



# Ryedale District Council

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**REPORT TO:** Policy and Resources Committee

**DATE:** 28 June 2007

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Performance Manager  
Phil Hancock

**SUBJECT:** Annual Report 2007

**WARDS AFFECTED:** All

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**1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To formally approve the Annual Report 2007.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION**

That the Annual Report 2007 is approved.

**3.0 BACKGROUND**

3.1 The Council is required each year to publish to the community, stakeholders and others its best value performance indicator figures. In order to do this an Annual Report is produced, based on the Council's Corporate Plan and showing progress against that Plan. The Annual report also acts as a useful source of information for both members and staff.

3.2 Accordingly, the Annual Report brings together:

- details of all national best value and local performance indicators;
- information about how the Council is performing, both against the targets the Council has set and against the performance of other Councils;
- the results of consultation with the community;
- reports of the Audit Commission on the work of the Council;
- what we did during the past year;
- what we plan to do in this forthcoming year to improve services in Ryedale.

This information helps residents and other stakeholders to decide how well the Council is doing.

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3.3 Copies of the Annual Report will be available in Council Offices, Libraries and on our website. Copies will also be sent on request to Parish and Town Councils and other stakeholders. The Annual Report is also available in other languages, large print and audio format upon request.

#### **4.0 REPORT**

4.1 The complete Annual Report 2007 is available electronically on the Council's website. Attached at Annex A are the core elements that need to be reported:

- a table of the Best Value Performance Indicators with performance during 2006/07 compared to 2005/06 and to all district councils, together with targets for the following three years;
- financial implications behind the Corporate Plan 2006/09.

Reported below are some of the main achievements over the past year in delivering the priorities of the Council as set out in the Corporate Plan.

#### **4.2 Satisfaction survey results:**

In 2006 the Council surveyed around 1100 residents to find out what they thought of the Council and also of the local area. Separate surveys were also carried out of users of our housing and council tax benefit service and our development control service. Results from each of these surveys is highlighted below:

- The large majority of respondents rate themselves as satisfied with their local area as a place to live;
- When asked about aspects that are most important in making somewhere a good place to live, health services, the level of crime, affordable decent housing, and clean streets are the issues mentioned most often
- Satisfaction with the Council continues to remain high, placing the Council in the top 25% nationally;
- The majority of respondents to our survey indicated they agree the council is working to make the area cleaner and greener, treats all types of people fairly and is making the local area a better place to live;
- Satisfaction with the cleanliness of the district again achieved top scores nationally;
- Satisfaction with our benefits service, recycling, development control service and museums is high.

#### **4.3 Opportunity and choice of housing and employment**

In response to public consultation this continues to be the Council's top priority. Over the year:

- 23 new affordable homes have been provided for local people in Norton with further schemes due for completion shortly in Pickering and more on the way; funding bids have been made for a further 99 affordable homes in the district;
- A low cost home ownership waiting list is now run by the council so that local people can register their need to buy;
- By focussing on the prevention of homelessness, the Council has seen a substantial decrease in the number of homelessness presentations. Helping people to stay in their existing home or find another avoids the personal trauma of homelessness;
- A new Moors and Coast Tourism Partnership has been established to enhance support to the tourism economy of Ryedale;
- Over the past year the Council has been working with partners on a number of exciting employment opportunities, including a technology and engineering cluster-park near Malton and an extension to an existing industrial estate in Pickering to include starter units for small businesses. Completion of these projects will improve the range and quality of local jobs;

#### **4.4 Diverse and vibrant communities**

- Following the completion of improvements to the Council's sports and leisure facilities, the satisfaction of residents has increased over the position in 2003, with now almost three-quarters of users reporting that they are satisfied or very satisfied;
- At a special meeting in March the Council also came a step closer to realising the community's long cherished ambition of providing a leisure centre for central Ryedale. Outline planning permission has now been obtained to develop the centre at Malton School;
- The Council has been reviewing the management of our leisure facilities over the past year to improve the performance of this important service and thus the experience offered to customers to match the improvements already made to the buildings;
- The Council has improved our policies and approach to race equality, disability and gender, and undertaken training of all staff in equalities issues;
- In response to public dissatisfaction the Council re-opened the public conveniences at Wentworth Street, Malton. As this facility and that at Rosedale Abbey do not have disabled access targets here have been missed but the Council has agreed a new approach and is acting to address this issue;
- Support to the arts through advice and funding continues;
- Three year funding agreements to support the voluntary sector have been agreed, giving them more certainty and security for their work programmes

#### **4.5 Safe and inclusive communities**

By working in partnership this Council aims to make Ryedale a safe place for children and young people. Five key priorities have been identified by the Safer Ryedale Partnership in response to the issues identified by the people of Ryedale and these are:

- To reduce both domestic and non-domestic burglaries
- To reduce violent crime, including domestic abuse
- To tackle issues of substance misuse and alcohol
- To identify and address anti-social behaviour
- To reduce criminal damage and vehicle crime

Initiatives operated over the past year to tackle these areas and to support and involve young people include:

- Identifying and targeting action against 'hotspots' of anti-social behaviour e.g. setting up the 'Malton Cruzers';
- Policing the new licensing laws and operating and replicating the dry bar in Norton for young people;
- Closer multi-agency working on domestic abuse and holding more abusers to account for their actions;
- Operating a multi-agency scheme aimed at stopping re-offending through the provision of support and guidance, particularly towards young people often at a critical stage in their life;
- Launching the Young Community Volunteer scheme for 12 to 17 year olds to think up and deliver individual community based projects to be completed over the school summer holidays.

More details on the work of this group can be found at [www.ryesafe.org](http://www.ryesafe.org)

#### **4.6 Clean and sustainable built and natural environment**

Ryedale already possesses a very high quality environment and we intend to maintain this in future years.

- With your help and support the Council has achieved exceptional levels of recycling of household waste, with Ryedale being one of the top performers in the country. New recycling initiatives will be introduced during this year;
- Residents have continued to express their satisfaction with the cleanliness of the district, with the Council again achieving top scores;
- Implementation of the Climate Change Strategy has begun and environmental improvements have been carried out to council property;
- A number of energy efficiency initiatives have been promoted, including working with National Energy Action to address fuel poverty for vulnerable groups such as pensioners, people with disabilities and families with young children;
- A contract has been let for a new pumping station at Priorpot Beck, Norton to prevent flooding of homes;

- The Council pledged funding of £1 million pounds to support a flood defence scheme for Pickering;
- The Council together with partners held a very successful and well-attended event to launch its new Biodiversity Action Plan that helps to protect wildlife and local habitats. The Plan is a critical part of Ryedale Council's campaign to protect the local environment;
- Working with Selby Council a joint officer has been appointed to identify contaminated land and make plans to deal with it;
- Campaigns to encourage responsible dog ownership have been held in Crambeck, Ebberston, Thornton Dale and Sherburn;
- Improvements to public open space have been delayed but the Council will be focusing on this in the coming year.

#### **4.7 Effective and integrated communication and transport networks**

- The concessionary fares scheme providing free travel within North Yorkshire for people with disabilities and those aged 60 and over has been improved;
- The new community transport Wolds 'Ring-and-Ride' service has been supported through grant aid
- Financial support to Ryecat to maintain the 'Wheels to Work' moped hire scheme for young people, the car scheme and the minibus brokerage has continued;
- Information and services have been made more accessible through our website and through other electronic means;
- The ability to book tourist accommodation on-line is now available;
- Representations have been made to Government and discussions held with NYCC and developers to upgrade junctions on the Malton Bypass to address the pollution and congestion caused by HGVs in Malton and Norton;
- The new Local Development Framework will focus development in the main market towns where facilities already exist. By doing so vehicle journeys can be reduced and the use of public transport encouraged, which also helps the wider environment

#### **4.8 Efficient and effective high quality services**

- The Council has improved its focus on performance over the year with the use of its on-line performance management system Covalent being extended. As a result the Audit Commission in their Annual Audit Letter for 2005/06 recognised that Ryedale was performing amongst the best in the country (see Appendix 4)
- The Pickering Area Office has been relocated into a Customer Resource Centre in the Library, shared with North Yorkshire County Council
- More services have been introduced onto the Council website [www.ryedale.gov.uk](http://www.ryedale.gov.uk) for you to access information, pay and order services online and join in discussions in the on-line forums
- The Council continued to meet its Gershon savings targets of 2.5%

- Joint working with other districts has continued – work on extending the coverage of the Building Control Partnership has continued, with Hambleton considering joining Ryedale and Selby in the existing partnership. A joint procurement resource has also been agreed to seek out savings from joint purchasing initiatives. Joint working on with North Yorkshire County Council on joint customer centres, waste management, transport and procurement continues
- Training for all staff in equalities took place during the year. However, the Council has not moved forward as quickly as expected on some equality indicators following the departure of the temporary Equalities Officer;
- During the year the Council considered forming a partnership with neighbouring Hambleton District Council to run a joint revenues service encompassing council tax and business rates collection, housing and council tax benefits and fraud. However, the Council decided that the risks of proceeding with the Partnership were too great and therefore withdrew.

More detail can be found within the Annual Report.

- 4.9** Members will note that some information is missing from the Annual Report. A separate sheet containing these missing items and any further amendments will be circulated at the meeting for final approval and incorporated within the Annual Report prior to publication.

**5.0 RECOMMENDATION**

That the Annual Report 2007 be approved.

**Background Papers:** None

**OFFICER CONTACT:** Please contact Phil Hancock, Performance Manager, if you require any further information on the contents of this report. The officer can be contacted at Ryedale House on ext. 296 or e-mail [phil.hancock@ryedale.gov.uk](mailto:phil.hancock@ryedale.gov.uk).