

## COUNCIL SUMMONS

YOU ARE REQUESTED TO ATTEND A MEETING OF THE TAUNTON DEANE BOROUGH COUNCIL TO BE HELD IN THE PRINCIPAL COMMITTEE ROOM, THE DEANE HOUSE, BELVEDERE ROAD, TAUNTON ON TUESDAY 17TH APRIL 2007 AT 18:30.

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### AGENDA

The meeting will be preceded by a Prayer to be offered by the Mayor's Chaplain.

1. To receive the Minutes of the Meetings of the Council held on 20 February 2007 and 20 March 2007 (attached)
2. To report any apologies for absence
3. To receive any communications
4. To receive petitions from Local Government electors under Standing Order 17
5. To receive questions from Local Government electors under Standing Order 18
6. Declarations of Interest
7. The Local Authorities ( Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007  
To receive a recommendation from the Standards Committee (to follow)
8. Gambling Fees  
To receive a recommendation from Councillor Mrs Bradley, Executive Councillor, Environmental Services (attached)
9. Part 1 - To deal with questions to and receive recommendations from the Executive:-
  - (i) Councillor Williams (Leader of the Council)  
  
Recommendation relating to Team Somerset and Potential Local Government Reorganisation
  - (ii) Councillor Edwards (Housing Services)  
  
Recommendation relating to Restructure of Housing Service
  - (iii) Councillor Mrs Lewin-Harris  
  
Recommendation relating to Corporate Strategy 2007 - 10
10. Part II - To receive reports from the following members of the Executive:-

- (i) Councillor Williams - Leader of the Council
- (ii) Councillor Bishop - Planning Policy and Transportation
- (iii) Councillor Mrs Bradley - Environmental Services
- (iv) Councillor Cavill - Economic Development, Property and Tourism
- (v) Councillor Clark - Leisure, Arts and Culture
- (vi) Councillor Edwards - Housing Services
- (vii) Councillor Hall - Resources
- (viii) Councillor Leighton - Communications
- ix) Councillor Lewin-Harris - Community Leadership

G P DYKE  
Democratic Services Manager  
11 April 2007







Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to the discussion. Lift access to the main committee room on the first floor of the building is available from the main ground floor entrance. Toilet facilities, with wheelchair access, are also available. There is a time set aside at the beginning of the meeting to allow the public to ask questions



An induction loop operates to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter. If you require any further information, please contact Greg Dyke on:



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## **Taunton Deane Borough Council**

At a meeting of the Taunton Deane Borough Council held in the Principal Committee Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton on Tuesday 20 February 2007 at 6.30 pm.

**Present:** The Mayor (Councillor Hindley)  
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Hayward)  
Councillors Mrs Allgrove, Beaven, Bishop, Bone, Bowrah, Mrs Bradley, N Cavill, Miss S Cavill, Clark, Coles, Croad, Davies, Denington, Durdan, Edwards, Govier, Guerrier, Hall, Hayward, Henley, C Hill, Mrs Marie Hill, Mrs M J Hill, House, Lees, Mrs Lewin-Harris, Meikle, Morrell, Mullins, Murphy, Paul, Phillips, Prior-Sankey, Slattery, Stuart-Thorn, Vail, Watson, Wedderkopp, Weston, Mrs Whitmarsh, Williams and Mrs Wilson.

### **1 Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 22 January 2007, copies having been sent to each Member, were signed by the Mayor.

### **2. Apologies**

Councillors Mrs Biscoe, C Cluff, Mrs J Cluff, Floyd, Garner, Leighton, Lisgo, Mrs F Smith and P Smith.

### **3. Declarations of Interest**

Councillors Prior-Sankey, Henley, Govier and Paul all declared personal interests as Members of Somerset County Council.

### **4. Car Parking Charges 2007/08**

Submitted recommendations from Councillor Bishop, Executive Councillor Planning and Transportation following a meeting of the Traffic Regulation Order Panel held on 1 February 2007.

On the motion of Councillor Bishop it was RESOLVED that:

- (a) the Parking tariffs for 2007/2008 be increased as set out in the Appendix attached to the report and
- (b) the Taunton Deane Borough (Off-Street Parking Places) (No 30 Amendment) Order 2006 as set out in the report submitted be confirmed.

### **5. Recommendations to Council from the Executive**

(a) General Fund Revenue Estimates 2007/08

The Executive had considered its 2007/08 budget proposals including

- (i) The General Fund Revenue budget proposals for 2007/08 including the proposed Council Tax increase and the Prudential Indicators and
- (ii) Draft figures on the predicted financial position of the Council for the following four years.

It was now a requirement for the Council to prepare not only budgets for the following financial year but also to provide indicative figures for the two years after that. The Medium Term Financial Plan provided an indication of the expected budget gap going forward into 2008/09 and a summary of this position was submitted.

The proposed budget for Taunton Deane would result in a Band D Council Tax of £128.05 an increase of £2.51 (2%) on 2006/2007. This represented an increase of 4.8p per week. The Band D taxpayer would therefore receive all the services provided by the Council in 2007/2008 at a cost of £2.46 per week.

The estimated expenses chargeable to the non parished area of Taunton in 2007/2008 amounted to £27,870.00 an increase of 2% and this formed part of the total net expenditure of the Council.

The Council's Section 151 Officer had confirmed that the Council's reserves were adequate and that the budget estimates used in preparing the 2007/08 budget were sufficiently robust. On the motion of Councillor Williams it was RESOLVED that the budget for General Fund services for 2007/2008 be agreed and that

- (i) the transfer of any potential underspend in 2006/2007 back to General Fund Reserves be agreed;
- (ii) the proposed 2007/2008 budget being an authority expenditure of £13,245,730.00 and Special Expenses of £27,870.00 be agreed in accordance with the Local Government Act 1992;
- (iii) the predicted General Fund Reserve balance at 31 March 2007 of £1,442,400.00 be agreed;
- (iv) the Prudential Indicators for 2007/2008 as set out in the report to the Executive be agreed;
- (v) the revised forecast budget position for 2008/2009 onwards as outlined in the report to the Executive be noted.

(b) Capital Programme 2007/08

Consideration had been given to the proposed General Fund and Housing Revenue Account capital programmes for the period 2007/2008 to 2010/2011.

For the General Fund the estimated unallocated resources available were £17,000. The proposed new schemes amounted to £145,000 but were self funding leaving the same £17,000 of unallocated capital resources available for future schemes.

For all housing schemes both General Fund and Housing Revenue Account the estimated resources available for 2007/2008 amounted to £6,593k. The proposed capital programme for 2007/2008 amounted to £6,402k. It was proposed that the remaining £191,000 be carried forward to support the Housing Revenue Account Decent Homes capital programme into the future.

Moved by Councillor Weston, seconded by Councillor Croad that the recommended Capital Programme be amended as follows. The Council allocate £100,000.00 towards capital items to improve the Taunton Deane bus service infrastructure subject to discussion and agreement regarding the best use of this money with the County Council, the relevant providers and representatives of local bus users.

The amendment was put and was lost.

On the motion of Councillor Williams it was RESOLVED that both the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account capital programme be agreed.

(c) Council Tax Setting 2007/2008

The Council were required to make an annual determination which set its gross expenditure (including the Housing Revenue Account and balances brought forward) and gross income (also including the Housing Revenue account and balances brought forward) with the difference as its budget requirement.

The estimated expenses chargeable to the non parished area of Taunton in 2007/2008 amounted to £27,870 and this formed part of the total net expenditure of the Council. Details had also been received of the parish precepts levied and the appropriate Council Tax at Band D.

The estimated balance on the Council Tax Collection Fund was a deficit of £45,136, Taunton Deane's share of this amounted to £4,830 and this was reflected in the revenue estimates.



The Council's budget requirement included parish precepts and non parished special expenses was £13,630,000. This amount was then reduced by the amount notified in respect of the Borough's Revenue Support Grant amounting to £1,172,035 and the Non Domestic Rates distribution from the pool amounting to £6,983,855.

The net amount having taken the Collection Fund position into account of £5,478,940 was used to calculate the Council Tax at Band D reflecting the parish precepts by dividing it by the total of the Council Tax Base as approved by the Executive in December 2006.

The Council Tax for the Borough (excluding parish precepts and special expenses for the non parished area) was £128.05 an increase of £2.51 (2%) compared to the 2006/2007 Council Tax. Since the meeting of the Executive final notification of all parish precepts had been received. Also since the meeting figures in relation to the Police and Fire Authorities precepts and the likely level of the Council Tax for Somerset County Council had been received. On the motion of Councillor Williams it was RESOLVED:-

That it be noted that at its meeting on 6 December 2006 the Executive calculated the following amounts for the year 2007/08 in accordance with the regulations made under Section 33(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended):-

(1) 39,786.35 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as its Council Tax base for the year.

(2)

Ash Priors	74.00	Neroche	246.02
Ashbrittle	88.39	North Curry	717.91
Bathealton	80.85	Norton Fitzwarren	696.58
Bishops Hull	1,079.90	Nynehead	153.26
Bishops Lydeard /Cothelstone	1,919.98	Oake	329.74
Bradford on Tone	278.16	Otterford	166.26
Burrowbridge	203.46	Pitminster	454.24
Cheddon Fitzpaine	643.95	Ruishton/ Thornfalcon	620.40
Chipstable	119.73	Sampford Arundel	131.54
	308.21		711.86

Churchstanton		Staplegrove	
Combe Florey	122.31	Stawley	120.43
Comeytrowe	2,088.55	Stoke St Gregory	384.75
Corfe	130.15	Stoke St Mary	210.55
Creech St Michael	943.89	Taunton	15,914.40
Durston	57.64	Trull	1,022.07
Fitzhead	123.31	Wellington	4,576.12
Halse	143.54	Wellington (Without)	297.40
Hatch Beauchamp	256.79	West Bagborough	157.33
Kingston St Mary	460.80	West Buckland	405.03
Langford Budville	215.56	West Hatch	141.36
Lydeard St Lawrence/ Tolland	198.30	West Monkton	1,111.64
Milverton	593.29	Wiveliscombe	1,086.71

being the amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 6 of the Regulations, as the amounts of its Council Tax Base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

That the following amounts be calculated by the Council for the year 2007/08 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:-

- (a) £69,913,650 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2)(a) of the Act.  
*(Gross Expenditure including amount required for working balance).*
- (b) £55,398,650 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(3)(a) to (c) of the Act.  
*(Gross Income including reserves to be used to meet Gross Expenditure).*
- (c) £13,630,000 being the amount by which the aggregate at

(a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 32(4) of the Act, as its budget requirement for the year.

(d) £8,151,060

being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its general fund in respect of redistributed non-domestic rates, revenue support grant, additional grant or SSA reduction grant (increased by the amount of the sums which the Council estimates will be transferred in the year from its Collection Fund to its General Fund in accordance with Section 97(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (*Council Tax Surplus*) and increased by the amount of any sum which the Council estimates will be transferred from its Collection Fund to its General Fund pursuant to the Collection Fund (Community Charge) directions under Sec. 98(4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 made on 7 February 1994 (*Community Charge Surplus*).

(e) £137.71

$$\frac{(c) - (d)}{9.2.1(1)} = \frac{13,630,000 - 8,151,060}{39,786.35}$$

being the amount calculated at (c) above less the amount at (d) above, all divided by the amount at 9.2.1(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 33(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year. (*Average Council Tax at Band D for Borough Including Parish Precepts and Special Expenses*).

(f) £384,270

being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act. (*Parish Precepts and Special Expenses*).

(g) £128.05

$$(e) - \frac{(f)}{9.2.1(1)} = 137.71 - \frac{384,270}{39,786.35}$$

being the amount at (e) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (f) above by the amount at 9.2.1(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special items relate.

(*Council Tax at Band D for Borough*)

*Excluding Parish Precepts and Special Expenses).*

(h)

Ash Priors	131.43	Neroche	141.87
Ashbrittle	142.76	North Curry	146.85
Bathealton	135.47	Norton Fitzwarren	151.82
Bishops Hull	142.87	Nynehead	148.60
Bishops Lydeard/ Colthelstone	146.42	Oake	140.18
Bradford on Tone	145.11	Otterford	128.05
Burrowbridge	151.15	Pitminster	141.92
Cheddon Fitzpaine	137.37	Ruishton/ Thornfalcon	144.17
Chipstable	138.91	Sampford Arundel	161.80
Churchstanton	150.62	Staplegrove	140.83
Combe Florey	142.77	Stawley	139.68
Comeytrowe	137.63	Stoke St Gregory	143.64
Corfe	136.50	Stoke St Mary	140.94
Creech St Michael	143.63	Taunton	129.80
Durston	128.74	Trull	139.79
Fitzhead	148.73	Wellington	144.31
Halse	144.04	Wellington (Without)	143.18
Hatch Beauchamp	141.29	West Bagborough	143.94
Kingston St Mary	141.07	West Buckland	148.42
Langford Budville	148.93	West Hatch	142.55
Lydeard St Lawrence/ Tolland	138.19	West Monkton	139.29
Milverton	139.01	Wiveliscombe	144.25

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at (g) above, the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at 9.2.1(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate. (*Council Taxes at Band D for Borough, Parish and Special Expenses*).

- (i) See overleaf

(a)

Valuation Band	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Ash Priors	87.62	102.22	116.82	131.43	160.64	189.84	219.05	262.86
Ashbrittle	95.18	111.03	126.90	142.76	174.49	206.21	237.94	285.52
Bathealton	90.32	105.36	120.42	135.47	165.58	195.68	225.79	270.94
Bishops Hull	95.25	111.12	126.99	142.87	174.62	206.37	238.12	285.74
Bishops Lydeard/Cothelstone	97.62	113.88	130.15	146.42	178.96	211.49	244.04	292.84
Bradford on Tone	96.74	112.86	128.98	145.11	177.36	209.60	241.85	290.22
Burrowbridge	100.77	117.56	134.35	151.15	184.74	218.33	251.92	302.30
Cheddon Fitzpaine	91.58	106.84	122.10	137.37	167.90	198.42	228.95	274.74
Chipstable	92.61	108.04	123.47	138.91	169.78	200.65	231.52	277.82
Churchstanton	100.42	117.14	133.88	150.62	184.10	217.56	251.04	301.24
Combe Florey	95.18	111.04	126.90	142.77	174.50	206.22	237.95	285.54
Comeytrowe	91.76	107.04	122.34	137.63	168.22	198.80	229.39	275.26
Corfe	91.00	106.16	121.33	136.50	166.84	197.17	227.50	273.00
Creech St Michael	95.76	111.71	127.67	143.63	175.55	207.46	239.39	287.26
Durston	85.83	100.13	114.43	128.74	157.35	185.96	214.57	257.48
Fitzhead	99.16	115.67	132.20	148.73	181.79	214.83	247.89	297.46
Halse	96.03	112.03	128.03	144.04	176.05	208.06	240.07	288.08
Hatch Beauchamp	94.20	109.89	125.59	141.29	172.69	204.08	235.49	282.58
Kingston St Mary	94.05	109.72	125.39	141.07	172.42	203.77	235.12	282.14
Langford Budville	99.29	115.83	132.38	148.93	182.03	215.12	248.22	297.86
Lydeard St Lawrence/Tolland	92.13	107.48	122.83	138.19	168.90	199.61	230.32	276.38
Milverton	92.68	108.11	123.56	139.01	169.91	200.79	231.69	278.02
Neroche	94.58	110.34	126.10	141.87	173.40	204.92	236.45	283.74
North Curry	97.90	114.21	130.53	146.85	179.49	212.12	244.75	293.70
Norton Fitzwarren	101.22	118.08	134.95	151.82	185.56	219.29	253.04	303.64
Nynehead	99.07	115.57	132.09	148.60	181.63	214.64	247.67	297.20
Oake	93.46	109.02	124.60	140.18	171.34	202.48	233.64	280.36
Otterford	85.37	99.59	113.82	128.05	156.51	184.96	213.42	256.10
Pitminster	94.71	110.49	126.27	142.06	173.63	205.20	236.77	284.12
Ruishton/Thornfalcon	96.12	112.13	128.15	144.17	176.21	208.24	240.29	288.34
Sampford Arundel	107.87	125.84	143.82	161.80	197.76	233.71	269.67	323.60
Staplegrave	93.89	109.53	125.18	140.83	172.13	203.42	234.72	281.66
Stawley	93.12	108.64	124.16	139.68	170.72	201.76	232.80	279.36
Stoke St Gregory	95.76	111.72	127.68	143.64	175.56	207.48	239.40	287.28
Stoke St Mary	93.96	109.62	125.28	140.94	172.26	203.58	234.90	281.88
Taunton	86.54	100.95	115.38	129.80	158.65	187.49	216.34	259.60
Trull	93.20	108.72	124.26	139.79	170.86	201.92	232.99	279.58
Wellington	96.37	112.42	128.49	144.55	176.68	208.79	240.92	289.10
Wellington Without	95.46	111.36	127.27	143.18	175.00	206.81	238.64	286.36
West Bagborough	95.96	111.95	127.94	143.94	175.93	207.91	239.90	287.88
West Buckland	98.95	115.43	131.93	148.42	181.41	214.38	247.37	296.84
West Hatch	95.04	110.87	126.71	142.55	174.23	205.90	237.59	285.10
West Monkton	92.86	108.33	123.81	139.29	170.25	201.20	232.15	278.58
Wiveliscombe	96.17	112.19	128.22	144.25	176.31	208.36	240.42	288.50

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at (h) above by the number which, in proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which is that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands (Council Tax for Individual Parishes and the Borough)

(b) That it be noted that for the year 2007/08 the Somerset County Council, the Avon and Somerset Police Authority and the Somerset and Devon Fire and Rescue Authority have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each categories of dwellings shown below.

Somerset County Council	642.26	749.30	856.35	963.39	1,177.48	1,391.56	1,605.65	1,926.78
Avon & Somerset Police Authority	98.11	114.47	130.82	147.17	179.87	212.58	245.28	294.34
Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority	42.30	49.35	56.40	63.45	77.55	91.65	105.75	126.90

That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (a) and (b) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts of council tax for the year 2007/08 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

Valuation Band	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Ash Priors	870.29	1,015.34	1,160.39	1,305.44	1,595.54	1,885.63	2,175.73	2,610.88
Ashbrittle	877.85	1,024.15	1,170.47	1,316.77	1,609.39	1,902.00	2,194.62	2,633.54
Bathealton	872.99	1,018.48	1,163.99	1,309.48	1,600.48	1,891.47	2,182.47	2,618.96
Bishops Hull	877.92	1,024.24	1,170.56	1,316.88	1,609.52	1,902.16	2,194.80	2,633.76
Bishops Lydeard/Cothelstone	880.29	1,027.00	1,173.72	1,320.43	1,613.86	1,907.28	2,200.72	2,640.86
Bradford on Tone	879.41	1,025.98	1,172.55	1,319.12	1,612.26	1,905.39	2,198.53	2,638.24
Burrowbridge	883.44	1,030.68	1,177.92	1,325.16	1,619.64	1,914.12	2,208.60	2,650.32
Cheddon Fitzpaine	874.25	1,019.96	1,165.67	1,311.38	1,602.80	1,894.21	2,185.63	2,622.76
Chipstable	875.28	1,021.16	1,167.04	1,312.92	1,604.68	1,896.44	2,188.20	2,625.84
Churchstanton	883.09	1,030.26	1,177.45	1,324.63	1,619.00	1,913.35	2,207.72	2,649.26
Combe Florey	877.85	1,024.16	1,170.47	1,316.78	1,609.40	1,902.01	2,194.63	2,633.56
Comeytrove	874.43	1,020.16	1,165.91	1,311.64	1,603.12	1,894.59	2,186.07	2,623.28
Corfe	873.67	1,019.28	1,164.90	1,310.51	1,601.74	1,892.96	2,184.18	2,621.02
Creech St Michael	878.43	1,024.83	1,171.24	1,317.64	1,610.45	1,903.25	2,196.07	2,635.28
Durston	868.50	1,013.25	1,158.00	1,302.75	1,592.25	1,881.75	2,171.25	2,605.50
Fitzhead	881.83	1,028.79	1,175.77	1,322.74	1,616.69	1,910.62	2,204.57	2,645.48
Halse	878.70	1,025.15	1,171.60	1,318.05	1,610.95	1,903.85	2,196.75	2,636.10
Hatch Beauchamp	876.87	1,023.01	1,169.16	1,315.30	1,607.59	1,899.87	2,192.17	2,630.60
Kingston St Mary	876.72	1,022.84	1,168.96	1,315.08	1,607.32	1,899.56	2,191.80	2,630.16
Langford Budville	881.96	1,028.95	1,175.95	1,322.94	1,616.93	1,910.91	2,204.90	2,645.88
Lydeard St Lawrence/Tolland	874.80	1,020.60	1,166.40	1,312.20	1,603.80	1,895.40	2,187.00	2,624.40
Milverton	875.35	1,021.23	1,167.13	1,313.02	1,604.81	1,896.58	2,188.37	2,626.04
Neroche	877.25	1,023.46	1,169.67	1,315.88	1,608.30	1,900.71	2,193.13	2,631.76
North Curry	880.57	1,027.33	1,174.10	1,320.86	1,614.39	1,907.91	2,201.43	2,641.72
Norton Fitzwarren	883.89	1,031.20	1,178.52	1,325.83	1,620.46	1,915.08	2,209.72	2,651.66
Nynehead	881.74	1,028.69	1,175.66	1,322.61	1,616.53	1,910.43	2,204.35	2,645.22
Oake	876.13	1,022.14	1,168.17	1,314.19	1,606.24	1,898.27	2,190.32	2,628.38
Otterford	868.04	1,012.71	1,157.39	1,302.06	1,591.41	1,880.75	2,170.10	2,604.12
Pitminster	877.38	1,023.61	1,169.84	1,316.07	1,608.53	1,900.99	2,193.45	2,632.14
Ruishton/Thornfolcon	878.79	1,025.25	1,171.72	1,318.18	1,611.11	1,904.03	2,196.97	2,636.36
Sampford Arundel	890.54	1,038.96	1,187.39	1,335.81	1,632.66	1,929.50	2,226.35	2,671.62
Staplegrove	876.56	1,022.65	1,168.75	1,314.84	1,607.03	1,899.21	2,191.40	2,629.68
Stawley	875.79	1,021.76	1,167.73	1,313.69	1,605.62	1,897.55	2,189.48	2,627.38
Stoke St Gregory	878.43	1,024.84	1,171.25	1,317.65	1,610.46	1,903.27	2,196.08	2,635.30
Stoke St Mary	876.63	1,022.74	1,168.85	1,314.95	1,607.16	1,899.37	2,191.58	2,629.90
Taunton	869.21	1,014.07	1,158.95	1,303.81	1,593.55	1,883.28	2,173.02	2,607.62
Trull	875.87	1,021.84	1,167.83	1,313.80	1,605.76	1,897.71	2,189.67	2,627.60
Wellington	879.04	1,025.54	1,172.06	1,318.56	1,611.58	1,904.58	2,197.60	2,637.12
Wellington Without	878.13	1,024.48	1,170.84	1,317.19	1,609.90	1,902.60	2,195.32	2,634.38
West Bagborough	878.63	1,025.07	1,171.51	1,317.95	1,610.83	1,903.70	2,196.58	2,635.90
West Buckland	881.62	1,028.55	1,175.50	1,322.43	1,616.31	1,910.17	2,204.05	2,644.86
West Hatch	877.71	1,023.99	1,170.28	1,316.56	1,609.13	1,901.69	2,194.27	2,633.12
West Monkton	875.53	1,021.45	1,167.38	1,313.30	1,605.15	1,896.99	2,188.83	2,626.60
Wiveliscombe	878.84	1,025.31	1,171.79	1,318.26	1,611.21	1,904.15	2,197.10	2,636.52



(d) Proposals to refresh the Corporate Management of the Council

Consideration had been given to a number of drivers for change which would require a refresh of the Council's Corporate Management structure. The current arrangements had been looked at together with the proposals for the future. These included the personnel changes including the proposed early retirements/redundancies. A second phase further review of the entire organisation was also proposed.

Although the proposals were within existing budgets and could in large parts be carried out by the Chief Executive under delegated powers elements of the proposals required the agreement of the Council. It was also important that the proposal in its entirety was supported by Members.

It was anticipated that the proposed changes would reflect the external and internal drivers for change. The proposals could be met within existing budget levels and after paying back the initial up front costs would return ongoing budget savings of approximately £61,000 per annum to the Council's General Fund. In addition there would be ongoing savings to the Council's Housing Revenue Account.

The total cost of the proposal was £302,000. The majority of this cost fell in 2006/2007 with the remainder falling in 2007/2008. Savings would start to accrue immediately and would be earmarked for paying back the upfront costs of the General Fund Reserve. This would be fully achieved by 2011/2012 meaning that the proposal had a pay back period of 4.9 years.

It was intended that the proposals would ensure that Corporate Management Team remained fit for future as the Council proceeded through a period of unprecedented change and the local government landscape shifted to reflect the issues arising from the Local Government White Paper. On the motion of Councillor Williams it was RESOLVED that

- (i) the proposals to refresh Corporate Management Team be agreed;
- (ii) the early retirements and voluntary redundancies contained in the proposal for the posts of
  - (a) Head of Housing
  - (b) Head of Environment and Leisure
  - (c) Head of Development be agreed and
- (iii) a Supplementary Estimate of £263,000 from General Fund reserves be agreed.

(This would be fully paid back to the General Fund Reserve by 2011/2012 and thereafter the Council's General Fund budget would benefit by approximately £61,000 a year).

(e) Housing Revenue Account, Revenue Estimates and Rent Levels

Consideration had been given to the proposed Housing Revenue Account for 2007/2008. It also included details of the new rent levels, service charges and other housing related charges such as garage rents. It also provided information on the Deane Helpline trading account and the Deane Building DLO trading account. Following the recent ballot on the future of the housing stock there was a gap between the funding needed to deliver the Decent Homes Standard to the Council's housing stock and the funding available of £1.85m per year. On the motion of Councillor Edwards it was RESOLVED that the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2007/2008 be agreed.

(f) Provision of Information Technology and Development Control

Consideration had been given to the replacement of the current in house software package for planning application recording, monitoring and historic data retention software with an established external software package.

The national planning system was currently undergoing significant changes and unfortunately the existing software was not suitable. The quality of the service which was being provided had declined and Best Value Performance Indicators had fallen. This had resulted in a reduction in Planning Delivery Grant received. The Council had gone from being one of the best performing authorities in the South West to being in the bottom quartile. In view of the problems currently being experienced it was felt necessary to develop an external planning software package. This would not only improve the planning function but would assist greatly in delivery of a number of the Council's corporate priorities. On the motion of Councillor Bishop it was RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the proposal to replace the current in house software application for planning application recording, monitoring and historic data retention be agreed in principle;
- (ii) a Supplementary Estimate from General Fund Reserves of £80,000 be agreed. The ongoing revenue costs would be funded from within existing Development budgets.

## 6. Taunton Railway Bridge

Councillor Weston referred to a statement made by Councillor Bradley at a recent Health and Leisure Review Panel Meeting that Railtrack had finally accepted responsibility for renewal of pigeon proofing measures at the railway bridge in Taunton and further asked Councillor Mrs Bradley:-

- (a) When was this work estimated to begin;
- (b) What agreement had been made to ensure that the effectiveness of the new measures or equipment was monitored and maintained;
- (c) Whether Railtrack also accepted responsibility for repainting and repairing both bridges to an acceptable ascetic standard.

Councillor Mrs Bradley replied that responsibility for maintenance of the bridge was that of Railtrack who had indicated that although bridges were maintained in a strictly rotational order a plan had been developed to deal cost effectively with the problems being caused by pigeons under this bridge.

## 7. Reports of the Leader of the Council and Executive Councillors

The following reports were made to the Council on the main items of current and future business:-

- (i) Leader of the Council (Councillor Williams)

Councillor Williams' report covered the following topics.

- Housing Stock Transfer
- Local Government Reorganisation
- Improving Services in Somerset
- Budget setting
- Project Taunton
- Affordable Homes
- Retirement of staff

Councillor Williams drew attention to the forthcoming retirement of long serving Council officers Malcolm Western, Pete Weaver and Tom Noall. Council agreed that these officers had been dedicated and committed to providing excellent services and had made a tremendous contribution to the successful operation of the Council. On behalf of all Members of the Council he wished them every success for the future and thanked them for their dedicated service to the Council.

- (ii) Community Leadership (Councillor Mrs Lewin Harris)

Councillor Mrs Lewin Harris' report focused on the following areas within her portfolio.

- Sustainable Community Strategy
- Area Working
- Corporate Equality Scheme

(iii) Planning Policy and Transportation (Councillor Bishop)

Councillor Bishop submitted his report which drew attention to the following:-

- Regional Spatial Strategy
- A303/A358 South Petherton to M5 Taunton
- Planning Applications Somerset County Cricket Club
- Councillors involvement in planning decisions
- Talking Tomorrow's Taunton Deane

(iv) Environmental Services (Councillor Mrs Bradley)

The report from Councillor Mrs Bradley drew attention to development in the following areas:-

- Smoke free preparations
- Food safety
- Health and Safety
- Environmental Protection
- Waste Recycling
- Somerset Waste Partnership
- Networking

(v) Economic Development Asset Management and Tourism (Councillor N P Cavill)

The report from Councillor Cavill covered:-

- Economic Development
- Rural Economy
- Tourism
- Arts and Creative Services
- Asset Management
- Water Links

(vi) Leisure Arts and Culture (Councillor Clark)

The report from Councillor Clark dealt with activities taking place in the following areas:-

- Village and Community Halls
- Sports and Physical Activity Strategy
- Tennis
- Tone Leisure
- Forthcoming Events

- Sports and Health Development

(vii) Housing Services (Councillor Edwards)

Councillor Edwards' report focused on how the Council had continued to improve the energy efficiency of the privately owned housing stock in the Deane using a combination of grants and the cavity wall insulation council tax rebate scheme.

(viii) Resources (Councillor Hall)

The report from Councillor Hall provided information on the following areas within his portfolio:-

- Personnel
- Corporate Support
- ISiS
- Democratic Services
- Procurement
- Financial Services
- Revenues
- Benefits
- Corporate Property and Information Technology

(ix) Communications (Councillor Leighton)

Councillor Leighton's report was submitted by Councillor Williams in her absence and covered the following areas:-

- Public Relations
- Web Content and Marketing
- Consultation

**8. The Wellsprings Centre**

A report on the issues that had arisen out of the recovery of the project to build the Wellsprings Centre had been submitted to the Executive at its meeting on 6 December 2006. Although there was no decision to be made by Council on this matter the Executive felt that in view of the importance of this project a report should be submitted to Council for information.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

(The meeting ended at 10.17 pm)

## **Taunton Deane Borough Council**

At a meeting of the Taunton Deane Borough Council held in the Principal Committee Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton on 20 March 2007 at 9.00 pm.

**Present:** The Mayor (Councillor Hindley)

Councillors Mrs Allgrove, Beaven, Bishop, Bowrah, Mrs Bradley, Cavill, Miss Cavill, Clark, Coles, Davies, Denington, Edwards, Floyd, Govier, Guerrier, Hall, Hayward, Henley, Mrs Marcia Hill, House, Mrs Lewin-Harris, Lisgo, Meikle, Mullins, Paul, Prior-Sankey, Miss Priscott, Slattery, Mrs Smith, P Smith, Vail, Watson, Wedderkopp, Mrs Whitmarsh, Williams and Mrs Wilson.

### **1. Apologies**

Councillors Mr Biscoe, Bone, C Cluff, Mrs Cluff, Croad, Garner, C Hill, Mrs Marie Hill, Lees, Leighton, Phillips and Weston.

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

Councillors Prior-Sankey, Paul, Govier and Henley all declared personal interests as Members of Somerset County Council. Councillor Hall declared a personal interest as a BT pension holder and Councillors Mrs Smith and Mrs Marcia Hill both declared personal interests as employees of Somerset County Council.

### **3. Improving Services in Somerset**

Following the meeting of the Executive, that had taken place immediately preceding this meeting of the Council, Councillor Williams drew attention to the recommendations that had been made by the Executive.

### **4. Exclusion of Press and Public**

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item because of the likelihood that exempt information would otherwise be disclosed relating to Clause 7 of Schedule 12(a) of the Local Government Act 1972.

### **5. Improving Services in Somerset**

Having considered the recommendations made by the Executive, on the motion of Councillor Williams, seconded by Councillor Hall, it was RESOLVED:

- (1) To accept the variant A/B bid by IBM for the purposes of allowing further clarification, evaluation and negotiation with a view to the Council entering into a contract at the conclusion of the process (subject to due diligence), value for money and suitability for

arrangements for transition. This effectively appointed IBM as preferred bidder to the Council subject to recommendation 4 below.

- (2) To agree that, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder (Resources), the Strategic Director (Shirlene Adam) be authorised to take forward such negotiations as may be necessary with IBM to enable the contract to be finalised.
- (3) To agree that, on satisfactory conclusion of the further negotiations which may be necessary and in consultation with the Portfolio Holder (Resources), the Strategic Director (Shirlene Adam) would bring details of the commercial option to the Executive for final approval prior to contract signature.
- (4) To agree that, in the event of the Council being unable to reach an acceptable commercial framework agreement with IBM within eight weeks, the Strategic Director (Shirlene Adam), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder (Resources), may jointly, with Somerset County Council, revise the priorities and expectations of its requirements and seek to reengage with all three bidders on the basis of best and final offer. This would ensure the continuance of a commercially competitive process.
- (5) To agree that, subject to Avon and Somerset Police Authority decisions on 21 March 2007, a joint negotiating team drawn from representatives of the three authorities be formed to pursue the negotiations outlined above.
- (6) To agree that the Strategic Director (Shirlene Adam), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder (Resources), be authorised to enter into such interim agreements with the preferred bidder as she considered appropriate in order to further the objectives of the ISiS Project and facilitate the finalisation of the contract and commencement of the partnership with the preferred bidder.

(The meeting ended at 9.10 pm.)

## **COUNCIL MEETING 17 APRIL 2007**

### **GAMBLING FEES**

#### **RECOMMENDATION FROM COUNCILLOR MRS BRADLEY, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR, ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

From 21 May 2007 the Council will be accepting applications for gambling premises. In order to do this we have to decide what fees to charge these premises. Unfortunately the Regulations and method of calculating the fees have only recently become available.

The Somerset Authorities have agreed that each Council should set the same level of fees. The proposed fees are attached to this report. In order to comply with the necessary legislation the fees have to be agreed by Council.

It is therefore RECOMMENDED that Council agree to the scale of fees set out in the attached Appendix.

Councillor Mrs Dilly Bradley  
Executive Councillor  
Environmental Services



## Applications

	New Regional Casino	New Large Casino	New Small Casino	Bingo	Betting – not on course	Track Betting (on course)	Adult Gaming Centre	Family Entertainment Centre
<b>Transition Fast Track</b>	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Max. Permitted	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300
Suggested fee	<b>255</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>255</b>
<b>Transition – non Fast Track</b>	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Max. Permitted				1750	1500	1250	1000	1000
Suggested fee				<b>1500</b>	<b>1275</b>	<b>1100</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>850</b>
<b>New Application</b>	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Max. Permitted	15000	10000	8000	3500	3000	2500	2000	2000
Suggested fee	<b>12750</b>	<b>8500</b>	<b>6800</b>	<b>2975</b>	<b>2550</b>	<b>2125</b>	<b>1700</b>	<b>1700</b>
<b>New Application - with Provisional Statement</b>	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Max. Permitted	8000	5000	3000	1200	1200	950	1200	950
Suggested fee	<b>6800</b>	<b>4250</b>	<b>2550</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>400</b>
<b>Provisional Statement</b>	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Max. Permitted	15000	10000	8000	3500	3000	2500	2000	2000
Suggested fee	<b>12750</b>	<b>8500</b>	<b>6800</b>	<b>2975</b>	<b>2550</b>	<b>2125</b>	<b>1700</b>	<b>1700</b>
<b>Transfer</b>	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Max. Permitted	6500	2150	1800	1200	1200	950	1200	950
Suggested fee	<b>5525</b>	<b>1830</b>	<b>1530</b>	<b>1020</b>	<b>1020</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>1020</b>	<b>800</b>
<b>Re-instatement</b>	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Max. Permitted	6500	2150	1800	1200	1200	950	1200	950
Suggested fee	<b>5525</b>	<b>1830</b>	<b>1530</b>	<b>1020</b>	<b>1020</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>1020</b>	<b>800</b>
<b>Variation</b>	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Max. Permitted	7500	5000	4000	1750	1500	1250	1000	1000
Suggested fee	<b>6375</b>	<b>4250</b>	<b>3400</b>	<b>1500</b>	<b>1275</b>	<b>1100</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>850</b>
<b>Annual Fees</b>	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Max. Permitted	15000	10000	5000	1000	600	1000	1000	750
Suggested fee	<b>12750</b>	<b>8500</b>	<b>4250</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>650</b>

## **TAUNTON DEANE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **COUNCIL MEETING – 17 APRIL 2007**

#### **Part 1**

To deal with questions to and receive recommendations to the Council from the Executive

#### **COUNCILLOR WILLIAMS**

##### **Team Somerset and Potential Local Government Re-organisation**

The Executive have given consideration to the Team Somerset Outline Business Case, and associated actions which would enable its further development.

Following the short listing of the proposal submitted by Somerset County Council for the creation of a single unitary council for the whole of Somerset, a 12 week period of 'stakeholder consultation' will now take place. Following stakeholder consultation, the Government will announce those areas that will be restructuring into unitary councils in early July 2007.

Council, at its meeting on 12 December 2006, decided to oppose the unitary bid for the whole county. All other districts in Somerset have also rejected the proposal for a single county unitary.

As a positive alternative to any unitary option, Somerset districts have co-operated to produce a prospectus on how the aims of the White paper could be achieved without structural reform of local government in the County. This enhanced partnership approach, termed 'Team Somerset', received the formal support of Taunton Deane Borough Council and all other Somerset districts in January 2007, with South Somerset voting it as their second preference. The Team Somerset approach did not (and still does not) have the formal support of Somerset County Council.

##### **The Team Somerset Proposal**

The Team Somerset prospectus, previously supported by Council, is a clear 'direction of travel' for local government in Somerset, based on:

- strong leadership at strategic planning level;
- joined up local political engagement and strategic decision making;
- efficiencies through shared services: improved satisfaction and joined up customer access;

- equity of service for Somerset citizens

Since approval by Council, district councils have worked together to further develop the Team Somerset approach, establishing clear proposals that will bring the aspirations of the prospectus into reality. The result is the Team Somerset Outline Business Case, proposing a fresh approach to delivering better outcomes and more efficient services across Somerset within a renewed and re-invigorated system of county, district, town and parish councils. The Outline Business Case is attached as an Appendix to this report .

The proposals in the Team Somerset Outline Business Case build on, and are entirely consistent with, the aspirations of the earlier prospectus document. As such, it has been endorsed by the Leaders and Chief Executives of all Somerset district councils.

The following are the main proposals contained in the Outline Business Case :

#### **Strong, effective and accountable leadership**

- A Team Somerset Board, comprising leaders of all principal local authorities in Somerset.
- Aligned political and management arrangements across all principal authorities, strengthening partnership working across the County.
- A joint strategy unit across Somerset, eliminating duplication on key priority areas whilst recognising and respecting the need for local variation

#### **Neighbourhood flexibility and empowerment**

- A strengthened network of district Local Strategic Partnerships, accountable to the Team Somerset Board and the relevant district council.
- A strong network of Community Partnerships, operating at a sub-district geographical scale,

#### **Value for money and equity**

- A rapid acceleration of shared service and collaborative working across all local government services.

As well as rising to the challenges of the Local Government White Paper, the Team Somerset model provides a robust alternative to a single unitary council

and offers the best and most appropriate solution for the citizens of Somerset. The key benefits featured in the Outline Business Case include:

- Greater voice and influence for citizens and local communities, through enhanced democratic and management arrangements that are flexible and responsive to the needs of Somerset's many different localities.
- Maintenance of existing levels of democratic representation across the County.
- Better services that put the needs of customers first. Service delivery will be socially inclusive; defined and driven by customers needs.
- A stronger voice for Somerset - locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.
- Annual efficiency savings in excess of £22 million from 2012, and almost £8 million within just two years.
- Establishment of proposed new arrangements in their entirety from within existing resources.
- No need for any legislative change or structural reform of local government.

Implementing the Team Somerset Business Case will require further work by all local authorities. Members will be informed at regular intervals of significant progress made.

Also following the short listing of the County wide proposal, local authorities in all affected areas have been encouraged to bring the consultation exercise to the attention of all stakeholders. The Executive feel that to do this effectively, the District Councils in the County should join together to fund a programme of consultation which will possibly include a referendum. Any such exercise would be dependent on all the Districts agreeing to contribute a similar sum to the funding.

It is therefore RECOMMENDED that:

- i) The Team Somerset Outline Business Case, attached as an Appendix, be agreed;
- ii) The Chief Executive and Leader be authorised to take decisions as required for the further development of the Team Somerset Outline Business Case;

- iii) A further report on progress be submitted in August 2007;
- iv) A Supplementary Estimate of £60,000 be made to fund a programme of consultation, possibly including a referendum, subject to all District Councils in Somerset agreeing to contribute a similar sum.

Councillor John Williams

## **COUNCILLOR EDWARDS**

### **Restructure of Housing Service**

Following the decision not to proceed with the Housing Stock Transfer, consideration has been given by the Executive to the reorganisation of the housing service and the consequent redundancies.

Members will remember that the 2007/08 HRA budget included indicative budgets that covered the four years to the Decent Homes target date of 2010.

As part of the budget setting process it has been necessary to find savings of £1.85m per year for each of these years to ensure that Decent Homes could be delivered.

The budget setting report, which went to the January Tenants Forum, Housing Review Panel and Review Board and the February Executive meeting, outlined how these savings would be achieved. This included an outline of a Housing restructure that would save the service some £550,000

We are now recommending cuts in the management and support roles. It is proposed to reduce the management team of the Head and five Service Unit Managers to three SUMs, one of who should be senior to the other two. Further cuts have been made in Asset Management (1 post), Building Management DLO (3 posts) and Housing Strategy (1 post). The impact of these redundancies is to reduce management and support services but at the same time take on new Government initiatives and ensure that we have sufficient operational staff to deliver our services.

In total eight posts have been shed through natural wastage, voluntary redundancy and reorganisation. All staff have been informed of their situation. Additionally eight Deane DLO painters are taking voluntary redundancy. This reorganisation has, however, allowed us to reinstate the

post of Energy Efficiency Officer from 1 May 07, which will give the Council proper focus to this important area of work.

The ongoing savings of these deleted posts equates to £550k per year.

We have now been able to calculate the costs involved in the redundancies. There will be 16 redundancies and the total cost of these is £619k, As far as possible these redundancies have been mitigated through the removal of vacant posts and a total of 4 vacant posts have been deleted from the proposed new establishment.

This restructure is necessary in order for the Council to achieve the savings necessary to deliver Decent Homes. This restructure will enable the Council to make significant savings within the HRA of £550k per annum and this money will be diverted to fund the Decent Homes capital works. The overall payback period of the costs is 1.1 years, however of course this money will not be realised in the HRA until after the Decent Homes deadline. After that period it is anticipated that these monies will be repaid and this will be built into the HRA MTFP.

There will be ongoing costs involved in these redundancies, being the cost of our ongoing contributions to the pension fund. This cost has been calculated as £8,700 p.a. and this cost has been offset against the savings.

As nine of the redundancies will have already taken place in 2006/07 the cost to be paid in that year amounts to £147k with the remaining £472k to be paid in 2007/08. The cost in 2006/07 has been verbally reported to the February Review Board via the Quarterly Joint Performance Report

It is proposed that the costs in the current year are funded from 2006/07 underspends which have been already reported. The costs in 2007/08 will be funded in part from these underspends and in part from the working balance.

The table below shows the impact of the restructure on the forecast working balance of the HRA:

	<b>2006/07 £000</b>	<b>2007/08 £000</b>	<b>2008/09 £000</b>	<b>2009/10 £000</b>	<b>2010/11 £000</b>
Current Balance	1,982	2,321	2,225	1,872	1,413
Budgeted in year surplus/ (deficit)	0	376	(353)	(459)	(588)
Expected Underspend 2006/07	486	0	0	0	0
One off costs of redundancies/pensions etc	(147)	(472)	0	0	0
Revised Forecast Balance	2,321	2,225	1,872	1,413	825
Approximate Amount held per dwelling	£378	£364	£308	£233	£136

It is therefore RECOMMENDED that the proposed restructure of the Housing Service be agreed and a Supplementary Estimate from HRA reserves of £472k to fund one off costs in 2007/08 be made.

Councillor Mark Edwards

## **COUNCILLOR MRS LEWIN-HARRIS**

### **Corporate Strategy 2007-10**

The Corporate Strategy is the Council's principal policy document. It establishes the outcomes that we want to achieve in the community and provides an important lead for budget setting and service planning activities.

We have modelled the Corporate Strategy 2007-10 on last year's Strategy, which was formulated after extensive consultation. This document also received high praise from the Audit Commission inspectors. In refreshing the Strategy, we have considered recent community consultation, seeking views and preferences on future priorities and budget-setting choices. We have also considered feedback from the Audit Commission, Central government guidance and the 'Local Futures' area audit.

The Corporate Strategy has been extensively challenged and scrutinised during its development.

The key areas of change to the Corporate Strategy, resulting from the consultation, feedback, challenge and scrutiny are:

- A new objective on promoting sustainability
- A new objective on developing the Cultural offer of the borough
- A new objective on promoting healthy activities to the wider community
- An increased focus on tackling deprivation (Objective 4)
- An increased focus on reducing antisocial behaviour and the fear of crime (Objective 10 and 11)
- A greater emphasis on the future of partnership working, with specific mention of ISiS and Team Somerset

The Corporate Strategy 2007-10 is outcome-focussed and aligned closely to delivering our stated priorities. It provides a framework for future decisions over budget and resource allocation and reflects national recommended best practise in its design.

It is therefore RECOMMENDED that the Corporate Strategy be adopted.

Councillor Mark Edwards





# Team Somerset: Connecting Communities Outline Business Case



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# I. Introduction

**1.1** The prospectus document *Team Somerset: Connecting Communities* received the formal support of all the District/Borough Councils of Somerset in January 2007. The prospectus is aspirational, outlining a new approach to achieving our joint ambitions for Somerset and meeting the challenges and opportunities of the Local Government White Paper (published in October 2006).

**1.2** This document has been developed as a supplement to our earlier prospectus. It describes in greater detail how we plan to turn our aspirations into reality, proposing a fresh approach to delivering better outcomes and more efficient services across Somerset, within a renewed and reinvigorated system of integrated county, district and parish/town councils.

**1.3** We firmly believe that our programme ***offers the best and most appropriate solution for the citizens of Somerset***, providing a model of excellence that other authorities will wish to follow. We will provide opportunities for citizens and stakeholders to jointly shape and deliver our programme.

**1.4** The main benefits we will deliver as Team Somerset include:

- **Greater local flexibility and empowered communities** - through renewed locality working arrangements that hold local knowledge, intelligence and understanding firmly at their heart. Communities will be further empowered to have a real say on local services, priorities and issues affecting their day-to-day lives. Frontline councillors and staff of all Somerset Councils, with partner agencies, will have greater capacity to focus on and respond flexibly to the different needs of Somerset's many distinct communities. The role of

frontline councillors cannot be understated. Their capacity to tackle local issues, represent their communities and use their local knowledge effectively goes to the very heart of the Local Government White Paper's aspirations of neighbourhood management, community ownership and putting people first. Existing levels of democratic representation will not be diminished under the Team Somerset governance model.

- **Excellent services that put the needs of customers first** - through a rapid acceleration and expansion of collaborative working and reduced duplication across all council services in Somerset. Our service transformation programme will build on the strong foundation of shared service models already in place. ***Somerset citizens will experience excellent value for money, with service performance and costs that compare with the very best in the Country. Team Somerset will achieve annual efficiency savings in excess of £22 million from 2012, and almost £8 million within just two years.***

- **Strong and accountable strategic leadership** - through a joint Board of Somerset's elected leaders. The Team Somerset Board will oversee the delivery of the sustainable community strategy and Local Area Agreement (LAA) outcomes, as well as our broad service transformation programme. This approach to collaborative working will deliver the robust strategic leadership needed to effect genuine place-shaping and community cohesion for communities in Somerset. The Team Somerset Board will also have a major outward focus, ensuring that Somerset's influence is increased regionally, nationally and internationally.

**1.5** Our programme will bring about radical changes to the way that local government currently works in Somerset. We have already

started on our transformation journey, with a number of key shared service projects already under way or about to begin. As part of Team Somerset, authorities will appoint a senior post to sit on a management board, responsible for the wider development and acceleration of our service transformation programme. Similarly, senior level posts from each authority will work together to develop and implement renewed locality working arrangements across Somerset.

**1.6** Our programme can be delivered in its entirety from within existing local government resources across Somerset. Our focus on new

and collaborative ways of working will not require legislative changes and ***will avoid the costly and unnecessary disruption to service delivery that would be caused by any wholesale structural reform of local government in Somerset.***

**1.7** The next section of this business case provides a brief factual profile of Somerset, as the context for our programme. Remaining sections are structured around the aims set out in the Government's invitation to councils to pioneer, as pathfinders, new two-tier models of local government. Supporting information is provided in the five appendices.

## 2. Somerset - A Place of Variety and Distinctiveness

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**2.1** Any system of local government needs to reflect and respond to the nature of the place and communities it serves and represents. Somerset is a place of variety and distinctiveness in many respects:

- Somerset has a diverse inheritance of landscapes and environmental assets, such as the Mendip Hills, Quantock Hills and Blackdown Hills, the Somerset Levels and Moors, Exmoor National Park and over 40 miles of coastline. Our diverse environment and poor communication links between different parts of the County have been major factors shaping the unique identities and characteristics of our communities over the centuries and to this day. Team Somerset's approach is flexible and highly responsive to the challenges faced by our distinct communities, giving them greater voice in Somerset and beyond.
- 28% of Somerset's population lives in the relatively densely populated centres of Taunton, Yeovil and Bridgwater. Market and coastal towns, villages and small hamlets account for the remaining 72% of the population. Many of these communities are remote and isolated, posing

particular challenges in terms of transport, access to services and representation. To illustrate Somerset's transport and access challenges, an east-west journey across the County takes approximately two and a quarter hours by car. It takes a similar time to travel by car from the County Town of Taunton to Birmingham, in the West Midlands. The flexible, joined-up approach of Team Somerset, working within new and established partnerships and alongside local Councillors, will deliver tailored service solutions that get to the heart of local issues. ***Somerset does not have a 'one size fits all' community and Team Somerset will provide solutions that meet needs at a local community level.***

- Generally, quality of life in Somerset is above regional and national averages. However, there are pockets of deprivation right across Somerset that feature highly in national indices. There are 13 super output areas in Somerset (4%) that fall within the most deprived in the country, including one classed in the worst 10%. There are also many challenges associated with rural deprivation that are often less visible on the national radar, because of low population density.

The 1997 Rural Services Survey revealed that 77% of parishes in the South West don't have daily bus services, 46% don't have access to a local school and 83% don't have access to a local doctor. These are typical challenges found within rural communities that need to be addressed through effective partnership working. There is a distinct lack of affordable housing in Somerset, with the average home now costing £209,000, more than 8 times the average annual household income. The affordability ratio ranges from 7.4 times in Mendip to 9 times in West Somerset. Team Somerset will work to provide better solutions by using local knowledge and local commitment, tackling affordable housing and creating a higher wage economy through more effective cross-agency working.

- A recent independent report of the Somerset economy found that “Over the past decade, Somerset's rate of economic activity has continued to grow while national rates have remained static. Somerset's economic activity rate ranks second highest of the South West sub-regions. Into the future, the economy of Somerset is projected to grow and perform fairly well”<sup>1</sup>. This reflects the work being done by economic development teams across the county, however we recognise that collaboration through Team Somerset is needed to further consolidate Somerset's economic growth.

- Somerset's main employment sectors are wholesale and retail trade, manufacturing, health and social work, real estate, education and public

administration. However, the economic composition of each Somerset district varies significantly, bringing often different challenges of regeneration and development. Common challenges being tackled by all include raising the skills profile of the local economy and collectively working to attract greater levels of inward investment into the County (see case study attached as Appendix E)

- Somerset's population is growing and ageing at a faster rate than regional and national averages, presenting particular challenges for support/public services and the wider economy. There are also recent trends of growth in the Black and Minority Ethnic and migrant worker populations. The Local Government White Paper challenges local authorities to create strong, vital and cohesive communities. We believe that Team Somerset, by utilising its many successful existing partnerships and relationships, will further encourage community participation and cohesion.

**2.2** Somerset's communities consistently express a strong affinity for their own unique place and locality within the County. A founding principle of Team Somerset's approach is to maintain and build on the strong sense of place that exists in different localities across the County, whilst delivering the excellent services, better outcomes, clear accountability and value for money that our citizens and communities rightly expect and deserve.

### 3. Strong, Effective and Accountable Strategic Leadership

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**3.1** We recognise the need to fundamentally review the way that we work, to meet the challenges and expectation of our communities and citizens, and deliver national and local outcomes. Our proposed new local governance arrangements for Somerset represent a radical departure from the status quo. These governance arrangements will provide a mix of

strongly connected components that provide strategic leadership and focus at *all* levels, from County wide to local community. Our proposed governance arrangements appear in diagram form as Appendix A. This section describes those aspects of our governance model that will operate at strategic level, across Somerset.

## The Team Somerset Board

**3.2** In our proposed governance model, strong, effective and accountable leadership will rest primarily with the Team Somerset Board. The Board will comprise elected leaders, supported by chief executives from each principal local authority. The Board will:

- Ensure delivery of priority outcomes within the Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement (LAA), formed through the wider forum of the Somerset Local Strategic Partnership.
- Ensure delivery of the Team Somerset shared service transformation programme and the efficiency gains that will accrue from this.
- Be the democratic voice and advocate for Somerset, regionally, nationally and internationally.

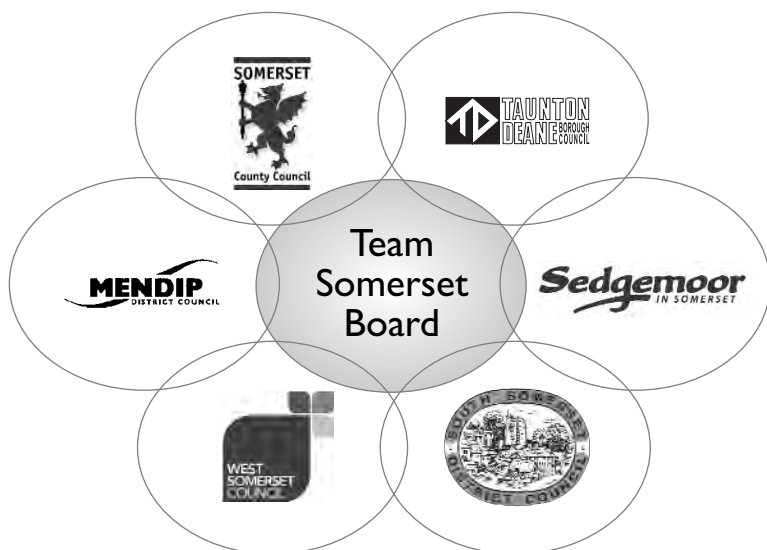
**3.3** Through its activities, the Board will bring together overall delivery of theme and service based outcomes within a framework that is more accountable and coherent than the present joint governance arrangements in Somerset.

**3.4** The Team Somerset Board will be accountable to central government for delivery of LAA outcomes. It will be responsible for directing the new LAA grant monies from Government (no longer ring-fenced to particular LAA 'blocks') to the best possible effect across Somerset. The Board, and other elements of our proposed governance model, will also be subject to regular challenge through the new 'Comprehensive Area Assessment' process, from 2008.

**3.5** The Team Somerset Board will meet in public at locations across the County. It will be accountable to localities through robust area-working arrangements described in greater detail in section 4 of this document. A joint scrutiny committee comprising of elected members from all principal local authorities in Somerset, will be established to strengthen democratic accountability of the Team Somerset Board. In addition, decisions made by the Team Somerset Board will be subject to scrutiny and potential call-in by any principal local authority in Somerset.

**3.6** The Team Somerset Board will be set up in 'shadow' form during 2007 and fully operational by 1 April 2008.

## Strategic Leadership of Team Somerset:



## Team Somerset Board

- Somerset County Council
- Taunton Deane Borough Council
- Sedgemoor District Council
- West Somerset District Council
- Mendip District Council
- South Somerset District Council

## Local Authority Arrangements

**3.7** Our collaborative approach to political and managerial leadership does not end at the Team Somerset Board. We recognise that working arrangements at individual authorities need to be reviewed, and we are committed to making a number of significant changes that are necessary to achieving our ambitious programme.

**3.8** Team Somerset believes that strong democratic arrangements must remain in each principal authority across the County. Political leadership in each authority will be democratically accountable to citizens for the local delivery of priority outcomes in the sustainable community strategy and LAA, and for the delivery of services at levels of performance and cost that compare with the very best councils in the Country. Following the May 2007 local elections, District Councils will work with Somerset County Council to closely align executive portfolio arrangements, to facilitate the timely implementation of our transformation programme. Closely aligned executive arrangements will be fully operational across all Somerset local authorities by April 2008.

**3.9** Frontline Councillors in all Somerset local authorities will play a key role in strengthened overview and scrutiny and locality working arrangements across the County (outlined in section 4).

**3.10** Management arrangements under Team Somerset would see the retention of chief executive and director level posts in each local authority in the short term. It is anticipated that this too will be rationalised over time with a more 'federated' approach with authorities 'sharing' the skills of senior officers. In the short term however, this capacity will be vital in

strengthening engagement, understanding, representation and delivery of services across Somerset's many and varied communities. The needs of our communities deserve strong representation within the locality, county, region and beyond.

**3.11** Reflecting changes to political management arrangements, senior management in each local authority will closely align to facilitate implementation of our programme. Each Somerset local authority will nominate a senior lead officer for transformation, to sit on a team responsible for delivering our service transformation programme. A senior lead officer for localities will also be nominated by each authority, to ensure the delivery of effective locality working across Somerset (see section 4). Lead directors for specific themes across Team Somerset will be nominated where appropriate, to reduce duplication between authorities. Links between the County and District Councils will be strengthened by a nominated County Council director attending each District Council Management Team on a regular basis. ***This will ensure that the combined effort and resources of all authorities are tailored and directed to achieve the best possible outcomes for Somerset's communities.***

**3.12** A county-wide strategy unit will be established during 2007, and will be fully operational by April 2008, as part of Team Somerset, comprising senior officers from each local authority. This unit will be responsible for developing and ensuring the delivery of joint strategies on specific priority themes, creating greater harmonisation and alignment and eliminating duplication between tiers of local government, whilst recognising and respecting the need for local variation.

## 4. Neighbourhood Flexibility and Empowerment

**4.1** In this section, we describe our proposed locality working arrangements across Somerset. These arrangements are also represented in diagram form in Appendix A. Our definition of 'locality' is the geographical scale of a district, and smaller.

**4.2** We are acutely aware that a 'one size fits all' approach to locality working will not be appropriate or desirable for different places and communities in Somerset. Our locality working model therefore provides a broad and common framework that can be applied flexibly to address the varying characteristics, needs and priorities of different communities across the County.

### District Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs)

**4.3** The existing network of district LSPs across Somerset will be strengthened under our proposed governance model. District LSPs will comprise key public, private and voluntary sector partners, convened by the relevant district council. The main duties of district LSPs will include:

- Agreeing the sustainable community strategy for the district, reflecting and informing the Somerset Local Area Agreement and other key strategies.
- Overseeing the local delivery of sustainable community strategy and Local Area Agreement (LAA) outcomes, joining resources as appropriate.
- Promoting greater coherence in partnership working activity, rationalising where appropriate.
- Ensuring that the voice for the district and its communities is heard within the County, region and beyond.

**4.4** LSPs will be accountable both to the Team Somerset Board for delivery of LAA outcomes in the relevant district area, and to the relevant

district council for delivery of the sustainable community strategy and LAA outcomes.

### Community Partnerships

**4.5** A strong network of Community Partnerships forms a critical part of our governance model. Community Partnerships will provide the main forum for councils (including parish and town councils), partner agencies, community groups and citizens to jointly shape the future of neighbourhoods and localities, improving services and outcomes for residents.

**4.6** Community Partnerships will be set up at a geographical level that is smaller than a district, although their precise coverage will vary depending on local circumstances and views. In many cases, Community Partnerships will be a natural extension of locality working arrangements that already exist in different parts of the County. The main responsibilities of Community Partnerships will clearly require agreement with the communities involved, but we suggest that these may include:

- Ensuring that citizens have a real say in shaping the delivery of local services.
- Managing the delivery of the sustainable community strategy and LAA at local level.
- Identifying priorities that need to be included in future revisions of the sustainable community strategy and LAA.
- To challenge and scrutinise the performance and effectiveness of local authorities and partners (e.g. the Police, Health), holding them to account for the delivery of local services and outcomes.

**4.7** *It is important to us that communities are provided with simple and effective ways of engaging with and influencing public agencies.*



***Community Partnerships will provide an opportunity to join up various community engagement and area based initiatives led by different partner agencies, eliminating duplication.*** For example, we are already working with the Avon and Somerset Constabulary to develop Community Partnerships in a way that advances Neighbourhood Policing across the County.

**4.8** With a membership that includes elected frontline councillors, Community Partnerships will form an important part of local authority overview and scrutiny arrangements. In addition to the bullet points set out in section 4.6, Community Partnerships may identify and investigate local community issues, contribute to 'task and finish' reviews on specific topics and

administer 'Community Calls for Action' within the locality.

**4.9** Community Partnerships will feed in to, and be represented on, the relevant district LSP. This will strengthen the link between the outcomes specified in the LAA and sustainable community strategy and ensure their delivery at local level.

**4.10** As mentioned in section 4.6, different models of community engagement are already in place across Somerset. Building on these models, a County-wide network of Community Partnerships will be fully operational by April 2008. By agreement with each Community Partnership, we will seek to devolve as many powers and responsibilities as possible and appropriate.

## 5. Value for Money and Equity

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**5.1** *We are committed to ensuring the delivery of consistently high quality services that represent excellent value for money for all Somerset citizens.*

**5.2** We recognise that some citizens do not necessarily understand who provides local government services, or where to go to make enquiries, seek information and advice about the support that might be available to them.

**5.3** *Our proposal is for a rapid acceleration of shared service and collaborative working models, providing streamlined, efficient and cost effective services to all citizens.* For some services, we believe that a streamlined County-wide delivery arrangement is the most appropriate, while for others we believe that a more local unit of management and delivery, tailored to particular communities' needs, is required.

**5.4** Services where we believe a County-wide delivery arrangement would be most appropriate include all customer contact and corporate support services. We will establish one consistent approach for all customers to

access all County and District Council services by 2010 at the latest. This will encompass the full range of customer service channels, from face-to-face and telephone through to internet and others. Excellent customer service will be underpinned by modern technology and delivered by highly trained and multi-skilled staff.

**5.5** Similarly, corporate support services such as human resources, finance, ICT, procurement and others will be delivered through streamlined County-wide arrangements that encompass the County and all District Councils. In our earlier prospectus document, we described the ISiS (Improving Services in Somerset) project, currently led by Somerset County and Taunton Deane Borough Councils (see also separate case study at Appendix D). ***All Somerset districts have signed a framework agreement that will enable them to procure services from the joint venture company that will emerge from ISiS.*** As part of Team Somerset, all District Councils remain committed to ISiS, subject to approval of a robust business case.

**5.6** There are other services where we believe a more localised management arrangement is more appropriate, such as 'street-scene', regulatory and planning services. Strong local management arrangements will provide greater capacity for customers and citizens to engage with and influence the design and delivery of local services. In all services that are managed and delivered locally, opportunities for greater efficiency through common business processes and joint procurement across the County will be realised.

**5.7** Details of shared service proposals, and efficiency gains accruing from these, are outlined in Appendix B. The case studies

attached as Appendices C - F demonstrate the strong track record that we are building from in Somerset.

**5.8** Through our programme of shared services, we will achieve efficiency savings in excess of £22 million from 2012 onwards. In the same timescale, citizens across Somerset will experience excellent value for money, with service performance and costs that are comparable with the very best in the Country.

**5.9** The summary table below provides a brief overview of the efficiency savings arising from different aspects of our programme:

#### Efficiency Savings Arising from Team Somerset

Savings Area(s)	2008/09 £'000,s	2009/10 £'000,s	2010/11 £'000,s	2011/12 £'000,s	2012/13 £'000,s	Total £'000,s
Cost of democracy	94	94	94	94	94	<b>470</b>
Management savings	305	914	1,218	1,218	1,218	<b>4,872</b>
Staff savings in areas of identified duplication	859	2,147	4,295	5,726	5,726	<b>18,753</b>
Staff savings – support services	985	4,270	6,405	8,540	8,540	<b>28,740</b>
Accommodation	-	-	3,249	4,922	4,922	<b>13,093</b>
ICT (non-staff)	-	-	433	866	866	<b>2,165</b>
Procurement	-	300	400	450	450	<b>1,600</b>
Financial saving	-	-	-	-	426	<b>426</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,242</b>	<b>7,725</b>	<b>16,093</b>	<b>21,816</b>	<b>22,242</b>	<b>70,118</b>

## 6. Implementation Timetable

6.1 Many aspects of our programme are already well under way and in some cases completed, as described in our earlier prospectus document and the case studies

attached to this document.

A summary timetable of key activities from now onwards is provided in the timetable below:

### Implementation Timetable

Activity	Deadline
<b>Strong, Effective and Accountable Leadership</b>	
Service Transformation Management Team established	Sept 2007
Team Somerset Board established, together with other key aspects of Team Somerset Governance (see Appendix A)	April 2008
Aligned leadership portfolios across all Somerset local authorities.	April 2008
Aligned management arrangements in place across all Somerset local authorities.	April 2008
County wide strategy unit established	April 2008
Establishment of one Crime and Disorder Partnership for Somerset West, coinciding with the Police Basic Command Unit (BCU) area.	April 2008
<b>Neighbourhood Flexibility and Empowerment</b>	
Roles and membership of County and district LSPs reviewed and aligned as appropriate	April 2008
Community Partnerships model fully operational across Somerset.	April 2008
<b>Value for Money and Equity</b>	
One consistent approach across Somerset for all customers to access all County and District Council services	April 2010
Shared Service Transformation Programme delivered	See Appendix B

## 7. Conclusion

**7.1** We believe that the communities and citizens of Somerset deserve a quality of life and standards of service that are second to none. We also recognise that the current local government arrangements in Somerset can work more effectively - radical change is necessary to meet the demands and expectations of citizens and the Government, as well as our own ambitions for Somerset and its communities.

**7.2** We believe passionately that Team Somerset's approach is the best and most appropriate governance model for the County, now and into the future. We believe that the different needs and priorities of our communities require a blend of governance arrangements and service delivery approaches that are able to represent Somerset on a regional and national level on the one hand, yet engage and respond strongly and flexibly to local citizens on the other.

**7.3** The benefits of our approach will include:

- Greater voice and influence for citizens and local communities, through enhanced democratic and management arrangements that are flexible and responsive to the needs of Somerset's many different localities. Existing levels of democratic representation will not be diminished under the Team Somerset governance model.

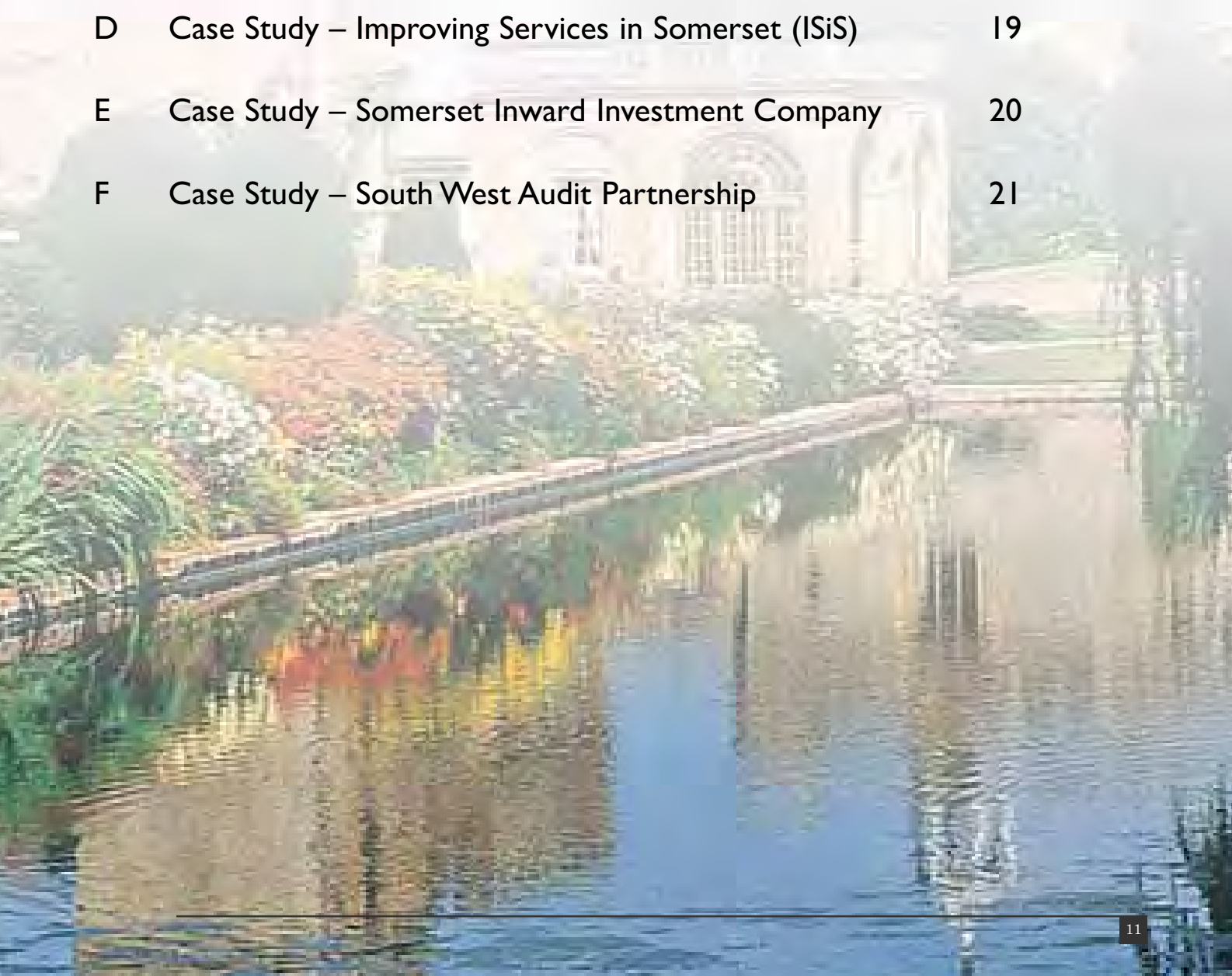
- Better services that put the needs of customers first. Service delivery will be socially inclusive; defined and driven by customers needs. Our aspiration is for overall customer satisfaction and performance levels to be in the top quartile nationally, from 2011.
- A stronger voice for Somerset - locally, regionally, nationally and internationally
- Annual efficiency savings in excess of £22 million from 2012.
- Establishment of our proposed new arrangements in their entirety from within existing resources.
- No need for any legislative change or disruptive structural reform.

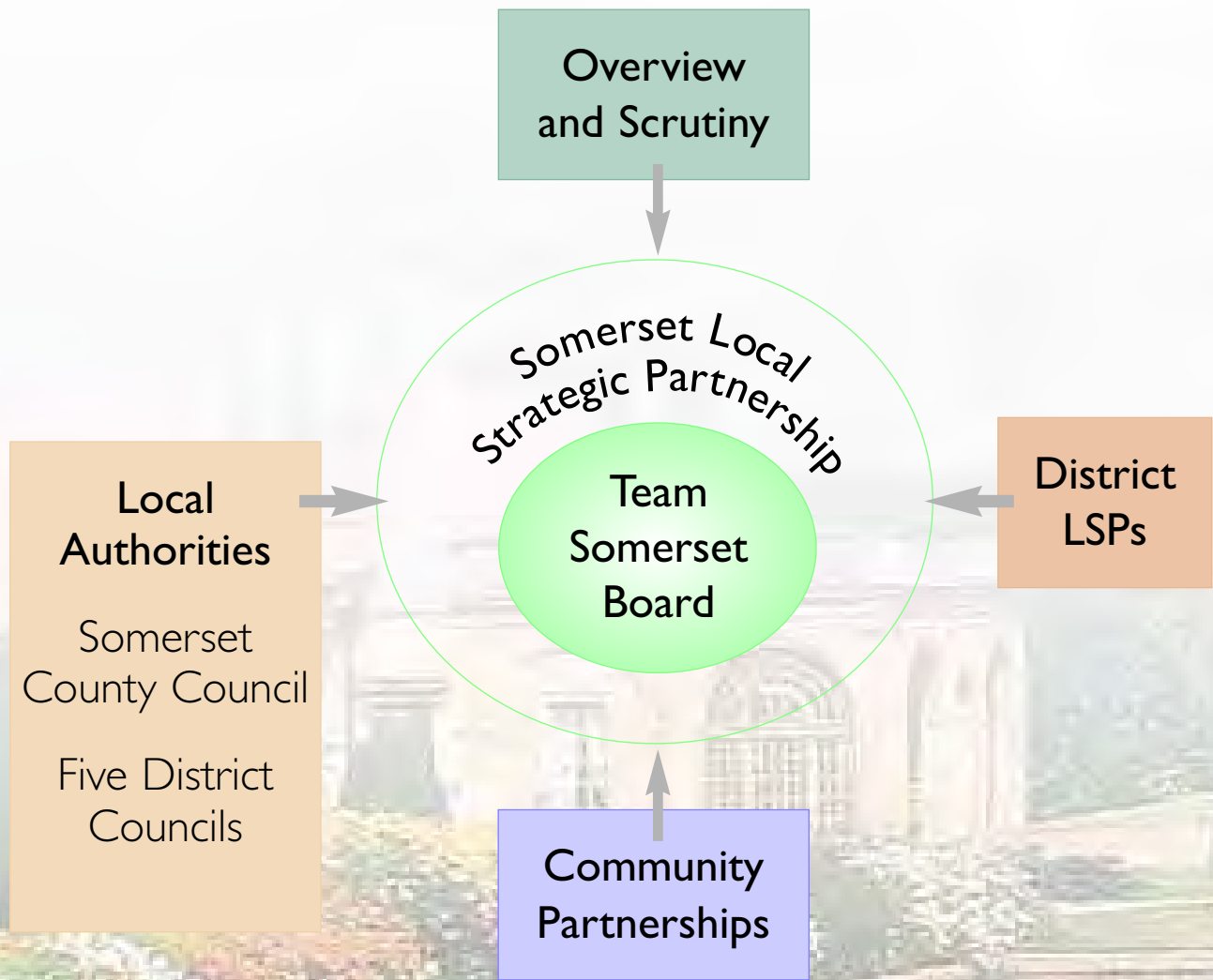
**7.4** We are committed to maintaining effective dialogue with communities and partners, ensuring at all times that we have the broad support of those we are proud to serve and represent.



## Appendices

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## Team Somerset - Shared Service Proposals

Ref.	Service Area	Team Somerset Proposal	Key Features/Benefits	Projected Annual Savings (£'000s)	Implementation from:
1	<b>Regulatory:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental Health</li> <li>• Licensing</li> <li>• Trading Standards*</li> </ul>	Somerset Regulatory Services Partnership, comprising single management structure for Somerset, with strong local delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross disciplinary working</li> <li>• Common ICT platform</li> <li>• Common staff terms and conditions and recruitment/retention policies</li> <li>• Consistent standards of enforcement across Somerset</li> <li>• Economies of scale through common ICT platform and business process re-engineering (BPR)</li> <li>• Top quartile service standards across Somerset</li> <li>• Emphasis on home working</li> <li>• Reduction in CO2 emissions</li> </ul>	369	2008
2	<b>Planning and Building Control:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning Control</li> <li>• Building Control</li> <li>• Highways planning*</li> <li>• Specialist advisory services* (eg ecology, archaeology, landscape and listed buildings.</li> </ul>	Two planning and building control teams in East and West of Somerset, with one manager for each team. or: Outsourcing of planning and building control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tailoring of services to local character and circumstances</li> <li>• Economies of scale through common ICT platform and BPR</li> <li>• Common staff terms and conditions and recruitment/retention policies</li> <li>• Staff re-deployment between teams.</li> <li>• Top quartile service standards across Somerset</li> <li>• Emphasis on home working</li> <li>• Reduction in CO2 emissions</li> </ul>	536	2008

## Team Somerset - Shared Service Proposals

Ref.	Service Area	Team Somerset Proposal	Key Features/Benefits	Projected Annual Savings (£'000s)	Implementation from:
		services (see main body of Business Case)			
3	<b>Street Scene:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Street cleansing</li> <li>Ground maintenance</li> <li>Litter and fly-tipping</li> <li>Graffiti</li> <li>CCTV</li> <li>Abandoned vehicles</li> <li>Car parking &amp; enforcement</li> <li>Community/park wardens</li> </ul>	Five district-based teams across Somerset, each with a manager.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>County-wide joint contracts for street cleansing, Grounds maintenance, CCTV and removal of abandoned vehicles</li> <li>Strong local presence - public service ambassadors</li> <li>Cross disciplinary working</li> <li>Community engagement</li> </ul>	1,481	2008
4	<b>Corporate Support and Transactional:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revenues and benefits</li> <li>ICT</li> <li>Design and Print/Postal Services</li> <li>Finance</li> <li>Human Resources</li> <li>Joint Procurement (works, services and goods)</li> <li>Property</li> <li>Single Customer Contact Strategy</li> <li>Legal (not in scope of ISIS)</li> </ul>	All Somerset authorities have signed up to the framework agreement to participate in a new joint venture company, to be established in 2007 to deliver support services to public sector bodies in Somerset and beyond.	<p>See separate case study on the ISIS ("Improving Services in Somerset") Project.</p> <p>Every principal authority in the County is committed to joining ISIS at the earliest opportunity subject to agreement of a detailed business case</p>	11,531 <sup>2</sup>	2008
5	<b>Audit:</b>	SCC to join the	See case study	-	2007



## Team Somerset - Shared Service Proposals

Ref.	Service Area	Team Somerset Proposal	Key Features/Benefits	Projected Annual Savings (£'000s)	Implementation from:
		SW Audit Partnership			
6	<b>Joint Strategy</b> eg: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic development</li> <li>Procurement</li> <li>Culture</li> <li>Customer Contact</li> <li>Strategic Housing</li> <li>Local plan</li> </ul>	Creation of a county wide joint strategy team	Joining up strategies to reduce duplication and generate greater efficiency, consistency and standards of service	180	2008
7	<b>Democratic and Governance:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Single electoral services unit</li> </ul>	Creation of a single electoral services unit	Reduced duplication	94	2007
8	<b>Management Reductions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education</li> <li>Highways</li> <li>Social Services</li> <li>GF Housing</li> <li>Housing benefits</li> <li>Cultural Services</li> <li>Environmental Services</li> <li>Street Cleansing</li> <li>Planning (DC)</li> <li>Fire Services</li> <li>Central Services</li> <li>Management Teams</li> </ul>	Reduction in management through more collaborative working		1,218	2008
9	<b>Accommodation and new</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More efficient use of assets.</li> </ul>	5,348	2010

## Team Somerset - Shared Service Proposals

Ref.	Service Area	Team Somerset Proposal	Key Features/Benefits	Projected Annual Savings (£'000s)	Implementation from:
	<b>ways of working:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced staff numbers</li> <li>• Home working</li> <li>• Asset Disposal</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CO2 reduction through more efficient travel patterns and home working</li> </ul>		
10	Reduced duplication in front line service delivery		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced duplication</li> <li>• Greater efficiency and value for money</li> </ul>	1,485	2008
<b>TOTAL (£'000s)</b>				<b>22,242</b>	

The Somerset Waste Partnership is an excellent example of collaborative two-tier working in Somerset, delivering improved services and greater efficiency without any loss of local democracy.

### **The Challenge**

The EU Landfill Directive and the National Waste Strategy 2000 required local authorities to significantly reduce landfill and to improve waste recycling. This was enforced by the introduction of the Landfill Tax and Statutory Recycling Targets. Furthermore, local surveys reveal that Waste Management and Recycling is consistently a top priority for the residents of Somerset.

The Challenge across Somerset was for the six Councils to work collaboratively to radically improve recycling services, reduce landfill, increase recycling rates and to reduce costs.

### **How we addressed the challenge**

The Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP) was formed in 1992 and is made up of the County Council and five District Councils in Somerset. In 2002 the SWP completed a joint Best Value Review of waste services with an improvement plan to significantly improve the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of waste services throughout Somerset. The five District Councils then wrote a joint specification to procure a Kerbside Recycling Service; the contract was awarded and commenced in October 2002. This joint approach has resulted in economies of scale for all five District Councils, along with much improved collection and separation of waste. Additionally, the County Council has invested in its household waste recycling centres to more effectively recycle household waste.

Since 2004/05 the SWP, with the support of Defra, has worked collaboratively to integrate

the waste disposal and collection functions across Somerset through the creation of a new arms length organisation, the Somerset Waste Board (SWB), to manage all the municipal waste functions. This mini local government reorganisation includes the procurement of a county wide waste collection contract for all household waste and recycling materials. The complex procurement involves joint planning, sharing resources and skills to deliver a key service that is used, every week, by the half million citizens of Somerset. The creation of the SWB will save the five Somerset Districts around 10% of their current waste and recycling costs.

In addition to these substantial savings, we are constructing a link between the County Council as waste disposal authority and Districts as waste collection authorities to manage the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS). This vertical and horizontal service integration enables the SWP to provide excellent waste collection services while enabling the County Council to minimise the financial risk of LATS to taxpayers and maximise the potential financial benefit.

This investment in improved collection regimes will minimise biodegradable waste going to landfill with the benefit of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the need for future waste treatment facilities. Our collaborative working is creating a win-win situation for both tiers of local government in Somerset and most of all for the communities we serve.

The SWP is currently finalising the budget pooling arrangement for the funding of the new waste body. The pooled budget will total circa £30million per annum, which in itself illustrates the level of trust and mature approach to collaborative working that exists in Somerset.

The SWP's collaborative working is a pathfinder project; we are going further than any other successful waste partnerships that exist in England. Defra recognise the cutting edge nature of this work and have made a significant contribution to our consideration of the appropriate legal form for the SWB. The approach that is being endorsed by the partner authorities is to create a new Joint Waste Authority. In January 2007, the government announced new powers through a Local Government Bill that will support the creation of joint waste authorities in two tier areas. Our aim will be to have the new Joint Waste Board established by 2009/10. In the meantime all authorities have agreed to establish the SWB as a Joint Committee, commencing in September 2007, which will be responsible via a newly formed centralised client team for both the new collection contract (October 07) and the disposal contract.

## **Outcomes**

Somerset is now one of the leading areas in the UK with regard to municipal waste management and our approach is recognised as a pathfinder project.

Our residents now enjoy a comprehensive recycling service both on their doorstep and at recycling sites and this is set to improve further once the Joint Waste Authority is in operation.

- 40.4% of all Household Waste was recycled in 2005/06
- 72% of waste entering Household Waste Recycling Centres was recycled
- The best performing site (in Bridgwater) recycled 82% of household waste
- The Waste Education Team have now made over 1000 visits to schools to promote recycling and composting
- The new Joint Waste Authority should realise savings of 10% of the current waste and recycling costs across the five District Councils
- The Joint Waste Authority will be in an excellent position to take advantage of the flexibilities of trading, banking and borrowing allowances under the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS) in the most cost effective way

ISiS offers a gold-plated opportunity for Somerset authorities to achieve enormous efficiencies and improvements for our transactional and back office services while allowing us to focus on strengthening strategic leadership, place shaping and community cohesiveness to improve the quality of life for Somerset citizens.

All of the Somerset Districts recognise the value of ISiS and have signed the Framework Agreement to join the partnership in principle, as part of the Team Somerset proposal.

### The Challenge

Local councils face increasing budgetary pressures, a requirement to make savings, efficiencies and service transformation through the Gershon agenda and rising expectations from customers. Clearly a radical rethink is required to deliver services in a better and more efficient way across the county.

We believe that working in partnership with other Somerset Councils is the only way to deliver the good value and quality of service our customers deserve.

The ISiS vision was to transform the founder partners, Somerset County Council, Taunton Deane Borough Council and potentially the Avon and Somerset Police, into strikingly modern and progressive organisations capable of delivering high quality local services across Somerset through excellence in customer experience. The proposal was designed specifically to admit other public authorities in the region.

### How we addressed the Challenge

After much consideration between the founder partners, it was agreed to form a Joint Venture Company with the private sector to deliver

transactional and back office services for the founding organisations. The programme to deliver this strategic partnership was named ISiS - Improving Services in Somerset.

We advertised across Europe for a private sector partner and received an overwhelming response. In April 2006, we short-listed three companies: BT, Capita and IBM.

We specified six objectives for the ISiS programme:

- To improve access to and delivery of customer-facing services
- To modernise, reduce the cost of and improve corporate, transactional and support services
- To help modernise and transform the overall workings of the Councils
- To invest in new world class technologies to improve productivity
- To create an excellent working environment and sustainable employment for staff
- To generate economic development by a partner willing to invest in Somerset

### Outcomes

- We plan to appoint a preferred private sector bidder for a ten years plus ISiS Joint Venture partnership later in March 2007, with the contract to commence in July 2007
- The three short-listed bids offer enormous benefits to the county including tens of millions of pounds in efficiencies and savings, enormous economic regeneration, improved service delivery and customer service standards and better access to customers
- ISiS will also deliver a raft of other added value initiatives to the region that will benefit a large number of communities
- ISiS will improve a number of key service areas and should elevate them to beacon status within a few years

The Somerset Inward Investment Company is the way forward for Somerset to secure future economic vitality and regeneration, while maintaining existing strong links and support for business partners and local businesses. It will work through strong collaborative partnership across both tiers of Somerset authorities.

### The Challenge

The Somerset economy has been a success story over the past decade, with economic activity growing while national rates have remained static. Our economic activity rate is ranked second highest of the South West Sub Regions and the economy is projected to continue to grow well in the future.

Contrary to these economic facts, there is a problem with the perception of Somerset as a place to do business, which has made it difficult for the local authorities to promote inward investment. The County has no distinctive employment sector, an ageing population and suffers from low wages and low skills when compared nationally. It is a key strand of the Economic Development Strategy at both County and District level that attracting new companies in high skills areas of work will address many of the issues currently being faced within the local economy.

Despite the fact that the Somerset economy has out-performed the region (with an economic activity rate of 84.6% compared to 78.7% nationally and 81.6% regionally), until recently the six Councils have been working separately to attract and support existing businesses and have had no coordinated approach to collaboratively marketing Somerset.

### How we addressed the Challenge

Early meetings between the five District Councils and the County Council made it clear that the most effective means to make Somerset a serious contender for inward investment would be to work collaboratively and form an Inward Investment Company whose primary role was to

market Somerset and its Districts to the business sectors in the Midlands, the M4 Corridor and the South East of England. The Company was formed with the six Somerset Councils, the Regional Development Agency (RDA), business representative organisations and 'champion businesses' (such as Augusta Westland Helicopters). Roles, responsibilities and funding levels have been agreed for the first three years, providing in the region of £300k per annum to seriously tackle the issue. Three members of staff are being appointed to manage the company and deliver the objectives and the organisation will officially commence in April 2007.

The Company has been organised so that it utilises the strengths of the existing organisations (e.g. the District Councils' knowledge of local businesses, local agencies and sites and premises) in a collaborative manner. There are regular meetings between portfolio holder councillors for Economic Development from each Council that ensure political unity, a retained focus on the Economic strand of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) and a continued focus on the aims of the Inward Investment Company. The Company will report to the Somerset Strategic Partnership through the economic leaders group.

### Outcomes:

The Inward Investment Company will commence April 2007 and we are confident of it achieving the following outcomes:

- Positively change the perception of Somerset to business leaders around the country, especially in the South East, the M4 corridor and the midlands, to further enhance the economic position of Somerset
- Have a focus in Somerset on the creative industries sector, especially around communication technologies and aerospace engineering, creating a regional centre of excellence for creative industries and attracting businesses and jobs to the area

- 
- Deliver a smart, co-ordinated marketing campaign to attract new businesses to relocate to the County
  - Increase business relocations into the area by attracting more enquiries and providing more professional coordinated responses and visits
  - Support the expansion of existing businesses across Somerset, including expanding into other districts
  - Utilise existing successful businesses in Somerset to act as ambassadors and engage with other interested organisations
  - Work closely with the Inward Investment function of the new ISIS partner; using their knowledge, ability and technology to further enhance the economic outcomes for Somerset
  - Develop the Inward Investment service to businesses to ensure we are providing the right information and support to best meet their needs
  - Build upon the already identified growth in business across Somerset and ensure we continue to out-perform the regional economy as we have consistently done in the last decade

# Team Somerset: Outline Business Case

## Case Study: South West Audit Partnership (SWAP)

# Appendix F

The South West Audit Partnership is another example of successful collaborative working across the County, providing a win-win solution for all four partner Councils. The remaining two Somerset Councils, which include the County Council, are both negotiating joining the partnership and are currently reviewing the business case.

### The Challenge

All local councils are required by law to provide an internal audit function. The District Councils in Somerset recognized that their internal audit functions were already efficient, but had further potential to improve their working practices and efficiency, by adopting a partnership approach to audit across the County.

The drivers for change included the need to address: improved cost effectiveness; staff recruitment difficulties; the development of specialist audit skills; more flexible shared resources; and the development of best practice and common procedures. By addressing these, the partnership drives up the overall quality of Internal Audit Services available to Somerset Councils.

### How we addressed the Challenge

A number of 'joint audits' were trialled between Taunton Deane and South Somerset District Councils, which helped build relationships and an understanding of joint working.

In April 2005, the South West Audit Partnership was established using the Joint Committee model. The founding members were Taunton Deane and South Somerset, with Mendip and West Somerset both joining six months later.

The model allowed for equal governance of the partnership, overseen by a board of members and Section 151 officers. Allocation of resources was agreed to be proportional, based

on the size of the financial contributions from the respective authorities. The management of the new partnership was scaled down from four Chief External Auditors to a Head of internal Audit and two Group Auditors.

The two remaining Councils in Somerset, Sedgemoor and Somerset County Council, are both in the process of negotiating to join the partnership and the details of this are being worked up.

### Outcomes:

This partnership approach to delivering audit services has already provided many benefits to the partners:

- Significant efficiency improvements by providing an expanded and more comprehensive service, with numerous benefits, for the same costs
- The recruitment of a specialist computer auditor has led to more robust audits across the County, mitigating IT risks faced by the partner Councils.
- More flexible staffing to meet audit requirements. This has already proved useful when two auditors at South Somerset Council went on maternity leave and the partnership was able to cover this without additional recruitment.
- The scope of audits has been widened from traditional financial systems to include other non-financial areas that have a greater impact on the achievement of the Councils' corporate priorities. Recent reviews include Customer Services, Environmental Protection and Corporate governance, and there is now audit capacity to review risk management and health and safety. This also has the benefit of job enrichment for the audit staff.
- Acquired learning through identifying and sharing best practice is leading to more standardised working procedures across all the councils, which in turn, is improving systems across the range of council services.



# Team Somerset: Outline Business Case

## Appendix F


### Case Study: South West Audit Partnership (SWAP)

- The audit partnership effectively promotes further partnership working between the Somerset Councils, by signposting examples of best practice at other Councils (e.g. standardised procedural guides, risk management processes and policies) reducing the replication of work and delivering real process improvements.
- This greater assurance, increased quality of audit services and added value is being provided for the same resources. As the partnership expands, further efficiencies and financial savings will be realised.



If you have any comments or require further information concerning this document please contact:

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#### Bengali

যদি এই দলিলপত্রের কোন তথ্য আপনার অন্য কোন ভাষায় অনুবাদ করে প্রয়োজন হয়, বা ব্রেল, বড়ো ছাপার অক্ষর, অডিও-টেপ বা সিডিতে প্রয়োজন হয়, তাহলে আমাদের টেলিফোন করুন এই নম্বরে : 01823 356499  
বা অথবা ই-মেল করুন : [r.james@tauntondeane.gov.uk](mailto:r.james@tauntondeane.gov.uk)

#### Chinese

如果你需要這文件內的任何資料翻譯成另一語言或盲人凸字,大號字,聲帶,或光碟,請致電我們,電話 01823 356499  
或電郵 [r.james@tauntondeane.gov.uk](mailto:r.james@tauntondeane.gov.uk)

#### Hindi

अगर आप इस दस्तावेज़ में प्रस्तुत किसी भी जानकारी का अनुवाद दूसरी भाषाओं या ब्रेल, बड़े अक्षरों वाली छपाई, ऑडियो टेप, या सीडी में चाहते हैं, तो कृपया हमें इस नंबर पर फ़ोन कीजिये  
01823 356499  
या यहाँ ईमेल कीजिये [r.james@tauntondeane.gov.uk](mailto:r.james@tauntondeane.gov.uk)

#### Portuguese

Se desejar a tradução de alguma parte deste documento para um outro idioma ou em Braille, letras grandes, cassete de áudio ou CD, contacte-nos pelo telefone 01823 356499 ou pelo endereço de correio electrónico [r.james@tauntondeane.gov.uk](mailto:r.james@tauntondeane.gov.uk)



**TAUNTON DEANE BOROUGH  
COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE STRATEGY**

**2007-2010**

# **CORPORATE STRATEGY 2007-10**

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# **CORPORATE STRATEGY 2007-10**

## **FOREWORD**

Welcome to our new Corporate Strategy for 2007-10.

In September 2004, Taunton Deane Borough Council was rated an 'excellent' authority by the Audit Commission. Last year they assessed us on our use of resources and value for money and we were again judged as high performing, retaining our place amongst the very best councils in the country. Although proud of this recognition, we are not resting on our laurels. We need to ensure that we remain in touch and responsive to the changing needs and pressures we face as a community into the future.

In this Corporate Strategy we set out clearly what kind of organisation we want to be and introduce a range of measurable ambitions to improve local quality of life and make a positive difference in our communities.

In developing our Corporate Strategy, we have consulted residents and listened carefully to their views about local priorities. We have also taken account of statistical trends in the area and the requirements of the Government and other national bodies. Our Corporate Strategy does not attempt to cover everything that we do, or intend to do, as a local authority. However the priorities and ambitions established in this document will provide the main foundation for future choices about local services and the setting of budgets. We will publish results in our Annual Report, produced in late June each year.

This year we will embark on our Improving Services in Somerset (ISiS) partnership with IBM, Somerset County Council and potentially the Avon and Somerset Police. This partnership will modernise and reduce the cost of many of our services as well as improve access to and delivery of customer-facing services and deliver longer term benefits, such as economic development in the borough.

Team Somerset is the other exciting partnership we are developing. This is a collaborative partnership between all the Somerset District Councils to offer strong and accountable leadership across the County, excellent service quality and value for money and to give communities a greater say in services provided. Team Somerset is expected to be delivered within existing resources and to achieve annual efficiency savings across the County of £22m from 2012.

We recognise that our ambitions are challenging and that we cannot achieve them alone. We will work closely with local residents and partner agencies to ensure success.

Our staff and elected members are committed to delivering this Strategy and we commend it to you.

***Signed Cllr Williams & P James***

## **PURPOSE OF THE CORPORATE STRATEGY**

Our Corporate Strategy is intended for our staff, councillors, residents and partners. It has three main aims:

- To establish the Council's overall Vision and priorities for the area and how we will deliver these
- To give a clear lead for service planning activities and budget setting decisions
- To guide our dealings with partners and the community.



# VISION, BUSINESS PRINCIPLES AND CORE VALUES

## OUR VISION

Our Vision is:

**To be a high performing Council, working in partnership to create a good quality of life for all Taunton Deane residents.**

## OUR BUSINESS PRINCIPLES

We have established four essential principles to support our Vision and help make it happen:

**Excellent services** – ensuring the delivery of accessible, high quality services that provide good value for money.

**Customer driven** – putting the needs of individual customers at the heart of all that we do.

**Local focus** – making a positive difference to quality of life in communities across Taunton Deane

**A dynamic organisation** – innovative, forward-looking and focused on results

## CORE VALUES

We have developed a set of Core Values with our staff and Councillors. These reflect our fundamental beliefs as an organisation and will guide how we deal with our staff, customers and partners. Our Core Values are:

**Integrity** – we will be honest, do what is right and stick to it.

**Fairness** – we will consistently treat everyone equally, respecting their individual needs and abilities

**Respect** – we will always show respect for everyone

**Trust** – we will show trust and confidence in our staff and members

## **CORPORATE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES AND KEY ACTIVITIES**

**PLEASE REFER TO AIMS AND OBJECTIVES (ATTACHED AS APPENDIX )**

### **PORTFOLIO HOLDERS AND DIRECTORS**

#### **Portfolios**

Leader of the Council  
Leisure, Arts and Culture  
Economic Development, Property and Tourism  
Planning Policy and Transportation  
Community Leadership  
Environmental Services  
Corporate Resources  
Housing Services  
Communications

#### **Councillor**

Councillor John Williams  
Councillor John Clark  
Councillor Norman Cavill  
Councillor Cliff Bishop  
Councillor Joanna Lewin-Harris  
Councillor Dorothea Bradley  
Councillor Terry Hall  
Councillor Mark Edwards  
Councillor Gwyneth Leighton

### **Directors – Service Block Responsibility**

#### **Service Block**

Environment and Leisure  
Development  
Policy and Performance / Corporate Services  
Housing

#### **Director**

Brendan Cleere  
Joy Wishlade  
Kevin Toller  
Shirlene Adam

#### **Directors – Area Responsibility**

Taunton and Area  
Wiveliscombe and Quantocks  
Blackdown and Levels  
Wellington and Area

#### **Director**

Brendan Cleere  
Joy Wishlade  
Kevin Toller  
Shirlene Adam

## Contributing to Wider Priorities and Strategies

Corporate Priority	LSP (Four LSP Priorities)				LAA	Community Strategy	National Shared Priorities					Other Key Strategies	
	Safer Communities	Stronger Economy / Deprivation	Sharing Information	Reducing Inequalities			Safer and Stronger Communities	Quality of life for the vulnerable	Transport needs	Healthier Communities	Economic Vitality		Local Environment
<b>ECONOMY</b> (Objectives 1 to 5)		✓		✓	✓	✓					✓		A, B, C, D, E, F, G, T, Y
<b>TRANSPORT</b> (Objectives 6 to 7)						✓			✓				A, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, T, Y
<b>CRIME</b> (Objectives 8 to 11)	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			L, M, N, T, Y
<b>HEALTHY LIVING</b> (Objectives 12 to 14)		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			E, F, G, O, P, Q, T, Y
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b> (Objectives 15 to 17)						✓						✓	R, S, T, Y
<b>DELIVERY</b> (Objectives 18 to 20)			✓	✓					✓				T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z, AA

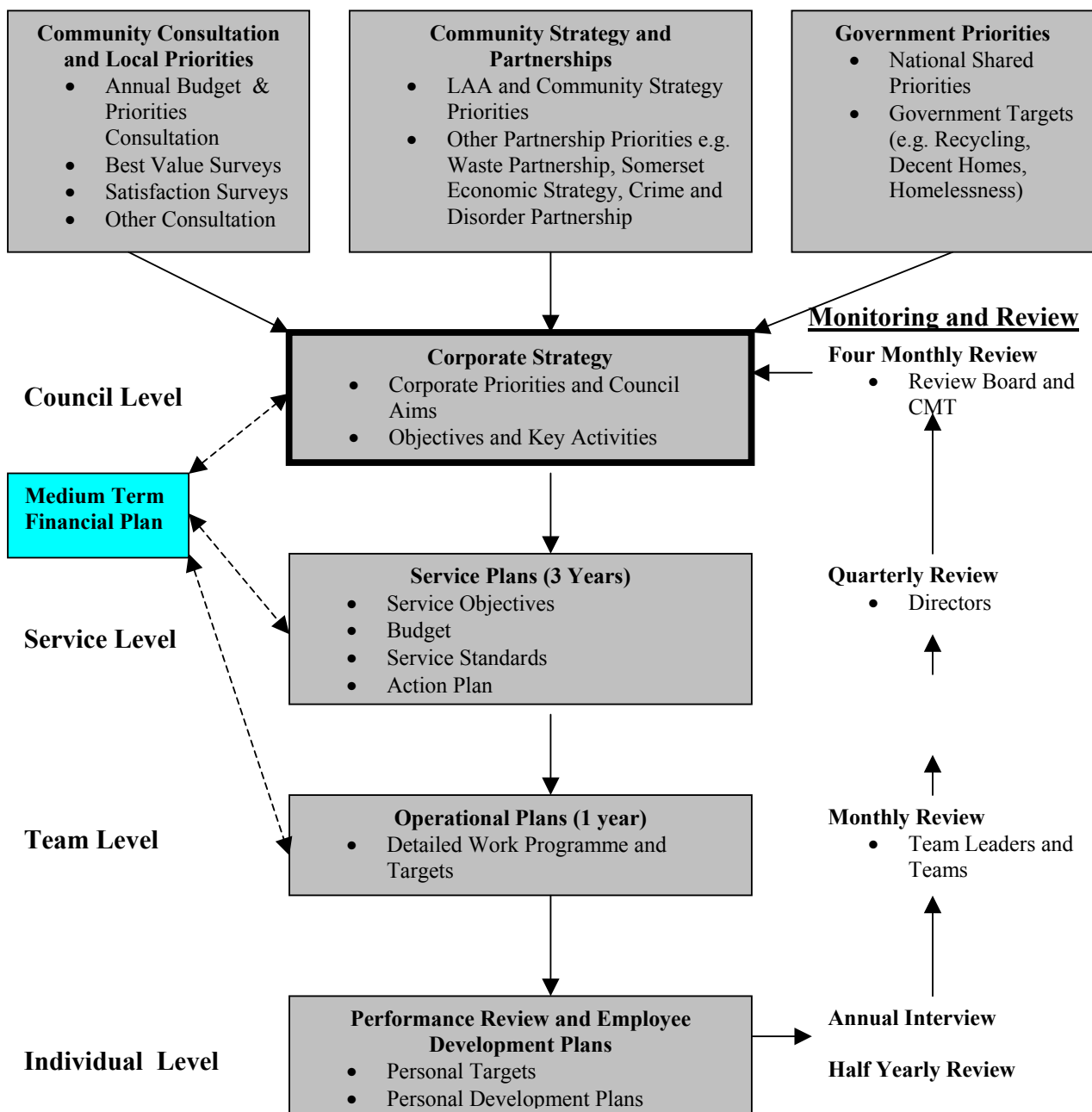
## **Key to ‘Other Key Strategies’ that link to Corporate Strategy Objectives**

- A. The Vision for Taunton
- B. Economic Development and Tourism Strategy
- C. Somerset Economic Strategy
- D. Town Centre Area Action Plan
- E. Regional Spatial Strategy
- F. Taunton Deane Local Development Framework
- G. Taunton Deane Local Plan
- H. Local Transport Plan 2
- I. Atkins Car Park Strategy
- J. Traffic Congestion Protocol
- K. Taunton Deane Travel Plan
- L. Somerset Crime Reduction and Drug Strategy 2005-2008
- M. Taunton Deane Crime and Disorder Reduction Audit 2004
- N. Taunton Deane Licensing Policy
- O. Housing Strategy
- P. Planning Out Homelessness Strategy
- Q. ARK Housing Needs Report
- R. Somerset Waste Strategy
- S. Green Spaces Strategy
- T. ISIS partnership contract (to be developed)
- U. Risk Management Strategy
- V. Customer Access Strategy
- W. Medium Term Financial Strategy
- X. Race Equality Scheme
- Y. Team Somerset Business Case
- Z. Procurement Strategy
- AA. Communications Strategy

## How we deliver the Corporate Strategy

The Corporate Strategy is established through annual priorities consultation, consideration of government and local priorities and the community strategy. The Corporate Strategy then informs service planning, the Medium Term Financial Plan, budget setting and service delivery (through Service Plans, operational plans and staff appraisals.) The link from community consultation right through to staff delivery is often referred to as 'The Golden Thread.' The whole process has a feed-back cycle built in to ensure effective performance management and delivery. This is illustrated below:

### Managing performance at each level of the organisation



## **How ISiS will help us deliver our Corporate Priorities**

In March 2006, our council, along with Somerset County Council appointed IBM as the Preferred Bidder to join us in setting up a unique Joint Venture Partnership called ISiS.

ISiS (Improving Services in Somerset) will be based in Taunton and will deliver a range of support and customer services, currently provided in-house. This will enable the delivery of efficiency savings for both councils and allow better investment in front line services.

One of the key aims of the Partnership is to significantly improve the way in which the public can access and receive council services. It also aims to create an improved working environment and more sustainable employment position for the future for staff, as IBM has committed to employ all staff who move into the Partnership.

The Joint Venture Partnership contract is worth in the region of £400 million over 10 years and is the first of its type in the South West. ISiS will revolutionise both Authorities, bringing knowledge and expertise from IBM and modernizing and reducing the cost of many of our services. We anticipate that negotiations will be concluded and the contract signed by the end of June 2007.

The six specified objectives for the ISiS programme are:

- To improve access to and delivery of customer-facing services
- To modernise, reduce the cost of and improve corporate, transactional and support services
- To help modernise and transform the overall workings of the councils
- To invest in new world class technologies to improve productivity
- To create an excellent working environment and sustainable employment for staff
- To generate economic development by a partner willing to invest in Somerset

The influence of ISiS on the Council will be enormous and will impact on all of our Corporate Objectives, especially around Economy and Delivery. ISiS will improve service quality and value for money, making key services more accessible for local residents and potentially elevating them to beacon status. The ISiS partnership should also bring significant economic regeneration to the County and especially Taunton.

## **Team Somerset – Providing Excellent Services for Customers in the Future**

Since early 2007, the five Somerset District Councils have been working together to respond to the “Strong and Prosperous Communities” Local Government White Paper. The White Paper clearly expects councils to work far more collaboratively, together and with other local partners. The message from central government is that maintaining the status quo is no longer an option.

Our joint response to this is an agreement between the District Councils to work together collaboratively under a new partnership arrangement called “Team Somerset”.

The Team Somerset proposal is for the six councils in Somerset (five Districts and the County Council) to work collaboratively in partnership. It will have one joint strategic leadership board and a number of county-wide service partnerships to jointly deliver our services across Somerset. This joined-up leadership will ensure we deliver the priority outcomes of the Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement across the County.

We believe that Team Somerset is the right solution for Taunton Deane residents. It will offer strong and accountable leadership across the County, excellent service quality and value for money, and will give communities a greater say, through improved locality working arrangements.

We expect Team Somerset to be delivered within existing local government resources across Somerset and achieve annual efficiency savings of £22 million from 2012, with savings of £8m within just two years. Half of these savings would come through ISiS expanding across the County. All of the District Councils will review the business case for ISiS and have signed the Framework Agreement to join in principle.

We have produced an outline business case for Team Somerset and the next steps are to develop the proposed service partnerships and Joint Strategic Leadership Board. Team Somerset will require a radical change in the way we currently work across the County and will impact on all service areas.

Team Somerset offers a viable and attractive alternative to the Council’s Unitary bid, avoiding the cost and disruption of wholesale structural reform, while maintaining a democratic voice for residents. The Outline Business Case for Team Somerset can be viewed through the following internet link:

<http://www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/tdbc/sites/council/press/teamsomerset.asp>

## **Performance Management of the Corporate Strategy**

The Corporate Strategy is clearly very important in translating the priorities of the community and government into real objectives that can be delivered by the Council and its partners. We are confident that we have identified the correct areas of action that will result in tangible improvement in these priority areas.

The detail of how the twenty objectives will be delivered can be found in the Service Plans and corresponding Operational Plans. These actions, when completed effectively will result in measurable progress being made against the Corporate Strategy Objectives.

To ensure we make forward progress in achieving these objectives, and to provide assurance to Corporate Management Team, Managers and Councillors, the Corporate Strategy is monitored through the Performance Management System. This takes place through the following means:

1. Directors review Service Plans quarterly, and discuss progress regularly at Corporate Management Team and with relevant managers.
2. Progress against the Corporate Strategy Objectives will be reported every four months to a Corporate Business Group responsible for performance and the Review Board. These reports will include:
  - An executive summary of problem areas, detailing action required to address this
  - A Summary 'Dashboard' clearly showing progress through simple graphs and analysis of Key Activities and Performance Indicators
  - Progress against each of the 20 objectives, describing them as 'On Course', 'Off Course' or 'Action Pending', with details of actions taken, and problems or delays occurring.
  - Any areas where inadequate progress is being made against Objectives or Key Activities, and recommended actions to address this.
3. A four-monthly simplified performance summary to communicate to staff successes and current issues against our Corporate Strategy.



<b>AIM 1 Economy</b> Regenerating Taunton and strengthening the economy of the Borough	<b>AIM 2 Transport</b> Minimising the growth in traffic congestion	<b>AIM 3 Crime</b> Promoting safer communities and tackling anti-social behaviour	<b>AIM 4 Healthy Living</b> Promoting healthy and sustainable communities	<b>AIM 5 Environment</b> Safeguarding and enhancing the local environment	<b>AIM 6 Delivery</b> Delivering accessible, value for money services
<b>OUR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES (Principal Objectives shown in Bold and above the line)</b>					
<b>1. Stimulate the creation of 14,000 new jobs in the Borough between 2006 and 2026, (5% from the Creative Industries Sector). This includes 6,500 jobs at Firepool by 2010 through Project Taunton</b>	<b>6. Support the County Council as lead agency to limit the rate of growth of traffic congestion in Taunton (vehicle delay target of 2,414 vehicle hours by 2011)</b>	<b>8. To reduce overall crime in Taunton Deane by 15% by March 2008.</b>	<b>12. To enable the building of 985 units of affordable housing between April 2006 and March 2011</b>	<b>15. To increase to at least 75% the percentage of people who are satisfied with the cleanliness of their local environment by 2007.</b>	<b>18. To provide value for money services where overall satisfaction with the Council is in the top quartile nationally and council tax charges are in the lowest quartile when compared with other English districts</b>
<b>2. To encourage 30 new businesses to set up in Taunton Deane per year (5% from Creative Industries Sector)</b>		<b>9. To reduce the incidence of violent crime in Taunton Deane by 15% by 2008</b>			
<b>3. Develop the Cultural Offer of the Borough</b>	<b>7. Support the County Council as lead agency to reduce the proportion of journeys to work made in Taunton by Single Occupancy Vehicles</b>	<b>10. To reduce anti-social behaviour incidents by 15% from baseline figures by 2007/08</b>	<b>14. Promote healthy activities to meet the needs of the wider community, recognising the needs of different age groups</b>	<b>17. To actively promote sustainability in Taunton Deane with a focus on climate change, energy efficiency and renewable energy, to reduce our carbon footprint on the environment.</b>	<b>20. To ensure that 90% of service enquiries to the Council are resolved at the first point of contact by 2015.</b>
<b>4. Reduce deprivation in Taunton Deane, taking the four most deprived sub-areas out of the 25% national most deprived areas by 2020</b>		<b>11. To reduce the fear and perceptions of crime by 5% per year to 2009 from March 2007 baseline</b>			

## KEY ACTIVITIES

### AIM 1: Economy

#### Regenerating Taunton and strengthening the economy of the Borough

**Key Portfolio Holders: Councillor Norman Cavill and Dorothea Bradley**

**Lead Director: Joy Wislade**

The Council's major priority under Economy is to work in partnership to deliver Project Taunton, an exciting and long-term initiative to transform our County town into a key economic and cultural centre in the South West region. We recognise the importance of cultural and creative industries to the economy of the borough and will support the growth of this sector. We are also focussed on enabling local businesses to start up and grow in both rural and urban areas and to tackle areas of deprivation.

<p><b>Objective 1:</b>  <b>Stimulate the creation of 14,000 new jobs in the Borough between 2006 and 2026 (of which 5% will be within the Creative Industries Sector). This includes 6,500 office based and admin jobs at Firepool by 2010, (through Project Taunton) with pay rates on average 5-10% greater than existing average wages</b>  <b>Director: Joy Wislade</b></p>			
Key Activities	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Develop an Economic Development Strategy, based on an appraisal of the Borough's economy. To include a 3 year detailed action plan with outcomes addressing local economic issues (wages, employment, deprivation & skills etc)	✓ (Annual Review)	✓ (Annual Review)	✓ (Annual Review)
Relocate the Livestock Market to Junction 24, vacating the Firepool site for Project Taunton (Dec 2007). Secure a development partner for Firepool and commence development of the site by Spring 2008	✓	✓	✓
Kick start the Cultural Quarter of Project Taunton by redeveloping Castle Green, Coal Orchard and Goodland Gardens, to include providing a new site for the County Council library and records office (Start on site 2009)	✓	✓	✓
Provide an agreed framework of planning policies to successfully implement the Urban Design Framework and Project Taunton, through adopting the Town Centre Area Action Plan (December 08)	✓	✓	

<b>Objective 2: To encourage 30 additional businesses to set up in Taunton Deane per year (5% from the Creative Industries Sector) Director: Joy Wislade</b>			
<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>
Secure a major business incubation centre for Taunton with facilities for up to 40 emerging micro and creative industries companies	✓		
Cross-working within the Council and with partners to purchase / develop land for a minimum of ten small business units and to develop a further two hectares of serviced land for business use through S106 agreements.	✓	✓	✓
Effectively work in partnership to promote new business start-ups, small business support and grant schemes to ensure that 250 businesses receive suitable advice, counselling and support in the Borough over the lifetime of this plan. Strive to meet our LAA stretch targets which could yield £1.3m for business support in the County if we are successful.	✓	✓	✓

<b>Objective 3: Develop the Cultural Offer of the Borough, by recognising and supporting the importance of cultural activities and creative industries to the economy of the borough Director: Joy Wislade</b>			
<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>
Establish Taunton Deane as a Regional Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries, working closely with BOOST (the Creative Enterprise Resource Centre) and with a minimum 5% increase year on year for this sector. Produce an action plan to develop business activities in Tourism and Culture.	✓	✓	✓
Explore the feasibility of facilitating the development of Tone Mill, Wellington as a cultural and creative industry 'node'		✓	✓
Continue to work with the Creative Industries Development Agency (CIDA) and the Creative BOOST project, to support a minimum of 15 new creative industry businesses over the next three years	✓	✓	✓
Provide advice, funding and support to the	✓	✓	✓

Brewhouse Theatre to secure a 7.5% improvement in audience figures over the next three years			
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<b>Objective 4:</b> <b>To reduce deprivation in the most deprived wards in Taunton Deane, with a specific focus on Halcon and Lyngford, taking the four most deprived sub-areas from these wards out of the 25% most deprived ‘super output’ areas in the country by 2020. (Based on national index of multiple deprivation rankings)</b> <b>Director: Joy Wishlade (Service); Brendan Cleere (Area)</b>			
<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2008/10</b>
Work closely with the Project Taunton Delivery Team, Learning and Skills Council and SCAT to promote new work opportunities and training provision resulting from Project Taunton. This is aimed at improving skills levels, job readiness and employment levels in these wards	✓	✓	
Agree a local workforce arrangement with the Regional Development Agency for employing a percentage of local labour for all development. Deliver promotional events and workshops to engage the community and signpost training and work opportunities, grants and support.	✓	✓	✓
Council to work with Project Taunton delivery team, employers, community and partners to match people, skills, training and jobs	✓	✓	✓
Ensure that other benefits from Project Taunton are delivered that will benefit the Halcon and Lyngford wards, including better connectivity to the town centre, job opportunities and a new health centre on the Firepool site	✓	✓	✓
Promote confidence and business skills in young people through supporting the three year Young Enterprise South West project, delivered to schools in Taunton Deane’s eight most deprived wards	✓	✓	✓

<b>Objective 5: Support the development of the rural economy through facilitating and supporting agricultural diversification projects, business activity and land development Director: Joy Wislade (Service); All Directors (Area)</b>			
<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>
Facilitate and support ten rural agricultural diversification projects in the rural economy between 2006 and 2009	✓	✓	
Work with partners to develop two rural 'nodes' of business activity through diversification and promotion of creative and tourism business opportunities by 2009	✓	✓	
Facilitate the development of 20 hectares of employment land in Wellington and Wiveliscombe by 2009	✓	✓	
Drive forward the Wellington Food Town initiative to promote Wellington as a regional centre of excellence for food and drink and supporting local food and agricultural industries	✓	✓	✓

### **ECONOMY - Key Performance Indicators and Baselines**

The Following Performance Indicators will demonstrate levels of progress against our Objectives and the 'Economy' Aim. The key indicators will be reported to CMT and Members as part of a 'Dashboard' to help assess progress against the Corporate Strategy.

#### **Objective 1:**

QoL 11 – The percentage of the working-age population that is in employment  
Baseline: 2003/04: 87%

Corporate Strategy – The number of new jobs created in the Creative Industries Sector in the Deane (Baseline to be established 2006/07)

HoS PI – Average income relative to regional average (Baseline: 97%)

#### **Objective 2:**

HoS PI 13a – New VAT registrations per 10,000 population in Taunton Deane  
Baseline: 2002: 30 per 10,000 population

HoS PI – Number of businesses assisted through business development grant  
Baseline: 2004/05: 19

HoS PI – Increase in 3 year business survival rate (Baseline: 2002: 71.5%)

Corporate Strategy – The number of new projects in the Creative Industries sector supported by the Council (Baseline: 2005/6: 2.0)

**Objective 3:**

Corporate Strategy - The proportion of the business stock operating in the Creative Industries sector in Taunton Deane (Baseline to be established 2006/07)

Corporate Strategy - The number of businesses based in Taunton Deane and operating within the Creative Industries Sector that have been supported through CIDA/Creative Boost (Baseline to be established 2006/07)

Taunton Deane - The number of new Creative Industries businesses supported through CIDA (Baseline to be established 2006/07)

The proportionate increase in visitors to performances and events at the Brewhouse Theatre (Baseline to be established 2006/07)

**Objective 4:**

QoL 15 – The reduction in the proportion of residents who are defined as living in the most deprived super output areas in the country (Baseline: 2004: 5%)  
(Baseline: Index of Multiple Deprivation national rankings: Halcon North (10.3%); Halcon West (15.2%); Lyngford North (15.2%); Lyngford West (24.1%))

**Objective 5:**

Corporate Strategy – The number of rural agricultural diversification projects supported by the Council (Baseline: 2005/06: 4)

## **AIM 2: Transport**

### **Minimising the growth in traffic congestion**

**Key Portfolio Holder: Councillor Cliff Bishop   Lead Director: Joy Wishlade**

Working in partnership with the County Council, we will ensure that strategic transport investment is made for the future prosperity of the Borough as part of Project Taunton. A major part of this is to reduce the rate of growth of traffic congestion in Taunton

<b>Objective 6: Support the County Council as lead agency, to limit the rate of growth of traffic congestion in Taunton (to limit vehicle delay hours at peak-time to 2,414 hours by 2011) Director: Joy Wishlade</b>			
<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>
Implement the Taunton car park strategy to operate up to 7 new strategically placed multi-story car parks around the Taunton town centre	✓	✓	✓
Deliver the Congestion Reduction Strategy with SCC, implementing the agreed car park charging policies to ensure the success of the Park and Ride Schemes	✓	✓	✓
Promote the use of the Silk Mills Park and Ride Scheme	✓	✓	✓
Work closely with the County Council to identify a site for the Taunton East Park and Ride facility and to agree a clear timetable for delivery	✓	✓	✓
Optimise the location of homes, retail, business and leisure to minimise travel requirements, by implementing the actions in the Local Development Framework and Project Taunton	✓	✓	✓

<b>Objective 7: Support the County Council as lead agency, to reduce the proportion of journeys to work made in Taunton by Single Occupancy Vehicles (SOV) Director: Joy Wislade</b>			
<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>
Deliver the actions in the Taunton Deane Borough Council Employee Travel Plan to achieve key targets including reducing the use of SOVs to 60% by March 2008	✓		
Work in partnership with SCC to encourage top ten employers to achieve a transport modal shift to reduce SOV by 2011 (to align to SCC target)	✓	✓	✓
Develop a S106 policy to ensure that significant new commercial premises or major extensions to existing premises have a S106 agreement requiring submission and implementation of a travel plan	✓	✓	✓
Promote and publicise alternative modes of transport to local residents and businesses through targeted road-shows, campaigns and other means	✓	✓	✓

### **TRANSPORT - Key Performance Indicators and Baselines**

The following Performance Indicators will demonstrate levels of progress against our Objectives and the 'Transport' Aim. The key indicators will be reported to CMT and Members as part of a 'Dashboard' to help assess progress against the Corporate Strategy.

#### **Objective 6:**

Corporate Strategy – Vehicle delay on principal Taunton roads at peak hour (9am)  
(Baseline 2001: 1,093 hours; predicted rate without action: 2,847 vehicle hours 2011)

QoL 42 - The percentage of the resident population who travel to work by a) private motor vehicle; b) by public transport; c) on foot or cycle (*10 yearly census*)  
(Baseline 2001: (a) 54.6%, (b) 2.7% (c) 24.4%)

#### **Objective 7:**

Corporate Strategy - Journeys to work in Taunton in Single Occupancy Vehicles  
(Baseline to be established 2006/07)

Corporate Strategy - Journeys to work (TDBC) in single occupancy vehicles  
(Baseline: 2004: 74%)



### **AIM 3: Crime**

#### **Promoting safer communities and tackling anti-social behaviour**

**Key Portfolio Holder: Cllr Joanna Lewin-Harris Lead Director: Kevin Toller**

As a member of the Taunton Deane Crime and Disorder Partnership, we strive to reduce levels of crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime in Taunton Deane. Although not the main agency for tackling crime, we make a key contribution and through close working with partners can have a considerable impact

<b>Objective 8: To reduce overall crime in Taunton Deane by 15% by March 2008* Director: Kevin Toller</b>			
<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>
Deliver Somerset Crime Reduction and Drug Strategy 2005-2008 by delivering objectives 8 and 9	✓		
Focus on reducing and preventing volume crimes (common assault, vehicle crime and criminal damage)	✓		

\* Target set by the Home Office

<b>Objective 9: To reduce the incidence of violent crime in Taunton Deane by 15% by 2008** Director: Kevin Toller</b>			
<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>
Enforcement of new licensing laws to meet the four licensing objectives of public safety, prevention of nuisance, prevention of harm to children and prevention of crime and disorder	✓		
Delivery of night-time economy plan in partnership with the police. Key actions being the 'three strikes' initiative and the 'drink safe, be safe' campaign	✓		

<b>Objective 10:</b> <b>To reduce anti-social behaviour incidents by 15% from baseline figures by 2007/08**</b> <b>Director: Kevin Toller</b>			
<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>
Move towards Neighbourhood Policing – work closely with PCSO's (increased provision from 2007), Local Action Teams and partners to provide a more co-ordinated and effective approach to tackling anti-social behaviour	✓	✓	✓
Devise and deliver a program of actions to tackle antisocial behaviour hotspots, identified through the database and partnership working	✓	✓	
Continue identifying and implementing youth diversionary activities and facilities, including sports and arts activities	✓	✓	✓
Provide training and support to the Antisocial Behaviour Officer to tackle antisocial behaviour through partnership work, youth provision and diversion work, ASBOs, the three strike policy and other means	✓	✓	✓

\*\* Targets agreed in the Somerset Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy

<b>Objective 11:</b> <b>To reduce the fear and perception of crime by 5% per year to 2009 (from March 2007 baseline - to be established)***</b> <b>Director: Kevin Toller</b>			
<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>
Implement the Somerset multi-agency action plan to reduce fear of crime	✓	✓	
Support and promote the increased security of residents' properties through the Handyman Scheme, the Bobby Van initiative and the payment of grants, to make safer vulnerable properties and repeat victims of burglary	✓	✓	✓

\*\*\* Mandatory LAA Target

## **CRIME - Key Performance Indicators and Baselines**

The Following Performance Indicators will demonstrate levels of progress against our Objectives and the 'Crime' Aim. The key indicators will be reported to CMT and Members as part of a 'Dashboard' to help assess progress against the Corporate Strategy.

### **Objective 8:**

Corporate Strategy – Overall number of crime incidents (basket of crimes)  
(Baseline: 2003/04: 5,245 incidents)

BV 126 – Domestic burglaries per 1,000 households (Baseline: 2004/05: 6.7)

BV 128 – Vehicle crimes per 1,000 population (Baseline: 2004/05: 10.8)

### **Objective 9:**

Corporate Strategy – Violent crime incidents (Baseline: 2003/04: 1,340 incidents)

BV 127a – Violent offences committed by a stranger per 1,000 population  
Baseline: 2004/05: 7.1

BV 127b - Violent offences committed in a public place per 1,000 population  
Baseline: 2004/05: 10.5

BV 127c - Violent offences committed in connection with licensed premises per 1,000 population (Baseline: 2004/05: 2.2)

BV 127d - Violent offences committed under the influence per 1,000 population  
Baseline: 2004/05: 2.7

LPI 49 – Percentage of inspections of licensed premises (Baseline: 2004/05: 100%)

### **Objective 10:**

Corporate Strategy – Antisocial behaviour incidents  
Baseline: 2003/04: – criminal – 1977 incidents

LPI 30 – Percentage of council tenants who have reported anti-social behaviour / neighbour nuisance in the past 12 months, satisfied with the service received  
Baseline: 2004/05: 64%

Corporate Strategy – The number of attendances of arts activities supported by the Council  
(Baseline to be established 2006/07)

**Objective 11:**

Corporate Strategy (and LAA) – The percentage of residents that fear crime (using the Somerset LAA fear of crime survey) (Baseline: 2004/3: 23%)

Corporate Strategy – The number of properties that have made use of housing grants, the Handyman Scheme and the Bobby Van to increase security on their properties (Baseline to be established 2006/07)

## **AIM 4 – Healthy Living**

### **Promoting healthy and sustainable communities**

**Key Portfolio Holders: Councillor Mark Edwards & John Clark**

**Lead Directors: Shirlene Adam and Brendan Cleere**

Under Healthy Living, our highest priority is to meet the requirements of those with greatest housing need. Housing is fundamental to the general health and well-being of our citizens and we have focussed on enabling more affordable housing and tackling homelessness in the Deane. Our other main priority is around promoting healthy activities for the community, ensuring we recognise the needs of different age groups

<b>Objective 12:</b> <b>To enable the building of 985 units of affordable housing between April 2006 and March 2011</b> <b>Director: Shirlene Adam</b>			
<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>
Planning Gain through Section 106 agreements – negotiations with developers to meet a targeted proportion of social housing and other subsidised housing, as outlined in the Local Plan	✓	✓	✓
Utilise council owned and other sites to develop social and other subsidised housing, as detailed in the Housing Strategy	✓	✓	✓
Deliver the Local Development Framework for all types of housing need, including low cost and social housing.	✓	✓	✓
Investigate new approaches to delivering intermediate housing to meet targets from the ARK report.	✓		

<b>Objective 13:</b> <b>To reduce the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation by 50% by 2010, with an emphasis on homelessness prevention</b> <b>Director: Shirlene Adam</b>			
<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>
Prevention – Deliver the issues in the Planning Out Homelessness Strategy around preventing homelessness	✓	✓	✓
Supply - Deliver the issues in the Planning Out Homelessness Strategy around increasing housing supply for the homeless	✓	✓	✓
Support - Deliver the issues in the Planning Out Homelessness Strategy around improving support for the homeless	✓	✓	✓

<b>Objective 14:</b> <b>Promote healthy activities to meet the needs of the wider community, recognizing the needs of different age groups</b> <b>Director: Brendan Cleere</b>			
<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>
Develop a state of the art Skate-Park in Taunton Deane, building it in 2007/08 and attracting a minimum of 5,000 visits in 2008/09, to increase annually	✓	✓	✓
Assess existing provision of Youth Facilities, identify gaps and make provision in priority areas, tying in to the Play Strategy	✓	✓	
Promote and support health activities for the elderly, such as the 'Prime' package from Tone Leisure (2007), and other initiatives (Flexercise, health walks etc)	✓	✓	✓

## **Healthy Living - Key Performance Indicators and Baselines**

The Following Performance Indicators will demonstrate levels of progress against our Objectives and the 'Healthy Living' Aim. The key indicators will be reported to CMT and Members as part of a 'Dashboard' to help assess progress against the Corporate Strategy.

### **Objective 12:**

QoL 37 - Affordable dwellings completed (Number of, and as a percentage of all new housing completions (Baseline: 2004/05: 48; 10.7%)

BV 212 - Average time taken to re-let local authority housing  
Baseline: 2005/06: 16.4 days

### **Objective 13:**

Corporate Strategy - Homeless Households in temporary accommodation  
(Baseline: 30/6/05: 94)

BV 202 – The number of people sleeping rough on a single night within the area of the authority (Baseline: 2005/06: 4)

BV 203 – The percentage change in the average number of families placed in temporary accommodation (Baseline: 2004/05: -11.9%)

BV 213 – The number of households who considered themselves as homeless, who approached the local housing authority's housing advice service(s), and for whom housing advice casework intervention resolved their situation.  
(Baseline: 2005/06: 4%)

BV 214 - Repeat Homelessness: Proportion of households accepted as statutorily homeless who were accepted as statutorily homeless by the same Authority within the last two years. (Baseline: 2005/06: 8%)

### **Objective 14:**

Corporate Strategy - The number of TDBC owned youth facilities provided on open spaces (includes MUGAs, shelters, kickabouts and others)  
(Baseline 2006/07: 15)

Corporate Strategy – The percentage of over 16's participating in moderate intensity activity 3 times a week for 30 minutes (Baseline 2006/07 21.3%)

Corporate Strategy – The number of elderly persons or people with health needs (e.g. obesity) that have benefited from Health Activities provided through the Council and Tone Leisure (Baseline to be established)

Corporate Strategy – The satisfaction with (a) sports and leisure facilities;  
(b) Parks and Open Spaces (Baseline: 2006/7: (a) 69%; (b) 85%)

## AIM 5 - Environment

### Safeguarding and Enhancing the local environment

**Key Portfolio Holders: Councillors Dorothea Bradley and John Clark**

**Lead Director: Brendan Cleere**

We aim to manage a clean and safe environment and we achieve this through our services and partnerships, most significantly the Somerset Waste Partnership. Residents and visitors alike value the high quality of the physical environment of the Borough and we will continue to protect and enhance it. We will also improve sustainability in Taunton Deane, using our influence to promote energy efficiency, tackle climate change and reduce the emission of greenhouse gases.

<b>Objective 15:</b> <b>To increase to at least 75% the percentage of people who are satisfied with the cleanliness of their local environment by 2007 and to 78% by 2009</b> <b>Director: Brendan Cleere</b>			
<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>
Holistic management of the environment, linking highways, parks, open spaces, car parks, river and canal and other street scene areas. Achieve improved partnership and cross-service working	✓	✓	✓
Further improve cleanliness of the environment by targeting litter offenders through a publicised program of enforcement for littering - PCSOs to serve fixed penalty notices	✓	✓	✓
Improve methods and approach to street cleansing such as taking a responsive approach to tackling areas that need cleaning (rather than strictly following a rota)	✓	✓	✓

<b>Objective 16:</b> <b>To increase the percentage of household waste recycled to 45% by the end of 2008/09 and 47% by the end of 2009/10</b> <b>Director: Brendan Cleere</b>			
<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>
Expanded delivery, promotion and enforcement of the recycling service, focussing on maintaining high levels of awareness, overcoming obstacles and enforcing compliance where necessary	✓	✓	✓
Expand the recycling service to include other	✓	✓	



types of waste, such as plastics and cardboard			
Let an integrated waste collection and recycling contract with the other Somerset Councils and create a single client body (Nov 07.) This new Waste Board should ensure we meet the 2020 European Landfill target of reducing biodegradable municipal waste landfilled, to 35% of that produced in 1995	✓	✓	✓

<b>Objective 17:</b> <b>To actively promote sustainability in Taunton Deane with a focus on climate change, energy efficiency and renewable energy, to reduce our carbon footprint on the environment.</b>			
<b>Director: Brendan Cleere</b>			
<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>
Follow up our signing of the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change by establishing a baseline of carbon emissions and carbon reduction targets. This will lead to developing a Climate Change Strategy to provide a joined-up approach to promoting sustainability, tackling climate change and reducing emissions	✓	✓	✓
Reduce carbon emissions by adopting the BREEAM excellence standards for commercial construction on all Council owned land. This will include construction on Firepool and other Project Taunton sites	✓	✓	✓
Ensure that new housing built through Housing Corporation funded schemes meet a minimum of level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Housing from 2007/08, with a view to increasing this level from 2008/09	✓	✓	✓
Meet the government target of improving energy efficiency by 30% on housing in Taunton Deane (1995-2010) through various housing initiatives	✓	✓	✓
Review our existing buildings to ensure they are 'green' (using renewable energy suppliers, water saving measures, waste separation and recycling, energy-saving lightbulbs etc)	✓	✓	

## **ENVIRONMENT – Key performance Indicators and Baselines**

The Following Performance Indicators will demonstrate levels of progress against our Objectives and the 'Environment' Aim. The key indicators will be reported to CMT and Members as part of a 'Dashboard' to help assess progress against the Corporate Strategy.

### **Objective 15:**

BV89 – Percentage of people satisfied with cleanliness standards of the local environment (Baseline: 2005/6: 73%)

BV 199.1 The proportion of relevant land and highways (expressed as a percentage) that is assessed as having combined deposits of litter and detritus that fall below an acceptable level (Baseline: 2005/06: 19.5%)

BV 199.2 - The proportion of relevant land and highways (expressed as a percentage) from which unacceptable levels of graffiti are visible (Baseline: 2005/06: 3.5%)

BV 199.3 - The proportion of relevant land and highways (expressed as a percentage) from which unacceptable levels of fly-posting are visible (Baseline: 2005/06: 0%)

BV 218.2 - Percentage of abandoned vehicles removed within 24 hours from the point at which the Authority is legally entitled to remove the vehicle (Baseline: 2005/06: 96.8%)

### **Objective 16:**

Corporate Strategy: Overall percentage of household waste recycled (including composting)

Baseline: 2005/06: 25.5%

BV 82ai – Percentage of household waste arisings which have been sent by the Authority for recycling (Baseline: 2005/06: 18.9%)

BV 82bi - The percentage of household waste sent by the Authority for composting or treatment by anaerobic digestion (Baseline: 2005/06 6.6%)

### **Objective 17:**

Corporate Strategy – Improvement in energy efficiency of housing stock in Taunton Deane since 1995 (Baseline: 2005/06: 19.2%)

Corporate Strategy – Reduction in carbon emissions as a direct result of the Council's work or influence (Baseline: to be established in 2007/08)

## AIM 6 - Delivery

Delivering accessible, value for money services

**Key Portfolio Holders: All Members of the Executive**

**Lead Director: All**

We aim to deliver value for money services that are customer focussed and accessible by everyone. To this end, we aim to achieve high levels of customer satisfaction, ensuring we provide value for money services, improving on our approach to Equalities and providing a consistent high standard of response to our customers

<b>Objective 18:</b>			
<b>To provide value for money services where overall satisfaction with the Council is in the top quartile nationally, over 60% of national BVPIs perform above English average and council tax charges are in the lowest quartile when compared with other English districts</b>			
<b>Directors: Kevin Toller &amp; All</b>			
<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>
Continue to develop the Team Somerset Proposal to work collaboratively across all the Somerset councils to make annual efficiency savings of £22m and improve quality and accessibility of services to residents	✓	✓	✓
Achieve a minimum Level 3 rating for CPA 'Value for Money' annual assessment by implementing key recommendations from the Audit Commission assessment of the Council	✓	✓	✓
Explore using other partnerships and means of delivery that will improve value for money, (e.g. the Somerset Waste Board and the relocation of the nursery)	✓	✓	✓
Improve customer perception and satisfaction of the Council through delivering the five core communications actions recommended by the LGA (Local Government Reputation Project) that promote effective communication	✓		
Strengthen the role of Scrutiny at the Council to drive improvement, including developing the review of Value for Money and Performance and delivering more outcome-focussed task and finish reviews.	✓	✓	✓
Develop Corporate Procurement in line with the National Procurement Strategy and other Best Practise to achieve better quality, cost effective services and support our objectives around economy, sustainability and equalities	✓	✓	✓

<b>Objective 19:</b> <b>To achieve level 5 of the Equality Standard for Local Government by the end of 2009</b> <b>Director: Kevin Toller</b>			
<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>
Deliver effective Equalities Training to managers, staff and councillors and ensure this training is implemented at every level through the staff appraisal, committee reporting and service planning mechanisms	✓	✓	✓
Working through the requirements to progress the Council through Levels 2 to 5	✓	✓	✓
Improved engagement of BME communities through good service interface, use of an Equalities Forum and translation policies - all informed through customer feedback	✓	✓	✓
Adopt the government's 'Rural Proofing' commitment by ensuring that all our key policies are rural-proofed in future to ensure they have an appropriate focus on rural needs and circumstances	✓	✓	✓

<b>Objective 20:</b> <b>To ensure that 90% of service enquiries to the Council are resolved at the first point of contact by 2015.</b> <b>(Director: Kevin Toller)</b>			
<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>
Work closely with our ISiS partners to modernise and improve transactional and back office services, and improve access to and delivery of customer-facing services	✓	✓	✓
Implement the Customer Access Strategy to deliver our services where and when they are required. Promote and monitor the Customer Contact Standards.	✓	✓	✓
Develop the management of complaints and consultation to ensure that consistent messages from the public are identified, fed through to services and result in service improvements	✓	✓	✓
Use the demographic and social information available to focus our services more effectively on meeting the changing needs of the Taunton Deane community (e.g. aging population)	✓	✓	✓

Implement appropriate HR policies to manage the cultural change and workforce development required to achieve the above key activities	✓	✓	✓
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**DELIVERY - Key Performance Indicators and Baselines**

The Following Performance Indicators will demonstrate levels of progress against our Objectives and the 'Delivery' Aim. The key indicators will be reported to CMT and Members as part of a 'Dashboard' to help assess progress against the Corporate Strategy.

**Objective 18:**

Corporate Strategy: CPA Rating for Value for Money Assessment (Baseline: 2005/06: 3 out of 4))

Corporate Strategy: Percentage of BVPIs that are above the English District Average

Baseline: 2005/06: 64%

Corporate Strategy: Percentage of BVPIs that are in the national top quartile

Baseline: 2005/06: 36%

Corporate Strategy: Average Band D Council Tax, and percentile when compared to other English District Councils (Baseline: 2005/06: £121.88; 23.9<sup>th</sup> percentile)

BV 3 – The percentage of citizens satisfied with the overall service provided by the authority (Baseline: 2005/06: 59%)

Corporate Strategy: Percentage of media articles that positively and negatively reflect on the Council (Baseline: 2005/06: 44% positively, 15% negatively)

Corporate Strategy: Percentage of milestone activities completed in the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government (Baseline to be established 2006/07)

**Objective 19:**

BV 2a – The level of the Equality Standard for Local Government to which the authority confirms (Baseline: 2005/06: Level 1)

**Objective 20:**

Corporate Strategy: The percentage of service enquiries to the Council resolved at first point of contact (Baseline: 2005/06: 60% of services linked to Customer Service)





## Part II – Reports from the Executive

### COUNCIL MEETING 17APRIL 2007

#### Report of Councillor Williams – Leader of the Council

I am pleased to submit this final report of the quadrennium for our Conservative administration. In this period we have achieved the status of an “Excellent Council” only one of four Council’s in the SW Region to aspire to this position which has been maintained in subsequent reviews. The tangible benefits of this have been much lighter inspection regimes with consequently reduced audit costs but the intangible benefits are the enhanced reputation of the Council because of the status it bestows upon us.

During this period we have worked hard on maintaining our efficient front line services but delivering with it the necessary financial savings which were essential to ensure Council Tax increases were held in check. I believe during this period our financial management has been impressive and it is a credit to the hard work of officers and members that we have been able to deliver more for less. We have established clear priorities and invested wisely, Council Tax increases have dropped to 2% only for this year and will remain low if our administration continues. We have also ensured that our annual budgets balanced without the need to contribute from our reserves to support ongoing revenue costs which, regrettably, had become an all too common feature of budgets pre our administration. Of the savings we have implemented these exceed those required by the Gershon Efficiency statement by 150%, £289K specified, £723K achieved, thereby allowing much needed savings from our base budget and targeting our identified priorities for the benefit of the communities in Taunton Deane.

The prudent use of our financial resources has also meant considerable investment in assets and other benefits for our community. From realization of capital from poor performing asset we have invested in major development of employment buildings in Wellington and further substantial sums set aside for investment in Wiveliscombe and Taunton. We have also now secured an economical alternative site for a nursery for plant production which in turn will release a very valuable town centre site for housing or similar. We are presently awaiting a marketing appraisal of the options available to us before a final decision is made.

Huge investment has also been made in recycling with amounts recycled rising from the low point of 17% in 2003 to the remarkable amount of virtually 50% in 2006/07, well above the Governments prescribed target and one of the highest rates of recycling in England at this time.

We have also invested substantially in sports facilities, affordable housing and supported many good causes in an attempt to encourage new initiatives for our communities in the form of Westival, the ice rink and Project Taunton. All



this achieved and a Council Tax increase of only 2%, definitely a case of delivering more for less.

### **Local Government Reorganisation**

Since our last meeting in February the Government has announced that Somerset County Council bid to establish a single Unitary Council for Somerset meets the set criteria sufficiently to go forward for further consultation. I have not changed my opinion that the whole idea is flawed and should be utterly and convincingly rejected by the communities of Somerset who will ultimately end up suffering from lack of meaningful representation at a local level. This "super-size" council would be one of the largest local authorities in England with the greatest "sparsity factor" and thousands and thousands of citizens for each councillor. The County Council's proposals would in my view be inefficient, be bad for local democracy, bad for local services and bad for the local economy.

What is the alternative as I totally agree that Local Government generally must work smarter and thus more efficiently. All District Councils in Somerset have been working together on the "Team Somerset" approach, this was approved at Full Council last December and has been accepted by all other District Councils in Somerset as a first choice, or in South Somerset DC's case, a fall back position after their two unitary for Somerset bid.

An outline business case has now been agreed showing savings of £22.2 million can be achieved by collaborative working whilst still maintaining the dedicated and committed local representation and avoiding the high risk strategy of huge disruption, financial risk and loss of dedicated resources that are inevitable with reorganisation on the scale proposed. Team Somerset is partnership working at its best and something we can be proud of as we have always been willing to work in partnership for the benefit of our community.

It is the view of all District Councils that the communities of Somerset must be allowed a voice in such a momentous change as is now proposed. Nothing short of a referendum can achieve this level of community involvement and as such I exhort the Government and County Council to join with the Somerset District Councils and fully support this way forward to ensure the voice of the people is heard.

### **Project Taunton**

I reported at the last meeting that we were moving forward apace and I am pleased to report that the momentum has been maintained. A total of five major developers are enthusiastically on board to produce masterplan schemes and appraisals for the firepool site. These plans will be submitted by late June with consideration of each by early July and a short listing down to two developers. Final schemes and best offers will then be sought with a view to agreeing the exchange of Contracts with the chosen developer in September. In parallel with this the legal agreements will be drawn up in

consultation with the developers so that it is ready and available when the scheme and offers have been agreed.

Before the end of March we also secured the necessary funding from SWRDA to purchase flood alleviation land at Longrun Farm, properties to facilitate the development of Firepool and funding to assist site assembly for the cricket ground development. Particularly the securing of land at Longrun Farm for flood alleviation means we can move forward in the most timely and effective manner with regeneration of the Firepool and Tangier areas that would otherwise have required localised flood alleviation methods. This also guarantees we can enhance the riverside areas without massive flood prevention walls preventing views over or access to the river side. This greatly assists the stated aim to bring the river back into the heart of Taunton, not turn our backs on it.

### **Proposed Upgrading of the A358**

The Highways Agency finally published proposals for the route and joining with the M5 motorway 1 March 2007 when, like other Members, I first became aware of the “loop” proposals that would, if constructed, use virtually all of the open playing field area attached to Blackbrook. We are in the process of exhorting the Highways Agency to find a suitable alternative means of linking with the M5 to minimize impact on the adjacent community and our sports facilities. We must also not forget the potential impact on homes adjacent the proposed new alignment of the road as it bypasses Henlade, the ultimate requirement is for the design and construction to be to the highest standards to mitigate any impact so that it does not cure one problem and create a worse one for others.

It is disappointing that Somerset County Council as the Highways Authority for the area have seemingly abdicated all responsibility for any liaison with the Highways Agency in order to try and secure the best solution for the community nearby. This despite their stated policies in the adopted Somerset Structure Plan

#### **POLICY 53**

“Cls 7.38; Whilst the Department of Transport is responsible for improvements to the trunk road network, the County Council is consulted on overall trunk road strategy and any proposed improvements to individual trunk roads and their programming. The Council’s involvement is essential if the county is to gain the greatest benefit from Central Government’s investment in roads. The County Council also has a key role in ensuring that Trunk Road improvements have minimal impact on the environment.”

#### **POLICY 54**

“Cls 7.39; The County Council as Highway Authority is particularly aware of the possible adverse impact of new road schemes on surrounding areas. For this reason it attaches considerable importance to reducing the impact of new roads and highway improvement schemes on local communities and to integrate them within the local environment. This needs to be addressed in

relation to Outstanding Heritage Settlements and Conservation Areas. In many cases the construction of a new bypass has created a far more pleasant environment for the local community. Consequently, such developments will be the subject of critical examination, and environmental assessment where appropriate, in order to ensure that the requirements of this policy are satisfied.”

These are fine words but totally bereft of any action when the local community needs support to find the best solution with minimum impact on their environment.

### **Norton Fitzwarren Dam Construction**

I am pleased to report this finally commenced in earnest as of the 1 March 2007 which will provide much needed flood protection to existing properties in Norton Fitzwarren and at long last this will release the old cider factory site for redevelopment providing much needed housing and regeneration of this unsightly derelict centre of the village.

### **And Finally**

My last report for this period, it has been a great experience working with all Members and Officers, we have achieved much but there is still much to be done. I have the greatest of respect for the dedication and commitment shown by officers and thank you sincerely for your hard work and help over the last four years. We hope to be able to continue this over the next four years which should see Project Taunton and many of our other plans come to fruition.

Cllr John Williams,  
Leader, Taunton Deane Borough Council

## **COUNCIL MEETING 17 APRIL 2007**

### **Report of Councillor Bishop – Planning Policy and Transportation**

#### **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

##### **Statements of Community Involvement – Adoption**

The Council will be aware that the Statement of Community Involvement is a Local Development Framework document that explains:

How we shall consult on the preparation of the LDF.

An applicants requirements to consult in advance of the submission of significant planning applications.

The Borough Council's requirements to consult following the registration of a planning application..

The SCI has been through three rounds of public consultation. A Government appointed planning Inspector recently considered all objections to the SCI, and concluded that the SCI was "sound" subject to a few minor changes. These changes are "binding" on the Council and relate mainly to matters of fact. There are no changes to the overall strategy or to the proposed actions. Having viewed the binding changes, I now approve the adoption of the SCI. The adopted version is due for publication during late April / early May 2007.

##### **Local Development Scheme – Joint Working**

The Council has been fully supportive of joint working with other Somerset Districts, the County Council, the Regional Planning Body and Government Office South West in the early stages of preparing the Local Development Framework, including bi-monthly meetings to progress similar working practices including approaches towards preparing the LDS.

It is not proposed to prepare any joint Development Plan Documents requiring adoption with adjoining districts. However, joint working towards developing a compatible set of "generic" development control policies across the Somerset districts and joint working on information gathering for future proposed Supplementary Planning Documents such as Affordable Housing is proposed.

##### **Local Development Scheme – Monitoring and Review**

Following the January meeting of the Somerset LDF working party, and a later meeting with GOSW and an officer of the Planning Inspectorate it was made clear that that the one way of adding value to the **Core Strategy** was for it to be used as a delivery document in itself rather than simply a document that sets the strategic framework within which other Development Plan Documents would be delivered.

Consequently it is proposed to identify specific allocations of a strategic nature within the Core strategy. This would remain on a schematic rather than Ordnance Survey base in the Core Strategy but would contain sufficient description, including policies, to give a developer and the public certainty as to where development would occur. As a result additional time is required to accommodate extra front loading of information to guide the strategy, including further consultation on site opportunities and an assessment of responses prior to progressing to Preferred Options stage. Any specific allocations will need to be tested, including traffic modelling in some instances.

Although the Core Strategy submission to the Secretary of State is delayed from March / April 2008 to June / July 2009 the actual delivery of sites is brought forward by at least a year. The delay in the Core Strategy will also provide greater certainty of conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy (Examination in Public now in process).

### **Planning Gain Supplement**

The Treasury has announced, amongst the budget papers, that 70% of the revenue from any **PGS** would be paid directly to the local authority granting permission and the rest would be put into a fund for spending in support of regional infrastructure priorities identified in the Regional Spatial Strategies.

The **DCLG** has stated that Communities England will help decide spending priorities for the regions' share of **PGS**. Communities England which is set to replace English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation, will also assume some of the DCLG's responsibilities..

### **Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) Actions for housing growth : Creating a legacy of great places**

At the end of March I was sent a copy of the above document produced by CABE with Natural England, Environment Agency, English Heritage and the Academy for Sustainable Communities.

The letter enclosed with the document stated :

“Planning for and delivering housing growth offers a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create places where people want to live, work and visit, It provides the potential to improve the quality and economic performance of existing places as well as creating new ones; and it offers the chance to create places that help people live and work in a more environmentally sustainable way. Ahead lies the prospect of achieving well designed cities, towns and neighbourhoods – places that are sustainable, functional and distinctive, and consequently more attractive to investors and home-buyers alike”

“Actions for Housing growth contains 10 actions for local government and delivery vehicles that are seeking to make this happen. From putting in place

the right design processes to building teams with the right skills to deliver the vision, this guide explores what is needed to make places where people want to invest, live and work. It includes case studies that demonstrate the results of effectively putting the actions into practice to create successful places”

I am endeavouring to obtain further copies of this excellent document and will place a copy in the Members Room when received.

**Cliff Bishop**

## **COUNCIL MEETING – 17<sup>th</sup> April 2007.**

### **REPORT OF COUNCILLOR DOROTHEA BRADLEY–ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

#### **1.0 ENVIRONMENTAL OR GREEN AGENDA.**

Over the years as a Council we have developed a range of green initiatives across the whole organisation. In recognition of this and our commitment to action on Climate Change we have signed the Nottingham Declaration. In practice we are well into green actions:

- we are negotiating on a waste contract which includes plastic and cardboard recycling
- in planning/building we are looking to 20% reduction in carbon emissions
- our DLO acquired LPG vehicles years ago of which 27 remain. We now purchase more economic and efficient diesel ones which can also be run on bio-diesel
- our staff re-structuring means that we now employ an officer dedicated to promoting fuel efficiency and drawing down funds for this.

#### **2.0 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH.**

##### **2.1 Smokefree Preparations**

Preparations continue for Smokefree England from 1<sup>st</sup> July this year. A large successful seminar was recently held at SCAT for businesses and a range of other stakeholders to brief them on what they need to do to prepare for Smokefree. The Somerset District Councils have also jointly commissioned radio advertising on three local commercial stations to raise awareness of Smokefree and signpost people to us for more information. In addition a range of leaflets and guides are being produced, to be distributed to local businesses. We are currently planning a programme of further seminars and roadshows to target as many businesses as possible before July again to assist them in getting ready for Smokefree.

##### **2.2 Licensing**

The Gambling Act is nearly upon us, applications can be made from 21<sup>st</sup> of May 07. In short gaming licences previously issued by the Courts will now be issued by the Licensing Authority, (TDBC) this includes betting shops, trackside betting bingos and fruit machines.

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 has from the 4 April made it a legal requirement that pet shops can only now sell pets to 16 year olds and above, this Act will introduce a range of other new provisions over the coming months.

##### **2.3 Health and Safety & Food Safety teams**

The Health and Safety and Food Safety Teams have been very busy ensuring that they met their Government set targets for inspections by the end of March. Both teams

managed to inspect 100% of businesses they were due to inspect by the end of the year.

## **2.4 Environmental Protection Team**

### Pigeon Control

Network Rail have sought to address the problem of pigeons roosting under the Kingston Road rail bridge by installing a sonic device to deter the birds. This device is a trial project to establish if such deterrents are effective in the circumstances of a road and rail bridge. Clearly if the results are positive there are major benefits to Network Rail who encounter this problem at many sites across their estate.

Officers from Environmental Health have been assisting Network Rail in the local arrangements for the works to install the device, and we have taken the opportunity during a recent road closure to remove the old pigeon netting from the bridge that was installed by TDBC many years ago, but has since fallen into disrepair. We will be closely monitoring its effectiveness in the coming weeks. If the device does not result in a substantial reduction in bird numbers at this site, the issue will be referred back to Network Rail for solution.

### Flytipping

The Team has been very busy investigating cases of flytipping. To date, four people have been formally Cautioned for this anti-social offence.

### Gull Control

This year, we will be using plastic gull eggs instead of oiling and replacing the real ones. This should result in one fewer visit to each nest site and an increase in the success rate for preventing hatching. Gloucester City Council has used the technique very successfully. Control measures will begin as soon as nesting starts in earnest and, as in past years, the exercise will be limited to flat-roofed buildings in Taunton Town Centre for reasons of cost. This is the area of the greatest concentration of nesting and we reached more than 130 eggs last year.

## **2.5 Looking Ahead**

The Environmental Health Department as a whole looks forward to a challenging year. Many legislative changes will come into effect this year and other changes will have an impact on how enforcement and other duties are undertaken in respect of:

- Smoking in work premises and enclosed public places
- Gambling
- Closer Partnership working with the Health and Safety Executive, the Fire Service, and Trading Standards
- Air Quality and Integrated Pollution Control
- Control of Stray Dogs
- Noise Monitoring



- Animal Welfare
- Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing
- Maintaining the quality of drinking water from mains and from private supplies.

### **3.0 WASTE COLLECTION AND RECYCLING**

#### **3.1 Somerset Waste Partnership.**

On 29th March the Executives of each of the 6 Somerset Waste Partnership authorities agreed to endorse the decision to invite ECT to become the preferred Bidder for the Somerset Waste Collection Contract subject to consideration of key issues at the negotiation stage, which is expected to take 3 months. The ECT bid was best in quality and costs and provides potential to deliver savings and increase service levels. The reserve bidder is SITA.

This is an historic achievement and has been in gestation for 15 years. The SWP was set up in 1992 looking at waste options across the country and into Europe. In 1999 a Memorandum of Understanding was signed. The Best Value Review took place in 2002 and recommended contract integration. This was followed in 2004 with the business case which identified savings of £700K -£1.5million of £3-£6.50 per household. In the event the size of the joint contract has attracted serious bidders with the capital resources to implement the developments necessary to meet recycling targets and developments in the waste industry.

I would pay a special tribute to our Lead Officer Bruce Carpenter who has been with the project since its inception. It has been in part the continuity in officers and members and good working relationships that have made this partnership so successful. The trust developed by the SWP has contributed to the successful inception of ISiS. It is part of the business case for Team Somerset.

#### **3.2 Chewing Gum Removal**

During March a firm of specialists was employed to remove all chewing gum and deep clean the brick paved areas of Taunton town centre, this was the first time these bricks had been cleaned since their installation in 1997. This work was carried out in close cooperation with Somerset County Councils Highways group as the cleaning operation removes the jointing sand and it has been necessary for Deane DLO to re-sand the complete area.

#### **3.3 Green Machine (Applied Sweeper).**

This machine is an important part of the town centre cleaning regime and works six days a week, the present machine was purchased in 2002 and is becoming very unreliable consequently a replacement is arriving during the first week in April.

## **4.0 NET-WORKING**

### **4.1 Renewable Solutions – Delivery Across Local Government**

This conference in Bristol run by Regen SW and attended by a number of councillors, was devoted mainly to practical solutions and the experience of those councils who had tried them.

### **4.2 Recycle for Somerset – Sharing the Somerset Experience**

This was a free conference funded by DEFRA in which the joint approach of the Somerset Waste Partnership was promoted to councillors from other authorities.

### **4.3 LGA Rural Commission**

The main event was an address by Cllr Paul Bettison on the work of the LGA Environment Board whose priorities for 2007 are: greening communities and sustainable communities. I attended a workshop on "Meeting the needs of rural areas through Local Area Agreements". The point was made that the LAA does not engage local district councillors as there are too many activities and so communication breaks down. In Shropshire they had focussed on a small number of priorities to get partnership working together on delivery. What was clear was that different communities require different solutions.

### **4.4 IDeA Effective Democracy for Sustainable Communities**

This event was intensive and instructive. What emerged was the need for us as councillors to develop a collective over-view and coherent grasp of what we are about and where we are going under this new constitution of executive and backbenchers. By this I mean not just within the council but also outside it. It is all about aligning our Corporate Strategy with the LSP Sustainable Community Strategy and keeping the latter in gear with the SSP and Local Area Agreement, under the over-arching strategies of the Regional Assembly. The message from the government is that future funding will be channelled through the LAA.

The basic fact is that the way the system is set up means that if we do not have the right word or idea included in the right place for a particular course of action in any one of these plans then we are stuck. It cannot be done. Ideas are important as it is shared, ideas that hold people together but even more important is a common sense of identity. We have work to do. I would quote something I recently read: "The spirit and identity of the British has been broken by endless propaganda traducing their history ...Loss of national identity, with increased individualism, has led to loss of community spirit throughout what is left of "society". We as councillors are now being charged with Community Leadership and place-making in order to retrieve a situation created in part by central government.

In such circumstances we have a lot of work to do on developing both effective discussion and communication with and also "buy-in" and involvement from all councillors. I believe working groups of officers could more often include members. There could be more joint training sessions of officers and members. My regret is that on this occasion given the breadth of the topic, that officer attendance was confined to planners. The buzz word is lateral, joined-up thinking!

## **FINALLY**

I am standing down after 20 years of extensive change both within and without the Council. I would just pick out a few highlights apart from the LGA Rural Commission and Policy Review Group and other conferences which are always interesting; new ideas and the stimulus of councillor colleagues and how they tackle the problems that face us all.

The extensive travels and visits of the SWP in particular the waste tips of Northern Europe during Holy week were not only informative but a source of bonding between councillors and officers. To be Portfolio holder at the point of choosing ETC as preferred bidder has been a suitable culmination. I would add that my daughter insists that composting at Priorswood was her idea.

The Portfolio for Leisure Arts and Culture was most enjoyable. The real achievement there was the birth (thanks to the proactive midwifery of officers), from a Vision for Taunton working party of the Taunton Cultural Consortium. This is in effect a grassroots community of arts interests whose report on the Cultural Quarter has been adopted by this Council; an excellent example of effective community involvement.

My deepest regret is not to have seen the implementation of the Tree Town Policy. My bid in 2000 for £12,000 was never expended on that consultant's advice and planning on which to develop a unique and coherent street scene through Taunton and in the long term an urban arboretum and so upping the offer of Taunton.

Apart from that it has been a most interesting and stimulating time and I would like to thank all those of my colleagues and officers who have been supportive to me over the years. I would especially pay tribute to the very focussed leadership of Councillor John Williams without which we would not be where we are with Project Taunton. Thank you all and I wish Taunton Deane Borough Council well for the exciting times that lie ahead.

Cllr Dilly Bradley

## **COUNCIL MEETING 17<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2007**

### **REPORT OF COUNCILLOR CAVILL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSET MANAGEMENT AND TOURISM**

#### **Economic Development**

##### **Somerset Inward Investment Company**

The first meeting of the Shadow Board of the Company was due to be held on 2 April 2007. However, additional comments were received from key representatives of the Private Sector, this has led to a wider discussion over the remit of the Agency and that of the Local Authority EDU's. Further information was requested, and this will be discussed at the Somerset Economic Leaders Group meeting on 24 April 2007. This should enable the project to be progressed.

##### **Wellington Economic Partnership (WEP)**

The Partnership, which has been established since 1994, is now seeking to change it's Terms of Reference. This will allow it to become an 'unconstituted partnership' with powers to hold and manage finance and to take a full leadership and management role in developing a wide range of initiatives in Wellington. A number of sub groups have been formed by WEP to manage the process of Food Town and a wider community-based Market & Coastal Towns programme

This is a direct result of the successful Wellington Food Town event in December last year. The successful bid for Market & Coastal Towns Initiative Funding, from 1 April 2007, also required a change to the operation of the Partnership.

Work is underway to re-draw the current constitution with a view to WEP becoming a Community Development Trust later in 2007/08.

This Councils' support has seen more than £100,000 worth of public sector grants for WEP agreed for the next 12-18 months, and the Partnership is keen to further develop this aspect of its work, as well as to deliver a two day food festival in September 2007.

##### **Business Development Grant**

This last round has been one of our most successful, with 14 applicants for 5 grants. Such was the exceptional quality of the applicants, that 6 grants have been awarded. The award of £2000 for each of them will make a significant impact on their business.

##### **Waterlinks**

The WonderTree feasibility study is now being undertaken on the site adjacent to SCAT, that has recently been acquired for flood alleviation work. The full study will investigate public access, planning, project viability and the final report should be due late May/early June.

Waterlinks was officially launched 5<sup>th</sup> April 2007, at Bridgwater Docks. This marks the start of a much larger publicity campaign. Both press and radio were very interested in the WonderTree scheme, particularly the potential for the first UK green cathedral.

#### **Rural & Community Development**

##### **Wiveliscombe**

'Wivey Link' continues to be a flagship social enterprise, and a model for such

developments in the Deane. Further development of the service through improved IT usage and additional technical resources has been proposed through a new Lottery 'Reaching Communities' Bid. If successful this will also allow for greater promotion of the service and move the organisation significantly in the direction of self sufficiency.

A local group has been working on proposals to refurbish and regenerate the Former Town Hall in Wiveliscombe as a quality venue and a focus for a number of identified quality arts, media, cultural and heritage groups operated by a charitable organisation. The Council has supported the group to employ consultants to advise on the technical and practical aspects of the proposal, and their report is due to be received by the end of April.

### **Agricultural Development**

Despite the closing down of traditional avenues of funding from Defra, Business Link and other related 'subsidiaries' for skills development in the agricultural sector, demand remains strong for those courses and events organised by this Council's Agricultural Development Officer. A total of 109 farming representatives have been assisted and supported by this programme over the past 4 years, and this will be built on in the future.

### **Bio –Energy Developments**

The Rural Team continue to investigate the potential for the Council to lead in work towards establishing the Deane as a centre of excellence in environmentally friendly energy use on both the urban and rural industrial setting. Recently a Rural Hub was set up in Warwickshire to provide practical and effective business development and farm diversification for rural businesses in areas such as food supply chains, bioenergy, non-food crops, waste management and resource efficiency. This has proved popular and attractive to Advantage West Midlands (The Regional Development Agency). Work to assess the lessons and messages to be learnt will take place in the months to come.

### **Tourism Development**

#### **Somerset Destination Management Organisation**

Meetings of the key Stakeholders Group of local authorities and business organisations continue. Work towards a more co-ordinated and effective Destination Management System is largely complete, and this aspect of the Group's work is looking at ways in which the marketing and business support and development within the sector can be further improved.

At recent meetings of the DMO and the Somerset Inward Investment Company the need was recognised for close and continuing liaison as the two initiatives move forward, to ensure that where possible duplication of marketing effort and cost could be reduced and particularly so that a single selling image for Somerset should be used.

#### **Tourist Information Services**

During the 2006/07 the TIC has placed in excess of £45,000's worth of accommodation bookings with local establishments, and work to maintain the Centre's pre-eminent position in coach and other local ticketing facilities continues. This contributes significantly to the running costs of the Centres in Taunton and Wellington, and places our TIC's in the top rank of regional facilities.

Work to 'refresh' the Wellington TIC has also been carried out in time for the emerging season, and includes new displays, services and publicity,

## **Creative Services**

### **Creative Business BOOST**

This County-wide, European Funded initiative to support and develop the Creative Industries sector in the County has established its main base in the Brewhouse Theatre in Taunton. It has been operating for almost 12 months, and is actively working with 56 businesses based in Taunton Deane. This represents almost 36% of all business support delivered by BOOST. The 'agency' is working with the Council to develop Creative Business Hubs within the Deane, particularly in rural areas; as such it is actively pursuing a number of locations for such developments.

The Council continues to work towards a wider Creative Industries Development Agency for Somerset in partnership with the County Council and other Districts, recent moves by the County Council to appoint staff to lead this work has provided a further impetus to the programme.

### **Asset Management**

The resale of Highfields has been completed and preparatory work has started on tidying up the site for the new nursery. Initial assessment has been done with respect to a bore hole site, further costings are to be obtained. Tender lists are being drawn up for the provision of infrastructure, poly tunnels and glass house.

The Old Municipal Building: This Council has completed the required work to fire doors, asbestos and other improvements that it was required to do before the County Council would commence its work. It is now available for the County to start work on their required improvements, which will enable them to take on the lease from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2007.

Tenders have been received for the proposed new business units at Frobisher Way, and work is now underway to complete the contract with the successful tenderer. When completed, this project will provide 7 business units, 4 of which will be owned by the Council; adding to our 7 new units at Blackdown Business Park.

Finally, may I welcome a new member of staff to the EDU: Matthew Parr, who is taking over from Nick Coleman as Regeneration Officer.

Cllr Norman Cavill  
Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Property

April 2007.

## **Council Meeting 17 April 2007**

### **Report of Councillor John Clark – Leisure, Arts and Culture**

#### **PARKS DEVELOPMENTS**

##### **Victoria Park**

Work in Victoria Park is underway to complete the planting schemes, improve the entrances and plant the environmental area. The relocation of the original play equipment alongside the new play area has freed up the site planned for a community garden in the park. The community is responding enthusiastically to this work with far greater numbers of people using the park than in the past.

##### **Holway**

Consultation with the community in Holway about the development of plans to improve the Higher Holway open space continues with a visit planned to the youth group meeting at the YMCA in April. This complements work done with Holway Primary School. The consultation will direct the work of the landscape architect who will bring some more detailed design ideas back to the children and young people later in the spring.

##### **Events in Parks**

Vivary Park Sunday bandstand concerts commence on June 3 and continue until September 9. Sunday afternoon events in Wellington Park begin in May and continue until the end of August.

##### **Play Strategy**

The second meeting of the multiagency Taunton Deane Play Partnership was held last month and plans agreed to complete the audit of play and consultation with children, young people and parents approved. The Partnership is overseeing the production of a Strategy for Play in the district which will be delivered by the partners and a bid will be submitted to BIG Lottery for funding this in September.

##### **Deano**

The Easter edition of the Deano has been sent to all primary school aged children in Taunton Deane and the summer edition will be issued at the beginning of June. This publication gives details of activities for children in the main school holidays.

##### **Grants to Community Groups**

Langford Budville Village Hall Management Committee has been successful in its application to the Somerset Joint Committee for Voluntary Village Halls and Community Centres for grant aid assistance towards a village hall for the parish. Grants from the Committee are jointly funded by both Taunton Deane Borough Council and Somerset County Council.

## **Sport**

### **Sports Strategy**

The TDBC Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2000 -2012 has now been finalised and printed and will be circulated to partners in due course. The Strategy outlines a thematic approach to working in partnership with a range of providers to maximise opportunities for participation.

The published strategy is deliberately succinct but a longer version will shortly be placed on the Councils website.

The Facilities Needs Assessment is an important document is an audit of all TDBC built sports facilities and will enable the Council to prioritise future investment and to seek developer contributions towards built sports facilities for the new residents. It is intended as a reference document as it is 123 pages long but copies are available from the Sports Services Manager.

### **Community Sports Network**

TDBC has organised the inaugural meeting of the Community Sports Network for the Borough. Representatives from Health Services, Sports Development, National Governing Bodies, Tone School Partnership, local clubs and the Somerset Activity & Sports Partnership met in March at the Taunton Rugby Club. The network has an aim to work in partnership to increase opportunities for all. The next meeting is now planned for May 2007.

### **Hamilton Skate Park**

The designers have circulated the first draft of the plans for the proposed skate park and the local skate group have commented on the initial thoughts. A revised set of plans (with costs) is anticipated before the end of the month after which the Council will seek planning permission. It is hoped that the facility will be completed in 2007

## **TONE LEISURE (TAUNTON DEANE) LIMITED ACTIVITIES**

### **Facility News**

- **Quest and National Pool Safety Award**  
During the Spring two more of Tone Leisure's facilities will be assessed against best practice models. Blackbrook Pavilion will be assessed against the Quest criteria and Station Road Pool will be undergoing assessment against the Institute of Sport and Recreation Management Pool Safety award. Both assessments include a rigorous two-day assessment and a mystery visit. The assessment criteria covers all aspects of facility operation including programming, health and safety, maintenance, cleanliness, customer research, customer relations, marketing and staff and people management.

### **Blackbrook Pavilion and Tennis Club**

Works to refurbish the toilets at Blackbrook Pavilion are being carried out over the Easter period. The refurbishment will lift the quality of the



finishes to the same level as the changing areas, which were refurbished last June.

#### The Young Persons' Activity Zone

The Zone at Blackbrook Pavilion has enjoyed a very successful launch and first quarter. One of the main aims of the project is to encourage groups that would not normally choose to be active or have access to this type of facility to become more active and to increase activity levels. There has already been some success with this, with the following groups making use of the Zone:

- One-to-one sessions with young people from Priory School, who fall into the category of 'at risk of offending'.
- Small referral groups from New Horizons and Bridgwater referral unit.
- Inclusion sessions for Taunton Inclusion Community. The young people attending have a range of disabilities.
- Tone Schools Partnership are providing the Zone on a regular basis for disaffected girls from secondary schools to encourage them to take part in structured exercise and to improve concentration and focus at school.
- Vibe Sport diversionary programme makes use of the Zone on a weekly basis.

#### Vivary Golf Course

In partnership with Golf Coach Richard Coffin, part of the Golf Professional Shop has been converted into an excellent retail area. The shop now offers a full range of golf clothing and equipment, as well as offering a custom fit club service.

### **Somerset's Champions of Learning Awards 2007**

Val Lambert, Swimskool Manager at Wellington Sports Centre, has won a prestigious award for inspiring others to learn. Val has been recognised for her support, mentoring and guidance of aspiring Swimming Teachers. She was presented with her award at the Learning and Skills Council Champions of Learning event, by former national tennis professional and TV presenter Andrew Castle.

### **Forthcoming Events**

The Counterfeit Stones will be appearing at Wellsprings on 20th April.

Jethro will be back at Wellsprings for his third, fully booked visit on 28th April.

Freddie Starr makes his first appearance at Wellsprings on 27th July.

### **Sports and Health Development**

Wellsprings Leisure Centre has undertaken the assessment process for re-accreditation of its ProActive Physical Activity Referral Scheme this week. The assessment process seemed to go well and the result of the assessment is expected in April.

The Swimathon took place at Taunton Pool on 23rd and 24th March with 24 adults taking part and raising money for Marie Curie Cancer Care. The event is one of several that Tone Leisure are going to use over the next 3 years as a way of increasing participation in physical activity, to contribute towards LAA targets.

**Walk in the Park** - Tone Leisure are currently working in partnership with Diabetes UK (South West) to stage its Walk in the Park event at Vivary Park on Saturday, 16th June. Walk in the Park is a sponsored walk and events are being held across the country; this is the only one to be held in Somerset. As well as the sponsored walk, there will be fun physical activities for families to do and refreshments available, making it a great day out for everyone. This is the next mass-participation event of the year that Tone Leisure is using as a way of increasing participation in physical activity, to contribute towards LAA targets.

Somerset PCT's Phase III Community Cardiac Rehabilitation Programme (a partnership with Tone Leisure) that takes place at Wellsprings Leisure Centre, has seen success in the number of patients completing the course and maintaining a more active lifestyle beyond the programme. 60% of those completing their Phase III course were referred on to Tone Leisure's ProActive Phase IV Programme.

## **Arts**

There was a meeting of the on the 19<sup>th</sup> March. The Arts Alliance hadn't met for a couple of years and theoretically the Cultural Forum should have replaced it at an earlier date. After a brief discussion there was a vote and by a unanimous decision the Somerset Arts Alliance was wound up.

## **The Brewhouse**

Following the success of the Snow Queen, The Brewhouse has had a very encouraging start to the year achieving higher levels of advanced bookings. Currently there is a program to introduce a new financial management system which will enable close monitoring of all aspects of the theatre's activities. At the same time a feasibility study is proposed to look at the best way ahead in terms of size of theatre and the kinds of associated events which could enhance the cultural provision for Taunton. It is hoped that this will be closely linked to Project Taunton and the developments to the Somerset County Cricket Club.

## **Westival**

Plans for this years Westival are at an advanced stage and it is hoped to build on the success of last years launch.

Cllr John Clark

## **COUNCIL MEETING      17<sup>th</sup> April 2007**

### **Report of Councillor Mark J Edwards**

#### **Housing Services**

I have entered the Housing Service world at a particularly difficult and challenging time however I am determined to focus on achieving the best I can with the resources available.

Following the ballot on large scale voluntary transfer and the resultant vote by tenants to retain the Council as their landlord cuts of £1.85m per annum had to be made to ensure we meet the Government's "Decent Homes" standard by 2010/11. Members will be aware that this meant the loss of 16 posts, many hundreds of years of valuable experience, plus reductions and alterations to services. Staff have been reorganising the service and most of the redundancies, all voluntary, will take place from the end of March to July. The reorganisation is starting to take effect and I wish to thank all those that have been involved it has been a difficult period for everyone in housing and it is with great regret that we have had to make these changes but they are very necessary.

Ironically if the ruling group at County Hall are successful with their unitary bid the tenants will see Taunton Deane Borough Council, the very Council which the tenants were encouraged to keep as their landlord by that group, abolished. It makes me wonder how the tenants might have voted with this present scenario, very differently I suspect.

In addition to the job losses and to meet the "Decent Homes" requirements we have reduced to 723 from 1100 the number of homes having planned exterior painting / maintenance. This reflects the move from 5 yearly to 8 yearly contracts. The programme includes homes in Taunton, Wellington, Pitminster, Churchstanton and North Curry. Additionally we will be carrying out similar work on 184 leased flats sold under the "Right to Buy" and 58 homes in the Musgrove/Galmington/Wellington Roads area will be re-roofed for which I have recently authorised the firms able to tender.

There are a large number of government reports and consultations currently affecting the Housing Services e.g. Hills, Lyons, Cave and Communities England (the amalgamation of the Housing Corporation and English Partnerships). The "Respect Agenda", anti-social behaviour initiatives, supporting people and "Decent Homes" which are all being driven by central government. These all create additional work and pressure and whilst many initiatives are welcome we have to be careful that centrally driven policy and regulation don't put too much pressure on the Housing services team.

I recently met with a Senior Director of the Housing Corporation and after our discussions they are very keen to forge closer links with Taunton Deane and they have considerable funds to invest so we will be progressing our conversations to make sure the District of Taunton Deane benefits from this opportunity.

Housing must also play its full part in ISIS, new scrutiny arrangements and the CMT reorganisation. During this time the service to our tenants and many other customers must continue as normal.

Officers are approaching all of the above professionally. I am confident that Housing, in time, will emerge with all of the challenges met and a structure which is able to continue to provide excellent services.

Cllr Mark J Edwards

## **COUNCIL MEETING 17 APRIL 2007**

### **REPRT OF COUNCILLOR TERRY HALL CORPORATE RESOURCES**

#### **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

##### Member Charter

The first meeting of the Member Charter Steering Group has recently taken place. The Council believes that development of its entire people, whatever their role, is essential in ensuring that its Community aspirations are met. As well as being a visible commitment, The Charter will form a sound framework to support and measure member development. Work will now commence on developing an Action Plan on which the Charter will be based.

It is also pleasing to report that a bid for funding of this work has been successful. An application to the South West Regional Assembly for funding (one of the first to be submitted) has been judged to meet the required criteria and a grant of £5,000 has been received.

##### Civic Visit from Konigslutter

We have just said goodbye to 36 friends from Taunton Deane's German twin town of Konigslutter after another hugely successful civic visit led by its Burgermeister, Herr Ottomar Lippelt. Apart from the usual programme of events, it has been a fascinating experience to listen to Herr Lippelt on his role as Konigslutter's first directly elected executive Mayor. He is, in effect, both the Mayor and the Chief Executive. The town of Konigslutter is also currently undergoing a major town centre refurbishment so he was equally interested to learn of the plans for Project Taunton.

Herr Lippelt has invited the Mayor to lead a civic party to Konigslutter in 2008.

##### Electoral Services

Members will all be very well aware of the hard work currently being carried out by our small but diligent Electoral Services team as it prepares for the forthcoming Borough and Parish elections.

#### **PERSONNEL**

##### Job Evaluation

Much progress has been made with the implementation of the new Job Evaluation scheme. Almost all jobs have now been evaluated and a new pay and grading structure is being worked on. Consultations with Unison and Staff side are progressing and it is intended to advise all staff of their new grades and how it will affect them during the first week of June. Management

briefings, staff information sessions and a booklet about the scheme are all planned for early May.

### Smoking

The new legislation regarding non- smoking comes into effect on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2007 and the results of the staff survey on this are have been distributed. A draft policy has been circulated to UNISON, Staff Side and members of the Smoking Working Group and is now being updated in line with feedback. We have now visited all external sites to check compliance and managers understanding. Smoking in company vehicles will no longer be permitted so this will also need to be managed and communicated.

### Payroll

The payroll function has now moved across to SCC. We have uncovered some issues around tax and NI relating to car payment schemes and these are now being looked into with the Inland Revenue. There have also been some queries raised by SCC staff over the completion of payroll forms, which they are inputting. We are therefore planning a reminder email to staff as to what they need to complete and how, in order to assist with this process. HR Staff from Taunton Deane have this week met with the key SCC contacts to further encourage this partnership working.

### Professional Support

We continue to provide professional support to ISiS and Waste Partnership activities. We are also dealing with other restructures as well as a number of staffing matters and disciplinaries that have also been raised.

## **FINANCIAL SERVICES**

April sees the Financial Services Unit concentrating on the closedown of the accounts ready for their submission to the Corporate Governance Committee in June. June will also see the final outturn position for 2006/07 being reported to the Executive along with our final Treasury Management position for last financial year. Work is also progressing on the financial impact of the ISIS project and staff will be working closely with the preferred bidder to ensure that all of the proposals that come out of the negotiation period are understood in terms of their impact on the Council's budget. The Unit is also developing proposals to ensure that we are able to maintain our overall "3 out of 4" score for the Audit Commission's Use of Resources assessment which contributes towards our overall CPA ranking

## **REVENUES AND BENEFITS**

March 2007 saw the merger of the Revenue & Benefit Services in preparation for entry into the Joint Venture from 1 July 2007. We hope that by bringing the

services together we will be able to provide more seamless service delivery for our customers as well as giving us greater resilience in staffing.

Year end went extremely well, especially when this is viewed in the context of it being our first year end with new Revenue & Benefit software. Annual billing and benefit notification took place within the allotted timescale and system "downtime" was minimal. As a consequence, the impact on day-to-day work processing was contained.

Council Tax administration is generally turning work around within 3 weeks, although staff absence has affected our ability in processing valuation listings. However, the start of home working in the Council Tax Team has already seen increases in productivity and we are confident we will start the new financial year in a healthy work position.

In Business Rates we continue to do well and are able to process the relevant schedules regularly. Our Debtors Team have had a challenging time through 500 accounts accruing over just 4 weeks as the result of billing for garden waste bins. Plans are in place to gradually catch up in this area. Both Council Tax & Business Rate collection suffered from the system conversions. Recovery action has now re-started in earnest, and again we expect to be back on track with all our processes as we start the new financial year

Speed of processing In Benefits Administration goes from strength to strength as we saw yet another improvement on our performance in comparison with previous months

During March 2007:

- The average time for processing new claims was 26.27 days
- The average time for dealing with changes in our customers' circumstances was 9.51 days
- 85% of new claims were worked out within 14 days of receiving all the information we needed to assess the claim

As we went into April, the number of claims outstanding fell below 500 - the lowest level of outstanding work since system conversion in July 2006. In general, we are turning work around in less than 2 weeks.

Our Benefit Advice Team received over 28,000 calls in 2006/2007 with only 3.3% of customers abandoning their enquiry. The average for waiting time for customers calling the service was just 18 seconds.

We are analysing results from the survey we carried out in 2006/2007. Overall satisfaction with the Benefit Service was 77%. As this survey coincided with system conversion, and at a time when our customers were experiencing a reduced level of service from that which they had come to expect, it is not surprising satisfaction levels have decreased from previous years. We will look to identify future improvements as well as re-surveying our customers in 2007/2008 to check on our progress now we have recovered from system conversion.

## **CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES**

Work on the ISiS project still continues and meetings with preferred bidder IBM have now started.

### **Customer Services**

The new Corporate Complaints System and the Customer Contact Standards have now gone live and training for Complaints has taken place. Sessions within Service team meetings have started to pinpoint highlights of the Customer Contact Standards and posters and leaflets have been put up in public areas in Deane House and Wellington Community Office.

Almost 176,000 calls were managed through the contact centre last year with 61.47% being dealt with entirely within Customer Services. The average abandonment rate for the year was 5.88%.

48,490 people passed through the Main Reception desk and Planning Reception either as an internal visitor or to have a general enquiry dealt with at Deane House. Throughput in Wellington Community Office was 30,803, which included people making payments via the kiosk or by cheque, TDBC general enquiries, SCC general enquiries and TIC/travel enquiries.

### **Design and Print**

Partnership discussions have started with SCC Design and Print ahead of preferred bidder meetings to ensure we make best use of our services.

A total of 4,826 jobs were carried out by Design and Print in the year to March 2007 with a total value of £276, 823.47 with an additional £20,311.22 worth of jobs invoiced to Tone Leisure. It was necessary to outsource £48,754.75 but the new printing equipment provided an additional £37,571.48 saving to the authority.

### **Corporate Administration Facilities**

During the year Facilities was moved to the remit of Corporate Support Services and this move has proved extremely productive. The team facilitated in the setting up, catering and clearing away for an average of 5 meetings a day (almost 1200 in the year) in addition to working with services to provide access to the building as necessary during weekends etc.

Word Processing carried out 3,241 WP jobs in addition to administrative roles such as scanning, job-line requests, filing, stuffing envelopes and assisting other departments with advice etc.



Corporate Administration successfully delivered the new security system for the building that included the programming and distribution of approximately 400 new staff, member and visitor passes. Just over £102,000 was spent on postal charges with 83% being sent second class (an increase of 1% on last year).

#### Member's Entrance Door Keeper

It is with regret that I have to report to members that Nigel, the almost always-cheerful doorkeeper, has decided to leave us for pastures new. I will miss his banter and wish him well in what he chooses to do.

### **CORPORATE PROPERTY SERVICES**

Stewart Rutledge retired from the Authority on Friday 30th March 2007. George Stark has taken over the post of Corporate Property Manager. This is on a secondment basis.

Toby Taylor left TDBC (GIS Section) on the 21st March 2007. The intention is not to replace him at the moment, but as and when required we will employ outside consultants/companies on a task by task basis.

Registration of Land - Documentation for registration of part of the Council's land holdings is now 99% complete and has been sent to the Land Registry Office. We now await the Land Registry response to our submissions.

The OMB - The tenants of the OMB have now been successfully installed in 57 East Reach.

### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY UNIT**

#### Year End

We have now finished running year-end processes for all our systems, and everything happened successfully and on time. Thanks to all involved, especially as this year was the first time a number of new systems had been through the process, and many new interfaces and processes were run for the first time.

#### Student Placements

We are interviewing 6 students shortly to fill our 2 placement posts for the 07/08 academic year. We continue to be impressed with the calibre of the students we take on and hope that we will be able to continue this practice within ISIS.

#### Housing Academy System Implementation

Work continues apace as the scheduled live date approaches. There is still much to do, especially around the DLO operation, but we remain confident that the schedule live date will be met.

#### Development Management Planning System Replacement

The project to replace the existing planning system with an off the shelf package is now entering the formal procurement phase, and we hope to invite potential suppliers to demonstrate their systems to us in the near future.

#### Service Performance

Our performance against our KPI's remains strong, with help desk performance in particular exceeding our targets. Our recent customer satisfaction survey showed that overall satisfaction of the service remains very high, so thank you to all the staff within the ICT service for maintaining such a high performance during what has been a very challenging year.

**Terry Hall**

**Council Meeting 17 April 2007**

## **Report of Councillor Gwyneth Leighton - Communications**

### **Public Relations**

The spring edition of **Deane Dispatch** has now been distributed and featured a variety of stories from each service area.

We have been involved working across the districts on press releases to encourage the community to get involved in **Team Somerset**. The PR generated from the trip to London has been very effective in terms of coverage generated.

The public announcement of the Preferred Bidder for the **ISiS Programme** was successfully coordinated between all organisations involved. The announcement received some media coverage.

We are currently developing the Communications Plan for the transition stage of the ISiS Programme. This has involved undertaking a comprehensive stakeholder analysis which will be used to inform the Plan. Communications on the Programme are now being managed through the Communications Workstream involving representatives from TDBC, SCC and the Police as well as IBM.

**Waterlinks** - the Member briefing I mentioned in my last report was put on hold as all councillors were invited to the launch at Bridgwater. Several members attended to experience first hand what the project is all about. The public response was tremendous and we had good media coverage.

### **Web Content and Marketing**

Members who visit our website regularly will have noticed that the homepage has changed – giving better presentation of our news stories and events in Taunton Deane. It now looks less cluttered and is more user-friendly. The pages across the site are being updated and revised to improve the information that we are providing to our customers and to improve the consistency of presentation. A web strategy and a style guide are being prepared to support staff when adding information to the site.

### **Consultation & Information**

Our annual survey 'Your Council Your Views 2007' will be sent out to a random sample of 5000 residents in May. To publicise the survey and encourage a good response we are planning Roadshows in Taunton and Wellington. We will use these to encourage people to feedback their thoughts on specific aspects of the survey. The results from this survey will inform the budget setting for 2008/09.

We have successfully launched a new Corporate Complaints System following a thorough review of how we dealt with complaints. We have simplified the process following feedback from users and customers. Our focus has been on creating a more effective and efficient process which enables a more consistent approach to dealing with complaints. We have also tried to strengthen how we embed organisational learning as a result of complaints. A new Customer Feedback leaflet has been produced and is available on request.

Finally, when I first took on the Communications Portfolio I asked Stephen Fletcher (the then Chief Exec) what was involved and was handed an almost empty sheet of paper. It would be hard if writing this up now to stop short of a book! We have developed a great Communications Team and have worked on all the major projects and events the Council has been involved with. Furthermore we have developed excellent working relationships with the PR teams in our neighbouring councils and external partners.

I would like to thank Councillors and Officers alike for their contributions, and for all the support and encouragement they have given. It has truly been a team effort.

**Gwyneth Leighton**  
**Executive Councillor Communications**

**COUNCILMEETING 17 APRIL 2007**

**REPORT OF COUNCILLOR MRS JOANNA LEWIN-HARRIS  
COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP**

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

The 10 year document has been agreed by the LSP and work now continues on the first Action Plan. Both documents will be published by the end of the month.

**COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

The Team Somerset prospectus contains a clear commitment to establish Community Partnerships as part of the drive to work at a more local level.

The Community Leadership panel recently debated a discussion paper on the possible functions and form of Community Partnerships within Taunton Deane.

Possible functions of Community partnerships could be:

- To monitor the delivery of the Local Area Agreement and Sustainable Community Strategy at the local level.
- To identify issues/actions for the next Local Area Agreement and Sustainable Community Strategy Action Plan
- To contribute to TDBC's overview and scrutiny role.

The starting point for deciding on the appropriate geographical area could be the four community planning areas proposed in the recent restructure of the Corporate Management Team. However, many partners are also planning to work at a neighbourhood level and there would be considerable advantages to working together on this. Early discussions with the police have shown support for this approach.

The panel supported the recommendation that the Executive continue to develop and implement locality working within Taunton Deane.

**EFFECTIVE DEMOCRACY FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES**

The IDEA recently invited Taunton Deane to participate in a pilot seminar on Effective Democracy for Sustainable Communities.

Both members and officers attended this event at the Cleeve Hotel in Wellington last month. Topics included the Growth Agenda, Creating Sustainable Communities and Securing the Benefits of Growth for Local Communities. A range of highly qualified speakers gave a most interesting

perspective from both the public and private sector point of view and all those attending seemed to agree that it was a very worthwhile event.

The bonus for those attending was full board at the Cleeve Hotel funded by the IDEA, so at no cost to TDBC!

## **HALCON CLEAN UP AND COMMUNITY CLEAN UP PARTNERSHIP**

Residents, councillors, representatives from Taunton Deane Borough Council, Government Office South West and the Avon & Somerset Constabulary joined together for the Halcon & Lambrook Community Clean-Up Day and to mark the launch of the Community Clean-Up Partnership.

The Community Clean-up Partnership is a joint effort by Taunton Deane Borough Council, Avon and Somerset Constabulary and The Probation Service to work together to make our communities cleaner, brighter and feeling safer.

The Partnership will run a group of unpaid workers subject to Community Punishment Orders to work in the community cleaning up the effects of anti-social behaviour. The type of work carried out includes litter picking, refurbishment of benches and other street furniture, removal of graffiti, painting and repairing vandalised areas. The Clean-Up Partnership will work closely with Local Action Teams (LATs) and other community groups on both small scale and larger scale projects and in neighbourhoods or at sites across Taunton Deane.

The Community Clean-Up Partnership was involved with the Clean-Up Day clearing fly tipping, dealing with graffiti as well assisting people clearing refuse from their gardens. They joined many local residents, of all ages, cleaning up the neighbourhood and making a real difference to the Halcon and Lambrook Estates.

## **SWRA MEETING**

Climate Change was the main topic of debate on Friday 16 March 2007, when the full membership of the South West Regional Assembly met at County Hall in Exeter.

The Assembly supported a recommendation to sign the South West Regional Declaration on Climate Change (the Nottingham Declaration) and also to encourage local Authorities and other organisations in the South West to do the same.

I am glad to say that, once again, Taunton Deane is ahead of the game, having already signed the Nottingham Declaration.

The Assembly also voted to to give in principle support to the use of Severn tidal power as a source of energy.

**AND FINALLY ...**

I would like to take the opportunity of my last report to Full Council of this quadrennium to offer my most sincere thanks to the officers of the Council with whom I have worked over the past four years.

It has been a pleasure to work with them. I have learnt a huge amount from them and I thank them all for their professionalism, commitment, hard work and support.

Joanna Lewin-Harris