



Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Community Governance Review

Review of the unparished areas of Tunbridge Wells

Draft Recommendations for consultation

Published Monday 29 September 2025

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. At its Extraordinary Full Council meeting on Wednesday 21 May 2025, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) resolved that a Community Governance Review (the Review) be undertaken to consider the governance arrangements of the six unparished areas (the Review Area) of Tunbridge Wells, as defined in the published [Terms of Reference](#) and shown on the [Review Area map](#).
- 1.2. At all stages of the Review, TWBC will be guided by and must have regard to:
- [Part 4, Chapter 3 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007](#)
 - [Guidance on Community Governance Reviews](#) issued by the Government and The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE)
 - Its own [Terms of Reference](#)
- 1.3. Since the Review commenced on Monday 2 June 2025, the Government has issued further guidance to councils in areas invited to submit proposals for unitary local government under Section 2 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. Kent is one of those areas, therefore, TWBC must also have regard to the [letter to areas invited to submit final proposals](#), issued on Friday 25 July 2025 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Jim McMahon OBE MP.

2. The Review

- 2.1. TWBC took the decision to undertake the Review because:
- It has a duty to carry out periodic reviews of the parished and unparished areas within the Borough of Tunbridge Wells.
 - There were increased calls locally to undertake a review of the unparished areas.
 - It is likely that local government in Kent will be reorganised, which would see TWBC subsumed into a much larger West Kent unitary authority from April 2028.
- 2.2. The aim of the Review is to bring about improved and stronger community engagement, more cohesive communities, better local democracy, and more effective and convenient delivery of local services; ensuring electors across the whole area are treated equitably and fairly.
- 2.3. The Review relates to the six currently unparished areas of Tunbridge Wells (the Review Area). The unparished areas are the borough wards of:
- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| • Culverden | • Sherwood |
| • Pantiles | • St James' |
| • Park | • St John's |
- 2.4. An unparished area is one that is not represented by a parish or town council. Instead, all council services are delivered directly by TWBC and/or Kent County Council.

- 2.5. The Review considers the creation of one (or more) parish or town council(s) for the Review Area and its/their electoral arrangements.
- 2.6. The Review is being led by TWBC's Local Government Reorganisation Working Group (the Working Group). This is a cross-party working group setup specifically to lead the Review and oversee TWBC's response to Local Government Reorganisation.
- 2.7. The Review commenced on Monday 2 June 2025 when TWBC published its [Terms of Reference](#) and invited initial submissions from individuals and organisations who have an interest in the Review Area. The Terms of Reference include a [timetable for the Review](#).
- 2.8. The first phase of public consultation commenced on Monday 2 June 2025 and closed at midnight on Sunday 3 August 2025 (9 weeks). A survey was made available for completion online via TWBC's website or by completing and returning a paper copy.
- 2.9. The public consultation survey asked if a new parish and/or town council(s) should be created to represent the six unparished areas. Where a respondent indicated that a new council(s) should be created, they were asked how many councils there should be.
- 2.10. Information about the Review and how to complete the public consultation survey was published on TWBC's website and social media channels. More targeted engagement was carried out by:
- Providing information in TWBC's weekly update email sent to over 22,000 subscribers.
 - Delivering a leaflet to all households in the Review Area.
 - Featuring the Review in the summer edition of TWBC's Local magazine, delivered to all households in the Review Area.
 - Holding in-person engagement events at the Calverley Road Market on Sunday 29 June and Sunday 27 July, attended by local councillors.
 - Delivering and asking for posters to be displayed in GP surgeries, dentists, and libraries in the Review Area.
 - Featuring the Review in the Local Lifestyle Tunbridge Wells magazine, delivered to over 12,000 households in the Review Area.
- 2.11. In preparing these Draft Recommendations, the Working Group has been mindful of the survey responses and representations received. The Working Group also has the role of balancing these against the wider requirements and duties that are placed upon it in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. TWBC has a duty to ensure that community governance within the area under review, reflects the identities and interests of the community in that area; and is effective and convenient.
- 2.12. In assessing these criteria, the Review is required to consider:
- The impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion; and
 - The size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish.

- 2.13. Following analysis of the survey responses and representations received, the Working Group has developed these Draft Recommendations for the Review Area, which propose that a Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council be established (see section 4).
- 2.14. The Working Group has sought to ensure that the proposed Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council:
- Reflects the identities and interests of the different communities in the area.
 - Is effective and convenient. The Working Group considers that this is a ‘viability’ test, and it is keen to ensure that a Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council would be viable and able to actively and effectively promote the well-being of its residents, and to contribute to the real provision of services in its area in an economic and efficient manner.
 - Considers any other arrangements for the purposes of community representation or community engagement in the area that reinforce the community identity test.

3. Background information, considerations, and evidence

- 3.1. This section contains the background information, considerations, and evidence gathered by the Working Group and used when developing its Draft Recommendations and the proposal to establish a Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council.

3.2. Responses to the first phase of public consultation

- 3.2.1. A total of **1,044** survey responses were received (1,024 online and 20 paper) during the first phase of public consultation. Full details of all survey responses can be found at **Appendix D** of these Draft Recommendations.
- 3.2.2. Based on the Review Area electorate of 36,846 (as at 2 January 2025), the response rate to the first phase of public consultation was **2.83%**.
- 3.2.3. Of those who responded, **94% (984)** said they live in one of the unparished areas.
- 3.2.4. When asked if a new parish and/or town council(s) should be created for the unparished areas of Tunbridge Wells, the responses were as follows:
- Yes: **626 (60%)**
 - No: **300 (29%)**
 - Uncertain: **116 (11%)**
 - Blank (paper forms): **2**
- 3.2.5. Of those who said a new parish and/or town council(s) should be created:
- **418 (67%)** said there should be one town council
 - **208 (33%)** said there should be more than one parish or town council

3.3. Council Tax

- 3.3.1. The level of Council Tax is not a determining factor for the Review. However, the Working Group acknowledges that residents will be curious to understand the likely cost if the proposed Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council is established.
- 3.3.2. At present, the Review Area is unparished and not represented by a parish or town council. Instead, all local services are delivered by TWBC and/or Kent County Council.
- 3.3.3. Residents in the Review Area pay 'special expenses' to TWBC via their Council Tax for the provision of services and costs incurred. As an example, the 2025/26 Band D property special expenses charge for Royal Tunbridge Wells is £134.79.
- 3.3.4. Should the proposed Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council be established, the special expenses charge paid to TWBC would initially remain but *may* be reduced. However, any reduction would be dependent upon which services were transferred from TWBC to Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council, which could happen over a lengthy period, possibly many years.
- 3.3.5. Should the proposed Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council be established it would be funded by a 'precept' added to residents' Council Tax bills. The precept would be in addition to the special expenses paid to TWBC.
- 3.3.6. The money raised through a precept would be spent on Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council operational costs (buildings, staffing, elections etc.) and delivery of services.
- 3.3.7. The precept for a Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council would be set by its elected councillors and reviewed annually. It is not for the Review or the Working Group to determine what a newly established Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council precept would be.
- 3.3.8. The tables below show the 2025/26 precept charges applied by the 16 parish and town councils in the Borough of Tunbridge Wells. The costs shown are the annual precept for a Band D property. These figures are provided for information only.

Parish/Town	Band D precept
Benenden	£53.90
Bidborough	£136.31
Brenchley and Matfield	£92.69
Capel*	£104.25
Cranbrook and Sissinghurst	£145.90
Frittenden	£40.24
Goudhurst	£176.44
Hawkhurst	£123.18

Parish/Town	Band D precept
Horsmonden	£113.67
Lamberhurst	£84.83
Paddock Wood	£235.92
Pembury	£125.97
Rusthall*	£78.01
Sandhurst	£165.78
Southborough*	£161.59
Speldhurst	£99.52

**In addition to their parish/town council precept, residents in Capel, Rusthall, and Southborough also pay special expenses to TWBC for the provision of some services, such as street lighting.*

- 3.3.9. At this stage it is impossible to provide an indication of the anticipated Council Tax precept for the proposed Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council. This is because all the parish and town council functions listed at **Appendix C**, except for allotments, are discretionary and the Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council annual operational costs are currently unknown.
- 3.3.10. The Government does not limit the amount a parish or town council can increase its precept by each year. Currently, borough councils are limited to a 3% increase each year and county councils 5%.
- 3.3.11. Businesses in a parish or town council area do not pay the precept. Instead, they are subject to Business Rates which are calculated separately from Council Tax.

3.4. **Electorate size and housing development data**

- 3.4.1. As set out in TWBC's Terms of Reference for the Review, the electorate figure used in these Draft Recommendations is taken from the Register of Electors published on Thursday 2 January 2025.
- 3.4.2. The Review Area is comprised of six borough wards in their entirety. The table below gives details of the polling districts, number of borough councillors, and current electorate within each ward.

Ward	Polling Districts	Total electorate	Borough Cllrs
Culverden	BA - Culverden North, BB - Bishops Down, BC - Culverden, BD - Holy Trinity, BE - Culverden South	6,305	3
Pantiles	GA - Christ Church, GB - Ramslye, GC - Showfields, GD - St Marks	6,775	3
Park	HA - Calverley, HB - Dunorlan, HC - Grove, HD - Hawkenbury	6,895	3
Sherwood	LA - Oak Road, LB - Knights Park, LC - Sherwood, LD - Sherwood West	6,483	3
St James'	NA - Ferndale, NB - Grosvenor, NC - Camden, ND - St James	6,121	3
St John's	PA - St Johns	4,267	2
Total:	N/A	36,846	17

- 3.4.3. To help inform certain elements of these Draft Recommendations, such as the number of councillors and any parish warding, there is a requirement to provide an electorate forecast of 5 years from the publication of TWBC's Terms of Reference.

3.4.4. To achieve this, data has been collected from TWBC's Planning service about the number of additional dwellings estimated to be delivered in each of the Review Area wards between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2030. Planning data is collected from:

- TWBC's Submission Local Plan (SLP).
- Estimated windfalls expected before 31 March 2030, these are based on the dwelling stock found within each ward as a percentage of the total borough dwelling stock of 52,747.

3.4.5. The table below sets out the estimated total additional dwellings to be delivered in each Review Area ward before 31 March 2030.

Ward	SLP allocation references	SLP site allocations	Extant permissions	Estimated windfalls	Total additional
Culverden	RTW5, RTW20, RTW3, RTW1, RTW14	0	559	36	595
Pantiles	RTW16, RTW15, RTW13, RTW12, RTW22, RTW11, RTW10, RTW2	120	206	38	364
Park	RTW9, RTW19	0	63	37	100
Sherwood	RTW8, RTW7, RTW21, RTW18, RTW17	185	11	35	231
St James'	RTW4	0	201	36	237
St John's	RTW6	0	48	21	69

3.4.6. Using the data from the tables at 3.4.2 and 3.4.5, as well as Office for National Statistics Census data from 2021 and 2022, forecast electorates for the wards within the Review Area, as of 31 March 2030, have been calculated and are shown in the table below.

Ward	Electorate 2025	Forecast increase	Electorate 2030
Culverden	6,305	1,015	7,320
Pantiles	6,775	598	7,373
Park	6,895	188	7,083
Sherwood	6,483	383	6,866
St James'	6,121	372	6,493
St John's	4,267	125	4,392
Total:	36,846	2,681	39,527

3.5. Parish and town council functions

- 3.5.1. The Working Group recognises the key role that parish and town councils can play at a local community level. They serve as a key representative voice and often act as the eyes and ears for other tiers of local government, public agencies, and other organisations to raise local concerns.
- 3.5.2. Parish and town councils are a statutory consultee on planning, highways, and other regulatory matters, and may deliver or support other local services. Depending upon the size, capacity, ambitions, and decisions of a parish or town council, the services provided can range from very few activities to wide ranging functions.
- 3.5.3. **Appendix C** of these Draft Recommendations illustrates the potential division of responsibility for delivering services between Kent County Council, TWBC, and the proposed Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council. As can be seen and although not exhaustive, most services that could be delivered by a Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council are discretionary, meaning they are optional.

3.6. Benefits and disbenefits of parish and town councils

- 3.6.1. It is important to consider both the benefits and disbenefits of establishing a Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council. Set out within the two tables below are some of the benefits and disbenefits associated with parish and town councils.

Benefits (taken from the National Association of Local Councils)

Benefit	Description
Community representation	Give residents a stronger voice in local affairs, ensuring their needs and preferences are directly addressed.
Enhanced local services	Provide and maintain amenities like parks, playgrounds, and community centres. They can also improve services like street cleaning, lighting, and local events.
Focused development	Drive community projects and initiatives tailored to local needs, such as environmental conservation or youth programs.
Economic advantages	Parish and town councils can attract funding and grants unavailable to larger councils. They can also promote local businesses through initiatives and events, boosting the local economy.
Improved quality of life	Work on projects that enhance the quality of life, such as creating green spaces, supporting local sports teams, and organising cultural events.
Greater accountability	Parish and town councils are closer to their residents, leading to more accountability and transparency in decision-making.

Disbenefits

Disbenefit	Description
Unlimited Council Tax precept increases	There is no limit on how much parish and town councils can increase their Council Tax precept by each year. This means residents may face higher local taxes (precepts) which can be a burden for some communities.
Low level of auditing and scrutiny	Parish and town councils are subject to lower levels of auditing and scrutiny than other tiers of local government.
Limits on service delivery	The range of services that parish or town councils can deliver is more limited than other tiers of local government.
Extra tier of complexity	The creation of parish or town councils adds an extra tier of complexity as to who delivers which council services.
No regulatory body	There is not a single regulatory body to hold ineffective parish or town councils accountable, which can lead to issues with performance.

3.7. Number of councillors

- 3.7.1. The legal number of parish councillors for a parish council is five (Section 16, Local Government Act 1972). The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) considers that a council of no more than the legal minimum of five members is inconveniently small, and it considers that a practical working minimum should be seven.
- 3.7.2. There is no maximum number of councillors for a parish council. However, NALC suggests that the practical maximum should be 25 councillors for a parish council with over 23,000 electors.
- 3.7.3. The Aston Business School published research that shows parish councils typically have the following number of councillors based on the number of electors in the parish:

Electors	Councillors
Less than 500	5 to 8
501 to 2,500	6 to 12
2,501 to 10,000	9 to 16
10,001 to 20,000	13 to 27
More than 20,000	13 to 31

- 3.7.4. There are no rules relating to the allocation of parish councillors between parish wards, but each parish ward must have at least one parish councillor.

3.8. **Parish warding**

- 3.8.1. The 2007 Act requires that, in considering whether a parish should be divided into wards for the purpose of elections of the parish council, TWBC should consider:
- Whether the number, or distribution, of the local government electors for the parish would make a single election of councillors impracticable or inconvenient; and
 - Whether it is desirable that any area or areas of the parish should be separately represented on the parish council.
- 3.8.2. TWBC will be mindful of government guidance on parish warding, noting that each case should be considered on its merits and based on information and evidence provided during the Review.
- 3.8.3. TWBC will also be mindful of government guidance regarding urban parishes, noting that there is likely to be a stronger case to ward them. In urban areas community identity tends to focus on locality, whether that be a housing estate, a shopping centre, or community facilities. Each locality is likely to have its own sense of identity.
- 3.8.4. Government guidance states that consideration should be given to the desirability of parish warding where the parish is already divided by district wards and county divisions.

4. **Working Group Draft Recommendations**

- 4.1. This section sets out the Draft Recommendations of the Working Group. It includes the Draft Recommendations in full, the rationale behind them, electoral arrangements, and any consequential matters arising from them.

4.2. **Draft Recommendations**

- 4.2.1. As part of the Review, under the Terms of Reference published on Monday 2 June 2025, the Working Group has made the following Draft Recommendations in relation to the Review Area, that:
- a) a parish of Tunbridge Wells be established;
 - b) the boundary of the parish of Tunbridge Wells be drawn to include the existing borough wards listed at paragraph 2.3 (in their entirety) and as outlined in red on the map at **Appendix A** of these Draft Recommendations;
 - c) the name of the established parish be Tunbridge Wells;
 - d) the style of the parish of Tunbridge Wells be set as a town;
 - e) the parish should have a parish council in the style of a town council;
 - f) the name of the town council should be Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council (see 4.3.5);

- g) the parish of Tunbridge Wells be divided into six parish wards, comprising the area designated on the map at **Appendix B**, and those parish wards be named respectively as:
 - i. Culverden
 - ii. Pantiles
 - iii. Park
 - iv. Sherwood
 - v. St James'
 - vi. St John's
- h) the town council for Tunbridge Wells shall consist of 17 councillors;
- i) the number of councillors elected to each of the respective parish wards be as follows:
 - i. Culverden (3)
 - ii. Pantiles (3)
 - iii. Park (3)
 - iv. Sherwood (3)
 - v. St James' (3)
 - vi. St John's (2)

4.3. **Rationale behind the Draft Recommendations**

- 4.3.1. During the first phase of consultation there were 208 submissions made that proposed the creation of more than one parish council for the Review Area. The proposals ranged from the creation of six separate parish councils (one for each area) through to a parish council for Sherwood with a town council for the other five areas combined.
- 4.3.2. The Working group considered all the proposals for the creation of more than one parish council. However, it felt that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the proposals would lead to, or bring about, improved community engagement, cohesion, or local democracy. In many cases the proposed boundaries between parish councils would have sub-divided key retail areas and community facilities and therefore the submissions were not supported at this stage.
- 4.3.3. The Working Group was encouraged by the number of submissions supporting the principle of a town council (418) for the whole of the Review Area. The Working Group agreed to recommend the establishment of a new town council for Tunbridge Wells and to seek the wider public opinion through a formal second phase of consultation.
- 4.3.4. The Working Group feel that a single town council for Tunbridge Wells is the only viable option that can actively and effectively promote the well-being of residents, and to contribute to the real provision of services in the area in an economic and efficient manner.

- 4.3.5. The Working Group is proposing that a new town council should be named ‘Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council’. In many cases, the use of the title ‘Royal’ requires permission to be granted by the Royal Names Team at the Cabinet Office. At the time of writing these Draft Recommendations, the Working Group was in contact with the Cabinet Office to determine if permission is required for a new town council to include the title ‘Royal’ in its name. These Draft Recommendations assume that, if permission is required, it will be granted. If permission is not granted, this will be set out, along with the consequences of that decision, in the Final Recommendations due to be published in February 2026.
- 4.3.6. None of the submissions suggesting a single town council for Tunbridge Wells referred to suggested parish warding. Given the Government’s guidance on parish warding (see section 3.8), the Working Group feel it is sensible to have parish warding in place for the parish area and that these parish wards follow the already established borough ward boundaries.
- 4.3.7. It is an important democratic principle that each person’s vote should be of equal weight so far as possible, having regard to other legitimate competing factors, when it comes to the election of councillors.
- 4.3.8. Guidance suggests that it is not in the interests of effective and convenient local government to have significant variances in levels of representation between different parish wards. There is a risk that where councillors over-represent one parish ward, the residents of that parish ward (and their councillors) could be perceived as having more influence than others on the parish or town council.
- 4.3.9. Guidance further recommends that the elector to councillor ratio variance should be within +/-10%.
- 4.3.10. The warding pattern proposed at 4.2.1 would see a total of 17 elected representatives on Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council. The projected elector to councillor ratio under these arrangements would be 2,325:1 with the resultant variances ranging between -6.9% and +5.7%. The table below sets out the proposed warding pattern and elector ratios.

Parish ward	Electorate 2025	Electorate 2030	Seats	Elector Ratio	Variance from average
Culverden	6,305	7,320	3	2,440	+4.9%
Pantiles	6,775	7,373	3	2,458	+5.7%
Park	6,895	7,083	3	2,361	+1.5%
Sherwood	6,483	6,866	3	2,288	-1.6%
St James’	6,121	6,493	3	2,164	-6.9%
St John’s	4,267	4,392	2	2,196	-5.5%
Total:	36,846	39,527	17	N/A	N/A

4.4. **Electoral arrangements**

4.4.1. This section sets out the electoral arrangements that the Working Group is recommending for a Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council, should it be established.

4.4.2. The Working Group is recommending that:

- Vesting Day for Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council should be Thursday 1 April 2027. Vesting Day is the day that Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council would formally come into effect and take on its powers.
- In the interim period between a Community Governance Order being laid (early 2026) and Vesting Day, a ‘shadow’ Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council (made up of all principal councillors for the area of the new town council) should be created to oversee crucial early decisions, such as setting a budget and Council Tax precept.
- The first elections to Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council should take place on Thursday 6 May 2027.
- A total of 17 councillors representing the six parish wards of Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council should be elected.
- Councillors elected in May 2027 should serve an initial five-year term. Future elections will then be combined with TWBC (or a future unitary council) elections in May 2032 and every four years thereafter.

4.5. **Consequential matters arising from the Draft Recommendations**

4.5.1. This section sets out any consequential matters arising from the Working Group’s recommendation to establish a Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council.

Transferring of assets

4.5.2. The transferring of assets from TWBC to a newly established Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council is something that has attracted a lot of attention during the first phase of public consultation.

4.5.3. There is no statutory obligation on TWBC to transfer any assets to a newly established parish or town council, except for allotments. Therefore, any transfer of assets other than allotments would be entirely at the discretion of TWBC.

4.5.4. The legislation regarding allotments means that any allotments in a newly formed parish or town council area can only be administered by that newly formed parish or town council, therefore should be transferred to the parish or town council.

- 4.5.5. The Working Group is therefore recommending that the ownership and running of the allotments listed in the table below should transfer from TWBC to Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council on Vesting Day.

Address
Charity Farm Allotments, King George V Hill, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 2LG
Cunningham Road Allotments, Cunningham Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 9EN
Eridge Road Allotments, Eridge Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 8HS
Ferrars Allotments, Cornford Lane, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 4QY
Hawkenbury Allotments, Halls Hole Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 4TU (see 4.5.6.)
Hilbert Recreation Ground Allotments, Hilbert Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 2LN
Hilbert Road Allotments, Hilbert Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 3SA
Reynolds Lane Allotments, Reynolds Lane, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 9XN
Sandhurst Road Allotments, Sandhurst Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 3TD
Woodlands Allotments, Merrion Way, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 9JL

- 4.5.6. The land at Hawkenbury Allotments is currently owned by TWBC but the site is managed by the Hawkenbury Allotment Holders' Association. Following transfer of the land to Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council on Vesting Day, the Working Group is recommending that the existing management arrangements with the Hawkenbury Allotment Holders' Association should remain in place and be unchanged.
- 4.5.7. Within the [correspondence issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government \(MHCLG\) on 25 July 2025](#), the Government made clear that it is essential that all councils involved in local government reorganisation are '*cognisant that decisions taken now by existing councils could fetter the future decisions of new councils and act accordingly*', and that '*Examples of those decisions include but are not limited to the sale and purchase of significant assets, transfer of local assets...*'.
- 4.5.8. Given the correspondence issued by MHCLG and the ongoing work in Kent surrounding local government reorganisation, TWBC will not transfer any other assets to a newly established Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council, other than the allotments listed at 4.5.5, which it would have a statutory duty to provide from Vesting Day.
- 4.5.9. After Vesting Day, it would be for Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council to consider what other assets, currently owned or leased by TWBC (or a future unitary council), it might wish to negotiate the transfer of. These negotiations do not form part of the Review.

Council Tax precept

- 4.5.10. As set out at section 3.3, at this stage it is impossible to provide an indication of the anticipated Council Tax precept for the proposed Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council. This is because all the parish and town council functions listed at **Appendix C**, except for allotments, are discretionary and the annual operating costs for the proposed Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council are currently unknown.

5. Next steps

- 5.1. All residents and any other persons or organisations wishing to make representations on these Draft Recommendations may do so by completing the online response form, which will be available from **Monday 29 September 2025**.
- 5.2. Alternatively, paper copies of the response form will be available for collection from the Amelia Scott in Royal Tunbridge Wells, or can be sent by post on request by calling TWBC's Elections team on 01892 554024 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).
- 5.3. All representations that are received, will be considered by judging them against the criteria in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.
- 5.4. The deadline to respond is midnight on **Sunday 30 November 2025**.