

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Executive – 2 February 2010

Corporate Strategy 2010-2013

Report of the Strategy Officer

(This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Nicola Wilson)

Executive Summary

This report presents the Corporate Strategy 2010-2013, providing direction for the Council and setting our objectives and desired outcomes for the next three years. The Executive is requested to approve the Corporate Strategy, for adoption by Full Council

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To seek the Executive's consideration of the Corporate Strategy 2010-2013

2. Background

- 2.1 The Corporate Strategy contains the Borough Council's Vision, Business Principles and Core values. It describes the key outcomes that we intend to achieve in the community over the next three years. Until now these outcomes have been delivered by achieving 20 objectives that are closely aligned to the Council's ETCHED aims.
- 2.2 Following both Member and manager involvement, our proposal for this year is to rewrite the Corporate Strategy and undertake the following:
- Replace ETCHED (our Corporate Aims based on Economy, Transport, Crime, Healthy Living, Environment & Delivery)
 - Introduce a new Vision and have four new Corporate Aims with fewer Objectives
 - Priorities that are focussed / measurable
 - Alignment with the Local Area Agreement (LAA)
 - Integration with the Medium Term Financial Plan & Core Council Review
 - Comprehensive Area Assessment - Fit for purpose
- 2.3 The timetable for the review of the Corporate Strategy is set out below.

Date	Meeting	Purpose	✓
1 Oct 09	Scrutiny	Proposed direction and timetable	✓

29 Oct 09	Scrutiny	Consideration of first draft	✓
21 Jan 10	Scrutiny	Consider final draft reflecting Executive's Proposed Budget	✓
2 Feb 10	Executive	To reflect final Budget Proposals and Executive approval	
9 Feb 10	Full Council	Final approval	

2.4 Corporate Scrutiny has considered the Corporate Strategy on three occasions. Feedback over these three meetings can be summarised as follows:-

- The initial proposals (1 October and 29 October 2009) did not fully reflect the importance of the growth agenda
- A general view that pockets of deprivation exist across the Deane and that the problem is not restricted to North Taunton and Taunton East (1 October 2009)
- More detail needed concerning the Performance Indicators (29 October 2009)
- There needs to be more emphasis given to the proposal to create a Green Knowledge Economy (21 January 2010)*
- We should state our commitment to deliver transport infrastructure in Wellington i.e. Northern Relief Road and Railway Station (21 January 2010)*

These matters have now been addressed.

3. Corporate Aims and Objectives

3.1 Having worked with Members and considered their initial feedback through Scrutiny, we are now proposing four corporate priorities:-

- Tackling Deprivation and Sustainable Community Development
- Regeneration (economic development and housing growth)
- Affordable Housing
- Climate Change

3.2 Supporting the Corporate Aims are objectives. These have been reduced from 20 in the existing strategy to 9 in the proposed strategy. There has been a similar proportionate reduction in the number of key activities.

3.3 Appendix A provides a short summary of the proposed corporate aims, objectives, key activities and performance indicators

3.4 Appendix B provides more contextual detail to each of the proposed Corporate Aims

3.5 The proposed corporate aims are all directly related to the growth agenda. Growth is the overarching context and will provide significant opportunities to address all of our priorities.

- 3.6 We have made an amendment to the Vision to reflect the importance of the Growth agenda and the possibilities that it provides:-

Taunton Deane will be recognized nationally as a place that is developing in a sustainable way, securing a better life and future for its people, businesses and communities.

- 3.7 At this stage the majority of the proposed objectives will need to be set at a high (strategic) level. For example, there is still much work to be done on developing the following strategies:-

- Tackling Deprivation: A strategy is required;
- Regeneration: Economic Development Strategy is still in preparation, as is the Core Strategy and Infrastructure Delivery Plans;
- Climate change: An action plan needs to be developed.

- 3.8 More clarity will be provided at the next review of the Corporate Strategy. Work on this will commence during Autumn 2010.

4. Performance Management

- 4.1 We need to monitor performance against the Corporate Strategy in order to understand how effective we are being at delivering our aims objectives. This will be done in two ways:-

- Activity monitoring: We shall contact appropriate managers on a quarterly basis for an update against each of the activities;
- Performance Indicators: We have chosen a number of performance indicators that will provide statistical evidence to support an assessment of our performance. A number of these are drawn from the National Indicator Set (NIS) whilst a small number have been locally defined. It is worth noting that the chosen National Indicators are within the Local Area Agreement. Data collection for most of the National Indicators is on a yearly basis, so preventing in year monitoring. Some of these locally defined indicators need more work in order to define data sources, baselines and targets.

- 4.2 The detail of the performance regime is provided at Appendix A (page 3).

5. Profile of Services

- 5.1 In developing this Corporate Strategy, we needed to understand what the priorities and non-priorities of the Council should be over the next three years, so that we can focus our efforts and resources on tackling the most important issues.

- 5.2 We consulted the Executive, the Shadow Executive and the Independents through facilitated workshops to understand their views on 75 different service areas historically provided by the Council.
- 5.3 To determine what our future priorities should be, Councillors considered the community priorities as identified through consultation, central government requirements and what we had already committed to in partnership with the LAA, Sustainable Community Strategy and other local agreements.
- 5.4 Councillors then used this context to consider in which service areas we should increase, decrease and maintain investment. This was further refined through two meetings with the Corporate Scrutiny Committee.
- 5.5 The headline results for the increase / decrease areas are captured in this table:-

Service Area	Increase Investment	Decrease Investment
Climate Change	Yes	
Tackling Deprivation	Yes	
Growth and Economic regeneration	Yes	
Affordable Housing	Yes	
Tourist Information Centre		Yes
The Town Centre Company		Yes
Golf and Tennis		Yes
Pest Control		Yes
Conservation and Heritage		Yes
Licensing		Yes
Food Control		Yes
Scrutiny		Yes

- 5.6 This profile of services has been fed into the Council's Core Council Review and has helped shape the restructure of the Council. This will ensure that we are 'fit for purpose' and can effectively deliver against these new priorities from 2010 to 2013.
- 5.7 Themes and Service Areas will need to work closely together in order to deliver the corporate aims. This needs to be set in the context of further budget pressures over the next few years, certainly within the lifespan of the emerging Corporate Strategy.

6. Delivering the Corporate Aims – Service Planning

- 6.1 A top down approach will be required to lead this process, involving the development of a Strategic Aims Delivery Plan for each of the

corporate aims. The Strategic Aim Delivery Plan will be the equivalent of a service plan that outlines time-scales, key actions, risks, resource requirements, expected outcomes and key performance indicators etc. It will also describe individual projects that are to be led by Theme Managers or Lead Officers within an agreed project management framework. The 'aim leader' (who will be a Director) will have the ability to call upon support from services across the Authority as and when required. Producing these plans to the necessary level of detail will take time and resource.

- 6.2 It will be important to help support managers to understand their connection to the corporate strategy. This includes an understanding of the Corporate Aims and other commitments within (for example) the Local Area Agreement and the Sustainable Community Strategy.

7. Thematic Working

"The ultimate purpose of local government should not be solely to manage a collection of public services, but rather pursue the well-being of a place and the people who live there by whatever means are necessary and available"

Sir Michael Lyons 2007

- 7.1 We need to develop an enthusiastic and flexible workforce that can move between priorities. This will involve the development of 'thematic working' where staff from different themes can be seconded to work in a project team as part of their 'day job'. This will be aided by the development of more flexible / generic job roles. These developments will enable the Council to become more flexible and better able to adapt to an environment of continuous and multiple change. However, 'thematic working' is a change that will take time to develop and is likely to be an area where investment and external support is required. The principle of thematic working has been approved as part of the proposals for Core Council Review

8. Service Delivery, Business Process Reengineering and Asset Management

- 8.1 We need to have a detailed look at the quality of (and expectations for) service delivery, particularly for those services that do not relate closely to corporate aims. This is a significant area of work. The intention will be to investigate different ways of delivering the same service at less cost i.e. Business Process Re-engineering. Services will be reviewed to identify opportunities for income generation and further streamlining. The CCR was the start of the process and we will need to continue the review of services to increase efficiencies. This work will take place during 2010.

- 8.2 We also need a thorough review of assets and asset management to explore opportunities for new revenue streams in the future. Southwest One is currently leading this process.
- 8.3 The above (sections 6 -8) are critical to the delivery of the Corporate Strategy and the Core Council Review. These are significant areas of work and will take time to develop and implement.

9. Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)

- 9.1 A working group, made from various leads and specialists on each of the proposed corporate aims, was formed to carry out an EIA on the Corporate Strategy. The group met on the 4 January 2010 to look at the potential negative impacts on protected groups (age, race, disability, gender, faith and belief, sexual orientation) and also considered the impact on people's socio-economic status that may occur as a result of the proposed aims.
- 9.2 Several negative impacts were identified and due to the complex nature of the assessment a second workshop took place on 12 January 2010 to complete the EIA and to recommend actions against each proposed aim to remove any negative impact that has been identified.
- 9.3 The headline results are that we are at risk of negatively impacting upon protected groups if we do not
- Consult and engage with our communities to understand the diverse needs and aspirations of the people we wish to serve.
 - Understand the demographics of our population, to plan effectively for the future needs of our communities.
 - Ensure that initiatives and delivery plans do not exclude certain groups from taking part or discriminate against certain groups.
 - Ensure that planning of growth and design of developments take into account the needs of different age groups, accessibility and the cultural and religious needs of the growing population.
 - Ensure that protected groups are consulted with on the provision and design of affordable housing to ensure it meets their needs.
- 9.4 The draft EqIA is attached at Appendix C. The results of the EqIA will be used to inform public consultations (Section 10 below). We shall also be meeting with Theme Managers to discuss the implications for project design and service delivery.

10. Public Consultation

- 10.1 Public consultation will occur in Spring 2010. This will inform both the delivery of the Corporate Aims and the next review of the Corporate Strategy. The focus of the consultation will be to challenge whether we have chosen the right key activities, and whether there are any alternative suggestions. We shall consult as follows:-

- On-line (through Limehouse / TDBC website)
- Focus on key partners and hard to reach groups
- 'Involve' leaflet
- Link in to other relevant consultations that may be programmed for Spring 2010

10.2 A consultation programme will be developed during February / March 2010 and the detail will be informed by the results of the EqIA.

11. Resource Implications

11.1 The aims and objectives of the Corporate Strategy provide an important lead-in to budget setting and service planning activity. Increasingly, local authorities are being challenged to demonstrate a clear link between priorities and resource allocation.

12. Impact on Corporate Priorities

12.1 The Corporate Strategy establishes the priorities of the Council.

13. Recommendation

13.1 The Executive is recommended to approve the Corporate Strategy for adoption by Full Council.

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Appendix A

Corporate Strategy

On TRAC.....!

Tackling Deprivation, Regeneration of the District, Affordable Housing & Climate Change

VISION

Taunton Deane will be recognized nationally as a place that is developing in a sustainable way, securing a better life and future for its people, businesses and communities.

Aims, Objectives & Key Activities

AIM 1: TACKLING DEPRIVATION & SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Deprivation will be tackled so that disadvantaged communities will have better access to jobs, training and local services

Objective 1: Focus on deprivation within Taunton East (the most deprived area), North Taunton and Rural Deprivation (the hidden problem)

- Work with partners to develop a Community Development Plan by April 2011 involving:
 - Data analysis
 - Community engagement
 - A vision that will contain elements of economic and community development and regeneration activity
- Deliver an Implementation Plan by September 2011 that will contain details of:
 - Priorities
 - Projects
 - Delivery mechanisms
- Work with partners to adopt a 'Total Place' approach to tackle deprivation
 - Alignment and pooling of budgets
- Develop a TDBC staff volunteering scheme
 - Recruit suitable volunteers
 - Support volunteers / projects

Objective 2: Work with partners to deliver 'one-stop' advice on skills, employment and apprenticeships direct to communities suffering most from deprivation

- Deliver Enterprise Gateway (Job Club) at Taunton East, work with partners (Somerset Skills & Learning) to enhance existing delivery of back-to-work skills programme in North Taunton and to develop back-to-work skills programme in Wellington

Objective 3: Support the work of key partners: North Taunton Partnership and Link Partnership

- Work with partners to help secure the medium term future of the Priorswood Resource Centre and Link Centre by sourcing appropriate funding to be released within an Service Level Agreement

AIM 2: REGENERATION

The growth and regeneration of Taunton Deane will have been planned and successfully managed. Nationally we shall be recognised as a leading 'Green Knowledge Economy'. Businesses will have located to the area to provide jobs in line with housing growth. Homes will have been provided to cater for the needs of a growing and diverse population within communities that people are proud of

Objective 4: Facilitate the creation of a leading Green Knowledge Economy

- An approved Economic Development Strategy by April 2010 that will state the intention to 'green and grow' the local economy
- Work with partners to identify innovative economic development projects that will deliver a leading Green Knowledge Economy, and to commence delivery during 2010/11
- Identify and promote the delivery of an increased supply of employment land in Taunton
- Promote Taunton as an attractive place to do business and work with businesses wishing to relocate to the area. Work with local businesses to ensure their needs continue to be catered for within Taunton Deane

Objective 5: Facilitate the provision of new homes to meet the needs of a growing population

- An adopted Core Strategy by September 2011
- Commence work on Urban Extensions Masterplanning and identify strategic deliverables by July 2010
- An annual review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Study (SHLAA)
- Utilise council owned land and work pro-actively with developers on other sites to develop all forms of housing
- Ensure a 5 year supply of housing land within Taunton by September 2011

Objective 6: Deliver infrastructure to support the growth of the economy and local communities

- Secure the medium term financial funding for Project Taunton for the period beyond March 2011
- An adopted Infrastructure Delivery Plan by September 2011
- Adopt the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document by September 2011
- Campaign and lobby for improvements to Junction 25
- Begin work on the redevelopment of Castle Green during 2010/11
- Major transport infrastructure for Wellington to be adopted within the LDF by September 2011

AIM 3: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Everyone will have access to a decent home at a price they can afford, in a place where they want to live and work

Objective 7: Making Homes More Affordable

- Explore the full range of affordable housing solutions to meet the diverse needs of communities and to better understand the Taunton Deane housing market by March 2011

- Identify and implement the key actions that will improve our ability to increase the number of affordable homes available in the Borough March 2011
- Improve conditions in the existing private sector and social housing stock where this will make living more affordable by March 2013

AIM 4: CLIMATE CHANGE

Carbon emissions across the Deane will have been reduced through partnership and community action. Local communities will be more resilient to the twin threat of climate change and peak oil.

Objective 8: Meet the 10:10 challenge by reducing the Council's carbon emissions by 10% by the end of 2010 and then to achieve year on year reductions thereafter, with the aim of becoming a carbon neutral authority in energy use in the future

- Produce an action plan to reduce carbon emissions for all Council buildings and assets including vehicles by May 2010 and to implement the agreed actions over the following twelve months. Work towards carbon neutrality in energy use by setting future targets and reviewing the action plan on an annual basis

Objective 9: Work with communities to significantly reduce individual carbon emissions across the Taunton Deane area, with measurable achievements by March 2013

- Work with the LSP and local community to produce a 'Community energy descent plan' by the end of 2013 to provide a deliverable action plan to reduce per capita carbon emissions across Taunton Deane.
- Actively seek external funding as a Council and in partnership to support Climate Change initiatives

Performance Indicators

Objective 1

Activities 1 and 2

Actions monitoring

QoL – Reduction in the proportion of residents who are defined as living in the most deprived super output areas in the country

Activity 3

Total volunteer hours

Objective 2

Actions monitoring

Numbers referred / back to work

Objective 3

Actions monitoring

Local PI – Funding secured against target

Objective 4

Activities 1, 2 and 3

Actions monitoring

Local PI – No of jobs created against 1,000pa target

Activity 4

NI170 – previously developed land that has been derelict for more than 5 years

Objective 5

Activities 1,2 and 3

Actions monitoring

NI154 Net additional homes provided

Activity 4

NI159 Supply of ready to develop housing sites

Objective 6

Actions monitoring

Objective 7

Activities 1 and 2

NI155 – Number of affordable homes delivered

Activity 3

NI158 - % of non decent council homes

NI187 – Tackling fuel poverty: People receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low energy rating

Objective 8

Local PI – 10% reduction in Council's CO2 emissions by 2010 from 2009 baseline

NI 185 – Reduction in CO2 emissions from LA operations

MI 188 – Adapting to climate change (process only)

Objective 9

Activity 1

NI 188 – Per capita CO2 emissions in the LA area

Activity 2

Actions monitoring

Appendix B

Vision

Taunton Deane will be recognized nationally as a place that is developing in a sustainable way, securing a better life and future for its people, businesses and communities.

Aim 1: Tackling Deprivation and Sustainable Community Development

Vision

Deprivation will be tackled so that disadvantaged communities will have better access to jobs, training and local services

Context and Challenges

Deprivation is calculated using the Indices of Multiple Deprivation – IMD. The IMD analyses performance data relating to income, employment, education, crime, health, access to services and living environment.

IMD data (2007) identifies that overall deprivation is improving across the Deane. We are 204th out of 354 local authorities, where 1 is the worst.

However, deprivation is worsening in certain areas. We now have 6 areas that are classified as being within the 25% most deprived areas in England (an increase from 4 in 2004). We have one area that is within the 10% most deprived areas in England (we had none in 2004). 8% of our population lives in comparatively high deprivation (compared to 5.6% in 2004). The six areas comprising the worst deprivation are:

- Halcon North (Roman Rd)
- Halcon West (Lambrook Rd)
- Lyngford North (Cheddon Rd)
- Lyngford West (Lyngford Rd)
- Pyrland and Rowbarton Central (Dorchester Rd)
- Eastgate South-West (East Reach)

However, deprivation is not confined to Taunton and it can often be hidden from statistical analysis within IMD. Examples of deprivation elsewhere are:

Rural: Fuel Poverty

Rural: Access to broadband and mobile phone networks

North Wellington / Rockwell green: Income & employment

Rural: Access to services and public transport

Over the past few years there has been much effort and resource devoted to tackling deprivation. And yet the problem is worsening at certain locations (both urban and rural). This would suggest that we need a more coordinated and focussed approach to the problem. This has now been recognised by other partners. The Local Strategic Partnership has prioritised this issue. It has provided funding to help support community development and is now in the process of establishing better connections between strategy and delivery. It is important that the work of the Borough Council aligns itself to this process and provides leadership.

There are a number of factors that will be critical to tackling deprivation:

- Leadership – Political and managerial
- Community engagement – Communities need to be part of the solution
- Partnerships – Forging effective partnerships with public, private, voluntary and community sectors
- Budgets – Channelling investment (aligning and pooling budgets)

At this stage it is considered too early to be committing the Borough Council to specific actions. A bottom-up approach is critical to resolving deprivation. A key objective must therefore be the delivery of a Community Development Plan. This would then inform delivery through an Implementation Plan.

Of direct relevance to tackling deprivation is the delivery of Enterprise Gateways. This work is being led by the Economic Development Unit, and links closely to the emerging Economic Development Strategy. Enterprise Gateways are multi-agency (e.g. Business Link, Job centre+ etc, training providers etc) and act as 'one-stop-shops' to provide business, employment and training advice direct to local communities. They typically provide the following advice:

- Interview skills, job application advice and CV writing
- One to one support and advice to help people become self employed
- Referral to training and personal skill development
- Access to employment

Enterprise Gateways are recognised as best practice from the Business Support Simplification Programme (BERR). There are many successful examples nationwide. We are working to provide Enterprise Gateways in North Taunton, Taunton East & Wellington.

Enterprise gateways (and many other activities that will flow from the Community Development Plan) will naturally be delivered from the community offices at North Taunton and Taunton East. These are staffed by a paid worker (currently absent at Taunton East) and volunteers. These offices are central to tackling deprivation and their continued existence must be a priority objective.

The following objectives and key activities are proposed:

Objective 1

Focus on deprivation within Taunton East (the most deprived area), North Taunton and Rural Deprivation (the hidden problem)

Key Activities

- Work with partners to develop a Community Development Plan by April 2011 involving
 - Data Analysis
 - Community engagement
 - A vision that will contain elements of economic and community development and regeneration activity
- Deliver an Implementation Plan by September 2011 that will contain details of:
 - Priorities
 - Projects
 - Delivery mechanisms
- Work with partners to adopt a 'Total Place' approach to tackle deprivation
 - Alignment and pooling of budgets
- Develop a TDBC staff volunteering scheme
 - Recruit suitable volunteers
 - Support volunteers / projects

Performance Indicators

Activities 1 and 2

- Actions monitoring
- QoL – Reduction in the proportion of residents who are defined as living in the most deprived super output areas in the country

Activity 3

- Total volunteer hours

Objective 2

Work with partners to deliver 'one-stop' advice on skills, employment and apprenticeships direct to communities suffering most from deprivation

Key Activity

- Deliver Enterprise Gateway (Job Club) at Taunton East, work with partners (Somerset Skills & Learning) to enhance existing delivery of back-to-work skills programme in North Taunton and to develop back-to-work skills programme in Wellington

Performance Indicators

- Actions monitoring
- Numbers referred / back to work

Objective 3

Support the work of key partners: North Taunton Partnership and Link Partnership

Key Activities

- Work with partners to help secure the medium term future of the Priorswood Resource Centre and Link Centre by sourcing appropriate funding to be released within a Service Level Agreement

Performance Indicators

- Actions monitoring
- Local PI – Funding secured against target

Aim 2: Regeneration

Vision

The regeneration and growth of Taunton Deane will have been planned and successfully managed. Nationally we shall be recognised as a leading 'Green Knowledge Economy'. Businesses will have located to the area to provide jobs in line with housing growth. Homes will have been provided to cater for the needs of an expanding and diverse population within communities that people are proud of

The Economy

Context and Challenges

Taunton has reached a watershed in its economic development. The challenges it faces are new and different, and require a highly ambitious approach:

Taunton is a national "Growth Point". To meet this challenge, the local economy has to generate 16,500 new jobs by 2026, nearly 30 per cent more jobs than now in order to support major housing expansion plans. The recession has obviously made this a more challenging task. Taunton has to grow strongly and steadily for the next 15 years, at a time when the economic outlook is highly uncertain.

Public spending will be weak over the next 5-8 years. Taunton is highly exposed to spending cuts, given that 40 per cent of residents work for public sector employers – who also account for 70 per cent of Taunton's high skill, high wage jobs. These impacts are hard to predict. Taunton needs to develop stronger business drivers to compensate for an adverse outlook in the public sector of the local economy.

Prior to the recession, there were concerns over Taunton's economic competitiveness. This is reflected, for example, in the persistent workplace-based earnings gap between Taunton and the rest of the South West and the rest of Britain: 5 per cent and 15 per cent in 2008 respectively. To achieve parity with regional workplace earnings levels 48% of the new jobs created must be high-value high-skill employment within knowledge intensive businesses. Local businesses are of the view that there is a strong need to modernise Taunton's economy. They underlined Taunton's lack of economic dynamism, evident from low levels of inward investment, tourism and high-value consumer services, and mooted the prospect of Taunton becoming a suburban extension of Exeter and Bristol.

In order to become a successful knowledge economy Taunton will need to strengthen the recognised drivers of competitiveness: Skills and talent – universal and generic, graduate and skilled craft/technical/process skills

- Innovation – new products, new processes in all sectors
- Enterprise – new start ups and dynamic, knowledge-intensive small firms
- Infrastructure – marketable employment sites/buildings, sustainable transport, ICT and 21st century 'green economy' energy, water and waste networks
- Finance – new business models and sources for financing projects

Delivery of the emerging Economic Development Strategy (EDS) will be based on *existing* economic development related initiatives – such as the regeneration work of Project Taunton and the University of Somerset project. However, in order to underline Taunton's new contemporary vision and sense of economic ambition, the EDS will also be driven forward by a new 'engine of growth' – dubbed the "Green Knowledge Economy" (GKE). This signals Taunton's intent to fully exploit the new business and job opportunities emerging from the 'green agenda' – tackling climate change (cutting Green House Gas emissions), managing resources more efficiently and responsibly and protecting eco-systems and biodiversity.

The GKE dimension of the EDS will be taken forward through three thematic programmes, which are channels for developing and implementing individual projects. The names and missions of the programmes are:

- **Green and Grow Communities:** *To develop community-based, driven and owned approaches to the green knowledge economy, linking green initiatives (renewable energy, resource conservation and management and sustainable development) with business and employment growth initiatives*
- **Business Development:** *To accelerate business growth and innovation and new enterprise development, particularly in knowledge-intensive sectors of Taunton's economy*
- **Promoting Taunton:** *To establish Taunton as an important destination for inward investment and tourism, at the regional, national and international levels*

Objective 4

Facilitate the creation of a leading Green Knowledge Economy

Key Activities

- An approved Economic Development Strategy by April 2010 that will state the intention to 'green and grow' the local economy
- Work with partners to identify innovative economic development projects that will deliver a Green Knowledge Economy, and to commence delivery during 2010/11
- Identify and promote the delivery of an increased supply of employment land in Taunton
- Promote Taunton as an attractive place to do business and work with businesses wishing to relocate to the area. Work with local businesses to ensure their needs continue to be catered for within Taunton Deane

Performance Indicators

Activities 1, 2 and 3

- Actions monitoring
- Local PI – No of jobs created against 1,000pa target

Activity 4

- NI170 – previously developed land that has been derelict for more than 5 years

Housing Growth

Context and Challenges

Emerging regional plans recognise Taunton as a major focus for growth over the next twenty years. Proposed changes to the Revised Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West identify a requirement for at least 21,800 new homes to be provided over the period 2006 – 2026 with some 18,000 at the Taunton urban area.

New housing development can deliver many benefits. An increased supply of housing can help to meet housing needs and demand, improve affordability and contribute towards us achieving our affordable housing aim. New housing development will help to unlock additional investment in local services and facilities as well as critical infrastructure, the benefits of which will be wide. Accommodating housing growth creates an opportunity to create sustainable, mixed-use urban extensions that are well-integrated with communities and which represent something residents can be proud of.

However, it must be recognised that there are significant challenges:

- The global recession and the downturn in the housing market
- Availability of finance for developers affecting the delivery of schemes
- A shortfall in the supply of ready to develop housing sites
- Fundamentally increasing the rate of delivery in order to meet strategic housing requirements significantly higher than those previously prescribed
- Ensuring developments retain viability whilst contributing towards meeting infrastructure and affordable housing requirements

The Borough Council is leading the preparation of a number of strategies and plans. This will help to ensure that these challenges are managed successfully:

Core Strategy: This will frame the Council's planning policy across a series of themes including housing. It will be central to enabling and facilitating housing growth. It will identify strategic housing allocations which will deliver a large proportion of the new homes needed. It will also establish a wider spatial strategy that will outline the approach to accommodating the remainder of the housing growth.

Urban Extensions Masterplanning: Central to meeting challenging growth targets for Taunton is the delivery of two large scale sustainable urban extensions at Monkton Heathfield and Comeytrowe. These developments will require detailed masterplanning to ensure that these developments are

- integrated with the existing urban area
- offer an appropriate mix of uses, services and facilities
- deliver a high quality design

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA): There is a need to increase the supply of deliverable housing sites ahead of both the Core Strategy and the major urban extensions at Monkton Heathfield and Comeytrowe, both of

which are longer term strategic sites. To enable this, we plan to release a number of suitable housing sites in Spring 2010. These sites have been identified by the SHLAA (July 2009). It is anticipated that each will make a contribution towards the requirement to maintain five year supply of deliverable housing sites.

A comprehensive review of the SHLAA will commence in the Spring of 2010. This will help the Council to identify further potential deliverable development sites across the Borough, including identifying any of its own assets which may be available for housing. The SHLAA is developed through the active involvement of the Strategic Housing Partnership, which includes representatives from the Local Authorities as well as the housebuilding industry and Registered Social Landlords. The work of the SHP also involves the development of common LDF housing policies across different planning authorities and the commissioning and updating of different components of the housing evidence base.

Objective 5

Facilitate the provision of new homes to meet the diverse needs of a growing population

Key Activities

- An adopted Core Strategy by September 2011
- Commence work on Urban Extensions Masterplanning and identify strategic deliverables by July 2010
- An annual review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
- Utilise council owned land and work pro-actively with developers on other sites to develop all forms of housing
- Ensure a 5 year supply of housing land within Taunton by September 2011

Performance Indicators

Activities 1,2 and 3

- Actions monitoring
- NI154 Net additional homes provided

Activity 4

- NI159 Supply of ready to develop housing sites

INFRASTRUCTURE

Context and Challenges

Expansion of the economy and the development of new housing should not be provided in isolation of essential infrastructure. There are two broad types of infrastructure.

Physical infrastructure includes the following:

- Roads and bridges, including the Third Way and Northern Inner Distributor

- Flood defences and flood related infrastructure e.g. weirs and dams
- Green infrastructure, such as open spaces and country parks
- Public spaces, such as works to enhance the setting of the town centre
- Waste to power initiatives
- District wide energy and waste systems
- IT connectivity (both domestic and commercial)
- Sustainable transport solutions, such as cycleways and public transport

Public service infrastructure includes the following:

- School places
- Doctor's surgeries and health centres
- Libraries
- Provision of policing, fire and rescue, youth services etc to new and expanded communities

The anticipated high levels of future growth place significant pressures on existing communities, their services and facilities. In addition, some of the larger urban extensions and development sites are likely to give rise to significant infrastructure requirements of their own. Development does however provide a major opportunity to ensure that the benefits arising from growth are wide-reaching and benefit the communities of Taunton Deane. It is therefore critical that we have a good understanding of the infrastructure requirements of the Borough over the next 20 years and how they can be realised.

The Single Conversation is the means by which the Homes and Communities Agency (the HCA is the government body with responsibility for housing and regeneration) engage with local authorities and their partners. The HCA has funding available to local authorities which can help to 'unlock' development and remove barriers to delivery, it is therefore important that the Council continues to engage with the Single Conversation process which is partly facilitated by Somerset County Council.

An important component of the Council's Core Strategy will be an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). The preparation of the IDP will involve a range of partners (e.g. Taunton Growth Board, LSP, developers etc). The IDP will identify critical infrastructure, when it is likely to be required and how it can be delivered, i.e. paid for. A Planning Obligations SPD will then be prepared to develop the approach to collecting planning obligations to fund the necessary infrastructure.

Project Taunton is a small team that was formed in 2004. They help to manage the regeneration of Taunton, bringing together experience from both the public and private sectors. They will play a key role in securing key infrastructure for Taunton Town Centre and the proposed urban extensions. Their coordinating work (e.g. New Growth Point) has been central to securing large sums of Government funding towards key infrastructure projects. They have worked closely with the County Council to help secure Local Transport Plan (LTP) funding, and with the Borough Council to help secure Housing and Planning Delivery Grant (HPDG) funding. Project Taunton are currently funded until March 2011. It is essential that they are funded beyond this date so that they can continue to provide valuable support to the regeneration process.

Work on the preparation of the Ec Dev strategy has identified that J25 will be a significant barrier to east west movements within the Taunton TWA (text to be developed).

Castle Green (text to be developed)

Wellington – Major transport infrastructure (Northern Distributor Road and Railway Station) (text to be developed)

Objective 6

Deliver infrastructure to support the regeneration of both the economy and local communities

Key Activities

- Secure the medium term financial funding for Project Taunton for the period beyond March 2011
- An adopted Infrastructure Delivery Plan by September 2011
- Adopt the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document by September 2011
- Campaign and lobby for improvements to Junction 25
- Begin work on the redevelopment of Castle Green during 2010/11
- Major transport infrastructure for Wellington to be adopted within the LDF by September 2011

Performance Indicators

Activities Monitoring

Aim 3: Affordable Housing

Vision

Everyone will have access to a decent home at a price they can afford, in a place where they want to live and work

Definitions

The clearest definition of affordable housing is in the Government's 2007 Housing Green Paper which contains the aspiration that "everyone should have access to a decent home at a price they can afford, in a place where they want to live and work."

National, Regional and Local Challenges

The national and regional context for affordable housing sets the following key priorities:

- increase housing supply to achieve a better balance between supply and demand
- provide a mix and balance of housing sizes, types and tenures that reflect local needs
- locate housing developments in suitable places, which give easy access to jobs, services and facilities
- achieve well designed, good quality homes that support sustainable communities.

Locally, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment indicated that around 1800 new affordable homes per annum were required in the Taunton Housing Market Area, but this need is far bigger than can be met in any feasible affordable house building programme.

Objective 7: Making Homes More Affordable

Everyone should have access to a decent home at a price they can afford to live in, which is why our Affordable Housing Objective is simply Making Homes More Affordable.

Essentially, Taunton Deane is aiming to make homes more affordable, not just by maximising the delivery of new affordable homes, but also by tackling the affordability of existing homes.

The underlying aims of this objective are to:

- make Taunton Deane a more affordable place to live
- ensure people have sufficient choices of housing
- meet the varied needs of people wanting to live here
- improve housing conditions throughout the Borough
- create homes and communities people are proud of.

Key Activities

In order to make homes more affordable in Taunton Deane we will:

- Explore the full range of affordable housing solutions to meet the diverse needs of communities and to better understand the Taunton Deane housing market by March 2011
- Identify and implement the key actions that will improve our ability to increase the number of affordable homes available in the Borough March 2011
- Improve conditions in the existing private sector and social housing stock where this will make living more affordable by March 2013

These key activities will also involve close and effective collaborative working with a wide range of partner organisations.

Performance Indicators

Activities 1 and 2

- NI155 – Number of affordable homes delivered

Activity 3

- NI158 - Percentage of non decent council homes
- NI187 – Tackling fuel poverty: People receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low energy rating

Aim 4: Climate Change

Vision

Carbon emissions across the Deane will have been reduced through partnership and community action. Local communities will be more resilient to the twin threat of climate change and peak oil

Challenges:

Tackling Climate Change is a huge global, national and local challenge, with far-reaching consequences. There are three main elements of this:

- Reduce carbon emissions to mitigate the extent of global warming and climate change
- Reduce the dependence on oil and oil derivatives to prepare for when the global 'Peak Oil' point is reached, after which the rate of production of oil goes into terminal decline (and the price increases accordingly)
- Help our communities to adapt to Climate Change and Peak Oil by preparing for and managing the risk of increased flooding, warmer weather and more expensive fuels

There is an increasing responsibility for Councils to act as community leaders and place shaper to co-ordinate and lead local partners in tackling Climate Change.

Taunton Deane Borough Council has publicly committed to tackling the causes and impacts of Climate Change as one of its main priorities.

Objective 8

Meet the 10:10 challenge by reducing the Council's carbon emissions by 10% by the end of 2010 and then to achieve year on year reductions thereafter, with the aim of becoming a carbon neutral authority in energy use in the future

Key Activity

- Produce an action plan to reduce carbon emissions for all Council buildings and assets including vehicles by May 2010 and to implement the agreed actions over the following twelve months. Work towards carbon neutrality in energy use by setting future targets and reviewing the action plan on an annual basis

Performance Indicators

- Local PI – 10% reduction in Council's CO2 emissions by 2010 from 2009 baseline
- NI 185 – Reduction in CO2 emissions from LA operations
- NI 188 – Adapting to climate change (process only)

Objective 9

Work with communities to significantly reduce individual carbon emissions across the Taunton Deane area, with measurable achievements by March 2013

Key Activities

- Work with the LSP and local community to produce a 'Community energy descent plan' by the end of 2013 to provide a deliverable action plan to reduce per capita carbon emissions across Taunton Deane
- Actively seek external funding as a Council and in partnership to support Climate Change initiatives

Performance Indicators

- NI 188 – Per capita CO2 emissions in the LA area
- Actions monitoring

DRAFT Equality Impact Assessment Form

(Note: Action table to be developed)

What are you completing this impact assessment for?	The 2010- 2013 Corporate Strategy
Section One – Aims and objectives of the policy /service	
The three main aims are;	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To establish the council's overall vision and aims for the District and how we will deliver them• To give a clear lead for service planning activities and budget settings decision• To guide our dealings with partners and the community.	
Section two – Groups that the policy or service is targeted at	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff• Residents• Those who work in / trade in Taunton Deane• Visitors to Taunton Deane• Partner organisation	
Section three – Groups that the policy or service is delivered by	
All sections of the Council will be involved, although the main responsibility will lie with Directors and senior managers. It can only be delivered through partnership working and so will also involve our partners, in the private, public and voluntary sectors.	
Section four – Evidence and Data used for assessment	
Given the broad nature of the Corporate Strategy, a wide range of evidence was used, including:	
For general community profiling: NHS Health Profile (2009), IMD Data, IDeA/ ESD profiles, Somerset Joint Needs Assessment and Housing and Social Needs Assessment (HSNAG) data.	

For information on public perception, preferences and satisfaction: The 2008 Place Survey and Talking Tomorrow's Taunton Deane consultations results.

To guide in the setting of priorities: Members Corporate Strategy Workshop (2009)

For the Affordable Housing priority: Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Affordable Housing Events, the Choice Based Letting (CBL) reports, the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA).

For Climate Change priority: Transition Town workshops, Somerset Joint Needs Assessment and Housing Stock Conditions data.

For Tackling Deprivation priority: Halcon Away Day feedback, the Deprivation Workshop and community profiling information as listed above.

For Growth priority: The Local Development Framework (LDF) consultation (2010), Accommodating Growth and Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) consultations, Local Economic Assessment, Employment Land Survey and Economic Development Strategy Consultation.

Section Five - Conclusions drawn about the impact of service/policy/function on different groups highlighting negative impact or unequal outcomes

These have been considered in line with the corporate priorities and associated objectives:

Growth/ Regeneration:

a) Economic growth

The Economic Development Strategy is undergoing an impact assessment utilising the knowledge of Equality South West and Somerset Racial Equalities Network.

- Potential negative impact on low skilled and low educated members of the community. These groups may find accessing jobs within the High knowledge Economy which the authority plans to attract to the area.
- Potential negative impact on part-time workers, parents, carers, disabled people if businesses that support part-time working are not attracted to the area.
- Potential negative impact gender groups. Construction industries will be attracted to the area due to the high amount of growth, this industry does not attract a high number of female employees.
- Potential negative impact on age groups. Older people may find it difficult to access jobs in the emerging sectors,

such as the Green Knowledge Economy and high knowledge sectors requiring recent training and up-to-date knowledge.

- Potential risk to socio-economic groups. Many part-time workers and low earners are employed by the Public sector, a reduction in public sector employment and a rise in private sector employment may affect many people in the area.
- Potential negative impact on our partners if our vision and aims are not communicated to them effectively. Partners may have objectives which contradict our own, especially communicating with Schools and education and skills training establishments who will be providing training for the people to fill the jobs we plan to attract to the area. Communicate with the EBP and other partners (LSP and skills group) to align our plans for the future economy of Taunton Deane.

b) Enabling housing growth

A comprehensive EqIA on the Local Development Framework (LDF) will be carried out in September 2010.

- There are potential negative impacts on all groups if the urban extension master planning does not take into account the views of the community regarding housing and community provision, all consultation must be accessible and carried out regularly to reflect the changing needs and aspirations of our communities.
- Potential negative impacts on all protected groups due to the lack of profile information on our communities. A lack of understanding of the needs of our diverse communities may lead to a lack of suitable and appropriate provision. Especially for the increasing elderly population and people. Data projecting the future profile of Taunton Deane should be used during the planning and design process. Specifically around the provision of 'Homes for Life' and cultural, religious and community provision. Profiling should include the mapping of current provision to identify gaps.

c) Delivering the infrastructure

- Potential for negative impact if the infrastructure delivery action plan is not impact assessed.
- A potential negative impact on all groups could occur if the authority does not communicate its plans for growth effectively. If the borough sees an increase in the diversity of its communities due to the economic development and increase in housing provision issues of community cohesion could be raised. The authority must take an active role in promoting the value of diversity.
- A potential negative impact on all groups could occur if the authority focuses on areas of growth to the exclusion of existing communities.

Affordable Housing:

- Potential negative impact if all protected groups are not consulted with.

- Potential negative impact if consultation is not fully accessible and therefore not representative of our community's diverse needs and aspirations.
- All protected groups could be negatively impacted on if their views on housing providers, location and the types of homes and design of infrastructure are not considered.
- Potential negative impact if we offer inappropriate housing.
- Providing more choice should positively impact on vulnerable groups allowing disadvantaged families to move from areas of deprivation. However in allowing more choice some cultural groups may choose to live together, this has the potential to exclude other people from the area, or create ghetto's or further pockets of deprivation.
- Potential negative impact on faith or belief groups due the a lack of places of worship in an area attracting growth.
- Potential negative impact on all groups if cohesive and sustainable communities are not built into the design process in consultation with local people. Planners must also ensure suitable community and cultural provision and accessible facilities.

Climate Change:

a) To meet the 10:10 challenge by reducing the Councils carbon emissions by 10% by 2010 and continue reductions with the aim of becoming a carbon neutral authority.

- Potential negative impacts for employees. Consideration should be made for staff for whom homeworking is not an easy option. For example, disabled staff, parents and carers and those who are digitally excluded. Also if the use of public transport is encouraged this could discriminate against employees that live in rural areas where public transport links are limited.
- Potential negative impacts on partner organisations, especially those supporting vulnerable groups if we have a lack of staff in the office to answer queries.
- Potential negative impacts on customers if this objective reduces our availability to carry out home visits – this will particularly affect those with disabilities, those who need an interpretation service, parent and carers.
- Potential negative impact on all groups, including those in rural and deprived areas if there is a lack of accessible and affordable public transport when car use is being discouraged. A lack of facility to travel to work or places of education or training may increase levels of disadvantage.

b) Work with communities to significantly reduce carbon emissions.

- Potential negative impact for certain socio-economic groups and rural communities for whom there may not be the same level of opportunity to participate. This might also apply to certain older or disabled individuals and small businesses
- Potential negative impact on certain groups who for cultural or religious/ belief reasons do not accept or agree with

the theory of climate change and do not wish to participate, leading to potential community cohesion issues.

- Potential negative impact if we do not understand the issues faced by the community and protected groups in taking part in Climate Change initiatives. Consulting with the community on possible issues and solutions will help to engage the community and help them to understand and be willing to accept some changes to their standard of living if choices taken away.
- Higher fuel poverty and less energy efficient homes are usually in rural areas, initiatives should be targeted in these high priority areas where protected groups are made more vulnerable

Tackling Deprivation/ Community Development:

a) To focus on deprivation and disadvantage within Taunton East, North Taunton and Rural deprivation

- There is a potential negative impact on those disadvantaged and vulnerable groups that are not included in the Community Development Plan which focuses on geographical areas (Taunton East, Taunton North, Rural areas).
- Potential negative impact on some vulnerable individuals which are not identified through the use of area profiling. Some disadvantage may be 'lost' in otherwise affluent areas. Through consultation and the use of a wider range of data vulnerable groups may be identified and work prioritised to support these groups of people.
- There is a potential negative disadvantage groups and communities due to the lack of plans for a community volunteering scheme. A scheme could support and encourage youth engagement and the opportunity to transfers skills from older people.
- Potential negative impact if accessible consultation on Community Needs is not carried out during the design of the Community Development Plan. Consultation must include listening to the views of young people, parents, the Gypsy and Travelling community, disabled groups, the elderly and carers.
- Potential negative impact on all groups due gaps in service provision and duplication of work by partners to support this aim. A partnership response must be taken to support the Total Place initiative. The authority must work across its themes and with the Local Strategic Partnership and other agencies who provide key work on the ground to support the achievement of this aim.

There is a need to research and utilise best practise schemes, delivered by similar authorities to reduce deprivation, ensure the effective delivery of our targets.

b) Work with partners to deliver 'one-stop' advice on skills, employment and apprenticeships direct to communities.

- Potential negative impact on young people, especially those not in education, employment or training to utilise a service aimed at getting them into work without a bridge between secondary school education and applying for employment. Young people, especially young men aged 18-25 and young parents will need extra support before gaining employment. Consideration should be made to how the service is advertised you young people to make it

attractive.

- Potential negative impact on gender groups (returning to work after time off with children), lone parents, carers if the service does not taken into account their specific needs.
- Potential negative impact on staff providing the service and vulnerable groups if staff providing the service are not trained to take into account and provide services for protected groups, such as providing translated services, issues faced by disabled people, helping those who are illiterate etc.
- Potential negative impact on disabled and ethnic groups if information is not provided in an accessible way (ie the use of translation service, Somerset Total Communications signs). The service should be advertised in a way that ensures different cultural and ethnic groups are encouraged to take part in activities and projects.
- Potential negative impact on ethnic and religious groups. Cultural differences must be understood and supported by the service to overcome cultural barriers and ensure the service can be used by all.

c) To support the work of the North Taunton Partnership and Link Partnership

- Potential negative impact on employees of the Partnerships if the Partnerships do not adopt the TDBC equal opportunities policy for recruitment.
- Potential negative impact if the Partnerships do not adopt the TDBC Equalities Policy.
- Potential negative impact on other vulnerable groups due to funding being redirected towards this aim, the redirecting of funding should take this into consideration.

Section six – Examples of best practise

To be identified.

Signed: Person/Manager completed by		Signed: Group Manager/Director	
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