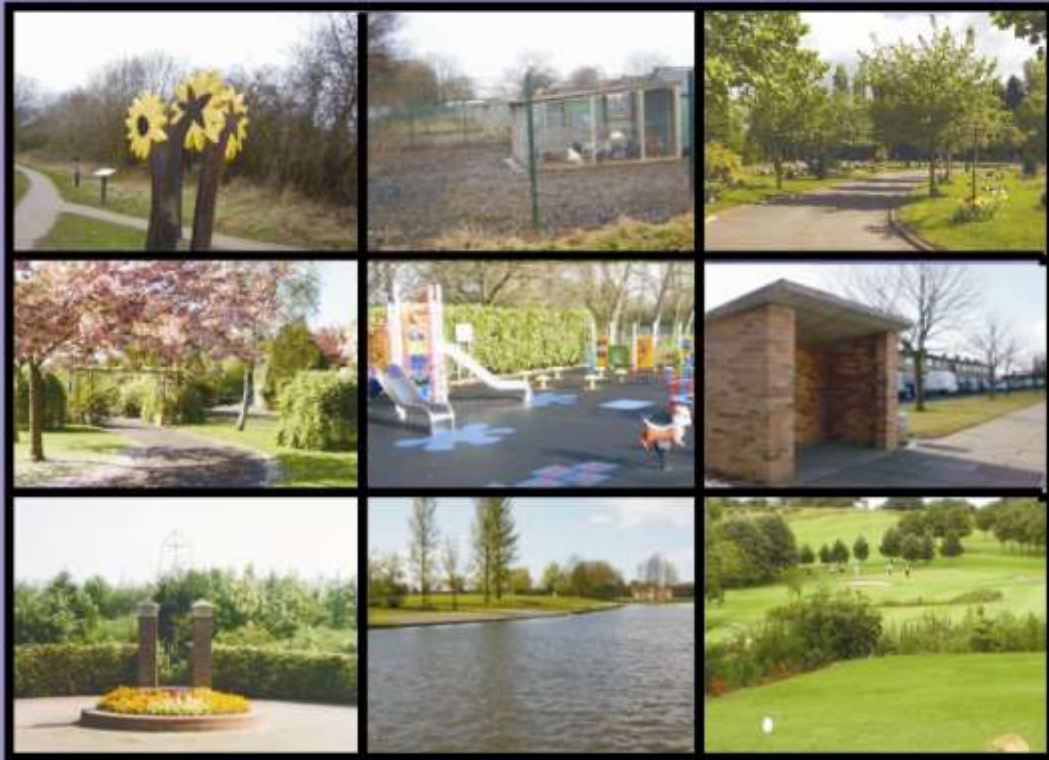


Great Aycliffe Town Council



Parish Performance Plan

2009/2010



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1. Foreword by the Mayor

This is the third Parish Performance Plan. Within this document we aim to inform you about the town council activities, what we said we would do and what we actually did. It is an important strategic document that the Town Council produce each year.

Through our satisfaction surveys; open days; attending community events; the youth council and the customer panel we aim to take into account your views and act upon your priorities in order to improve our services for the people of Great Aycliffe.

The first few pages of this document are intended to provide a brief summary of some key targets from the past year; an overview of financial information and a snapshot of the year to come.

Some key things we did last year

YOU SAID	WE DID
Improve parks and play facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Refurbished and improved Simpasture and St. Oswald's Parks. ✓ Provided infants play equipment at Horndale Park. ✓ Provided a multi use games area at Woodham Park ✓ Parks and play areas are inspected weekly.
Improve the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Appointed an Environment Officer to raise environmental awareness. ✓ Appointed a Town Pride Team. ✓ Improved the Moore Lane building to provide an Environmental Centre. ✓ Set up a volunteer group to work on environmental issues. ✓ Environment Officer is working with some schools on the Town to raise environmental awareness and issues. ✓ Undertaken a number of environmental improvements around Great Aycliffe. ✓ Replaced some signage along Great Aycliffe Way. ✓ Installed additional seating along Simpasture Walkway and revamped the seating in Woodham Burn (on our land only)
Improve the Oakleaf Complex, make the facilities better and advertise more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A new disabled lift has been installed to improve access. ✓ DDA compliant access doors have been installed. ✓ A bar and function room refurbishment has taken place.

YOU SAID	WE DID
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ An open day was held where all facilities were free for the day. ✓ The menu has been reviewed and improved. ✓ A best value review of the Sports Complex is ongoing. ✓ The website has improved information and more advertising is being undertaken.
Continue to deliver the special events programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 2 new Fun in the Parks were provided at Woodham and Aycliffe Village. ✓ 2 new venues for the Pensioners trips were added. ✓ The Aycliffe Show went ahead and was a great success, even though the weather was against us. ✓ The firework display was a success. ✓ The usual Santa activities were enjoyed by all.
Keep costs down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Council tax increase was kept below 3% (2.91% actual) ✓ £263,969 savings in total were made across all service areas. ✓ Over £350,000 additional funding was gained from external sources and used to provide important community assets including play areas, multi use games areas and the environment centre.

In addition to the things you asked for the Town Council set some targets to ensure good corporate governance and improved service delivery.

We also

- Retained the 'Quality Parish' status.
- Achieved an unqualified opinion in the Annual Audit Letter, this is the best possible result available and demonstrates that the Council is well run, has sound finances and provides value for money to the local community.
- Made efficiency savings of £263.969.
- Are undertaking a Best Value Review of the Sports Complex facility.

The Town Council has been pro-active and fully involved throughout the local government reorganisation to ensure the best interests of the Great Aycliffe area are not ignored.

Some key targets for this year

Following the annual review of the Town Council aims and targets, and including recommendations from the residents of Great Aycliffe, some of our key targets for 2009/2010 are:

- Ensure the Town Clerk and at least 80% of Members are trained in the power of well being.
- Complete the redevelopment of the park at St. Oswald's.
- Complete the best value review of the Oakleaf Sports Complex.
- Deliver 3% efficiency savings.
- Continue to build relationships with Durham County Council.
- Work and encourage schools, community and voluntary groups to work together to improve Great Aycliffe.

Council Finances

A sound financial standing is a key element in demonstrating value for money to the council tax payers of Great Aycliffe.

The Council must, by law, make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and in doing so secure economic, efficient and effective use of its resources, safeguard its assets and take reasonable steps to prevent fraud and other irregularities.

The key performance measure of the Council's financial standing is the annual Audit Letter, which is based on an annual inspection undertaken by the Audit Commission.

The Council must obtain an 'unqualified' audit opinion within this Letter in order to retain its Quality Council status. The Council achieved this in 2006/2007 and 2007/2008 a copy of the most recent Audit Letter is appended to this document.

The 2008/2009 Audit Letter is due to be received later in the year following the completion of the 2008/2009 Audit by the Audit Commission.

2008/2009 was also a good year financially for the Council, with significant savings being achieved on the Council Revenue Budgets, which have been transferred to Council Balances to support future investment in the Parish.

In addition, the Council, supported by funding from Sedgefield Borough Council, made significant capital investment in and around the town, totalling over £700,000.

This included new infant and junior play areas at St Oswald's Park, refurbished tennis courts and a multi use games area at Simpasture Park, a multi use games area at Woodham, new play area at Horndale, and the refurbishment of Moore Lane Park Pavilion into an Environmental Centre.

Other Council funded projects included the refurbishment of the Sports Complex bar, Council Offices and St Oswald's Pre School.

Finally, the recent Council satisfaction survey saw an excellent response from the tax payers of Newton Aycliffe with 63% of respondents believing that the Town Council Tax represented value for money.

An overview of the Council's finances is included in Section 19 of the Parish Performance Plan on pages 37 - 39.

Cost to YOU of Town Council Services per week

The following table shows how much each of the Council's many services will cost you, the council taxpayer, in 2009/2010, per week, based on the Band A Council Tax:-

Environment and Grounds Maintenance	40p
Corporate Management	39p
Parks and Play Areas	38p
Sports Complex	37p
Administration and Council Offices	17p
Financial Management	16p
Civic Costs and Councillors	13p
Contingency	11p
Pre-Schools	10p
Senior Citizens Trips	9p
Aycliffe Show	9p
Cemeteries	6p
Public Seating, Lighting and Bus Shelters	3p
CCTV Cameras	3p
Golf Course and Driving Range	3p
Allotments	2p
Football Pitches	2p
Fun in the Parks	2p
Fireworks Display	2p
Santa Tours and Christmas Lights	1p
Other Special Events	1p

Total Cost per Tax Payer per week of Great Aycliffe Town Council Services **£2.64**

Total Cost per Taxpayer per year of Great Aycliffe Town Council Services **£137.41**



2. Introduction

The Town Council have in previous years been guided by Best Value legislation. Although best value is no longer a statutory duty, Great Aycliffe Town Council has agreed to maintain the principles of Best Value. These principles are incorporated into our strategic documents, including the Parish Performance Plan, thereby ensuring value for money in the services we deliver.

There is no set format for a parish plan, and the Government expect they will vary considerably from community to community. There are, however, strong policy values underpinning the concept. These can be summarised as requiring parish plans to be user friendly, understandable, and to be produced after detailed, good quality consultation.

This is the third Parish Performance Plan. It is also intended to be a working document which will be used as the Corporate Service Plan.

The Council accepts full responsibility for its preparation and for the information contained in it. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information is correct.

Copies of the Plan are available for public reference in the following locations:

Town Council Offices

Newton Aycliffe Library

Oakleaf Sports Complex

Aycliffe Village Post Office

And the Council's website – www.great-aycliffe.gov.uk

Copies have also been sent to Durham County Council and neighbouring Town and Parish Councils.

3. Equalities

Great Aycliffe Town Council is committed to the removal of all barriers preventing access to our services arising from ethnicity, religion, special needs, language differences, learning difficulties, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability or geographic location.

Following government guidance, information will generally be provided by the Council in English only. Where we are required under other statute to provide certain information in other languages, this information will be translated. You can request and alternative format copy by contacting Great Aycliffe Town Council on 01325 300700.

4. Views on the Plan

The Town Council would welcome your views and comments on the Plan and these can be sent to:

Andrew Bailey, Town Clerk, at Great Aycliffe Town Council, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe, Co Durham, DL5 6QF

Fax: (01325) 301053

E-mail: info@great-aycliffe.gov.uk

5. Introduction to Great Aycliffe

Great Aycliffe comprises the town of Newton Aycliffe and the villages of Aycliffe and School Aycliffe. The population of Great Aycliffe is approximately 26,500. (Sedgefield Borough Council, regeneration statistics 2007)

Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the mining industry dominated Durham. During World War II, the Government established an Ordnance factory near to Aycliffe Village, to supply munitions to the services. The workforce, mainly women, became known as the 'Aycliffe Angels' or the 'canaries' so called because the chemicals used in shells turned their hands and skin yellow.

After the war, Aycliffe became the site of a new town, planned to provide good quality homes near to the Aycliffe Industrial Estate. Under the guidance and control of the Aycliffe Development Corporation, the town flourished and has grown to be part of the Great Aycliffe settlement.

Great Aycliffe is a vibrant community, set in an attractive semi-rural setting. It is bounded on all sides with open countryside and the area administered by the Town Council contains many attractive green spaces.

Schools in the area are generally good, and are increasingly linked to the higher education network. The towns and villages have excellent road links to the A1, and Newton Aycliffe has a train station on the Darlington to Bishop Auckland rail line.

The Aycliffe Industrial Park comprises 230 hectares and is a base for a mix of local, national and international companies.

There are a wide range of clubs and societies active in the area, and play and leisure facilities are provided by Great Aycliffe Town Council and Durham County Council. The Oakleaf Sports Complex and the Oak Leaf Golf Course are valued and well used by local residents and visitors.

Housing conditions are generally above average. Significant levels of new house building mean that Aycliffe can offer a wide choice of choice of starter, family and executive homes to new residents coming to the area.

The Town Centre has a mix of individual retail outlets and smaller chain stores, with individual retail outlets in neighbourhood areas. The proposed redevelopment of the town centre commenced in January 2009. A wider range of shopping facilities is available in Darlington, Bishop Auckland and Durham.

As with much of the North East, the highly attractive environment can, however, serve to mask some of the problems inherent in the area. The region is the poorest region in the United Kingdom and the gross domestic product of the Durham Tees Valley area lags behind the national and EU average. Over the last 15 years, the North East has been able to access significant resources from both UK and European governments to support a wide programme of regeneration, as the North East undergoes the process of transformation from an economy traditionally based on heavy engineering and manufacturing, with a lower skills base, towards the more modern, higher skilled mixed economy visualised in the regional economic strategy.

While this intervention has undoubtedly acted to stem decline and provide growth in some areas, there is still much to do. The UK therefore has identified which areas of the country are deemed to be a priority for concerted action to support regeneration. To do this the Government produces a list of deprived areas and parts of Great Aycliffe are ranked within the poorest 20% of deprived areas nationally.

6. Relationship with Durham County Council

Local government in England and Wales is provided by a network of primary and secondary councils. The primary council serving the Great Aycliffe area is Durham County Council. Sedgefield Borough Council was dissolved in April 2009 and became part of the new Durham County Council Unitary Authority.

Great Aycliffe is constituted as a town council and is therefore the tier of local government closest to the neighbourhood.

Durham County Council is responsible for providing educational and social services, fire and consumer protection, strategic planning, waste disposal and economic development, waste collection, leisure and local planning.

Housing in the Great Aycliffe areas is provided by Sedgefield Borough Homes a 'not for profit' housing association which was set up on 27th February 2009 as well as a number of registered social landlords and private houses.

The Town Council **don't** :

- ✗ Manage schools
- ✗ Manage the Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre
- ✗ Run economic development
- ✗ Manage the highways
- ✗ Manage the police, fire or ambulance
- ✗ Grant planning permission
- ✗ Run social services
- ✗ Run housing services
- ✗ Provide bus services

The Town Council are **not responsible** for the Town Centre, which is in private ownership.

7. Services Provided by Great Aycliffe Town Council

Great Aycliffe Town Council works with other Town Councils in the area to bring together local neighbourhood councils to share good practice, developing a strong voice for the local council sector in Durham.

We are aware of the importance for the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Town Council's area. We are endeavouring to work with the new Durham County Council to ensure representation for Great Aycliffe on work that may affect us such.

What we do:

- ✓ Run the Oakleaf Sports Complex - indoor bowls, sports hall, squash courts, bar and catering, children's holidays courses, indoor/outdoor sports coaching
- ✓ Run the Oakleaf Golf Complex – 18 hole golf course and 18 bay floodlit driving range
- ✓ Manage Stephenson Way Cemetery and West Cemetery and provide grounds maintenance and burial service at St Andrew's Churchyard
- ✓ Manage 8 parks, all with play equipment
 - Town Park
 - Moore Lane Park
 - Simpasture Park
 - St Oswald's Park
 - West Park
 - Aycliffe Village
 - Byerley Park
 - Woodham Park
- ✓ Additional play areas at Scott Place, School Aycliffe, Oakleaf Complex and Horndale
- ✓ 8 football pitches, Mini-soccer and six-a-side pitches
- ✓ Run 3 pre-school play settings – with 'good' Ofsted ratings
- ✓ Provide and manage a wide range of special leisure events – Great Aycliffe Show, Fun-in-the-Parks, Santa Tours, Firework Display, Senior Citizen Trips, Christmas Lights
- ✓ Assist and support other event organisers – 10k race, 3K Fun Run, Remembrance Parade, Junior Cross Country, Annual Indoor Bowls Competition and Community Enhancement Awards
- ✓ A range of civic events
- ✓ Aycliffe Angels Memorial Garden – provision and maintenance
- ✓ Maintenance of war memorial and flagpole
- ✓ 5 allotment sites with pigeon and poultry facilities

- ✓ Provide an environmental centre at Moore Lane
- ✓ Comment on all planning applications
- ✓ Market administration
- ✓ Lorry park
- ✓ CCTV in a number of locations
- ✓ Public seats in many locations
- ✓ Bus shelters with litter bins (not the ones with adverts)
- ✓ Grounds maintenance and environmental management

North Agnew Plantation	Cobbler's Hall Plantation
Woodham Burn	Simpasture Railway Walk
Great Aycliffe Way	Millfields/Bickford Terrace
Butterfly Meadow at Rail Halt	School Aycliffe Wetlands
Aycliffe Village Greens – custodians and maintenance	
- ✓ Youth Council
- ✓ Crime prevention – the Council pays for some CCTV cameras and park wardens
- ✓ Community Empowerment – Customer Panel, Consultation and Open Days
- ✓ Grants – small grants to local voluntary organisations

8. The Civic Year

Councillor George C Gray was elected as Mayor of Great Aycliffe in May 2008 and his term of office lasted until the Annual General Meeting of the Council in May 2009.



There are a number of formal civic engagements each year, which include:

- ✿ The Civic Service
- ✿ The Christmas Carol Service
- ✿ The Civic Ball
- ✿ Remembrance Sunday
- ✿ Mayor's 'At Home'

In addition to these the Mayor attended a further 199 engagements. Mrs Maud Gray was his Mayoress during his term of office.

The Mayor raised £8,000 for his nominated charities in his year of office. This was split equally between, the British Heart Foundation and BLESMA (British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association) which were his nominated charities.

9. Election of Mayor

The Council elects a Town Mayor annually from amongst its members and the Mayor for 2009/10 is Councillor Mary Dalton. She has chosen the North East Army Benevolent Fund and local charities (not yet specified) as her charities for her term of office.



10. The Council, its Members and Establishment

10.1 The Council

Great Aycliffe Town Council is one of the largest Town Council's in the country, employing 73 full and part-time staff, with a planned revenue budget of £1,625,500 in 2009/10.

10.2 Members

The Council has a membership of 30, which is made up of 18 Labour and 11 Independent Councillors.

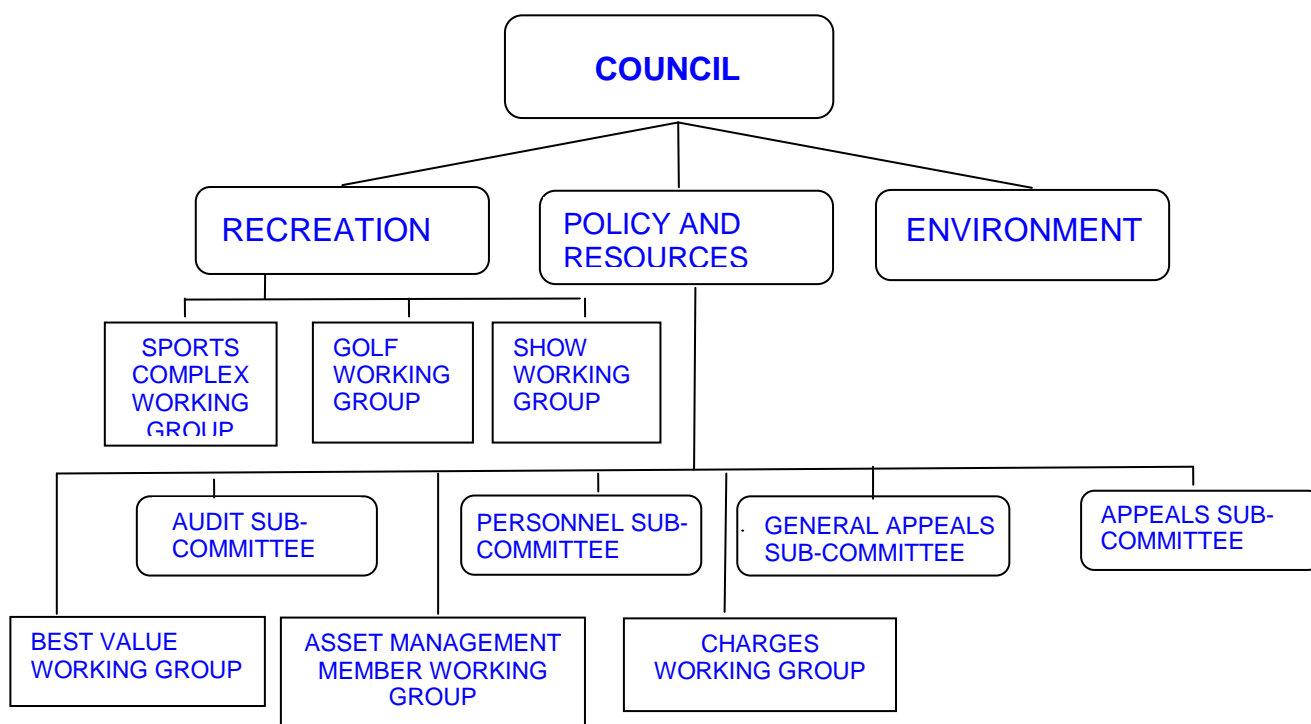
The area represented by the Town Council is divided into eight wards.

◆	Byerley Park, Horndale and Cobblers Hall	6 members
◆	Shafto/St Mary's	3 members
◆	Woodham South	3 members
◆	Woodham North	6 members
◆	Simpasture	2 members
◆	Neville	3 members
◆	West	6 members
◆	Aycliffe Village	1 member

The Council conducts its business through committees and the committee structure is set out below. The responsibilities of each committee are set out in the Council's Scheme of Administration and are reviewed annually.

10.3 Committee Structure

The Council originally considered its Constitution in 2005/06. The constitution was reviewed, updated and adopted in May 2009.



The Local Authorities' (Members' Allowances) Regulations 2003 came into force on 1 May 2003, which allowed the Council to pay each member a basic parish allowance.

After taking advice from the Independent Remuneration Panel of Sedgefield Borough Council, as was, in April 2005, the level of remuneration is currently set at £1,059.60 per annum for each member of the Town Council. This amount has not increased since that date. Durham County Council will be establishing a remuneration panel to review town and parish allowances.

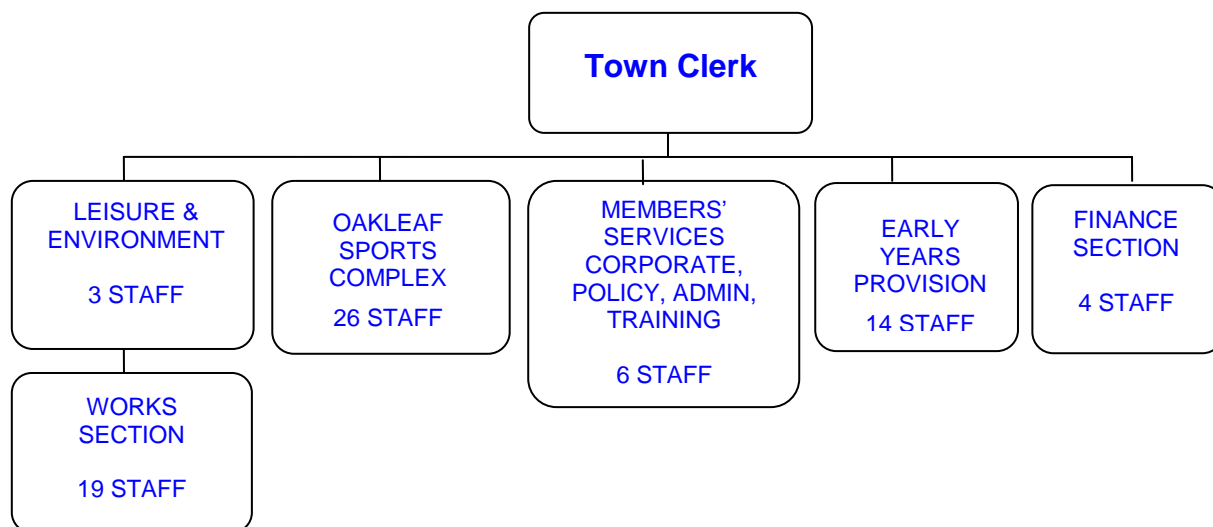
10.4 Appointment of Committees

The three main committees are appointed at the Council's Annual General Meeting in May each year and a list of the dates for the committee meetings in 2009/10 are set out in the Council's newsletter.

Membership for the various sub-committees, working groups and outside bodies representatives are also appointed at the Council's Annual General Meeting.

10.5 The Council's Establishment

The Council employs 41 full-time and 32 part-time employees.



10.6 The Senior Officers within the Council are:

Town Clerk	Andrew Bailey	info@great-aycliffe.gov.uk
Corporate & Policy Officer	Christine Walton	christine.walton@great-aycliffe.gov.uk
Finance Manager	Dan Austin	daniel.austin@great-aycliffe.gov.uk
Works Manager	Don Thompson	info@great-aycliffe.gov.uk
Complex Manager	Derek Snowball	derek.snowball@great-aycliffe.gov.uk
Early Years Officer	Jackie Swainston	Jackie.swainston@great-aycliffe.gov.uk
Senior Admin Officer	Christine Ryder	christine.ryder@great-aycliffe.gov.uk
Environment Officer	Steven Cooper	steven.cooper@great-aycliffe.gov.uk

Great Aycliffe Town Council occasionally employs casual staff, which do not form part of the formal staff establishment.

The Council also retains the services of consultants for HR matters, Health & Safety and Occupational Health services and other speciality services such as IT.

11. Council Targets 2008/09

To maintain Quality Parish Council Status, there was increased emphasis on reviewing our progress and performance. In response to this requirement progress on the Council targets are discussed at Performance Management Group and reported to the Council on a quarterly basis and the Strategy Customer Panel on a

six monthly basis. The progress made during the year informs the development of targets for the following year.

Following the designation as a Quality Parish, the Council agreed a strategic mission statement in February 2005, which is that Great Aycliffe aims to be:

“A quality Council, working in partnership, listening to and speaking up for the community, to bring excellent services to Great Aycliffe.”

In support of this statement, the Council agreed a number of strategic Aims.

The aims were reviewed as part of the parish planning process in March 2009 and Aim 6 – To influence the design and delivery of services provided by others in partnership; and Aim 7 – To deliver services for partners where that would provide added value, have been replaced with the aims above. A report detailing the reasoning can be found on the council’s website, meetings and agendas, Policy and Resources meeting 4th March 2009. The eight strategic aims are:-

1.	To provide good quality governance and management of the Council.
2.	To manage the council’s finances and assets in a responsible manner.
3.	To provide accessible, affordable leisure facilities and opportunities.
4.	To provide pre-school education as appropriate in Great Aycliffe.
5.	To contribute to the environmental improvement of Aycliffe by managing and developing parks, play areas and green spaces.
6.	To help and encourage partnership working to improve the services and facilities for the residents of Great Aycliffe.
7.	To encourage the residents of Great Aycliffe to become involved in local democracy.
8.	To research information and make the case for Great Aycliffe.

To ensure that the aims are met, the Council set a series of targets under each aim.

Every effort is made to ensure aims and targets are reviewed as part of the budget setting process, although it is acknowledged that many work matters and projects are generated from other areas as and when funding becomes available. The Parish Performance Plan is therefore only a guide for the Council in deciding on spending priorities in future years and assists in the medium term financial planning for the Council.

Most capital projects are undertaken within the context of the Great Aycliffe aims and targets and the Council’s Asset Management Plan. However, we cannot forget that additional funding is occasionally made available from other sources giving rise to one off projects that are not part of the aims and targets but are important to take advantage of.

The targets set out for the last financial year, under each aim, are attached as Appendix 1, including a statement of progress achieved against each target.

12. Council Targets 2009/10

The large satisfaction survey exercise undertaken in August 2007, covering the whole of the Great Aycliffe area, helped prioritise the targets for 2008/09. The Council's budgets were developed in line with these targets and the survey results which identified the customers' needs.

The targets for 2009/10 have again been developed using the satisfaction survey as a guide. In addition, the Strategy Customer Panel and Youth Council have also been consulted; findings from a 'Planning for Aycliffe' event and comments made from the Community Fair have been taken into account.

The Area Action Partnership has been set up and named – The Great Aycliffe and Middridge Partnership (GAMP – a gamp is an umbrella which seems to fit the partnership well). The Town Council will try and play a significant role within this group and wherever possible reflect the wider needs of the area.

At the first meeting of GAMP a number of priorities for the area were set. The top five are:

1. Environmental concerns and street cleansing
2. Support to the community and voluntary sector
3. Activities for young people
4. Town centre vitality
5. Health and lifestyles

The Town Council aims do somewhat reflect these areas and we are confident we will be able to deliver targets in line with most of the above.

It is worth noting, once again, that the Town Centre is in private ownership and is **NOT** the responsibility of the Town Council. The Town Council have limited input into any meetings or progress made in this area although we strive to have a larger impact.

In addition to our aims and targets, many additional projects arise throughout the year which cannot be budgeted or planned for. The projects are progressed when funding becomes available.

The list of targets for 2009/10 is attached as Appendix 2.

13. Performance Indicators

In addition to targets set by the Council, one of the key aspects of Best Value is the requirement to establish a system for measuring the Council's performance against other councils. We do this year on year by examining our performance against a number of indicators and where possible comparing those against other councils.

However, although we work and share information with the other town and parish councils, due to the differences in services provided it is extremely difficult to compare like for like.

The Government does not stipulate performance indicators for parish and town councils. However, we have chosen a set of local indicators which we feel will help the Council monitor performance to ensure that value for money and efficient services are being provided for the residents of Great Aycliffe. Our performance against these indicators can be seen at Table 1 on the following page.

The successful introduction of a comprehensive performance management framework a number of years ago ensure a consistent approach to performance management is applied across all services.

Quarterly monitoring of targets and regular progress reports to the Council are also undertaken. These improvements have been closely linked with the budget setting process and risk assessment.

**TABLE 1
ACHIEVEMENT AGAINST PERFORMANCE INDICATOR**

REF	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	ACTUAL 2007/08	TARGET 2008/09	ACTUAL 2008/09	TARGET 2009/10	COMMENT
BV1	Number of complaints received	3	Nil	2	NIL	
BV2	% of those making complaint satisfied with handling of complaint	75%	100%	100%	100%	Delete
BV3	% of correspondence where acknowledgement sent in 5 working days	98.5%	99%	100%	100%	Delete
BV4	% of undisputed invoices paid in 30 days	98.54%	97%	99.23%	99%	
BV5	Sports Complex – cost per visit.	£2.49	£2.95	£2.71	£3.00	Net cost £279,877 / 103,321 users
BV6	Sports Complex - % of visitors satisfied with service	N/A	95%	87%	90%	
BV7	Cost per round of golf	-£0.06	£0.87	£2.13	£1.80	Net cost £40,861 / 19,149 rounds
BV8	Number of senior citizens using excursions	31 trips 1586 clients	31 trips 1519 clients	36 trips 1508 clients	35 trips 1560 clients	Delete
BV9	% of occupied allotments	98.5%	100%	98%	100%	22 new allotments have been created
BV10	% of allotment tenants satisfied with the overall service	N/A	99%	N/A	99%	Survey due later this year
BV11	Cost per allotment plot	£41.69	£49.33	£74.01	£80.79	Net cost £12,138 / 164

REF	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	ACTUAL 2007/08	TARGET 2008/09	ACTUAL 2008/09	TARGET 2009/10	COMMENT
BV12	No of aims and targets completed	25	22	22	25	
BV13	Deliver 2½% efficiencies (£)	£312,498	£40,000	£263,969	£48,750	Target increased to 3% in line with gov't targets. Not a requirement for town or parish council's but is good practice for Great Aycliffe.
BV14	Average no. of days lost to sickness per employee	7.6	5	10.8	7	A number of long term sicknesses have greatly impacted on this figure
BV15	Net cost per elector for the provision of all special events	£6.47	£7.53	£6.84	£7.40	Net cost £135,960 / 19,876
BV16	Number of organisations supported by grant or well being powers	10		12		It is impossible to set a target for these indicators as the Town Council have no control over how many people apply for assistance, nor how much they request.
BV17	Amount donated (£)	£2,088	n/a	£2,691	n/a	

14. Service Areas

This section of the Plan explains the individual services we provide and the purpose of the service.

Because of the increasing emphasis on ensuring that all Great Aycliffe Town Council targets can demonstrate direct linkage to the overall aims of the Council, service areas have developed service plans; action plans and performance indicators which can clearly be linked back to the Council's aims.

As always, we invite the community's comments on the Plan and positively welcome constructive criticism, which will help us to improve the information we provide for you each year.

14.1 Corporate Services/Best Value/Personnel

This service area covers corporate and cross-cutting issues which have an effect across the entire Council. These are policy, best value, planning, performance management, risk management, administrative and committee services, training, and customer engagement.

This service area is responsible for the implementation of new performance management arrangements and in particular for setting up systems for monitoring the Council's progress in relation to continuous improvement.

The **objectives** of this service are:

- ◆ To ensure timely and appropriate advice to the Council on matters affecting the strategic and corporate activities of the Council
- ◆ To ensure effective management and implementation of the Council's policies and priorities
- ◆ To be aware of and ensure compliance with all duties and obligations as laid down in Acts of Parliament, statutory instruments and specific guidelines
- ◆ To provide timely and appropriate advice in relation to all employee/employer relations issue
- ◆ To provide advice in relation to training requirements for members and employees.

14.2 Finance Section

The Finance Manager is the Council's formally designated Responsible Financial Officer, as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations. The Finance Section is responsible for all financial aspects of the Council business.

The objectives of this service area are:

- ◆ To ensure the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs
- ◆ Managing and developing the Council's accounting systems, contracts, financial accounting policies and procedures
- ◆ Providing financial information to members and officers and advising on the correct financial position
- ◆ To ensure that an effective payroll function is maintained
- ◆ To ensure that the necessary systems of internal control are in place and that a robust internal audit plan is developed and kept under review
- ◆ To ensure that appropriate treasury management advice is provided to the Council in relation to its investments and borrowings
- ◆ To ensure compliance with the Council's Financial Regulations and to advise on appropriate changes in the light of new legislation
- ◆ To ensure effective procurement of council goods and services and prompt payment of invoices (creditors and debtors)
- ◆ Prepare the Council's Statutory Statement of Accounts
- ◆ Prepare the Council's Annual Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan
- ◆ Monitor and control spending via an effective budgetary control system

- ◆ Income collection and banking
- ◆ Financial advice and training
- ◆ Insurance arrangements

14.3 Members/Civic Services

This service area covers principally the work undertaken by the Mayor's Secretary and the general administration office staff in supporting the Mayor during their year of office.

The **objectives** for this service area are:

- ◆ To support the Mayor in their year of office
- ◆ To ensure that proper conventions and protocols are observed at all times
- ◆ To organise successfully the necessary civic functions agreed annually by the Council
- ◆ To manage the Members' Allowances Scheme.

14.4 Administration

The Administration Section of the Council produces all minutes and agendas and provides support to members and service areas.

The **objectives** of the Administration function are:

- ◆ To provide effective and efficient typing, administration and reception services to members, officers and to the public in relation to the Council's functions
- ◆ To provide the necessary support at meetings of the Council and its Committees.

14.5 Pre-School Learning Centres

The Council's aim is to provide a high quality service, where every child feels safe, is happy and has fun in safe and secure learning environments in three locations within its administrative area.

Our standards are high and each Pre-school has received a successful inspection from the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), each receiving a 'good' grading at their last inspection.

To enable us to develop and maintain these standards we have an excellent ratio of well-trained and motivated staff, who work with the children on a daily basis.

The work of the Pre-schools is managed by the Council's Early Years Officer who ensures the smooth running of the Pre-Schools in accordance with Council Policy and current legislation.

The continual training of the staff is vital to the operation of the Pre-Schools, and the Council ensures that sufficient resources are available to ensure that the high standards continue to be achieved.

The **objectives** of this service area are:

- ◆ To ensure the Pre-schools are fully inclusive in meeting the needs of all children. Particularly those that arise from their ethnic heritage, social and economic background, gender, ability or disability.
- ◆ To ensure that quality learning experiences are provided for the children, appropriate to their stage of development
- ◆ To provide the Early Years Foundation Stage and meet the Welfare Requirements
- ◆ To ensure that the current high standards within the Pre-schools are developed further
- ◆ To ensure that appropriate training is provided for all staff in all aspects for the provision of the service
- ◆ To ensure effective liaison and joint working with other organisations, particularly with Sure Start County Durham, who have an interest in the provision of early years learning
- ◆ To seek to secure, for the benefit of the service, assistance, resources and contributions towards its operation
- ◆ To keep the service under review and to make appropriate recommendations.

14.6 Works and Environment Section

The Works and Environment Section provides a range of what might be called 'grounds maintenance' services, including grass-cutting, floral bedding displays, hard and soft landscaping, tree maintenance and planting, play equipment maintenance and installation, litter-picking, supervision of park activities, maintenance of parks, playing fields, woodlands, nature areas, open spaces and amenity areas and the preparation of graves.

In addition, the Section carries out the inspection and maintenance of Town Council owned buildings and property, and inspects and maintains Town Council owned footpaths, roads, cemeteries, bridges, public seats and play equipment.

The Works and Environment Service provide a range of skilled services to the Council. These services include:

- ◆ Grass cutting
- ◆ Design, planting and maintenance of annual floral bedding displays
- ◆ Management, inspection and maintenance of amenity trees

- ◆ Management, inspection and maintenance of woodlands
- ◆ Management and maintenance of shrub beds and perennial borders
- ◆ Management, inspection, maintenance and renewal of play equipment and play areas
- ◆ Operational management and maintenance of the Oakleaf Golf Course and Driving Range
- ◆ Management, associated record keeping, burial service and maintenance of two cemeteries
- ◆ Maintenance and burial service of Aycliffe Village Churchyard
- ◆ Management, inspection and maintenance of allotment sites
- ◆ Management, inspection and maintenance of 8 parks
- ◆ Maintenance and inspection of Council buildings and property
- ◆ Maintenance and inspection of Council roads and footpaths
- ◆ Maintenance and inspection of bus shelters, litter bins and public seating
- ◆ Provide expertise and assistance in setting up and staging special events
- ◆ Management, setting up, inspection and maintenance of Christmas lighting display
- ◆ Management of the community enhancement award scheme
- ◆ Work in partnership with other agencies to enhance and improve other amenity areas not under the ownership of Great Aycliffe Town Council
- ◆ Provide and manage a park ranger service
- ◆ Provide an 'out of hours' service for emergency call outs in relation to security or health and safety issues
- ◆ Supply and maintain sufficient plant, vehicles and equipment required to undertake the above services
- ◆ To carry out operational duties in a safe manner by employing safe working practices and undertaking risk assessments to ensure the health and safety and welfare of staff and the general public
- ◆ To work with schools to encourage environmental awareness
- ◆ To manage and maintain wild flower areas and wetlands.

The Works and Environment Service charges are allocated across other service areas' budget headings as appropriate and this reflects the variety and range of the work which the Section undertakes.

The **objectives** of the Section therefore need to reflect the variety of services provision and are:

- ◆ 'To ensure adequate provision and management of well maintained and accessible environmental areas, allotments, cemeteries, parks and play areas, which meet the needs of all the community in a cost effective, efficient and timely manner'.

Individual service areas for Works and Environment are detailed in this chapter.

14.7 Parks and Play Areas

We currently manage and maintain 8 parks, all of which have play equipment. In addition West Park has a boating lake.

The 8 parks are:

- ◆ Town Park
- ◆ Woodham
- ◆ St Oswald's
- ◆ Simpasture
- ◆ Moore Lane
- ◆ West Park
- ◆ Horndale
- ◆ Byerley Park

We also provide and maintain play areas at Aycliffe Village, School Aycliffe, Scott Place and the Oak Leaf Sports Complex.

The Works and Environment Section carry out maintenance and upkeep of the parks and the play equipment in them. Regular inspections are undertaken of play equipment to ensure that it is safe.

The Town Council currently pays Sedgefield Borough Council to provide two wardens to 'keep an eye' on its parks, principally the Town Park. The arrangement is working well, however it is unsure what services will be provided following the Local Government Review.

The **objectives** for this service area are:

- ◆ To maintain the Council's parks and play equipment in order to provide a clean, safe environment for the community to use
- ◆ To carry out a phased programme of replacing play equipment in the Council's parks.

14.8 Playing Pitches

The Council provides eight permanent football pitches for the use of the community and 11 teams use these during each football season. The football pitches are located at:

- ◆ Oakleaf Sports Complex
- ◆ Horndale Park
- ◆ Simpasture Park
- ◆ Moore Lane Park

In addition, mini-soccer facilities for the age groups 8-11 years are provided at St Oswald's.

Our seasonal charges for the pitches range from £230 to £420, depending on location and the facilities provided. Junior team fees are half the adult fees, in pursuance of our policy to assist junior football development.

The **objectives** for this service area are:

- ◆ To seek to provide sufficient playing pitches to meet the demand from the community
- ◆ To ensure that the pitches provided by the Council are maintained to an acceptable standard
- ◆ To liaise with and work in partnership with other appropriate bodies to secure the availability of suitable playing pitches and to consult as necessary with users
- ◆ To keep under review the charging policy for the use of playing pitches.

14.9 Outside Events

The Council organises several events each year for its community. The Service continues to be popular with many residents enjoying the various events throughout the year.

There is input to this service area from a number of staff, principally the Leisure Manager, the Works Manager and the Leisure and Environment Assistant.

We continue to seek to work in partnership with other bodies in the organisation and staffing of outside events.

The **objectives** of this service area are:

- ◆ To organise and/or stage outside events in accordance with the Council's priorities as set down from time to time
- ◆ To ensure that the organisation of each event complies with all statutory regulations and requirements
- ◆ To continually survey the community in relation to its satisfaction with such events and to respond to the results of such surveys
- ◆ To actively seek to work in partnership with other appropriate organisations in staging or organising outside events.

14.10 Allotments

The Council provides and supervises five allotment sites. These are located at Aycliffe Village, Finchale Road, Clarence Chare, Byerley Park and St Oswald's Park. There are a total of 164 allotments and fees range from £8.19 for a half plot to £32.75 for a full plot.

We also provide 9 pigeon sites at St. Oswald's and 5 poultry sites at Clarence Chare.

At the inaugural Allotment Tenants Annual Meeting in 2001, tenants were asked if they would like to form an allotments association and manage the sites themselves.

The tenants decided that they wanted the Council to manage the sites and agreed to an 'Allotments Charter', which sets out the Council's future commitment to the allotments and also the maintenance standards we intend to achieve and maintain at the sites.

An annual meeting, which is open to all allotment tenants, ensure that the Charter's standards are adhered to. In addition a satisfaction survey is undertaken every two years.

As a Council we continue to explore new initiatives to reduce green waste, including financial incentives in the form of reduced rents for sites which recycle green waste and have produced a Good Composting Guide, which has been issued to all tenants.

New allotment tenants are also provided with an Allotment Tenants Handbook, which contains useful information and tips on how to get started.

The **objectives** of this service area are:

- ◆ To provide sufficient allotment plots to meet the demand for them
- ◆ To maintain all allotment sites up to the standards set out in the Council's Allotments Charter and tenancy agreement
- ◆ To liaise with allotment holders and their representatives on a regular basis
- ◆ To ensure that the obligations of the allotment holders under the Allotments Charter are carried out.

14.11 Cemeteries and Burials

The Town Council is the burial authority and is responsible for the following facilities:

- ◆ Stephenson Way Cemetery
- ◆ West Cemetery

Stephenson Way Cemetery was opened for interments in 1963 and West Cemetery in 2000.

Burial spaces are available at both cemeteries. However, at Stephenson Way this is now restricted to reserved, single-burial plots and cremated remains plots as the cemetery nears full capacity.

In addition, the Council carries out the burial function at Aycliffe Village Churchyard and also maintains the church grounds. The burial function is undertaken on a rechargeable basis.

The Council works hard to ensure that not only does it provide high quality services, delivered in a professional and sympathetic manner, but that these standards are also observed by funeral directors and stonemasons when carrying out duties in the cemeteries.

To this end, the Council introduced an approval scheme for stonemasons. Only stonemasons on the approved list are allowed to operate in the Council's cemeteries. Before being accepted on the approved list, stonemasons must provide references from other local authorities regarding standards of workmanship and also produce health and safety documentation and public liability insurance certificates.

In an effort to help bereaved families through a difficult time in their lives, the Council has also produced a reader-friendly booklet, which is issued to grant holders, detailing various aspects of cemetery procedures.

The **objectives** of this service area are:

- ◆ To provide facilities for burials.
- ◆ To provide and manage attractive and well-maintained cemeteries for parishioners and non-parishioners alike
- ◆ To ensure that liaison with undertakers, stonemasons, ministers and the bereaved, and the administration of the service are efficient, professional and sympathetic at all times.

14.12 Street Equipment

This service area relates to the maintenance of street equipment such as bus shelters, dog bins, litter bins, public seats and parish footway lighting.

The Town Council provides most of the bus shelters within the parish (with the exception of the Adshell style shelters located on Woodham Way, Williamfield Way, Burnhill Way and the Industrial Estate) and public seating.

We also provide footway lighting, dog bins and litter bins on areas for which we have responsibility. Although Durham County Council are responsible for the emptying of the dog and litter bins.

The objectives of this service area are:

- ◆ To keep under review the demand/requirements for additional street equipment
- ◆ To ensure that existing equipment is maintained in a clean and safe condition
- ◆ To respond effectively to remove graffiti from premises and property for which the Council has responsibility.

14.13 Environment

The appointment of an Environmental Officer to raise environmental awareness and two multi skilled 'Town Pride' operatives will enable the Town Council to deal with urgent and environmental issues.

In addition, the Environment Officer will be working with other external bodies such as the local schools, the Police and Youth Offending Service to raise awareness about the environment, climate change and developing a sense of pride in our local area. The Environment Officer will also be responsible for the Environmental Centre based in Moore Lane Pavilion.

The **objectives** of this service are:

- ◆ To create a greater understanding of the natural environment around Great Aycliffe
- ◆ To provide opportunities for members of the public to become more involved in their towns practical environmental management
- ◆ To develop and maintain strategic environmental policies for Great Aycliffe Town Council
- ◆ To identify suitable conservation and environmental works for the Town Pride Team and Volunteers on natural green areas.

14.14 Sports Complex

Our Oak Leaf Sports Complex is, a family friendly facility, open 7 days each week from 9am until 11pm. We continue to provide facilities for the following sports: five-a-side football, badminton, netball, hockey, cricket and table tennis within the main sports hall. The Complex also provides the Town's only squash courts and indoor bowls facility.

The bar/catering function provides an excellent facility and a range of reasonably priced meals. The function room can cater for 80 users and is able to provide an excellent venue for a number of leisure activities such as private functions, meetings, bridge and yoga classes. We employ 26 staff within the Complex, supported by a pool of casual staff.

The **objectives** for this service area are:

- ◆ To provide and maintain a variety of sporting activities commensurate with the size and capability of the Complex and in accordance with the Council's priorities as determined from time to time
- ◆ To be flexible in our approach to the facilities provided
- ◆ To provide and maintain a bar/catering facility
- ◆ To ensure that an efficient and effective booking service is operated for those wishing to use the facilities
- ◆ To seek to maintain or increase levels of usage for each of the activities undertaken

- ◆ To be alert to new initiatives and provide appropriate and timely advice to the Council in relation to the same
- ◆ To provide sports coaching courses as appropriate and to liaise with other bodies.

14.15 Golf Course and Driving Range

The Council provides an 18-hole Golf Course and an 18-bay Driving Range. There is involvement from a number of different sections in the operation of both. The Town Council has entered into a new contract for services with a Golf Professional, whose responsibilities are:

- ◆ To collect fees for the Course and Driving Range
- ◆ To operate the Driving Range and to collect the range balls
- ◆ To take tee reservations and to administer party bookings
- ◆ To provide a golf shop with associated professional services.

The Works and Environment Section employ green-keeping specialists who are dedicated to maintaining the course to a high standard. The Recreation Committee of the Council has responsibility for overseeing the operation of both facilities and has established a Golf Working Group, whose remit is to discuss with representatives of users of the facilities how well they are being operated. Proposals from that Working Group are then fed back into the committee process.

The **objectives** in relation to these two facilities are:

- ◆ To keep under review the management arrangements for the two facilities
- ◆ To liaise appropriately with other municipal golf course providers
- ◆ To keep under review the cost of the green-keeping operation and compare costs with other municipal courses
- ◆ To ensure that there is an opportunity within the Golf Working Group for users to make their views known on the operation of the facilities
- ◆ To continue to work with the Oak Leaf Golf Club
- ◆ To provide a warden service for the Course
- ◆ To promote and support junior golf in all appropriate ways
- ◆ To keep the course layout under review, with the intention of all-year-round 18-hole provision
- ◆ To maintain the Golf Course to an acceptable standard.

14.16 Capital Projects

The Council reviews annually its programme of proposed capital projects i.e. significant one off investment in the Council's assets such as its buildings, vehicles and machinery. Some represent one-off proposals, others a continuing programme of improvements in a particular area. For example DDA works and Asset Management works.

In 2005/6 we recognised that we need to review the planning, management and delivery of capital projects which resulted in the development of a 10 year Asset Management Plan. Work on this continues, with the Council now in a position where most capital projects are undertaken within the context of the Great Aycliffe aims and targets and the Medium Term Financial Plan and Asset Management Plan. However, we cannot forget that additional funding is occasionally made available from other sources giving rise to one off projects that are not part of the aims and targets but are important to take advantage of Local Improvement Programmes.

All of these actions are subject to continuous monitoring by the Performance Monitoring Group, with any problems identified by that Group being notified to the Policy and Resources Committee.

The Medium Term Financial Plan originally approved by the Council in 2007, is updated annually. It sets out capital investment priorities and plans for the next three years, with clear links to the Parish Performance and Asset Management Plans. The capital programme position of the Council is also monitored on a regular basis and discussed at the Policy & Resources Committee.

The main capital works undertaken in 2008/2009 are listed below:

Council Offices DDA work	Simpasture Park Redevelopment
St Oswald's Pre-School building	Moore Lane Environment Centre
New Tractor	St Oswald's Park and Play Areas
Sports Complex Bar Refurbishment	Woodham Park Multi Games Area
DDA lift Oakleaf Sports Complex	Horndale Play area

Full details are provided in the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts.

15. Best Value

Although the previous legislative requirements have been removed from Town and Parish Councils, and to date no further guidance has been released, the Town Council considers it vital to continue to deliver services under the ethos of Best Value.

The Town Council consults its community on a regular basis from a town wide satisfaction survey undertaken every three years to consultation on specific projects. It undertakes an annual review of its functions; measure performance on a quarterly basis and produce a number of strategic documents including the Medium Term Financial Plan, which are audited by an independent external auditor.

As a Quality Council, Great Aycliffe Town Council will continue to make arrangements to secure continuous improvements in the way in which it exercises its functions, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

The Council, will continue to undertake Best Value reviews of services which have significant member involvement.

A Best Value Working Group was established and will be retained and this Group is charged with the following responsibilities:

- ◆ To consider and make recommendations to the Policy and Resources Committee in relation to all aspects of Best Value
- ◆ To undertake reviews of services as determined by the Council and in accordance with the Council's review strategy
- ◆ To consider and make recommendations from in respect of the order of reviews

The Group appointed for the municipal year 2009/10, at the Council's Annual General Meeting in May 2009, comprises of ten Councillors from both political parties.

Best Value principles now permeate the culture of the Council.

15.1 Best Value Reviews 2008/09

A best value review was commenced by the Council's Best Value Working Group during 2008/09 which looked at the Oakleaf Sports Complex. This review is still ongoing.

15.2 Planned Best Value Reviews 2009/10

A review of the Oak Leaf Golf Complex is planned for 2009/10. The findings will be reported to the Policy & Resources Committee in due course.

16. Project Reviews

16.1 Youth Council

The Aycliffe Youth Council was formally launched in November 2008. It consists of seventeen young people age 11 to 19. Representatives are from Woodham Community Technology College, Greenfield Community and Arts College, St John's 6th Form College, Queen Elizabeth 6th Form College and the Youth Centre. Provision has also been made for representatives from the Investing in Children Group but no nominations have been received to date.

16.2 Quality Parish

The Town Council undertook a reaccreditation exercise to retain the Quality Parish status in January 2009. The new requirements are more rigorous than in previous years with some optional aspects now becoming mandatory.

We achieved and retain our Quality Status by demonstrating that we have reached the standard required by passing several tests:

- ✓ We have a full electoral mandate
- ✓ Our Town Clerk is appropriately qualified
- ✓ We hold regular council meetings
- ✓ Our newsletter is published quarterly with other information and news on our website
- ✓ We produce an Annual Report
- ✓ We produce timely year end accounts with an unqualified opinion from District Audit
- ✓ We adopted a Code of Conduct for Members and Officers which complies with national standards
- ✓ We encourage our community to become more involved with Town Council matters.

16.3 Website

A large part of the Quality Parish status requires information to be made readily available to members of the public. The Town Council have always made every effort to make information available on our website as well as in hard copy format from the Town Council Offices.

However the reaccreditation exercise gave the Council an ideal opportunity to review the web pages and simplify the layout and navigation of our website. Work has been ongoing for many months, however the new unitary Durham County Council will now be responsible for certain parts of the website and it is unclear at this time how this will affect the Town Council's aspirations to have a great, user friendly website.

16.4 The Environment

This has been an extremely busy year with the appointment of an Environment Officer and Town Pride Team. Work has been undertaken on a number of environmental areas including The Burn, Nature Park, Cobblers Hall Plantation and School Aycliffe Wetlands.

Work has included considerable improvements to the Nature Park including installation of a pond dipping platform, interpretation boards and fencing around the pond. Other work on various sites has included surfacing, hedge-laying, pond clearance and general routine maintenance.

The Environment Officer works with a number of groups and volunteers each week and various community and school groups on a frequent basis. Activities include educational classroom based sessions, after school eco clubs, encouraging, leading and advising on school grounds, environmental improvements, practical conservation tasks and public events.

In addition the old building at Moore Lane has been refurbished and now provides a community facility for environmental activities.

16.5 Customer Panel

The Customer Panel has been running successfully for over a year now. They meet on an as and when basis with a busy period from October looking at the budget until April when the aims and targets are reviewed for the Parish Performance Plan.

Presentations have been given on the limitations of a town council; the Council Finances and the budget setting process. Each service Manager, the Town Clerk and the Leader of the Council has attended a specific meeting to provide a question and answer session for the panel.

Although there is a core group of dedicated residents the Town Council are always looking for new members. If you would like more information or would like to become involved in the customer panel please contact;

Chrissy Walton, Corporate & Policy Officer at Great Aycliffe Town Council, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe, Co Durham, DL5 6QF

Tel: (01325) 300700

E-mail: info@great-aycliffe.gov.uk

17. Consultation

Effective communication and consultation with the community in Great Aycliffe are essential elements of best value.

We will continue to be flexible in our approach to consultation but our methods of consultation will be realistic in terms of cost and available resources. The Council continues to have a regular programme for surveying the users of our services, and we continue to publish a quarterly newsletter.

Surveys are undertaken each year for

- ◆ Users of the Oakleaf Sports Complex;
- ◆ Pensioners using the trips provided by the Council;

The allotment holders are surveyed every two years; and other ad-hoc surveys are undertaken as and when required.

A Strategy Customer Panel was set up following the satisfaction survey undertaken in August 2007. This panel has been involved in the setting of council targets and are consulted on a range of matters including the budget setting process.

A Youth Council was set up in November 2008 who is also consulted on a range of matters. In addition the Youth Council have been given a devolved budget to help deliver specific projects highlighted by the young people of the Great Aycliffe area.

The Town Council attend community events to highlight the services provided by them and gather residents views.

17.1 Satisfaction Survey Findings

In August 2007 a Great Aycliffe satisfaction survey was undertaken by the Town Council. The Best Value Grant received from Central Government covered all the financial costs.

The survey showed:-

67% for overall satisfaction;

63% though the Town Council provided value for money

76% of people thought Great Aycliffe was a pleasant place to live:

A second survey was undertaken in April 2009; once again all the financial costs were covered by the remaining Best Value Grant. The Council have not been able to analyse the survey responses in time for this document. However, the findings and where possible comparative data will be reported in due course to the Full Council and made available to members of the public.

17.2 Comments from Customers

Detailed below is progress on specific comments made by customers during the 2007 Satisfaction Survey and other consultation and community events attended.

In addition, to the items set out previously, the following requests have been addressed.

You asked for	We have
Replace existing dog waste bins on Town Council owned land and investigate the possibility of providing more bins	The Town Council have an annual replacement programme for dog and litter bins. In addition we undertook a review of litter and dog bin provision. However the County Council are responsible for emptying these bins and they are currently unable to add any further bins, either litter or dog, to their existing routes.
Replace existing litter bins with more vandal resistant bins and investigate the possibility of providing additional bins in areas prone to littering.	
Rolling programme of investment/inspection of play areas (funding limited)	As detailed earlier we bid for and received a large amount of Local Improvement Programme and Neighbourhood Enhancement Programme funding which supplemented by funding from the Council enabled us to improve a number of play areas and facilities.
Improve landscaping at the Cemeteries	New footpaths have been laid at West Cemetery and flower beds to the entrances to both West and Stephenson Way Cemeteries. Extended the cremated remains area at Stephenson Way.

New footpaths where required at the cemeteries	New footpaths have been provided at West Cemetery to improve access to graves.
Continue 6-weekly meetings with allotment representatives	A council representative meets with the allotment representatives on a 6 weekly basis
Undertake 6-weekly inspections at the allotments	6-weekly inspections were already being undertaken and reported to committee
Provide more half plots at the allotment sites	11 half and 11 full plots have been provided at St. Oswald's.
Review waiting list at St Oswald's and provide additional sites if required	
Continue to hold an Allotment AGM	Allotment AGM continues to be held
Undertake a 6-monthly walk around of the Great Aycliffe Way and log incidents	Complete and planned for future inspections
Make more places available for 3 year olds at the Pre-Schools	We have made more places available at St. Oswald's but are unable to expand further at St. Mary's and Woodham Burn.
Invest and update St. Oswald's pre school, give them a new kitchen and bathroom facilities	St. Oswald's has receive a complete update including new windows and doors; replacement kitchen and new more appropriate toilet facilities
Continue to provide the special events because lots of people benefit from them	The special events delivered by the Town Council was complete with extra Fun-in-the-parks being provided and 2 new venues for the OAP Trips
Provide additional seating	New seating has been provided in many locations
Improved drainage at the cemeteries	This is an extremely difficult task, however options are being investigated for West Cemetery.
Set up a user group to discuss things at the Oakleaf Sports Complex	The Customer Panel and Youth Council have visited the Complex to discuss ideas. It is intended to make this a regular event.
Improve the toilets at the Sports Complex	The toilets have been redecorated and some drainage work has been undertaken. Plus some further work identified in the Medium term Financial Plan.

Some requests we have not been able to progress and the reasons why are set out below:

You asked for	Our response
Increased community activities	This has become a target for 2009/10

You asked for	Our response
Publicise parks and play areas via a map and map open spaces	The Town Council are planning to undertake a mapping exercise as soon as possible when we know which GIS Officer we will be working with after the local government review. In the mean time we will publicise facilities though our website; newsletters and the Newton News.
Investigate providing a map of Council facilities	
Investigate provision of Crazy Golf facilities at an appropriate location	This has been investigated in the past as part of a review looking at staffed park games facilities. Due to the staffing implications it is considered not efficient or providing value for money.
Undertake review of allotment rents	These are reviewed annually as part of the annual fees and charges review. A comprehensive review will be undertaken during this financial year.
Review eviction protocol for bad tenants	Protocol has been reviewed however legislative requirements must be adhered to therefore no amendment can currently be made
Serve the food in a separate area to the bar at the Oakleaf Sports Complex	This has been tried in the past and does not work. However it is done occasionally.
Introduce more pre-schools	The Town Council are not in a position to introduce more pre-schools and do not have suitable buildings available
Open the pre-schools during school holidays / extend the current hours	2 pre-schools are run from school establishments therefore no school holidays or extended hours can be offered. It is being investigated for St. Oswald's.

18. Representation

The Council nominate representatives annually to the following outside bodies. The representatives for 2009/10 are:

- a) Great Aycliffe Village Hall Association
Councillor WM Blenkinsopp
- b) County Durham Association of Local Councils
Councillors RS Fleming (Leader), JD Clare (Deputy Leader) and the Town Clerk.
- c) Citizens' Advice Bureau
Councillor GC Gray with Mrs A Palmer as reserve.
- d) Agnew Community Association
Councillors Mrs S Haigh and A Warburton

- e) Woodham Village Community Association
Councillors Mrs J Gray and K Henderson
- f) Great Aycliffe and Midridge Partnership
Councillors RS Fleming and B Hall and the Town Clerk.
- g) Town Centre Forum
Councillors Mrs D Bowman and B. Hall and the Town Clerk.
- h) Countryside Volunteers
Councillors V Crosby, I Gray and A Warburton.
- i) Larger Local Councils' Forum
Councillors WM Blenkinsopp, JD Clare, RS Fleming, GC Gray, B Hall, T Hogan and the Town Clerk.
- j) Greenfield Arts Management Group
Councillors Mr. D Bowman, V Crosby and B Haigh.
- k) Normandy Veterans' Association
Councillor Mrs M Dalton.
- l) Woodham Community Technology College Forum Meeting
Councillors Mrs M Dalton and Mrs VM Raw.
- m) Newton Aycliffe Youth Centre
Councillor Mrs EM Paylor
- n) Aycliffe Youth Council
Councillors V Crosby, A Warburton and the Corporate and Policy Officer.

19. A Financial Overview

19.1 2009/2010 Budget

The Town Council agreed its Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2009/2010 in December 2008. The Council's spending plans for 2009/2010 can be summarised as follows:-

Total Revenue Cost of running Town Council Services	£ 2,549,550
Capital Investment in Council and Community Assets	£ 140,000
Total Council Spending / Budget	£ 2,689,550
Less County Council Funding for Pre-Schools	(£ 142,000)
Less Fees and Charges for Services	(£ 762,050)
Less Investment Income	(£ 20,000)
Less Use of Council Balances (Capital Works)	(£ 140,000)
Net Budget/Precept	£ 1,625,500

The Town Council's Precept is set based on the net cost of running the Council's services and is the amount that we ask from the County Council, as the Council Tax

Billing Authority, to collect for us from the Council taxpayers of Great Aycliffe in order to fund all of the services we provide.

The 2009/2010 Budget document can be viewed at the Council Offices or on the Council's website. The Budgets are broken down by Committee area and by each individual service area that the Council provides.

19.2 2009/2010 Council Tax

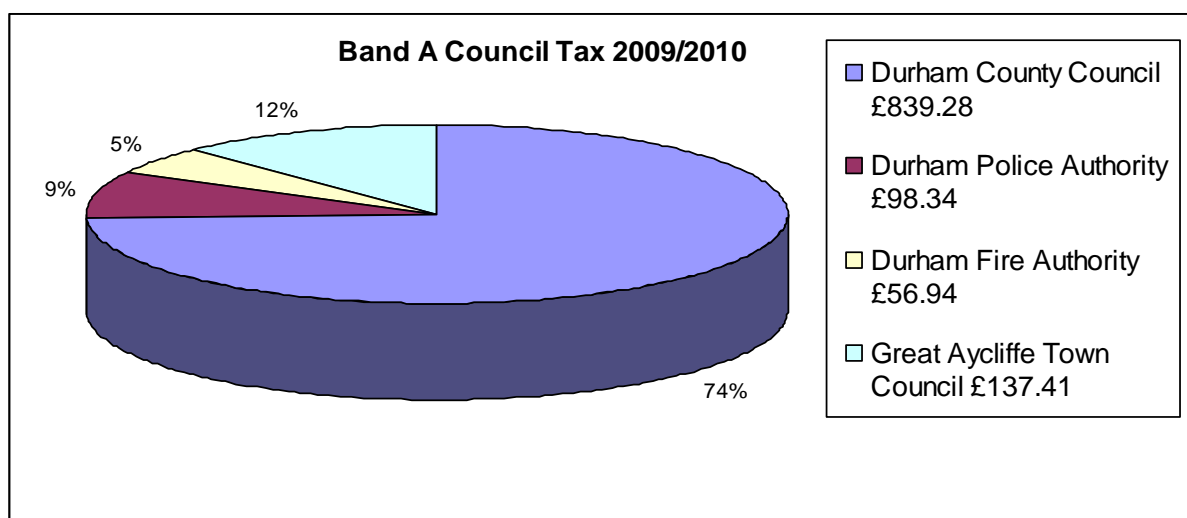
As detailed above, the Council's 2009/2010 Precept is **£1,625,500** which equates to a Band D Council Tax of £206.12. However a significant proportion of properties in the Great Aycliffe area fall within **Council Tax Band A**, for which the Town Council element of the Council Tax bill is **£137.41 or £2.64 a week**.

The Town Council only receives Council Tax from those properties in the Great Aycliffe area to fund services provided specifically within the town.

The **overall Council Tax** figure for 2009/2010 for **Band A** properties in the Great Aycliffe area is **£1,131.97**.

The following illustration demonstrates that only **12p in every £1 of council tax comes to Great Aycliffe Town Council**.

The remainder of your council tax bill pays for services provided by the County Council such as education, social services and roads, as well as the Police and Fire Authorities.



19.3 Medium Term Financial Plan

The Council also has in place an approved Medium Term Financial Plan which sets out the Council's financial strategy for the next three years.

The Medium Term Financial Plan provides the link between our aims, targets and priorities as set out in this Parish Performance Plan and the resources that are likely to be available to fund them via the Annual Budget.

The Plan enables the Council to take a more strategic view towards the planning of its finances as well as putting in place the resources to help the Council achieve its strategic vision.

The Medium Term Financial Plan can be viewed at the Council Offices or on the Council's website.

19.4 2008/2009 Spending

The financial position and spending of the Council is continuously monitored and controlled in order to help achieve efficient use of public resources.

Progress on the Council's approved Budgets is reported to the Policy & Resources Committee on a quarterly basis.

This prudent management of the Council's spending was demonstrated in 2008/2009, when the Council achieved a saving of £263,969 on its Revenue Budget.

This money has now been set aside in the Council's balances to meet future spending commitments and to provide further investment in Council and community assets for the benefit of the tax payers of Great Aycliffe over the next few years.

19.5 Annual Audit Report

The Council is subject to an annual external inspection by the Audit Commission and the overall opinion on the overall financial standing of the Council is set out in an Annual Audit Letter.

The Audit Commission looked at four main areas in 2007/2008:-

1. Statement of Accounts
2. Parish Performance Plan
3. Annual Governance Statement
4. Use of Resources Assessment (also known as the Value for Money)

The Council has received an "unqualified" audit opinion in all of these areas.

What this means in practice is that our Accounts present fairly the financial position of the Authority, our Parish Performance Plan is good, our arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of public resources are sound, our finances are in good order and that we provide value for money to the community.

So all in all, it was a very good Annual Report with some good progress made by the Council over the course of the last financial year.

The 2008/2009 Audit Letter is due to be received later in the year, following the completion of the 2008/2009 Audit.

The Audit Commission's Annual Audit Letter to Great Aycliffe Town Council for 2007/2008 is attached as Appendix 6 and the 2007/2008 Statement of Accounts is available to view at the Council Offices or on the Council's website. (www.great-aycliffe.gov.uk).

APPENDIX 1

Aims and Targets 2008/09

AIM 1 "TO PROVIDE GOOD QUALITY GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF THE COUNCIL"

TARGETS

- 1) Quarterly performance report to Policy & Resources Committee

Complete

Quarterly aims and target performance reports are presented to Policy & Resources Committee for consideration and comment. In addition the customer panel review progress on the Council's targets twice a year.

- 2) Complete all staff training identified by the personal development review (PDR) process by October 2008.

PDR's not on target and not yet complete. An action plan has been developed and this is progressing. The Sports Complex PDR's and training plan are complete.

- 3) Prepare an annual training list developed from the PDR and feed into the budget setting process

This is linked to 2 above and therefore not on target. There is a general training list which outlines a rolling programme of training available, most of which is delivered in house by existing staff.

- 4) Deliver Member training and review completed post training evaluation forms.

Complete

Member training is delivered throughout the year and an annual report is presented to Full Council for consideration. Evaluations forms are reviewed after training events.

- 5) Prepare a Member and Town Clerk training programme to comply with guidance for Quality Status.

Complete

Member training programme developed. Quality Parish Status reaccredited.

- 6) Complete the review of the records management system to comply with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

This target is likely to be ongoing. Much work has been undertaken including staff training on Data Protection and Freedom of Information.

- 7) Develop and encourage a Youth Council or similar forum.

Complete

The Aycliffe Youth Council was launched on the 19th November 2008. The Town Council is actively consulting with the Youth Council and training has been provided to support the young representatives.

- 8) Undertake a carbon footprint assessment for Great Aycliffe Town Council offices, with a view to this being expanded into all areas in the future.

Larger Councils and neighbouring authorities have been contacted to gather information on the progress they have made regarding a carbon footprint assessment. To date none have been undertaken by the authorities contacted. In addition a number of training courses have been looked into but nothing suitable has been found to date.

AIM 2 "TO MANAGE THE COUNCIL'S FINANCES AND ASSETS IN A RESPONSIBLE MANNER"

TARGETS

- 9) Produce an annual statement of accounts by 30th June 2008 without external audit qualification.

Complete

Accounts approved 25 June. Annual Governance Report approved 24 Sept – unqualified audit opinion, no matters arising

- 10) Complete any Government returns electronically by the relevant deadline.

Complete.

- 11) Continue to deliver 2½ % efficiencies.

Complete

Budget for 2009/2010 approved on 17th December 2008 and savings of 8% identified. It is highly unlikely savings of this level will be able to be made in future years.

- 12) Complete office accommodation works.

Complete

DDA compliance work and general office accommodation improvement works have been complete.

- 13) Develop an action plan, linked to the budget, for the implementation of repairs and DDA compliant work as part of the delivery of the Asset Management Plan.

Complete

Action plan now linked to budget, Medium Term Financial Plan and Asset Management Plan. Approved 2009/10 budget takes into account AMP.

- 14) Undertake a review of all council risks every March.

Complete

- 15) Budget/Precepts approved by 31st January 2009.

Complete

- 16) Complete the Asset database and undertake an annual review.

Complete

- 17) Complete the schedule of expected life and replacement costs for plant and machinery.

Complete.

AIM 3 "TO PROVIDE ACCESSIBLE, AFFORDABLE LEISURE FACILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES"

TARGETS

- 18) Undertake a Best Value Review of the Oakleaf Sports Complex.

Ongoing.

Bar refurbishment complete.

- 19) Complete the installation of a DDA compliant lift and new access doors at the Oakleaf Sports Complex.

Complete.

Disabled lift project complete. New access doors have been approved and awaiting installation dates.

- 20) Continue the provision of small local parks and take into consideration users needs.

The focus has been on improving the existing parks and play areas. Great Aycliffe has very good play and park provision.

21) Complete a programme of day trips for pensioners by July 2008.

Complete

22) Run the annual Aycliffe Show.

Complete.

The bad weather caused many problems but the event went ahead as scheduled with some minor amendments to the field layout and the provision of a park and ride facility.

23) Work with partners to review the provision and operation of environmental areas and all leisure facilities.

Nothing to report no progress due to LGR.

24) Deliver the Council's programme of special events.

Complete

AIM 4 "TO PROVIDE PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION AS APPROPRIATE IN GREAT AYCLIFFE"

TARGETS

25) Investigate the need for extended opening hours at early years settings. If required extend the opening hours.

Ongoing. Opening hours extended to incorporate extended funded hours. Further investigations to be carried out into need for further extended hours at St Mary's and St Oswald's.

26) Implement the new Early Years Foundations Stage in all pre-school settings.

Complete. Continue to develop.

27) Provide adequate outdoor learning and storage facilities' at all pre-school settings.

Ongoing. Funding sources to be investigated.

28) Achieve good Ofsted Inspection results (if undertaken)

At the end of year no inspections had taken place. However, St Oswald's were inspected in April and achieved a 'good' score. This is a fantastic result and continues to highlight the high standards the Town Council facilities achieve.

**AIM 5 “TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT OF
AYCLIFFE BY MANAGING AND DEVELOPING PARKS, PLAY
AREAS AND GREEN SPACES”**

TARGETS

- 29) Ensure the adequate provision and management of well maintained and accessible environmental areas, allotments, cemeteries, parks and play areas.

Work is ongoing on this target.

- 30) The Environmental Officer to work with local schools and community groups and provide an additional resource to the Works & Environment Section.

Ongoing. The Environment Officer has contacted all schools and works with some on a regular basis.

- 31) Provide new play area and revamp equipment at Simpasture Park.

Complete

- 32) Provide two new play areas, provision of a picnic area and new formal garden at St. Oswald's Park.

Work is progressing and the two phased project has been rolled into one.

- 33) Review proposals for the upkeep and improvements to Great Aycliffe Way (Town Council owned land only)

Complete

**AIM 6 “TO INFLUENCE THE DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF SERVICES
PROVIDED BY OTHERS IN PARTNERSHIP”**

TARGETS

NO TARGETS WILL BE SET FOR THIS AIM FOR 2008/2009 UNTIL THE OUTCOME OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW IS KNOWN.

HOWEVER, WORK WILL CONTINUE ON EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS.

This aim has been replaced with “to help and encourage partnership working to improve the services and facilities for the residents of Great Aycliffe”

**AIM 7 “TO DELIVER SERVICES FOR PARTNERS WHERE THAT WOULD
PROVIDE ADDED VALUE”**

This aim has been replaced with “encourage the residents of Great Aycliffe to become involved in local democracy”

TARGET

- 34) Successfully complete applications and bid for LIP funding for improvements to Simpasture Park; Moore Lane Pre-School Building and St. Oswald's Park.

Complete

- 35) Revamp the existing building at Moore Lane to be used for community and school groups and as a base for the Environmental Officer.

Complete

- 36) Prepare budget plans by January 2009 for the delivery of all services, including any new or reduction of services.

Complete

AIM 8 "TO RESEARCH INFORMATION AND MAKE THE CASE FOR GREAT AYCLIFFE"

TARGETS

- 37) Produce timely responses to all major consultations carried out by service or governance partners.

Ongoing

- 38) Undertake benchmarking and research where appropriate for new policies and procedures.

Ongoing

APPENDIX 2

Aims and Targets 2009/10

AIM 1 "TO PROVIDE GOOD QUALITY GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF THE COUNCIL"

TARGETS

- 1) The Town Clerk is trained in the power of well being.
- 2) At least 80% of Members are trained in the power of well being.
- 3) Quarterly performance report to Policy and Resources Committee
- 4) Complete all staff training identified by the Personal Development Review (PDR) process by October 2010.
- 5) Prepare a training list, developed from the PDR process and feed into the budget setting process.
- 6) Prepare a Member and Town Clerk training programme to comply with guidance for Quality Parish Status.
- 7) Complete Member training and review completed post training evaluation forms.
- 8) Undertake a review of all records and filing systems annually to comply with the Freedom of Information Act.
- 9) Improve advertising of council facilities and services.
- 10) Complete the electronic recording of appropriate historical archive documents.

AIM 2 "TO MANAGE THE COUNCIL'S FINANCES AND ASSETS IN A RESPONSIBLE MANNER"

TARGETS

- 11) Produce an Annual Statement of Accounts by 30th June 2009 without external qualification
- 12) Complete any government returns electronically by the relevant deadline.
- 13) Continue to deliver 3% efficiencies.
- 14) Implement any works highlighted in the Asset Management Plan, prioritised by DDA compliance.
- 15) Undertake a review of all Council risks every March.
- 16) Budgets/precept approved by 31st January 2010.

- 17) Undertake an annual review of the Asset database.
- 18) Undertake an annual review of the schedule of expected life and replacement costs for plant and machinery and build into the capital works programme as necessary.
- 19) Undertake an energy assessment for Great Aycliffe Town Council Offices with a view to this being expanded into all areas in the future.
- 20) Explore drainage options for wet areas at West Cemetery.
- 21) Open the toilets for limited hours at Stephenson Way Cemetery on a weekend for a trial basis. (times to be agreed)

AIM 3 “TO PROVIDE ACCESSIBLE, AFFORDABLE LEISURE FACILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES”

TARGETS

- 22) Complete the Best Value Review of the Oakleaf Sports Complex.
- 23) Hold an open day at the Oakleaf Sports Complex.
- 24) Complete a programme of day trips for pensioners by July 2009.
- 25) Run the annual Great Aycliffe Show.
- 26) Work with partners to review the provision and operation of environmental areas and green spaces.
- 27) Deliver the Council’s programme of special events.
- 28) Review the existing pricing at the Oakleaf Sports Complex and investigate the possibility of a junior reward card or scheme.

AIM 4 “TO PROVIDE PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION AS APPROPRIATE IN GREAT AYCLIFFE”

TARGETS

- 29) Investigate the need for extended opening hours at the Pre-school settings. If required, extend the opening hours.
- 30) Continue to develop the new Early Years Foundations Stage in all pre-school settings.
- 31) Provide adequate outdoor storage facilities at St. Oswald’s and Woodham Burn pre-school settings.
- 32) Achieve ‘Good’ Ofsted inspection results (If undertaken).

AIM 5 “TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT OF AYCLIFFE BY MANAGING AND DEVELOPING PARKS, PLAY AREAS AND GREEN SPACES”

TARGETS

- 33) The Environmental Officer to work with local schools and community groups to develop volunteer opportunities.
- 34) Work with the Youth Council, schools, community and voluntary groups to hold a Town Pride Environment Day.
- 35) Publicise environmental/green spaces in the Great Aycliffe area.
- 36) Publicise parks and play areas in Town council ownership.
- 37) Complete the refurbishment of St. Oswald’s Park.
- 38) Re-open the public toilets at St Oswald’s Park.
- 39) Investigate options for the provision of a town wide park ranger service.

AIM 6 “TO HELP AND ENCOURAGE PARTNERSHIP WORKING TO IMPROVE THE SERVICES AND FACILITIES FOR THE RESIDENTS OF GREAT AYCLIFFE”

TARGETS

- 40) Support and encourage Aycliffe Youth Council.
- 41) Work with other groups to develop community activities to encourage pride in Great Aycliffe.
- 42) Hold a litter awareness campaign in partnership with Durham County Council, the Youth Council, schools and any national initiatives.
- 43) Negotiate with Durham County council to hold a high profile ‘dog fouling’ campaign in the Great Aycliffe area.

AIM 7 “ENCOURAGE THE RESIDENTS OF GREAT AYCLIFFE TO BECOME INVOLVED IN LOCAL DEMOCRACY”

TARGETS

- 44) Develop an Aycliffe Citizens Charter. Setting out the responsibilities of the Town Council and the level of service they can expect to receive. Including a list of who provides what and citizen’s responsibilities.

- 45) Hold or take part in at least 2 events to inform residents about Town Council services.
- 46) Promote the need to register to vote prior to any elections.

AIM 8 “TO RESEARCH INFORMATION AND MAKE THE CASE FOR GREAT AYCLIFFE”

TARGETS

- 47) Produce timely responses to all major consultations carried out.
- 48) Undertake benchmarking and research, where appropriate, for new policies and procedures.

APPENDIX 3

PEST ANALYSIS

PEST ANALYSIS FACTORS	POTENTIAL IMPACT	IMPLICATION AND IMPORTANCE			ACTION
		Type:	Impact:	Importance:	
	High Medium Low Undetermined	Strength Weakness Opportunity Threat	Increasing Unchanged Reducing Unknown	Critical Important Unimportant Unknown	
Political					
Unitary Council / AAP developments	Undetermined	Opportunity	Unknown	Important	Make case for Great Aycliffe at every opportunity Feed issues to CDALC for representation
Changes in Government policy	High	Weak	Unknown	Important	Keep up-to-date Lobby via NALC
Regional Spatial Strategy	Medium	Threat	Increasing	Important	Make comments
Audit Commission Inspections	Medium	Opportunity	Reducing	Important	Comply with SORP Maintain internal control Adhere to legislative requirements
Political balance of Council	Medium	Opportunity	Increasing	Important	Be apolitical Work with all parties
Local Government elections	High	Opportunity	Increasing	Important	Await outcome Keep up-to-date with changes
Change in Government	Medium	Weakness	Unknown	Important	Await outcome React accordingly
Local Development Framework	Medium	Opportunity	Unchanged	Important	Make comments

PEST ANALYSIS FACTORS	POTENTIAL IMPACT	IMPLICATION AND IMPORTANCE			ACTION
		Type:	Impact:	Importance:	
	High Medium Low Undetermined	Strength Weakness Opportunity Threat	Increasing Unchanged Reducing Unknown	Critical Important Unimportant Unknown	
Economic					
Tax Base	Medium	Opportunity	Increasing	Important	Monitor
Changes in interest rates	High	Weak	Increasing	Important	Borrowing/repayments Loss on interest Medium Term Financial Plan
Skills Shortages	Medium	Threat	Increasing	Important	Monitor
Inflation	Medium	Threat	Reducing	Important	Efficiency savings Precept rate
Levels of Employment	Medium	Weak	Unknown	Important	Monitor
Demand for Services	Medium	Threat	Reducing	Important	Monitor and offer promotions where possible
Lack of government grant funding/ limited fund raising ability	Low	Weakness	Unchanged	Important	Review Bid for funding whenever possible

PEST ANALYSIS FACTORS	POTENTIAL IMPACT	IMPLICATION AND IMPORTANCE			ACTION
		Type:	Impact:	Importance:	
	High Medium Low Undetermined	Strength Weakness Opportunity Threat	Increasing Unchanged Reducing Unknown	Critical Important Unimportant Unknown	
Sociological					
Access to services	Low	Opportunity	Increasing	Important	Develop partnerships DDA work Pricing policy Marketing
Social exclusion Hard to reach groups Equality and diversity Deprivation	Low	Opportunity	Increasing	Important	Special events Free taster sessions Equal opportunities employer Monitor service users Satisfaction Survey Be aware
Crime/Fear of Crime	Medium	Threat	Unknown	Important	CCTV Wardens
Ageing population	Medium	Threat	Increasing	Important	Provision of services - cost
Poor educational attainment	Low	Opportunity	Increasing	Important	Be aware
Health/Obesity	High	Opportunity	Unknown	Important	Partnership working

PEST ANALYSIS FACTORS	POTENTIAL IMPACT	IMPLICATION AND IMPORTANCE			ACTION
		Type:	Impact:	Importance:	
	High Medium Low Undetermined	Strength Weakness Opportunity Threat	Increasing Unchanged Reducing Unknown	Critical Important Unimportant Unknown	
Technical					
New Communication Technologies	Medium	Threat	Increasing	Important	Keep up-to-date
Mechanical equipment	Medium	Opportunity	Increasing	Important	Risk management Asset management
Environmental Impact / Carbon Footprint	High	Opportunity	Increasing	Important	Keep up-to-date with legislation Monitor energy usage
Severe Weather	Medium	Threat	Unknown	Important	React accordingly

APPENDIX 4

SWOT ANALYSIS

<p style="text-align: center;">STRENGTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Strong customer focus ❖ Stable and committed workforce ❖ Improved working relationships ❖ Commitment to service ❖ Clear focus on the way forward ❖ Different skills ❖ Performance management ❖ Local employer ❖ Sound finances ❖ Risk management ❖ Investment in people ❖ Quality Council status ❖ Adaptability ❖ Health and Safety 	<p style="text-align: center;">WEAKNESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Rate of change/speed of decision making ❖ Equalities implications ❖ Project planning ❖ Time and capacity ❖ Lack of specialist knowledge
<p style="text-align: center;">OPPORTUNITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Increased efficiency in service delivery ❖ Customer involvement at a deeper level ❖ Need to increase and build morale through recognition of success ❖ Strengthen aspirations ❖ Develop appropriate strategy documents ❖ Improve skills of existing staff and Members ❖ Increased flexibility ❖ Partnership working ❖ Area Action Partnership ❖ Publicity of Council services and facilities 	<p style="text-align: center;">THREAT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Political changes ❖ Crime and vandalism ❖ Failure to retain staff ❖ Staff motivation ❖ Age of workforce/loss of knowledge ❖ Best Value reviews ❖ Unforeseen budget pressures ❖ Partnership working ❖ Industrial action

APPENDIX 5

MEMBER CONTACT DETAILS

Advice and information about our services can be obtained by telephoning 01325 300700 or visiting our website at www.great-aycliffe.gov.uk.

There are 30 elected members who represent the 6 wards of the Town.
L – Labour I - Independent

BYERLEY PARK, HORNDAL & COBBLERS HALL

COUNCILLOR	TELEPHONE (01325)	EMAIL ADDRESS
Mrs. D. Bowman - L	Home - 308094 Mobile - 07967901477	dorothyeskdale62@talktalk.net
I. Gray – L	Home - 313770	
V. Crosby - L	Home - 315083 Mobile - 07905 738285	vince@vcrosby.plus.com
B. Hall - L	Home - 314105 Mobile - 07899 721573	
Mrs I. Hewitson - I	Home - 318763	
Mrs A. Palmer - I	Home - 317652	alison2760@hotmail.co.uk

SHAFTO/ST MARYS

R. S. Fleming - L	Home - 310025	
B. Haigh - I	Home - 318645 Mobile - 07760 403992	
T. Hogan - I	Home - 313828 Mobile - 07901 552205	terryhogan23@btinternet.com

WOODHAM SOUTH

P. Gittins - I	Home - 317666 Mobile - 07831 269526	
W. Iveson - L	Home - 312490 Mobile - 07946 659663	WilliamIveson@hotmail.com
Mrs V. M. Raw - L	Home - 311447 Mobile - 07804452865	

WOODHAM NORTH

Mrs B. A. Clare - L	Home - 318333 Mobile - 07980 834977	BarbaraClare@johndclare.net
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COUNCILLOR	TELEPHONE (01325)	EMAIL ADDRESS
J. D. Clare - L	Home - 318333	jdc@johndclare.net
Mrs M. Dalton - L	Home - 320499	
Mrs J. Gray - L	Home - 313778	
Mrs S. Haigh - I	Home - 318645 Mobile - 07867 788603	
K. Henderson - L	Home - 319542	keith.henderson@durham.gov.uk

SIMPASTURE

M. Iveson - L	Home - 319759 Mobile - 07882361492	
A. Warburton - I	Home - 315182	pinkyna51@yahoo.co.uk

NEVILLE

P. Ducker - I	Mobile - 07950 351830	
G. R. Gray - L	Home - 304480 Mobile - 07881 784299	
Mrs S. J. Iveson - L	Home - 01325 319759 Mobile - 07882 842973	

WEST

S. Bambridge - I	Home - 304100 Mobile - 07717301498	sparky1ste@yahoo.co.uk
T.R. Bowman - I	Home - 308094 Mobile - 07944 067396	
B. Curtis - I	Home - 320291	
G.C. Gray - L	Home - 314934 Mobile - 07711 159763	georgecgray@btinternet.com
Mrs H J Hutchinson - L	Home - 316899	
Mrs E. M. Paylor - L	Home - 313697 Mobile - 07979 727338	

AYCLIFFE VILLAGE

B. Blenkinsopp - I	Home - 308057 Mobile - 07772 921166	
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APPENDIX 6

Annual Audit Letter