

TAUNTON DEANE BOROUGH COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL 11^h DECEMBER 2007

**REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE MANAGER
(This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Fran Smith)**

RETROSPECTIVE APPROVAL OF ANNUAL REPORT 2007/08

Executive Summary

The Council is required to produce an Annual Report (or 'Performance Plan'). 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, targets for PIs and progress against past objectives.

We drafted the Annual Report in June 2007, and sought input and feedback from individual Executive members by email, which was fed into the final document. We also received feedback from Overview and Scrutiny members. We published and distributed copies of the Annual Report in July 2007. It can be accessed through the following link:

<http://www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/tdbcsites/polperf/annualreport.asp>

The Audit Commission requires formal approval of the Annual Report from Full Council, and we are now seeking this retrospective approval.

1. Purpose

1.1 To retrospectively approve the Annual Report 2007/08.

2. Background

2.1 This year the publication of the Annual Report was behind schedule and the Scrutiny and Performance Manager therefore requested Executive Member and Review Board input and feedback via email (email sent 19/7/07).

2.2 The Audit Commission requires the Annual Report to be formally approved by Full Council, as a requirement of the Local Government Act 1999: Best Value and Performance Improvement. Our Audit Manager has told us that he is happy for this to be done retrospectively this year.

3 Recommendation

3.1 Full Council is recommended to formally approve the Annual Report.

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Annual Report

2007/08



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A copy of this Annual Report is available on our website at:
www.tauntondeane.gov.uk

Copies are also available for viewing at local libraries,
The Deane House, The Link Centre, Priorswood Resource Centre,
Wellington Community Office, Wiveliscombe Community Office and
Tone Leisure Centres.

English

If you need any information in this document translated into another language or in braille, large print, audio tape, or CD please telephone us on 01823 356397 or e-mail us at scrutinyandperformance@tauntondeane.gov.uk

Bengali

অপনি যদি এই দলিলপত্র অন্য কোন ভাষায় অনুবাদ করে চান, বা ব্রেল, বড়ো ছাপার অক্ষর, অডিও-ট্যেপ বা সিডিতে চান, তাহলে আমাদের টেলিফোন করুন এই নম্বরে 01823 356397 বা অথবা ই-মেল করুন scrutinyandperformance@tauntondeane.gov.uk

Chinese

如果你要這文件翻譯成其他語言或盲人凸字,大號字,聲帶,或光碟,請致電我們,電話 01823 356397 或電郵 scrutinyandperformance@tauntondeane.gov.uk

Hindi

अगर आप इस दस्तावेज़ का अनुवाद दूसरी भाषाओं या ब्रेल, बड़े अक्षरों वाली छपाई, ऑडियो टेप, या सीडी में चाहते हैं, तो कृपया हमें इस नंबर पर फ़ोन कीजिये 01823 356397 या यहाँ ईमेल कीजिये scrutinyandperformance@tauntondeane.gov.uk

Portuguese

Se desejar a tradução deste documento para um outro idioma ou em Braille, letras grandes, cassete de áudio ou CD, contacte-nos pelo telefone 01823 356397 ou pelo endereço de correio electrónico scrutinyandperformance@tauntondeane.gov.uk

Polish

W celu uzyskania niniejszego dokumentu w innym języku, w języku Braille'a, wydrukowanego dużym drukiem, nagranych na taśmę dźwiękową lub CD prosimy o kontakt pod numerem telefonu 01823 356397 lub na adres scrutinyandperformance@tauntondeane.gov.uk

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Foreword

We are proud of this Annual Report and of the Council's achievements. What matters most is that this council delivers high quality, value-for-money services and once again the Audit Commission have confirmed that this is exactly what we do.

On top of excellent day-to-day service delivery we have broader ambitions for our communities and our staff.

We have concentrated on three big projects: Project Taunton, ISiS, and the Somerset Waste Partnership. All will bring enormous benefits.

We have appointed a lead developer for Firepool, a key part of Project Taunton, and we expect work to start on site this financial year to create jobs, new homes and a mix of restaurants, shops and cafes.

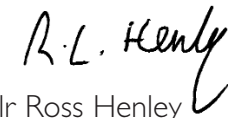
The Improving Services in Somerset Programme (ISiS) is a groundbreaking partnership between ourselves, the County Council, Police and IBM. Together we will form a new company, which will drive up service quality, improve access to services and reduce costs.

The Somerset Waste Partnership have progressed the procurement of a single waste contract, which should enable us to extend the range of recycling services to residents cost effectively.

We are proud of our achievements but cannot be complacent. Affordable housing, sustainability and energy efficiency remain big issues that we are committed to tackling in the future.



Penny James



Cllr Ross Henley

Our Vision

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

Business Principles, Core Values and Partnership Working

Our Business Principles

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

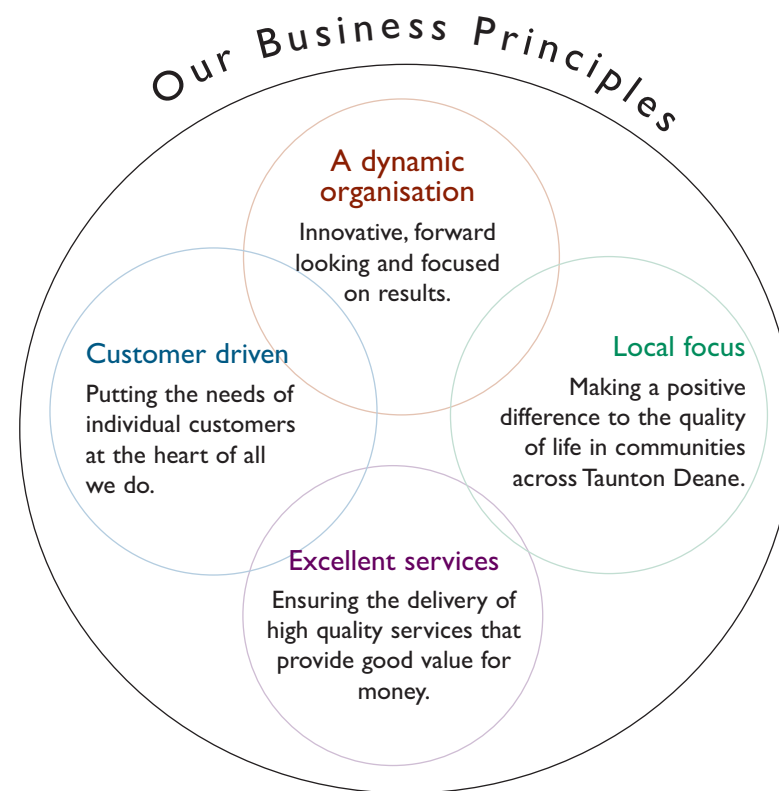
- Excellent services:** Ensuring the delivery of accessible, high quality services that provide good value for money.
- Customer driven:** Putting the needs of individual customers at the heart of all we do.
- Local focus:** Making a positive difference to the quality of life in communities across Taunton Deane.
- A dynamic organisation:** Innovative, forward-looking and focused on results.

Our 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.



Partnership Working

We are a relatively small council and know, that to achieve our challenging plans for the future, we must work with other organisations in strong and effective partnerships. Our Improving Services in Somerset (ISIS) plans are an example of how we propose to make the Council more effective and efficient by working in partnership. We are fortunate to be a member of several, very successful, partnerships that help us achieve our corporate aims. It is only through working with local residents and these partner-agencies that we will continue to ensure future success.

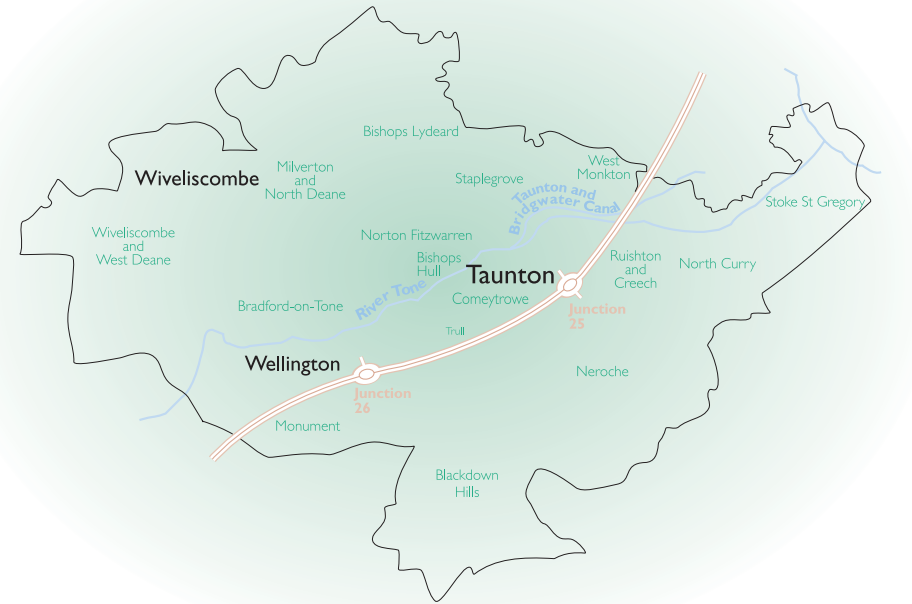
Taunton Deane

An Overview of the Borough with Key Facts and Figures

Size:	462 square kilometres
Population:	106,800 (Source 2005 Office of National Statistics)
Households:	46,859
Main Settlements:	Taunton, Wellington, Bishops Lydeard, Wiveliscombe
Main Employment:	Wholesale/Retail; Health & Social Work; Real Estate/Renting; Public Services; Education; Manufacturing
Number of Businesses:	5,000
Unemployment:	1.2% (Source NOMIS)
Ethnic Minorities:	1.6%
Deprivation Ranking:	188th out of 354 districts. Four wards ranked in the worst 25% nationally. (2004)

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 longer term challenges that face Taunton Deane include:

- A shortage of affordable housing. We have a very challenging target of enabling 564 affordable dwellings per annum.
- 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.
- Some deprived wards, including four that are classed as being in the worst 25% deprived in the country.
- Significant planned growth in the district that reflects the strategic importance of Taunton and the Borough. Project 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.
- Anticipated increases in traffic congestion especially in the main towns.

On pages 24 to 26 we show our Key Plans for 2007/08, including a summary of our major projects. These plans will help us meet the objectives of our Corporate Strategy 2007-2010 and many will form part of longer-term plans to address the challenges above.

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 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 seven miles from Taunton and is immediately identifiable by its towering monument visible from miles around, commemorating the Duke of Wellington. The town is proud of its award winning park, which is nationally recognised as one of the Country's top ten urban parks. Much of the local employment is based around agriculture and factory units. Last year the town successfully launched the Wellington Food Town initiative in a bid to become a Centre of Excellence for food and local produce.

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 through the beautiful countryside 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, shops 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/heartofsomerset.

Taunton Deane - A Year in View

The stories, events and achievements from 2006/07

April 2006

- Fixed penalty notices introduced for litterbugs, with fines of up to £75.
- CCTV operations increased for Taunton and Wellington. Now 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and monitored by specialist CCTV Officers.
- Audit Commission says Taunton Deane Borough Council delivers “high quality services” and “delivers positive value for money” scoring us one of the highest marks for a district council in the South of England.
- ‘Your Council Your Views’ consultation launched, asking people what they think the Council’s priorities are and how council tax should be spent.

May 2006

- ‘No Drinking Order’ introduced in Taunton.
- Nine Community Arts Projects awarded grants totalling £5,630. We also secured a further £106,000 from other sources for these projects.
- Cllr Chris Hindley welcomed as new Mayor for Taunton Deane.
- Taunton Deane Borough Council Supports “Noise Action Week”, promoting practical solutions to everyday noise problems.
- ‘Home Aid’ service launched focusing on home improvement for elderly and vulnerable tenants.

June 2006

- Penny James, Chief Executive of Taunton Deane Borough Council, along with a Strategic Director, host three forums, giving the public an opportunity to air their views of the Council.
- Our Website is rated fifth out of 464 sites monitored by the Local Government Forum.
- Deane Helpline, our 24 hour emergency response service, is the first in the South or South-West to be given all three Telecare Services Association accreditations in a single audit.
- In the third round of Business Development Grants, Taunton Deane Borough Council award £2,000 each to four local companies.
- A Young Enterprise team from Richard Huish presented with £500 from TDDBC’S Economic Development Unit, in recognition of their achievement in reaching the regional finals.
- Affordable Housing Open Day a great success, attracting nearly 500 visitors.

July 2006

- Wellington Retail Survey shows that Wellington is improving with less retail vacancies.
- Wellington Park retains both the prestigious Green Flag and Green Heritage Site Accreditation, and Victoria and Vivary Parks, Taunton, were also awarded Green Flags.
- Vivary Park's new warden starts.
- Construction of Wellington Business Park enters its final stages. A sum of £469,357 has been invested in the park by Taunton Deane Borough Council.

August 2006

- Wellington shoppers to be given 50p towards their parking charge as part of the Free Parking Scheme.
- First edition of Wellington Food Newsletter distributed in town.
- Our Dog Warden Service and Trust Ilfracombe Rehoming Centre team up to offer a microchipping day for dog owners in Wiveliscombe. Free advice and poop scoops given out.
- Family Fun Day a great success in French Weir Park.

September 2006

- We contribute £658,739 towards an affordable housing development in Wiveliscombe.
- Final phase of Sort It! recycling scheme begins in Taunton Deane.
- 'View on Vivary' survey collects over 200 responses from people expressing their opinion on what should be done in the park ranging from number of tennis courts to a sensory garden.
- We approve over £5,000 worth of Arts grants to support local organisations including 'Take Art' and '10 Radio'.
- Taunton Deane Borough Council & British Gas cavity wall and insulation scheme a huge success, saving home owners £'000s and reducing carbon emissions.

October 2006

- Opening of Taunton Green Site, Cheddon Road, in conjunction with Somerset Activity & Sports Partnership.
- Thanks to the weekly collection of food waste, 1,988 tonnes of leftover food has been recycled into high quality compost since SORT IT! was introduced.
- Customer Service charter agreed for all the Tourist Information Centres in Somerset. This will provide a consistent level of guidance and advice across Somerset.
- The 'Talking Tomorrow's Taunton Deane' Consultation reaches the final of the prestigious RTPI National Planning Awards for 2006, in recognition of the exemplar work linking planning and community consultation.

November 2006

- Officers and Members visit Torbay Council to learn good practice from a council that has been praised for its scrutiny function.
- New Interpretation panels installed which provide information on the diversity of wildlife and promote appreciation of the South Taunton Brooks and Stream Local Nature Reserve.
- Seven new units unveiled at Blackdown Business Park following almost £500,000 of investment from Taunton Deane Borough Council.

December 2006

- We give a grant of £1,000 to Mindline Somerset.
- Multi million pound affordable housing development launched at the BT building, Taunton, to include 75 high-quality homes.
- Plans approved to apply for a £900,000 bid for major improvements to Taunton's French Weir Park.
- Environmental Health and Communications Team successfully manage our response to a serious fire in central Taunton.
- First major food festival held in Wellington - begins campaign to achieve official 'Food Town' status.

January 2007

- Opening of two state-of-the-art fabric framed tennis courts, funded by Taunton Deane Borough Council and the L.T.A.
- We provide a grant award of £1,200 to Wellington & District Healthy Living Trust.
- Taunton Car Parks secure a revamp, thanks to Avon and Somerset Probation Unpaid Work Unit. They carried out ground maintenance work as well as dealing with graffiti.
- 24 hour 7 days a week CCTV operations scheme is a success.
- TDDBC backs "Team Somerset" partnership approach as an alternative to Somerset County Unitary Authority bid.

February 2007

- Launch of Staplegrove Local Action Team, with support from Avon and Somerset Constabulary.
- Anti-social behaviour (ASB) Project Officer appointed to support and advise residents and groups wanting to tackle anti-social behaviour.
- Mayor's Musical Extravaganza held in support of his charities.
- Six awards granted to support diverse and innovative entrepreneurs across Taunton Deane. Each received a £2,000 grant.

March 2007

- IBM chosen as preferred bidder by Taunton Deane Borough Council and Somerset County Council for the ISiS Joint Venture Partnership. This should significantly improve how our services are delivered and enable savings for both Councils.
- Launch of new pilot scheme to help householders install solar power systems. Run in partnership with British Gas.
- £6,000 European grant secured for the continued development of Wellington as a Premier Food Town in the South West.
- 'Keep Somerset Local' campaign delegation in London to lobby MPs.

Between April 2006 and March 2007

We dealt with:

175,846	Calls to the Customer Enquiries line
133,217	Counter enquiries handled by the Tourist Information Centre
41,846	Enquiries through the Deane House main reception
30,803	Visits to our Wellington Community Office
12,963	Enquiries dealt with by our Wellington Community Office
14,425	Enquiries dealt with by Housing Reception
8,054	Enquiries dealt with by Planning Reception
6,478	Site inspections of building works in progress.
5,704	Homeless enquiries
1,728	Planning applications
1,350	Licence Applications
873	Pest Treatments
753	Nuisance service requests, for example noise complaints
747	Handyman jobs completed (at year end)
699	Potential building work defects identified and corrected
457	Press enquiries
207	Homeless applications
109	Defective drainage investigations

We issued:

£70,000	Total value of Home Insulation Grants
17,400	Penalty notices for parking offences
10,000	Low energy light bulbs given to Vulnerable people and pensioners
347	Taxi licenses including Hackney Carriages, Private Hire, Private Hire, Private Operator and Drivers.
80	Repair grants
9	Fines for littering

We collected:

21,348	Tonnes of household waste
8,669	Tonnes of dry recyclables eg. glass
3,488	Compostable tonnes of food waste
2,699	Compostable tonnes of garden waste
178	Abandoned vehicles
172	Stray dogs
157	Drinking water samples
105	Commercial food samples

We inspected:

493	Premises for food safety
419	Planning complaints
142	Premises for health & safety
86	Housing standard inspections

Other key statistics and facts:

£130 m	Value of tourism to Taunton Deane economy
235,666	New visitors to TDBC Website
200,156	Returning visitors to TDBC Website
572	Number of homes in TDBC where the thermal comfort has been improved

Progress Against Last Year's Promises

Last year's Annual Report set out our planned improvements over the three years 2006-2009 under each of our six Corporate Aims. Here we report progress against all 17 planned improvements and it is pleasing to report that we have fully progressed as planned against 13 of these objectives, with some progress being made against the other four

The objectives in the Annual Report were established after listening to local residents' priorities, largely through the annual priorities consultation exercise and through feedback from satisfaction surveys and other consultation. We also considered government priorities and local partnership priorities in setting these objectives.

Last year's Annual Report is available to view on our website:
<http://www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/tdbcsites/polperf/annualreport.asp>

Corporate Aim - Economy

Regenerating Taunton and strengthening the economy of the Borough

Taunton Deane has a medium sized economy by British standards, with only Exeter and South Somerset having larger economies locally. Taunton continues to be a significant 'growth area' for the region in both housing and employment terms.

The following tables show the employment structure, with a low level of manufacturing compared to the rest of the county, but high levels of public sector employment. We have experienced average growth in the number of VAT registered businesses. Wages remain lower than the average of the South West and the UK.

We have used this data to develop an Economic Development Strategy to focus our resources and efforts on developing the local economy. This work ties in to the Project Taunton regeneration.

Employment Structure	Taunton Deane	Somerset	South West	GB/UK
Public Admin, education & health	37.5 %	27.5 %	28.2 %	26.9 %
Distribution, hotels and restaurants	24.4 %	27.4 %	26.0 %	24.4 %
Finance, IT, other business activities	18.9 %	15.8 %	18.4 %	20.7 %
Manufacturing	6.8 %	14.4 %	11.4 %	11.1 %
Tourism related	6.3 %	8.3 %	8.8 %	8.1 %
Construction	3.7 %	5.5 %	4.5 %	4.6 %

Top 6 employment sectors

source: ONS annual business inquiry employee analysis 2005

	2003	2004	2005	Change 2000-05	VAT stock By population	Registration rate By population
Taunton Deane	465	3,365	3,670	4.7 %	582.5	48.4
Somerset	19,040	19,210	19,390	4.1 %	646.3	49.7
South West	170,120	171,935	174,135	5.8 %	573.8	49.2

Number of enterprises registering for VAT each year

source: NOMIS. Per 10,000 working population (mid-2005 estimates)

Taunton Deane	£419
Somerset	£421
South West	£424
Great Britain	£449

Average gross weekly pay (2006)

Source: ONS

Improvements on Course

- Project Taunton is beginning to take shape and we have received developer bids for the redevelopment of the Firepool area of Taunton. We expect that a preferred bidder will be selected in the summer of 2007.
- Creative Business Boost has been set up which is a resource centre at the Brewhouse Theatre for artists and other creative enterprises.
- We have developed a Community Strategy for Taunton which also focuses on reducing deprivation in our most deprived wards.
- This year the Council has provided business support funding for fifteen local businesses and provided advice, guidance and support to hundreds more.
- We have continued to provide support for rural agricultural diversification projects such as Wellington Food Town initiative.

Improvements that have fallen behind the original timetable

- Negotiations are still taking place for sites and the final shape of the proposed Cultural Quarter for Project Taunton.
- Negotiations are ongoing to provide a sixty unit business incubation centre at Somerset College for Arts and Technology (SCAT).

Other Specific Achievements for 2006/07

- Nine Community Arts Projects were awarded grants totalling £5,630. We also secured a further £106,000 from other sources for these projects.
- The 'Talking Tomorrow's Taunton Deane' Consultation reached the final of the prestigious RTPI National Planning Awards for 2006, in recognition of the exemplar work linking planning and community consultation.
- We approved plans to apply for a £900,000 bid to the lottery for major improvements to Taunton's French Weir Park.

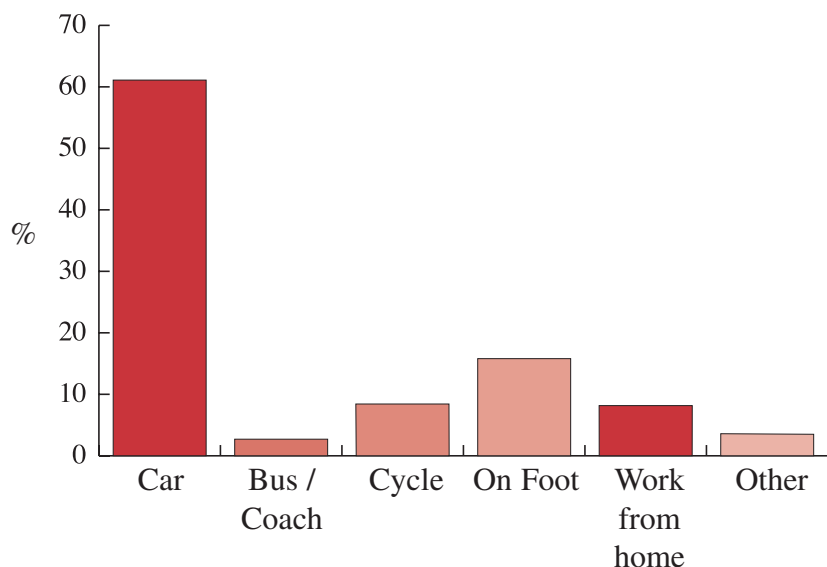
Corporate Aim - Transport

Minimising the growth in traffic congestion

We need to work in partnership with the County Council to ensure that strategic transport investment is made for the future prosperity of the Borough as part of Project Taunton. Current forecasts show a large increase in congestion in Taunton in the next few years, and we will work closely with the County Council to manage this rate of growth, keeping it to a minimum.

The percentage of resident population who travel to work in Taunton and method of travel

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

- We implemented an employee travel plan to reduce single occupancy vehicles and encourage alternative means of transport. A new restrictive parking scheme for staff has been introduced along with the building of an additional bicycle shed.
- A car park strategy has been drafted outlining a series of action plans to develop the provision of multi-storey car parking for Taunton to underpin Project Taunton.
- We continue to lobby and work with others to ensure the strategic transport investment necessary to fulfil Taunton's role as a 'Strategically Significant Town'.
- We have promoted the use of the Silk Mills Park and Ride scheme which is currently exceeding expectations.
- Working closely with the County Council, we have lobbied for a clear timetable for the delivery of the Taunton East Park and Ride Facility. A planning application will be submitted in September 2007.
- We have worked in partnership with Somerset County Council 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 Project Taunton.

Other specific achievements in 2006/07:

- Signed up to the Congestion Protocol in partnership with the County Council. Action points include the promotion of 'Smarter Choices' (walking, cycling and public transport), the alleviation of congestion at Station Road, and the provision of coach drop-off facilities at Castle Way.

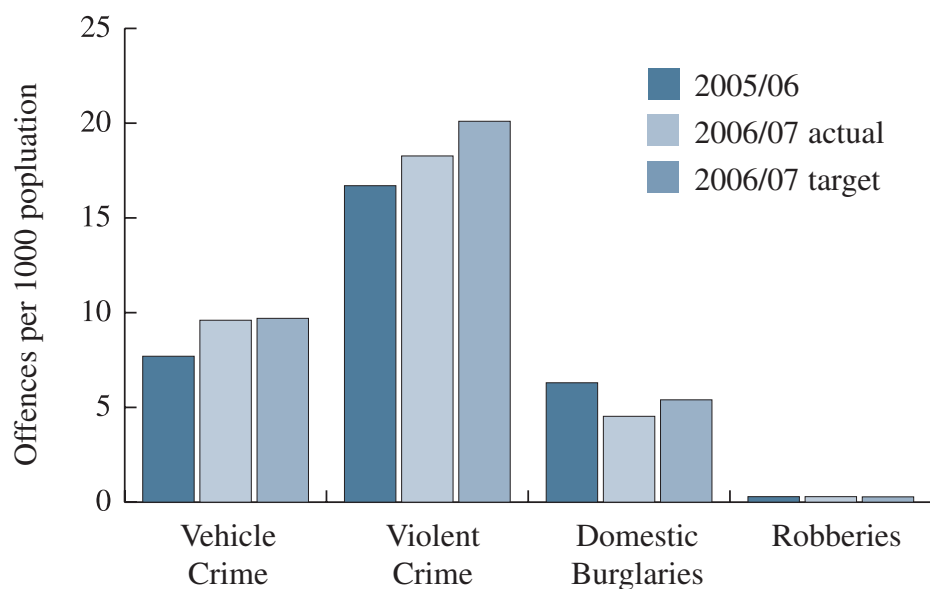
Corporate Aim - Crime

Promoting safer communities and tackling anti-social behaviour

As a member of the Taunton Deane Crime and Disorder Partnership, we strive to reduce levels of crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime in Taunton Deane. By working closely with partners, we contribute to and have a considerable impact on meeting the Partnership's crime reduction targets. Crime levels in Taunton Deane are lower than the national average, and the graph below shows progress against the Partnership's main crime targets. The 2006/07 targets were set as a 15% reduction to crime incidents from 2003/04 levels, which we've compared to 2006/2007.

Offences per 1,000 population in Taunton Deane

Source: Home Office Crime in England and Wales



Improvements On Course

- By working closely with the 'Drink Safe, Be Safe' campaign, alcohol related crime in Taunton Town Centre has fallen by 40% in the last two years.
- Incidents of anti-social behaviour have been recorded and mapped to ensure partnership working develops appropriate actions to address problem areas.
- We have continued to provide support to twelve Local Action Teams and helped organise community clear up days in Halcon and Lambrook.
- Our licensing team continue to enforce new licensing laws to meet public safety, prevention of nuisance, prevention of harm to children and vulnerable adults and the prevention of crime and disorder.

Improvements that have fallen behind the original timetable

- We will continue to increase the number of reported incidents of anti-social behaviour before setting baseline figures to reduce the number of incidents occurring.
- We are investigating the purchase of a biometric scanning machine to help reduce problems associated with the night time economy. These are point of entry machines which record personal details of who is in a nightclub.

Other specific achievements in 2006/07:

- CCTV operations increased for Taunton and Wellington. Specialist CCTV officers now monitor coverage 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- A 'No Drinking Order' was introduced in Taunton.
- Avon and Somerset Unpaid Work Unit cleaned and painted our multi-storey and High Street car parks.

Corporate Aim - Healthy Living

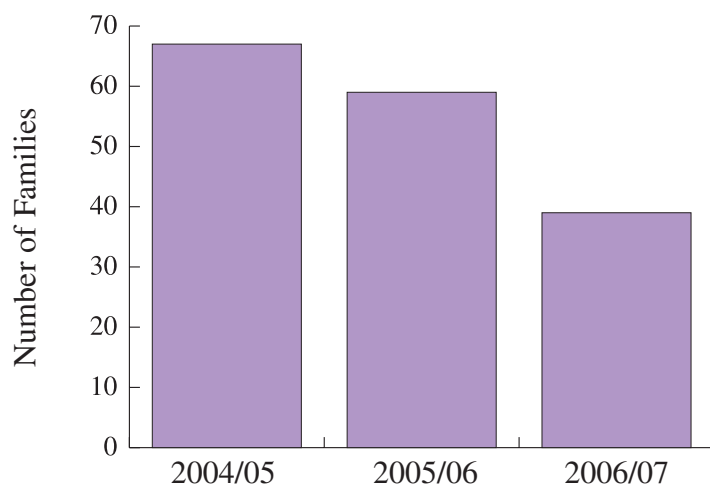
Promoting healthy and sustainable communities

Our highest priority is to meet the requirements of those with greatest housing need. Housing is fundamental to the general health and well-being of our citizens and we have focussed on enabling more affordable housing and tackling homelessness in the Deane. Our other main priority is around promoting healthy activities for the community, ensuring we respond to the needs of different age groups, recognising the contribution made from sport, arts and culture. The table and chart below shows house prices above the national average (although income is below the national average). However we are making good progress in reducing the number of families in temporary accommodation.

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

Average number of families in temporary accommodation

Source: Housing Section, BVPI 203



Improvements On Course

- As shown in the graph, we have significantly reduced the number of homeless families staying in bed and breakfast accommodation through prevention measures and the greater use of private sector tenancies.
- We are trying to increase the amount of permanent accommodation available to the homeless.
- A multi million pound affordable housing development at the BT Building in Taunton is underway to be ready for occupation in October 2007. This will create 75 high quality affordable homes, of which 51 will be socially rented and 24 will be shared equity apartments. The development will also include apartments specifically designed for disabled tenants.
- We continue to negotiate with developers to meet a targeted proportion of social housing and other subsidised housing.

Improvements that have fallen behind the original timescale

- A housing needs survey identified that we should now be enabling the building of 564 affordable units each year. In 2006/07 we completed 53 units but anticipate an increase in numbers to around 300 this year.

Other Specific Achievements for 2006/07

- Held an Affordable Housing Open Day which attracted nearly 500 visitors.
- Contributed £658,739 towards an affordable housing development in Wiveliscombe.
- Organised a Family Fun Day in French Weir Park which was hailed a great success.
- Completed Taunton Green site, off Cheddon Road in conjunction with Somerset Activity & Sports Partnership. This has a new tarmac court which has facilities for football and basketball, alongside there are tennis facilities.

Corporate Aim - Environment

Safeguarding and enhancing the local environment

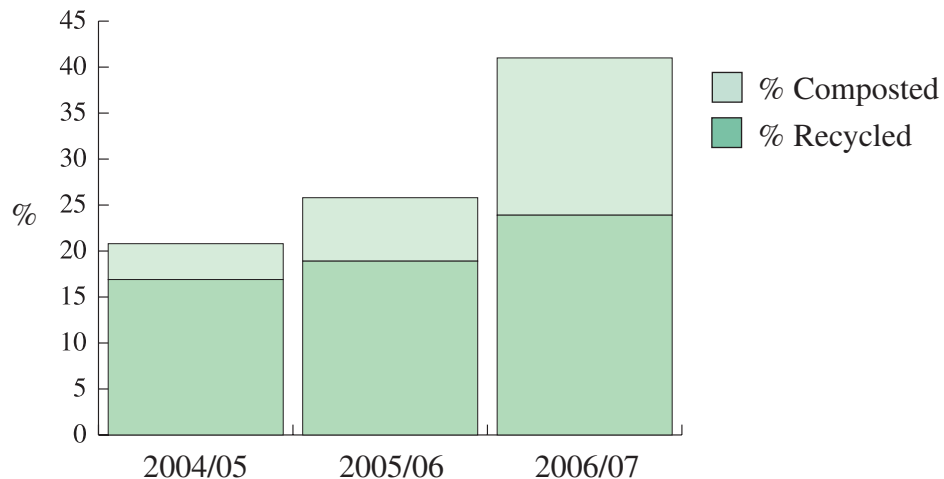
We aim to manage a clean and safe environment, through our services and partnerships, especially the Somerset Waste Partnership. Residents and visitors value the high quality of the physical environment of the Borough and we will continue to protect and enhance it. The table and chart below show high customer satisfaction with the cleanliness of the Borough, and increasing levels of recycling.

Year	TDBC	English Districts Top Quartile
2003	72.5%	68.0%
2006	73%	Unknown

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

Percentage of Taunton Deane household waste recycled and composted

Source: Waste Services



Improvements On Course

- We have completed the roll out of SORT IT! to all properties in Taunton Deane which has resulted in an overall recycling figure of over 40% in 2006/07.
- Increased satisfaction from residents of our sports/leisure facilities from 59% in 2003 to 69% in 2006 (Source: Taunton Deane General Survey)
- Maintained high satisfaction from residents with our parks and open spaces from 83% in 2003 to 85% in 2006 (Source: Taunton Deane General Survey).
- We are continually reviewing and progressing in the holistic management of the environment.
- We have been working with community groups to improve street cleaning.

Other specific achievements in 2006/07

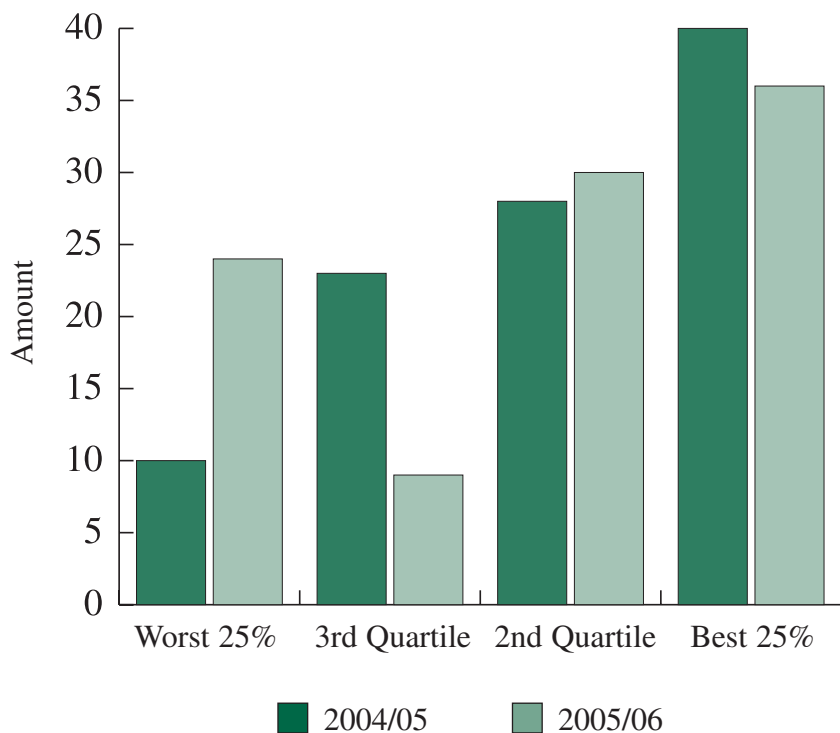
- Installed new Interpretation panels at the South Taunton Brooks and Stream Local Nature Reserve. These provide information on the diversity of wildlife.
- Supported new scheme to help Taunton Deane Householders to install solar power systems on their property.

Corporate Aim - Delivery

Delivering accessible, value for money services

We aim to deliver value for money services that are customer focussed and accessible to everyone. The chart below shows a breakdown of our statutory performance indicators compared nationally. In the latest comparison year (2005/06), 36 % of our performance indicators are ranked amongst the best 25% of council performance in the Country.

Indicator Comparisons for Taunton Deane 2004/05 to 2005/06



Improvements On Course

- Equality Impact Assessments have been undertaken for all our services. From these, we have created a comprehensive equalities scheme with an action plan to tackle race, gender and disability issues.
- We have liaised with Black and Minority Ethnic Communities via meetings with voluntary groups.
- A joint procurement strategy has been developed with Somerset County Council which aims to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and social responsibility of procurement.
- We were awarded a score of 'three' out of four for how well we use our resources which was assessed by the Audit Commission. This score places us in the top quartile against other councils, and further builds on our 'Excellent' status.
- IBM has been selected as our Preferred Bidder for the ISiS project. Negotiations are currently underway with a contract for the Joint Venture Partnership expected to be signed in September 07.
- We continue to work in partnership to deliver shared priorities, including the Local Area Agreement, the Local Strategic Partnership and the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.
- We are using a 'dashboard' approach to performance reporting to attain better focus on performance issues.
- We have strengthened the role of Scrutiny in the Council by undertaking more Task and Finish reviews that drive improvement on specific issues.

Other specific achievements in 2006/07:

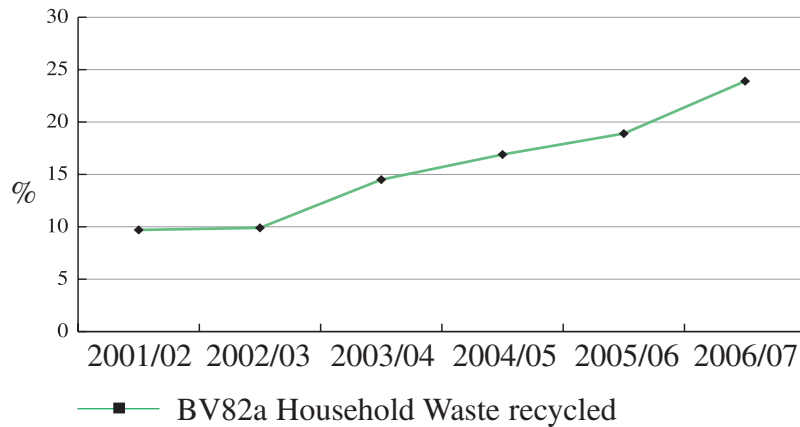
- 'Your Council, Your Views' consultation launched, asking people what they think the council's priorities are and how council tax should be spent.
- The Deane helpline was the first in the South and South West to be given all three Telecare Services Association accreditations in a single audit.
- The Mayor's Musical Extravaganza was held in support of his charities.

Summary of Performance

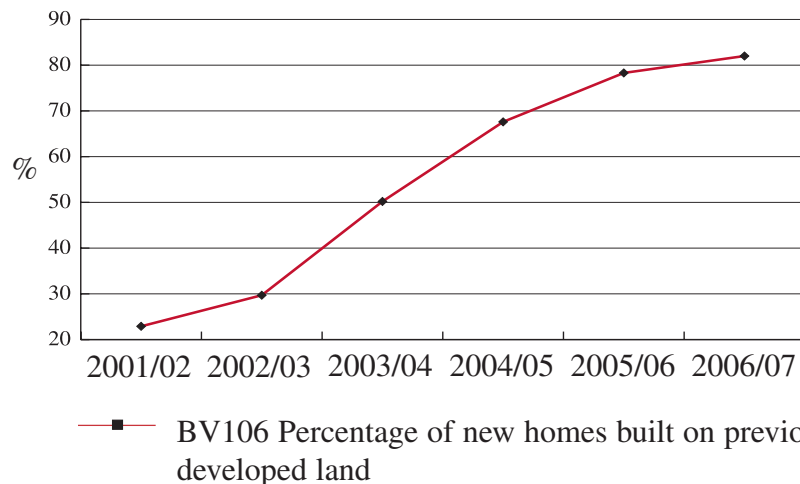
For 2006/07 we don't yet have national comparison data, however we know that our performance has improved on 35% of performance indicators compared to 2005/06, and we have met our targets for 56% of performance indicators.

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

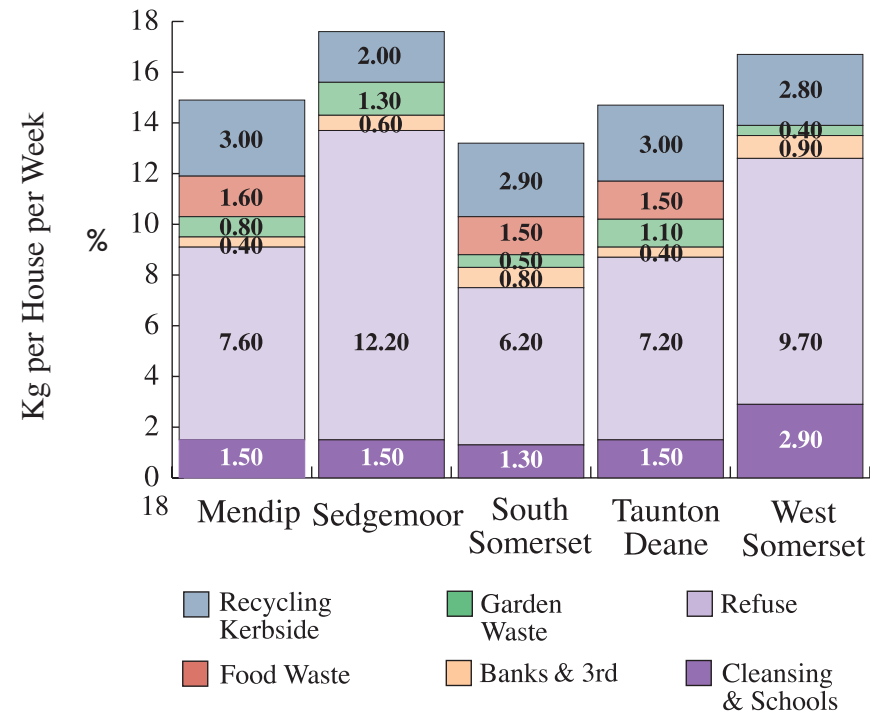
Recycling Rates (excluding Composting)



Percentage of new homes built on previously developed land



Somerset Districts Waste 2006/07 - Kg/Hh/Wk



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, one of only four District Councils in the South West. In 2006, we were awarded a 'performing well' rating for how we use our resources. This score placed us in the top five in the South West for district councils and amongst the top 25% 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 356397 or by visiting www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/tdbcsites/polperf/AnnualReport.asp

Financial Performance

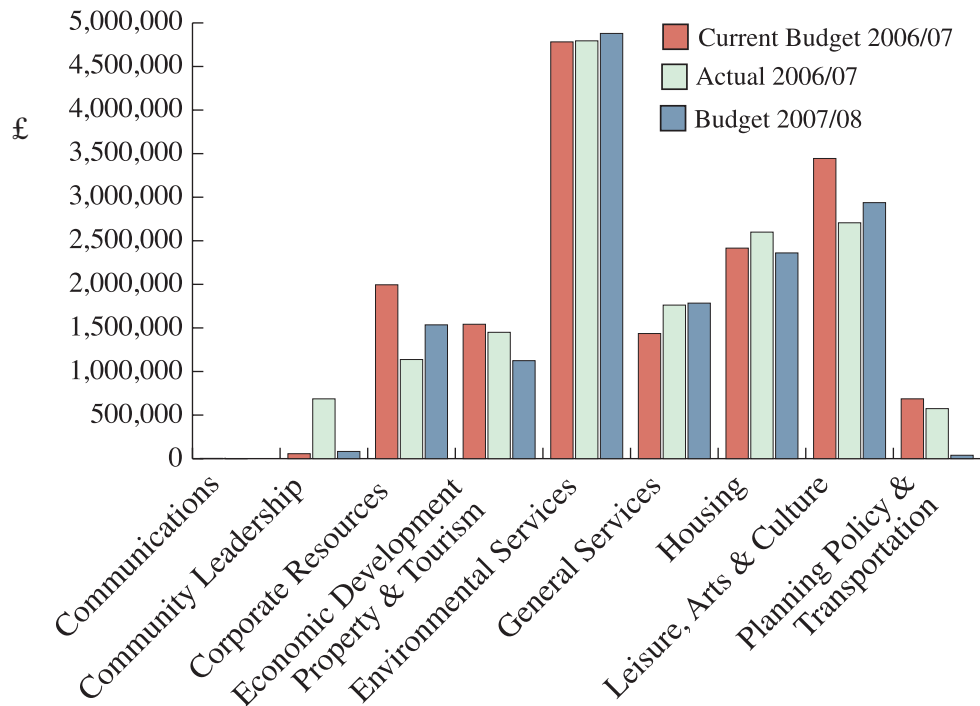
Please note the figures used in this summary are from the un-audited version of our accounts and are subject to approval by the Audit Commission.

General Fund

For 2006/07 the Council's actual expenditure on services was £15.7m, which was £241,696 above the approved budget. The main reason for the overspend was the contribution made towards the Housing Transfer Project. If this is excluded then the Council actually under spent by £33k. The budget for 2007/08 has been set, with a focus on achieving our objectives as described under our 6 corporate aims. See page 23.

Below is a graph to compare the current budget 2006/07 with the actual 2006/07 and budget 2007/08.

General Fund



Housing Revenue Account

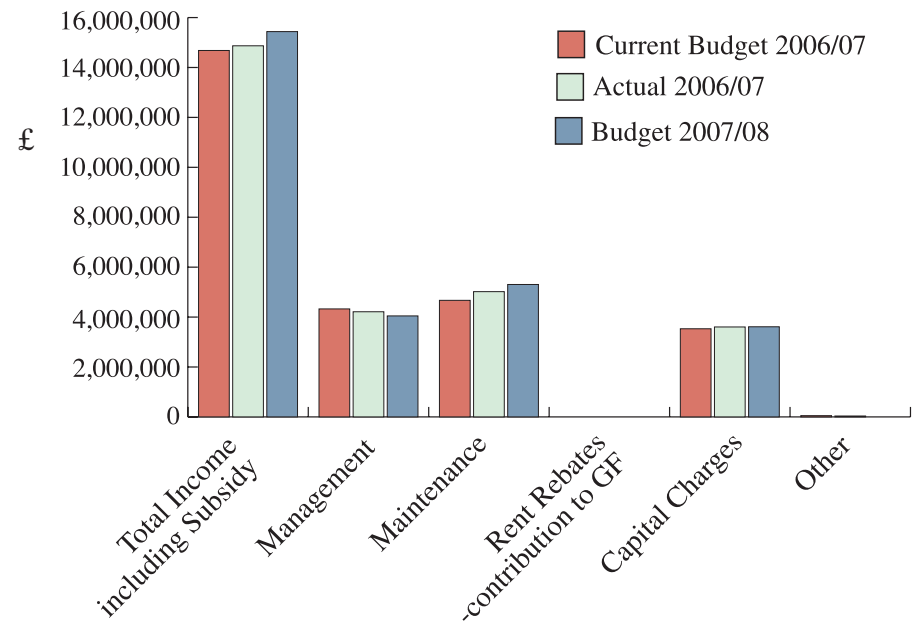
We account for Housing Revenue separately and for 2006/07 our total surplus for the year was £650,010 against a current budgeted surplus of £312,280.

The main reasons for the under spend were additional income collected on service charges, additional interest received and the transfer from the general fund for the stock transfer project costs.

The Council owned 6,127 properties at the 31 March 2007. It is required by law to pay for all the costs associated with these properties from the rental income received.

52 properties were sold to tenants during the year.

Housing Revenue Account Outturn 2006/2007

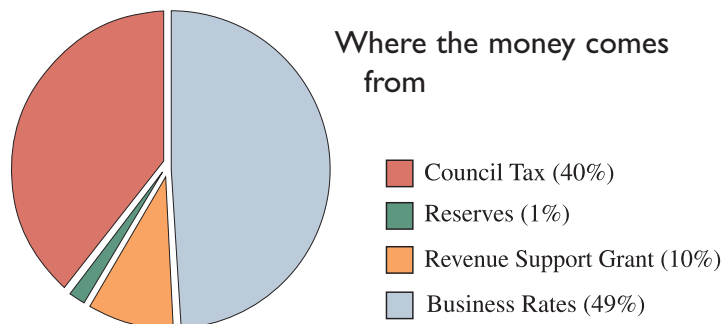


Income and Expenditure Account

The Income and Expenditure Account below shows the cost of running Council services between April 2006 and March 2007.

Income and Expenditure Account	Net Exp £'000
Housing Services	1,096
Cultural Services	3,144
Environmental Services	4,790
Planning Services	2,457
Corp Costs inc Councillors	1,142
Central Services to the public	82
Unapportionable Costs	784
Collection of local taxes	783
Highways, roads and Transport	(728)
Net Cost of Services	13,550
Add: Interest Payable and Similar Charges	1,115
Add: Contribution of Housing Capital Receipts to Government Pool	2,735
Add: Parish Council Precepts	360
Add: Other Costs	104
Less: Gain on Disposal of Fixed Assets	(563)
Less: Interest and Investment income	(940)
Net Operating Expenditure	16,361
Net Additional Amount Required by Statute and Non Statutory Proper Practices to be Credited to the General Fund	(3,144)
Net Expenditure	13,217

The pie chart shows where the money for this came from:



Below is the balance sheet for 2006/07. This details what the council owes and is owed.

Balance Sheet as at 31 st March 2007	£'000
Buildings, Land and Vehicles Owned	487,039
Stocks Held	232
Cash and Investments	9,623
Money owed to the Council	8,077
Less: Money owed by the Council	(51,279)
Total	453,692

Financed by:

Non-distributable Reserves	441,201
Distributable Reserves	12,491
Total	453,692

Distributable reserves comprise the following:

General Fund	1,242
Other Reserves	6,682
Housing Reserve Balance	2,659
Collection Fund	(51)
Unapplied Capital Receipts	1,959
Total	12,491

Cash Flow during 2006/07

	£'000
= Cash and Investments held on 31 March 2006	14,100
+ Cash In	144,730
- Cash Out	(149,207)
= Cash and Investments held on 31 March 2007	9,623

Capital Expenditure

Capital expenditure is money spent by the Council on purchasing, updating and improving assets such as buildings, vehicles and machinery. The Council receives this type of expenditure over many years, so it is 'matched' in the accounts over those years. The table below shows the investment made by the Council during April 2006 to March 2007.

Capital Expenditure Summary 2006/07	£'000
Council Dwellings	4,035
Grants to Housing Associations	1,168
Capital Grants	1,245
Other Land and Buildings	2,594
Computer Software	788
Vehicles and Equipment	763
Other Misc	185
Total	10,778

Council Tax 2007/08

The budget for Taunton Deane Borough Council for 2007/08 gives a Band D Council Tax of £128.05, which is a 2% increase (£2.51 more) on 2006/07. The Taunton Deane element of the Council Tax bill works out at £2.46 per week for a Band D Council Tax payer.

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



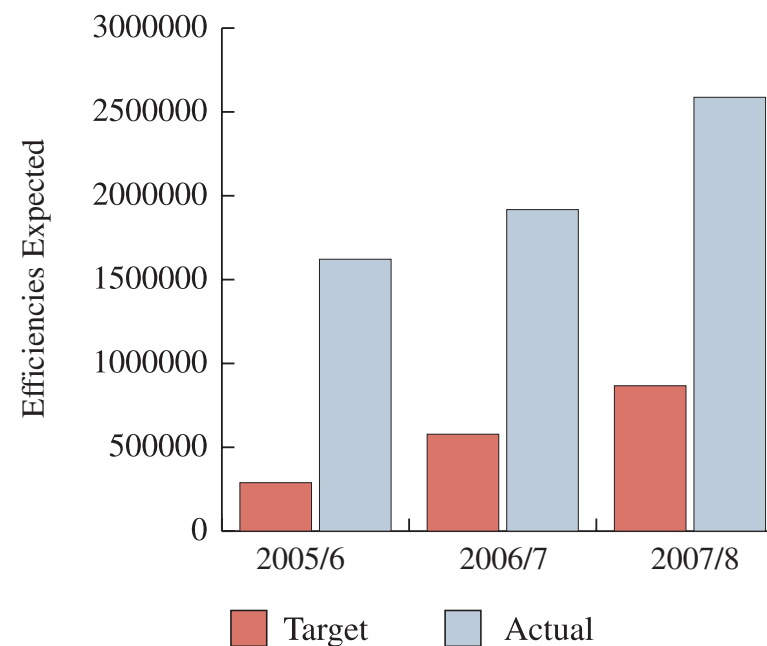
Annual Efficiency Statement

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 scrutinising the budget and using technology better.

This is illustrated below.

Annual Efficiency Statement - Progress Against Targets



For a more detailed copy of the financial accounts please call on **01823 356421** or visit www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/tdbcsites/finance/index.asp.

How We Manage Performance

In this Annual Report we have presented our plans and targets 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 to ensure the Council's performance is monitored effectively and corrective action taken when required. The key elements of this framework are as follows:

Effective Consultation

Effective consultation is vital to ensure that we are meeting the needs of local residents. We ask residents annually for their priorities for the district and how we should set our forthcoming year's budget. Last year we undertook major consultation exercises on satisfaction levels within Housing Services, Benefits, Planning and general Council services. These results helped to shape our Corporate Strategy and determine our priorities and objectives for the future.

We recognise the need to improve the way we use consultation results and complaints feedback. We have improved our complaints handling procedures and are working further to ensure that analysis of complaints and consultation feeds into service improvement plans and results in real improvements for our customers.

Performance Management System

Our Corporate Strategy contains our six corporate aims and twenty objectives for 2007 to 2010. Progress is reported quarterly to managers and Councillors, allowing them to challenge poor performance and redirect resources to achieve our targets.

We also report progress against our annual financial budget and 125 performance indicators (national and local) which measure performance across all services. An overview of our 2006/07 performance is provided in the Summary Performance section. The full results of our performance indicators are found on www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/tdbcsites/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.

A corporate CPA assessment in 2004 rated us as 'Excellent', and a 'Use of Resources' assessment in 2006 gave us a 3 out of 4 score. Both of these scores rate us amongst the best district councils in the Country. However, a number of areas requiring improvement were identified so we have developed improvement plans which we monitor and report against twice yearly to managers and Councillors.

Your Local Councillors

Local elections are held every four years to elect the 56 Councillors who represent Taunton Deane's 27 wards. The Councillors' role is to represent the views of local residents, make sure that council decisions reflect local priorities and ensure that we provide quality services that meet residents' needs.

The Executive

The Executive is comprised of the Leader of the Council, together with eight Executive Councillors from the ruling party, each responsible for distinct portfolio areas. Key Policy decisions on all Council issues are agreed by the Executive at monthly public meetings. The Executive Councillors and their portfolios are shown on the following page.

Scrutiny

The remaining 47 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 and to add value to the Council by helping develop new policies. The Review Board also scrutinise the Council's performance by analysing and challenging the quarterly performance reports.

Scrutiny aims to add value to the Council by representing the public and their concerns, helping develop policies, reviewing the work of the Council and its partnerships and ensuring that Councillors have a real opportunity to make a difference.

The chairpersons of the review panels and committees, and the other scrutiny Councillors are shown on the following page.

Your Local Councillors

Executive Councillors



Ross Henley
Leader of the Council



Alan Wedderkopp
(Deputy Leader)
Community Development



Steve Brooks
Communications



Simon Coles
Planning, Policy & Transportation



Jefferson Horsley
Economic Development,
Property & Tourism



Richard Lees
Leisure, Arts and Culture



Melvyn Mullins
Environmental Services



Hazel Prior-Sankey
Housing Services



Fran Smith
Corporate Resources

Chairs of Scrutiny Panels and Committees



John Williams
Chair of Review
Board and Corporate Governance



Mark Edwards
Chair of
Health & Leisure
Review Panel



Joanna Lewin-Harris
Chair of Strategic Planning,
Transportation & Economic
Development Panel



Terry Murphy
Chair of
Housing Review
Panel



Alan Paul
Chair of
Community
Leadership
Review Panel



Mary Whitmarsh
Chair of Resources
Review Panel



To be
Appointed
Chair of
Licensing
Committee



Marcia Hill
Chair of
Planning
Committee



Ken Hayward
Mayor

Scrutiny Panel Members



Jean Allgrove



Anthony Beaven



Cliff Bishop



John Bone



Robert Bowrah



Jayne Brockwell



Norman Cavill



Gloria Copley



Jean Court-Stenning



Peter Critchard



Brian Denington



David Durdan



Habib Farbahi



Anthony Floyd



Andrew Govier



Dr. Gerry Guerrier



Terence Hall



Catherine Herbert



Chris Hill



David House



Louise James



Sue Lees



Gwyneth Leighton



Tony McMahon



John Meikle MBE



Ian Morrell



Timothy Slattery



Peter Smith



Vivienne Stock-Williams



Phillip Stone



Nigel Stuart-Thorn



John Thorne



Peter Watson



Elaine Waymouth



Denise Webber



Danny Wedderkopp



Nicola Wilson



Julie Wood



Andrew Woolley

Corporate Aims & Objectives 2007-2010

<p>Aim 1</p> <p>Economy</p> <p>Regenerating Taunton and strengthening the economy of the Borough.</p>	<p>Aim 2</p> <p>Transport</p> <p>Minimising the growth in traffic congestion.</p>	<p>Aim 3</p> <p>Crime</p> <p>Promoting safer communities and tackling anti-social behaviour.</p>	<p>Aim 4</p> <p>Healthy Living</p> <p>Promoting healthy and sustainable communities.</p>	<p>Aim 5</p> <p>Environment</p> <p>Safeguarding and enhancing the local environment.</p>	<p>Aim 6</p> <p>Delivery</p> <p>Delivering accessible, value for money services.</p>
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Our Corporate Objectives *(Principal Objectives shown in Bold and above the line)*

<p>Stimulate the creation of 14,000 new jobs in the Borough between 2006 and 2026 (5% from the Creative Industries Sector). This includes 6,500 jobs at Firepool by 2010 through Project Taunton.</p>	<p>Support the County Council as lead agency, to limit the rate of growth of traffic congestion in Taunton (vehicle delay target of 2,414 vehicle hours by 2011).</p>	<p>To reduce overall crime in Taunton Deane by 15% by March 2008.</p>	<p>To enable the building of 985 units of affordable housing between April 2006 and March 2011.</p>	<p>To increase to at least 78% the percentage of people who are satisfied with the cleanliness of their local environment by 2009.</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>To encourage 30 new businesses to set up in Taunton Deane per year (5% from Creative Industries Sector)</p> <p>Develop the Cultural Offer of the Borough.</p> <p>Reduce deprivation in Taunton Deane, taking the four most deprived sub-areas out of the 25% national most deprived areas by 2020.</p> <p>Support the development of the rural economy through facilitating and supporting agricultural diversification projects, business activity and land development.</p>	<p>Support the County Council as lead agency to reduce the proportion of journeys to work made in Taunton by Single Occupancy Vehicles.</p>	<p>To reduce the incidence of violent crime in Taunton Deane by 15% by 2008.</p> <p>To reduce anti-social behaviour incidents by 15% from baseline figures by 2007/08.</p> <p>To reduce the fear and perceptions of crime by 5% per year to 2009 (from March 2007 baseline).</p>	<p>To reduce the number of homeless applications in temporary accommodation by 50% by 2010, with an emphasis on homelessness prevention.</p> <p>Promote healthy activities to meet the needs of the wider community, responding to the needs of different age groups.</p>	<p>To increase the percentage of household waste recycled to 45% by the end of 2008/9 and 47% by the end of 2009/10.</p> <p>To actively promote sustainability in Taunton Deane with a focus on climate change, energy efficiency and renewable energy, to reduce our carbon footprint on the environment.</p>	<p>To achieve level 5 of the Equality Standard for Local Government by the end of 2010.</p> <p>To ensure that 90% of service enquiries to the Council are resolved at the first point of contact by 2015.</p>

Summary of ongoing Key Projects

Project Taunton

During the current financial year, work has concentrated on appointing a lead developer for the Firepool site. We expect that this will be complete by September 2007, and work on site will start during 2008. This will create 500 new homes, a mix of restaurants, shops and cafes and attract 3000 new jobs.

We are making real progress on delivering Project Taunton. This is an exciting long-term initiative that will transform our County Town into a key economic and cultural centre in the South West region. The Council, working with its main partners, has set up a small team of people dedicated solely to turning Project Taunton into reality. Over the past twelve months they have dealt with issues as diverse as flooding, car parking, transport, culture and the arts. To contact the team call 01823 250807, visit www.projecttaunton.co.uk or email: info@projecttaunton.co.uk.

Improving Services in Somerset (ISiS)

The ISiS Programme is a partnership between ourselves, Somerset County Council, the Avon and Somerset Constabulary and IBM. We are working towards establishing a Joint Venture Company (JVCo) based in Taunton. The JVCo, which will be jointly owned by all the partners, will deliver a number of shared services for each authority, including Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology, Revenues, Benefits, Property Services, Design and Print, Office Services, Procurement and Customer Services.

The aim of the Joint Venture Company is to deliver the shared services more efficiently as well as supporting service and organisational transformation across all partners. A key driving force behind the partnership is also to improve customer access to services for our local community. Our aim is to be in a position to sign the contract setting up the Joint Venture Company between IBM and all partners at the end of September 2007.

Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP)

The 6 SWP authorities have endorsed the decision to appoint a preferred and reserve bidder for a joint County-wide waste collection, recycling and disposable contract. There have been a number of meetings to clarify issues and enable the award of the Contract. The SWP Project Team have also met with members of each District Executive/Cabinets to discuss future service options.

Every SWP District would like to move to SORT IT!+, which would provide a broader service, if the addition of plastic and cardboard kerbside collections can be done more cost effectively.

Somerset are moving to the widest range of major materials being collected at kerbside anywhere in the UK, and so developing the most effective and efficient collection approach is key to making the enhanced services affordable for all SWP authorities. Preparations are well advanced for the SWP Executives who will meet again to consider the outcomes of the negotiations and to agree the final steps in the Governance arrangements that will create the Somerset Waste Board.

Other key plans for 2007/08

Our corporate aims and objectives for 2007-2010 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 2007/08, which will help us deliver these three year objectives.

Corporate Aim: Economy

Regenerating Taunton and strengthening the economy of the Borough

- Relocate the Livestock Market from Firepool and start development of the site.
- Work in partnership to launch a major business incubation centre for Taunton with facilities for up to 40 emerging micro and creative industries companies.

- Drive forward the Wellington Food Town initiative to promote Wellington as a regional centre of excellence for food and drink and supporting local food and agricultural industries.
- Work closely with our Local Authority partners in Somerset to improve the quality and effectiveness of the marketing and support for businesses wishing to locate within Somerset.
- Promote confidence and business skills in young people through supporting the three year Young Enterprise South West project, delivered to schools.
- Kick start the Cultural Quarter of Project Taunton by redeveloping Castle Green, Coal Orchard and Goodland Gardens, to include providing a new site for the County Council library and records office.
- Continue to work with our partners in the rural economy to support, diversify and strengthen the rural economy of the Borough.

Corporate Aim: Transport

Minimising the growth in traffic congestion

- Implement the Taunton car park strategy to operate up to 5 new strategically placed multi-storey car parks around the Taunton town centre.
- Deliver the actions in the Taunton Deane Borough Council Employee Travel Plan to reduce the use of Single Occupancy Vehicles (SOVs) by TDBC employees.
- Work closely with the County Council to identify a site for the Taunton East Park and Ride facility and to agree a clear timetable for delivery.
- Deliver the Congestion Reduction Strategy with Somerset County Council, including implementing the agreed car park charging policies to ensure the success of the Park and Ride Schemes.
- Improve rural transport by supporting County wide access projects including Rural Moped Loan Scheme, Slinky bus, Wivey Link and through Service Level Agreements.

Corporate Aim: Crime

Promoting safer communities and tackling anti-social behaviour

- Move towards Neighbourhood Policing – working closely with PCSOs, Local Action Teams and partners to provide a more co-ordinated and effective approach to tackling anti-social crime.
- In order to make pubs and clubs safer investigate the possibility of introducing ID Scan at the point of entry.
- Improve provision of CCTV through upgrading existing equipment and introduction of Automatic Number Plate Recognition system.
- Devise and deliver program of actions to tackle anti-social behaviour hotspots, identified through Taunton Deane database and partnership working.
- Continue identifying and implementing youth diversionary activities and facilities.
- Continue to support and empower Local Action Teams to identify local issues and create solutions.

Corporate Aim: Healthy Living

Promoting healthy and sustainable communities

- Continue toward the target of all homes meeting the Decent Homes Standard by 2010, through a planned maintenance and repair programme.
- Focus on enabling more affordable housing to achieve the building of 985 units of affordable housing between April 2006 and March 2011.
- Reduce the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation with an emphasis on homelessness prevention.
- Promote and support health activities for the elderly, such as 'Flexercise' and health walks.
- Provide more free youth facilities in all areas in order to encourage children and young people to be more active.
- Develop a state-of-the-art Skate-Park in Taunton Deane, building it in 2007/08 and attracting a minimum of 5,000 visits in 2008/09, to increase annually.

Corporate Aim: Environment

Safeguarding and enhancing the local environment

- Expand the recycling service to include other types of waste. Collection point skips to be converted to take both cardboard and paper.
- Create an integrated waste collection and recycling contract with the other Somerset Councils and create a single client body
- Following our signing of the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change, we will establish a baseline of carbon emissions and carbon reduction targets. This will lead to a Climate Change Strategy to provide a joined-up approach to promoting sustainability, tackling climate change and reducing emissions.
- Review our existing buildings to ensure they are as 'green' as possible using renewable energy suppliers, water saving measures, waste separation, recycling and energy-saving light bulbs.

Corporate Aim: Delivery

Delivering accessible, value for money services

- Improve the engagement of black or minority ethnic communities through good service interface and equalities forums.
- Ensure that our key policies are rural-proofed in future to ensure that they have an appropriate focus on rural needs and circumstances.
- Work closely with our ISiS partners to modernise and improve transactional and back-office services, and improve access to, and delivery of, customer-facing services.
- Continue to provide 'Value for Money' through achieving a minimum of a level 3 rating for CPA annual assessment by implementing key recommendations from the Audit Commission assessment of the Council.

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 2007/08. The table below summarises the main identified weaknesses from the recent Audit Commission Annual Audit Letter and how we propose to address them.

Weakness	Action
Review systems for producing performance indicators, focussing initially on those it has identified as the key indicators.	We have reviewed our data quality systems during the year end collection 2006/07 of performance indicators.
The effectiveness of less formal partnerships and use of grants is still not being fully evaluated.	The Local Strategic Partnership will be operating under new governance arrangements from June 2007. We will review partnerships and SLAs to ensure their actions support key local priorities in the Community Strategy.
Monitor general fund expenditure very closely for the remainder of this year and throughout 2007-08, so that the Council can agree timely and effective action in response to any further overspendings against budget that arise.	We are closely monitoring this and working with officers and managers to address the overspend.
Carry out a thorough review of working balances on the Housing Revenue Account, taking account of the key financial risks the Council faces locally.	We will continue to monitor the Housing Revenue Account.
Ensure clarity and communication of the high level efficiency aims and workforce implications of the large scale transformation projects.	All staff have been briefed on our joint venture company. Regular updates are regularly communicated to staff. In scope staff have been briefed in depth on employment choices and opportunities.
Provide and enable the development of more affordable houses to meet identified need.	We have completed 53 units in 2006/07 and anticipate over 300 units in 2007/08.
The vision for the level of customer service lacks clarity. It is not clear what level of customer satisfaction the Council is aiming for; or how it will develop its enabling role.	New customer standards are currently being communicated and our customer charter is now available for all customers on the website and as a paper leaflet.
Scrutiny to date has had limited success in external results.	We will continue to develop scrutiny and move towards more Task and Finish reviews with more tangible outcomes. We are starting a Corporate Project on Scrutiny in June 2007 to be completed with improved outcomes by December 2007.
Continue to seek further efficiency savings to minimise the impact of budget constraints on the quality and levels of services provided.	An implementation plan for 'Team Somerset' will be delivered by September 2007, to deliver services in partnership across Somerset. This will include a clear focus on priorities and resources required. There is a Corporate Project focussed on reducing unnecessary bureaucracy to be completed by Dec 07 which will help free up resources.

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.

For example, in 2006/07 the Council awarded contracts that involved the transfer of staff, as shown to the right.

Contract	Awarded to	Date	Staff transferred Out
Transfer of CCTV Parking Services	Sedgemoor District Council	1 August 2006	3

There were no staff transferred into Taunton Deane Borough Council during 2006/07.

Guide to Acronyms

ASB	Anti-Social Behaviour	LTA	Lawn Tennis Association
BT	British Telecom	NIDR	Northern Inner Distributor Road
BV(PI)	Best Value (Performance Indicator)	ONS	Office for National Statistics
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television	PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
Cllr	Councillor	PI	Performance Indicator
CPA	Comprehensive Performance Assessment	RTPI	Royal Town Planning Institute
GB	Great Britain	SCAT	Somerset College of Arts and Technology
HRA	Housing Revenue Account	SCC	Somerset County Council
IBM	International Business Machines	SLA	Service Level Agreement
ID	Identification	SOV	Single Occupancy Vehicle
ISiS	Improving Services In Somerset	SWP	Somerset Waste Partnership
IT	Information Technology	TDBC	Taunton Deane Borough Council
JVCo	Joint Venture Company	TIC	Tourist Information Centre
Kg	Kilograms	UK	United Kingdom
LAT	Local Action Team	VAT	Value Added Tax
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership		