

The improvement since last year - our Direction of Travel report – February 2009

Auditor's Comment	Key comments	Partnership/ project/ involvement	Comments
<p>9 The Council continues to deliver improvements in priority areas. The rate of recycling and composting improved significantly, although the amount of waste collected increased. High standards of street cleanliness were maintained despite a slight fall in performance. Schemes to increase industrial units and provide skills training are increasing employment opportunities and tourism employment and income increased in 2007. A wider range of facilities and activities has increased participation in leisure and cultural events. Levels of crime remain low. Quality of housing is improving through delivery of the decent homes programme, though providing affordable homes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rate of recycling and composting improved significantly • Amount of waste collected increased • High standards of street cleanliness despite a slight fall in performance • Schemes to increase industrial units and provide skills training increasing employment opportunities • Tourism and employment and income increased in 2007 • Wider range of facilities and activities has increased participation in leisure and cultural events • Levels of crime remain low • Quality of housing improving through delivery of decent homes programme, though 		

to meet needs remains a challenge.	providing affordable homes to meet needs remains a challenge			
10 The Council has been well managed in its last year and corporate improvement is well above average for key performance indicators (PIs) selected by the Audit Commission. Council efficiency targets have been met, there is increased community engagement, more assistance to vulnerable and minority groups and some particularly effective partnerships contribute to good service delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council has been well managed in its last year • Corporate improvements is well above average key perf, indicators (PIs) • Council efficiency targets have been met • Increased community engagement • More assistance to vulnerable and minority groups • Some particularly effective partnership contribute to good service delivery 		Due solely to the engagement of Deputy Chief Exec and recommended by O&S to extend contract till April 1 2009	
The main challenges are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plans to meet affordable homes needs; • environmental improvement targets; • maintaining levels of service and local access to services in the rural area; and 				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintaining support to key partnerships. 				
<p>What evidence is there of the Council improving outcomes?</p> <p>12 The Council is delivering improvements in its four priority areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to make Teesdale a cleaner, greener place; to grow Teesdale's economy; to improve the health and wellbeing of residents and develop safer communities; and to meet the housing needs of residents. 				
<p>13 Teesdale Council is achieving an above average rate of improvement. With 62 per cent of key PIs improved in 2007/08 Teesdale is the second most improved district council in Durham. It also has 38 per cent of Pis performing in the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieving an above average rate of improvement 62% of key PIs improved 07/08 Teesdale is the second most improved district council in Durham 			

<p>top 25 per cent, this is above the 33 per cent average for all district councils. Corporate improvement of key Pis is well above average: the Council is ranked 11 out of 388 authorities for 63 per cent Corporate Pis improved in 2007/08.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 38% Pis performing in the top 25% this being above average for all district councils • Corporate improvement of key Pis is well above average • Council ranked 11 out of 388 authorities for 63% Corporate Pis improved 07/08 		
<p>14 The Council is improving the environment to make Teesdale cleaner and greener. Service standards for environmental services have been introduced to inform residents and surveys confirm good levels of cleanliness continue. Good recycling and composting performance improved significantly from 27.5 per cent to 35.3 per cent in 2007/08. However, the amount of household waste collected increased to 495 kg/head. Using Waste Resources Action Programme funding the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving the environment • Service standards for environmental services introduced to inform residents • Surveys confirm good levels of cleanliness continue • Good composting performance improved significantly from 27.5% to 35.3% in 07/08 • The amount of household waste collected increased to 495kg/head • Using waste Resources Action Programme funding the council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste Resources Action Programme funding 	

<p>Council carried out recycling campaigns in poor performing areas, this raised participation by 12 per cent and 128 households stopped putting out excess waste.</p>	<p>carried out recycling campaigns in poor performing areas, this raised participation by 12 % and 128 households stopped putting out excess waste</p>			
<p>15 There are good partnerships in place to deliver environmental improvements. Rotters Community Composting, part of the Teesdale Conservation Volunteers, collect green waste for the Council, contributing a significant amount to the composting rate and have extended the service to more locations in the district. The Street Cleaning team was one of the first in County Durham to work in partnership with the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) to promote an anti-litter campaign 'Stop the Drop', targeting removal of litter from rural roads. The</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good partnerships in place to deliver environmental improvements • Rotters Community Composting collect green waste for the council contributing a significant amount to the composting rate and have extended the service to more locations in the district. • The Street Cleaning team was one of the first in Co. Durham to work in partnership with CPRE to promote an anti- litter campaign 'Stop the Drop' • Targeting removal of litter from rural roads • 'Barny Bag' initiative involving Barnard Castle Vision, Teesdale LSP and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotters Community Composting, part of Teesdale Conservation Volunteers • The Street Cleaning team in partnership with the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) • 'Stop the Drop' 		

<p>'Barny Bag' initiative involving the Council, Barnard Castle Vision, Teesdale LSP and 24 local retailers aims to reduce the number of disposable bags distributed: 7,500 bags are ordered for a campaign launch early in 2009.</p>	<p>24 retailers aims to reduce the number of disposable bags distributed: 7,500 bags are ordered for campaign</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Barny Bag' • Barnard castle Vision • Teesdale LSP • 24 retailers 	
<p>16 The Council is delivering improvements to grow Teesdale's economy. Improvements are delivered through the Barnard Castle Vision partnership. Six new units recently completed on the Stainton Grove Industrial Estate assist creation of new businesses. Single Programme funding over the last three years has assisted 600 residents to undertake skills training. A five year New Leader programme of funding for rural communities is also in place to assist community development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council delivering improvements to grow Teesdale economy • Improvements through Barnard castle Vision partnership • Six new units recently completed on the Stainton grove Industrial estate assist creation of new businesses • Single Programme funding • Over last 3 years has assisted 600 residents to undertake skills training. • A five year New Leader programme of funding for rural communities is also in place to assist community development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barnard Castle Vision • Single Programme funding • New Leader programme of funding for rural communities 	

<p>17 There are good levels of service to support tourism, a key business area for Teesdale. Latest available figures, for 2007, show tourism employment up from 1,590 to 1,883 and income up 13 per cent to £84.55 million. The annual national survey of Tourist Information Centres (TIC) in 2007/08 showed a 13 per cent increase of satisfaction in the Barnard Castle TIC, the highest score across the NE region. The TIC is also a customer contact point for Council services and was chosen as an education point for the Northern Red Kites project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good levels of service to support tourism • Tourism employment up • Income up 13% • National Survey of TIC 07/08 showed a 13% increase in satisfaction in the Barnard Castle TIC, the highest in the NE region • TIC also a customer contact point for Council services • TIL chosen as education point for Northern Red kites project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourist Information Centre • Northern Red Kites project 	
<p>18 The Council is assisting the improvement of the health and wellbeing of residents and development of safer communities. There are referral and rehabilitation programmes supported by the Primary Care Trust in the Leisure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisting the improvement of the health and well being of residents and development of safer communities. • Referral and rehabilitation programmes supported by the PCT in the Leisure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary Care Trust 	

<p>Centre and also in villages using local facilities. The Passport to Sports scheme gives young people discounted access to sports facilities: 1,200 have joined and a Positive Futures Programme designed for young people at risk of offending is also delivered. A £300,000 rolling investment programme is delivering the Play Strategy improvements. Low levels of crime continued to fall in all categories except domestic burglaries during 2007/08.</p>	<p>centre and also in the villages using local facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Passport to Sports scheme gives young people discounted access to sports facilities • 1,200 have joined and a Positive Futures Programme designed for young people at risk of offending is also delivered • £300,000 rolling investment programme is delivering the Play Strategy improvements • Low levels of crime cont. To fall in all categories except domestic burglaries during 07/08 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passport to Sports • Positive Futures Programme • Play Strategy 	
<p>19 The Council is delivering improvements to meet the housing needs of residents. There are now published leaflets setting out housing service standards and providing advice. The Council is improving the quality of housing in the district. Currently in year three,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering improvements to meet the housing needs of residents • Leaflets published setting out housing service standards and providing advice • Council improving the quality of housing in the district 		

<p>20 Services to assist vulnerable and minority groups have improved. The introduction of Community Visiting Officers has increased opportunities to contact vulnerable residents. Increased homelessness prevention activity with Teesdale Housing Association provides housing options advice. A new private sector Rent Deposit Scheme for vulnerable people in partnership with Centrepont started in January 2008 and jointly with other Durham districts a study into the housing needs of Gypsies and Travellers has been commissioned.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services to assist vulnerable and minority groups have improved. The introduction of Community Visiting Officers has increased opportunities to contact vulnerable residents. • Increased homelessness prevention activity with Teesdale Housing Association provides housing options advice • A new private sector Rent Deposit Scheme for vulnerable people in partnership with Centrepont started in January 2008 and jointly with other Durham districts a study into the housing needs of Gypsies and Travellers has been commissioned. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Visiting Officers • Teesdale Housing Association • Centrepont 	
<p>21 Engagement with communities is improving. The network of sports and leisure focus groups supporting the LSP thematic group are recognised by</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with communities is improving. • The network of sports and leisure focus groups supporting the LSP thematic group are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network of sport and leisure focus groups supporting the LSP thematic group 	

<p>Sport England as one of six good practice engagement models. The Council has improved its engagement with travellers by establishing the Teesdale Residents and Travellers Forum, helping to ensure that issues arising out of the travellers visiting the Appleby Horse Fair are minimised for residents and to also improve the welfare of the travellers themselves.</p>	<p>recognised by Sport England as one of six good practice engagement models</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has improved its engagement with travellers by establishing the Teesdale Residents and Travellers Forum, helping to ensure that issues arising out of the travellers visiting the Appleby Horse Fair are minimised for residents and to also improve the welfare of the travellers themselves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport England • Teesdale Residents and Travellers Forum 	
<p>22 Good contact with businesses is improving. The newly formed Retail Guild increases the involvement of businesses in promotional campaigns and local activities. This also assists delivery of the shop front improvement scheme. The Market Improvement Working Group was set up to revitalise the Wednesday</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good contact with businesses is improving • The newly formed Retail Guild increases the involvement of businesses in promotional campaigns and local activities. This also assists delivery of the shop front improvement scheme. • The Market Improvement Working Group was set up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail Guild 	

<p>Market in Barnard Castle. From October 2008 agreement to reduce charges to stallholders, reduce car parking charges, increase publicity and improve traffic management is attracting more traders and visitors to the Market.</p>	<p>to revitalise the Wednesday Market in Barnard Castle. From October 2008 agreement to reduce charges to stallholders, reduce car parking charges, increase publicity and improve traffic management is attracting more traders and visitors to the Market.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The market Improvement Working Group 	
<p>23 There is a clear focus on working towards a single authority for County Durham. The LGR Project is now the only project within the Improvement Programme. The Council has formed an LGR project team to share information from county work streams and ensure a co-ordinated approach from Teesdale.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a clear focus on working towards a single authority for County Durham. • The LGR Project is now the only project within the Improvement Programme. • The Council has formed an LGR project team to share information from county work streams and ensure a co-ordinated approach from Teesdale. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGR Project • Improvement programme 	
<p>How much progress is being made to implement improvement plans to sustain future improvement? 24 Key Strategies are in place to support the Teesdale</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Strategies are in place to support the Teesdale Sustainable Community Strategy 2021 and deliver improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teesdale Community Strategy 2021 	

<p>Sustainable Community Strategy 2021 and deliver improvement. They include: the Local Development Framework; Housing Strategy 2007 to 2010; joint five year Supporting People Strategy; Tourism Strategy; and an Economic Development Strategy currently being developed. The Council's Transition Plan sets out the way forward and targets for Teesdale's four priority areas. However, there are not always clear plans in place to achieve all targets, an example is actions to achieve key environmental targets such as 35 per cent household waste recycling and 14 per cent composting by March 2010. There is also a target to reduce CO2 emissions by 30 per cent by 2010/11 to meet Home Energy Conservation Association (HECA) requirements, though how this will be</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They include: the Local Development Framework; Housing Strategy 2007 to 2010; joint five year Supporting People Strategy; Tourism Strategy; and an Economic Development Strategy currently being developed. • The Council's Transition Plan sets out the way forward and targets for Teesdale's four priority areas. However, there are not always clear plans in place to achieve all targets, an example is actions to achieve key environmental targets such as 35 per cent household waste recycling and 14 per cent composting by March 2010. • There is also a target to reduce CO2 emissions by 30 per cent by 2010/11 to meet Home Energy Conservation Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Development Framework • Housing Strategy 2007 – 2010 • Supporting People Strategy • Tourism Strategy • Economic Development Strategy • Transition Plan 	
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<p>achieved is not clear.</p>	<p>(HECA) requirements, though how this will be achieved is not clear.</p>			
<p>25 Plans are in place to grow Teesdale's economy. Key targets include: business development assistance to 90 businesses in 2008/09 and in following years; development of a local produce network that celebrates the 'Best of Teesdale'; and to complete business cases for the Barnard Castle Vision and Hamsterly Forest Redevelopment project in 2008/09.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans are in place to grow Teesdale's economy. Key targets include: • Business development assistance to 90 businesses in 2008/09 and in following years and in following years; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of a local produce network that celebrates the 'Best of Teesdale'; and • to complete business cases for the Barnard Castle Vision and Hamsterly Forest Redevelopment project in 2008/09. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be developed: local produce network that celebrates the 'Best of Teesdale' • Barnard Castle Vision • Hamsterly Forest Redevelopment project 		

<p>26 The Council has a good understanding of housing needs in Teesdale and has developed strategies to deliver improvements. The updated Housing Needs Assessment provides up to date affordability information and in partnership with other County Durham authorities a survey of the condition of the private sector housing stock has been commissioned. A first Durham sub-regional housing strategy was produced with Durham Housing Neighbourhood Group partners. The additional homes target for 2008/09 is 200 and 163 in each of the following two years with 60 affordable homes in 2008/09, then 49 in each of the next two years. However, the recent Housing Needs and Demand survey found that Teesdale is the least affordable District in</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has a good understanding of housing needs in Teesdale and has developed strategies to deliver improvements. • The updated Housing Needs Assessment provides up to date affordability information and in partnership with other County Durham authorities a survey of the condition of the private sector housing stock has been commissioned. • A first Durham sub-regional housing strategy was produced with Durham Housing Neighbourhood Group partners. • The additional homes target for 2008/09 is 200 and 163 in each of the following two years with 60 affordable homes in 2008/09, then 49 in each of the next two years. • However, the recent Housing Needs and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Needs Assessment 	
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<p>County Durham. Analysis indicates that, across Teesdale, there is an annual gross shortfall of 110 affordable dwellings.</p>	<p>Demand survey found that Teesdale is the least affordable District in County Durham. Analysis indicates that, across Teesdale, there is an annual gross shortfall of 110 affordable dwellings.</p>		
<p>27 Programmes are in place to increase participation in leisure and cultural activities. There are three year programmes aiming to increase young people and older people participation, both by 1 per cent per year from 2008. Significant external funding has been secured to improve leisure activities available for young people. In December 2008 the Teesdale Community Resources (TCR) obtained £5 million of funding to develop 'The Hub' a 15 acre site to provide a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities for young people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 27 Programmes are in place to increase participation in leisure and cultural activities. • There are three year programmes aiming to increase young people and older people participation, both by 1 per cent per year from 2008. • Significant external funding has been secured to improve leisure activities available for young people. • In December 2008 the Teesdale Community Resources (TCR) obtained £5 million of funding to develop 'The Hub' a 15 acre site to provide a wide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teesdale Community Resources (TCR) • 'The Hub' 	

	range of indoor and outdoor activities for young people.			
28 The Council has maintained service levels and improved in some areas by good management of its people resource. The Council's People Strategy 2008 incorporates the Workforce Development Plan, the HR Service Plan and the Annual Training Plan. A good performance management framework identifies performance that is either not on target or deteriorating. Performance against the Balance Scorecard for 2008/09 half year is good: 77 per cent are meeting or exceeding target; 15 per cent are currently below target; and 8 per cent are just missing the target. The areas currently showing as under target are expected to improve by year end and therefore no remedial action was taken. Where	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has maintained service levels and improved in some areas by good management of its people resource • The Council's People Strategy 2008 incorporates the Workforce Development Plan, the HR Service Plan and the Annual Training Plan. • A good performance management framework identifies performance that is either not on target or deteriorating • Performance against the Balance Scorecard for 2008/09 half year is good: 77 per cent are meeting or exceeding target; • 15 per cent are currently below target; and 8 per cent are just missing the target. The areas currently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People Strategy2008 • Workforce Development Plan • HR Service Plan • Annual training Plan 		

<p>performance has deteriorated previously, action has been taken to address it through working with others. Examples include: Finance restructure and partnership working with Durham County Council and Darlington; and further work to assess NI 180 and NI 181 through the Benefits Shared Partnership with Wear Valley Council.</p>	<p>showing as under target are expected to improve by year end and therefore no remedial action was taken.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where performance has deteriorated previously, action has been taken to address it through working with others. Examples include: Finance restructure and partnership working with Durham County Council and Darlington; and further work to assess NI 180 and NI 181 through the Benefits Shared Partnership with Wear Valley Council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership working with Durham County Council • Benefits Shared Partnership with Wear Valley 	
<p>29 Good partnership working is delivering improved service outcomes and providing good value for money. A Partnership register has been set up and the Council is monitoring performance of key partnerships, with reports to full Council to ensure they</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good partnership working is delivering improved service outcomes and providing good value for money. • A Partnership register has been set up and the Council is monitoring • performance of key partnerships, with reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership Register • Transition Plan 	

<p>contribute to the Council's key priorities. Many key partnerships are listed in the Council's Transition Plan. Key local partnerships include: the Barnard Castle Vision to deliver improvements across the district; Teesdale Rotters collecting and redistributing significant amounts of green waste; the Teesdale Marketing Company contributing to good tourism initiatives; the Village Hall Consortium ensuring good use of community facilities; and the Teesdale Community Sports Network increasing opportunities to improve health. Other forums contribute to effective engagement such as the Retail Guild, the Upper Teesdale Agricultural Support Services (UTASS), Youth Council and Teesdale Resident and Travellers Forum. The expectation in Teesdale is</p>	<p>to full Council to ensure they contribute to the Council's key priorities. Many key partnerships are listed in the Council's Transition Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key local partnerships include: the Barnard Castle Vision to deliver improvements across the district; • Teesdale Rotters collecting and redistributing significant amounts of green waste; • The Teesdale Marketing Company contributing to good tourism initiatives; • The Village Hall Consortium ensuring good use of community facilities; and • The Teesdale Community Sports Network increasing opportunities to improve health. • Other forums contribute to effective engagement such as the Retail Guild, the Upper Teesdale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barnard Castle Vision • Rotters • Teesdale Marketing Company • Village hall Consortium • Teesdale Community Sports Network • Retail Guild • Upper Teesdale Agricultural Support services (UTASS) • Youth Council • Teesdale Resident and Travellers Forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Action
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<p>that these partners and forums, and others, will form the new Area Action Partnership (AAP) engagement network to inform the new unitary authority of Teesdale's needs.</p>	<p>Agricultural Support Services (UTASS), Youth Council and Teesdale Resident and Travellers Forum. The expectation in Teesdale is that these partners and forums, and others, will form the new Area Action Partnership (AAP) engagement network to inform the new unitary authority of Teesdale's needs.</p>	<p>Partnerships (AAP) Engagement network</p>		
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