

SPENNYMOOR TOWN COUNCIL



**Winner of the May Woolley Award 2006 – Best Voluntary Project
Eden Residents Community Garden, Spennymoor**



Cemetery of the Year Awards Finalist, Spennymoor Cemetery

BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN 2006

SPENNYMOOR TOWN COUNCIL

BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN
(BVPP)

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SPENNYMOOR TOWN COUNCIL

LEADER'S MESSAGE

Dear Stakeholder,

We are pleased to present the Town Council's Performance Plan for the year 2006/2007. Thank you for taking the time to read this document which sets out our previous year's progress and performance in accordance with our Best Value legislative duties, as well as highlighting our intended targets and achievement aspirations for the coming year.

I can speak with confidence when I say that every Town Councillor and Officer of the Council is interested in the views of our community, and what you think we as your Town Council do well or could improve upon. We have now begun consulting informally on the preparation of the Township's Parish Plan and a detailed questionnaire aimed at obtaining information from you to create an action plan for the Township will be distributed to every household in the township during the lifespan of this performance plan. Again, I would ask any of you interested in becoming involved in this process to contact our Town Clerk Mrs Wilson at TownClerk@spennymoortowncouncil.gov.uk to register your interest.

COUNCILLOR J.M. MARR
Leader of Spennymoor Town Council

HOW TO CONTACT US

The Town Council through the Town Clerk are always pleased to receive your views and ideas on this plan together with your suggestions on any matter to benefit the community. You may contact the Town Clerk

Mrs Pauline Wilson LLB(Hons) DMS MBA Solicitor

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Web Site: - www.spennymoortowncouncil.gov.uk

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

Spennymoor Town Council is responsible for the preparation of this Performance Plan and for the information and assessments set out in it and the assumptions and estimates on which they are based. The Council is also responsible for setting in place appropriate performance management and internal control systems from which the information and assessments included in the plan have been derived. The Council is satisfied that the information and assessments included in the plan are in all material respects accurate and complete and that the Plan is both realistic and achievable.

INTRODUCTION

The Local Government Act 1999 placed with effect from April 2000 a duty of Best Value on local authorities.

The Statutory Best Value duty requires Spennymoor Town Council to:-

- Make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way it exercises its functions having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness;
- Improve its services;
- Provide and deliver its services the way the community wants it done in a **challenging** way;
- Consult with the community on its services
- Make **comparisons** with other similar Council's on its service;
- **Competitively** provide its services.

Meeting this duty requires the Town Council to review all of its functions periodically, measure their performance and produce a performance plan which is independently audited by the audit commission.

AUDITORS RESPONSE TO LAST YEARS BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN

The Audit Commission, in the Auditor's statutory Report on the Best Value Performance Plan for 2005/2006 concluded that Spennymoor Town Council had prepared and published its Best Value Performance Plan in all significant respects in accordance with section 6 of the Act and the statutory guidance issued by the government.

The Audit Commission whilst commenting "We have not identified any significant weaknesses in the overall control framework"* made a number of recommendations for action by the Council to aid continuous improvement to service and value for money by way of further embedding a risk management and long term financial planning ethos into the Council's already existing corporate governance arrangements.

** page 6 of the Annual Audit Letter relating to Spennymoor Town Council as produced by the Audit Commission in December 2005 a full version of the Annual Audit Letter can be viewed on the Council's website – spennymoortowncouncil.gov.uk*

AUDIT COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

In relation to systems of internal financial control the following recommendations were made by the Audit Commission:-

1. Development of a medium-term financial strategy and a medium-term financial plan linked to the parish plan
2. Introduction of a Treasury Management strategy
3. Develop formal risk management arrangements
4. introduction of an asset management plan

RESPONSE TO AUDIT COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

The Town Council in accordance with its fiduciary responsibilities, has already undertaken some work to address these recommendations, a formal treasury management strategy has already been approved. Work has already begun on the development of a risk management strategy having drawn from best practice from principal local authorities elsewhere. Committee reports to Members address the appropriate financial and legal implications associated with the required related recommendation and the Town Clerk routinely draws Members attention to both explicit and implicit risks. Work is ongoing on the asset management plan and an officer review of the existing asset register and insurance position is currently underway. Work has already begun to complete a medium term financial strategy, based on known current and future expenditure and income, until the parish plan is complete this work will remain ongoing.

In relation to Internal Audit, the auditor recommended that the Audit Plan should be determined in advance of the start of the year and be approved by Members.

RESPONSE TO AUDIT COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

This recommendation has been taken on board and the internal audit plan for the year 2006/07 has been formally approved by the Audit Committee.

SUMMARY OF 2005/06 ACHIEVEMENTS

Parks and Open Spaces

1. Secured continued grant funding from Durham County Council to assist in the maintenance of pathways.
2. Award of outstanding contribution to Horticulture by Northumbria in Bloom Judges to Peter "Mel" Crossley, Spennymoor Cemetery Caretaker on his retirement.
3. Certificate of Merit awarded to Spennymoor Town by Northumbria in Bloom Judges.
4. Introduction of "Story Boards" at Cow Plantation nature reserve.
5. Creation of two part-time "Park Attendant" positions with a result of saving on overtime payments to horticultural staff for the performance of non-horticultural duties.
6. Successful Partnership working with the Borough Council's Planning Department to re-affirm at planning appeal that village green land should be enjoyed by the public and not encroached upon for private benefit.

Cemeteries

Continued provision of two recognised first class cemeteries and Memorial Gardens which are "beautifully maintained" * Commentary by Northumbria in Bloom Judges during Spring and Summer Judging 2005

Allotments

- 1 Provision of Best Kept Allotment Competition
- 2 Maintenance of Competitive rent
- 3 Resolution of the longstanding Contaminated Land issue at Timothy Terrace Allotments.
- 4 S137 Financial support to Eden Residents Association for the development of a Community Garden, "The Garden of Eden" which as a result of the fantastic effort of the residents association was awarded the Northumbria in Bloom Community Project Award 2005.
- 5 Recognition of the Council's commitment to Allotment and Leisure Gardening was given when two of Spennymoor Town Councillors were elected to serve on the Management Committee of the National association of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners.
- 6 As a result of improved communication and dialogue between the Town Council and Spennymoor Allotment association a better working relationship has been effected.

Financial Assistance

- 1 Grants to individuals and organisations for the benefit of the Community. (A full list of all s137 Grants paid by the Council for the benefit of the Community is available from the Town Council website)
- 2 Provision of grants for pre-school facilities
- 3 Working in partnership with Sedgefield Borough Council and providing financial support for the regeneration of Spennymoor Town Centre

Town Hall and Community Properties

- 1 Increased use of the Town Hall facilities, especially for Conferences. (The Town Hall has recently hosted a wedding Fayre and a Craft Fayre)
- 2 Continued Success of the Town Hall Catering Franchise as demonstrated by the high level of letters and cards of Compliment and Thanks regularly received.
- 3 Refurbishment of the Bar area including Pictorial History of Spennymoor-permanent display
- 4 Continued support to Byers Green Village Hall, Kirk Merrington Community Centre, Middlestone Moor Community Centre and Tudhoe Community Centre.
- 5 Introduction of a commission producing ticket sales service for Town Hall events.
- 6 Further successful use of 'flashing sign' to promote the Town Hall Facilities, Community and Civic Events.
- 7 Completion of the refurbishment of the Memorial Room with a Poppy Orientated "Lest we forget" theme to remind users of how and why the room was originally funded.
- 8 Completion on time, and within budget, of the refurbishment of the Ground floor office accommodation to create a user friendly reception and private interview facility which is fully compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act.
- 9 Completion on time, and within budget, of three new Disabled Toilet facilities (one with shower), which are fully compliant with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.
- 10 Assistance offered to all Community Properties to ensure compliance with the new licensing legislation.

General

- 1 Provision of Annual Santa's Grotto receiving over 1500 children
- 2 Provision of Annual Firework Display
- 3 Improvements to Xmas Lighting, including more animated displays
Children's Christmas light design competition and provision of fully illuminated Christmas Trees in Festival Walk, Byers Green, Kirk Merrington and Tudhoe Village.
- 4 Establishment of the Town council's Quarterly Newsletter.
- 5 Continued improvements to the Council's website.
- 6 Success in the Town Council's facilitating of the Northumbria in Bloom Children's painting Competition-runner up award given to Middlestone Moor Primary School.
- 7 The Majority of Town Council Bar staff and Managers now hold the statutory recognised qualification required of personal licence holders, demonstrating the Council's commitment as a licensee to the underlying principles of the new Licensing legislation i.e. A reduction in anti-social and criminal disorder related to underage drinking and other alcohol abuse.

Corporate Governance

- 1 Embedding within the council organisation and culture of the Member/Officer Protocol
- 2 Embedding within the council organisation and culture of the revised Standing Orders, which include a procedure to allow for Public Questions at full Council-Quality Status Requirement.
- 3 Member Training Events on Planning, Standards, Parish Planning and Community Engagement & Involvement.
4. Embedding within the Council organisation and culture of the new Financial Regulations.
5. Inflationary only increase in the precept, notwithstanding significant budget pressures.
6. Multi-party involvement in the local promotion of National Local democracy week with local school children hosted by Spennymoor Library.

THE TOWN COUNCILS MISSION IS TO:-

- Ensure that the Community of Spennymoor can democratically voice its opinion;
- Contribute towards the economy of the Community;
- Contribute towards the regeneration of the Community;
- Contribute towards the well being of the Community; and
- Provide quality services at an economic cost.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:-

Is a calculation of measurement on the performance of a service of the Town Council set against an identifiable aim of the Town Council.

Due to the differences of approach and functions no one Local Council is alike for comparison purposes and the Town Council has produced Performance Indicators to reflect its locality, its priorities, its objectives and its aims.

The Performance Indicator shows a comparison each year for you to see if the Council is improving.

Principal Councils i.e. those other than Town and Parish Councils use statutory required Performance Indicators.

The Statutory Performance Indicators used by Principal Councils do not apply to Town Councils – however where appropriate these have been modified to give an accurate assessment of our performance.

NOTE: All service users are actively encouraged to complete the Feedback Questionnaires provided – copied at Appendix I and every edition of the Town Council's Newsletter invites Feedback on Council Services.

PARKS, OPEN SPACES AND RECREATION GROUNDS

The Town Council provides:-

Jubilee Park comprising 4.64 acres of recreation grounds, 2 bowling greens, 3 tennis courts, 2 all weather pitches, bowling pavilion, changing rooms, showers, public toilets, crazy golf, band stand, picnic areas, flower beds, swings, roundabouts, play areas, CCTV, mother and toddler facility and open spaces.

3 village greens at Byers Green, Kirk Merrington and Tudhoe Village; 8 football pitches; Spennymoor and Tudhoe Cemetery; Cow Plantation Nature Reserve; Bus Shelters; Public Seating; Litter, poop scoop bins and dog toilet; Northumbria in Bloom Competition; Playing of Cricket at Spennymoor and Tudhoe; Provision of an FA approved football field at Spennymoor Town United A.F.C.

LAST YEARS AIMS- Parks Open Spaces & Recreation Grounds

Continue to promote public feedback	YES the Public responded by completing survey forms, and emailing their comments into the Town Hall Email facility. Each edition of the Town council Newsletter (delivered to every house in the Parish, makes it explicitly clear to the public how they can contact their local ward Councillor or the Town Clerk.
Continue to expand/change facilities according to public demand.	YES Matters raised by the public are referred to the appropriate Committee for consideration. The Town Council takes the views of the public very seriously and was delighted to see an improved public attendance at the Annual Town Meeting
Look to make economic efficiencies of 2% in the year	YES
Provide quality bedding/carpet bedding of flowers to promote visual impact	YES Spring judging from Northumbria in Bloom was very complimentary
Registration of land at Tudhoe Village as a village green	NO. this work is still ongoing
Assist in the maintenance of churchyards at Byers Green, St.Charles Tudhoe in addition to St.Paul's and Holy Innocents	YES. This work is carried out annually
Further development of facilities for young adults	YES The Town Council has made s137 grant monies available to Spennymoor Youth & Community Centre, Spennymoor Boxing Academy, Spennymoor Boys Football Club, Byers Green Boys Football Club, Local residents associations for the purchase of football posts, Spennymoor Cricket Club, and Tudhoe Cricket Club. The Town Council has funded basketball and tennis coaching opportunities in Jubilee Park In addition to this the Town Council makes financial contributions to the Summer Play scheme facilitated by Sedgefield Borough Council. Initial informal meetings to engage young people in the Parish Planning process have been fruitful and the findings of the Parish plan consultation will inform the Council's long term strategy in engaging with young adults

PARKS OPEN SPACES AND RECREATION GROUND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

SERVICE	INDICATOR	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Actual 2005/6	Target 2006/7
Eight Football Fields	Number of organised teams using the facilities	19	16	18	18
Jubilee Park Tennis Courts	Number of individual users	1537	2000	1564	2000
Jubilee Park All Weather floodlit surface	Numbers of players booking for a five a side football	6755	6000	5546	5500
Jubilee Parks Bowls	Number of individual players	3194	3200	2889	3000
Jubilee Park Crazy Golf	Number of individual players	1598	1598	1154	1200
Jubilee Park All weather floodlit facility	Individual users for game(excluding football)	459	500	592	500
Cemeteries	Number of Interments	81	65	70	70

Indicators	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Actual 2005/6	Target 2006/7
The number of litterbins	39	40	36*	40
The number of bus shelters provided	52	52	50	50
Number of formal complaints concerning the public convenience.	1	None	None	None
Countryside footpaths maintained by the Council	100%	100%	100%	100%
The cost per resident on maintaining CCTV cameras	£0.73	£0.75	£0.74	£0.75
The number of playgrounds provided by the Council	9	9	9	9
The percentage of those which conform to national standards	100%	100%	100%	100%
The total net cost, per resident of maintaining Cemeteries	£3.07**	£2.75	£2.43	£2.50
The number of complaints received and dealt with in accordance with the Council's published complaints procedure	None	None	None	None

* Due to vandalism

** Increase due to the costs of providing a Memorial Garden at Tudhoe Cemetery.

NEXT YEARS AIMS 2006/2007- Parks, Open Spaces & Recreation Grounds

- Continue to promote public feedback;
- Continue to expand/change facilities according to public demand;
- Look to make economic efficiencies by 2% in the year, any efficiency realised will be used to expand or enhance the current service;
- Provide quality bedding/carpet bedding of flowers to promote visual impact;
- To Continue to provide play provision that meets all ROSPA and legislative Health & Safety Requirements.
- Improve our Northumbria In Bloom Judgement
- Registration of land at Tudhoe Village as a Village Green, (agreement has been given to outsource this work).
- Assist in the maintenance of church yard at Byers Green, St. Charles Tudhoe in addition to St. Paul's, Holy Innocents.
- Improve on our Cemetery of the Year Judgement
- Further development of facilities for young adults.
- Look to address the structural issues in relation to Jubilee Park Wall, to include a heritage Lottery Grant application to attempt to address all community issues relating to Jubilee Park e.g. concern about parking facilities.

ALLOTMENTS

The Town Council provides:-

- Number of Allotment Estates – 11;
- Administration support and help to Allotment Associations;
- Maintenance of perimeter fencing and roadways;
- Security;
- Water;
- Allotment Competition;
- Membership of the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners;
- Provision of Community Garden site.

LAST YEARS AIMS- Allotments

Our Aim Last Year	Was it achieved?
Appoint suitably qualified undergraduate to facilitate the production of site plans and compile data base of tenants.	NO. The appointment of an undergraduate was investigated and subsequently dismissed, however human and financial resources have been set aside to commence with this work. Work is expected to begin in the autumn when the Summer planting, grass cutting and holiday periods are over.
Promote the establishment of allotment associations.	YES. Whilst the Council promoted the associations via the Town Council Newsletter no new associations were formed in the year.
Continue to enforce cultivation	NO. Whilst the policy of cultivation has not been 100% successful we continue to work in partnership with the associations to enforce the policy.
Formulate a Strategy to deal with falling demand	IN PART publicity in the Spenny News & The Town Council Newsletter has led to increased interest, and agreement has been reached with one local GP surgery to launch a campaign to promote the 5 a day initiative
Support the Government Initiative in promoting leisure gardening	NO. This matter has not been progressed.

Improvement of site aesthetics and roadways	YES. Some work was completed in the year regarding fencing; Dog fouling signs have been erected. .
Promote application for Grant Funding	YES over 50% of Town Council Admin Staff have received training in Grant Funding. We have secured our first grant to maintain Public Footpaths and subscribe to FINE "Funding Initiatives North East"
Undertake feasibility work on the provision of an allotment for the disabled	NO. this work has not commenced
Revise rules and tenancy documentation in partnership with the Allotment Association.	IN PART new rules and Constitution for the Spennymoor Allotment Association have been approved by Council but the Town Council are committed to revising the terms and conditions of tenancy in association with the work to be undertaken on plot numbering and collation of tenant information, as referred to above, human & financial resources have been set aside for this.

ALLOTMENT PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

SERVICE	INDICATOR	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Actual 2005/6	Target 2006/7
Allotments/stables	Number of allotments estates	11	11	11	11
The net spend (income) per allotment Estate		£171.00	£350.00	£235.00	£809.00**

** Funds have been included in the budget to carry out best value initiatives

NEXT YEARS AIMS 2006/07- Allotments

- Review of all Allotment Sites to ensure that the only animals housed on Town Council owned allotments are those permitted by statute or with explicit Town Council Consent.
- Maximise cultivated usage by relocation from other sites;
- Satisfy demands for allotment/grazing;
- To free up uncultivated land for other use subject to the Secretary of State.
- Encourage Allotment sites to have open days to promote the benefits of gardening in the hope that the demand for allotment tenancies may be increased. This matter has already been taken on board by the Spennymoor Allotment association and Eden Resident Association's "Garden Of Eden" Community Garden has already held one successful Open Day.
- To continue to work closely with the Allotment Associations in the management of sites.
- To fully investigate the issue of self-management of Allotment sites.
- Produce accurate Plans of all allotment sites and up to date tenant details and produce revised tenancy conditions to be signed by all tenants.
- Continue to promote the establishment of Allotment Associations;
- Continue to enforce cultivation.
- Formulate strategy to deal with failing demand.
- Support the government initiative to promoting leisure gardening.
- Improvement of site aesthetics and roadways;
- Promote application for Grant Funding for site improvements as part of the self management initiative.

SECTION 137 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 ALLOCATION AND GRANTS OF THIS EXPENDITURE

The Town Council provides:-

- Grants to individuals and/or Organisations that are of benefit to the Community.

LAST YEARS AIMS –Section 137 Grant Allocation

Our Aim Last Year	Was it achieved?
To continue to provide the service at current financial levels	NO As a result of Policy change to minimise impact of Capital spend economies have been implemented.
To increase community awareness of grant availability	YES Officers have worked closely with many community groups
To implement systems to improve service effectiveness	YES Current procedures were reviewed and were considered satisfactory. Agreed policy changes in terms of room hire refunds to charitable organisations have ensured that these refunds are allocated to s137 expenditure in the Council's accounts
To ensure publicity of successful grant aid given by the Town Council	IN PART , all s137 payments are detailed on the Town Council website.

SECTION 137 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

	Y/E 03/04	Y/E 04/05	Y/E 05/06	TARGET 06/07
Annual Expenditure	£53,820*	£9,784	£22,704	£22,000
Number of recipients	47	36	37	37

*includes an amount of £30,000 for Town Centre Regeneration

NEXT YEARS AIMS 2006/07-Section 137 Grant Allocation

- To increase community awareness of grant availability-through the Council's Newsletter and Website
- To ensure publicity of successful grant aid given by the Town Council.
- To continue to ensure that grants are administered in an equitable manner

TOWN HALL CATERING AND BAR

The Town Council provides a good quality building providing many multi uses, shops, offices and administrative services in a central position with a high quality catering and bar service at reasonable prices.

LAST YEARS AIMS – Town Hall Catering & Bar

Our Aim Last Year	Was it achieved?
Investigate methods promoting the use of Town Hall facilities.	YES. Whilst the review is continuing we have increased the number of regular users. Regular advertising in SpennyNews and Local Parish Magazine. Town Council facilitated a Successful Wedding Fayre to promote the local economy and a recent “Spennymoor Craft Fayre” was very well attended.
Provision of Catering Service to the Community Halls	YES service offered but not taken up
Is it keeping up with current needs and trends?	YES. The facilities can cope with all sizes of functions. Feed back from all users has been extremely positive.
Are standards of quality being achieved	YES. Feed back is from good to excellent
Are targets being achieved	See performance indicators below
Refurbishment of the memorial Room	YES This work has been carried out
Promotion of Town Hall as a conference venue	IN PART we attract regular small conference bookings but work on the production of our Conference Brochure is still ongoing.

BAR AND CATERING PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

SERVICE	INDICATOR	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Actual 2005/6	Target 2006/7
Town Hall	Number of functions	692	650	702	700

	Y/E 03/04	Y/E 04/05	Y/E 05/06	TARGET 06/07
Number of functions	102	184*	148	150
Commission received	£4,446	£4,672	£4,681	£4,600

* increase in conference bookings requiring tea/coffee

NEXT YEARS AIMS 2006/07 Bar and Catering

- Investigate methods promoting the use of the Town Hall Facilities;
- Is it keeping up with current needs and trends;
- Are standards of quality been achieved;
- Are targets been achieved;
- Promotion of Town Hall as a Conference Venue.
- Full implementation of Internal Auditors recommendations

COMMUNITY HALLS

The Town Council provides Community Halls at Byers Green, Kirk Merrington, Middlestone Moor and Tudhoe.

ITS AIMS...

- To provide the Community Building for community activities and events to take place in a given locality;
- To provide such buildings at low cost to the local residents.

LAST YEARS AIMS - Community Halls

Our Aim Last Year	Was it achieved?
To improve where possible security to all community buildings following consultation with the community, Durham Constabulary and the local community surrounding the community centres	YES Crime Prevention and Fire Officer visits have taken place and security measures have been immediately implemented.
To continue to meet with Management Committee Members to ascertain their views.	YES. The Council has representatives on the various committees and is in continuous liaison.
To improve awareness to the Management Committee's. of grant funding initiatives	YES General meetings hosted by the Town council were held. CAVOS gave a presentation.

COMMUNITY HALL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

SERVICE	INDICATOR	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6
Community Centre Buildings	Number of buildings	4	4
Community Centres	Number of self management committees	4	4

NEXT YEARS AIMS 2006/07- Community Halls

- To improve where possible security to all Community Buildings following consultation with the community, Durham Constabulary and the local community surrounding the community centres.
- To continue to meet with Management Committee Members to ascertain their views.
- To set up a joint community hall council (2 representatives from each committee) to achieve best practice, economies of scale and joint promotions.
- To increase public awareness of community halls by means of an Open Day at the Town Hall.

DEMOCRATIC AND CORE SERVICES

The Town Council provides:-

- A full administration service representing the needs of the people of Spennymoor, representing the community on a number of Public Bodies, consulting on behalf of the community i.e. planning matters, licensing matters and parks and open space matters;
- Ensures that the Councils democratic decision making process is fully supported by the Staff in full compliance with all legal requirements
- Representation to you as a member of the community, by ensuring that any matter that affects your life is considered to ensure that your needs and the needs of the community are best served.
- Information to let you know what the Council is doing when the meetings take place and what the decisions are.

LAST YEARS AIMS- Democratic & Core Services

Our Aim Last Year	Was it achieved?
Review the caretakers working arrangements in light of changing circumstances	PART. Consultants report received. Consultation with Trade Unions to commence.
To continue to support the Town Mayor in Civic Events and representation within the community	YES. The Mayor was invited to a number of events. The Mayor's appeal raised record breaking funds for charity
Review of working methods, payment and quality of service provided by the caretaking staff	YES. A new wage structure and working pattern affording the Council more flexibility was introduced during the year.
Review the working methods, payment and quality of service provided by the Town Clerks Staff	YES A review was carried out by our HR advisors and has been implemented.
Produce a working guide book on Internal Practice within the Town Clerk's Department	ONGOING as highlighted in Internal Audit Report
Provide full training for staff and Councillors as and when needed	YES. A budget is set aside for training for the benefit and development of both Councillors and Staff. A formal historic record is kept for staff training and development
To secure an increase in external grant funding for council initiatives	YES opportunities to secure external Funding is investigated as and when initiatives are introduced.
Produce a member handbook	YES A handbook (ring-bound) was produced which allows for continuous updating where necessary.

DEMOCRATIC AND CORE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Indicators	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Actual 2005/6	Target 2006/7
The percentage of correspondence where an acknowledgement is sent within 5 working days.	100%	100%	98%*	100%
The percentage of correspondence where a full response is sent within 10 working days.	98%	98%	98%	98%
The percentage of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days. A target of 97% to be met within the first year	100%	100%	100%	100%
The percentage of posts filled by women to ensure compliance with the Council's equal opportunities policies.	29%	29%	26%	29%
The percentage of days lost to sickness.	6%	8%	6%	6%
The percentage of employees receiving training	24%	50%	55%	50%
The number of buildings accessible to the public who are disabled	100%	100%	100%	100%

* some delays caused by office relocation

SERVICE	INDICATOR	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Actual 2005/6	Target 2006/7
General and Civic Services	Number of Mayoral Engagements	163	150	172	150

NEXT YEARS AIMS 2006/07- Democratic & Core Performance Indicators

- To continue to support the Town Mayor in Civic Events and representation within the community;
- Review the working methods, payment and quality of service provided by the caretaking staff, in accordance with consultant's recommendations
- Produce a working guide book on internal practice within the Town Clerk's department – some work has begun;
- Provide full training for staff and councillors as and when needed;
- Continue to support National Local Democracy Week
- To consider the Introduction of a Junior Mayor Competition
- Promotion of Mayoral Visits to help local people celebrate their special occasion.
- Promotion of additional Mayoral charity Event on New Years Eve.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

Spennymoor Town Council provides:-

- An Annual Budgeted sum to fund Capital Works and also to a fund rolling programme for the repairs and maintenance of buildings and the replacement of plant, machinery and vehicles.
- Provision of financial support to improvement of the Town Centre;
- Provision of new catering equipment in the Town Hall kitchen to comply with Food Hygiene Legislation;
- Providing new Christmas decorations;
- Provide additional disabled toilets within the Town hall to comply with legislation.

ITS AIMS...

- To provide funds to undertake Capital Projects;
- To maintain existing property belonging to the Town Council;

Our Aim Last Year	Was it achieved?
To continue to provide a Capital Programme	YES. Reserves will be earmarked to spread a replacement/maintenance programme over forthcoming financial years
To continue with a rolling programme for the maintenance of buildings	YES. As above
Continued financial support for Town Centre improvements	YES
Provide new Christmas Decorations	YES
Relocation of office and admin. Support to Ground Floor (within budget)	YES The office and administrative function were relocated on schedule with little interruption to public services. The project was completed within budget.

NEXT YEARS AIMS 2006/07- Capital Programme

- Continued financial support for Town Centre Improvements;
- Provide new Christmas Decorations;
- Provide Christmas Light Competition for children of under Primary School Age;
- To see to successful completion, the works required to the Town Hall Clock
- To see to successful completion the essential Health & Safety works to Jubilee Park Depot and the Park retaining wall.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

The Town Council provides:-

Administrative and Financial procedures and the carrying out of the Council's decision through the Town Clerk's Department based at the Town Hall. This covers a vast area from personnel matters for all staff, administrative and computer systems, incoming mail, financial assistance, all payments of income, audit, operation of legal agreements, bookings, insurance, dealing with complaints and public relations. The list is endless and is really whatever is needed to make your life in the community better.

In addition we deal with all public at the reception area and incoming telephone calls to the Town Council.

The administration, management and maintenance of the Town Council's property (gross asset value of £2,489,761) are carried out centrally with each facility allocated a repair fund within its budget. Responsibilities include verification of orders, invoices, drawing up tenders for work, programming of works, capital programme reports implementation, arrangements and maintenance of all alarm systems, establishment of appropriate maintenance contracts with outside contractors and the monitoring of all Health and Safety Matters.

ITS AIMS...

- The management of an efficient Town Clerk's Department;
- To comply with the Town Council's financial Standing Orders and Government Legislation;
- Provide budget information to Members;
- Correct use and provision of equipment;
- Adequate provision of staff and training of staff;
- The management of all land and legal agreements;
- Ensure that the Council is fully appraised of all statutory duties;
- To carry out the policies of the Council;
- To ensure that the Council's activities are promoted and publicised;
- To respond to all contact made with the Town Clerk's Department in a friendly helpful way;
- To comply with Health and Safety matters;
- To improve the appearance of the Town Council's property;
- To police and respond to act of vandalism of Town Council property;
- Application for Quality Town status by June 2006

Our Aim Last Year	Was it achieved?
To apply for Quality Status by June 2006	NO in order to qualify for quality status there is a requirement to produce a quarterly Newsletter. Although a Newsletter is produced we have not yet released the required number to enable our application for Quality Status to proceed.
To ensure that the activities are promoted and publicised	YES, this year has seen wider use of the flashing sign, to publicise Town Hall activities, advertising in the SpennyNews and a Parish magazine and improvements to our website.

TIMETABLE OF SERVICE REVIEWS

The Service review turned over 5 years is now no longer a legal requirement but now a continuous review of all Services for Best Value Purposes.

This has been a very busy year for the Council in terms of service review in recognition and response of the delays in their review programme as a result of the long term absence of the previous Town Clerk. All Best Value Working groups have met to consider their service specific issues, and progress is being made although many reviews are still ONGOING.

In order to provide a 'responsive' approach to matters highlighted the Council has decided that the timetable of its Reviews will be as follows:-

2005/2006	Allotments – All sites to take into account Internal Audit recommendations	ONGOING –work is still underway to inform the associations of the benefits of Self Management. The Town Council are committed to addressing in this review year the anomalies relating to animals on allotments and the equity issues regarding the unauthorised transfer of ground rent garage sites in the Clyde Terrace area..
2005/2007	Provision of Catering, Bar and Room Hire Responsive review to look at Bar and Catering issues in light of new opportunities created by The Licensing Act 2000	ONGOING Bar & catering review started July 2005 a full internal audit report into the Bar & Catering has made recommendations to improve efficiency these are currently being implemented. Hire of Town Hall Facilities is ONGOING having commenced in April 2006 comparative data via a questionnaire is to be sought from other Council's
2005/2007	Community Facilities at Byers Green, Kirk Merrington, Middlestone Moor and Tudhoe	ONGOING useful work has been undertaken by facilitating two meetings to enable the respective Community Centre Associations to come together to discuss their experience of best practice.
2005/2007	Parks and Recreation Playing Fields	ONGOING earlier Best Value Review complete but matters are being revisited.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The Council's net budgeted expenditure for the year ending 31st March 2007 amounts to £1,090,332 of which £130,000 relates to capital projects. Whilst the Council worked hard to keep increases to a minimum they had to reluctantly increase the Precept by 4.5% to £1,079,014. To balance the budget the Council was required to forecast use of bank balances of £11,318.

Given below are details of Budget Information for the past and current year along with actual figures for 2005/6

	2005/06 Budget £	2005/06 Actual £	2006/07 Budget £
Recreation and Sport	521,850	419,483	492,551
Cemeteries	76,507	59,987	66,022
Environmental Health	142,959	103,783	95,305
Educational Support	15,900	15,900	15,000
Corporate Management	148,073	179,786	249,449
Democratic Representation and Management	120,893	200,870	240,521
Section 137 Grants	38,000	22,704	22,000
Investment and Other Income	(68,721)	(107,980)	(90,516)
	995,461	894,533	1,090,332
Transfer to/from Reserves	37,088	138,016	(11,318)
Precept on Borough Council	1,032,549	1,032,549	1,079,014

The Town Council due to Best Value Initiatives has achieved savings benefiting current and future years:-

- Parks and Open Space
- Partnership with Sedgefield Borough Council, assistance re: Countryside Officer and Walking Away to Health Officer
- Security
- The provision of facilities to Allotment Sites
- The review of pre educational financial support
- Reduction in entering competitions.
- In house printing and design.
- Relocating of Bar Cellar
- Savings on Community Force
- Town Hall and Community Properties – preventative maintenance
- Christmas Lighting

SPENNYMOOR TOWN COUNCIL

List of Councillors 2003 - 2007

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>TEL NO.</u>
ARMSTRONG, Miss Sarah L.	Stone House, 5 Green Lane, Sp.	814228
BAINBRIDGE, Mrs. Catherine	6 Eden Terrace, Kirk Merrington	814585
CAMPION, Ronald	93 Parkside, Spennymoor	815808
CULINE, John C.	Amusement Depot, Tudhoe Ind.Est., Spennymoor	813856
FLEETHAM, Mrs. Shirley A.	169 Tudhoe Moor Estate, Spennymoor	812171
GRAHAM, James V.	7 St. David's Close, Spennymoor	817873
Deputy Leader of the Council		
HARRINGTON, Ian	18 Winchester Court, Spennymoor	813537
JONES, Martin T.B.	17 Dickens Street, Spennymoor	827229
KENNEDY, Mrs Christine	The Binchester Hotel, Albion Street, Middlestone Moor, Spennymoor	816533
MADDISON, Mrs. Elizabeth	49 Parkside, Spennymoor	816297
MARR, John M.	13 Gerard Street, Spennymoor	817304
Leader of the Council		
PARKIN, John	38 South Court, Middlestone Moor, Sp.	815343
PLEWS, Mrs. Sylvia I.	17 Ash Grove, Spennymoor	816113
Town Mayor		
SMITH, James W	90 St. David's Close, Spennymoor	819907
SMITH, Mrs. Myra	20 Ridgeside, North Close, Sp.	817799
SPROAT, Mrs. Christine	Field View, Vyners Close, Merrington Lane, Spennymoor	810386
SUMMERSON, Mrs. Elsie	50 Princess Court, Spennymoor	818848
TOLLEY, George	1 Parkdale, Spennymoor	819856
WALKER, Fred	177 Durham Road, Spennymoor	812708
WATERS, William	7 Vine Street, Byers Green, Sp.	602841
WELSH, Peter	32 Clyde Terrace, Spennymoor	818793
WOOD, Mrs. Joan L.	112 Wood Vue, Spennymoor	818151
Deputy Town Mayor		

Spennymoor Town Council

Service and Amenities
Feedback Slip

Please
Tick

Very
Satisfied
Satisfied
Not
Satisfied

Activity

- All Weather Surface
- Bowls
- Tennis
- Crazy Golf
- Football

Reasons for lack of satisfaction:

Your suggestions as to other services we could provide for the future:

Optional

Name: Signature: Date:.....
(Block Capitals)

Address:

.....
.....

Spennymoor Town Council
Best Value Policy

To be assured that we are affording you the hirer, a quality service, please be as kind as to complete this questionnaire

Date of Function:	
Name of Hirer:	

Please Tick

	Good	Average	Poor
STAFF			
Assistance given to make your booking			
Set up of the room for your function			
Assistance if requested from staff during your function			

FACILITIES			
Room décor			
Furniture			
Toilets			
Overall cleanliness			

BAR			
Standard of Goods Purchased			
Service performance			
Degree of pleasantness			

CATERING			
Standard of Meal			
Table layout			
Speed of Service			

Any other Comments