

Group Directors' Assurance Statement – Questionnaire for 2011/12

This Assurance Statement forms one part of the review process necessary before the Council's Annual Governance Statement (AGS) can be produced.

APPENDIX 3

1. Policy and Decision Making			
No.	Key area	Yes/No	Comment / Evidence
1.1	What arrangements do you have to ensure that all appropriate Corporate and Service policies have been disseminated effectively to your staff?		
1.2	What arrangements do you have in place to ensure that all decisions in your directorate have been made through proper process in accordance with the Council's constitution?		
1.3	Have strategic, or key decisions, been properly documented and taken after fully considering risk and resourcing implications?		
2. Service Delivery			
2.1	Have directorate priorities been identified and reflected in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service business plans? • Performance indicator targets? • Individual targets detailed in appraisals? • Budget/Medium term financial plan? 		
2.2	Are priorities informed by appropriate consultation, including with customers, and been communicated within the department?		
2.3	Have critical and priority services been identified and business continuity plans been developed and approved for these? Are the business continuity plans in the above areas regularly reviewed and tested?		If yes, please state your critical and priority services

No.	Key area	Yes/No	Comment / Evidence
2.	Service Delivery cont.		
2.4	What arrangements do you have in place to ensure that all statutory obligations have been provided in your service area and that all legislation been complied with?		
3.	Strategic and Operational Risk Management		
3.1	Have risk owners been allocated to all key risks identified within your directorate to ensure appropriate actions are taken to manage and monitor the risks?		
4.	Performance Management		
4.1	Have key performance indicators have been established, is progress monitored and regularly reported to the Group's senior management team, Corporate Board and Executive Member?		
4.2	Have robust systems and clear responsibility for monitoring each PI have been established to provide accurate and timely performance information?		
4.3	Do the key or local indicators indicate significant performance issues?		If yes, please detail.
4.4	Are the number and type of complaint/comment received by the department, including those arising from Ombudsman's investigations) monitored and regularly reviewed?		

5. Partnerships with other public bodies, voluntary and community organisations involving funding of over £50,000pa.			
No.	Key area	Yes/No	Comment / Evidence
5.1	List all partnerships currently operated within your department involving funding of over £50,000pa.		
5.2	What arrangements do you have in place that gives you assurance that there are effective financial and governance arrangements in place for these partnerships?		
5.4	Is an exit strategy in place for each significant partnership and has this been fully documented?		
5.5	Do you have assurance that partnership risks are adequately managed and where appropriate that the partners are actively involved in this process?		
6. Finance and Asset Management			
6.1	Has clear responsibility been assigned for all budgets within your Directorate?		
6.2	Have individual managers with the responsibility for budgets received appropriate financial training?		
6.3	Do you have assurance that all relevant staff in your Department are aware of and have access to the Council's Financial Regulations, Contract Standing Orders and other Departmental specific financial procedures/guidance?		
6.4	Were estimated efficiency savings identified and agreed with relevant managers and were these savings delivered?		

7. Staff			
No.	Key area	Yes/No	Comment / Evidence
7.1	Do you have assurance that the expected standards of behaviour of staff and of Councillors (e.g. Employees Code of Conduct and Member/Officer Protocol) have been communicated to all staff?		
7.2	Do all staff have up-to-date Job Descriptions and agreed development plans (using the Council's Intouch appraisal system)?		
7.3	Are all individuals working for your department remunerated through the Council's payroll system, or the Council's creditor system (following an assessment of the individual's employment status)?		
7.4	Is all staff sickness reported in accordance with Council Policy i.e. through HR First Response?		
7.5	Are you and your staff aware of the Council's rules relating to declaration of interests, and acceptance of gifts and hospitality?		
8. Information Governance			
8.1	Do you have confidence that robust arrangements are in place to monitor compliance with Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation?		
8.2	Have all staff been trained in use of relevant IT systems and been made aware of relevant policies i.e. IT Security Policy, internet and e-mail policy, phone usage?		
8.3	Do all staff have unique access to IT systems and that their access is commensurate with their duties?		
8.4	Are you satisfied that all staff and consultants (that you were responsible for) that have left the employment of your Department during 2010/11 have been removed from accessing Council IT systems?		

9. Control Environment			
No.	Key area	Yes/No	Comment / Evidence
9.1	In 2011/12, within your Directorate, have there been any breaches of security, or fraud, resulting in loss of Council assets or injury to staff?		
9.2	Have all agreed Internal Audit recommendations relating to your Department been implemented, or will be by the agreed implementation date?		
9.3	Have all procedures for key systems and operations within your Directorate been documented?		
9.4	Have all frauds and financial irregularities identified been referred to the Head of Internal Audit in accordance with the Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy and Fraud Response Plan?		
9.5	Have there been any breaches in Standing Orders and if so have they been reported to the Council's Monitoring Officer?		
9.6	Please provide details of all external inspection reports carried out in your Department during 2011/12 and details of any significant weaknesses identified.		
9.7	Have all recommendations made following external inspections that relate to your Department been implemented, or will be by the agreed implementation date?		

10. Significant Control and Governance Issues

Please identify here any issues that you feel represent a significant control item or governance issue. Guidance issued by CIPFA in relation to what should be considered 'significant', for inclusion in the Council's Annual Governance Statement, may be those which:

- Have seriously prejudiced or prevented achievement of a principle objective
- Has resulted in the need to seek additional funding to allow it to be resolved
- Required a significant diversion of resources
- Has had a material impact on the accounts
- The Audit Committee has advised that it should be considered as significant
- Has resulted in significant public interest or has seriously damaged reputation
- Has resulted in formal actions being taken by the Chief Financial Officer or Monitoring Officer
- Received significant adverse commentary in external; inspection reports that has not been able to be addressed in a timely manner

The above is only guidance and not an exhaustive list.

I confirm that this document provides a fair reflection of the system of internal control and governance arrangements operating within my Directorate since 1st April 2011.

Name of Group Director / Director:

Signature:

Date: