

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Local Code of Corporate Governance

Statement of Assurance 2006/07

Bromsgrove District Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. In discharging this accountability, members and senior officers are responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of the authority's affairs and the stewardship of the resources at its disposal.

To this end, the Authority has adopted a code of corporate governance, which is consistent with the principles and reflects the requirements of the CIPFA/SOLACE *Framework Corporate Governance in Local Government: a Keystone for Community Governance*. A copy of the code is on our website at www.bromsgrove.gov.uk or can be obtained from The Council House, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B60 1AA.

Bromsgrove District Council continues to put in place appropriate management and reporting arrangements to enable it to satisfy itself that its approach to corporate governance is both adequate and effective in practice. The Council's Corporate Management Team is responsible for:

- Overseeing the implementation of the code and monitoring the way it operates;
- Reviewing the way the code operates; and
- Reporting annually to the Audit Board on compliance with the code and any changes that may be necessary to maintain it and ensure its effectiveness in practice.

In addition, the Head of Financial Services has been given the responsibility to review independently and report to the Audit Board annually, to provide assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Code and the extent of compliance with it.

On the basis of the annual review of Bromsgrove District Council's corporate governance arrangements, the main areas that have shown improvement are:

- 2005/06 accounts being closed within the statutory timeframe and receiving an unqualified opinion;
- Approval of Financial Regulations and Internal Control Framework;
- Approval of the revised Risk Management Strategy and process;
- Revised Customer Feedback Policy;
- Approval of a revised Capital Strategy 2007 – 2010;
- Introduction of an Inclusive Equalities Scheme and achievement of Level 2 of the Local Government Equality Standard (LGES);
- Approval of a Value For Money Strategy;
- Development of an improved Asset Management Plan;
- Approval and publication of the Council Plan 2007 – 2010; and
- Launch of the Council's updated Internet and Intranet websites.

We are satisfied that, except for the matters listed below, corporate governance arrangements are adequate and are operating effectively.

The main areas requiring further attention in order to secure full compliance with the Local Code of Corporate Governance are identified as follows:

- Review and implement the Council's Communications Strategy;
- Embed a risk management culture;
- Implement the CIPFA Financial Model in respect of the Medium Term Financial Plan;
- Implement the Modern Councillor Programme;
- Embed effective asset management within the Council;
- Implement Purchasing Order Processing system;
- Implement the updated cash receipting system;
- Adopt a revised Community Plan;
- Review and update the Customer First Strategy;
- Adopt a revised version of the Improvement Plan; and
- Implement the IT Security Policy.

We propose over the coming year to take steps to address the above matters to further enhance our corporate governance arrangements.

We are satisfied that these steps will address the need for improvements that were identified in our annual review and we will review their implementation and operation as part of our ongoing review arrangements.

Signed:

K. Dicks

**Chief Executive and Officer
Champion**

Date: 10th July 2007

Signed:

R. Hollingworth

**Leader of the Council and Member
Champion**

Date: 10th July 2007