

## **TAUNTON DEANE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE 21<sup>st</sup> JUNE 2006**

**REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE MANAGER**  
**(This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Lewin-Harris)**

### **APPROVAL OF ANNUAL REPORT 2006/07**

#### **Executive Summary**

The Council is required to produce an Annual Report (or 'Performance Plan'), which must be published by 30<sup>th</sup> June. Its purpose is to "articulate proposals for improvement for the coming year, including how weaknesses will be addressed, opportunities exploited and better outcomes delivered." We are also required to include outturn data and targets for BVPIs, progress against past objectives and statutory statements on workforce matters.

The audience of the Annual Report is the authority itself (councillors, managers and staff), key partners, the government and the general public.

We have decided this year to publish a more accessible 'Annual Report' which will link to an appendix of performance indicators and the previously published Corporate Strategy 2006-09.

The Review Board scrutinised the Annual Report and recommended approval at their meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> June 2006.

The Executive is requested to recommend approval to Full Council.

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To comment on the draft contents of the Council's Annual Report 2006/07.
- 1.2 To note that further work will be required prior to publication by 30th June 2006.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 It has been a requirement for councils to produce an Annual Report / Performance Plan since April 2000, in accordance with Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1999: Best Value and Performance Improvement. The legislation provides guidelines on the content, which is revised frequently by Government.
- 2.2 The latest guidance reaffirms that the Annual Report and the Corporate Strategy should become the focus of authorities improvement planning, by articulating priorities for improvement, including how weaknesses will

be addressed, opportunities exploited and better outcomes delivered for local people. It should set targets for improved future performance.

- 2.3 The Government has implemented a differentiated approach that reflects CPA categorisation. For authorities ranked as Excellent or Good, such as our own, the Government has reduced its requirements further. We have taken this into account in producing this year's Annual Report.
- 2.4 The main audience of the Annual Report is officers, members, groups and organisations with an interest in the authority, the regulatory bodies and central government. The Annual Report is still required to be available and accessible to the public, and one of the Audit Commissions criticisms from last years publication was that it needed to be more readable. The publication deadline is 30th June each year.
- 2.5 The Annual Report will link to the Corporate Strategy 2006-09 describing our aims for the next three years. A separate appendix contains all our performance indicator results for 2005/06 and our targets. **(Appendix 1)**

### **3. Timetable**

- 3.1 Members should note that the Annual Report is still draft, with some information and data still outstanding. The report has been circulated to CMT members for comment, prior to formal CMT review on 12<sup>th</sup> June. The report also went to Review Board for scrutiny on 8<sup>th</sup> June. We have passed the report to our local Audit Commission inspector for comment prior to publication. The Annual Report and Performance Indicators will be audited separately by the Audit Commission later in the year.
- 3.2 As in previous years, Full Council will be asked to give retrospective approval after 30<sup>th</sup> June publication deadline.

### **4. Effect on Corporate Priorities**

- 4.1 The Annual Report makes us accountable for our past performance against previously published objectives and targets against our corporate priorities. It also focuses on future objectives, clearly laying out our plans and targets for future performance. In effect, the Annual Report is the measure of success against our corporate priorities.

### **7. Recommendation**

- 7.1 Members are asked to recommend approval of the Performance Plan to Full Council.

#### **Contact Officer:**

Simon Lewis  
Scrutiny and Performance Manager  
01823 356397  
[s.lewis@tauntondeane.gov.uk](mailto:s.lewis@tauntondeane.gov.uk)

## Taunton Deane Borough Council Annual Report 2006/07

**1. Cover – To include TD logo (top right) and Excellent Council logo and IIP logo**

**2. Contact details and Equalities Statements (as currently on back page).**

Add: Simon Lewis name and contact details (telephone no and email)

**3. Contents (Note document needs page numbering)**

<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>Page</b>
FOREWORD	X
VISION, BUSINESS PRINCIPLES AND CORE VALUES	X
TAUNTON DEANE IN BRIEF	X
TAUNTON DEANE - A YEAR IN VIEW	X
PROGRESS AGAINST LAST YEARS PROMISES	X
SUMMARY PERFORMANCE	X
HOW WE MANAGE PERFORMANCE	X
KEY PLANS FOR 2006/07	X
HOW WE WILL ADDRESS OUR WEAKNESSES	X
STATEMENT ON CONTRACTS	X
GLOSSARY	X

## **Foreword**

I am delighted to present this Annual Report to you. It demonstrates the achievements the Council has made against the communities priorities and our aims for the future. Highlights from the past year include the creation of the Taunton Vision Delivery team which has taken forward the regeneration of Taunton. We've also made transport improvements and lobbied successfully for funding for major transport schemes needed to support Taunton Deane's future. Crime levels are reducing. We have been independently recognised as an Excellent Council and were recently judged to be continuing to deliver high quality, value for money services.

We have issues we still need to work hard on. Lack of affordable housing remains a problem which we need to address and we still need to further reduce staff sickness levels.

We have ambitions for Taunton Deane the place and for Taunton Deane Borough Council the organisation. An excellent organisation will deliver your ambitions for your area and will not take its eye off the importance of delivering quality, good value services.

**Include photo of Penny James and Cllr J Williams (as per the Corporate Strategy)**

#### **4. Our Vision (as current), plus an extra page showing Business Principles and Core Values:**

### **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

## 5. Taunton Deane in Brief

<b>Size:</b>	462 square kilometres
<b>Population:</b>	106,000
<b>Households:</b>	46,859
<b>Main Settlements:</b>	Taunton, Wellington, Bishops Lydeard, Wiveliscombe
<b>Main Employment:</b>	Wholesale/Retail; Health & Social Work; Real Estate/Renting; Public Services; Education; Manufacturing
<b>Number of Businesses:</b>	5,000
<b>Unemployment:</b>	2.0%
<b>Ethnic Minorities:</b>	1.6%
<b>Deprivation Ranking:</b>	188 <sup>th</sup> out of 354 districts. Four wards are ranked in the worst 25% nationally

Taunton Deane is situated in an outstanding landscape of natural beauty, extending from the Somerset Levels along the River Tone, with the Quantock hills to the North and the Blackdowns to the South. It is well served by road and rail links to Bristol, Exeter and London, having the M5, A38, A303 and rail links within easy reach.

Taunton Deane is predominantly a rural borough, with the main centres of population being Taunton and Wellington and with a number of smaller towns and villages. The borough is generally prosperous, with relatively low levels of crime and unemployment. However, the area does suffer from lower rates of pay and relatively high house prices. Deprivation is not prevalent, however there are significant pockets of greater need in parts of Taunton.

Some of the challenges that face Taunton Deane include:

- a shortage of affordable housing (we have a very challenging target of enabling 546 affordable dwellings per annum)
- Significant planned growth in the District that reflects the strategic importance of Taunton and the borough. The Vision for Taunton will involve major regeneration of the town between now and 2020. Furthermore, the Regional Spatial Strategy has identified 17,300 new homes to be built in the district over the next twenty years.
- an ageing population, with an anticipated decrease in 35-39 year olds and a significant increase in the over 65s age-group over the next few years
- anticipated increases in traffic congestion especially in the main towns
- Some deprived wards, including four that are classed as being in the worst 25% deprived in the country

**Taunton** is the county town of Somerset, with a colourful history dating back over 1,100 years. Main attractions and landmarks include the Castle, the Taunton Museum, Vivary Park, the Somerset County Cricket Club, the Brewhouse Theatre, Hestercombe House and Gardens and a vibrant shopping centre and late night economy. The town is also famed for the river Tone that flows through its centre, its award winning parks and the numerous church spires that can be seen from all corners of the town. Out of town shopping and entertainment is found at Hankridge Farm, with Ten Pin Bowling, cinema and restaurants among the attractions.

**Wellington** is situated 7 miles from Taunton and is immediately identifiable by its towering monument visible from miles around commemorating the Duke of Wellington. The town also enjoys an award winning park, this time Edwardian, and has been recognized nationally as one of the country's top ten urban parks. The town centre is smaller than Taunton's and much of the local employment is based around agriculture and factory based units.

**Bishops Lydeard** is a rural centre five miles from Taunton with a good range of shops and facilities, including a village hall and a church centre that are well used by the local community. It is the home of the West Somerset Railway, a major tourist attraction which runs steam trains on the beautiful railway line to Minehead. Bishops Lydeard also has a Mill with a water wheel that has been painstakingly restored as a further tourist attraction.

**Wiveliscombe** is a thriving community with societies and clubs to cater for all tastes, from sports to cinema and everything in between. Wiveliscombe is known for its artistic and creative side and hosts the annual Ten Parishes Art Festival. Economically, there is an abattoir and two very popular breweries producing local ales (Cotleigh and Exmoor Ales.)

Further information on Taunton Deane can be found by calling the Council's Tourism Section on 01823 356488 or visiting the Council's website at [www.tauntondeane.gov.uk](http://www.tauntondeane.gov.uk)

## 6. Progress against last year's promises

Last year's Performance Plan set out our planned improvements over the three years 2005-2008 under each of our six Corporate Aims. Here we report progress against all 24 planned improvements and it is pleasing to report that we have fully progressed as planned against 19 of these objectives, with some progress being made against the other five.

Last year's Performance Plan is available to view at:

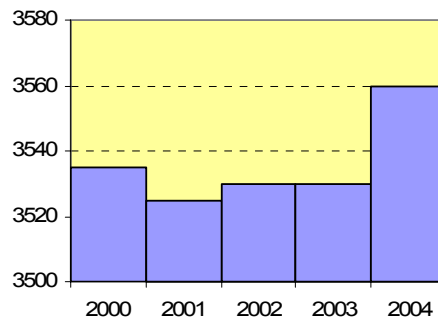
<http://www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/tdbc/sites/polperf/forms.asp>

### Corporate Aim – Economy

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

##### Snapshot of the local economy:

Employment Structure %	Taunton Deane	Somerset	South West	GB/UK
Wholesale/retail trade; repair etc	19.3	20.9	19.3	17.9
Health + social work	18.4	12.9	12.0	11.4
Real estate, renting, business activities	14.1	13.7	13.3	15.6
Public Admin/defence; social services	9.5	5.2	5.7	5.4
Education	9.5	9.3	9.4	9.0
Manufacturing	9.4	17.6	12.5	12.6
<b>Top 6 employment sectors</b>				
Source: ONS 2003				



**New VAT registrations in Taunton Deane**  
Source: ONS

Taunton Deane	£360
Somerset	£351
South West	£378
Great Britain	£424
<b>Average gross weekly pay (2005)</b>	
Source: Local Futures	



### Improvements On Course

- Develop key sites to bring about the Vision for Taunton
- Ensure the wider community realise the social benefits of the Vision for Taunton by incorporating them into the second community strategy
- Publicise and promote the Vision for Taunton and the borough locally, regionally, nationally and internationally
- Encourage businesses to start up and grow in Taunton Deane

### Improvements that have fallen behind the original timetable

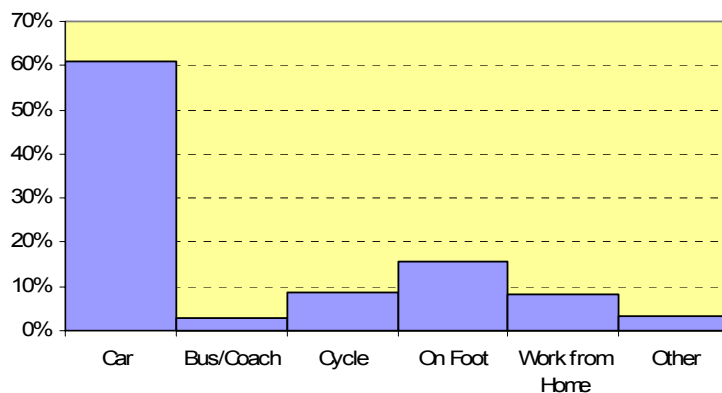
- Develop the Planning Framework to deliver the Vision for Taunton
- Target resources to areas of greatest need in the Borough by establishing strategies for North Taunton and Taunton East

### Other Specific Achievements

- The Council has supported and helped fund the creation of the Vision Delivery Team, securing £1.8m over three years to take forward the Vision for Taunton.
- The Council provided business support funding to more than thirty businesses. We also provided advice, guidance and support to hundreds of local businesses including farming and agricultural businesses, rural community organisations and other local businesses. Our Environmental Health Section provided support and advice on Food Safety, Licensing and Health and Safety.
- The Taunton Tourist Information Centre (TIC) is now managed by the Council. It recently won the National Express agent of the year award and also generated £30,000 of bookings for local accommodation last year through its accommodation booking line.
- There have been improvements to the occupancy levels of shopping units and the signage of the Cornhill area of Wellington. We will continue to monitor the situation and seek to identify a plan for the physical improvement of the area by May 2007.

## Corporate Aim – Transport Minimising the growth in traffic congestion

### Snapshot of Transport:



The percentage of resident population who travel to work in Taunton  
Source: 2001 Census

The share of people using public transport is well below the national average (3.2% against 14.8%), while proportionately more people travel to work by car (63.6% versus 61.2% nationally)

## Improvements On Course

- Lobby and work with others to ensure the strategic transport investment necessary to fulfil Taunton's role as a 'Strategically Significant Town'
- Reduce the growth of traffic congestion in Taunton through completing the North West Taunton Package, reviewing our Car Park Strategy and lobbying for completion of the Sustrans cycle route
- Improve the choice and availability of accessible public transport options, particularly for rural and disadvantaged people

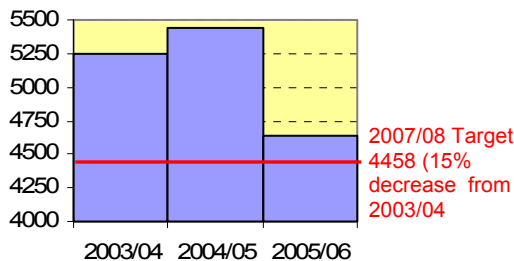
## Other specific achievements:

- In partnership with Somerset County Council (SCC), we have launched the North West Taunton Package – the Silk Mills Bridge, Park and Ride Scheme and associated bus lane and bus gate
- Worked in partnership with SCC to submit the Local Transport Plan 2006-2011, detailing our transport strategy for Somerset. This includes agreement for two major scheme bids 'The Northern Inner Distribution Road' (NIDR) and the 'Third-Way', which will alleviate traffic congestion in Taunton and enable the regeneration of Firepool and Tangier, both key sites for the Vision for Taunton.
- Ensured that the three key transport proposals for Taunton Deane, the dualling of the A358, the NIDR and Third-Way have been recognised by the Regional Assembly and included in the Regional Spatial Strategy 2006-2026.
- Worked closely with the Vision Partnership, resulting in a draft Car Park Strategy outlining a series of action plans to develop the provision of appropriate multi-storey car parking for Taunton to underpin the Vision for Taunton.

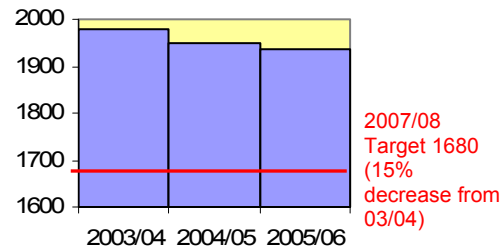
## Corporate Aim – Crime

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

#### Snapshot of Crime



Overall Crime incidents (basket of crime)  
Source: Home Office



Antisocial Behaviour incidents  
Source: Home Office

## Improvements On Course

- Identify, measure and reduce anti-social behaviour in our communities
- Use our influence in all that we do to reduce crime and disorder

## Other specific achievements:

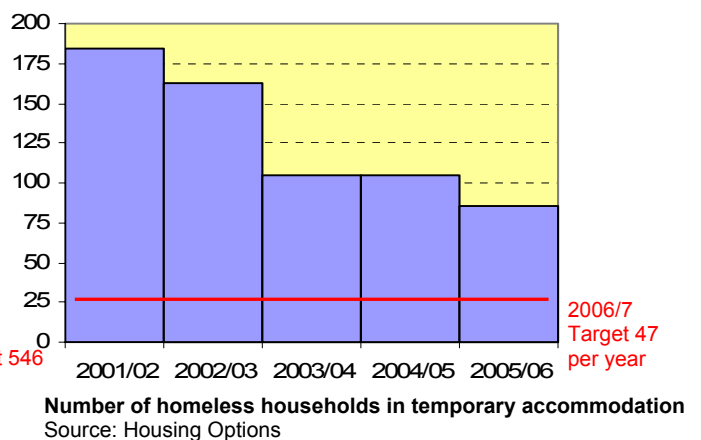
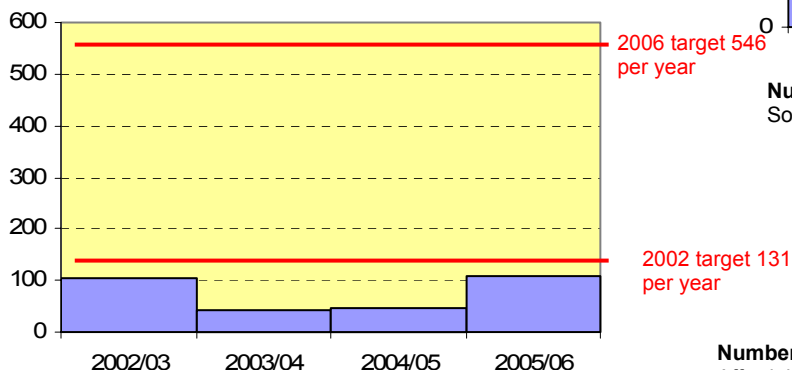
- Successfully introduced relocatable CCTV for use at trouble spots within the Deane
- Further expanded Vibe Sport, a diversionary programme for young people at Wellsprings Sports Centre, to Blackbrook Pavilion Sports Centre. The two sports centres ran 61 sessions in 2005/06, with a total of 1,315 attendances by young people
- Introduced the 'Drink Safe, Be Safe' scheme to pubs to promote safety, this included a national campaign to introduce plastic glasses into pubs
- Continued to promote the 'three strikes initiative' across Taunton to impact on alcohol related convictions
- Successfully implemented the Licensing Act with tighter conditions of entry to pubs and clubs to reduce the possibility of alcohol related disorder. We were one of only a few councils that achieved 100% implementation inside the government target date.
- We have supported ten Local Action Teams (LATs) in Taunton Deane, these are self-help community groups that tackle anti-social behaviour in their neighbourhoods. One of the successes from this has been a new Mobile Youth Shelter.
- Contributed funding to the Home Improvement Agency to launch the Handyman Scheme. Key aims of this scheme include making properties safer for vulnerable people

## Corporate Aim – Healthy Living

### Promoting healthy and sustainable communities

#### Snapshot of Healthy Living

Taunton Deane	£201,963
Somerset	£191,622
South West	£202,248
Great Britain	£196,676
House Prices: July to Sept 2005.	
Source: Local Futures	



**Number of units of affordable housing completed**  
Affordable housing: includes social rented and subsidised housing  
Source: Housing Strategy Section

### Improvements On Course

- Meet the requirements of those with greatest housing need by carrying out a Housing Needs Survey, enabling the building of social housing units and preventing homelessness. Our previous target for affordable housing was 197 dwellings per annum, however the Housing Needs Survey has identified that we should now be enabling the building of 546 affordable housing units per annum
- Contribute to the physical and mental health and well-being of our residents, by promoting physical activity in the borough, working with key partners. This includes the opening of play and hard court areas at Victoria Park and of a Multi-Use Games Area at North Curry. The extension of Taunton Tennis Centre is currently in progress.
- Improve the health and well-being of our staff

### Improvements that have fallen behind the original timescale

- Support the health needs of vulnerable people through advice, grants and loans on home energy, maintenance and independent living. This includes a Private Sector Stock Condition Survey, the operation of a new Home Improvement Agency and a campaign to reduce fuel poverty.

### Other Specific Achievements

- Last year we spent £4m renovating and improving council homes. This included installation of 727 new kitchens, 40 new central heating systems, re-roofing 57 properties and 4,300 annual gas inspections. A further 526 properties were made decent to meet the Decent Homes Standard
- Between August 2005 and April 2006, the Handyman Service completed 344 jobs for vulnerable and elderly people
- We enabled the delivery of 110 affordable homes in the District, although this is below the target it is a marked improvement on previous years.
- We significantly reduced the number of homeless people staying in bed and breakfast through prevention measures and greater use of private sector tenancies
- We paid out £600k via 123 grants to repair, improve and adapt homes for owner occupiers, tenants and landlords to improve the quality of life for occupants. This covered adaptations to meet the needs of people with disabilities, thermal comfort needs, health and safety and Decent Homes.
- We launched a Cavity Wall Insulation / Council Tax Incentive scheme with British Gas to improve the energy efficiency of 500 homes in the borough. The response to this initiative was rated the best in the UK
- Last year, the Council's Environmental Health service continued tackling fundamental health issues in the community to promote healthy living. This included inspecting 497 food premises to ensure the food sold was safe to eat, sampling 312 drinking water supplies, treating 1,009 pest infestations, investigating 240 infectious disease notifications and investigating 734 complaints for issues such as noise nuisance and drainage problems.

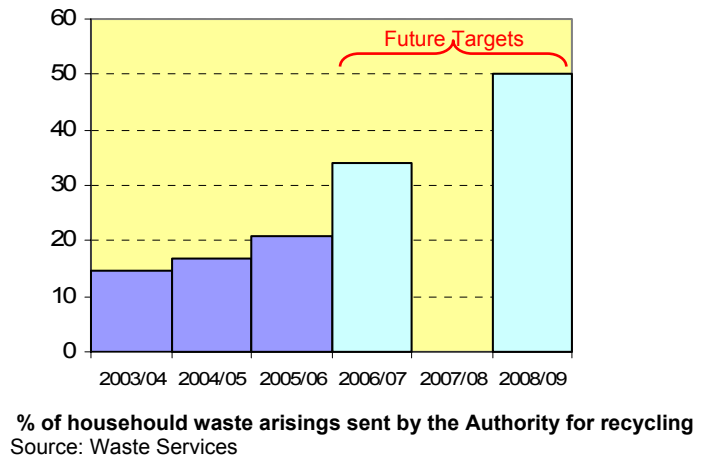
- We made improvements to a number of our parks, the main beneficiary being Victoria Park, where a new play and activity area was opened, along with a basketball court. The community were involved and planted ten oak trees in the park to coincide with the international exhibition commemorating Anne Frank
- Victoria Park joined Vivary and Wellington Parks in achieving Green Flag status, placing them amongst the best parks in the country
- We completed the building of the Vivary Chalet at Vivary Park Golf Course. Called the 'Sand Wedge Café', the alpine-style building blends in well with the leafy suburbs and provides a café, public WC facilities and a reception for the golf course and mini golf circuit.
- Tone Leisure continued to deliver a good standard of leisure activities and facilities for the people of Taunton Deane. The organization fulfilled its mission of "more people, more active, more often" by increasing use of its facilities to 946,138 visits for the year. The new Mini Golf Facility at Vivary attracted nearly 11,000 rounds of golf in its first year. The trust has also been extremely successful in attracting external funding, having secured more than £434,000 in external funding since its inception in August 2004.

**Corporate Aim – Environment**  
**Safeguarding and enhancing the local environment**

**Snapshot of Environment**

Year	TDBC	English Districts Top Quartile
2003	72.5%	68.0%

**% of people satisfied with cleanliness of their local environment.**  
 Source: TDBC General Survey



**Improvements On Course**

- Manage a clean and safe environment
- Protect and enhance the quality of our physical environment

**Other specific achievements**

- We launched the first two stages of Sort It! to 17,500 properties in Taunton Deane. Sort It! is an integrated package of waste collection and recycling

services to encourage more effective recycling which has resulted in an overall recycling figure of 25.5% for 2005/06

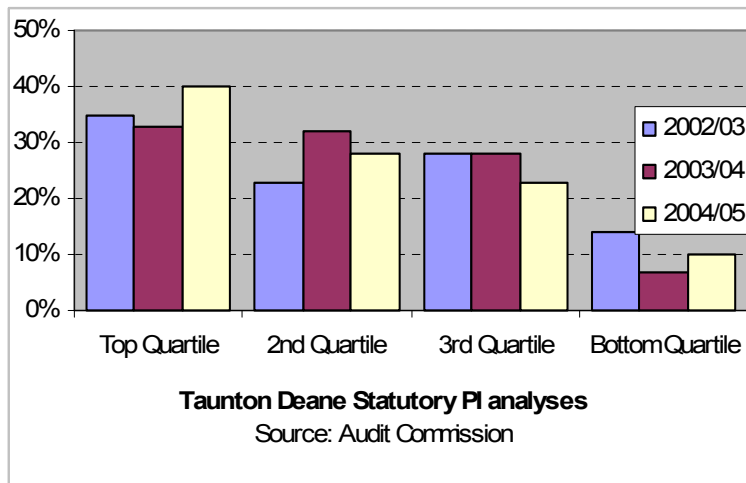
- The Sort It! scheme won the 'Best Local Authority Initiative' in the Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee (LARAC) National Recycling Awards, and won the same category from the Composting Association
- Our Parks officers have introduced an innovative approach to watering baskets and floral displays which uses a water reservoir. We now only water these plants twice a week, rather than six times. This has cut our costs by two thirds and reduced the amount of water and fuel we use, as well as any traffic congestion caused by the DLO vehicle blocking the road
- We had a community action day working with police and other local agencies on a 'clean sweep' initiative. This involved undertaking litter picks, river dredging, removing trolleys and cleaning off graffiti to clean and tidy the local environment.
- Introduced fixed penalty notices as a deterrent to prevent littering

### To speak to Tony Turner

### Corporate Aim – Delivery

Delivering accessible, value for money services

### Snapshot of Delivery



### Improvements On Course

- Deliver services in line with our corporate priorities. This includes effectively prioritising our budget, investigating a Joint Venture Company to provide support services and determining the future of the Councils housing stock
- Effectively manage and improve our performance.
- Work in partnership to deliver shared priorities, including the Local Area Agreement, the Local Strategic Partnership and the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership

- Ensure that we meet our legal requirements as a Council by delivering all mandatory work areas
- Improve access to Council information and services, including more than 80% of phone calls dealt with at first point of contact and consistent information provided through the website and other modes of contact

#### Improvements that have fallen behind the original timetable

- Develop motivate and empower staff to reach their potential. (Further work is required to better understand staff needs and further reduce staff sickness)
- Respond to customers needs and promote equality of opportunity in all that we do. (This is specifically focussed on meeting Level 2 of the Equality Standard for Local Government)

#### Other specific achievements

- Awarded a '3' score for our Use of Resources, as part of our CPA assessment by the Audit Commission. This score places us in the top quartile against other councils, and further builds on our 'Excellent' status
- The Council has formed the 'South West Audit Partnership' with three other District Councils (South Somerset, West Somerset and Mendip) to provide internal audit services. These councils now benefit from economies of scale, a pooling of expertise, sharing of Best Practice, greater flexibility and an ability to recruit specialist skills. This has led to an improved quality service and greater cost benefits.
- We have improved our telephone response service, answering more calls, quicker, with less onward referral
- We started using a translation and interpretation service, to make our documents available in different languages and Braille on request
- We have developed a framework for equality impact assessments for Council services and commenced in-house training on equalities for staff
- We undertook a Gypsy and Travellers Housing Needs Survey in partnership with the other District Councils

**Speak to K Toller, R James**

## 7. Taunton Deane - A year in view

### The stories, events and achievements from 2005/06

Month				
April 2005	The Council takes over the running of the Taunton Tourist Information Centre (TIC)	The Wellington Business Fair is a great success with accessible advice and an opportunity for networking	Collection Rates of Council Tax reach new heights (98.10%)	Launch of Foodo – A Board Game developed by staff to make learning about food hygiene and safety fun. This is being used in all Taunton Deane schools
May 2005	Launch of Sort It! To 17,000 properties. Taunton Deane Borough Council's recycling scheme.	Cllr Richard Lees, with wife Sue and guide dog Ramble welcomed as Mayor and Mayoress of Taunton Deane.		
June 2005	Official opening of the Youth Play Equipment at Cotford St Luke	A new orienteering course starts at Vivary Park'. The only orienteering course on TDBC ground, developed in partnership with Quantock Orienteers.		
July 2005	Summer Clean For The River Tone with part funding from TDBC	Victoria Park joins Vivary and Wellington Parks in achieving Green Flag status, placing them amongst the best parks in the country.	Taunton town stages a Commemoration for the 60 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Second World War ending	Celebrated 'Local Nature Reserve Week' with a series of guided nature walks
August 2005	The recycling rate across the Deane leaps to over 55% in the first phase of the	Taunton Deane holds a stand at the successful Wellington Spectacular, a local community and trade	Parish Play Area Grants' awarded to three Taunton Deane villages - Comeytrowe, North Curry & Stoke St Gregory	Community Bus launched for rural communities, part funded by the Council



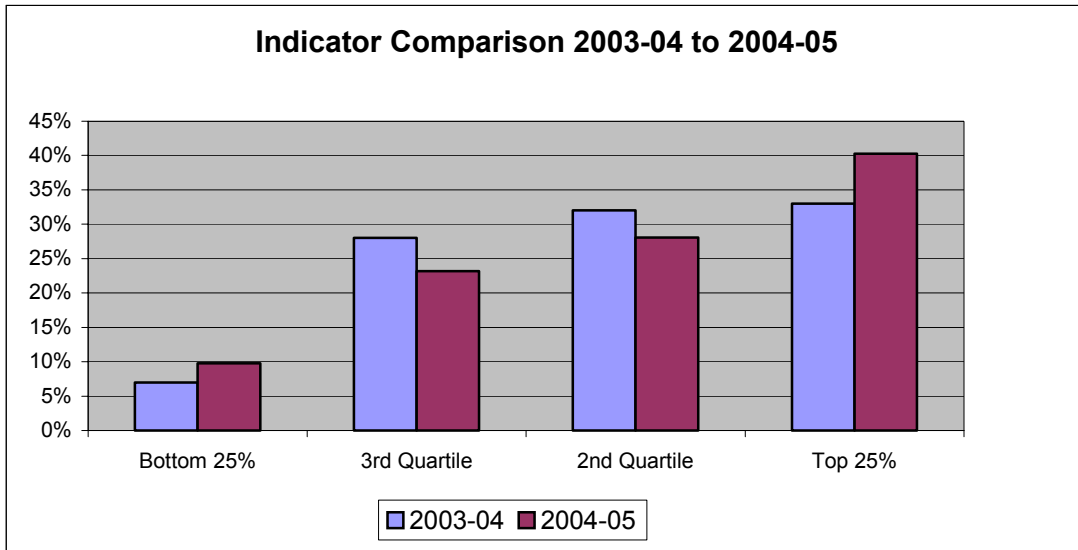
	<i>SORT IT!</i> services	fair Community Handyman Service launched to assist vulnerable homeowners repair their homes		Outstanding performance by Licensing department who process 95% of all licensing applications before the deadline to comply with new government legislation.
September 2005	Tourism Unit actively involved in organisation of Heritage Open Days	TDBC awarded a £20,000 grant from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) to help train local food businesses in food safety.	Taunton wins Britain in Bloom national 'Silver Gilt' award, and is awarded a gold medal and 'best market town' in the South West. Wellington won the Portman cup and a gold medal for its floral displays	Marcus Trescothick' presented with Taunton Deane Citizenship Award.
October 2005	Start of phase 2 of Sort it! A further 13,589 properties included.	Payment kiosk installed at Deane House so customers can pay Council bills by cash, credit or debit card	Home Loan Scheme launched to help people on low incomes meet The Decent Homes Standard	Held a series of Winter Workshops for Farmers In Taunton Deane, including a 2-day programme "Marketing for Profit"  Firework safety scheme launched
November 2005	Payment kiosk installed in Wellington Community Office  Silk Mills bridge and park and Ride starts operating	Our review panels agreed the recommendations of the Cultural Consortium report outlining the key initiatives for the Cultural Quarter of the Vision for Taunton	"Best Local Authority Initiative" prize awarded for "SORT IT!" recycling and waste collection scheme at National Recycling Awards  Five Local Businesses awarded £2,000 Business Development Grant	Taunton and Wellington Tourist Information Centres receive Bronze Awards in the South West Tourism 'Mystery Shopper' survey & commended for excellent support of local crafts people
December 2005	New Lyngford youth shelter opened, providing a safe and	Opening of enhanced recreational facility at Blackthorne Gardens, North	'Heart of Somerset' website re- launched promoting tourism in Somerset	

	positive place for young people to meet.	Taunton.	<a href="http://www.heartofsomerset.com">www.heartofsomerset.com</a> .	
January 2006	Awards ceremony to celebrate success of the pioneering Taunton initiative, 'Drink Safe Be Safe'	A three-month warning and publicity campaign launched against littering, with new powers to fine offenders	Environmental Health Safety Team surveyed butcher's shops and supermarket meat counters within the Borough and found the results to be highly satisfactory.	Local response to Cavity Wall Insulation (energy conservation) / Council Tax Incentive initiative is rated best in the UK, with over 500 applications
February 2006	Works starts on Blackbrook Tennis facility to upgrade the two outdoor tennis courts and cover them with a framed fabric structure.	Home Office (Alcohol Policy Team) visit Taunton to see how we are making the night time economy safer through schemes such as the 'Drink Safe Be Safe' initiative.	Draft Wellington and Area Community Strategy Action Plan for 2006 to 2010, ready for comment on Council website.	Tourist Information Centre wins National Express Regional Agent of the Year award in recognition of their commitment, enthusiasm and business development
March 2006	Mayor Honours Taunton Deane's Outstanding Citizens  Opening of Victoria Park's new play and activity areas. Ten oak trees were planted in memory of Anne Frank to coincide with the visiting international exhibition about her life.	Opening of the Halcon Community Office, taking over the vacant premises at the Link Centre rent free from the Council  The Vision for Taunton won a national award for best spatial strategy from the Royal Town Planning Institute	Launch of "Talking Tomorrows" - important consultation exploring what issues really matter to the communities of Taunton Deane in order to plan for the future  Royal Town Planning Institute Annual Award for Spatial Strategy goes to the Vision for Taunton partnership	Chelston House Farm Planning Application – the Council invites the views of the public on this proposed development  Work has begun on a new block of small industrial units in the Blackdown Business Park, Wellington. Taunton Deane Borough Council is funding the £470,000 units

<b>Between April 2005 – March 2006 TDBC</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>We dealt with:</b>	
Calls to the Customer Enquiries line	<b>158,528</b>
Enquiries dealt with by Deane House Main reception	<b>40,530</b>
Enquiries about council tax, business rates and benefits taken by Deane House Reception	<b>19,504</b>
Enquiries dealt with by Housing Reception	<b>14,425</b>
Homeless Enquiries	<b>5,346</b>
Visits to our Wellington Community Office	<b>37,403</b>
Planning applications	<b>1,806</b>
Building Regulation applications	<b>1,097</b>
Site inspections of Building works in progress	<b>6,599</b>
“Food Alerts” issued by the Food Standards Agency	<b>87</b>
<b>We Issued:</b>	
Grants for disabled facilities issued	<b>55</b>
Total value of Disabled Facilities Grants awarded	<b>£300, 000</b>
Repair grants issued (includes emergency adaptation and repairs to prevent crime and energy efficiency improvements)	<b>56</b>
Total value of repair grants awarded	<b>£195,000</b>
Handyman job requests received from 1 <sup>st</sup> September to year end	<b>427</b>
Handyman jobs completed at year end	<b>344</b>
New premises licenses under the new Licensing Act 2003 provisions	<b>406</b>
<b>We collected:</b>	
Tonnes of household waste	<b>37,709</b>
Stray dogs seized	<b>141</b>
Abandoned vehicles	<b>151</b>
Commercial food samples	<b>163</b>
Drinking water samples	<b>312</b>
<b>We inspected:</b>	
Premises for food safety	<b>497</b>
Premises for health & safety	<b>182</b>
Housing standard inspections	<b>79</b>
Pest Control Treatments	<b>1,009</b>
<b>Other key statistics / facts</b>	
Enquiries handled by TIC	<b>270,000</b>
Value of tourism to TD economy	<b>£96.5 m</b>
Day visitors (tourists) to Taunton D.	<b>1.7million</b>
Visitors/ Tourists staying in Taunton Deane	<b>280,000</b>
Number of visitors to Tone Leisure facilities	<b>946,138</b>

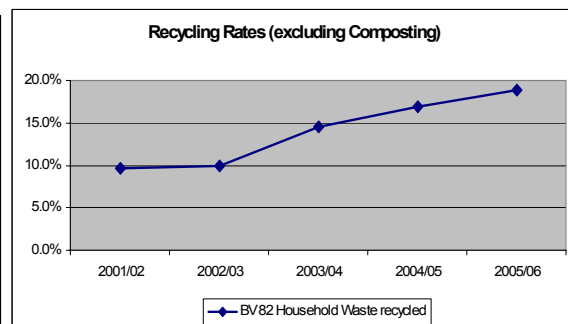
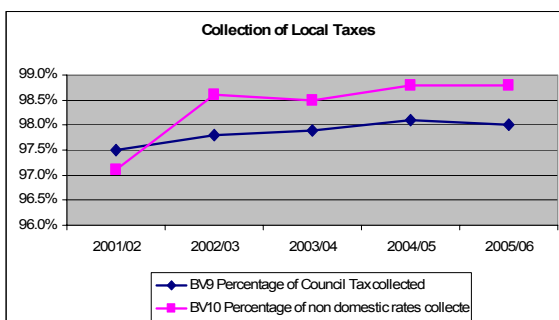
## 8. Summary Performance

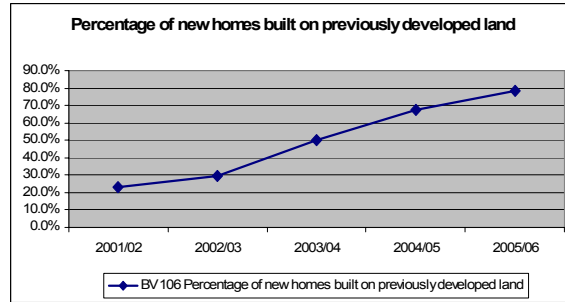
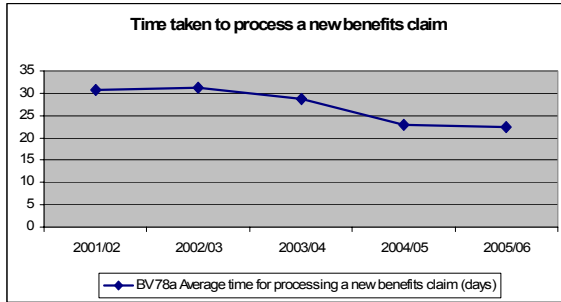
The Council reports its performance against 109 nationally prescribed performance indicators. For 2004/05 we know we performed at a very high level when compared to the other 238 District Councils in the country, with 40% of our performance indicators in the top quartile (where our performance ranks us amongst the best 25% of Councils in the country.) The TDBC element of Council Tax charged to residents for 2004/05 was also amongst the lowest 10% set by District Councils.



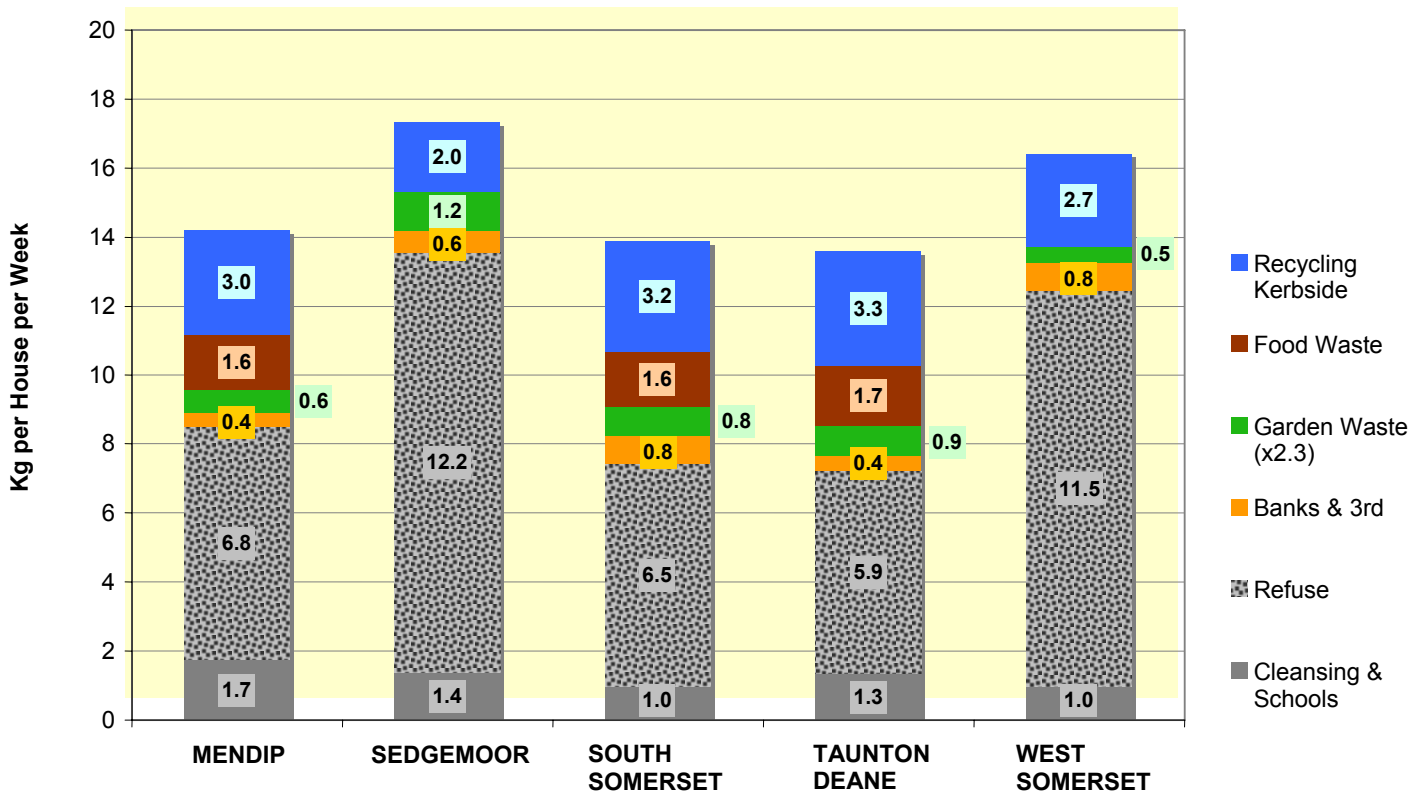
For 2005/06 we don't yet have national comparison data, however we know that our performance has improved on 56% of performance indicators compared to 2004/05, and we have met our targets for 54% of performance indicators.

We have included some example of our improving performance indicators below:





### Comparison of collection and recycling of waste across Somerset at 31/3/06



The Council has also had results from independent inspections by the Audit Commission as part of its Comprehensive Performance Assessment framework. In 2004, we received the top rating, being recognised as an 'Excellent' council. In 2005, we were awarded a 'performing well' rating for how we use our resources. This score placed us as equal second in the South West for district councils and amongst the top 10% of district councils in the country.

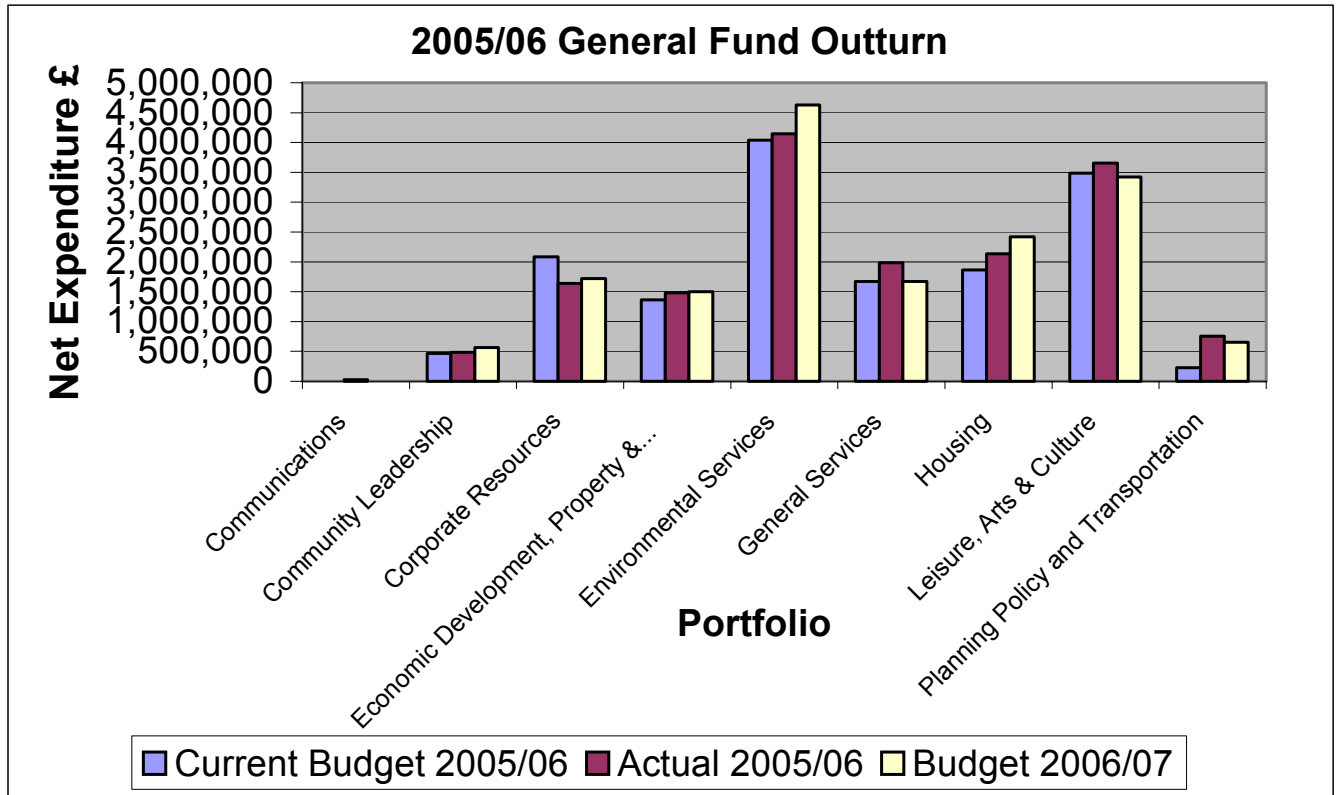
The full set of performance indicators showing our performance for 2006/07 is available on request by calling 01823 356481 or by visiting [www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/tdbc/sites/polperf/AnnualReport.asp](http://www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/tdbc/sites/polperf/AnnualReport.asp)

## Financial Performance

### General Fund

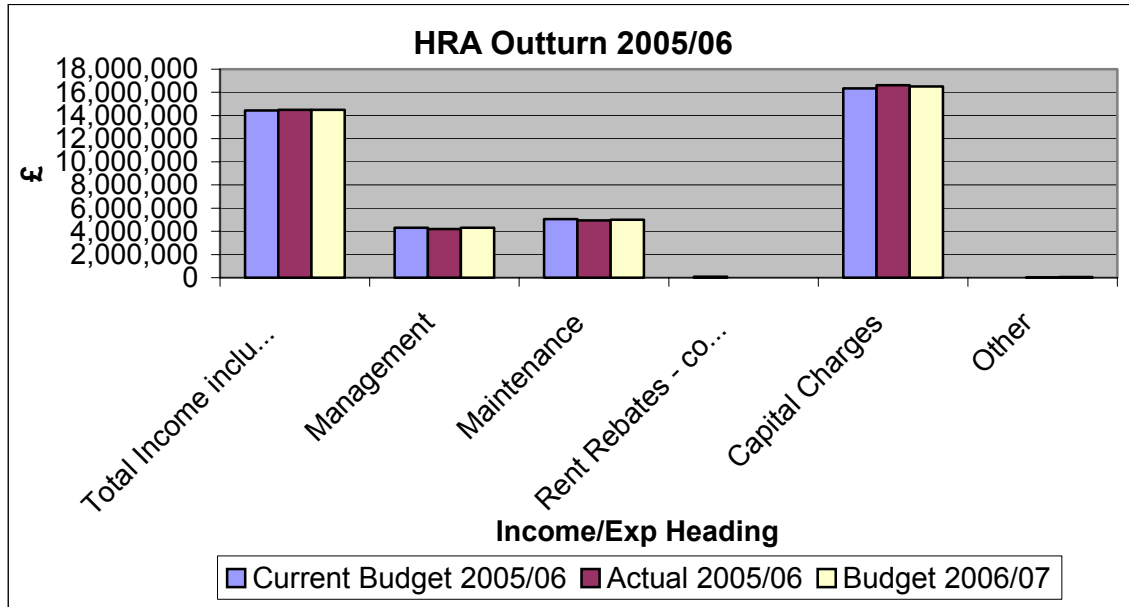
For 2005/06 the Council's actual expenditure on services was £16.3m, which was £44,764 below the agreed budget. The budget for 2006/07 has been set, with a focus on achieving our objectives as described under our six corporate aims.

The main reason for the under spend was increased subsidy received for Housing Benefits.



### Housing Revenue Account

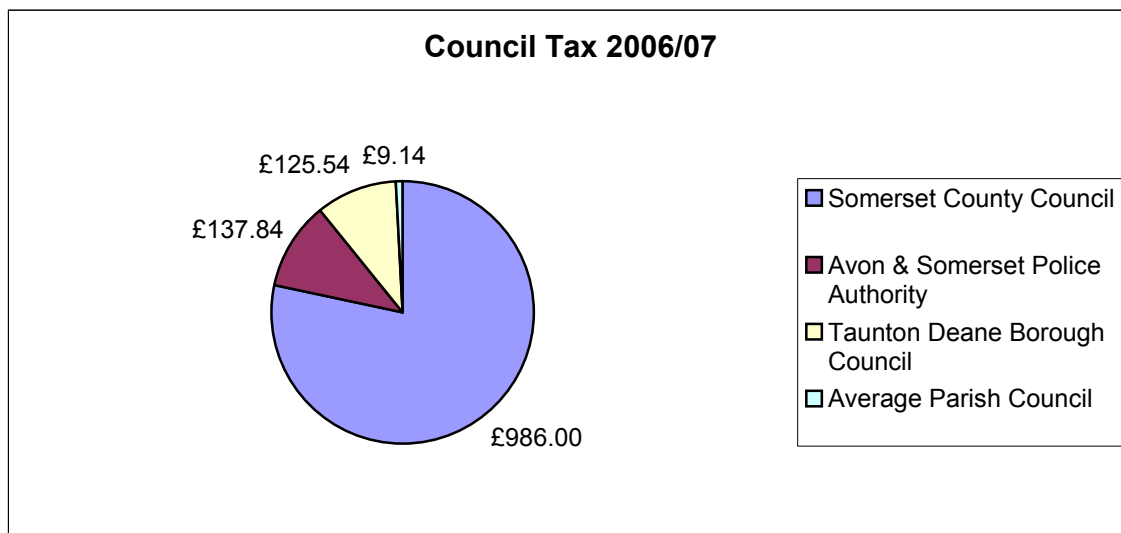
We account for Housing Revenue separately and for 2005/06 our total deficit for the year was £276,257 against a budgeted deficit of £628,730. The main reasons for the under spend were additional income from rents and services, a reduction in spend within the maintenance programme and efficiencies within management of the housing stock.



### Council Tax 2006/07

The budget for Taunton Deane for 2006/07 gives a Band D Council Tax of £125.54, which is a 3% increase (£3.66 more) on 2005/06. The Taunton Deane element of the Council Tax bill works out at £2.41 per week for a Band D Council Tax payer.

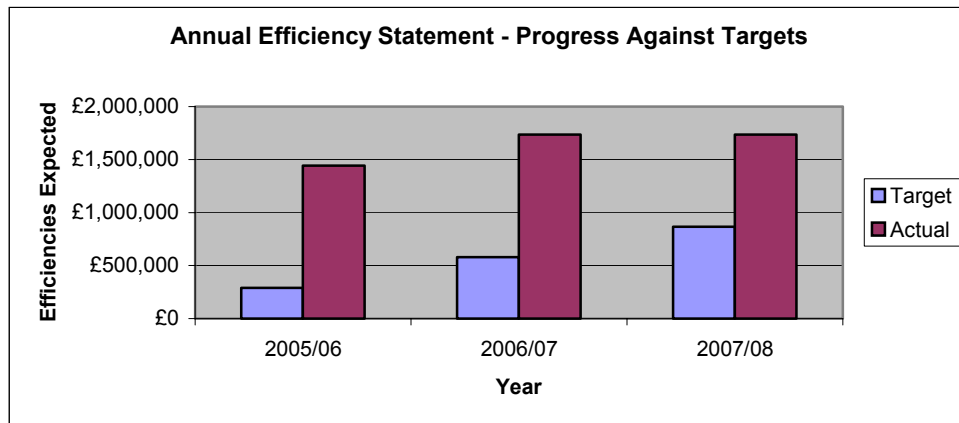
The relative proportions of Council Tax (Band D) received by each Council is shown below:



## Annual Efficiency Statement

A recent requirement from Central Government is for the Council to demonstrate 2.5% annual ongoing efficiencies each year. The Council has been issued target efficiency gains to achieve between 2005/06 and 2007/08.

The Council has made excellent progress in meeting these targets, through initiatives such as scrutinizing the budget and using technology better. This is illustrated below.



For a copy of the financial accounts please call on 01823 356421 or visit <http://www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/tdbc sites/finance/index.asp>

## 9. How we manage Performance

In this Annual Report we have presented our plans and targets to enable us to deliver our Vision of being a high performing Council, working in partnership to create a good quality of life for all Taunton Deane residents.

To achieve these targets we have a performance management framework so that we can effectively monitor the Council's performance and take corrective action when required. The key elements of this framework are as follows:

### Performance Management System

Our Corporate Strategy contains our six corporate aims and seventeen objectives for 2006 to 2009. To ensure we achieve these, we report on progress quarterly to managers and councillors, allowing them to challenge poor performance and redirect resources when necessary so that we achieve our targets.



At the same time, we report progress against our annual financial budget and against 125 performance indicators (national and local), which have been designed to measure our performance across all our services. An overview of our 2005/06 performance was provided in the [Summary Performance](#) section and the full results of our performance indicators are found on [www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/tdbc sites/polperf/AnnualReport.asp](http://www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/tdbc sites/polperf/AnnualReport.asp)

#### Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)

The Council is periodically subject to independent inspection by the Audit Commission, called Comprehensive Performance Assessment. This is designed to rate the Council nationally and to identify its strengths and weaknesses.

The Council had a corporate CPA assessment in 2004 that rated us as 'Excellent', and a 'Use of Resources' assessment in 2005 that gave us a 3 out of 4 score. Both of these scores rate us amongst the very best district councils in the country, however they still identified a number of areas requiring improvement.

We have used these CPA assessments to help us focus on our weaknesses and further improve the Council. We have developed improvement plans which we monitor and report against twice yearly to manager and councillors.

#### Scrutiny

The Council has an Executive of nine councillors from the ruling party who make the key policy decisions on all council issues.

The remaining 45 councillors represent their constituents through their work sitting on Scrutiny Panels. It is the role of these councillors to both challenge and hold the Executive to account when necessary (such as through 'Call Ins') and to add value to the Council by helping develop new policies. The Review Board also scrutinize the Councils performance by analyzing and challenging the quarterly performance reports.

The Council has recently dedicated more resources into supporting Scrutiny to ensure that it adds value to the Council and that councillors have a real opportunity to make a difference.

#### **Photographs of the Councillors:**

Six rows of nine – first row the Executive Councillors

Next row – the chairs of the nine panels

Next four rows the other councillors

Use a numbering system identifying councillors and key positions

## 10. Key Plans for 2006/07

The Councils six aims and seventeen objectives for the next three years are shown in the following table. These reflect local and national priorities, and a detailed description and timetable for these, with the key activities that will take place are shown in our Corporate Strategy 2006-2009. <http://www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/tdbc/sites/polperf/CorporateStrategy.asp>

# Corporate Strategy 2006 - 2009 Corporate Aims and Objectives

Aim 1 <b>Economy</b> Regenerating Taunton and strengthening the economy of the Borough. <i>(Lead Director: JW)</i>	Aim 2 <b>Transport</b> Minimising the growth in traffic congestion. <i>(Lead Director: JW)</i>	Aim 3 <b>Crime</b> Promoting safer communities and tackling anti-social behaviour. <i>(Lead Director: SA)</i>	Aim 4 <b>Healthy Living</b> Promoting healthy and sustainable communities. <i>(Lead Director: JTT)</i>	Aim 5 <b>Environment</b> Safeguarding and enhancing the local environment. <i>(Lead Director: JW)</i>	Aim 6 <b>Delivery</b> Delivering accessible, value for money services. <i>(Lead Director: All)</i>
---	---	--	---	--	---

## Principal Objectives shown in Bold

Develop 47 hectares of brownfield employment land and create 14,000 new jobs in the Borough between 2006 and 2026. (5% from Creative Industries Sector) (T Noall)	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) (T Noall)	To reduce overall crime in Taunton Deane by 15% by March 2008. <i>(B Cleere)</i>	To enable the building of 985 units of affordable housing between April 2006 and March 2011. <i>(M Western)</i>	To increase to at least 75% the percentage of people who are satisfied with the cleanliness of their local environment by 2007. <i>(P Weaver)</i>	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. <i>(All Heads of Service)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce deprivation in Halton and Lyngford, taking the most deprived sub-areas out of the 25% national most deprived areas by 2020. (T Noall)</li> <li>Support the development of the rural economy through facilitating and supporting agricultural diversification projects, business activity and land development. (T Noall)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the County Council as lead agency to reduce the proportion of journeys to work made in Taunton by Single Occupancy Vehicles. (T Noall)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To reduce the incidence of violent crime in Taunton Deane by 15% by 2008. <i>(B Cleere)</i></li> <li>To reduce anti-social behaviour incidents by 15% from baseline figures by 2007/08. <i>(B Cleere)</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To reduce the number of homeless applications in temporary accommodation by 50% by 2010, with an emphasis on homelessness prevention. <i>(M Western)</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To increase the percentage of household waste recycled to 34% by the end of 2006 and 50% by the end of 2009. <i>(P Weaver)</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To achieve level 5 of the Equality Standard for Local Government by the end of 2009. <i>(B Cleere)</i></li> <li>To ensure that 90% of service enquiries to the Council are resolved at the first point of contact by 2015. <i>(K Toller)</i></li> </ul>

## Summary of ongoing Key Projects

### Vision for Taunton

The Council is a key partner in enabling the Vision for Taunton. The Vision for Taunton is a regeneration plan to make Taunton an exemplar 21<sup>st</sup> Century town with a vibrant mix of employment, retail, housing, cultural and leisure facilities, with the River Tone as the town's civic and community heart. Long-term benefits will include the creation of 14,000 new jobs in the borough and the building of new homes. The Council is required to identify land to build a total of 17,300 new homes in the borough between 2006 and 2026, as identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy.

<http://www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/tdbc/sites/visionfortaunton/index.asp>

### Improving Services in Somerset (ISIS)

The Improving Services in Somerset (ISIS) project team continues to examine the potential to provide corporate and transactional services through a joint venture company to enable efficiencies and improvements in service provision. This is a very big project that proposes to move a number of services such as Finance, Human Resources, ICT, Revenues, Benefits and Procurement across to a new partnership company. The three organizations involved are Somerset County Council, Taunton Deane Borough Council and a third private sector company, yet to be agreed. There are currently three companies that have been short-listed as a potential partner; BT, Capita and IBM.

### Housing Transfer Consultation

Our Housing Consultants have identified that we are £1.85m a year short in our finances for future maintenance of our housing stock. The Council believe that Stock Transfer to a new Housing Association can provide a long-term solution to this. We are currently engaging tenants so that they feel informed enough to make a decision on the future of the Housing Stock. Providing tenants feel they are in a position to make an informed choice, we will ballot them on whether we should retain our Housing Stock or form a new Housing Association, mainly from our existing housing department, by the end of 2006.

### **Other key plans for 2006/07**

Our corporate aims and objectives for 2006-2009 are listed in our Corporate Strategy, along with the key activities needed to deliver them. We have listed some of these below along with other specific plans for 2006/07, which will help us deliver these three year objectives.

### **Corporate Aim: Economy**

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

- We will establish a Creative Industries Resource Centre in Taunton to provide support expertise for Creative Industries. We are planning to open the centre in the Brewhouse Theatre in Summer 2006.
- The LDA Design Group have been appointed for master-planning the Cultural Quarter of the Vision for Taunton
- We are working in partnership to launch sixty business incubation units for start-up businesses at SCAT in the Spring 2007
- We are constructing seven industrial units to provide 7,000 square feet of industrial rental space at Blackdown Business Park. We are also pursuing options for further industrial units at other sites.
- We are promoting Wellington town as Somerset's 'Food Town' by promoting the existing food producing and agricultural base and developing an annual week long food festival starting in the Summer 2007.
- We will work closely with our Local Authority Partners in Somerset to improve the quality and effectiveness of the marketing, attraction and support for businesses wishing to locate within Somerset
- The Council with the other Somerset councils has commissioned a review of Tourism to ensure we collaborate better in future to more effectively promote tourism in Somerset

### **Corporate Aim: Transport**

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

- Ensure that partnership working with SCC maximises the opportunity to secure the Taunton Third-Way and the Northern Inner Distributor Road
- Continue to work in partnership with SCC to implement the Congestion Protocol
- Continue developing the draft car parking strategy and ensure its adoption by both the Council and SCC. We will need to agree a programme to develop multi-storey car parks in Taunton to underpin the Vision for Taunton
- The Council is implementing its own Travel Plan to encourage staff to use more sustainable transport. This includes a new restrictive parking scheme for staff parking, and the building of an additional bicycle shed.
- We will continue to marketing and promote the Silk Mills Park and Ride and lobby for the dualling of the A358.

### **Corporate Aim: Crime**

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

- Working with the pub-watch scheme to investigate using biometric scanning for entry into pubs and clubs
- We are recruiting a park warden for Vivary Park to act as a point of contact and reduce the fear of crime

- Continued funding towards Unity House, a shared drug treatment centre in Taunton, in partnership with others
- We will work in partnership to improve the lighting in Bath Place, Taunton
- We will work in partnership with Sedgemoor District Council to increase the operation and monitoring of our CCTV system to 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This will include using a new Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) system that will notify the CCTV centre when a suspicious vehicle has entered the town.
- Expanding the No Drinking Order to cover a wider area of Taunton, especially key parks and open spaces
- We will continue to fund partnership working to tackle crime, such as the provision of Police Community Support Officers and the Handyman Scheme
- The Council will use a new antisocial behaviour database to collect and record anti-social behaviour information to quickly identify hotspot areas and effectively share this data with the police

### **Corporate Aim: Healthy Living**

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

- In partnership with South Somerset District Council we have launched the Home Improvement Agency to provide improvements, adaptations and renovations to elderly and vulnerable peoples' homes. The service will improve advice and guidance, grant and loan support and practical expertise.
- We continue to strive toward meeting the target of all homes meeting the Decent Homes Standard by 2010 through a planned maintenance and repair programme. Levels of funding from 2007/08 will largely depend on the outcome of the Stock Transfer ballot.
- The expansion of the Taunton Tennis Centre has started at Blackbrook. This will result in six outdoor and six indoor tennis courts, which will attract regionally important tennis tournaments to the town.
- Tone Leisure will launch its new Kids Fitness Centre/Activity Zone at Blackbrook Sports Centre in September 2006. Much of the funding from this was secured from a successful bid to the Sport England Community Initiative Fund.
- We will use issue grants for arts organisations to lever in further external funding to support local arts projects and activities. We have already approved £5,000 of grants to seven community arts projects that will lever in a further £106,000. Another £15,000 of grants paid to Key Strategic Arts Organisations (KSAO) will lever in further £56,000 to support the Brewhouse Theatre, Somerset Arts Week and other community arts events and activities.
- We will undertake drainage work on the Beech Grove playing field in Wellington and will then sub-let this field to the adjacent rugby club. In exchange, the rugby club will hand over one of their existing fields to Wellington Football Club. This will benefit both sports clubs but will

especially benefit Beech Grove School who will have access to these sites, and better sporting facilities as a result.

**Corporate Aim: Environment:**

**Safeguarding and enhancing the local environment**

- In 2006/07, we will continue the roll out of Sort It! to the remaining 28,500 properties in Taunton Deane and are striving to meet an overall recycling rate of 40%
- We will work with the other Somerset Councils to explore integrating our waste service contracts to achieve better economies of scale from 2007
- In 2005/06 we commissioned an audit of Wellington's open spaces to prioritise future investment (such as playgrounds, fencing, bins, toilets etc.) This year we will undertake a similar exercise for Taunton, allowing us to focus our investment on those sites in Taunton that most need it.
- We are developing a Play Strategy to make Taunton Deane a child friendly environment.

**Speak to Tony Turner**

**Corporate Aim: Delivery:**

**Delivering accessible, value for money services**

- We will publish new Community Strategies in December 2006 that will set out our direction for community focus and delivery in future years
- We will complete our review of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) so that in future we can optimise the effectiveness of partnership working in delivering community priorities
- This year we will create a comprehensive equalities scheme with an action plan to tackle race, gender and disability issues
- We will be sign up to a compact so that we have clear operating standards and working arrangements with the Voluntary and Community sectors
- The Customer Services Teams will aim to deal with 75% of calls without onward referral, further improving the Council's the overall response to customer enquiries
- We will link the Wellington Community Office to have full access to our data systems, enabling them to provide a fuller and quicker response to customer enquiries
- We will publish Customer Contact Standards for the whole authority to cover all forms of communication with the Council

**Speak to K Toller, R James,**

## 11. How we will address our weaknesses

Despite the Audit Commission recognising us as an Excellent Council, they have identified weaknesses that we need to address. We are developing improvement plans to tackle these and monitor progress during 2006/07.

The table below summarises the main identified weaknesses from the recent Audit Commission Annual Audit Letter and how we propose to address them.

<b>Weakness</b>	<b>Action</b>
Improve the effectiveness of Scrutiny to help the Council meet its objectives and drive innovation and improvement	We now have a dedicated Scrutiny Officer and an action plan to develop scrutiny and provide appropriate training to councillors and officers
Improve focus on internal and external equalities and diversity, listening better to 'hard to reach' groups and adapt services to meet all community needs	We are developing an Equalities action plan to meet level 2 of the CRE Equalities Standard for Local Government. This will include impact assessments across Council services, forming an Equalities Working Party from community groups and various other actions
Set challenging targets and reduce staff sickness	We have reviewed Best Practise from other councils and implemented several initiatives that are making an impact. Last year sickness fell by one day per member of staff on average
Ensure adequate performance management arrangements exist to measure the effectiveness and impact of key priorities, in particular economic investment and partnerships	The 2006-09 Corporate Strategy is now far more outcome-focussed. We plan to report progress quarterly in a clearer format to show the impact against our corporate priorities. We have signed up to the 'Local Futures' database to help us understand local issues, particularly economic. We have engaged consultants to review the effectiveness of our partnerships
Ensure stronger alignment between human capacity and key priorities including organisational change and project planning	We are improving our approach to this by using dedicated project teams for all our major projects. This issue is being further reviewed by our Corporate Management Team
Continue to seek further efficiency savings to minimise the impact of budget constraints on quality and level of services	We continue to meet our annual efficiency targets and to seek further efficiency savings
Agree an action plan to address areas of relative weakness identified through the CPA Use of Resources assessment	The Use of Resources assessment identified a number of areas that could be further improved. We will formulate an improvement plan to prioritise these and take appropriate actions to address any significant weaknesses

## 12. Statement on Contracts

We are required to state where applicable that all individual contracts awarded during the past year involving a transfer of staff, comply with the requirements in the Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Authority Service Contracts.

In 2005/06 the Council awarded the following contracts that involved the transfer of staff. The Council certifies the transfers complied with the Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Authority Service Contracts.

<b>Contract</b>	<b>Awarded to</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Staff Transferred Out</b>
Creation of an Audit Partnership to provide Internal Audit	South West Audit Partnership (SWAP)	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2005	3
Rights of Way Service	Somerset County Council	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2005	2

During 2005/06 the Council also transferred in staff from Somerset County Council. The Council certifies the transfers complied with the Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Authority Service Contracts.

<b>Contract</b>	<b>Awarded from</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Staff Transferred In</b>
Tourist Information Centre	Somerset County Council	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2005	6



### **13. Glossary**

**To be completed.....all acronymns**