



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 18TH MAY 2005 AT 6.00PM

COMMITTEE ROOM, THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BROMSGROVE

AGENDA

Council Agendas and Minutes are available on our web site at
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/meetings

MEMBERS: Those Members of the Council appointed to the Executive Cabinet

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. To confirm the Minutes of the Executive Cabinet held on 13th April 2005
4. Public Questions
5. To receive the Minutes of the Tenders Committee dated 7th April 2005
6. To receive the Minutes of the Local Development Framework Working Party dated 19th April 2005
7. To receive the Minutes of the Member Development Working Group dated 12th May 2005
8. Issues arising from Overview and Scrutiny Committees
9. Financial Services Business Plan 2005/2006
10. Treasury Management Strategy
11. Annual Efficiency Statement
12. Local Code of Corporate Governance
13. Performance Information 2004/2005
14. Information Communication and Technology (ICT) Strategy
15. Information Communication and Technology (ICT) Services Business Plan 2005/2006

16. High Hedges
17. Sports Centre/School Drive Car Park Business Case
18. Restructuring Update
19. To consider any other business, details of which have been notified to the Head of Administrative Services prior to the commencement of the meeting and which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting

S. NIXON
Chief Executive

The Council House
Burcot Lane
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B60 1AA

10th May 2005

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE CABINET

Wednesday, 13th April 2005 at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors D. C. Norton (Executive Leader), Mrs. M. M. T. Taylor (Deputy Executive Leader), B. L. Fuller C.B.E., Q.F.S.M., Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths, R. Hollingworth and P. J. Whittaker.

Observers: Councillors P. M. McDonald, N. Psirides J.P., and C. J. K. Wilson

209/04 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Cabinet held on 16th March 2005 were submitted.

RESOLVED: that the Minutes be approved and confirmed.

210/04 **MEMBER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP**

The Minutes of the Member Development Working Group held on 4th April 2005 were submitted. It was noted that in relation to Minute 22/04 further consideration was to be given to addressing the methodology of providing secure internet connections and not to the principle of such provision which had already been agreed.

RESOLVED: that the Minutes be approved and adopted.

211/04 **MOTION REFERRED FROM COUNCIL UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10**

(a) Cleanliness of the District

Councillors P. M. McDonald and C. J. K. Wilson spoke in support of the motion that the leaders of the political groups meet to best utilise the identified underspend to restore Bromsgrove's previous standard of cleanliness. During the discussion it was noted that the Interim Head of Depot Services was currently preparing a report on a range of issues with regard to the cleanliness of the District and related matters. It was suggested that Members contact the Officer direct with any specific concerns regarding particular areas of the District. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that in view of the work currently being undertaken to produce a comprehensive report on this issue, no action be taken in respect of a meeting of political group leaders.

212/04 **ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES BUSINESS PLAN 2005/06**

Having considered the Administrative Services Business Plan for 2005/06, it was

RESOLVED: that the Business Plan be approved.

213/04 **AUDIT AND POLICY BUSINESS PLAN 2005/06**

Having considered the Audit and Policy Business Plan for 2005/06, it was

RESOLVED: that the Business Plan be approved.

- 214/04 **LEGAL SERVICES BUSINESS PLAN 2005/06**
- Having considered the Legal Services Business Plan for 2005/06, it was
- RESOLVED:** that the Business Plan be approved.
- 215/04 **PERSONNEL SERVICES BUSINESS PLAN 2005/06**
- Having considered the Personnel Services Business Plan for 2005/06, it was
- RESOLVED:** that the Business Plan be approved.
- 216/04 **COMMUNITY SAFETY AND ENGINEERING BUSINESS PLAN 2005/06**
- Having considered the Community Safety and Engineering Business Plan for 2005/06, it was
- RESOLVED:** that the Business Plan be approved.
- 217/04 **PROTECTION OF EMPLOYEE PAY DURING REDUNDANCY REDEPLOYMENT**
- Consideration was given to the review of the Council's policy on the protection of employee pay during redundancy redeployment, and it was
- RESOLVED:**
- (a) that the reduction of the period during which employee pay is protected during redundancy redeployment from 3 years to 12 months be approved; and
- (b) that the establishment of a Policy and Procedure Consultation Group be noted.
- 218/04 **2005/2008 STRATEGIC AUDIT PLAN - YEAR ONE**
- Consideration was given to the first year of the 2005/2008 Strategic Audit Plan. Following discussion, it was
- RESOLVED:** that the first year of the 2005/2008 Strategic Audit Plan be approved and that the Plan be reviewed after 12 months.
- 219/04 **SUPPORTING PEOPLE PROGRESS REPORT AND DRAFT FIVE YEAR STRATEGY**
- Following consideration of the report, it was
- RESOLVED:**
- (a) that the latest position regarding the service reviews and financial position in 2004/2005 and 2005/2006 be noted;
- (b) that action to challenge the likely significant reduction in the Supporting People funding for Worcestershire in 2006/2007 be approved; and
- (c) that the Five Year Strategy be approved.
- 220/04 **FEASIBILITY STUDY OF DECIMINALISED PARKING ENFORCEMENT**
- Consideration was given to the report on the possibility of adopting Decriminalised Parking Enforcement and the advantages of undertaking a feasibility study. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that a feasibility study of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement be undertaken by RTA Associates Limited; and
- (b) that the cost of £4,775 be funded by way of a virement from the Excess Charge Revenue Budget.

221/04

STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING ADVICE POLICY

Consideration was given to the amendment of the Policy previously adopted to reflect the inclusion of the appropriate Parish Council in the list of Consultees on requests for naming streets and buildings.

RESOLVED: that the amended Policy on Street Naming and Numbering be approved.

222/04

ARTS STRATEGY

Consideration was given to the Draft Arts Strategy and it was

RESOLVED: that the Draft Arts Strategy be approved for consultation purposes.

223/04

CORPORATE PLAN

Following consideration of the results of consultation of the draft Corporate Plan, it was

RECOMMENDED: that, subject to the revisions set out at points 1-7 of the report, the Corporate Plan as amended be approved.

224/04

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

RESOLVED: that, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the Meeting during the consideration of the item of business the subject of the following Minute on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of "Exempt Information" as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act, the relevant paragraph of that part being as set out below:-

Minute No.
225/04

Paragraph
1

225/04

PROPOSED CHANGES TO MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Consideration was given to the report on the proposed changes to the Management Structure. The Chief Executive Officer amended figures in paragraph 6.2 with regard to the estimated cost of the proposed management structure for 2005/06 to £624,000 (£753,000 including on costs). In addition, it was noted that the amount set aside in the Council's budget for contingencies referred to in paragraph 6.5 should read £150,000.

It was also noted that at this stage the areas of responsibility allocated in the report to the service management posts and the post of Assistant Chief Executive were indicative and did not necessarily reflect the final position in view of the consultation process currently taking place. Following discussion, it was

- (1) **RESOLVED:**
 - (a) that the reshaping of the senior management structure of the organisation be approved;
 - (b) that the establishment of the two new posts of Assistant Chief Executive and Head of Financial Services be approved;

EXECUTIVE CABINET
13th April 2005

- (c) that the assessment centre process as described in section 7 of the report be noted;
 - (d) that authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer, in agreement with the Leader of the Council, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Corporate Director (Resources) to -
 - (i) agree any changes arising out of the consultation to be undertaken with senior staff and their Trade Union representatives; and
 - (ii) agree the funding of the assessment centre process, at the most cost effective price determined by the market at the time and to identify the most appropriate source of that funding.
- (2) **RECOMMENDED:**
- (a) that the release of £2,000,000 of capital receipts to comprise £1,250,000 to facilitate the restructure and £750,000 to fund additional activities to support improvement, be approved; and
 - (b) that the resulting reduction of £65,000 in investment income be met from the budget set aside for contingencies.

The Meeting closed at 7.20 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE TENDERS COMMITTEE

Thursday, 7th April 2005 at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillors D. C. Norton (Chairman), R. Hollingworth and G. H. R. Hulett

23/04 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Tenders Committee held on 31st January 2005 were submitted.

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Meeting be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

24/04 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

RESOLVED: that, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the Meeting during the consideration of the items of business the subject of the following Minutes on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of "Exempt Information" as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act, the relevant paragraphs of that part being as set out below:-

<u>Minute No.</u>	<u>Paragraphs</u>
25/04	7, 8 and 9
26/04	7, 8 and 9

25/04 **CONSTRUCTION OF MOBILITY UNIT**

Following the opening of the tenders received, it was

RESOLVED: that the matter be referred to Cabinet as the lowest of the three tenders received exceeded the approved budget by more than ten per cent.

26/04 **INSURANCE PROVISION**

Following the opening of the tenders received, it was

RESOLVED: that tender no. 3 being the lowest of the tenders received be accepted subject to checking.

The Meeting closed at 9.50 a.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING PARTY

Tuesday, 19th April 2005 at 4.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs. M. M. T. Taylor (Chairman), Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E. (Vice-Chairman), A. J. Dent (substituting for J. A. Ruck), Mrs. K. M. Gall, G. H. R. Hulett, Mrs. J. D. Luck, D. C. Norton, S. R. Peters (substituting for G. N. Denaro), Mrs. M. A. Sherrey and C. J. Tidmarsh.

07/04 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G. N. Denaro, D. McGrath and J. A. Ruck.

08/04 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Local Development Framework Working Party held on 8th February 2005 were submitted.

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Meeting be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

09/04 **STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Members received a report and presentation on the responses received to the Draft Statement of Community Involvement as a result of the public consultations period. The consultation fulfilled all of the statutory requirements and a Community Workshop event also took place. A number of further comments had been received since the report had been prepared and these were reported to the Working Party. It was felt that the time allocated for consultation over the summer period should be extended as far as possible.

RESOLVED: that the ideas and comments submitted by the Consultees on the subject of Community involvement during the consultation period be used to inform the Final Statement of Community Involvement.

10/04 **SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL SCOPING REPORT**

Members received a report and presentation on the Sustainability Appraisal process. It was noted that the first stage of the process was the publication of a Scoping report to set the context, objectives and establish the baseline for deciding the scope of the sustainability appraisal.

Following the presentation, Officers responded to Members' questions and comments. It was noted that at the next Meeting of the Working Party, schedule to take place on 17th May, there would be a full discussion on key sustainability issues and options to be considered.

RESOLVED: that the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report be approved for public consultation.

The Meeting closed at 5.30 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE MEMBER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

Thursday, 12th May 2005, at 4.30 p.m.

01/05

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: that Councillor C. B. Lanham be elected as Chairman of the Working Group for the ensuing Municipal Year.

02/05

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: that Councillor Mrs. K. M. Gall be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Working Group for the ensuing Municipal Year.

(In the absence of Councillor Lanham, Councillor Mrs. Gall was in the Chair for the remainder of the Meeting.)

03/05

APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor C. B. Lanham.

04/05

MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Working Group held on 4th April 2005 were submitted.

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th April 2005 be approved and confirmed.

05/05

E.MEMBERS PROGRESS

The Head of IT Services gave an update on progress relating to IT matters. A programme of training/discussion sessions had been arranged in the Members' IT Room and a number of Members had attended and raised questions which would be addressed as soon as possible. The programme of provision of internet connections to Members' homes had commenced. It was intended that IT staff would visit Members' homes to assist with the installation of equipment and answering questions where possible. It was hoped to set a date shortly for the new email addresses to come into being.

The Head of IT Services also referred to the development of the Members' pages on the Council's website. One of the e.government targets was for Members to be managing their own website pages or have their pages managed for them by December 2005.

RESOLVED: that the progress made be noted.

06/05

TRAINING SKILLS ANALYSIS FEEDBACK

The Chief Executive Officer referred to the Training Skills and Development Needs Analysis which had been undertaken recently. All Members had been approached as part of the survey. It was felt that a copy of the report should be sent to all Members of the Council for information.

The survey had revealed a number of areas of development which would be of interest to Members. The Chief Executive Officer referred to the importance of Member Development as one of the elements of the Recovery Process. Members recognised the importance of improving skills, behaviours and awareness to assist with changing the culture of the organisation and recognised that the results of the

survey indicated areas and skills which they were keen to develop. It was also reported that work on a new induction manual for Councillors was ongoing.

RECOMMENDED: that the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to arrange a Member Development Training Programme to include media training, scrutiny effectiveness and strategic planning as part of the Council's Recovery Process and that the funding be met from the Council's Revenue Budget or recovery funding as appropriate.

07/05

PEER MENTORS

It was noted that work was ongoing to identify appropriate peer mentors for Members.

The Meeting closed at 5.45 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE CABINET

18TH MAY 2005

FINANCIAL SERVICES BUSINESS PLAN 2005/6

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Roger Hollingworth
Responsible Head of Service	Kevin Dicks

1. SUMMARY

1.1 To seek Members' approval of the draft Financial Services Business Plan for 2005/6.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That Members approve the draft Financial Services Business Plan for 2005/6.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The plan is the first to be produced in the new corporate style, the intention being to have a common, but dynamic approach.

In summary it :

- ❖ Sets out the services provided, including those provided with our partner organisations, in the public, private and voluntary sectors, and work-load levels.
 - ❖ Details service performance over the past year, with reference to both successes and failures, and measures to address failures and improve performance.
 - ❖ Describes the challenges and service targets for the next financial year, and the resources available (staff and financial) to tackle them.
 - ❖ Sets out the linkages between the Community Plan, Corporate Plan, in particular, the Council's key objectives, the Recovery Plan, Medium-Term Financial Plan, Best Value Performance Plan, Service Business Plans and Staff Training and Development Plans, thus demonstrating the importance of their inter-relationship to performance management and ultimately the successful provision of customer-focused, quality services by the Council.
- 3.2 A copy of the Draft Business Plan, is shown at Appendix 1 to the report for Members' consideration.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The financial implications of the Business Plan were taken into account when producing the Council's Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2005/6.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 Approval and implementation of the Business Plan will assist in ensuring that service resources are used in a focused, well managed way, thus maximising the ability of service managers and their staff to achieve key service objectives, and minimising the risk of service failure.

6. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 It will be essential to monitor progress against agreed service objectives and to take intervention measures if required, to ensure that Financial Services strongly contribute in a prioritised, well managed manner, towards the achievement of elements of the Council's Recovery Plan, Community Safety Strategy, and in particular, the Council's Objectives as set out in the Community Plan, Best Value Performance Plan and Draft Corporate Plan.

7. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Two major service objectives contained within the Business Plan, are improving access to services for our customers and customer focus. These objectives will primarily be achieved through the Council's new Customer Services Centre, and the provision of comprehensive and readily accessible service information through the Council's web site.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

Contact Officer

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Financial Services Business Plan 2005/06

Introduction

In Financial Services we have brought together the following key elements that will support front line service to the public:

- Accountancy Services (covering pure accountancy work together with Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivable); and
- Payroll Services.

Our ambition is to be proactive so the Council will maximise its resources whether these be financial, technology or the Council's biggest resource, its employees. We will also be responsive to customer demand, enable and promote best practice, and ensure consistency - whilst seeking to enable and embed flexibility, efficiency and effectiveness in all areas of the Council.

The goals for the main services provided by each of the individual elements of Financial Services are as follows.

Accountancy Services

1. Deliver a high quality, proactive and responsive Accountancy Service to the Council and all that it encompasses, supporting and maximising the use of resources.
2. Provide operational and strategic financial advice to both officers and members of the Council.
3. Ensure that the Council's financial systems, procedures, and statements are in accordance with statutory and professional best practice.
4. Process all creditor payments for the Council, ensuring all payments are correct and made on time.
5. Endeavour to recover all sundry debt that is owed to the Council in the most efficient, cost effective way possible.
6. Ensure that the Council has in place the most appropriate and cost effective policies for insurance.
7. Maximise the interest on investments achieved from both external and in-house treasury management of funds.
8. Maximise the potential benefits from e-government and in particular e-procurement.

Specific Areas of Accountancy Services' work:

1. Financial Management.
 - a. Budget preparation.
 - b. Budget monitoring.
 - c. Final Accounts compilation and publication.
 - d. Cash Flow management.
 - e. General financial advice.
 - f. VAT accounting and advice.
2. Creditor Payments.
 - a. Management and maintenance of the Agresso creditor system (Accounts Payable).
 - b. Provision of training to Departments to enable effective use of the system.
 - c. Management of the Performance Indicator for the payment period.
3. Sundry Debtors and Mortgages.
 - a. Management and maintenance of the Agresso debtors system (Accounts Receivable).
 - b. Provision of training to Departments to enable effective use of the system.
 - c. Input of all new debtor information.
 - d. Initial arrears collection.
4. Insurance Claims.
 - a. Processing all claims.
 - b. Liaison with insurance companies.
5. Treasury Management:
 - a. Management of in-house funds within Council policies.
 - b. Review and monitoring of performance of external fund managers.

Payroll Services

1. Process all payrolls for the Council, ensuring that all payments are correct and made on time.
2. Process all payrolls for Bromsgrove District Housing Trust, ensuring that all payments are correct and paid on time.
3. Ensure compliance with external legislation relating to tax and pension issues.

Our Year

2004/05 was an extremely busy year for the whole of Financial Services, with a number of significant challenges for the team. In embracing the corporate objectives, Financial Services aims to provide an excellent service to both front-line departments (those that have direct links with the residents of the District) and other Support Services.

As our contribution towards meeting the objective "To be an efficient and effective Council", during the 2004/05 financial year we:

- continued to improve the use of the Agresso system with the aim of fully utilising its functionality;
- developed procedure manuals for use by Departments in using the Agresso system;
- carried out a planned programme of training to ensure Departmental staff were fully aware of how to use the system;
- designed budget monitoring reports within Agresso and carried out training sessions for line managers to interrogate the system on-line;
- produced budget monitoring reports that were distributed and reviewed with Heads of Service;
- produced budget monitoring reports for Members' consideration;
- invested £30m of the Council's funds with external fund managers;
- produced, in accordance with the timetable, a 3-year medium term financial plan for 2005/06 - 2007/08 with consideration of Council objectives and service provision;
- produced the Statement of Accounts for 2002/03;
- prepared and monitored a capital programme on a regular basis and reported to Members;
- delivered the first stage of financial awareness training to officers of the Council;
- started the review of business processes and streamlining of services;
- processed all income received through the cash receipting system which had been recommended by external audit for a number of years;
- reviewed the financial processes and accounting arrangements at the Depot and produced a budget for the first time; and
- implemented a new payroll system (CINTRA).

Our Challenges for the Future

There are a number of key areas that Financial Services will focus on during 2005/06. Our key actions for this year are to:

- Continue the process review of cash collection and implement appropriate recommendations to ensure that all cash collected by Bromsgrove District Council is recorded, processed and reconciled in an accurate and timely way.
- Implement the Purchase Order Processing module within Agresso to aid budget monitoring and decision making by managers.
- Identify the opportunities available for improving electronic systems for financial transactions. Through the use of technology and modern business practices, e-Government plays a key role in helping the Council to streamline and develop the services that it provides. The Council has outlined a strong commitment to e-Government and is committed to transforming its services in order to best meet the needs of its citizens.
- Produce the Statement of Accounts for 2003/04 and for 2004/05 within agreed deadlines.
- Review the budget process with the aim of improving the link between resources and the key objectives of the Council.
- Produce regular, accurate and timely budget monitoring reports to Managers and Members and review the information to assess the implications for the Council.
- Review and procure the renewal of the banking services contract.
- Review and improve the recharging mechanism to ensure the true cost of the service is shown.
- Continue financial awareness development for both officers and members. This will include on-line training in the use of the Agresso system.
- Carry out a full assessment of business risks within Financial Services, and identify and implement counter-measures and contingency arrangements.

Improving working relationships and engaging effectively across all areas of the Council are very important to us and we need feedback to help us to do this. We would be grateful to receive your comments regarding our plans for the future and a feedback form is included at the back of this document for you to use.

Council Values and Priorities

Service Mission Statement

“To provide high quality, efficient and effective financial services to the whole of the Council to enable it to achieve its priorities and objectives.”

Professional & National Standards

We will work to these professional standards:

- Compliance with Statements of Recommended Practice - as defined by CIPFA/LASAAC.
- Professional standards and legislation as defined by ODPM and CIPFA.

Areas of Focus

The Council's six objectives are to:	In 2005/06 we will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide a clean, safe and attractive environment.• Develop and implement an effective Local Development Framework.• Develop a caring, socially aware society.• Develop and sustain a strong and expanding economy.• Provide sustainable cultural and leisure opportunities.	<p>As a support function, Financial Services will contribute indirectly to meeting these objectives by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supporting colleagues in the service departments through the provision of quality financial advice and information to enable proactive decision making in line with Council priorities.• Reviewing the medium term financial plan to ensure resources are clearly linked with corporate objectives.• Holding regular budget monitoring meetings with budget holders. By regularly monitoring the financial performance of the Council, issues can be addressed at an early stage including action plans to realign any under expenditure to focus areas.• Further developing financial awareness training to assist managers and members when they are making service and corporate decisions

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be an efficient and effective Council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing key financial procedures to ensure we utilise the maximum functionality of systems available. • Reviewing practices and processes to ensure they are undertaken in the most efficient way - Business Process Reviews. • Providing accurate and timely budget monitoring information to managers and members. • Continually reviewing the investments of the Council so they achieve a maximum return for funding of services. • Developing the e-billing systems to ensure that creditor and debtor processes are managed in the most efficient way and accessible to all members of the community. • Producing the Statement of Accounts for 2003/04 and for 2004/05 within agreed timescales. • Securing the provision of banking services via the most efficient and effective provider by 1/4/2006 • Continuing to review the cash collection processes and the accounting treatment of the receipts.
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Recovery Plan Issues

<p>The related Recovery Plan themes are:</p>	<p>In 2005/06 we will:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Leadership and Political Priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the Financial Services Plan and performance and ensure procedures are in place to address any issues of concern. • Review the medium term financial plan to ensure resources are clearly linked to corporate objectives. • Provide financial support to the review of partnership working (SLPP-3).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance and Service Improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all managers have financial awareness training sessions to ensure they can manage the financial

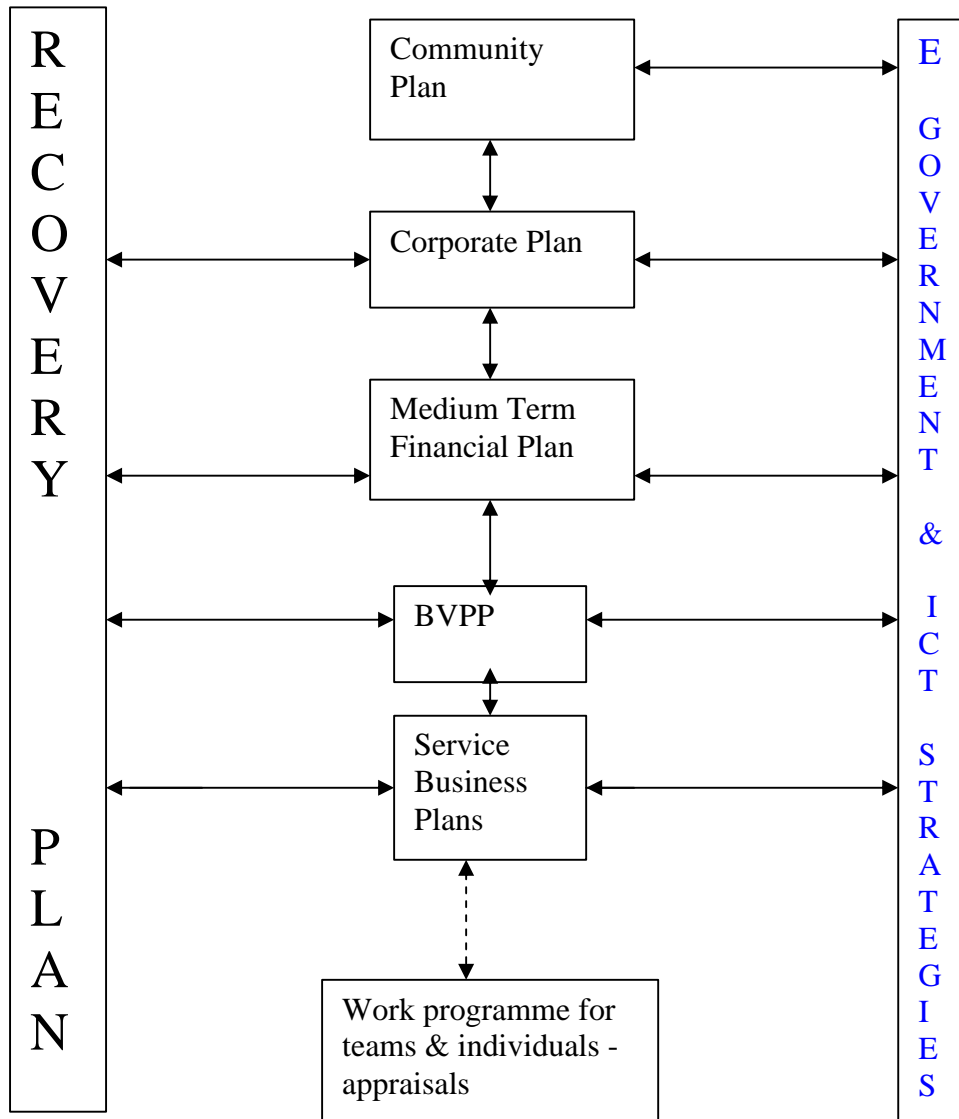
	<p>performance of their services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training on Agresso to all budget holders to enable instant access to financial information. • Hold regular budget monitoring meetings with budget holders and identify any areas that require action to ensure the budget is achieved.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close down accounts within an agreed timescale. • Carry out a needs analysis of officers and members in relation to financial awareness. • Develop financial training sessions for both officers and members. • Develop budget monitoring reports and action reviews for budget holders to be held on a regular basis. • Review the medium term financial plan for 2006/07 - 2008/09. • Develop the Agresso system with focus on the Purchase Ordering Process and bank reconciliation modules. • Implement BACS payments for creditors. • Implement e-procurement for electronic invoicing and billing. • Review the opportunities of utilising CIPFA's Financial model to develop a best practice model of financial management in Bromsgrove District Council.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political Leadership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop financial awareness sessions with members.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide professional financial support to the development of the procurement strategy and implement the recommendations concerning the creditor function.

ICT and e-Government National and Local Projects that affect this Service:

- E-procurement.
- E-billing.
- E-payments.

Business Framework

How Our Key Plans Fit Together



The framework provides a process for continued improvement.

Meeting Customer Needs

Financial Services provides a financial function to both internal and external customers. External customers are residents, service users of Bromsgrove District Council and external agencies. Internal customers are the service department officers and members to whom we provide a comprehensive financial service.

<p>In 2004/05 We Have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided a full payroll service to Bromsgrove District Housing Trust within the boundaries of an agreed contract. • Implemented an improved payment system where accounts can be paid by telephone or via the internet. • Liaised with KPMG, our external auditors, to review performance observations in line with best practice. • Improved the clarity of the "concurrent function" allocation of grant to Parish Councils. • Developed budget monitoring reports to budget holders. • Produced a medium term financial plan after consultation with all political groups. • Delivered the initial phase of financial awareness training to officers. 	<p>This year We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a detailed consultation on budget with the residents of Bromsgrove. This would be subject to a detailed business case. • Implement e-procurement and e-payments to improve the service to external suppliers and debtors. • Continue the development and delivery of financial awareness training sessions for budget holders and members. • Support the staff of Bromsgrove District Housing Trust in the delivery of the payroll service. • Develop and monitor key local performance indicators to aim to improve our quality of service. • Liaise with external audit to improve the accounting processes and procedures and compliance with accounting standards.
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Working Together

• External Partnership arrangements

Financial Services does not have any formal partnership arrangements in place. We do have close working arrangements with other district Council finance departments within our locality. There are regular combined meetings held at various levels where issues are discussed with the aim of a standard best practice option being identified.

Legislative changes and the implications for Bromsgrove District Council are discussed with our external auditors and other Councils as to ensure that compliance is being achieved throughout our financial policies and procedures.

Our Performance

<p>In 2004/05 We have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Achieved 84.18% of invoices paid within 30 days for the period April 2004-December 2004 against a target of 100%. Although the average for the year is low the last quarter shows a significant improvement. Earlier in the year there were delays in invoices relating to the transition to BDHT from the Council. Disputed invoices were not being flagged until the last quarter and there were issues relating to the input of invoices to the creditor system.	<p>This year We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Continue to improve the BVPI target to aim for 100% in 2005/06. <p><u>Implement the following local PIs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Monitor the % of outstanding sundry debt that has been outstanding for more than 35 days - target 15%.The number of weeks after 31st March that the Statement of Accounts is reported to members - 16 weeks in 2005/06.% of invoices paid by BACS - 60% in 2005/06.Days after month-end that budget monitoring reports are available to managers - 8 days in 2005/06.Reports to be presented to Cabinet on a quarterly basisVariance between budget/ expenditure for Financial Services - 5% in 2005/06.Days after month-end that bank reconciliation is complete - 5 days in 2005/06.% of creditor payments made correctly - 99% in 2005/06.Days after month-end that income reconciliation is complete - 5 days in 2005/06.Days after month-end that payroll reconciliation is complete - 5 days in 2005/06.Number of weeks to complete NNDR and Council Tax reconciliations - 4 weeks. <p>% of payroll paid correctly -99% in 2005/06.</p>
--	--

Areas where we didn't achieve

- The statutory accounts for 2002/03 and 2003/04 were not closed within the approved timescale. The closure of the accounts is a fundamental issue that needs to be addressed to enable the Council to move forward.
- Budget monitoring was not undertaken until January 2005. This is a key area for focus of resources in 2005/06.
- Government returns were not submitted on time. It is vital for comparison and benchmarking of our services that information is compiled in an accurate and timely manner.

What we are doing about it

- The closedown of 2003/04 and 2004/05 will be actioned within the agreed timescale. Additional resources have been employed on a temporary basis to ensure that the deadlines can be met.
- Budget monitoring reports will be distributed on a monthly basis with discussions being held with appropriate managers to identify any areas of concern.
- A timetable of returns to be issued to staff with the relevant resources to be allocated to the completion of the forms.
- Financial awareness sessions to be delivered to officers and members to help with the interpretation of the budget reports.

Anything key or special that we learnt? Significant or unexpected learning.

There is a significant lack of financial understanding and awareness at the Council. To enable Bromsgrove District Council to improve there must be a planned programme of development of budget holders' relating to financial issues to enable them to manage their performance effectively.

Resources within Financial Services

- **Financial**

2003/04 Actual net spend	2004/05 Estimated net spend	2005/06 Projected net spend
£643k	£528k	£451k

The costs and establishment for 2005/06 are set out below:

Expenditure / Income	Cost	Notes
<i>Employee costs</i>	<i>£451,357,</i>	<i>16 staff</i>
<i>Premise costs</i>		
<i>Transport costs</i>	<i>£1,870</i>	
<i>Supplies and Services</i>	<i>£9,328</i>	
<i>Contract Services</i>		
<i>Transfer Payments</i>		
<i>Support Service Costs</i>		
<i>Capital Costs</i>		
Total Expenditure	£462,555	
<i>Income</i>	<i>£11,600</i>	
Net Expenditure	£450,955	

• Staffing

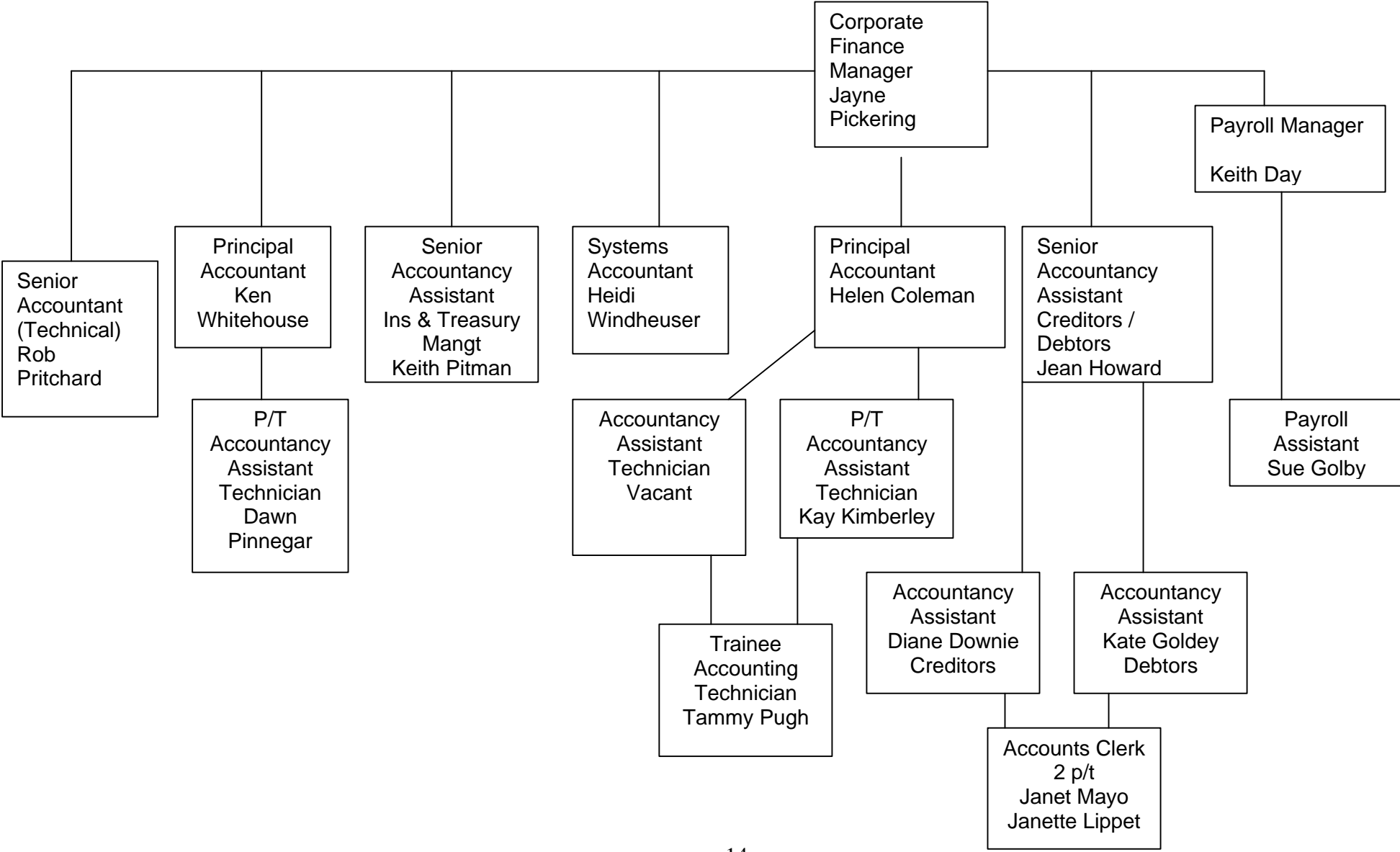
Name	Brief Details of Duties	Room No.	Tel Ext.	E-mail address
Jayne Pickering	Corporate Finance Manager	40	X1204	j.pickering@bromsgrove.gov.uk
<u>Accountancy</u> Helen Coleman	Principal Accountant	41	X1654	h.coleman@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Ken Whitehouse	Principal Accountant	42	X1090	k.whitehouse@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Rob Pritchard	Senior Accountant	41	X1466	r.pritchard@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Heidi Windheuser	Systems Accountant	42	X1211	h.windheuser@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Keith Pitman	Senior Accy Assist	41	X1213	k.pitman@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Dawn Pinnegar	Accy Assist Technician	42	X1672	d.pinnegar@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Kay Kimberley	Accy Assist Technician	41	X1214	k.kimberley@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Tammy Pugh	Trainee Accy Technician	41	X1467	t.pugh@bromsgrove.gov.uk
<u>Creditors & Debtors</u>				
Jean Howard	Senior Accy Assist	42	X1352	j.howard@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Kate Goldey	Accy Assist	42	X1215	k.goldey@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Diane Downie	Accy Assist	42	X1216	d.downie@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Janette Lippette	Accounts Clerk	42	X1210	j.lippette@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Janet Mayo	Accounts Clerk	42	X1210	j.mayo@bromsgrove.gov.uk
<u>Payroll</u>				
Keith Day	Payroll Manager	44	X1298	k.day@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Sue Golby	Payroll Assistant	44	X1600	s.golby@bromsgrove.gov.uk

Portfolio Holder details:

Councillor Roger Hollingworth 0121-445-0323

Email : r.hollingworth@bromsgrove.gov.uk

FINANCIAL SERVICES ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE APRIL 2005



Service Improvement Action Plan

The Council's external auditors, KPMG, review the financial processes and procedures on the Council on an annual basis as part of a planned audit review.

In addition the Corporate Governance reviews have identified issues that need to be addressed within Financial Services.

Areas of Service Identified for Improvement

Key Problems/Issues	Actions to Address	Timescale
Lack of financial awareness by officers and members.	Develop and deliver a planned programme of financial awareness sessions for both officers and members. This will include interrogation and interpretation of financial statements.	By December 2005.
Lack of budget monitoring.	To improve the current reports available - to have regular meetings with budget holders to address variances.	From April 2005 then monthly to budget holders and quarterly to members.
Lack of key reconciliations of financial systems.	To identify the reconciliations that are required and to undertake them on a regular basis with evidence.	From April 2005 for 2005/06. The reconciliations for 2003/04 and 2004/05 will be carried out prior to external audit of these years.
Financial resources not linked to key objectives.	To review the medium term financial plan with the aim of moving resources to key priorities.	December 2005.
Lack of a comprehensive fixed asset register.	To revalue and reassess all assets of the Council.	September 2005.

As part of the Council's corporate approach to performance monitoring there will be quarterly updates to Senior Management Team of progress.

Comments and feedback form

We would like your views on this booklet. Please detach this page and send it to:

The Audit & Policy Section
The Council House
Bromsgrove.

1. How helpful have you found this booklet?

.....
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2. What did you particularly like about it?

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3. What aspects can be improved? How?

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4. Any other comments?

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Name
(Optional):.....
Service:
.....

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE CABINET

18th May 2005

TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor R. Hollingworth
Responsible Head of Service	Corporate Director Resources

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Council to 'have regard to the Prudential Code and to set Prudential Indicators for the next three years to ensure that the Council's capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.
- 1.2 The Act therefore requires the Council to prepare an Annual Investment Strategy; this sets out the Council's policies for managing its investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments.
- 1.3 The ODPM's investment guidance was issued too late for the Annual Investment Strategy to be included in the Treasury Strategy Statement for 2004/05. However, the guidance did state that in future years, authorities could combine the Treasury Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy into one report; the Council has adopted that suggestion and the Annual Investment Strategy is therefore included as paragraph 9.
- 1.4 The suggested strategy for 2005/06 in respect of the following aspects of the treasury management function is based upon the Treasury officers' views on interest rates, supplemented with leading market forecasts provided by the Council's treasury advisor. The strategy covers:
- treasury limits in force which will limit the treasury risk and activities of the Council;
 - Prudential Indicators
 - the current treasury position;
 - prospects for interest rates;
 - the borrowing strategy;
 - the investment strategy;
 - any extraordinary treasury issues (such as the implications of the LSVT which was completed on 29th March 2004.)

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Treasury Management Strategy detailed in this report be recommended to Council for approval.
- 2.2 That the Council be recommended to set the Authorised Limit for borrowing at £6,000,000 as required by Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003.
- 2.3 That the Council be recommended to approve the maximum level of investment to be held within each organisation as detailed at 10.2 below.
- 2.4 That a review of the Treasury management service provision by HSBC be undertaken by officers and reported to members.

3. TREASURY LIMITS FOR 2005/06 TO 2007/08

- 3.1 Although Bromsgrove District Council is debt free (i.e has no long term outstanding debt) there is a statutory duty under S.3 of the Local Government Act 2003 and supporting regulations, for the Council to determine and keep under review how much it can afford to borrow. The amount so determined is termed the "Affordable Borrowing Limit".
- 3.2 The Council must have regard to the Prudential Code when setting the Affordable Borrowing Limit, which essentially requires it to ensure that total capital investment remains within sustainable limits and, in particular, that the impact upon its future council tax and council rent levels is 'acceptable'.
- 3.2 The Council must have regard to the Prudential Code when setting the Affordable Borrowing Limit, which essentially requires it to ensure that total capital investment remains within sustainable limits and, in particular, that the impact upon its future council tax and council rent levels is 'acceptable'.
- 3.3 Whilst termed an "Affordable Borrowing Limit", the capital plans to be considered for inclusion incorporate financing by both external borrowing and other forms of liability, such as credit arrangements. The affordable borrowing limit is to be set, on a rolling basis, for the forthcoming financial year and two successive financial years.

4. PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS FOR 2005/06 - 2007/08

- 4.1 The following prudential indicators are relevant for the purposes of setting an integrated treasury management strategy.
- 4.2 The Council has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management.
- 4.3 Due to the accounts for 2003/04 not being closed at this time it is not possible to carry out a balance sheet review to establish Prudential Indicator re the Capital Financing Requirement. A report detailing the indicators will be presented to members when the accounts for 2003/04 are finalised.

PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
(2). TREASURY MANAGEMENT PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	estimate	estimate	estimate	estimate
Authorised limit for external debt -				
Borrowing	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
This reflects that the Council does not currently have longer term fixed rate debt or longer term investments at fixed rates				
other long term liabilities				
TOTAL	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
Operational boundary for external debt -				
borrowing	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
other long term liabilities				
TOTAL	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Upper limit for fixed interest rate exposure				
expressed as either:-				
Net principal re fixed rate borrowing / investments	-75%	-75%	-75%	-75%
Upper limit for variable rate exposure				
expressed as either:-				
Net principal re variable rate borrowing / investments	-100%	-100%	-100%	-100%
Upper limit for total principal sums invested for over 364 days (per maturity date)				
	31,000	29,000	27,000	25,000

Maturity structure of new fixed rate borrowing during 2005/06	upper limit	lower limit
	under 12 months	100%
12 months and within 24 months	70%	%
24 months and within 5 years	%	%
5 years and within 10 years	%	%
10 years and above	%	%

5. CURRENT PORTFOLIO POSITION

5.1 The Council's treasury portfolio position at 28/02/05 comprised:

	Principal £'000	Ave Rate
TOTAL INVESTMENTS	28.543m	4.51%

6. BORROWING REQUIREMENT

6.1 The Council does not anticipate longer-term borrowing or funding through alternative financing arrangements in 2005-06 or in the following two years.

7. PROSPECTS FOR INTEREST RATES

7.1 The Council has appointed Sector Treasury Services as treasury adviser to the Council and part of their service is to assist the Council to formulate a view on interest rates. Appendix A draws together a number of current City forecasts for short term or variable (the base rate or repo rate) and longer fixed interest rates. The following table gives the Sector central view.

Sector View: Interest rate forecast - November 2004

	Q/E4 2004	Q/E1 2005	Q/E2 2005	Q/E3 2005	Q/E4 2005	Q/E1 2006	Q/E2 2006	Q/E3 2006	Q/E4 2006	Q/E1 2007	Q/E2 2007	Q/E3 2007
Base Rate	4.75%	5.00%	5.00%	4.75%	4.75%	4.50%	4.50%	4.25%	4.25%	4.25%	4.50%	4.50%
5 yr Gilt Yield	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.75%	4.75%
10 yr PWLB Rate	5.00%	5.00%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%
25 yr PWLB Rate	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%

7.2 The base rate is expected to rise to 5.00% in Q1 2005, but is nearing the peak of the cycle, and is consequently expected to fall back in 2005. The UK economic trend indicates a weakening ahead with a slowdown in household spending and

the housing market. Inflation may rise in 2005 as high street competition may not sustain the current situation against the effect of rising oil prices.

- 7.3 The medium term financial plan included an interest rate of 4.75% on investments. This will generated an anticipated £1,135,800 to the Council in 2005/06.

8. BORROWING STRATEGY

- 8.1 Although it is not anticipated that the Council will be borrowing longer-term funds, it is Sector's view that short-term variable rates will be good value compared to long-term rates, and are likely to remain so for potentially at least the next couple of years. Should there be need to borrow, best value will therefore be achieved by borrowing temporary/ short term funds at variable rates in order to minimise borrowing costs in the short term or to make short term savings required in order to meet budgetary constraints.
- 8.2 The Council officers, in conjunction with the treasury advisers, will continually monitor both the prevailing interest rates and the market's outlook for the path of interest rates.

9. ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY

- 9.1 The Council will have regard to the ODPM's Guidance on Local Government Investments ("the Guidance") issued in March 2004 and CIPFA's Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes ("the CIPFA TM Code"). The Council's investment priorities are: -
- (a) the **security** of capital and
 - (b) the **liquidity** of its investments.

The Council will also aim to achieve the **optimum return** on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity.

The borrowing of monies purely to invest or on-lend and make a return is unlawful and this Council will not engage in such activity.

Investment instruments identified for use in the financial year are listed in Appendix I under the 'Specified' and 'Non-Specified' Investments categories. Counterparty limits will be as set through the Council's Treasury Management Practices - Schedules.

10. SPECIFIED AND NON-SPECIFIED INVESTMENTS

- 10.1 The Council has determined which instruments it may use for the prudent management of its treasury balances during the financial year under the heads of Specified Investments and Non-Specified Investments. These are listed in

Appendix I. Some instruments may only be used by the Council's external fund managers

10.2 Credit Ratings

The Council uses Fitch ratings to derive its criteria. Where a counterparty does not have a Fitch rating, the equivalent Moody's rating will be used. All credit ratings will be monitored monthly. The Council is alerted to changes in Fitch ratings through its use of the Sector creditworthiness service. If a downgrade results in the counterparty/investment scheme no longer meeting the Council's minimum criteria, its further use as a new Investment will be withdrawn immediately.

ORGANISATION	CRITERIA	MAX AMOUNT	MAX PERIOD
UK and non-UK Banks, UK Building Societies and Government gilt edged securities Note: The Council's external fund managers will only use institutions that meet the criteria in this category	Minimum Fitch F1+ short term backed up by AA- long term credit rating (or and support ratings of 1 or 2 or equivalent ratings from Moody's	£3m per name/issue	1 year
U.K. and non-UK Banks and Building Societies	Minimum F1 short term backed up by (minimum) A long term credit rating and support ratings of 1, 2 or 3	£2m	1 year
UK Principal Local Authorities UK Debt Management Office		£2m for any one Authority £2m	1 year 1 year

11 INVESTMENT STRATEGY

- 11.1 Based on its cash flow forecasts, the Council anticipates its fund balances in 2005-06 to range between £31 million and £44 million.
- 11.2 The minimum percentage of its overall investments that the Council will hold in short-term investments is 30%.
- 11.3 Giving due consideration to the Council's level of balances over the next 3 years, the need for liquidity, its spending commitments and provisioning for contingencies, the Council has determined that 70%* of its overall fund balances can be prudently committed to longer term investments (i.e. those with a maturity exceeding a year).
* This limit is being set to permit the Council's fund managers to invest in longer-term investments, although these investments will be used for trading purposes and are unlikely to be held to maturity.
- 11.4 Sector is forecasting base rates to be on a falling trend from 5.00% in Q1 and Q2 2005 to 4.50% in Q1 & 2 of 2006. The Council will therefore seek

to lock in longer period investments at higher rates before this fall starts for some element of its investment portfolio which represents its core balances.

- 11.5 For its cash flow generated balances, the Council will seek to utilise its business reserve accounts and short-dated deposits (1-3 months) in order to benefit from the compounding of interest.

11.6 External Cash Fund Management

At the meeting of this cabinet on 17th March 2004 two external fund managers were appointed to manage £30m of the Councils investments using a range of financial instruments that are not utilised by the in-house team.

- 11.7 In September 2004 Cazenove withdrew from the Treasury Management service provision and the £15m funds, including interest generated were returned to the Council.

- 11.8 On receipt of the funds back to the Council, three month investments were made in line with our Treasury Management Practices to ensure maximum return was achieved.

- 11.9 With advice from Sector two further companies were interviewed in January 2005 with the intention of appointing one of the companies as a replacement for Cazenove.

- 11.10 Alliance Capital was considered to be the most appropriate for the Treasury Management service provision for Bromsgrove District Council.

- 11.11 Since the interviews took place the Corporate Finance Manager has met with the manager of the Councils bank HSBC regarding banking services provided to Bromsgrove District Council. During this meeting the Treasury Management service provided by HSBC was discussed and the potential savings that may be available if HSBC provided a wider service than banking. Further investigations need to be undertaken to assess the savings and the service that could be provided compared with Alliance Capital.

11.12 Update on investment income

- 11.13 For the period April 2004 - February 2005 the investment income generated was £1,486,412 showing a surplus to profiled budget of £305,745. This is mainly due to the fluctuations in the cash flow together with an increase on the average rate of interest up to 0.5%. The budget for 2004/05 in respect of interest on investments is £1,288,000.

12. End of year Investment Report

At the end of the financial year, the officers will provide a detailed report on the activities of the Treasury Management investments.

13. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

13.1 The financial implications are included in the body of the report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 This is a statutory report under the Local Government Act 2003.

8. OTHER SUB HEADINGS

8.1 None

Personnel Implications
Governance/Performance Management Considerations
Community Safety Considerations
Risk Management Considerations
Policy Considerations
Environmental Considerations
Equalities Implications

Background Papers

Report from Sector and Invesco

Contact officer

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INTEREST RATE FORECASTS

The data below shows a variety of forecasts published by a number of institutions. The first three are individual forecasts including those of UBS and Capital Economics (an independent forecasting consultancy). The final one represents summarised figures drawn from the population of all major City banks and academic institutions.

The forecast within this strategy statement has been drawn from these diverse sources and officers' own views.

1. INDIVIDUAL FORECASTS

Sector View interest rate forecast - November 2004

	Q/E4 2004	Q/E1 2005	Q/E2 2005	Q/E3 2005	Q/E4 2005	Q/E1 2006	Q/E2 2006	Q/E3 2006	Q/E4 2006	Q/E1 2007	Q/E2 2007	Q/E3 2007
Base Rate	4.75%	5.00%	5.00%	4.75%	4.75%	4.50%	4.50%	4.25%	4.25%	4.25%	4.50%	4.50%
5 yr Gilt Yield	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.75%	4.75%
10 yr PWLB Rate	5.00%	5.00%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%
25 yr PWLB Rate	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%	4.75%

UBS Economic interest rate forecast (for quarter ends) - November 2004

	Q/E4 2004	Q/E1 2005	Q/E2 2005	Q/E3 2005	Q/E4 2005
Base Rate	4.75%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%
10 yr PWLB rate	5.15%	5.05%	5.05%	5.05%	5.05%

25 yr PWLB rate

4.75% 4.80% 4.85% 4.85% 4.85%

Capital Economics interest rate forecast - November 2004

	Q/E4 2004	Q/E1 2005	Q/E2 2005	Q/E3 2005	Q/E4 2005	Q/E1 2006
Base Rate	4.75%	5.00%	5.00%	4.75%	4.50%	4.25%
5yr gilt yield	5.00%	4.90%	4.80%	4.60%	4.50%	4.40%
10 yr PWLB rate	5.15%	5.15%	5.05%	4.85%	4.75%	4.65%
30 yr PWLB rate	4.85%	4.85%	4.85%	4.75%	4.75%	4.65%

2. SURVEY OF ECONOMIC FORECASTS

HM Treasury - 21.10.04 summary of forecasts of 28 City and 14 academic analysts for Q4 2004 and 2005. (2006 - 2008 are as at August 2004 but are based on 11 forecasts)

	Quarter ended		annual average repo rate		
	Q4 2004	Q4 2005	ave. 2006	ave. 2007	ave. 2008
Indep. forecasters BoE Base Rate	4.89%	4.94%	5.08%	4.88%	4.64%
Highest base rate	5.13%	5.75%	6.00%	6.00%	5.70%
Lowest base rate	4.75%	4.25%	4.50%	4.05%	3.83%

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE CABINET

18TH MAY 2005

Annual Efficiency Statement

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Roger Hollingworth
Responsible Head of Service	Corporate Director (Resources)

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report outlines the Council's approach to delivering the annual efficiency savings as required by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) and in particular those in relation to 2005/06

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. It is recommended that the Executive Cabinet endorses the Annual Efficiency Statement for 2005/06.

3. Background

- 3.1. All local authorities are required under the Efficiency Savings regime (also known as the "Gershon" requirements) to make efficiency savings of 2.5% per annum. As part of this all authorities are required to submit to the ODPM for the years 2005/06 to 2007/08 a series of efficiency statements about targets and achievements, following the expenditure review by Sir Peter Gershon - "Releasing Resources to the Frontline".
- 3.2. Efficiency means providing the same service for lower cost or a better service for the same cost. It does not include making cuts in services or increasing fees and charges. The aim is to identify resources that can be reinvested in frontline services or used to hold down council tax.
- 3.3. The target value relating to efficiency savings for Bromsgrove District Council is £325,000 for 2005/06 based on 2.5% of an average Council spend of £13.018m over the Spending Review period - 2005/06-2007/08. In 2006/07 and 2007/08 the target increases by £325,000 per annum to £650,000 in 2006/07 and £975,000 in 2007/08.
- 3.4. The Council had to prepare and submit by 15 April 2005 a brief "forward-looking statement" for 2005/06 identifying the baseline and 2.5% target for 2005/06, together with the strategy and key actions intended to achieve the target for the year. The AES had to be signed off by the Leader of the Council, the Chief Executive and the Corporate Director (Resources). The AES (attached at Appendix A) was submitted on this date and in addition to the above was discussed with the portfolio holder for finance
- 3.5. There is not a formal requirement for this issue to be reported to Executive Cabinet however given its importance it is felt that members should be made aware and asked to endorse the approach.

4. Financial Implications

4.1. None other than included in the report.

5. Legal Implications

5.1. None.

6. Other Considerations

6.1 The report has also considered the following implications:-

Personnel Implications	None
Governance/Performance Management Considerations	None
Community Safety Considerations	None
Risk Management Considerations	None
Policy Considerations	None
Environmental Considerations	None
Equalities Implications	None

Background Papers

Annual Efficiency Statement

Contact officer

Name Kevin Dicks, Corporate Director (Resources)
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Tel: (01527) 881487

Timetable

The timetable and process for the budget review is as follows:

- 20 Sept A hard copy of the budget spreadsheets (also sent electronically) to be sent out to all budget holders. The spreadsheet will detail actual expenditure 2003/04, latest estimate 2004/05 and the base budgets for each of the years 2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08 for each cost centre for which they are responsible.
- 27 Sept Guidance and documentation to be issued on business cases, management plans and options for change.
- 27 Sept A copy of the relevant payroll estimates for each of the years 2005/06 to 2007/08 will be sent to each budget holder.

It is the responsibility of the budget holder to ensure that all posts/personnel/scale points and fixed term contract details are correct.

- 27 Sept Support Service recharges - Accountancy Services to issue a "Charging Form" to Budget Holders asking them to provide a split of staff time (for each post in the structure) over the various services. Separate information will be required for the current financial year, as opposed to future years. At the same time non-staff related data such as estimated number of debtor invoices, creditor invoices etc. will be requested. In completing the charging forms budget holders should have regard to what staff will be doing in the future rather than what they are doing now, they should also identify a split for each year. For the majority of staff this will be the same from year to year however for some staff they will be involved in project work that will alter the split of their time.

Note: In the near future Accountancy Services will be undertaking a separate project to develop the recharge system further. Part of this project will be a request for staff time to be split over functions - this is not required at this stage.

In addition we will critically examine the number and usage of the Internal Business Units, and how they are shown in the budget, as it is felt that they do not aid peoples understanding.

27 Sept to 5 Nov Budget holders to meet with their accountant to discuss any changes to the existing budgets (contained within the papers sent out on 20 September). The only changes that will be permitted to the existing base budgets will be by way of virement (however please refer to earlier note on the use of additional income), plus identification of any savings. Any bids for increased resources will be dealt with as part of the identification of Council priorities during October and November (Please see below).

Inflation and profiling of budgets will also be discussed at the meetings.

Note: In order to improve the robustness of our budget process we need to improve the way that we calculate the budgets for major items of income - planning fees, land charges, building control, car parking charges. We need to calculate the likely level of income based on usage and level of fees rather than simply rolling forward the budget - we also need to assess the risks associated with these levels of income.

27 Sep to 5 Nov Accountancy Services to undertake work on different scenarios with regard to major elements of expenditure e.g. different levels of pay award and the impact on budgets.

27 Sep to 5 Nov Budget holders to give consideration to fees and charges and submit to Accountancy Services the proposals.

13 Oct Executive Cabinet preliminary approval to Council priorities 2005/06 to 2007/08.

29 Oct Asset Management Plan and Capital Strategy reviewed and updated to assist with formulation of budget strategy.

5 Nov Return of Charging form by budget holders to Accountancy Services.

5 Nov Return of all other budget information and draft management plans.

Note: Ideally, in accordance with my report on "What constitutes a typical financial year" management plans should be completed by the end of September however due to the work required for the recovery plan it is felt that this can't be achieved until 5 November.

23 Nov Council preliminary approval to Council priorities 2005/06 to 2007/08.

3 Dec First draft base budgets available (including recharges and capital charges).

3 Dec Officers / Members to have identified specific work / projects required to achieve Council priorities. Budget holders must ensure that Accountancy Services are involved in "costing up" of proposals.

Mid Dec	Calculation of base budget requirement (variety of scenarios), together with cost of priorities, and including Government Grant indications, to be completed.
Dec	Presentations to Scrutiny Committees on the budget process and draft bas budget.
15 Dec	Executive Cabinet to consider base budget, cost of priorities and the process to be followed for consideration of the budget.
Mid Dec to 3 Feb	Officers to identify budget reductions (if they are required) in order to balance the budget.
Jan / Feb	Consideration by Scrutiny Committees of detailed budget for each area and proposed budget reductions (if required).
15 Feb	NNDR consultation
19 Jan	Consideration by Executive Cabinet of overall budget.
Jan/Feb	Undertake consultation with public on proposed budgets (note full year effect may not happen in 2005/06)
16 Feb	Consideration by Executive Cabinet of budget for 2005/06 and budget strategy to 2007/08.
1 Mar	Approval by Council of budget for 2005/06 and budget strategy to 2007/08.
By 31 Mar	Issue of budget books.

This timescale is very tight and will require everyone to adhere to the deadlines to ensure its completion.

ANNUAL EFFICIENCY STATEMENT – YEAR 1

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

BACKGROUND

Local authorities are expected to achieve, relative to the 2004/05 baseline, total annual efficiency gains of at least £6.45bn by 2007/08. It is a further requirement that at least 50% of this is cashable (savings in monetary terms). Efficiencies obtained for revenue, capital spend and better use of assets all count towards this target.

The target value relating to efficiency savings for Bromsgrove District Council is £325k based on 2.5% of an average Council spend of £13.018m over the Spending Review period - 2005/06-2007/08.

Efficiency is not considered to be as a result of cutting expenditure or increasing income by raising prices. The Council has to address the issues of raising productivity and enhancing value for money. The efficiencies include;

- Reduced numbers of inputs (e.g. people or assets), whilst maintaining the same level of service provision; or
- Lower prices for the resources needed to provide public services; or
- Additional outputs, such as enhanced quality or quantity of service, for the same level of inputs; or
- Improved ratios of output per unit cost of input; or
- Changing the balance between different outputs aimed at delivering a similar overall objective in a way which achieves a greater overall output for the same inputs (“allocative efficiency”)

In September 2004 the Council entered into Voluntary Engagement with the Government. The rationale was to concentrate the efforts of the Council on improvement rather than deflect any focus in preparing for the CPA. The need for improvement had been identified over a three year period of Corporate Governance with a mix of limited improvements and a “poor” classification in the absence of a CPA inspection.

In March 2005 the Council approved a three-year financial plan, with the objectives of maintaining the Council Tax increase to 5% per annum whilst developing and improving our services to the public and redirecting resources in line with the Council approved corporate priorities.

A key element of the Recovery Plan to address the Councils weakness is the financial management and confidence in financial planning and budgetary control. The production of the medium term financial plan included a detailed review of services provided and the relationship to corporate objectives. This review identified significant savings that could be redirected to fund the release of additional money to improve services in line with the council priorities and the recovery plan. The cashable savings generated as a result of improvements in managing services were also identified

ANNUAL EFFICIENCY STATEMENT – YEAR 1

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

STRATEGY FOR SECURING EFFICIENCY GAINS

The Recovery Plan focuses on key areas which will be addressed during 2005/06 - 2007/08 to secure the improvement of Bromsgrove District Council both in efficiency and performance terms.

In relation to achieving efficiency gains the priority areas include:

- Improvement in Procurement - the Council has established a cross departmental group to review the procurement policies with the aim to streamline processes in the future. This will be linked with the initiative for e-procurement and involvement with the Centre of Excellence
- Examination of base budget expenditure - the review that was undertaken as part of the medium term financial plan will be continued through detailed budget monitoring reports and action plans to identify areas for further efficiency savings. There will be a review of the medium term financial plan in the autumn.
- Better project management - by understanding the outcomes that we require from a system the Council can focus resources to ensure projects are managed in an efficient way
- Rationalisation of service provision and outsourcing to external agencies where appropriate
- Renegotiation of contracts with service providers
- Investing funds with external managers to look to over perform on original targets for investment interest
- Restructure of Council resources to ensure maximum potential of staff is achieved through competency framework
- Implementation of approved e-government strategy to maximise the benefits of the technology available to the Council
- Undertake Business Process Re-engineering to ensure all processes are delivered in the most productive way for Bromsgrove District Council

KEY ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN DURING YEAR

- Implement corporate restructure. The 1st phase of the restructure has started with the aim to rationalise the senior management structure of the Council to focus the services of the Council to our key objectives and to drive forward improvement and recovery
- Whenever there is staff turnover the opportunity is taken to review the provision of that service. This includes not replacing the member of staff, reallocating the duties or changing the way the service is provided.
- Service managers can transfer certain amounts and types of budget between items giving them flexibility to react to external changes and improve the delivery of services to their customers.
- Detailed budget monitoring to be undertaken on a monthly basis to identify and produce action plans to address underspends/overspends to budget

ANNUAL EFFICIENCY STATEMENT – YEAR 1 BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

- Continued development of the Worcestershire HUB (e-government project) to achieve efficiency savings and to improve customer service
- Continue to improve the efficiency of transactional services including: Revenues and Benefits, Financial Services and Cash receipting
- Identify efficiency gains available through the shared service approach with focus in 2005/06 to Revenues and Benefits and ICT
- Assess the value of non-cashable gains. These gains are more difficult to measure and will be reviewed in the light of advice given by the Measurement Task Force good practice guidance.

EXPECTED EFFICIENCY GAINS 2005/06

The target value relating to efficiency savings for Bromsgrove District Council is £325k based on 2.5% of an average Council spend of £13.018m over the Spending Review period - 2005/06-2007-08.

This is comprised as follows:

Total Service Expenditure (£'000)	£10,625
Capital Contribution (£'000)	£ 2,393*
Total spend (£'000)	£13,018
2.5% target (£'000)	£ 325

* Based on an average of the capital programme for 2005/06 to 2007/08:

2005/06	£4,409
2006/07	£1,697
2007/08	£1,074

ANNUAL EFFICIENCY STATEMENT – YEAR 1 BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

The following table sets out our efficiency gains for 2005/06.

Service	Expected annual efficiency gain of which cashable
<p>Environmental Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy: Rationalisation of Environmental Health staffing structure, utilising benefits from e-government programme, following opening of Customer Service Centre. Strategy in place for outsourcing of dog warden service. • Key actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Implementation of Restructure ➤ Outsourcing of dog warden service ➤ Ongoing monitoring of service provision to ensure that service levels do not decline 	32,500	32,500
<p>Local transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy: Renegotiation of contracts for service provision with local transport providers. • Key actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continual monitoring of service provided and associated costs to ensure quality of provision and that the service meets the needs of the community 	46,000	46,000
<p>Corporate Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy: Outperforming cash investment targets by 0.25% without an increase in risk. • Key actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Monitoring and management of investment portfolio and fund managers in accordance with Treasury Management Strategy and principles. 	60,000	60,000
<p>Procurement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Renegotiation of prices for IT consumables undertaken ➤ Renegotiation of business rate charges for Council owned properties • Key actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Monitoring of costs and quality of supplies. ➤ Continuing to work in partnership with the other Councils in Worcestershire to identify and secure opportunities for maximising the efficiencies and cost savings through joint procurement practices (specifically with regard to IT). ➤ Implement review of Council owned 	39,000	39,000

ANNUAL EFFICIENCY STATEMENT – YEAR 1 BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

properties in relation to NNDR costs.		
Productive Time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Corporate restructure to modernise the Council and to eliminate duplication ➤ E-government strategy approved by members to maximise the benefits of the technology available to the Council, both in terms of more efficient processes and quality of service • Key actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Implement Council wide restructure. This will involve changing working and management practices to increase the amount of productive time spent by staff on service delivery whilst maintaining and improving quality. ➤ Implement the existing e-government programme and to constantly explore opportunities for further investment to improve service delivery and release efficiencies (Business Process Re-engineering) 	197,000	197,000
Transactions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ By opening the Customer Service Centre (as part of the Worcestershire Hub partnership) the Council will improve the face to face interaction with the community of Bromsgrove. The Council has deleted posts from the back office service areas and reinvested the resources to fund the staffing establishment of the Customer Service Centre thus improving the quality and accessibility of services to the community. • Key actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review of the internal functions transferred to the Customer Service Centre in terms of quality of service delivery and also to learn from the process to facilitate the migration of further services. Planned programme of transfer of other services to be implemented throughout the course of 2005/06. The Council will continue to encourage other partners e.g. the Police and the Housing Trust to work alongside us in this venture. 	241,000	0
Total	615,500	374,500
Efficiency Gain	4.73%	2.88%

**ANNUAL EFFICIENCY STATEMENT – YEAR 1
BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

SIGNED:

Dennis Norton, Leader of the Council

SIGNED:

Sue Nixon, Chief Executive

SIGNED:

Kevin Dicks, Corporate Director, Resources

DATED: 15th April 2005

ODPM CAVEAT

This statement is a new development with limited good practice available and consequently results are subject to change (paragraph 4.4 of the Efficiency Technical Note for Local Government (February 2005)).

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE CABINET

18th MAY 2005

LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Roger Hollingworth
Responsible Head of Service	Corporate Director - Resources

1. SUMMARY

1.1 To present the Local Code of Corporate Governance.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 The Executive Cabinet is recommended to note and approve the adoption of a Local Code of Corporate Governance.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Corporate governance is “the system by which Local Authority’s direct and control their functions and relate to their communities”.

3.2 As part of the Recovery Plan the Council has identified the work that needs to be done to improve its corporate governance and risk management arrangements. Bromsgrove District Council is committed to the principles of good corporate governance and recognises the importance of operating in an open and accountable manner and demonstrating high standards of conduct and self governance. Evidencing good governance will support the delivery of the Recovery Plan and will assist in embedding an open and accountable culture within the Council.

3.3 To evidence this commitment, a “Local Code of Corporate Governance” should be adopted which allows us to show how the principles of good corporate governance will be applied by Bromsgrove District Council and enable us to demonstrate our commitment to the following principles, namely:

- Openness and inclusivity.
- Integrity.
- Accountability.

3.4 As part of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 there is a requirement for the Authority, as part of its corporate responsibility for the financial management and accounting control systems, to review at least once a year its internal control systems and make a statement on the adequacy of internal control.

- 3.5 From 2004/05, the statement on the adequacy of internal control includes a requirement to produce a Statement of Assurance. The Statement of Assurance allows the Authority to demonstrate its commitment to corporate governance and to state that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.
- 3.6 The “Local Code of Corporate Governance” underpins the Statement of Assurance and provides the supporting documentation to enable the statement to be produced.

4. LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

- 4.1 The “Local Code of Corporate Governance” is consistent with the principles and reflects the requirements of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework - *Corporate Governance in Local Government: a Keystone for Community Governance*.

The five key dimensions included in the CIPFA/SOLACE guidance are:

Community Focus - by demonstrating that the Council is working for and with the communities, exercising community leadership and promoting the “well being” of the area.

Service Delivery Arrangements - by having arrangements in place to deliver the right services to the right people in the right way and making sure we continue to improve.

Structures and Processes - by maintaining an appropriate political and managerial structure, as well as having up to date and effective processes that support decision making.

Risk Management and Internal Control - by having arrangements in place to identify, manage and minimise risk.

Standards of Conduct - by regulating the behavior of members and officers and promoting the highest standards of conduct.

5. MONITORING

Within each dimension included in the “Local Code for Corporate Governance” there are examples of systems and documents that aid compliance. To ensure that these systems and documents are effective and up to date a robust monitoring process should be introduced. This should include assigning responsibility for:

- Updating each system and document to a specific officer.
- Collating current progress for all systems and documents on an annual basis to complete the Statement of Assurance.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 None outside existing budgets.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 As part of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 there is a requirement for the Authority, as part of its corporate responsibility for the financial management and accounting control systems, to review at least once a year its internal control systems and make a statement on the adequacy of internal control. The regulations include a requirement to produce a statement of assurance, allowing the Authority to demonstrate its commitment to corporate governance and to state that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

Background Papers

None.

Contact officer

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Local Code of Corporate Governance



1. Introduction

Corporate Governance “is the system by which organisations are directed and controlled” (Cadbury report 1992). The main document regarding corporate governance within Bromsgrove District Council are the Articles of Constitution and their associated procedures and frameworks, which was adopted during 2002.

This code sets out and describes the Council’s commitment to corporate governance, and identifies the arrangements to ensure its ongoing effective implementation and application in all aspects of the Council’s work.

In order to achieve effective corporate governance, the Council has adopted the guidance contained in the Guidance and Framework documents published by CIPFA/SOLACE early in 2001, entitled “Corporate Governance in Local Government”, henceforth referred to as the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework.

Bromsgrove District Council is committed to the principles of good corporate governance and confirms its ongoing commitment and intentions through the development, adoption and continued maintenance of a “Local Code of Corporate Governance”.

This document, Bromsgrove’s “Local Code of Corporate Governance”, therefore sets out and describes the Council’s commitment to corporate governance, and identifies the arrangements that have been made, and will be made, to ensure its ongoing effective implementation and application in all aspects of the Council’s work.

2. What is Corporate Governance?

Corporate governance is “the system by which Local Authority’s direct and control their functions and relate to their communities”.

Bromsgrove District Council recognises that effective local government relies upon establishing and maintaining the public’s confidence in the elected councillors and staff and that the setting of high standards of self governance provides a clear and demonstrable lead to both our existing and potential partners, and therefore provides the basis of effective community governance.

3. What is a Local Code and why is it needed?

Bromsgrove District Council is committed to the principles of good corporate governance and recognises the importance of operating in an open and accountable manner and demonstrating high standards of conduct and self governance.

By publishing a Local Code we are able to show how the principles of good corporate governance will be applied by Bromsgrove District Council and we can demonstrate our commitment to these principles, namely:

- **openness and inclusivity.**
- **integrity.**
- **accountability.**

Fundamental to these principles is the concept of **leadership** and **effective** and **up to date** systems and processes.

This “Local Code of Corporate Governance” covers the five key aspects of our business, specifically:

Community Focus - by demonstrating that the Council is working for and with the communities, exercising community leadership and promoting the “well being” of the area.

Service Delivery Arrangements - by having arrangements in place to deliver the right services to the right people in the right way and making sure we continue to improve.

Structures and Processes - by maintaining an appropriate political and managerial structure, as well as having up to date and effective processes that support decision making.

Risk Management and Internal Control - by having arrangements in place to identify, manage and minimise risk.

Standards of Conduct - by regulating the behavior of members and officers and promoting the highest standards of conduct.

4. How will the Council know it has “good corporate governance”?

To satisfy ourselves that our approach is both adequate and effective, we will:

- Set out a series of local procedures and practices which create a framework for good corporate governance in line with best practice.
- Identify and agree the policies and procedures that are essential to demonstrating compliance with this Code.
- Establish systems, processes and documentation to provide evidence that these are effective and up to date.
- Nominate both a Member and an Officer “Corporate Governance Champion” to promote and support effective corporate governance arrangements.

As further evidence of our corporate commitment to good governance we will issue an annual statement of assurance. This statement will set out the arrangements that we have put in place to improve governance and also highlight those areas requiring further work.

This statement can then be used to gauge our year on year improvement in implementing a governance framework and our compliance with our Local Code. This statement will be published within our annual Best Value Performance Plan.

5. Conclusion

Bromsgrove District Council is fully committed to the principles of corporate governance and through the measures outlined within this “Local Code of Corporate Governance” will ensure that adequate arrangements are made for its continued implementation, monitoring and review.

Signed:

Signed:

**Chief Executive and Officer
Champion**

**Leader of the Council and Member
Champion**

REQUIREMENTS OF THE LOCAL CODE

Dimension 1: Community Focus

When carrying out our general and specific duties and responsibilities, including our ability to exert a wider influence, we undertake to:

- Work for and with our community.
- Exercise leadership in our local community, where appropriate.
- Act in an ‘ambassadorial’ role to promote the well-being of the area through the maintenance of effective arrangements:
 - or explicit **accountability** to our stakeholders for our performance and our **effectiveness** in delivering services and the sustainable use of resources.
 - to demonstrate **integrity** in our dealings in building *effective* relationships and partnerships with other public, voluntary and private agencies.
 - to demonstrate **openness** in all our dealings.
 - to demonstrate **inclusivity** by communicating and engaging with all sections of our community to encourage active participation.
 - to develop and articulate a clear and **up to date** vision and corporate strategy in response to community needs.

We will demonstrate these arrangements by the following:

Requirement	Achieved
Publish an annual report presenting an objective, understandable account of our: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • activities & achievements. • financial position and performance. This report will include statements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explaining our responsibility for the financial statements. • confirming that we comply with relevant standards and codes of corporate governance. • on the effectiveness of our system for risk management and internal control. 	Annual Accounting and Financial Statements and Financial Report Best Value Performance Plan Budget Book Corporate Plan Council Tax Leaflet Risk Management Strategy
Publish an annual performance plan presenting an objective, balanced and understandable account and assessment of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • our current performance in service delivery. • our plans to maintain and improve service delivery. 	Best Value Performance Plan Community Plan Corporate Plan Forward Plan Local Strategic Plan
Introduce arrangements for the independent review of the financial and operational reporting processes.	Annual External Audit Letter External Inspectorate Reports Internal Audit Function Overview and Scrutiny Procedure

	<p>Rules Policy and Strategy Scrutiny Committee</p>
<p>Introduce arrangements to encourage individuals and groups from all sections of the community to engage with, contribute to and participate in the Council's work.</p> <p>Additionally, implement an appropriate monitoring process to ensure that the arrangements work in practice.</p>	<p>Best Value Performance Plan Community Plan Corporate Plan Council Internet and Intranet Sites Customer Panel Equalities Policy Local Strategic Partnerships Local Strategic Plan Race Equality Scheme Section Performance Plans Spotlight Meetings</p>
<p>A commitment to openness in all of our dealings, subject only to the need to preserve confidentiality in those specific circumstances where it is proper and appropriate to do so.</p> <p>By our actions and communications deliver an account against this commitment.</p>	<p>Articles of Constitution Best Value Performance Plan Corporate Plan Scheme of Delegation Publication of Council Minutes</p>
<p>Clear channels of communication with all sections of our community and other stakeholders, and have proper monitoring arrangements to ensure that these channels operate effectively.</p>	<p>Articles of Constitution Communications Working Group Complaints Procedure Corporate Plan Council Internet and Intranet Sites Customer Panel Equalities Policy Local Strategic Partnerships Press and Media Section Publication of Council Reports Race Equality Scheme Spotlight Meetings</p>
<p>The vision for our local communities, strategic plans, priorities and targets, are developed through robust mechanisms with the local community and other key stakeholders, and that they are clearly articulated and disseminated.</p>	<p>Best Value Performance Plan Corporate Plan Local Strategic Plan Performance Plans Recovery Plan</p>

Dimension 2: Service Delivery Arrangements

We will seek continuous improvement in our service delivery. We will endeavor to implement agreed policies and make decisions as quickly as possible. We will do this by implementing and maintaining arrangements which:

- discharge our **accountability** for service delivery at a local level.
- ensure **effectiveness** through setting targets and measuring performance.
- demonstrate **integrity** in dealings with service users and in developing partnerships to ensure the 'right' provision of services locally.
- demonstrate **openness** and **inclusivity** through consulting with our key stakeholders, including service users.
- are kept **up to date** and can be adapted to accommodate change and user needs.

We will demonstrate these arrangements by the following:

Requirement	Achieved
Set standards and targets for performance in service delivery on a sustainable basis and with reference to equality policies.	Best Value Performance Plan Equalities Policy Performance Plans Race Equality Scheme Recovery Plan
Introduce sound systems for providing management information for performance measurement purposes.	Internal Audit Function Performance Management Performance Plans
Monitor and report performance against agreed standards and targets and develop comprehensive and understandable performance plans.	Best Value Performance Plan External Audit Letter Performance Plans Performance Reports to Members Recovery Plan
Introduce arrangements to allocate resources according to priorities.	Budget Process Capital Programme Corporate Plan Setting Objectives and Priorities
Foster effective relationships and partnerships with other public, private and voluntary sector agencies, and consider outsourcing where it is efficient and effective to do so, in delivering services to meet the needs of the local community.	Corporate Plan External Audit Function External Inspectorates Local Strategic Partnerships Local Strategic Plan Performance Plans
Introduce processes to ensure that they operate effectively in practice.	
Respond positively to external audit and statutory inspectors' recommendations and put in place arrangements for the effective implementation of agreed actions.	Annual Audit Letter External Inspectorate Reports Internal Audit Reports

Dimension 3: Structures and Processes

We need to establish effective political and managerial structures and processes to govern decision making and the exercise of authority within the Council. We will therefore maintain arrangements to:

- define the roles and responsibilities of members and officers to ensure **accountability**, clarity and ordering of our business.
- ensure that there is proper scrutiny and review of all aspects of performance and **effectiveness**.
- demonstrate **integrity** by ensuring a proper balance of power and authority.
- document clearly such structures and processes and to ensure that they are communicated and understood to demonstrate **openness** and **inclusivity**.
- ensure such structures and processes are kept **up to date** and adapted to accommodate change.

We will demonstrate these arrangements by the following:

Requirement	Achieved
Introduce clearly documented protocols governing relationships between members and officers.	Articles of Constitution Members Codes of Conduct Officer – Member Protocol Officer Employment Procedure Rules
The roles and responsibilities of members and officers are clearly defined.	Articles of Constitution Job Descriptions Scheme of Delegation
Ensure that members meet regularly on a formal basis to set the strategic direction for the authority and to monitor service delivery.	Articles of Constitution Performance Management Recovery Plan Meetings Calendar
Introduce a scheme of delegated powers, which includes those powers that are specifically reserved for the collective decision of the authority or specific members.	Articles of Constitution Scheme of Delegation
Introduce clear, documented and understood processes for policy development, implementation, review, decision-making, monitoring, control and reporting; and formal procedural and financial regulations to govern the conduct of the Council's business.	Budget and Policy Framework Council Procedure Rules & Articles of Constitution Financial Standards and Regulations Performance Management Performance Plans Scheme of Delegation
Introduce an effective member scrutiny process to ensure accountability of decision makers, support the development of policies and initiatives and contribute to continuous improvement in service delivery.	Council Procedure Rules Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules

Ensure that members are properly trained for their roles and have access to all relevant information, advice and resources as necessary to enable them to carry out their roles effectively.	Articles of Constitution Members Codes of Conduct
Ensure that the role of any executive member(s) is defined in writing to include responsibility for providing effective strategic leadership to the authority and for ensuring that the authority successfully discharges its overall responsibilities for the activities of the organisation as a whole.	Articles of Constitution Scheme of Delegation
Ensure that the roles and responsibilities of all members, together with the terms of their remuneration and its review are clearly defined in writing	Articles of Constitution Members Codes of Conduct Scheme of Members Allowances
The Chief Executive will be responsible for all aspects of operational management.	Articles of Constitution – Article 12 Conditions of Employment Functions of the Head of Paid Service Scheme of Delegation
A senior officer will be responsible for ensuring that appropriate advice is given on all financial matters, for keeping proper financial records and accounts, and for maintaining an effective system of internal financial control.	Annual Accounting Statement Articles of Constitution – Article 12 Functions of the Chief Financial Officer Scheme of Delegation Section 151 Officer responsibilities
A senior officer will be responsible for ensuring that agreed procedures are followed and that all applicable statutes, regulations and other relevant statements of good practice are complied with.	Articles of Constitution – Article 12 Functions of the Monitoring Officer Scheme of Delegation
Ensure that roles and responsibilities of all our senior officers, together with the terms of their remuneration and its review, are defined clearly and in writing.	Appraisal Process Codes of Conduct Conditions of Service Employee Handbook Equalities Policy Job Descriptions Officer Employment Procedure Rules Statutory Officer responsibilities
Adopt clear protocols and codes of conduct to ensure that the implications for supporting community political leadership are acknowledged and resolved.	Articles of Constitution Codes of Conduct Employee Handbook Members Codes of Conduct Officer – Member Protocol

Dimension 4: Risk Management & Internal Control

We need to establish and maintain a systematic strategy, framework and processes for managing risk. These arrangements will:

- include making public statements to our stakeholders on our risk management strategy, framework and processes to demonstrate our **accountability**.
- include mechanisms for monitoring and reviewing **effectiveness** against agreed standards and targets and the operation of controls in practice.
- demonstrate **integrity** by being based on robust systems for identifying, profiling, controlling and monitoring all significant strategic and operational risks.
- display **openness** and **inclusivity** by involving all those associated with planning and delivering services, including our partners.
- include mechanisms to ensure that the risk management and control process is monitored for continuing compliance to ensure that changes in circumstances are accommodated and that it remains **up to date**.

We will demonstrate these arrangements by the following:

Requirement	Achieved
Develop and maintain robust systems for identifying and evaluating all significant risks which involve the proactive participation of all those associated with planning and delivering services.	Best Value Performance Plan Member Reports Performance Plans Risk Management Strategy Scheme of Delegation
Introduce effective risk management systems, including systems of internal control and an internal audit function, to ensure compliance with all applicable statutes, regulations and relevant statements of best practice This will ensure that public funds are properly safeguarded and are used economically, efficiently and effectively, and in accordance with the statutory and other authorities that govern their use.	Comprehensive Performance Assessment Internal Audit Charter Internal Audit Plan Performance Management Risk Management Strategy
Services are delivered by trained and experienced people.	Appraisal Process Job Descriptions Training Plans
Introduce an effective arrangements for an objective review of risk management and internal control, including internal audit.	External Audit Function Internal Audit Function Performance Management
Maintain an objective professional relationship with our external auditors and statutory inspectors.	External Audit Management Letter Inspectorate report Internal Audit Manual
Publish on a timely basis, within the annual report,	Best Value Performance Plan

an objective, balanced and understandable statement and assessment of the authority's risk management and internal control mechanisms and their effectiveness in practice.	Statement of Accounts
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Dimension 5: Standards of Conduct

The openness, integrity and accountability of individuals within the Council form the cornerstone of effective corporate governance. The Council's reputation depends on the standards of behaviour of everyone in it, whether members, employees or agents.

Therefore, members and officers will:

- exercise leadership by conducting themselves as role models for others within the authority to follow.
- define the standards of personal behaviour that are expected from members and staff and all those involved in service delivery, and put in place arrangements to ensure:
 - **accountability**, through establishing systems for investigating breaches and disciplinary problems and taking actions where appropriate, including arrangements for redress.
 - **effectiveness** in practice through monitoring their compliance.
 - ensure that objectivity and impartiality are maintained in all relationships to demonstrate **integrity**.
 - ensure that such standards are documented and clearly understood to display **openness** and **inclusivity** and are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are **kept up to date**.

We will demonstrate these arrangements by the following:

Requirement	Achieved
Develop and adopt formal codes of conduct defining the standards of personal behavior to which individual members, officers and agents of the authority are required to subscribe.	Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy Articles of Constitution Employee Handbook Gifts and Hospitality Code IT Members Code
Introduce appropriate systems and processes to ensure that they are complied with.	Licensing Code of Practice Members Codes of Conduct Members Training Program Officer – Member Protocol Planning Code of Practice
Introduce arrangements to ensure that members and employees of the Council are not influenced by prejudice, bias or conflicts of interest in dealing with different stakeholders.	Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy Articles of Constitution Complaints Procedure Contracts Procedure Rules Gifts and Hospitality Code IT Members Code
Introduce appropriate processes to ensure that they continue to operate in practice.	Licensing Code of Practice Members Codes of Conduct Officer – Member Protocol

	Planning Code of Practice
Procedures and operations are designed in conformity with appropriate ethical standards, and we will monitor their continuing compliance in practice.	Articles of Constitution Equalities Policy Members Codes of Conduct Officer – Member Protocol
Introduce arrangements for whistle blowing to which staff and those contracting with the Council have access.	Confidential Reporting Code Employee Handbook

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE CABINET

18th May 2005

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION 2004-2005

Responsible Portfolio Holder	All
Responsible Head of Service	Corporate Director of Resources

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides the information relating to the Council's performance for the Financial Year 2004-05 on service provision and includes both national performance indicators and where in existence, local indicator detail. The figures are subject to external audit, this is due to take place during May.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council is required to deliver sustained improvements in the delivery of local services. All effective organisations need to know how well they are performing and what their strengths and weaknesses are.
- 3.2 The Government equally must ensure that high level priorities are being delivered and that standards are being met across the range of public services.
- 3.3 The Best Value Performance Indicators provide valuable information on the key services delivered locally and enable the Council to assess where we are and to set meaningful targets for further performance improvements.
- 3.4 The attached information (see appendix) has been prepared in full consultation with directors and heads of service who have provided such explanations as necessary on indicators where there is under performance against target.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 Any financial implications can only be identified when failing indicators have been fully analysed and appropriate improvement action plans have been developed. There is no existing budget provision defined.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 National BVPI's (Best Value Performance Indicators) are audited annually by the external auditor, KPMG, and the results are published.

6. Corporate Governance

- 6.1 Good performance management requires the availability of accurate and timely performance data. This Council is committed to addressing the changes required to exhibit good corporate governance and therefore is committed to putting into place an effective and efficient performance management framework. This information is therefore essential and should be used appropriately, re-defining its content as change is identified and thus ensuring that it remains relevant and useful.

Background Papers

Detailed performance information is attached.

Contact officer

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL
SERVICE PERFORMANCE MONITORING

April 2004 - March 2005

ABV- Audit, Best Value & Performance PIs												
	Actual 03/04	Target 04/05	Target for Period	Top Quartile	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	YTD	Perf to Target	Perf to Top Quartile	Comments
⊕ BV001 Does the authority have a Community Strategy developed in collaboration with the Local Strategic Partnership, for improving the economic, social and environmental well being in a way that is sustainable? Yes represented by 100. No represented by 0.	100.00	100.00	100.00	N/A	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	★	N/A	The Community Plan was produced in December 2003, therefore the targets for PI 1b & 1c set for 12 months from that date. The targets have been set as a numeric figure and the result will be entered as 100 when fully complied.
⊕ BV001b When will a full review of the Community Strategy be completed? Yes represented by 100. No represented by 0	0.00	100.00	100.00	N/A	0.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	★	N/A	A review day was held in December.
⊕ BV001c When will the authority report progress towards implementing the Community Strategy to the wider community? Yes represented by 100. No represented by 0	0.00	100.00	0.00	N/A	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	▲	N/A	An update report is in the process of being written.

★ = Perf exceeding target or 100%

○ = Performance on target

▲ = Performance below target

⊕ = data unavailable

⊖ = No target to measure performance against

N/A = Not applicable

Performance tolerance level is set at ± 10% target

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL
SERVICE PERFORMANCE MONITORING

April 2004 - March 2005

AS - Administrative Services PIs												
	Actual 03/04	Target 04/05	Target for Period	Top Quartile	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	YTD	Perf to Target	Perf to Top Quartile	Comments
± BV179 % Standard searches carried out in 10 working days.	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	★	★	Excellent Performance

Star = Perf exceeding target or 100%

Circle = Performance on target

Triangle = Performance below target

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N/A = Not applicable

Performance tolerance level is set at ± 10% target

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

SERVICE PERFORMANCE MONITORING

April 2004 - March 2005

CSE - Community Safety & Engineering Pls												
	Actual 03/04	Target 04/05	Target for Period	Top Quartile	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	YTD	Perf to Target	Perf to Top Quartile	Comments
± BV126a Domestic burglaries per 1,000 households	21.30	15.20	3.80	N/A	3.37	4.03	3.60	2.80	13.80	●	N/A	Good performance.
± BV126b % Domestic Burglaries Detected	30.80	25.00	25.00	N/A	35.94	25.80	18.90	59.40	35.01	★	N/A	Very good performance exceeding target.
± BV127 Violent crimes per 1,000 population and % detected broken down to show:	18.01 62.96	17.4 62.8	4.35 62.8	N/A	4.26 62.8	3.54 63.9	3.6 60.6	3.00 78.3	14.4 66.4	★	N/A	Very good performance exceeding target.
± BV127a Violent crimes committed by a stranger per 1000 population	1.32	1.22	0.30	N/A	0.25	0.45	0.30	0.30	1.30	●	N/A	Good performance.
± BV127b Violent crimes committed in a public space per 1000 population	1.49	1.49	0.37	N/A	0.50	0.54	0.40	0.64	2.08	▲	N/A	There will be a stronger focus on drug and alcohol offences in town centre areas which will support the stretched target of overall violent crime by 17.5% by 2008.
± BV127c Violent crimes committed in connection with licensed premises per 1000 population	0.36	0.36	0.09	N/A	0.10	0.06	0.10	0.10	0.36	●	N/A	Good performance.
± BV127d Violent crimes committed under the influence per 1000 population	1.00	1.00	0.25	N/A	0.25	0.20	0.30	0.25	1.00	●	N/A	Good performance.
± BV128 Vehicle crimes per 1000 population	14.38	13.20	3.27	N/A	3.05	2.75	2.80	2.80	11.40	★	N/A	Very good performance exceeding target.
± BV128b % Vehicle Crimes Detected	17.58	12.80	12.80	N/A	14.93	12.70	4.90	8.54	10.27	▲	N/A	An introduction of two schemes. A) operation Jade which will target vehicle crime and crime officers will attend each crime scene. B) Develop the vulnerable vehicle scheme whereby CSO's wardens, police officers will inform the vehicle's keeper about their vehicle contents being left at risk.
± BV156 % of authority buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for and accessible to disabled people.	63.00	75.00	75.00	67.00	65.00	65.00	69.00	75.00	75.00	●	★	Target achieved

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N/A = Not applicable

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Exclamation Mark = No target to measure performance against

Performance tolerance level is set at ± 10% target

Triangle = Performance below target

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

SERVICE PERFORMANCE MONITORING

April 2004 - March 2005

CSE - Community Safety & Engineering Pls												
	Actual 03/04	Target 04/05	Target for Period	Top Quartile	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	YTD	Perf to Target	Perf to Top Quartile	Comments
⊕ BV174 Number of racial incidents recorded by the authority per 100,000 population.	0.00	0	0	N/A	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	●	N/A	No target set because of very low incidence. No recorded incidence in 03/04 and none as yet in 04/05.
⊕ BV175 % of racial incidents that resulted in further action.	0.00	0	0	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	●	N/A	As BV 174
⊕ BV180a The energy consumption/m ² (kwh) of local authority operational property, compared with comparable buildings in the UK as a whole (expressed as %). Target is a reduction of 9% on previous energy consumption.	N/A	55.00	55.00	83.00	Unavail	Unavail	Unavail	Unavail	Unavail	?	?	Commissioning of photo voltaic panels in May will enable energy savings to be monitored during 2005/06. The Council offices will have an energy audit during 05/06 via the Energy Trust.

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

SERVICE PERFORMANCE MONITORING

April 2004 - March 2005

ES - Environmental Services Pis												
	Actual 03/04	Target 04/05	Target for Period	Top Quartile	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	YTD	Perf to Target	Perf to Top Quartile	Comments
BV062 The proportion of unfit private sector dwellings made fit/demolished as a direct result of action by the authority as a %.	4.48	5.00	5.00	3.75	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00			2 properties have been made fit, out of a district-wide total of 46. The target for the year was three (5%).
BV082a % of the total tonnage of household waste arisings which have been recycled.	10.88	22.00	22.00	16.86	9.09	12.61	14.72	21.82	14.51			Steady progress has been made, which will continue into next year. Overall, the total recycling performance of just over 24% (paper, glass, etc., plus compostable green waste), already exceeds the statutory target of 18% for 2005/06 and places the Council amongst the best performing authorities.
BV082b % of the total tonnage of household waste arisings which have been sent for composting or for treatment by anaerobic digestion.	0.40	4.50	4.50	5.14	5.89	12.49	9.40	10.61	9.60			Data is exclusive of some bring bank tonnages
BV084 Number of kilograms of household waste collected per head.	346.70	392.00	392.00	371.70	101.19	204.30	310.91	409.83	409.83			Data is exclusive of some bring bank tonnages
BV086 Cost of waste collection per household (£)	29.41	Not set. See comment	Not set. See comment	N/A	Unavail	Unavail	Unavail	Unavail	Unavail			Major service modernisation programme undertaken, therefore for the current year it was considered inappropriate to set a performance target which sought to compare the Council's performance with other authorities. End of year service costings will be reported to Members as soon as they become available, which is likely to be in 5-6 weeks time.
BV091 % Population served by a kerbside collection of recyclables.	14.12	100.00	100.00	100.00	13.13	39.21	60.45	92.63	92.63			The original target was 100% but following the identification of access difficulties to some properties due to their location or design, a revised target of 90% was set for the year under review. All 8 rounds are however operational and ways of providing all properties within the district with a service are being pursued.

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

SERVICE PERFORMANCE MONITORING

April 2004 - March 2005

ES - Environmental Services Pis													
	Actual 03/04	Target 04/05	Target for Period	Top Quartile	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	YTD	Perf to Target	Perf to Top Quartile	Comments	
BV166a % Score against a checklist of enforcement best practice for environmental health/trading standards.	70.00	80.00	80.00	90.00	70.00	70.00	70.00	70.00	70.00		▲	▲	Performance is measured against nationally set service quality criteria. Each of the 10 criteria are allocated a score of 1 point (presented as a %age - 10%). The criteria cover the provision & implementation of service policies, procedures etc. A comprehensive service review has been completed & proposals for programmed service improvements aimed at achieving a score of 100% were submitted for consideration during the budget determination programme.
BV199 Local street and environmental cleanliness - the % of relevant land that is assessed as having combined deposits of litter and detritus	34.00	30.00	30.00	12.00	Unavail	Unavail	Unavail	36.00	36.00		▲	▲	Performance lower than last year. Street cleansing services improvements being addressed.

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N/A = Not applicable

Performance tolerance level is set at ± 10% target

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL
SERVICE PERFORMANCE MONITORING

April 2004 - March 2005

FS - Financial Services PIs												
	Actual 03/04	Target 04/05	Target for Period	Top Quartile	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	YTD	Perf to Target	Perf to Top Quartile	Comments
BV008 % of Invoices for commercial goods and services that were paid by the authority within 30 days of receipt of invoice.	92.05	100.00	100.00	96.74	76.83	79.57	85.16	95.85	84.18	▲	●	Although the average for the year is low the last quarter shows a significant improvement. Earlier in the year there were delays in invoices relating to the transition to BDHT from the Council. Disputed invoices were not being flagged until the last quarter. Delays in invoices paid by the depot - this has now been addressed due to improved processes at the depot. General delays in invoicing using the new system in the early part of 2004/05.
BV009 % of Council Tax collected	98.30	98.50	98.50	98.50	30.33	59.55	87.72	98.60	98.60	●	●	We have collected 98.5% Top quartile.
BV010 % of NNDR collected	98.30	98.60	98.60	99.12	27.80	59.00	87.70	97.50	97.50	●	●	No debt for Business Rates has been put forward for write-off in 2004/05
BV076a Number of claimants visited per 1000 caseload.	237.00	230.00	230.00	304.00	44.86	87.03	135.26	221.80	221.80	●	▲	There are two investigator posts that are currently unfilled and this will be addressed as part of the re-structure of the service in July 05. Taking on a temporary investigator to help improve things
BV076b Number of fraud investigators employed per 1000 caseload.	0.18	0.36	0.36	0.48	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	0.26	▲	▲	There are two investigator posts that are currently unfilled and this will be addressed as part of the re-structure of the service in July05. We will be getting a temporary investigator to help improve things
BV076c Number of fraud investigations per 1000 caseload	67.63	70.00	70.00	61.70	14.59	29.72	41.31	56.84	56.84	▲	●	There are two investigator posts that are currently unfilled and this will be addressed as part of the re-structure of the service in July05. Will be getting a temporary investigator to help improve things.
BV076d Number of prosecutions and sanctions per 1000 caseload.	6.72	6.50	6.50	5.83	1.35	3.51	5.52	6.57	6.57	●	★	There are two investigator posts that are currently unfilled and this will be addressed as part of the re-structure of the service in July 05. Will be getting a temporary investigator to help improve things.

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL
SERVICE PERFORMANCE MONITORING

April 2004 - March 2005

FS - Financial Services PIs												
	Actual 03/04	Target 04/05	Target for Period	Top Quartile	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	YTD	Perf to Target	Perf to Top Quartile	Comments
⊕ BV078a Average time for processing new claims. (days)	49.66	40.00	40.00	31.00	64.68	47.72	47.45	44.16	44.16	▲	▲	Council tax re-billing did impact performance in December/January. The performance in QTR4 was slightly better than QTR3.
⊕ BV078b Average time for processing notifications of changes of circumstance. (days)	18.94	10.00	10.00	7.20	113.86	16.65	15.03	14.92	14.92	▲	▲	Council tax re-billing did impact performance in December/January. The performance in QTR4 was slightly better than QTR3.
⊕ BV079a % of benefit cases processed correctly	98.13	99.00	99.00	99.00	96.80	100.00	Unavail	98.80	98.80	●	●	Average for year is 98.8% which is top quartile
⊕ BV079b % of recovery of overpaid benefit.	41.38	70.00	70.00	55.60	7.68	16.08	24.91	28.47	28.47	▲	▲	In 2005-06 we are looking at our processes and procedures with a view to improving our overall collection rate.

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL
SERVICE PERFORMANCE MONITORING

April 2004 - March 2005

IT - Information Tech. Services PIs												
	Actual 03/04	Target 04/05	Target for Period	Top Quartile	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	YTD	Perf to Target	Perf to Top Quartile	Comments
BV157 The number of types of interactions that are enabled for electronic delivery as a % of the types of interactions that are legally permissible for electronic delivery.	51.00	75.00	75.00	72.00	51.00	51.00	51.00	63.95	63.95	▲	▲	This figure has been collected via the new Nationally accepted ESD toolkit. You should see a marked increase with the planned development of the Website this year. The use of e-forms (developed with e-Worcestershire Hub partners) will facilitate more electronic transactions.

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Circle = Performance on target

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N/A = Not applicable

Performance tolerance level is set at ± 10% target

LGL - Legal Services PIs

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

SERVICE PERFORMANCE MONITORING

April 2004 - March 2005

	Actual 03/04	Target 04/05	Target for Period	Top Quartile	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	YTD	Perf to Target	Perf to Top Quartile	Comments
BV002 CRE level to which the authority conforms	2.00	3.00	3.00	N/A	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	▲	N/A	An Equality 3-year plan for Impact Assessments has been in place but not due for completion until 2007. Therefore Level 3 only attainable in 2007.
BV002a % CRE Scorecard - The duty to promote race equality.	42.00	47.00	47.00	55.00	42.00	42.00	42.00	42.00	42.00	▲	N/A	Impact assessments are timetabled for the next 12 mths & these will identify improvements that can be made.
BV011a % of top 5% of earners that are women.	21.43	21.43	21.43	26.69	24.00	20.80	22.73	22.70	22.70	●	▲	BDC will continue to ensure Equality of Opportunity in applying for top positions.
BV011b % of top 5% of earners from black & minority ethnic communities	3.57	3.57	3.57	2.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	▲	▲	As BVPI 11a
BV012 Number of working days/shifts lost due to sick absence	11.33	8.60	8.60	8.93	2.24	4.83	7.42	9.08	9.08	●	●	Improvement sought by re-inforcement of strong absence management training, revised Policy and focus on hot-spots.
BV014 % of Early retirements (exc. Ill health) as % of total work force	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.14	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	★	★	There will be continued close monitoring of staff health offering specialist support through PTH (external Occupational Health Consultants). Final decision of ill health retirement lies outside of the Council's control (independent medical decision).
BV015 % of employees retiring on grounds of ill health as % of total workforce.	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.25	▲	▲	As BVPI 14
BV016a % Staff with disabilities as % of total work force	0.36	2.00	2.00	4.11	0.43	0.41	0.74	0.74	0.74	▲	▲	BDC will continue to ensure Equality of Opportunity in applying for positions. Fuller access discussed through Equalities Working Group
BV016b % of economically active people with disabilities in the area	11.03	11.03	11.03	15.09	11.03	11.03	11.73	11.73	11.73	●	▲	Figure has been recalculated using more detailed information from the Office of National Statistics

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL
SERVICE PERFORMANCE MONITORING

April 2004 - March 2005

LGL - Legal Services PIs												
	Actual 03/04	Target 04/05	Target for Period	Top Quartile	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	YTD	Perf to Target	Perf to Top Quartile	Comments
⊞ BV017a % employees from minority ethnic communities	1.16	1.16	1.16	2.40	0.86	0.62	0.74	0.50	0.50	▲	▲	As BVPI 16a
⊞ BV017b % of economically active ethnic minority in the area	Unavail	1.16	1.16	3.40	2.18	2.18	2.18	2.18	2.18	★	▲	Figure is calculated from 2001 Census data supplied by the Office of National Statistics.
⊞ BV177 % of authority expenditure on legal and advice services which is spent on services that have been awarded the Quality Mark and meet legal needs identified in the Community Legal Service Partnership strategic plan.	87.50	79.65	79.65	100.00	79.65	79.65	100.00	88.32	88.32	★	▲	This is the %age of total amount of grants paid to advice-giving bodies (CAB, Relate, Victim Support, Age Concern) which was represented by the CAB grant.

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N/A = Not applicable

Performance tolerance level is set at ± 10% target

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

SERVICE PERFORMANCE MONITORING

April 2004 - March 2005

LEI - Leisure Services PI's													
	Actual 03/04	Target 04/05	Target for Period	Top Quartile	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	YTD	Perf to Target	Perf to Top Quartile	Comments	
⊕											●	▲	The achievement of top quartile status for a small local museum such as the Bromsgrove Museum is impossible as we are competing with the large National and Regional Museums, but nonetheless we will continue to seek ways to drive up attendances within the resources we have.
	19.90	25.00	5.00	670.00	5.48	7.74	3.79	7.30	24.31				
⊕											●	▲	As BV170a
	19.48	24.00	5.00	427.00	5.76	7.35	3.36	6.61	23.08				
⊕											▲	▲	We are looking to develop and increase the number of temporary exhibitions that take place at the Museum and improve the liaison we have with local schools and colleges with a view to increasing the number of school visits.
	448.00	750.00	190.00	2754.00	222.00	33.00	71.00	213.00	539.00				

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

SERVICE PERFORMANCE MONITORING

April 2004 - March 2005

PLG - Planning Services BV PIs												
	Actual 03/04	Target 04/05	Target for Period	Top Quartile	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	YTD	Perf to Target	Perf to Top Quartile	Comments
⊥ BV106 % of new homes built on previously developed land.	80.88	90.00	90.00	86.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	Unavail	Unavail	?	?	Survey work to provide indicator results in progress - expected figure by mid May.
⊥ BV109a 60% of major applications within 13 weeks	60.00	70.00	70.00	63.58	22.00	75.00	55.00	57.00	48.00	▲	▲	Performance below target but these are the applications considered by Planning Committee that are normally the most contentious and complicated. In addition they will usually involve the signing of a S106 agreement. A review will take place to identify performance improvements. These larger applications represent only 2% of all applications.
⊥ BV109b 65% of minor applications in 8 weeks	69.00	75.00	75.00	71.00	86.00	85.00	78.00	74.00	81.00	●	★	Excellent performance, well in excess of Government target.
⊥ BV109c 80% of other applications in 8 weeks	85.00	87.00	87.00	86.00	92.00	88.00	91.00	83.00	89.00	●	●	Excellent performance, well in excess of Government target.
⊥ BV200a Dev.Plan adopted in Last 5 yrs. Yes represented by 100. No represented by 0	100	100	100.00	N/A	100	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	★	N/A	Target Achieved
⊥ BV204 % of appeals allowed against the authority's decision to refuse on planning applications.	0.00	40.00	40.00	New	21.00	17.00	37.50	18.00	23.38	★	N/A	Excellent performance
⊥ BV205 Quality of service checklist (Planning). Shown as %	0.00	72.00	72.00	New	67.00	67.00	67.00	67.00	67.00	●	N/A	Problems in recruiting to a specialist design post. However, should be in post for 2005/06.

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

SERVICE PERFORMANCE MONITORING

April 2004 - March 2005

PLG - Planning Services Local PIs												
	Actual 03/04	Target 04/05	Target for Period	Top Quartile	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	YTD	Perf to Target	Perf to Top Quartile	Comments
P01 % of Planning applications in 8 weeks	80.00	82.00	82.00	74.00	80.00	87.00	86.00	83.00	86.00	●	★	Excellent performance well in excess of former Government target.
P02 % of Bldg regs applications registered on day of receipt.	99.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	99.50	99.00	100.00	90.00	97.13	●	●	Performance adversely affected by new procedures in Finance Department. Applications now received 1 day later than previously.
P03 % of Bldg regs checked & notified in 10 Days	96.50	85.00	85.00	85.00	69.00	62.00	66.43	70.00	66.86	▲	▲	Performance adversely affected by new procedures in Finance Department which reduces period to 9 days. Work load and legislation increase, staff vacancy from beginning of July 2004. A report to improve staff retention and recruitment is being prepared.
P04 % of Completion certs generated within 5 days of completion	98.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	91.00	90.00	96.00	96.00	93.25	●	●	Work load and legislation increase, staff vacancy from beginning of July 2004.
P05 % of Building inspection on same day requested by applicant.	99.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	95.00	94.00	99.35	98.00	96.59	●	●	Work load and legislation increase, staff vacancy from beginning of July 2004.
P06 % of Active sites inspected at least every 3 months	35.00	85.00	85.00	85.00	43.00	30.00	36.60	33.00	35.65	▲	▲	Work load and legislation increase, staff vacancy from beginning of July 2004. A report to improve staff retention and recruitment is being prepared.
P07 Bldg Control charges to be within ± 10% national scales suggested by LGA.	±10.00	±10.00	±10.00	±10.00	±10.00	±10.00	±10.00	±10.00	±10.00	★	★	Break even budget requirement has been exceeded. Charges generally similar to those within county.
P08 No. of Small Business Start-Ups	34.00	30.00	7.00	N/A	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	17.00	▲	N/A	Capital budget temporarily withdrawn - led to lack of promotion and take-up. Revenue budget now in place for 2005/06 to fully support this initiative.
P09 No. of Farmers' Markets	13.00	16.00	4.00	N/A	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	15.00	●	N/A	One cancellation - high winds.
P10 - % Satisfaction - Plg Applications	69.00	75.00	75.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	71%	71%	●	N/A	An improvement over 2003/04 but hampered by staff shortages. A report to improve staff retention and recruitment is being prepared.

Star = Perf exceeding target or 100%

Circle = Performance on target

Triangle = Performance below target

Question Mark = data unavailable






Exclamation Mark = No target to measure performance against

N/A = Not applicable

Performance tolerance level is set at ± 10% target

SERVICE PERFORMANCE MONITORING

April 2004 - March 2005

SH - Strategic Housing Services National PIs												
	Actual 03/04	Target 04/05	Target for Period	Top Quartile	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	YTD	Perf to Target	Perf to Top Quartile	Comments
BV064 Number of private sector vacant dwellings returned into occupation or demolished during 2004/05 as direct result of action by the local authority	3.00	3.00	3.00	N/A	0.00	2.00	0.00	0.00	2.00		N/A	During 04/05 through financial assistance and liaison between owner and an RSL, the Council enabled the re-occupation of 345 and 347 Birmingham Rd. The guarantee of financial assistance in the absence of Hsg Corp funding also assisted the re-use of Saffron House, which will figure, in 05/06 statistics. Performance monitoring against this PI is driving the following action: Issuing of Empty Homes Initiative Information Packs to owners of empty homes. -Joint working with Council tax in sending questionnaires to owners of empty homes to identify reasons and methods of assistance. -Discretionary Empty Homes Grants to prospective LL's in return for nomination rights (subject to funds being available).-Through Private LL's Forum, publicising new Private Tenancy Scheme providing rent and condition guarantees to encourage prospective landlords to let empty homes.-Joint working with BDHT to identify empty accom over shops/buy back of empty dwellings.-Review need for Empty Homes Officer to specialise on research and enquiry to track empty homes (resource implication)
BV176 Domestic violence refuge places per 10,000 population, which are provided or supported by the authority.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.64	0.05	0.05	Unavail	0.08	0.08			Figure represents the proportion of DV places per 10K population provided by LA-BDC grant. Annual grant and increases are preset, therefore dependent upon outcome of Refuge annual costs. Final accounts from Gateway received in March allowing the calculation to be made.
BV183a Average length of stay (weeks) in B&B accommodation of households which include dependent children or a pregnant woman.	0.00	3.00	3.00	1.18	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00			Homelessness Act 2002 restricts use of B&B for this client group, therefore not used except in emergency. The figure relates to a historical placement which took place in June 2003. They have just been allocated a permanent tenancy & could not be included in the figures until our duty was fully discharged. This is not a reflection of current usage.

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Triangle = Performance below target

Question Mark = data unavailable





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SERVICE PERFORMANCE MONITORING

April 2004 - March 2005

SH - Strategic Housing Services National PIs												
	Actual 03/04	Target 04/05	Target for Period	Top Quartile	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	YTD	Perf to Target	Perf to Top Quartile	Comments
BV183b Length of stay (weeks) in hostel accom'n of households which include dependent children or a pregnant woman.	9.28	5.00	5.00	0.00	8.00	11.00	7.00	2.28	8.61			Restricted use of B&B under BV 183a increases pressure on use of hostel accom. Performance is governed by ability to move homeless on into permanent accom and demand from competing homeless apps. Performance monitoring against this PI is driving the following action: -Development of a 'pool of independent dwellings' that offer a better standard of temp accom (inc. private facilities) for families which are dispersed in the community (13 currently achieved). -Encouragement of a floating support service to assist clients in 'pool dwellings' - Review of the current Cat 1 and 2 priority system under which clients are moved from temp to permanent accom to ensure a fair and equitable approach is maintained.
BV202 Number of people sleeping rough on a single night within the area.	N/A	0.00	0.00	NEW	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		N/A	New BVP 1. Counted as zero if under 10 - no evidence of problem.
BV203 % change in the average number of families, which include independent children or a pregnant woman, placed in temporary accommodation under the homelessness legislation compared with the average from the previous year.	N/A	-12.00	-12.00	NEW	-3.00	-14.00	-13.00	10.80	-5.23		N/A	Performance is governed by three factors, i) the number of applicants becoming homeless ii) the backlog of other cases taking their turn and awaiting permanent rehousing from temporary accommodation and iii) the turnover / availability in social housing stock (which is reducing due to stock loss). Rarely possible to house directly into permanent accommodation without some length of stay in temp accom. The development of a pool of higher standard temporary but independent dwellings for the homeless as an expanding alternative to hostel and B&B offers clients a more suitable temporary housing solution, but does not improve the Councils performance against this PI as the 'pool dwellings' still classify as temporary accommodation. Only action that will improve PI is long term increase in supply of social housing.

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Question Mark = data unavailable







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N/A = Not applicable

Performance tolerance level is set at ± 10% target

SERVICE PERFORMANCE MONITORING

April 2004 - March 2005

ES - Environmental Services Local PI's												
	Actual 03/04	Target 04/05	Target for Period	Top Quartile	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	YTD	Perf to Target	Perf to Top Quartile	Comments
EHS1 % of Service requests responded to within 10 working days	N/A	99.00	99.00	N/A	Unavail	Unavail	91.00	98.50	98.50		N/A	The loss of key staff and other growing service pressures, resulted in us narrowly missing our ambitious customer request response target. However, the long-standing Pollution Control Officer post vacancy has now been filled.
EHS2 No. of schools registered for the ECO-schools scheme.	N/A	5	5	N/A	Unavail	Unavail	6	6	6		N/A	Exceeded target
EHS3 No. of compost bins sold.	N/A	1,000	1,000	N/A	Unavail	Unavail	1137	1137	1137		N/A	Exceeded target
EHS4 To complete the prioritisation of the inspection programme for contaminated land.	N/A	To complete programme	To complete programme	N/A	Unavail	Unavail	Not Completed	Not Completed	Not Completed		N/A	We were unable to commence our prioritisation of the inspection programme for contaminated land, due to the delay in land use data being installed onto the department's computer system. However, the land use data has recently been installed and the necessary site prioritisation work has begun.
EHS5 To produce a Local Air Quality Management Action Plan and complete the update and screening assessment of local air quality.	N/A	To complete plan	To complete plan	N/A	Unavail	Unavail	Completed	Completed	Completed		N/A	Plan completed on target.
EHS6 To produce & publish a County Waste Management Strategy in partnership with WCC & other DC's	N/A	To complete strategy	To complete strategy	N/A	Unavail	Unavail	Completed	Completed	Completed		N/A	Strategy was completed by December 2004

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Performance tolerance level is set at ± 10% target

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE CABINET

18TH MAY 2005

INFORMATION and COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT) STRATEGY

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Roger Hollingworth
Responsible Head of Service	Head of IT Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to define the Bromsgrove District Council Information and Communications Technology Strategy for the years 2005 through 2008. It also describes the rationale for our delivery of e-Government and how it will transform our services for the benefit of citizens and our customers.
- 1.2 The scope of this Strategy is that of a high level document which defines the strategic direction for ICT in line with the Council's Corporate Plan and e-Government vision.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That members agree the contents of the attached strategy and endorse it as the Council's Information and Communications Technology Strategy.
- 2.2 That the e-Government Project Team act as the ICT Strategy Programme Board.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The previous ICT strategy covered the period of transition up to the planned decommissioning of the mainframe computer in April 2004. There has been considerable expansion in the use of ICT by the Council in the last five years.
- 3.2 This document continues to build upon the principles stated in earlier strategies and recognises what we have achieved to date and then build upon these achievements.
- 3.3 Fundamentally, the objective of the ICT service is to help the Council to achieve its aims, either by carrying out processes more efficiently, or in a different manner. When implementing a new system, there is always the opportunity to change and improve the business processes (sometimes called "Business Process Re-engineering"). Departmental managers are responsible for considering the options in liaison with the ICT staff, to identify potential service improvements or savings.
- 3.4 The growth in the demands on the ICT service has resulted not only in an increase in the number of users using the computer network but also the change in emphasis. There is a requirement to provide remote access to a number of officers and members for access to the Council's computing facilities, particularly email facilities. This has resulted in the provision of telecommunication links and additional security to the network system.

- 3.5 Remote access to systems will expand with e-government requirements and the possible introduction of information points within the rural areas. Computing services is now required 7 days a week and outside the normal core office hours.
- 3.6 Members have laptop computers to enable them to participate in e-Government - retrieving documents, accessing information and e-mails and access to the Internet. ICT Services is responsible for training the Councillors both in use of equipment and the associated systems, and supporting them, remotely or otherwise, in the use of that equipment.
- 3.7 With the expansion of the Council's Internet facilities and the development of the Council's website, the use of electronic communication is rapidly increasing for the delivery of the Council's services.
- 3.8 There is potential for the increase in home working and greater access to systems from other remote information sites. This will require further development growth in the communications technology and use of web based access to systems.

4. THE STRATEGY

4.1 This Strategy, coupled with the rate of technological development, will drive modernisation forward. By addressing issues such as organising masses of data contained on paper and computer systems into coherent information systems we will be able to use this information to improve communication with our citizens.

4.2 The Strategy is presented in the following sections:

- **Purpose of the Document** - Need for a strategy & relationship with other plans and strategies.
- **Drivers for Change** - Both external & Internal
- **Enabling the Bromsgrove Vision** - aligned to e-Government vision
- **Strategic Approach** - Governance & Security
- **Technology Approach** - range of technologies used by the Council and how each area of technology conforms and integrates with the overall architecture.
- **Information Management** - Making better use of our information and Information Technology.
- **Councils ICT Strategic Goals** - Links ICT goals to the Council's six key objectives.
- **Implementation** - Outline Implementation Plan and a summary of the ICT projects that will turn our vision of e-Government into a reality.

4.3 This strategy will inform ICT developments and dovetail with key Council policy documents, including the Community Plan and Business Service Plans. It links with our new e-Government Strategy.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Many aspects of the ICT programme at both corporate and at service area levels are already funded or have funds in place, through IEG grant money.

5.2 There will be additional IEG funding of £150k in 2005-06 arising from our IEG4 submission in December 2004.

5.3 Some projects have Capital Expenditure already available as part of the approved Capital Programme for 2005/06.

6. DELIVERING THE STRATEGY

6.1 Having concentrated, in previous years, on ensuring that the Council has an infrastructure that supports what is a significant increase in data processing and data communication, it is now time to concentrate primarily on the delivery of applications that focus on improving the delivery of services to the citizen.

6.2 The annual review and update of this strategy includes the phasing of proposed projects and underpins the delivery of our e-Government agenda.

6.3 Delivery of the Strategy is subject to a number of key dependencies, not least the availability of capital and revenue resources and availability of the required ICT specialist skills. In addition, the strategy will need to remain flexible in order:

- To respond to any central Government initiatives which may in turn require a re-appraisal of overall priorities
- To take advantage of technological innovations over time

6.4 It is essential to recognise that ICT systems and ICT developments must be prioritised in relation to service business plans which in turn link to and enable the achievement of the Councils strategic aims.

6.5 A Project Management Methodology will be introduced for the delivery of major ICT projects providing a framework to manage projects. This framework will provide a standard and tested approach to such issues as management arrangements, planning, reporting and controls, risk, quality and change.

6.6 The summary of recommendations is highlighted in section nine of the strategy document and an outline implementation plan is detailed in the **APPENDIX** of the document.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 In the past we would not normally undertake pioneering projects, but would adopt new methods and technologies only when they are proven in other Local Authorities.

7.2 This remains the overall approach, but during the past 12 months we have found that there has been a good case for some of our developments to be more leading edge than was expected.

7.3 Risk assessment and management is included in the ICT project methodology. Unless there are unusual circumstances, the overall lower-risk option is to be taken, but in the context of a long-term view.

7.4 Private Sector partners will be appointed where they are able to provide skills and resources more efficiently than could be made available in-house, or where this would lessen the risk to the Council's services.

8. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

8.1 Much of the Government's modernisation agenda, including e-Government, impacts on corporate governance:

- Democratic renewal
- Community Leadership
- Engagement of the local community, consultation and partnership working
- Outward looking, accountable and responsive services
- Continuous improvement (including best value and value for money)
- The need to ensure inclusiveness and equality of access to public services

9. OTHER SUB HEADINGS

None

Human Resources
Environmental Considerations
Equalities Considerations
Policy Considerations

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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Bromsgrove District Council

Information Communications Technology Strategy

Bromsgrove Vision

March 2005



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1. PURPOSE of the DOCUMENT

The Council plan for employing technology to improve service delivery is described in the e-Government Strategy '**creating the Bromsgrove Vision**' (March 2005)


Investment in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) needs to be aligned with the Council's aims and objectives. The strategy recognises the Government's agenda for the modernising of local government, which is about the quality of local government services and the effectiveness of local democracy and the National Strategy for Local e- Government. The ICT Strategy provides the framework for achieving this by:

-  Describing how IT Services will work with other parts of the Council to maximise the benefits of the investment in ICT
-  Identifying the physical components that will be used.

1.1 NEED for a STRATEGY

Information technology needs to be planned and managed in an efficient and effective way and requires a corporate and consistent approach to be adopted throughout the Council in the use of the technology to aid the organisation to deliver the services to its customers.

The strategy provides direction and focus for the Council's investment in ICT by:

-  Establishing a framework for assessing technical aspects of investment in new systems;

- ✎ Identifying appropriate technology and standards to support information exchange with both internal and external stakeholders;
- ✎ Minimising the risk associated with ICT investment by identifying appropriate standards and procedures;
- ✎ Identifying the resources and competencies required for support and development;
- ✎ Providing a focus for the development of appropriate IT skills by users.

1.2 PREVIOUS STRATEGY

This document is the second Information & Communications Technology (ICT) Strategy since 2000. It summarises progress made since that time and is based upon the key elements as defined in Central Government's national e-Government strategy. It also describes the rationale for the delivery of e-Government, by the 31st December 2005, and how it will transform our services for the benefit of citizens and our customers.

The previous ICT Strategy covered the period of transition up to the planned decommissioning of our mainframe in April 2004. There has been considerable expansion in the use of ICT by the Council in the last 5 years, and much of the Capital investment required has been justified using the previous ICT Strategy.

Over the past five years, further investment has been made to install new and enhanced business applications, including:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| ✎ Financial Management | Payroll |
| ✎ Geographic Information system (GIS) | Environmental Health |
| ✎ Building & Development Control | Leisure Booking |
| ✎ Licensing system | Land & Property |
| ✎ Corporate Document Management | |

Major in-house development of a new Council Website, Content Management system, Intranet and the Customer Relationship Management system as part of the Customer Service Centre took place.

1.3 RELATIONSHIP with COMMUNITY, CORPORATE and SERVICE PLANS

The annual review and update of this Strategy includes the phasing of proposed projects and underpins the delivery of our e-government agenda, it is also closely linked to other corporate plans & strategies and underpins the Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) statements.

Key elements incorporated in the development of the strategy are:

- ☞ Bromsgrove District Council Vision
- ☞ The Community Plan created by our Local Strategic Partnership,
- ☞ Best Value Performance Plan and
- ☞ Service Business Plans

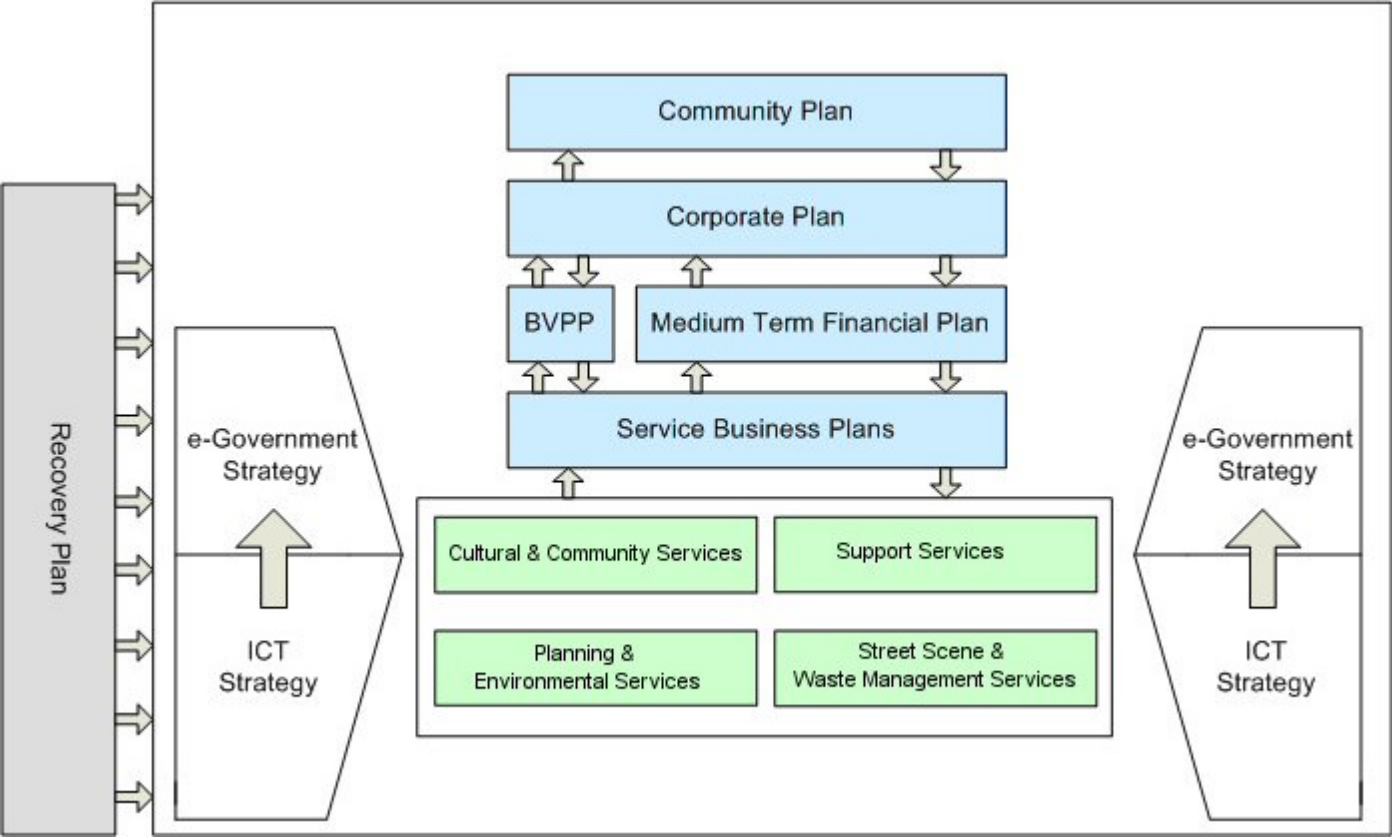
The review process of the strategy is as follows:

- ☞ Review and update carried out by ICT Staff, to confirm completeness of content and the feasibility of its phased delivery timescales.
- ☞ A review by the council's Officer Management Team (OMT) & Senior Management Team (SMT)
- ☞ A review by the e-Government Project Team (which comprises of e-Government Member Champion, e-Government officer champion/ Head of IT Services, Corporate Director of Resources and representation from all Directorates in the Authority)
- ☞ Review and approval by the Cabinet.
- ☞ Ultimately approval by full council.

The ICT Strategy is cross-cutting and provides direction for the use of ICT by Services, as outlined in Service Business Plans. In this way, the Strategy supports the Council's overall aims and objectives.

ICT Strategy
Creating the Bromsgrove Vision

Moreover, ICT Strategy creates the critical link between the Council's Corporate Plans, Central Government Initiatives and Information Technology.



1.4 RELATIONSHIP to e-GOVERNMENT STRATEGY

There is a separate associated strategy for e-Government, which was approved in March 2005.

The focus of the e-Government strategy is on using technology to transform front-line service delivery. New channels of service delivery (Contact Centre, face-to-face contact and the Internet) rely on a robust, secure and flexible technology architecture. This technology architecture and the associated management arrangements are the focus of the ICT Strategy.




2. DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

2.1 EXTERNAL & INTERNAL INFLUENCES





There are many drivers, both external and internal to our organisation, shaping the ICT Strategy. The Council operates in an environment of social, economic, environmental, political and technological change. An on-going process of adaptation is required to ensure that the Council evolves in line with its external environment. As the Council adapts, its use of ICT will change. Therefore the same external drivers for change will influence the future direction of ICT in the Council.

This ICT strategy document considers the major drivers and assesses their impact on the future direction of the Council.

2.1.1 The External Drivers Include:

-  The Government's modernisation agenda in particular the e-Government drive
-  Emerging best practice in providing access to public services in excellent Councils
-  The use of Quality Standards to improve services

2.1.2 The internal drivers for the Council are:





-  The commitments made to the e-Worcestershire Hub Partnership
-  The need to specifically consider access to services in the rural areas
-  Improved availability of Information
-  Drive for excellent performance

2.2 CENTRAL INITIATIVES

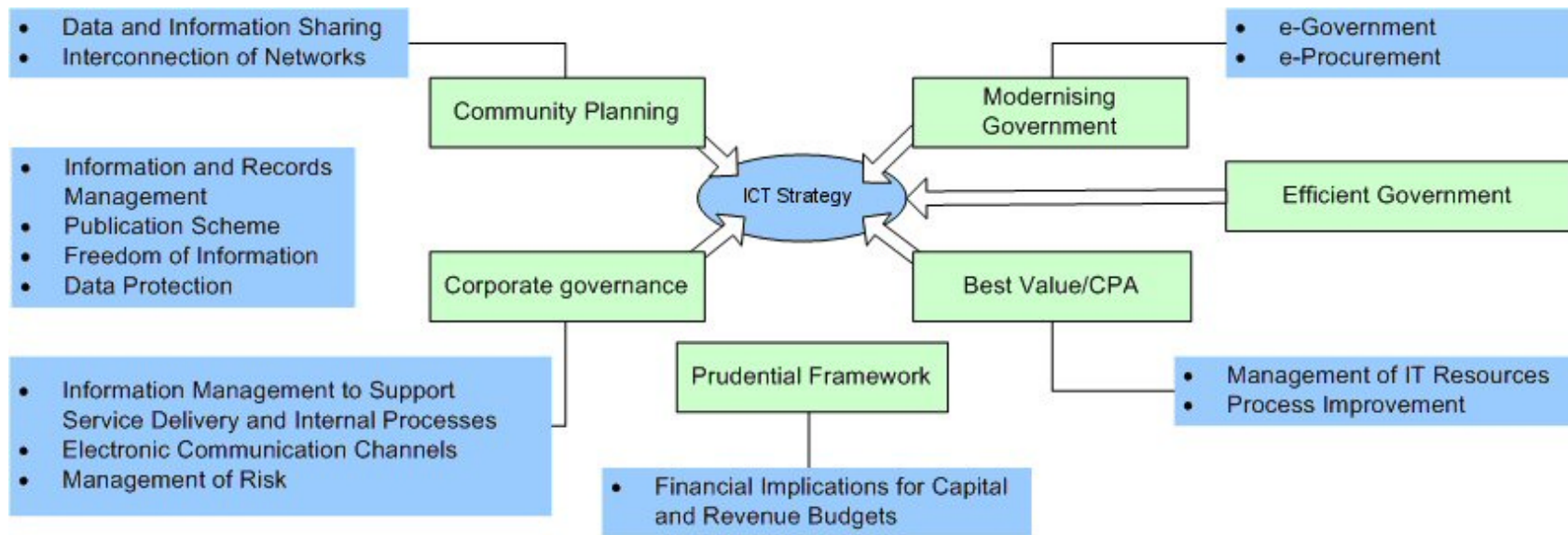
Information Age Government is using new technology to make government services more useful, accessible, reliable and fast; to increase openness and public participation in government. The Information Age offers tremendous scope for organising government activities in new, innovative and better ways and for making life easier for the public by providing public services in integrated, imaginative and more convenient forms, such as single gateways, the Internet and digital TV.

2.2.1 e-Government

The Office of the e-Envoy has developed a strategic framework for public services in the Information Age. It challenges all public sector organisations to innovate; it challenges the centre of government to provide common infrastructure which is needed to achieve these goals. e-Government has four guiding principles:

-  building services around citizens' choices
-  making government and its services more accessible
-  social inclusion
-  using information better.

ICT Strategy Creating the Bromsgrove Vision



Influence of external factors on ICT Strategy

3. ENABLING the BROMSGROVE VISION

The e-Government strategy highlights how this vision will be realised through an ambitious and wide-ranging programme of citizen and customer facing projects such as the Customer Service Centre, Web Site development and the e-Worcestershire Hub. Also important to delivering services is the reconfiguration of back office systems through projects such as Document Management, Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and the Land & Property and Geographic Information System (GIS). While these developments are in progress there remains the imperative of supporting the day-to-day business of the Council.

🔗 The **electronic government interoperability framework** (e-GIF), under the management of the Office of the e-Envoy, mandates policies and standards for achieving integration and coherence across the public sector. These specifications set the underlying

infrastructure, freeing up public sector organisations to concentrate on serving the customer through building added value information and services.

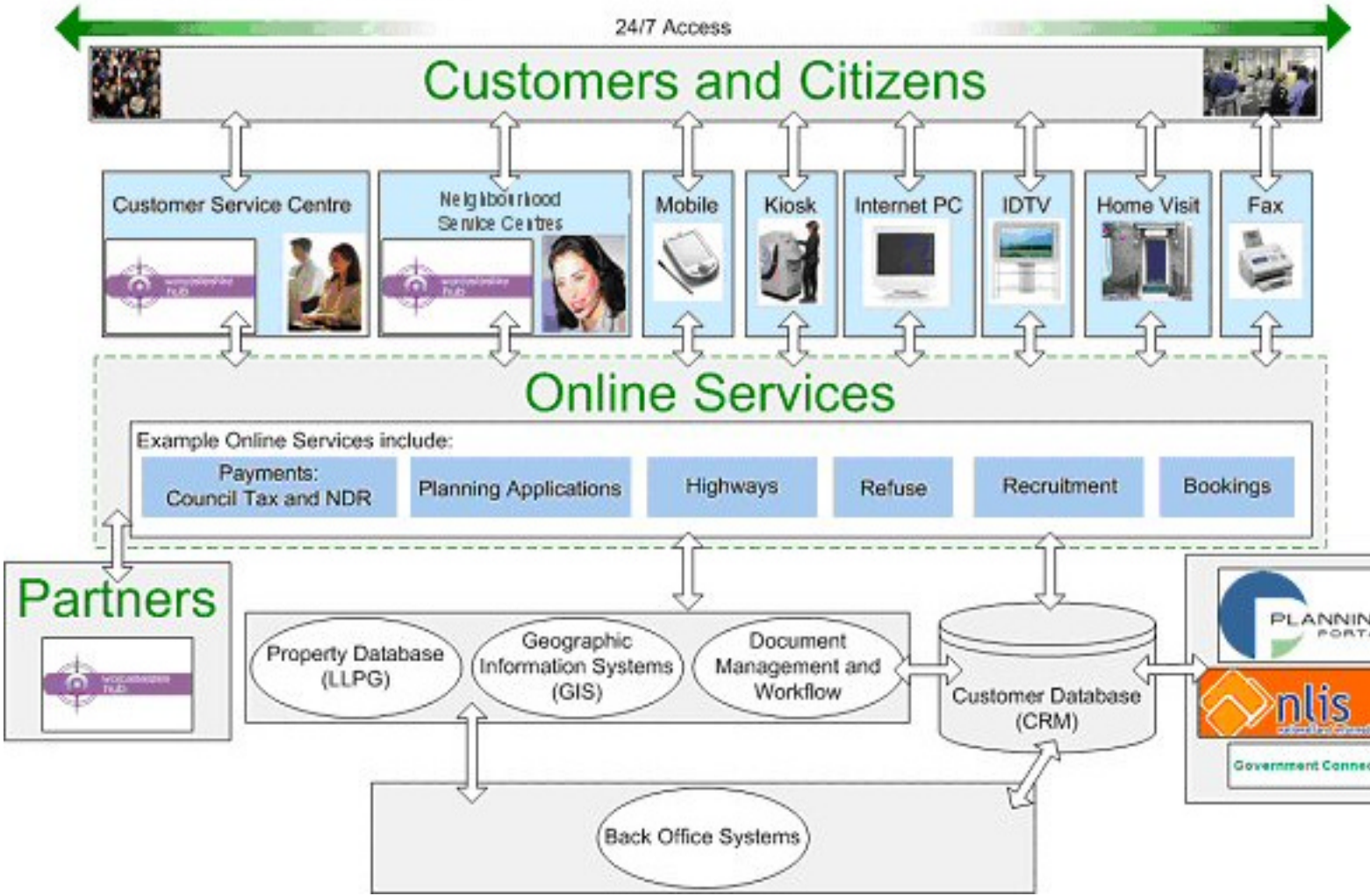
- ☞ The e-GIF approach must be consistently implemented by officers working together across the Council within a framework of **corporate governance**. It becomes even more important when set against the background of demand for modern, responsive, integrated public services enabled by increasingly complex technologies.
- ☞ The speed of technological change has increased in the Internet age. There are many products which claim to deliver the levels of integration required to achieve the e-Government goals. It is therefore essential to undertake a continuing programme of **knowledge awareness** into use of technologies which will help to deliver the Council's Key Objectives, enable "joined-up" government and maintain a firm foundation for the future.
- ☞ There is an increasing requirement to share data securely across the Council and with other organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors, in order to deliver the citizen's expectations for public services in this modern age. An effective strategy will simplify the technical aspects of data sharing. It will put in place a comprehensive **security infrastructure**, enabling concentration on the personal and organisational protocols relating to permissions and confidentiality.
- ☞ A technical ICT strategy is an investment in structural design, standards and integration principles supported by hardware and software which match the needs of the organisation. There is a requirement for a sound **project management** methodology and the implementation of a **managed test environment** to ensure robustness of the solutions deployed. The adoption of **disaster recovery** planning, is essential to safeguard ongoing operations. This standards-based strategy will deliver flexibility and responsiveness, laying foundations for changes that cannot necessarily be foreseen.

Delivering ICT is only part of the implementation of new, more effective ways of working. This strategy advocates that we need to think of e-Government as being first and foremost about changing the way government works, rather than simply about technology.

A cohesive approach to technology, reducing the level of variation, will bring about significant business efficiencies not only in terms of ICT operations but also with regard to both front-line services and back office support functions. Examples of the impacts on the Council and its services to the citizen or client that implementation of the technical strategy can deliver include;

- 🔗 Delivery of ICT 24 x 7, enabling front-line services whenever required
- 🔗 Citizen or client has a choice of methods, locations and times for contacting the Council
- 🔗 Elected members and officers can keep in touch with Council business from home or other locations of their choice and have convenient access to a range of information sources from across and outside of the Council
- 🔗 A higher proportion of the Council's ICT resources engaged in development of solutions for improved services
- 🔗 Solutions developed in one Service applied across the Council
- 🔗 Easy to use, resilient technology, appropriate to the purpose
- 🔗 Service departments can take advantage of cost-saving and service improvement from corporate contracts & partnership
- 🔗 Field staff able to use technology to make appointments, provide confirmation of service, report problems and access information needed to deliver an improved service while spending less time travelling to and from the office
- 🔗 Elected members and officers are ICT literate and have appropriate technology skills

The **Bromsgrove Vision** uses technology to enhance service delivery and provide the opportunity for citizens of Bromsgrove to take advantage of the Information Age



4. STRATEGIC APPROACH

4.1 e-Government Interoperability Framework

Joining up services across the public, private and voluntary sectors, including national and UK agencies will make a significant impact on the lives of citizens. Compliance with the e-GIF framework is a pre-requisite in achieving the level of integration and data-sharing necessary to deliver the Bromsgrove Vision.

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="215 683 943 783">☞ An ongoing activity of ensuring compliance and influencing the future direction of the e-GIF to be undertaken <li data-bbox="215 818 920 919">☞ Interoperability to be ensured in all technical selections, developments and interactions with suppliers <li data-bbox="215 954 960 1091">☞ Use of the Government Connect project to be considered where a secure and resilient service capable of handling high transaction volumes with another government agency is required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1050 683 1939 719">☞ Essential to the achievement of Council e-Government goals <li data-bbox="1050 754 1995 791">☞ Essential to delivery of wider modernising government objectives <li data-bbox="1050 826 2074 890">☞ Potential for central government to dictate use of the Connect Gateway for “joined up” services

4.2 Corporate Governance

Corporate Governance is the system by which local authorities direct and control their functions and relate to their communities. The e-Government strategy highlights that in order to deliver Best Value ICT services to the Council and engage in joint working with other agencies, it is necessary to adopt a cohesive approach to technology provision.

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="215 587 1028 691">✎ A common framework of strategies, standards and guidelines to be developed and implemented as a partnership between ICT and Audit <li data-bbox="215 722 1028 826">✎ The framework to include a consistent approach to service continuity and to be integrated with the Council Budget and Service Planning process <li data-bbox="215 858 1028 994">✎ Progress towards the electronic service delivery targets and the Bromsgrove vision to be monitored through Council-wide programme management, assisted by electronic reporting tools <li data-bbox="215 1026 1028 1129">✎ Corporate procurement and support agreements to be negotiated with key vendors, adopting a more collaborative approach <li data-bbox="215 1161 1028 1332">✎ Corporate awareness of organisations such as FAST (Federation Against Software Theft) and the Business Software Alliance (an international organisation representing leading software and e-commerce developers). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1050 587 2080 794">✎ A local authority is required to establish effective political and managerial structures to govern decision-making. This requirement includes documenting clearly, structures and processes which are designed to eliminate ineffective practices. Also important is ensuring that there is a mechanism in place to keep these up to date and to adapt to change <li data-bbox="1050 826 2080 930">✎ Facilitates the provision of cohesive public services to the Citizen through initiatives such as the Customer Service Centre, web portals, etc <li data-bbox="1050 962 2080 1026">✎ Delivers high quality solutions and services through effective processes and standards <li data-bbox="1050 1058 2080 1106">✎ Capitalises on the ICT skills available across the Council <li data-bbox="1050 1137 2080 1201">✎ Ensures the proper scrutiny and review of performance and effectiveness by implementing appropriate methods and tools <li data-bbox="1050 1233 2080 1332">✎ Software 'piracy' is covered by legislation addressing general licensing issues and major companies are increasingly willing to use the courts to protect their products. All Elected Members and staff must make

themselves aware of their responsibilities.

4.3 Knowledge Awareness Programme

The pace of technological change is ever increasing and it is essential that the Council is able to take informed judgements as to the suitability and maturity of solutions which become available. In addition there is a need to develop and improve the ICT service model. Therefore an ongoing programme of knowledge awareness will be undertaken.

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="203 630 1016 766">✎ A knowledge programme to be undertaken to maintain and improve the Council's understanding of technological advances and inform future developments and changes to the strategy <li data-bbox="203 798 1016 901">✎ A watching brief to be kept on emerging technologies in order to determine whether and when they are appropriate for Council implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1043 630 2060 734">✎ Assists in delivering the Council's Key Objectives by identifying technological advances that enable business efficiencies and improvement of services to the citizen or client <li data-bbox="1043 766 2060 837">✎ Develops an ICT service model which will deliver Best Value in the changing environment of e-Government <li data-bbox="1043 869 2060 941">✎ Encourages sharing of ICT knowledge and resources across the Council <li data-bbox="1043 973 2060 1077">✎ Develops a more collaborative approach by talking to our e-Worcestershire Hub partners to determine requirements and expertise available in ICT.

4.4 Security Infrastructure

Security becomes a much more complex area as the Council moves into the e-Government age. Considerable investment and effort is required to fully protect the information assets and the confidentiality of the citizen or client, while providing 24 x 7 services.

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The security infrastructure to be re-designed and implemented to support the requirements of e-Government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Enhances the security of confidential information essential to the maintenance of the trust relationship between the citizen and government
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Security infrastructure to be subject to stricter management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Minimises the number of access points to the Council's private network
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Education programmes to be enhanced or put in place to ensure Council users understand the importance of good security practice in the increasingly complex e-Government environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Complies with the Government's e-GIF standards ☞ Provides scalability to allow growth as user demand dictates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Updated procedures to be implemented to ensure continued effective monitoring of the redesigned security infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Provides high availability to support 24 x 7 access to services ☞ Provides flexibility to support the expansion of services into iDTV, remote kiosks, PDA/Mobile, etc ☞ Delivers on-going management of the infrastructure in an effective and efficient manner








4.5 Project Management Methodology

A corporate formalised project management methodology is essential to effective implementation of ICT solutions and the business change that these enable. PRINCE is a proven methodology covering management and control of projects. It was first developed in 1989 as a UK Government standard for ICT project management. Since its introduction, PRINCE has become widely used in both the public and private sectors and is now the UK's de facto standard. The PRINCE 2 guidance published in 1998, states that the way in which the methodology is applied to each project will vary considerably and that tailoring to circumstances is therefore critical to its successful use.

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="203 679 1016 783">✎ The PRINCE 2 methodology customised to meet the needs of the Council to be adopted for all major technology-related projects <li data-bbox="203 815 1016 919">✎ Guidelines to be developed to assist project managers in ensuring the methodology is used appropriately <li data-bbox="203 951 1016 1023">✎ The effective management of risk to be a key feature in all projects regardless of size <li data-bbox="203 1054 1016 1158">✎ Appropriate training in the methodology to be put in place for all those who will be involved in ICT related projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1043 679 2067 815">✎ A formal project management methodology provides a framework for managing a project, providing a standard, tested approach to such issues as management arrangements, planning, reporting and controls, risk, quality and change <li data-bbox="1043 847 2067 951">✎ PRINCE 2 is a comprehensive, widely-used project management methodology designed to be tailored to the needs of a project and organisation <li data-bbox="1043 983 2067 1054">✎ We currently have a poor reputation for ICT related projects in terms of missed delivery dates and failure to meet requirements <li data-bbox="1043 1086 2067 1158">✎ The effectiveness of any methodology will be compromised if training is inadequate

4.6 Managed Test Environment

An important factor in provision of high quality ICT solutions is the robustness of testing. A managed test methodology will put in place technologies and processes allowing full risk management at every stage of development and implementation.

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Standards and processes to be developed and implemented corporately for deployment of solutions on any production platform  Managed test environment methodology to be implemented for the Internet platform  The feasibility of setting up and maintaining separate development, testing and production environments for each strategic system to be examined. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  The shift towards electronic service delivery increases the dependence on technical solutions for effective provision of services to the citizen  The adoption of this methodology will increase the quality of solutions deployment, protecting the production systems  Cost and risk will determine the systems for which the fully developed approach can be taken  Server and storage consolidation programmes will assist in the set-up of managed test environments

4.7 Disaster Recovery

Ongoing delivery of ICT services depends on comprehensive disaster recovery planning.

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔒 Requirement to monitor ICT service delivery across the Council supporting 24 x 7 service where appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔒 Implementation of a management methodology delivers high availability ICT services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔒 Develop the Contingency planning policy statement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔒 A formal corporate policy provides the guidance necessary to develop an effective contingency plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔒 Identify preventive controls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔒 Measures taken to reduce the effects of system disruptions can increase system availability and reduce contingency costs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔒 Develop Recovery Strategies for all Business Critical systems, including the Council House, Customer Service Centre and Leisure suites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔒 Thorough recovery strategies ensure that the system may be recovered quickly and effective following a disruption.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔒 Tools for automatic deployment of software to the desktop to be implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔒 Staff are assisted in performing specialist tasks such as performance tuning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔒 Consistent disaster recovery plans to be in place across the Council in line with Audit recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔒 In preparing a disaster recovery plan Services must establish how they will fulfil their responsibilities in case of loss of ICT service and consider cost benefit for provision of resilience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔒 All users of the Councils ICT infrastructure and systems must adhere to the Internet & Email usage policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔒 Raises awareness about what is classed as acceptable use.

4.8 Shared Services

A single shared ICT support service for all of Worcestershire Councils.

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="203 523 994 592">☞ Play an active role in ICT shared services discussion with other County partners. <li data-bbox="203 628 994 727">☞ Play an active role in the various technological subgroup discussions as part of the overall shared service vision. <li data-bbox="203 764 994 799">☞ Identify 'quick wins' as part of collaborative working. <li data-bbox="203 836 994 904">☞ Look at joint procurement exercises with other District Councils where and when necessary. <li data-bbox="203 941 994 1010">☞ Be aware of the ICT element involved in the other shared service area workstreams. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1041 523 1693 558">☞ Keep ICT staff briefed of all developments. <li data-bbox="1041 595 1818 630">☞ Encourage ICT staff to contribute to the discussions. <li data-bbox="1041 667 2065 702">☞ Have ICT representation in the other shared service area workstreams..

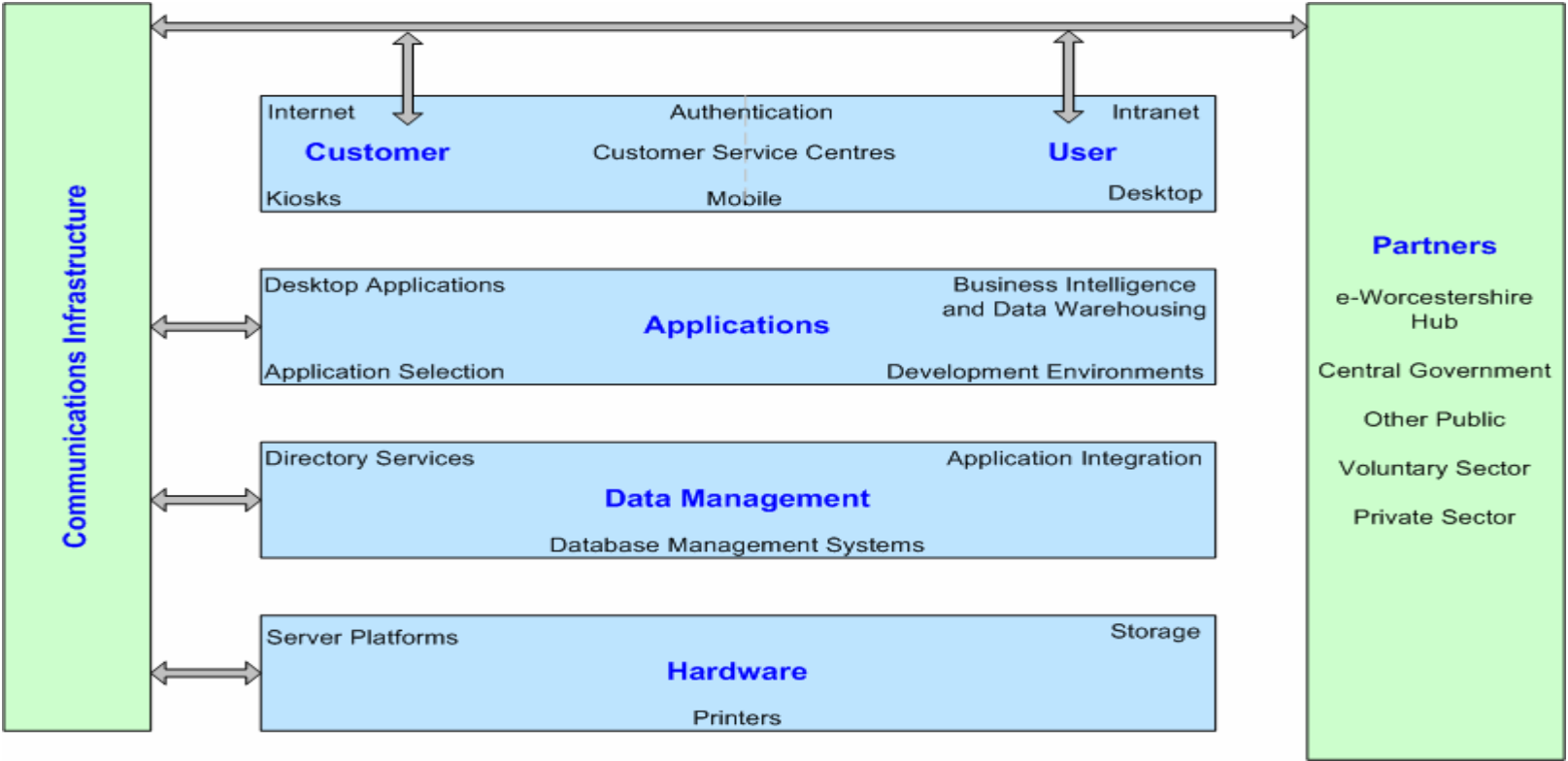
4.9 Training

ICT competency framework for IT staff and a general IT competency for all staff. Member training is covered elsewhere in the document.

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔗 Develop ICT Competency Framework for all staff based on the EDCL model. 🔗 Continue to promote in-house IT training courses 🔗 Develop ICT Competency Framework for ICT staff. 🔗 Include fundamental skills analysis in the ICT staff appraisal process. 🔗 Build ICT staff training plan based on the gap analysis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔗 All staff will be competent and comfortable in the use of IT. 🔗 Increased efficiency in some areas of work. 🔗 Should lead to less IT Help Desk calls, if users are more certain in their IT usage. 🔗 ICT staff need to keep abreast of ICT developments as technology moves on apace. 🔗 ICT staff need knowledge and understanding of the new systems as they come in to the Council.

5. TECHNOLOGY APPROACH

The strategic approach outlined in the previous section has implications across the range of technologies used by the Council. The diagram below indicates how these fit into an overall framework enabling the **Bromsgrove Vision**. Each area of technology must conform and integrate with the overall architecture.



5.1 Customer

This section covers self-service customer provision. Desktop PCs are currently provided for customers in the Customer Service Centre but are consistent with office architecture as in 5.2. Authentication is particularly significant for Electronic Service Delivery to the customer although it is also relevant to Council users.

Internet

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ All Internet deployment to be undertaken within the corporate framework defined for the web 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Supports delivery of services to the public over the Internet, in line with the Council's e-Government strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The cohesive Internet platform based on Redhat Linux, Apache & Coldfusion be developed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Uses a validated e-Government platform and complies with relevant e-Government standards such as e-GIF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Infrastructure to be corporately managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Operates within the proposed security infrastructure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Content to be locally managed to a set of templates, standards and guidelines as provided by the Content Management System (CMS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Conforms and integrates with other areas of the architecture proposals, minimising additional costs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Effective monitoring of uptake and usage to be put in place 	

Kiosks (Current Status: 0)

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="215 427 1028 496">☞ Keep a watching brief on the development of kiosk technology and strategies <li data-bbox="215 531 1028 600">☞ Take up further discussion with BT re their proposals for using existing telephone boxes for kiosk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1050 427 2080 528">☞ Provides a means of delivering electronic information and services to the citizens of Bromsgrove and visitors at a time and a place convenient to them









Authentication (Current Status: Not used)

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="215 1007 1028 1075">☞ Watching brief to be maintained on the development of national smartcard programmes <li data-bbox="215 1110 1028 1179">☞ A single card for authentication to be the preferred ultimate target for customers and within the Council <li data-bbox="215 1214 1028 1283">☞ Other Authentication technologies such as biometrics to be monitored 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1050 975 2080 1043">☞ Standardisation provides citizens and clients with a single card method of accessing services <li data-bbox="1050 1078 2080 1147">☞ Potential for central government to mandate use of a particular card technology <li data-bbox="1050 1182 2080 1219">☞ Multiple cards systems for staff increases administration overhead

5.2 User

This section covers the tools provided to Council officers and elected members in order to undertake their responsibilities.

Customer Service Centre (Current status: 1)

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Phase I of the Service Centre to handle phone and face to face contacts from citizens relating to a number of services, including Revenues & Benefits, Environmental & cash payments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Provides public access to information and services through a single point of contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Future phases to incorporate a wide range of services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Handles straightforward requests, freeing specialist staff to concentrate on more complex matters
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Back office integration with Service Centre CRM system to be developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Enables a better understanding to be gained of the range and type of services required by a particular citizen or client
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Migration programme to be undertaken to one set of integrated call centre technology across the Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Reduces the support overhead for the communications technologies

Desktop (Current Status: 3 Suppliers and 5 Windows operating systems across 350 PC's)

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Technology refresh programme required to remove old technologies and keep current technology on the Desktop. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Desktops are a key tool for the Council and as such require a service model which ensures supply and support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Consistent, affordable approach to be adopted to desktop supply and support, aimed at reducing proliferation of makes, models, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Standard hardware reduces the number of builds required and issues encountered on deployments of applications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Hardware standards with structured build to be defined and adopted, complete with refresh programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Standard builds enable effective rapid restore/refresh capability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Core, service and corporate build layer standards to be created for desktop software 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Directory services, remote management and deployment tools reduce the overhead involved in roll-outs and support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Software imaging, backup, remote management and software deployment tools to be used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ A standard back-up tool performs data restores with minimum of effort
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Security & different levels of lock-down to be achieved via directory services (Active Directory) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Reduction in number of suppliers and operating systems deployed to be targeted 	

Mobile (Current Status: 2 laptop suppliers across 30 Notebooks, various intelligent handhelds) Mobile telephony is not under the remit of ICT. This does not include the Notebooks as part of the 'e-enabling Members' project.

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Hardware and build standards for laptop and handheld computers to be defined and adopted ☞ Access security and backup procedures to be defined and adopted ☞ Appropriate training to be provided in security and backup procedures for those using mobile technologies ☞ In line with desktop, identify an affordable and effective delivery model that will consolidate the various makes and models of laptops deployed. ☞ The selection criteria for handheld computers to be specific to service requirement at this stage ☞ Further work to be commissioned to establish standards for use of handhelds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Requirement for mobile computing is likely to increase over time ☞ Standardisation on hardware and build will ensure consistent performance levels across the Council and assist in support provision ☞ Risks to corporate data are increased by the use of mobile devices as they are necessarily outside of automatic control systems for much of the time. The responsibility of individuals for adherence to backup and security policies is correspondingly increased ☞ The output from the current pilots of handheld technologies will help determine the usefulness of individual mobile computing solutions for the Council ☞ Handheld technology is changing rapidly and therefore this is not an appropriate time to mandate a standard

Member (Current Status: 1 laptop supplier across 23 Notebooks, HP MFD printers & ADSL Internet connection at home).

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Hardware and build standards for laptop computers to be defined and adopted ☞ Access security and backup procedures to be defined and adopted, members documents will be held centrally in Data Warehouse ☞ Appropriate training to be provided in security and backup procedures for those using mobile technologies ☞ In line with desktop, identify an affordable and effective delivery model that will consolidate the various makes and models of laptops deployed. ☞ Member ICT training plan to be developed. ☞ Development of Members Web Portal to continue in conjunction with members as they become more comfortable with the technology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Requirement for member mobile computing is likely to increase over time ☞ Standardisation on hardware and build will ensure consistent performance levels across the estate and assist in support provision ☞ Risks to corporate data are increased by the use of mobile devices as they are necessarily outside of automatic control systems for much of the time. The responsibility of individuals for adherence to security policies is correspondingly increased. ICT & technology will securely backup Member documents from Data Warehouse. ☞ An easy to use interface for all member needs will help make members more confident with the technology.

Intranet (Current status: single corporate infrastructure in use)

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="203 496 1016 595">✎ Newly adopted Internet architecture to be deployed for Intranet use, awaiting business case and release of IEG funds. <li data-bbox="203 635 1016 667">✎ Infrastructure to be corporately managed <li data-bbox="203 707 1016 805">✎ Content to be locally managed to a set of templates, standards and guidelines. Extension of the Internet CMS system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1043 496 2067 528">✎ The Intranet is a key method of communication across the Council. <li data-bbox="1043 568 2067 632">✎ Conforms and integrates with other areas of the architecture proposals, minimising additional costs

5.3 Applications/Tools

This section includes a summary of application selection criteria in addition to recommendations for tools used in in-house developments. Desktop applications are defined as those deployed as a separate instance for each user or developed using standard office tools such as Excel and Access.








Application Selection (Current Status: Selection criteria only based on Financial Standing Orders)

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Enhanced standards and guidelines to be developed for use across the Council in line with ICT and Audit recommendations ☞ Fit with e-Government & ICT Strategy to be recognised as a business requirement to be included in specifications for applications ☞ Variations to be considered only after a fully developed business case has been approved ☞ Tailoring of applications to be kept to a minimum and integration to other Council applications to be identified at specification stage. ☞ Vendor's commitment to e-GIF compliance and a strategic approach to be assessed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Procurement of 3rd party or packaged applications can provide ease of support and reduced maintenance costs ☞ A key deliverable of the technical strategy is the reduction in support overhead and required skills base. Packaged software must therefore comply or external arrangements be made at the contract stage ☞ Implementing vendor standard versions of applications delivers business benefits in robustness of solutions and thus in ongoing support and maintenance ☞ Application vendors of a standard appropriate to the Council should be expected to demonstrate a strategic approach to product development and provide a detailed Roadmap of development.



Development Environments (Current Status: 4 development environments)

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="203 427 1016 496">✎ Number of development environments and tools to be standardised <li data-bbox="203 531 1016 600">✎ A definition of the appropriate use of each language to be developed <li data-bbox="203 635 1016 740">✎ Existing midrange applications to be web-enabled where required to provide convenient interface until replacement is due <li data-bbox="203 775 1016 844">✎ Internal provision of application development to conform to the strategy recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1043 427 2065 564">✎ Reduced development skills base increases efficiency and effectiveness in managing resources across development and support and in delivering quality of output. This applies equally to external developments on behalf of the Council <li data-bbox="1043 600 2065 668">✎ The user population is becoming accustomed to a web-enabled interface <li data-bbox="1043 703 2065 772">✎ Adherence to the strategy for external developments will simplify support arrangements

Desktop Applications (Current Status: Many multi-user deployments with inadequate system controls)

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  The Technology refresh programme will impact on what operating systems these applications will run on  Design and usage standards to be defined for desktop applications  Desktop applications should not be used to support business critical processes unless approved as exceptional  Standard toolkit to be defined  Multiple-user desktop applications to be migrated to a standard database on a server. Migration priorities and interim support arrangements to be defined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Business critical corporate databases should generally be located on a server to provide control of corporate data, backup and housekeeping processes, and to ensure any economies of scale or synergies are achieved e.g. in avoiding duplication of data. Standards will define occasions when exception is appropriate e.g. the election results application  Office tools such as Excel and Access are not designed for development of complex business-critical applications. Using them in this way opens the Council to risk of loss of important information








Data Warehousing (Current Status: 1 developing warehouse)

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Data Warehouse application being developed as part of our Storage Area Network (SAN) solution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Ensure an integrated corporate approach to Data Warehousing, a new area of technology for the Council

5.4 Data Management

Data structures and file and print facilities continue to be important areas of technology. The move to “joined-up” services has increased the emphasis on managing the data across applications using integration tools.

Directory Services (Current Status: 1, Active Directory (Microsoft))

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Significant ongoing work still to be undertaken in this area  Gradual migration to one directory to be undertaken over a period of time as business opportunities arise  Active Directory to provide single sign-on access and control password updates to all systems with minimal interaction from the user 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  The selection of this architecture for the Internet infrastructure makes a shift towards standardising on the Windows technology increasingly likely in the longer term.  Need to consider the support for file and print services on Windows NT.  A strategic consolidated server, storage and backup infrastructure will prove beneficial to the Authority, providing ease of support and maintenance.  The requirement to sign on separately is inconvenient to the user and inefficient to manage

Relational Database Management Systems (Current Status: 5 main suppliers)

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Standardise on Oracle where possible ☞ Support arrangements for non-standard database deployments will require to be made in the shorter term 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ A number of installed versions of software across the Council are approaching their notional end-of-life and will shortly be unsupported by the vendor ☞ Nearly all database products require a high degree of specialist expertise and there are therefore benefits from standardisation ☞ Applications and skilled resource for the recommended products are generally easily obtained but very expensive ☞ Significant effort over a period of time will be required to bring about standardisation

Application Integration

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Integration tools to comply with e-GIF requirements to use XML for data transfer ☞ Number of integration tools to be minimised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Reduces the cost of managing complex integration environments ☞ Enables joining up of existing systems to provide a web enabled and holistic approach to services ☞ The e-government imperative to link beyond the Council's boundaries creates a requirement to examine products used in national initiatives. Implementation of more than one integration tool may result from this

5.5 Hardware

All classes of server and storage are covered by this section. Printers are included although they may also be regarded as user layer in many instances. In recent years there has been a tendency for a server with directly connected storage to be acquired for each new application. In order to achieve economies of scale and lessen support issues, the Council is undertaking significant work in setting in place a consolidation strategy. Printers too will benefit from a cohesive approach to procurement and deployment.

Server Platforms (Current Status: 35 servers, 10 UNIX, 19 Win2K, 3 Win2003, 2 NT4 & 1 Sun Solaris)

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Technology refresh programme will cover some of the older server technologies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The Council's most commonly deployed UNIX flavour is RedHat Linux.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Standardise on single versions of UNIX and Windows technologies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ SUN remain a clear market leader of UNIX solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Move from project based procurement to a strategic planning approach with all short-term developments giving consideration to server consolidation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Standardising will deliver benefits in terms of technical administration, ease of connectivity, backup capability, optimisation of system resource usage, etc
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Hardware and operating system management tools to be deployed on all servers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Having RedHat LINUX strategy in place, allowing the possibility of adopting an Open Source strategy in the future
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Clustering and load balancing to be deployed where appropriate to enhance resilience and performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Requirement to move from NT4 & Win2k platforms. Server Consolidation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Standard back-up software to be identified for all platforms 	

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Storage (2TB of directly attached storage, currently 800Gb of total storage in use)

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Move from directly attached storage towards the consolidated solution, fibre connected SAN Develop storage model to support server consolidation, the web strategy and the data requirements of major applications Consolidate Application servers as part of move towards Directory Services, Active Directory. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Council servers utilise some form of directly attached storage, which is both expensive to manage and labour intensive to back up on the ever-increasing number of platforms A combined server and storage consolidation methodology will enable a more efficient approach to platform management Bandwidth will be in place to allow consolidation as a result of the communications/infrastructure development over the past few years The cost of SAN / NAS solutions now compares favourably with that of directly attached server storage

Printers (Current status: 3 suppliers, 75 models across 350 PC's, 43 printers are networked, 32 standalone desktop)

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Network printing to be adopted as standard and further investigation into Digital printing required Development of a corporate printing strategy to be undertaken, allowing services to consolidate the number of printers in use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standardised hardware will bring business efficiencies in terms of procurement and support, and also in Service usage IT department leading the work of developing a printing strategy which can subsequently be implemented across the Council Some MFD devices already in use at Customer Service Centre & MFD

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The use and benefits of multi-function devices (MFD) within the Council environment to be fully assessed 	<p>printers being used as part of the e-members roll out programme</p>
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5.6 Communications & Infrastructure

The Communications infrastructure is a fundamental building block for implementation of this **ICT Strategy and indeed the e-Government Strategy**. Communications between departments and Council buildings is one area, the other is communications round the District and County, the Wide Area Network,

Recommendations	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Develop and implement a Communications Infrastructure Strategy which will support the changing environment ☞ The Standard for Communications internally still to be CISCO ☞ One cohesive set of communications infrastructure to be implemented across the District, this ☞ Network capacity to be monitored and if need be improved ☞ Obsolete Communications hardware to be removed ☞ Foundations for voice, video, data traffic using the same path already laid and in place ☞ Communications infrastructure to be corporately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Communications technologies are fundamental to the provision of e-Government services ☞ Demand for bandwidth continually increases, particularly as enterprise applications, video and audio are deployed ☞ Wide Area Ethernet provides an increased level of bandwidth at lower cost and the reliability of exclusive circuits

managed as part of the developing Communications Infrastructure Strategy	
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6. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

"We will make better use of our information and use information technology to increase organisational effectiveness" Corporate Plan 2005.

The Council already recognises that information is a valuable asset. In addition, it is increasingly recognised that knowledge embodied in employees needs to be captured, stored and shared. A combined approach to information and knowledge management will ensure that the Council's information assets, organisational skills and competencies are harnessed to improve service delivery.

The Freedom of Information Act has also made it imperative that a strategic framework is required for creating, organising, maintaining and sharing information and records.

The preparation of an Information Management strategy needs to consider:

- Information assets and requirements
- Custodianship
- Information security
- Standards and protocols
- Classification systems
- Skills development
- Information and knowledge sharing
- Change management.

Preparation of the Information Management strategy is one of the key tasks to help support the **e-Government & ICT Strategies**. An investment in appropriate technology will be required, and the Strategy will include the systems for document and image management, and electronic mail archiving.

Both the website and the Corporate Intranet have been developed using Goss Interactive for the **content management system**. The use of such a system will be crucial in the development of the Information Management Strategy. **E-Mail archiving and retrieval** will be an important aspect of Information Management Policy as the reliance on e-mail as a communication tool continues to grow.




7 The Council's ICT Strategic Goals




The Council has identified 6 Key Objectives which may be summarised as follows










- [

 1. Achieve a healthy caring and socially aware community
 2. Provide a clean, safe and attractive environment
 3. Develop and implement an effective Local Development Framework
 4. Foster and sustain a strong and expanding economy
 5. Provide sustainable culture and leisure opportunities
 6. To be an efficient and effective Council

The e-Government Strategy defined a number of strategic ICT goals aimed at making a positive impact over the long term on one or more of the Key Objectives (linkage shown in brackets). The implementation of the ICT Technical Strategy will deliver a number of contributions to these goals.




Strategic Goal	Contribution
Useable and Interoperable Technology Infrastructure (4,6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  More standardised technical components  Full compliance with the Government interoperability standards (e-GIF)  Standard user friendly interface

<p>Excellent Service (3,4,5,6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Simplifies maintenance of technical components  Improves quality of solutions and resilience from failure  Reduced complexity and more standard components will lead to less failure
--	--

Strategic Goal	Contribution
<p>Sustainable Investment in ICT (4,6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Reduces risk of inappropriate technology choices  Ease of integration of mainstream technologies  Proven vendor commitment to product development and support
<p>Information and Knowledge as Assets (6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Provides framework to enable progress towards single source of data  Improves security of information assets and reduces risk to the reputation of the Council  Improves management of critical business data
<p>Collaboration with Partners and Stakeholders (6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Improves opportunity for linking data sources across the Council and partners  Improves compliance with standards for interoperability as groundwork for links with external partners  Capitalises on ICT expertise available across the Council and partners

Value for Money (6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Provides leverage to negotiate improved contract conditions ☞ Improves estimating of resource requirements ☞ Improves efficiency and effectiveness of ICT services
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Strategic Goal	Contribution
Electronic Government – “e” improving service (2,6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Lays groundwork for service improvement by integrating information from across the Council and other agencies ☞ Improves access to information sources for both back office and front-line service ☞ Enables services to be provided to citizen expectations
Social Inclusion (1,4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Provides capability to deliver more for the same cost ☞ Enables innovative service concepts to tackle problems of exclusion ☞ Improves opportunity to take services and benefits of technology to hard-to-reach groups
Quality of Life (1,4,5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Contributes to initiatives such as teleworking, hotdesking and the use of mobile technologies in the field ☞ Improves staff skills in up-to-date technologies ☞ Contributes to quality of front-line service provision

<p>e-Bromsgrove, the Bromsgrove Vision (3,5,6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Fundamental to electronic access across the District e.g. to cultural assets  Improves the reputation of Bromsgrove e.g. through the World Wide Web  Contributes to the development of Bromsgrove through links with partners
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8. IMPLEMENTATION

8.1 Investment

Funding has already been identified in the Capital Programme (2004/05 – 2006/07) and IEG Funding supports the following projects:

- Technology refresh (Personal Computers, Servers)
- Further website development
- Information Management
- Network enhancements
- Security enhancements
- Land and Property and Geographic Information systems
- e-Worcestershire Hub Partnership

IT Services, in conjunction with the Senior Management Team (SMT), will submit proposals for continuing corporate investment as part of the annual budget process.

Individual Service requirements should be identified during Service Reviews and in conjunction with the **e-Government Project Team**. This will ensure that both the technical and business requirements are addressed as part of the proposed investment.

8.2 Programme Management

A high-level Programme for implementation of the Strategy is shown in the Appendix. This illustrates the main projects in the short to long term. Account is taken of the current Capital Programme.

Management of the Programme will be the responsibility of IT Services, with the **e-Government Project Team** acting as the Programme Board.

As previously noted, the Council operates in an environment of constant change and new challenges and opportunities will emerge. The ICT environment is particularly prone to rapid changes. The ICT Strategy will require on-going adjustment to adapt to external and internal changes, and alterations will be controlled through the consultative and reporting processes outlined in the Governance Framework.

9. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

A timescale for implementation is indicated based on the following definitions:

Short-term	6 to 12 months
Medium-term	12 to 24 months
Long-term	24 to 36 months

9.1 INFRASTRUCTURE

Proposal	Timescale
Technology Refresh	Ongoing
Gradual migration to newer versions of Windows	Ongoing
Migration to Microsoft Office 2003, but review during medium term	Medium-term review
Continue to use Microsoft Exchange & Outlook	Medium-term review
Standardise on Windows 2003 server as operating system for Windows servers	Medium-term
Continue to explore the 'open source' use of LINUX as an alternative operating platform	Ongoing
Encourage use of networked printers / Digital printing	Medium-term
Continue to use CISCO network equipment	Ongoing
HP iPAQs adopted as supported handheld PC	Short-term

Develop Internet access to internal systems/Intranet	Medium-term
Develop use of Integration product set	Long-term
Continue to develop ESRI as a corporate GIS	Long-term
Continue to develop ANITE as the corporate Document Management system	Long-term
Planning online project	Short-term
Leisure Booking Online project	Short-term

9.2 GOVERNANCE and SECURITY

Proposal	Timescale
e-Government Project Team to act as ICT Programme Board	Short-term
Continue with centralised ICT procurement	Long-term
Continue to use Software licensing Frameworks	Long-term
Complete review of PC life-cycle management, and assess options for service delivery	Short-term
Adopt Project Management Framework for use in all major IT projects	Short-term
Ensure Risk Management is part of all projects	On-going
Adopt Change Management Framework as part of Corporate culture	Med-term
Develop Customer relationship by regular service reviews and consultation	On-going
Enhance Performance Management processes through 'Performance Plus'	On-going
Development of ICT competency framework as part of staff personal development	Short-term
Provide point of contact for member support & training	Short-term
Continue the move towards BS7799 compliance	Long-term

9.3 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Proposal	Timescale
Prepare Information Management Strategy for the Council	Short-term
Continue to develop the framework around Content Management System for both Internet and Intranet.	Med-term
Mail Archive system	Short-term

APPENDIX IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME

INFRASTRUCTURE						
	2005/06		2006/07		2007/08	
Desktop Windows Migration						
Microsoft Office Migration						
Technology Refresh						
PC replacement						
Windows Server replacement						

Members e-enablement						
Members Web Portal						
Notebooks & printers						
ADSL/Internet at home						
Wireless Council Members area						
	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08			
Training programme						
Digital Printing feasibility						
Internet access to internal systems						
Geographic Information Systems (GIS)						
Positional Accuracy Improvement (PAI)						
Asset Management System						

Drainage mapping layer						
GIS on desktop/Intranet						
Corporate Document Management						
Anite roll out programme						
Workflow investigations						
Contact 'post' room						
	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08			
Land & Property						
LLPG integration						
LLPG maintenance						
National Land Information Systems (NLIS)						
Move to level 2						

Move to level 3						
Directory Services						
Active Directory						
Communications Infrastructure Strategy						
Customer Service Centre						
Service Migration Plan						
	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08			
e-Worcestershire Hub Partnership						
Implement electronic forms						
Develop BDC e-forms						
Web Portal						
Data Warehouse/ SAN						

Develop migration strategy						
BDC Web Site						
Vocabulary Merger Project (Taxonomies)						
Implement electronic forms						
Improved monitoring of usage Profiling of customers						
Improve/upgrade Intranet						
Leisure Booking Online						
	2005/06		2006/07		2007/08	
Planning Online						
Planning portal Connector						
BDC web site integration						
GOVERNANCE & SECURITY	2005/06		2006/07		2007/08	
e-Gov project team to act as ICT Programme Board						

Adopt Project Management Framework						
Review PC life-cycle framework						
Risk Management – new Framework						
Performance Management						
Develop more Local PI's						
Input current LPI's & BVPI157						
Develop ICT Competency Framework						
	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08			
HR to carry out baseline process						
Staff Appraisals						
Training Plan						
Detail Member Support						

Security						
<< BS7799 Compliance						
Secure Remote Access for home, Remote & Members						
Improved Web monitoring e.g. Surf Control						
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT	2005/06		2006/07		2007/08	
Information Strategy						
Document Management expansion						
Mail Archive System						
Intranet Development						
New templates needed as Internet						
CMS to cover Intranet also						

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXCECUTIVE CABINET

18TH MAY 2005

**INFORMATION COMMUNICATION and TECHNOLOGY SERVICE BUSINESS PLAN
2005/06**

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor R. Hollingworth
Responsible Head of Service	Norman MacLeod

1. SUMMARY

1.1 To seek Members' approval of the Information Communication and Technology Service Business Plan for 2005/06.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That Members approve the Information Communication and Technology Service Business Plan for 2005/06.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The plan is the first to be prepared in the revised format introduced to improve, simplify and in a consistent manner reflect relevant service and corporate information. It addresses the Recovery Plan action to improve service performance through a review of business planning and performance management.

3.2 The plan, as set out in Appendix 1, aims to:

- Explain clearly the purpose of the service
- Describes the challenges we face in the future
- Inform of successes and failures and what we have learnt from these
- Demonstrate performance achievements
- Exhibit links to the major strategic plans and the Recovery Plan
- Inform about customer identities, needs and opinions
- Detail an action plan of key changes

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The financial implications within the plan have taken into account the Council's Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2005/06.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1 The approval of the Service Business Plan will provide a clear and precise focus against the background of the Community, Corporate and Recovery Plans. Resources will be well managed, monitored and reviewed to meet the requirements of the Council Recovery Plan and minimise any risk of failure to deliver the service in an efficient and effective manner.

6. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

- 6.1** It will be essential to monitor progress against the agreed service objectives and to take intervention measures if required, to ensure that ICT Services strongly contribute in a prioritised and well-managed manner to the achievement of elements of the Council's Recovery Plan and in particular the Councils Objectives as set out in the Community Plan, Best Value Performance Plan, Corporate Plan and e-Government Strategy.

Background Papers

None

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9th May 2005

**SERVICE
BUSINESS
PLAN**

**Information Communication
Technology**

1st April 2005 - 31st March 2006



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Introduction

Our Service

Corporate ICT provides strategic advice and guidance to the Council in all matters relating to the use or potential use of Information & Communication Technology within the Council.

The overall aim of the IT Service is to develop and maintain an IT environment that will optimise provision of council services to our residents and other stakeholders. In order to achieve this aim the service bears responsibility for the management and maintenance of the Council's voice and data systems and services covering:

- e-Government strategy (Implementing Electronic Government statement)
- IT Infrastructure including the IT Helpdesk
 - networks and servers
 - application support
 - software/hardware support contracts
 - IT procurement – hardware, software, consumables
- Desktop support – including hardware and software technology refresh
- Data, systems and network security
- Telephone system
- Corporate IT projects
- Internet and intranet development
- e-mail service
- Management of the Corporate Gazetteer and Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
- Member IT support when using IT equipment provided by the Council
- Providing interfaces for remote access to the Council
- Providing substantial support to service areas procuring new application systems
- Identifying where opportunities for ICT investment will help drive forward service improvements and efficiencies

Excellence

What does excellence mean for the ICT service.

Excellence for this department, as a central support service, means providing ICT services that facilitate an efficient and effective workforce to provide quality services to all our customers. In addition we will strive to ensure that all our stakeholders have access to high quality information & services by whatever means they prefer. The Governments modernisation agenda means that we

must ensure the development and continuous improvement of a fully transactional web site that will allow easy access to information and services for members of the public, elected members and Council staff.

Our Year

2004/05 was a year of assisting in modernising service delivery through electronic access to services. We brought the Council website in-house carrying out major redevelopment of the site before hosting the site ourselves. The website has undergone many improvements throughout the year. Many other corporate ICT enhancements took place, e.g. we installed a new expanded Voice Mail system, started work on moving to one central Directory and installed electronic payments on the website.

The Council is a major player in the e-Worcestershire Hub Partnership and the original targets were met by opening the Customer Service Centre in March 2005, after many months of preparation and planning. The ICT department played a significant part in the opening of the new Customer Service Centre, providing the ICT backup to the development of the centre ensuring that everything that was required was achieved within the defined timescale.

The Geographic Information System (GIS) was further developed and many of the data layers have been integrated with the central e-Worcestershire Hub GIS. We started the roll out to departments of the corporate Document Management system, this will mean easier handling and retrieving of documents as they are held electronically, the first department to be involved in this exercise was Planning.

Our Challenges for the Future

The main challenge for the ICT team centres on the Governments modernising agenda and in particular the e-Government initiatives will influence the way that the Council works in the future. The emphasis on a “how, where and when” scenario for customer access to services must change service delivery across the Council. Key issues for ICT in the future will be:

- Increasing the range of services to be available electronically
- Keeping up with technology changes
- Supporting the 24/7 agenda
- Achieving 100% BVPi157 by December 2005
- Implementing & supporting IT home & mobile working
- Member IT support

- Working with departments to identify technology to drive forward service improvements

Security of information and data remains a prime priority for ICT staff. We are forever looking at methods of increased security against potential hackers and computer viruses which can have a devastating affect on this Councils information and its ability to carry out its day to day function. The increase in mobile working will add to the security risk and will have to be strictly managed and controlled. Business continuity will be a major challenge of the future.

The Governments 2005 target of 100% for Electronic Service Delivery will be a challenging target and an area in which we are improving as we develop the functionality of the Council website. It is anticipated that we will achieve 100% compliance by December 2005.

Through the use of technology and modern business practices, e-Government plays a key role in helping the Council to streamline and develop the services that it provides. The Council has outlined a strong commitment to e-Government and is committed to transforming its services in order to best meet the needs of the citizens.

Improving working relationships and engaging effectively across all areas of the Council is very important to us and we need feedback to help us to do this. We would be grateful to receive your comments regarding our plans for the future and a feedback form is included at the back of this document for you to use.

Council Values and Priorities

Service Mission Statement

The ICT department's primary objective is to ensure the Council optimises the use of suitable new technologies, providing a simple and effective medium for access to information and exploiting innovations where there is a clear & proven business benefit.

Professional & National Standards

We will work to National and professional standards as follows:-
BS7799 – We will investigate the criteria for BS7799 and audit our current position, developing a work programme for compliance to BS7799.
NLPG (National Land & Property Gazetteer) – comply with the national standard
NLIS (National Land Information Service) – aim to achieve level 3
AAA – work programme to move website to this National access standard
BS7666 – Change system applications to adopt this National standard for property addresses.

Areas of Focus

The six Council objectives are:	In 2005/06 we will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To make a major contribution towards achieving a healthy caring and socially aware community 	Enable innovative service delivery to tackle exclusion. Contribute to initiatives such as teleworking and the use of mobile technologies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a clean, safe and attractive environment 	Service improvement by integrating information from across the Council and other agencies and the use of mobile technologies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop & Implement an effective Local Development Framework 	Contribute to the development of Bromsgrove through links with partners and use of technologies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustain a strong and expanding economy 	Improve Staff skills in up-to-date technologies.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide sustainable culture & leisure facilities	Develop e-Bromsgrove, fundamental to electronic access across the District e.g. to cultural assets.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be an effective & efficient Council	Improve management of business critical data and capitalise on ICT expertise available across the Council and partners. Use of technology to improve and enhance service delivery not only in terms of cost but also in terms of quality.

Recovery Plan Issues

The only direct issue in the recovery plan for ICT services is:-

CM2 – To meet and exceed the Governments e-Government targets.

We shall move forward on this by increasing the number of services that are available electronically.

Although not directly referenced in the other Recovery Plan themes, the ICT service will help other departments to achieve their goals by using modern technologies to support their actions. The ICT service can add great value to other departments in the drive towards effective & efficient governance.

Technology plays a major part in underpinning the Governments modernisation agenda and indeed many of the improvements that the Council needs to make.. There is a clear indication that e-Government will be a key-enabler in achieving some of the expected Gershon efficiency saving and will play an increasing important part in future CPA inspections. It is likely that the Priority Outcomes will be an indicator of the quality of governance of a council.

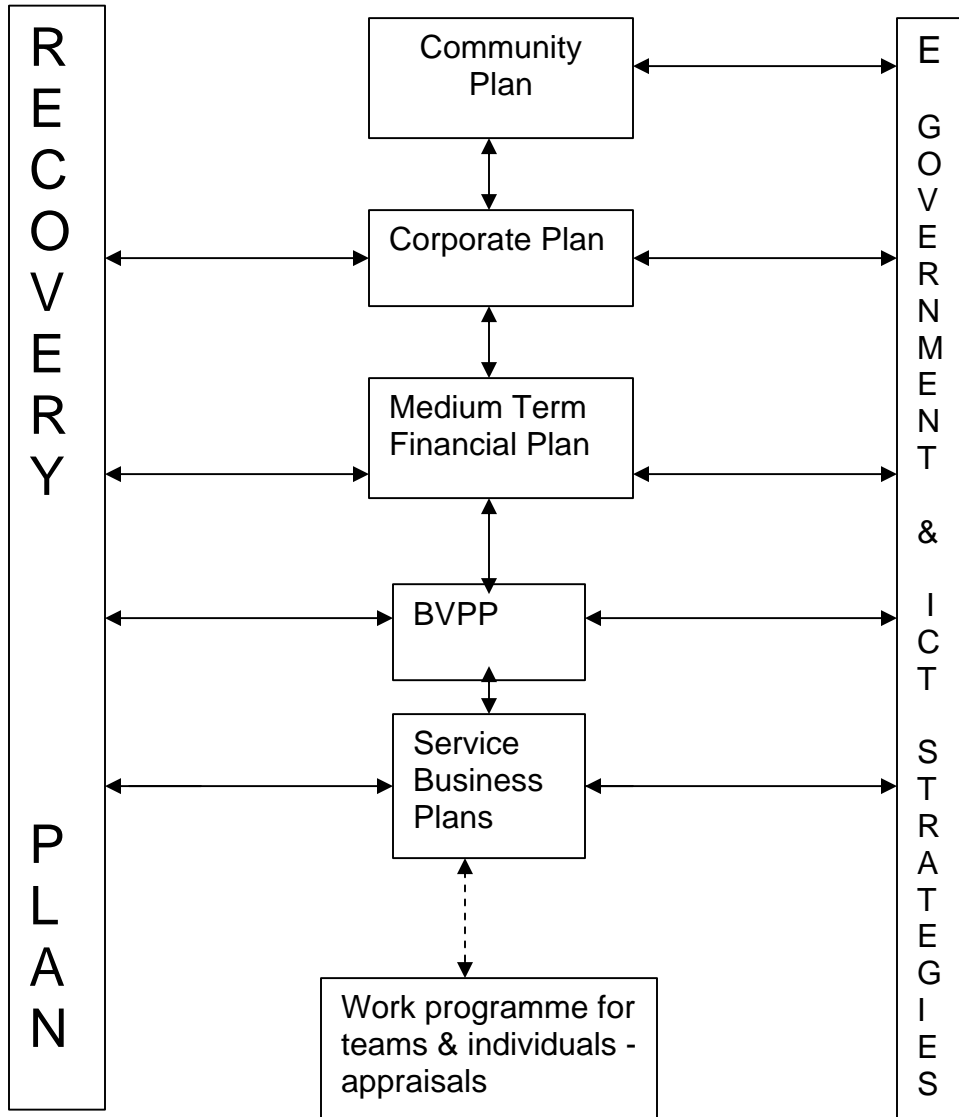
ICT and e-Government National and Local Projects that affect this service

The vast majority of the project work we undertake has an e-Government impetus and is related to the e-Government Strategy. The main developments and building blocks of the Bromsgrove e-Gov vision centre on the ICT department driving the development of:-

- Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- Corporate Document Management & Workflow
- Land & Property Gazetteer (LPG)
- Internet developments
- Additional Access channels (Service Delivery)

Business Framework

How Our Key Plans Fit Together



The framework provides a process for continued improvement.

Meeting Customer Needs

The service is primarily a support service for Council staff and Members; the role of the service is to provide information technology that facilitates and aims to improve the day to day work of front line services. Our customers include Service Areas implementing new systems and Service Areas needing to publish information on the web.

In 2004/05 We Have:	This year We will:
<p>Improved the quality of the Website to meet nationally accepted guidelines on accessibility.</p>	<p>Actively promote self learning to provide a better quality of service.</p>
<p>Developed and implemented e-payments to enhance our customer's options for payments.</p>	<p>Continue to monitor and improve the Website (accessibility).</p>
<p>Supported services in their quest for improved customer interfacing.</p>	<p>Use current tools to monitor PC's to identify those requiring upgrades or replacement.</p>
<p>Developed a Members Web Portal and started to roll out mobile Computing to Members.</p>	<p>Develop the forums facility on the website.</p>
<p>Developed & implemented a consultation web front end linked to SNAP software.</p>	<p>Introduce corporate calendar sharing for members & officers.</p>
<p>Implemented Content Management system enabling each department to manage their own web pages.</p>	<p>Produce an Information Management Strategy document, which will detail and give guidance on how we manage our customer information & data.</p>
<p>Introduced Internet & email usage policy.</p>	<p>Further consult with the citizens of Bromsgrove about access channels and review our programme in light of this consultation</p>
<p>Implemented and supported the technology in the Customer Service Centre.</p>	<p>Implement online Planning process.</p>
	<p>Continue to support and develop the technology availability for our customers in the Customer Service Centre</p>

Working Together

- **Learning from and sharing with other service providers, agencies, businesses and the community**

<p>In 2004/05 We have:</p> <p>Been an important player in the e-Worcestershire Hub Partnership alongside the other 5 Districts, County and Private partners Hewlett Packard & Deloitte.</p> <p>Partnered with White Hat Technologies to provide Network Security expertise.</p> <p>Been involved in the ICT Shared Services discussions with our County colleagues.</p> <p>Liaised with Parish Councils about website design and using the BDC website for a Parish Council presence.</p> <p>Had discussions with BDHT about having a presence in the Customer Service Centre.</p> <p>Had discussions with the local police Chief Inspector about having a presence in the Customer Service centre.</p> <p>Been part of the West Midlands LGA SMART Region Programme.</p>	<p>This year We will:</p> <p>Continue to active participant in the e-Worcestershire Hub Partnership.</p> <p>Continue to work with White Hat Technologies to move towards BS7799 compliance.</p> <p>Monitor & take part in the National Projects workshops.</p> <p>If agreed, work with other Worcestershire Councils on providing a shared ICT service.</p> <p>Partner with the NLIS to help us move towards level 3.</p> <p>Continue to seek guidance and advice from the ODPM on the current practices to do with e-Government.</p> <p>Continue to be an active member of the West Midlands ESD toolkit users group.</p>
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Our Performance

There is one Best Value Performance Indicator that falls into the ICT remit, **BVPI 157**, the percentage of services delivered electronically that are capable of being delivered electronically. ICT services drive this indicator but in reality it is the other departments that should take the business lead and look at the service delivery & electronic transactions.

ICT Service introduced some local PI's in 2004/05 and will look to introduce further local PI's in 2005/06. These local PI's are all based on the Society of IT Managers (SOCITM) national standards.

Performance Indicators			
Indicator	Text	Actual 04/05	Target 05/06
BVPI157	The number of types of interactions that are enabled for electronic delivery	63.9%	100%
LKPi1	%age of staff who rate the overall ICT service received as good or better	69%	86%
LKPi1a	%age of staff who rate the ICT Helpdesk service as good or better.	73%	87%
LKPi10	%age of staff who think that they have been adequately trained to make best use of ICT in the workplace.	56%	71%

LKPi1, **LKPi1a** and **LKPi10** were included in a full staff survey carried out in January 2005. The customer(staff) was prompted to answer using the scoring system where **1** was poor and **7** was good. The average returned scores and our targets for 2005/06 are included in the following table and these scores are translated into the percentages in the above table:

Indicator	Ave score 2004/05	Target score for 2005/06
LKPi1	4.82	6.0
LKPi1a	5.09	6.1
LKPi10	3.93	5.0

LKPi2 Resolution of reported incidents (to Helpdesk)

The figures reflect the year to Dec 2004.

Time	% closed in allocated time	No. of Calls	Total no. of Calls
All Calls	56%	2240	3958
0 – 4 Hours	58%	946	1644
4 – 8 Hours	59%	530	900
8 – 16 Hours	57%	450	796
16 + Hours	51%	314	618

We currently don't have call resolution targets as part of our service standard, with improved processes and a more focussed approach we are setting ourselves the following targets for **2005/06**:

Time	% closed in allocated time
All Calls	82.5%
0 – 4 Hours	85%
4 – 8 Hours	85%
8 – 16 Hours	80%
16 + Hours	80%

LKPi 9 Access to ICT

These figures give the indication of penetration of ICT throughout the organisation. The comparisons are made between Manual and office bound staff

Current figures used 300 workstations, 320 staff, 39 members

% of office-based staff with PC [include Members]	84%
% of members with PC [Laptops]	67%
% of staff access to internal email	84%
% of staff access to external email	84%
% of staff access to internet	84%
% of staff access to intranet	84%

We are setting the target of **90%** penetration for **2005/06**.

LKPi6 Service availability.

To measure the availability of the ICT service to users during the core hours of 08:00am to 7:00pm.

Level 1 = The whole service is unavailable affecting all users on the corporate network

Level 2 = Major applications are unavailable for all users.

Unavailable means that all users of a specific application cannot use that application(s) but are still able to use their computer for other applications.

The figures reflect the year to December 2004.

Service	Total Hours	Number of Instances
E-mail	70.5	7
Internet Access	73	9
Finance	73	9
Revenues	184.5	17
Payroll	None	None

For **2005/06** we are setting the target of a **10%** reduction in the number of hours systems and applications are unavailable. This will be achieved by scheduling more maintenance type of activities (software & hardware upgrades) outside of core hours.

In 2004/05 We have:	This year We will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Defined local PI's, based on the SOCITM nationally accepted indicators· Delivered the IEG4 Statement· Accepted 3958 calls to our ICT Helpdesk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Expand our local PI's to include all of the SOCITM indicators▪ Deliver the IEG4.5 statement in July 2005▪ Improve on our Helpdesk call resolution within agreed timescale. LKPi2 target set for 82.5%.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 57% of these calls were closed within agreed timescale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work to improve our overall ICT rating with Council staff. LKPi1 target set at 85.7% and LKPi1a target set at 87.14%. ▪ Liaise with other departments to improve staff general IT knowledge. (LKPi10) target set at 71.43%. ▪ Look to increase ICT penetration throughout the Council. LKPi9 set at 90%. ▪ Make every effort to decrease downtime of major systems. LKPi6 targetted for 10% reduction in unavailable hours.
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Areas where we didn't achieve

Meeting agreed timescales for Helpdesk calls.

What we are doing about it

Setting more realistic timescales and looking at prioritising our workload better. Better promotion of ICT workload and its abilities thus ensuring that customer expectation of timescales are reasonable

Anything key or special that we learnt? Significant or unexpected learning.

Involvement at early stage of departments ICT projects, not being brought in part way through to pick up the pieces. Inability of some managers to understand ICT and what it can do to help achieve their aims on service delivery. We will, through the e-Government Management Team, seek to ensure that projects are better planned and include all appropriate people at appropriate stages.

Resources

• Financial

2003/04 Actual net spend	2004/05 Estimated net spend	2005/06 Projected net spend
£ 949,554	£ 474,500	£ 485,760

The costs and establishment for 2005/06 are set out below:

Expenditure / Income	Cost	Notes
<i>Employee costs</i>	£351,998	<i>11 staff</i>
<i>Premise costs</i>	£8,508	
<i>Transport costs</i>	£3,383	
<i>Supplies and Services</i>	£121,873	
<i>Contract Services</i>	0	
<i>Transfer Payments</i>	0	
<i>Support Service Costs</i>	0	
<i>Capital Costs</i>	0	
Total Expenditure	£485,760	
<i>Income</i>	0	
Net Expenditure	£485,760	

Details of any key efficiencies achieved:-

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICT Strategic plan to migrate from Mainframe technology, cut ICT budget by some £475k
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICT Support Officer post has been vacant since January 2004 and subsequently deleted, saving on staff budget.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-negotiated Telephone costs for rental & call charges, saving some 30% of cost.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reworked interfaces to provide a streamlined management of the 'cash income' process.

- **Staffing**

Name	Brief Details of Duties	Room No	Tel Ext	E mail address @bromsgrove.gov.uk
Norman Macleod	Head of IT Services	IT	1256	n.macleod
Andrew Hartley	IT Manager	IT	1264	a.hartley
Darren Webley	Systems Development	IT	1265	d.webley
Leon Hall	Telephony/Comms	IT	1494	l.hall
Vacancy	Web/Graphics	IT	1489	
Stephen Grazier	Development	IT	1268	s.grazier
Orlando Leslie	Help Desk	IT	1258	o.leslie
Nick Hall	Tech Support	IT	1258	n.hall
Marilyn Hedgecock	Help Desk	IT	1255	m.hedgecock
John Knott	GIS/LLPG	IT	1425	j.knott
	GIS/LLPG support	IT	1424	

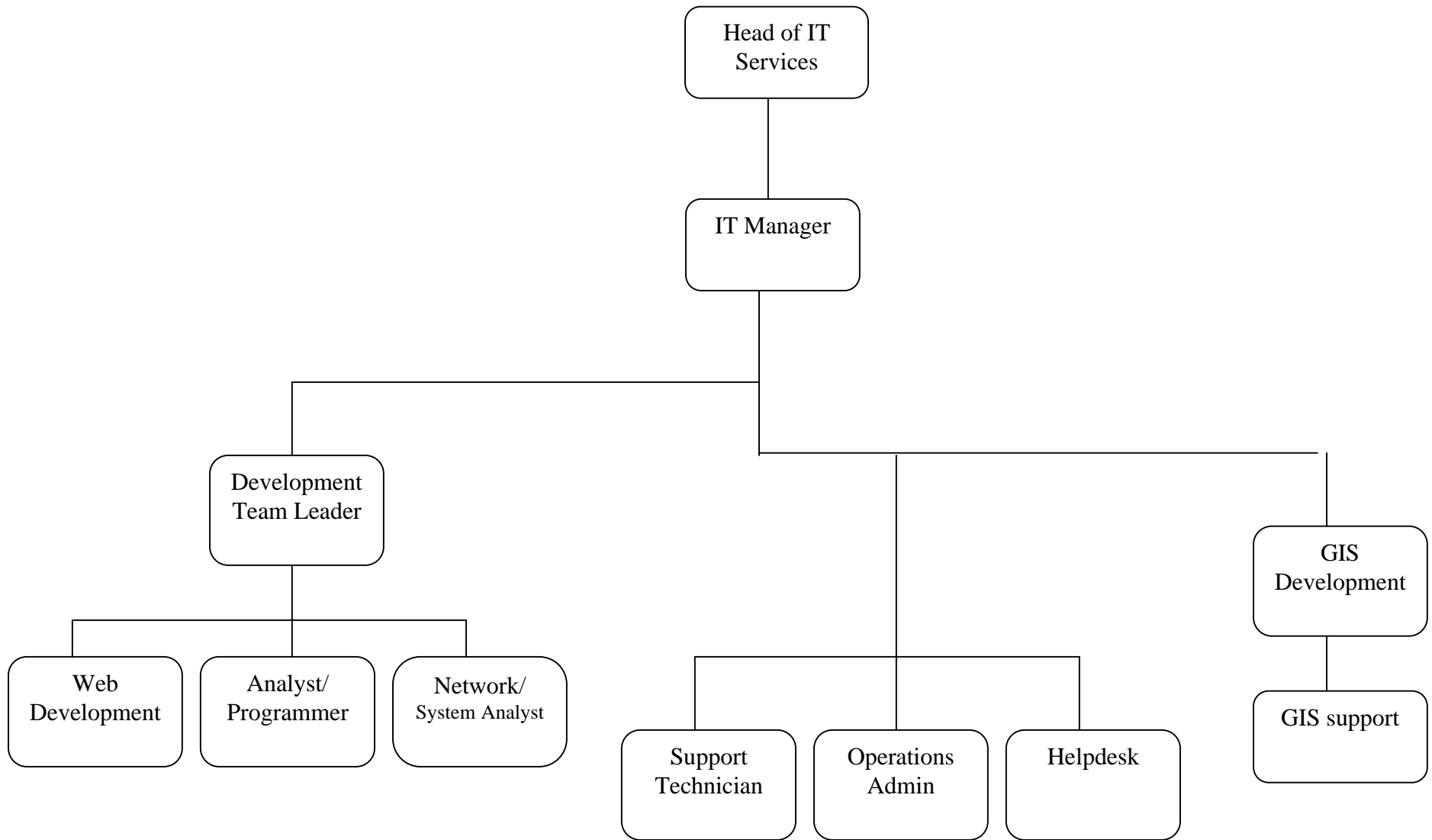
Portfolio Holder details:

Councillor Roger Hollingworth (Portfolio holder for Finance)

Tel 0121 445 0323

email r.hollingworth@bromsgrove.gov.uk

The Council is mindful that staff development is key to corporate improvement and will look to including this in its Corporate Plan and financial arrangements.



Service Improvement Action Plan

The ICT department has not been the subject of an external review, but elements have been included in a KPMG review on e-Government in Nov 2004 and the Audit Commission Inspection of e-Government in March 2005. The inspection covered the Council's web site and the Customer Service Centre, plus the cross cutting use of technology to improve services, governance and public engagement.

Areas of Service Identified for Improvement

Key Problems/Issues	Actions to Address	Timescale
Site security following the more open approach to IT within Modernisation Agenda	Work with Whitehat Technologies to move towards BS7799 compliance.	December 2005
BVPI157 performance	Other departments to need to understand their responsibilities in Electronic Service Delivery	December 2005
Lack of detailed implementation plans for ICT projects	Adopt a formalised Project and Change Management framework for all ICT projects. In the process, developing full project plans for all projects.	June 2005
Move to fully functional Active Directory	Planned replacement of all W95 & W98 PC's	Starting May 2005
Improve on the quality of data and information across the Authority. Poor quality will hold back developments on the e-Government agenda	Detailed plan of improvement as part of Information Management Strategy and Access Channel Strategy	May/June 2005
Lack of formal ICT training for all staff	Promotion of EDCL training for all staff & opportunities of e-learning throughout the Authority	July 2005

Member Development – ICT training	Promote the development of ICT skills through training.	Start May 2005
Requirement to prioritise our workload better & more effectively.	Will be addressed through the Project management framework.	June 2005
Internal ICT documented procedures inadequate	Review & revamp internal procedures. Document fully	Starting June 2005
Disaster Recovery procedures not fully documented	Review and develop a fully documented Disaster Recovery Policy as part of the Council's overall Business Continuity Management.	Aug 2005

The operation of the department will continue to be the subject of regular and close monitoring by, and reporting to, the Senior Management Team of the Council.

Comments and feedback form

We would like your views on this booklet. Please detach this page and send it to:

The Audit & Policy Section
The Council House
Bromsgrove

1. How helpful have you found this booklet?

.....
.....
.....
.....

2. What did you particularly like about it?

.....
.....
.....
.....

3. What aspects can be improved? How?

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.....
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4. Any other comments?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Name
(Optional):.....

Service:
.....

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE CABINET

18TH MAY 2005

HIGH HEDGES

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Mrs M Taylor
Responsible Head of Service	Malcolm Griffiths, Director of Planning Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report examines the regulations on 'High Hedges' and the procedures which are proposed to enable the Council to implement the legislation. The new system will commence on 1st June 2005.
- 1.2 Members should note that the final version of the Regulations which govern working arrangements has not yet been published and that it may be necessary to provide a verbal update if any further changes are made.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That Members endorse the approach advocated in the report and specifically:

- a. The setting of a standard fee of £320 per application;
- b. The repayment of 75% of the fee if an application is invalid;
- c. The adoption of a reduced fee of £200 for individuals on a low income.
- d. That the principle of officer delegation be agreed subject to the exceptions identified, in para. 4.2.13 and;
- e. The proposed scheme of delegation be recommended to the Standards Committee and Council in due course for consideration;
- f. That the application form and guidance notes proposed be adopted for use by the Council (Appendix 2).
- g. That a full review of the system be undertaken after 6 months to assess performance and operation of the scheme.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Government introduced legislation under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 to control the nuisance caused by excessively high hedges. This legislation was a late addition to the Act and consequently the Regulations for its implementation have been delayed. A report was presented to the Executive Cabinet on 23rd June 2004 detailing the Government's preliminary proposals contained in a consultation draft document. The Council's response was reported to Government as part of this process.
- 3.2 Under the legislation a council can investigate cases where an evergreen hedge of more than 2m in height is causing a nuisance. The need to introduce this

legislation arises from a number of reported cases where a hedge owner has refused to take reasonable action when a hedge is causing a nuisance.

- 3.3 Although the Government had intended to introduce the regulatory framework by December 2004 it has taken until now for detailed issues to be determined. Even so, there remain parts of the Regulations which have been left for individual councils to finalise, such as the fee structure to be adopted.
- 3.4 The following section sets out the approach that is proposed to allow this legislation to be implemented by the District Council from 1st June 2005. It should be noted that a final version of the consultation document entitled "*High Hedges Complaints: Prevention and Cure. Consultation Draft 2004*" is still awaited. A verbal update will be made should any details be changed which affect the operation of the new system.

4. PROPOSED OPERATION OF THE NEW SYSTEM

- 4.1 The 'High Hedges' legislation is designed to enable house owners to seek a reduction in the height of unreasonably high hedges where these are adversely affecting the reasonable enjoyment of their property or garden. On payment of a fee an applicant can ask a council to make a decision as to whether a qualifying hedge should be reduced in height. If a council decides that a hedge comes within the terms of the Act and that action is appropriate it can serve a 'remedial notice' on the hedge owner specifying the height to which the hedge must be reduced and thereafter maintained. Failure to comply with the notice can lead to a prosecution and fines and is a criminal offence.
- 4.2 In order to introduce this legislation in Bromsgrove District, Members will need to decide how to tackle those elements of the system where local authorities have been given the freedom to impose their own conditions. These are set out below:

Staff

- 4.2.1 There is no direction as to which local authority department is best suited to deal with this legislation. Some authorities are proposing to use enforcement staff or environmental health sections to tackle high hedges. It is also clear that many are utilising environmental sections and particularly those where staff have arboricultural or landscaping expertise.
- 4.2.2 The intention is that this Council will make use of its two Tree Officers to undertake the necessary investigative works. They will be supported by Planning Registry staff who will record applications, in a similar manner to how planning applications are presently dealt with. It will be necessary to seek the support of the Legal Department where cases are pursued through the courts and the Administrative Department will become involved where cases go to appeal. There may also be instances where support is sought from the Council's Enforcement Section.
- 4.2.3 No extra funding is provided for this work as Government expects authorities to fully recover costs from application fees. However, with the burden of work placed on the Tree Officers, it is likely that this new task will impact on their other duties. It is impossible to predict how many applications the Council is likely to receive and this along with other

consequences of the legislation will need to be monitored and its impact on staff resources reviewed at an early date.

- 4.2.4 Attached as Appendix 1 is the intended procedure to be followed in responding to a high hedge application.

Fees

- 4.2.5 The consultation draft suggested a fee structure of between £280 and £320. The Government felt this would fully cover the cost to councils of administering the system. A number of authorities (47%) disagreed saying this would be insufficient to achieve full recovery of costs. This is probably true of cases which end up as appeals. Our response to the consultation draft commented on this and it was pointed out that disputes have often been going on for some time. This would mean that attitudes could easily have become entrenched and with both parties having the right to appeal then it was likely that a number of cases will end up at appeal. This would add further to the Council's costs.
- 4.2.6 As there was considerable variance between local authority responses to fee structures the Government has decided to leave this matter for individual authorities to determine. In addition councils can, if they wish, set different rates for different groups and allow refunds.
- 4.2.7 A key aspect of the consultation outcome has been the changes proposed to the appeal process. The Government has now decided that all appeals will be in writing and that the local authority case file will suffice in providing an Inspector with the evidence needed to determine the appeal. This should mean that any additional cost of appeal work is minimised.
- 4.2.8 Consequently it is suggested that Members agree to a basic fee of £320 for applications for 'High Hedges'. If, for any reason, a case is not proceeded with then a refund of 75% of the charge is proposed. This reflects the costs involved in the registration procedure and the initial validation and assessment process.
- 4.2.9 It is also recognised that there will be instances where some householders will find the standard fee difficult to afford. It is therefore suggested that a reduced charge be levied where an individual is classed as being of 'low income' (this covers those in receipt of one or more of the following: Income Support; Job Seeker Allowance; Guaranteed Credit or Savings Credit; Incapacity Benefit or Pension Credit). In these cases a reduced fee of £200 is proposed. It is vital to minimise the amount of work needed to verify claims for a reduced fee. Evidence of the status of the applicant will therefore be required with the submitted fee and confirmation that the applicant gives his/her consent to permit a simple check to be made with the Benefits Section that the applicant is registered as being in receipt of a benefit.

Delegation

- 4.2.10 The guidance makes it quite clear that local authorities should not get involved where disputes arise between neighbours because of high

hedges. Instead potential applicants are advised to use existing mediation services to endeavour to overcome problems before applying to local authorities to intervene.

- 4.2.11 The role of the Council is to investigate, assess and reach a conclusion on what action is appropriate given the circumstances of the case. It must neither mediate nor negotiate between the parties. It must take account of all relevant factors and then strike a balance between the competing interests of the complainant and the hedge owner, as well as the interests of the wider community.
- 4.2.12 The decision on what action is appropriate will be determined on the particular circumstances of a case. There is a technical component to the assessment which requires an assessment of the levels of daylight and sunlight which are lost because of an excessively high hedge. In such instance it may be necessary to require the hedge owner to reduce its height to 2m, the maximum sanction. In other cases where a high hedge is obstructing a view of a neighbour further down a road, then a more subjective common sense approach is needed to determine firstly if any action is warranted and secondly precisely what measures are reasonable.
- 4.2.13 In order to allow consideration of such applications in an effective and efficient manner Members are requested to support the introduction of the following system of delegation:
- 1) Except in the circumstances listed in 2) below the Director of Planning Services, or any officer authorised to act on his behalf, be authorised to determine all “High Hedge” applications submitted in accordance with Part 8 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003.
 - 2) The Planning Committee determines “High Hedge” applications submitted in accordance with Part 8 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 when:
 - a) such applications are submitted by or on behalf of any officer of Bromsgrove District Council or any Parish Council within the District of Bromsgrove;
 - b) such applications are submitted by or on behalf of any County, District or Parish Councillor whose ward is within the District of Bromsgrove; or
 - c) where it is possible that any County, District or Parish Councillor whose ward is within the District of Bromsgrove may have a conflict of interest in such an application.
- 4.2.14 Members will be aware that the delegation proposed for the purposes of ‘High Hedges’ constitutes a change to the existing Scheme of Delegation and will require reporting to the Standards Committee and Council for approval.

Applications

- 4.2.15 The introduction of this legislation has been long anticipated and it is clear that the Government is concerned that householders may deluge local

authorities with applications on high hedges. They have made it quite clear that this legislation should be used as a last resort. Consequently they are giving councils the right to reject any application if insufficient information is provided or if there is no evidence of previous attempts to resolve conflict arising from a high hedge problem.

4.2.16 The Government has provided a model application form for authorities to use, if they so wish. This appears to cover the main areas of information required although at 7 pages in length it is excessively lengthy. An alternative form is proposed a copy of which is attached as Appendix 2. This would provide the basic information required.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The introduction of the 'High Hedges' legislation will increase the workload of local authorities although it is unclear how much work will be generated. It has implications for those parts of the Authority taking primary responsibility for the work as well as others whose support made be needed e.g. enforcement, legal.
- 5.2 However, the proposals outlined above provide a basis for operating the new legislation although it will be necessary to review the operation of the new system within a reasonable period.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The introduction of the proposed fee structure as recommended in this report for a 'High Hedges' service is intended to cover the costs of its administration and operation. The operation of the system will be monitored and a review carried out after six months to consider what changes are necessary. This will include consideration of costs.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There will be legal implications from this legislation necessitating professional support in some cases. Until the system has been in operation for a reasonable period it will be impossible to predict what resource or technical issues may arise.

Background Papers

Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003

ODPM: Hedge height and light loss March 2004.

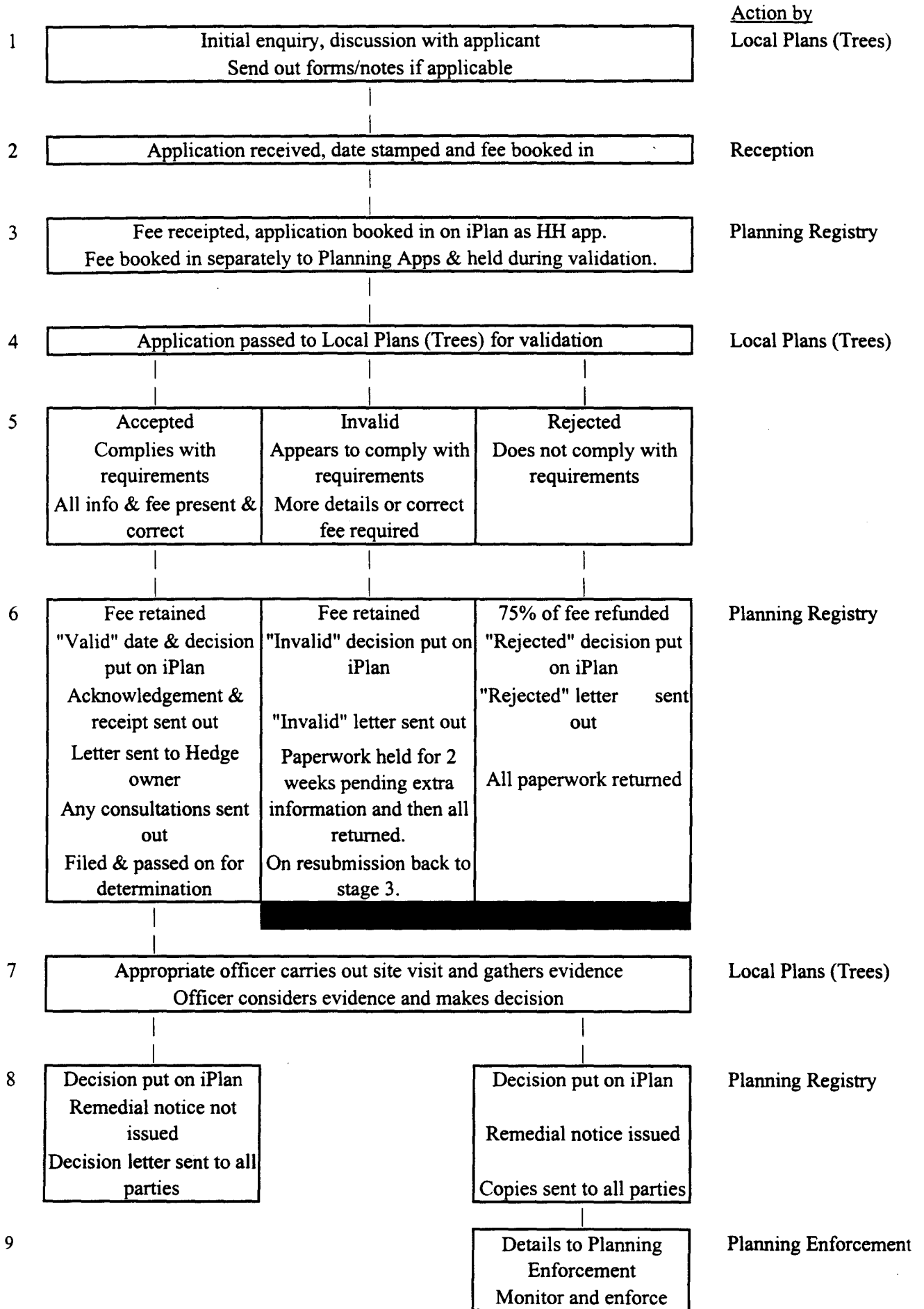
High Hedges Complaints: Prevention and Cure. Consultation Draft 2004

ODPM: Regulatory Impact Assessment: High Hedges - Implementing Part 8 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. March 2005

Contact officers

Name: P Crysell
E Mail: pcrysell@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Tel: (01527) 881318

High Hedges Complaints Process



HIGH HEDGES COMPLAINT FORM

Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003

Use this form to submit a complaint to the Council about a high hedge, under Part 8 of the above Act. It should be completed by the person making the complaint or their representative.



bromsgrove council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

- Please read the Guidance Notes and the leaflet "High hedges: complaining to the Council" before completing this form. Please use BLOCK CAPITALS and black ink. Answer all questions on both sides of the form.
- You must pay a fee when you send in this form. This is to cover the Council's costs in handling and assessing the complaint and also any costs should either party appeal against the Council's decision.
- The current full fee is **£320**. A reduced fee of **£200** is available to those on a low income subject to an independent and confidential confirmation of low income status by the Council's Revenue Services Department.
- Please make sure that the information that you supply is clear and accurate and that all the required details have been provided. The Council may not accept applications that are unclear or incomplete.
- You will have to demonstrate that you are complaining to the Council as a last resort and provide evidence of what steps you have already taken to resolve the matter yourself.

1. Address and Position of the 'problem hedge'

Please provide the address of the property where the hedge you are complaining about is located.

Please describe where on that property the hedge is positioned (e.g. southern boundary etc.)

2. Criteria for making a complaint

About the hedge

- Is the hedge (or the portion that is causing problems) made up of a line of 2 or more trees or shrubs? YES / NO
- Is it mostly evergreen or semi-evergreen? YES / NO
- Is its height more than 2 metres above ground level on the affected property side of the hedge? YES / NO
- Though there may be gaps, is the part of the hedge above 2 metres substantially obstructing light or views? YES / NO
- Is it land where the hedge is growing owned by a different person than the affected property. YES / NO

Who can complain

- Is the complainant the owner or occupier (e.g. a tenant) of the property affected by the hedge. YES / NO
- Is the land affected a domestic property or dwelling? YES / NO

If the answer to any of the questions in this section is 'NO' or is later found to be 'NO', the criteria have not been met and so the Council will not be able to consider your complaint further.

3. Attempts to resolve the complaint.

Please describe what you have already done to try to settle this matter. Give dates and say what the result was. Please provide copies of any letters you mention. If the details will not fit in the boxes provided, please use a separate sheet.

(i) Asked to discuss problem

(ii) Asked the hedge owner to try mediation

(iii) Informed them of intention to complain to council.

If you have not tried the above steps and supplied evidence, the Council may not proceed with your complaint

(iv) Any other steps.

16/8

2 COPIES OF THE COMPLETED FORM, LOCATION PLAN AND INFORMATION IN SUPPORT OF YOUR APPLICATION SHOULD BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED TO:

Director of Planning Services, Bromsgrove District Council, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove. Worcs. B60 1AA

4. Grounds of complaint

Please describe the problems actually experienced as a result of the hedge being too tall, and say how serious they are. It will save time and help your case if you stick to the facts and provide all relevant information to back up the points you are making. Please use a separate sheet if necessary.

5. Previous complaints to the Council

- Has a formal complaint been made to the Council before about this hedge? YES / NO
- If yes, please provide the details of the previous complaint: Date
Reference number
- What has changed since the Council last looked at this?

6. Those involved

Owner of site where hedge is growing:

Print Name:
Address:

Tel No:
Email:

Occupier of site if other than owner (e.g. tenant):

Print Name:
Address:

Tel No:
Email:

Complainant Details:

Print Name:
Address:

Tel No.
Email:

If submitted & signed by an Agent:

Print Name:
Profession:
Address:

Tel No.
Email:

7. Supporting documents

- You must enclose all of the following:
- One or more photos of the hedge
 - A location plan of the hedge and surrounding properties
 - Copies of correspondence with your neighbour about the hedge
 - Copies of any other documents that you mention (please list)
 - (i)
 - (ii)
 - (iii)
 - (iv)

8. Sending the complaint

I confirm that I have completed as much of this form as I can and that, to the best of my knowledge, the information provided is true and accurate.
I have sent copies of this form to all the parties listed in section 6.
I have enclosed the required fee.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____
16/9

HIGH HEDGES REDUCED FEE APPLICATION

Use this form if you are on a low income and believe that you may qualify for the reduced fee for complaining about a High Hedge.



bromsgrove council

www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

- You must pay a fee when you send in your High Hedges complaint. This is to cover the Council's costs in handling and assessing the complaint and also any costs should either party appeal against the Council's decision. The current full fee is **£320**, which must be submitted with your application unless you believe you qualify for the reduced rate. If you are on a low income you can apply for a reduced fee of **£200** by completing Section 1 below. You are classed as being on a low income if you receive one or more of the following payments:
 - Income Support
 - Job Seeker Allowance
 - Guaranteed Credit or Savings Credit
 - Incapacity Benefit or Pension Credit

- This form will be passed on to the Council's Benefits Section who will carry out a check to see if you qualify for the reduced rate. To allow them to do this, you must complete and sign Section 1 of this form to show that you agree to them carrying out this check.

SECTION 1 – PLEASE COMPLETE

1. Your full name

2. Your address

Postcode

3. Declaration

- I agree to allow the Revenues Services section of Bromsgrove District Council to carry out a check to confirm my low income status.
- I understand that this check will only be carried out within the Revenue Services section, who will confirm whether I qualify for the reduced rate. No details of my personal financial situation will be made available to any other Department of the Council.
- I confirm that, to the best of my knowledge, the information provided above is true and accurate.

Signed:

Date:

SECTION 2 – FOR COUNCIL USE ONLY

I confirm that the person named above is in receipt of one or more payments qualifying him/her as in a "low income" category.

Name:

Job Title:

Signature:

Date:

Tel. Extn:

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN TO HEAD OF LOCAL PLANS (TREES)

HIGH HEDGES GUIDANCE NOTES

Guidance notes to accompany the complaint form over a High hedge under Section 8 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. Use these notes to help you fill in the form when making a complaint about a neighbouring high hedge.



bromsgrove council

www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

You should have already followed the steps suggested in the guide 'Over the garden hedge' and read the leaflet 'High hedges: complaining to the Council' before making this complaint. Consideration of your complaint will be delayed or rejected if you do not complete the form properly or do not provide the information requested. If you are unsure how to answer any of the questions, please contact a Tree Officer on 01527 881320 or 881321 or email trees@bromsgrove.gov.uk.

1. Address and Position of the 'problem hedge'

Please provide the correct postal address wherever possible. If the site where the hedge is growing does not have a postal address, use the box to describe as clearly as possible where it is, eg 'Land to rear of 12 to 18 High Street' or 'Park adjoining Nonesuch Road'. Please describe the position of the hedge affecting you so that it can clearly be identified and distinguished from any other hedges on the same site. In each complaint, the Council can only consider a hedge in one ownership. If you are complaining about one or more hedge in different ownerships then separate complaints per hedge owner will be required.

2. Criteria for making a complaint

About the hedge

- The hedge must act, to some degree, as a barrier to light or access even if it has gaps in it. This includes access to a view or outlook. If the hedge has gaps in it above 2 metres height, these will be taken into account in assessing the extent to which the hedge affects the complainant's property.
- The hedge must consist of two or more trees or shrubs and these must be roughly in line. A complaint cannot be accepted about single trees or shrubs, whatever their size or about climbing plants such as ivy.
- The hedge must comprise wholly or predominantly evergreen or semi-evergreen trees or shrubs. To be regarded as evergreen or semi-evergreen, the hedge must retain some live foliage throughout the year. Deciduous trees which retain their leaves in the winter, such as beech and hornbeam, are excluded from the Act.
- The hedge must be over 2 metres high. This should be measured from the natural ground level of where the hedge is growing. If the hedge is growing in an artificial structure such as a raised bed, then the measurement will be from the ground level of the structure.

Who can complain

- You must be the owner or occupier of the property affected by a high hedge in order to make a formal complaint to the council.
- If you do not own the property (eg because you are a tenant or a leaseholder), you can still make a complaint. But you should let the owner (eg landlord or management company) know what you are doing.
- The property does not have to be wholly residential but must include some living accommodation otherwise we cannot consider the complaint.

3. Attempts to resolve the complaint.

Please keep the descriptions brief but say how you made the approach (eg face to face, phone, letter) and what the result was.

Example 1

- 12 March 2005 - phoned to ask if we could discuss hedge. Met on 19 March but we couldn't agree a solution;
- 15 April - mediators visited;
- 29 April - met neighbours and mediators. But still couldn't find an answer we were both happy with;
- 14 May - wrote to inform neighbour would be complaining to council.

Example 2

- 12 March 2005 - wrote to ask if we could discuss hedge. 2 weeks later still no reply;
- 9 April - wrote to ask if would speak to mediator. 2 weeks later still no reply;
- 7 May - wrote to inform neighbour would be complaining to council.

Example 3

- 12 March 2005 - saw neighbour in their garden and asked if we could discuss hedge. Neighbour came round on 19 March. Saw the effect of the hedge for themselves. Sympathetic but unwilling to reduce the hedge as much as we wanted;
- Neighbours willing to try mediation but discovered that neighbour mediation not available in our area. We live too far from the nearest service;

- 23 April - saw neighbour again and told them that, if we couldn't agree a solution, we would make a formal complaint to council. Left it for a couple of weeks then confirmed in writing that we would be going ahead with the complaint.

It is not necessary to send copies of all correspondence with your neighbour about the hedge - especially if the dispute is a long-running one. You need only provide evidence of your latest attempts (over e.g. the last four months) to settle it. You are

advised to ensure that you are able to prove that the described steps have been carried out, particularly if the hedge owner is likely to dispute your description of events. If there is any doubt over whether the attempts have been made as described, then your complaint may not be accepted.

4. Grounds of complaint

It will help if you provide as much information as you can but keep it factual. Remember that a copy of this form will be sent to the person who owns the site where the hedge is growing, and to the person living there if they are different people. Concentrate on the hedge and the disadvantages you actually experience because it is too tall.

We cannot consider problems that are not connected with the height of the hedge. For example, if the roots of the hedge are pushing up a path. Nor can we consider things that are not directly about the hedge in question. For example, that other people keep their hedges trimmed to a lower height; or that the worry is making you ill.

5. Previous complaints to the Council

We only need to know about formal complaints, made under the high hedges part of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. You don't need to tell us about telephone calls or other informal contact with the council about your hedge problems.

6. Those involved

We need all these names and addresses because there are some documents that we are required, by law, to send to the owner and occupier of the land on which the hedge grows. These include our decision on the complaint.

The complainant is the person who is resident at the property affected by the high hedge. Even if someone else is submitting the complaint on your behalf, it is important that we have the complainant's contact details.

Complete the Agent section if you are a professional adviser, relative, friend or other representative. This person will be our main contact on all matters relating to this complaint. We will direct all queries and correspondence to them. Please bear this in mind.

The owner of the site where the hedge is growing will normally be the person you have talked to when you tried to agree a solution to your hedge problems. If the site is occupied or used by someone who is not the owner, please provide these details also. We need this information because we will have to contact these people for their comments, and to arrange to visit the site where the hedge is growing.

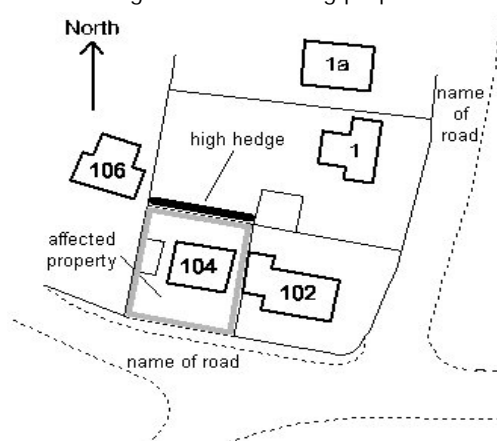
If you are in any doubt about who owns the property where the hedge is situated, you can check with the Land Registry. The relevant form (313) is on their website (www.landregistry.gov.uk) or can be obtained from the Local Office (see under Land Registry in the business section of the phone book). There is a small fee for this service, if you know the full postal address of the property. Alternatively, Land Register Online (at www.landregisteronline.gov.uk) provides easy access to details of registered properties in England. Copies of title plans and registers held in electronic format can be downloaded in PDF format for approx. £2 each. The register includes ownership details.

7. Supporting documents

You must provide photos of the hedge and a plan showing the location of the hedge and surrounding properties.

When drawing your plan, please look at the example and make sure that you:

- Mark and name surrounding roads.
- Sketch in buildings, including adjoining properties. Add house numbers or names.
- Show clearly the position of the hedge. Mark this with a thick GREEN line and show how far it extends.
- Outline the boundary of the affected property with a thin RED line
- Mark which way North is.



Please include copies of any professional reports that you may have had prepared. If you are complaining about the hedge blocking light, please ensure that you mark which way is north on your plan and provide relevant measurements (eg size of garden, distance between the hedge and any windows affected). All measurements must be in metres (m).

If you are enclosing other documents, please list these documents by date and title (eg January 2005 - Surveyor's report). This will help us to check that we have got everything. If you are submitting this form by email but will be sending supporting documents to us separately, put a reference number or title on them (eg hedge complaint, 12 High Street) so that we can match them up with your complaint.

8. Sending the complaint

You should send your complaint and all supporting information to the address shown below. You must pay a fee to Bromsgrove Council for £320 for this service. If the complainant is classed as being on a low income this fee may be reduced to £200. To apply for the reduced fee, please complete the separate claim form and include this with your complaint.

16/12

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE CABINET

18TH MAY 2005

SPORTS CENTRE / SCHOOL DRIVE CAR PARK BUSINESS CASE

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Cllr Peter Whittaker
Responsible Head of Service	John Moody

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report is brought back to the executive cabinet to reconsider the limited period allowed for free parking adjacent to the Customer Services Centre / Dolphin Centre entrance, and to note the business case set out in the report for which delegated authority has been granted. Reference Executive Cabinet minute 176/04.

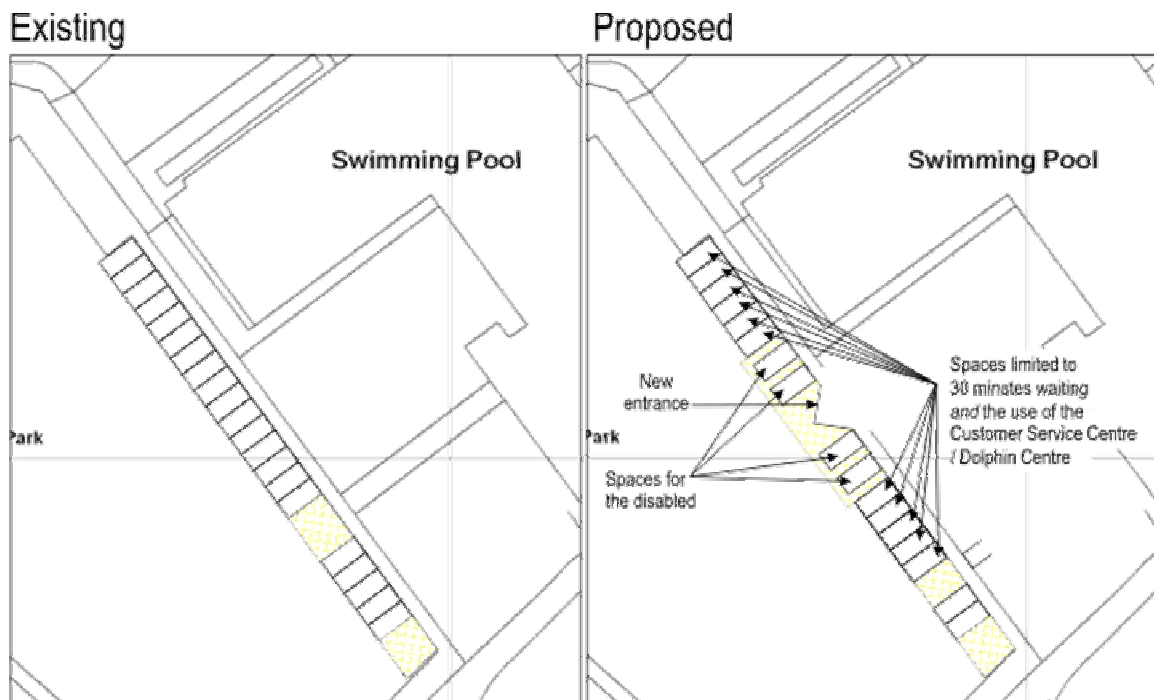
2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the issues relating to the business case are noted.
- 2.2 That the allocation of parking provision for customers of the Customer Service Centre is limited to 30 minutes waiting with no return within two hours.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The opening of the Customer Service Centre in April 2005 next to the Dolphin Centre in School Drive, Bromsgrove, will mean the dedication of parking spaces specifically for the use of customers of the centre, and the use of several spaces by staff of both the Sports Centre and Customer Service Centre. The Sports Centre car park is due to be adopted by the Council under the Car Parking Order in May 2005.
- 3.2 The planned adoption of the Sports Centre car park will lead to the creation of 2 spaces for the disabled, 8 spaces for staff, and 27 standard spaces, or 37 spaces in total.
- 3.3 It is anticipated that 10 spaces will be used by staff from the Sports Centre at any one time. It is also anticipated that a further 11 spaces will be used by staff of the Customer Service Centre at any one time. The number of spaces taken up by staff and disabled drivers will therefore be 23 in total, leaving an extra 14 spaces being available.

- 3.4 The dedication for spaces for the sole use of customers of the Customer Service Centre would incorporate 11 standard spaces and a further 4 spaces for the disabled. These dedicated spaces will mean a reduction of 19 paying spaces in the spaces available on the School Drive car park.
- 3.5 Officers would recommend that these 11 spaces are limited to 30 minutes use by users of the Customer Service Centre with no return within 2 hours, and that 4 spaces are provided for disabled drivers. Disabled drivers are currently free from any time restraint when using spaces for the disabled (or indeed standard spaces) under Article 25 of the Car Parking Order.

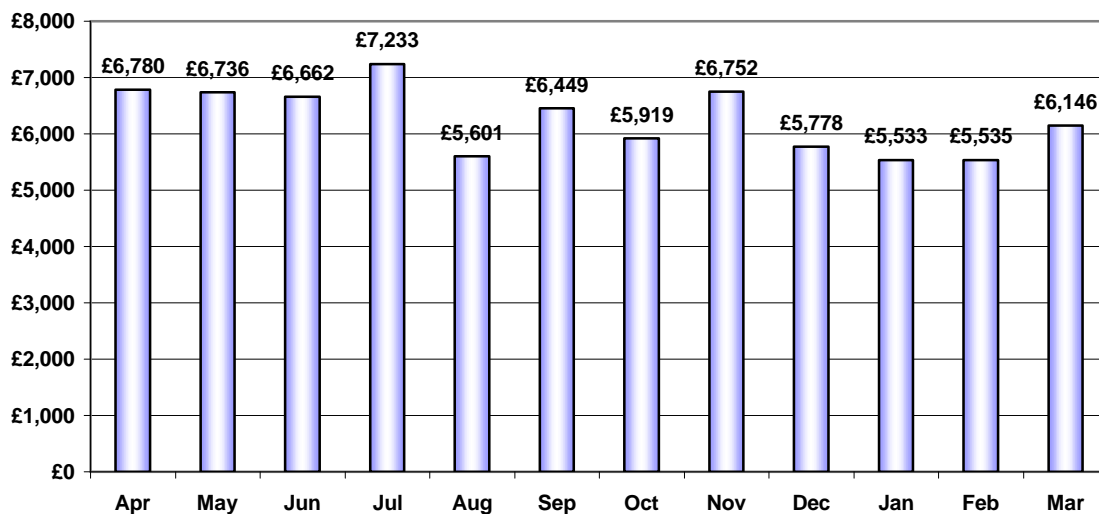


4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 Based on the assumption that the revenue generated from the Dolphin Centre car park would be in line with that achieved on the School Drive car park it is estimated that the income per space would be £484 per annum. The tariff for the Sports Centre car park will be identical to that used on School Drive and will include all day parking as well as parking for up to one and two hours. Officers believe that revenue for the Sports Centre car park is likely to match the current levels achieved on the School Drive car park.
- 4.2 Therefore the predicted annual revenue for 2005/2006 for the Dolphin Centre car park would be $12 \times £484 = £5808$.
- 4.3 The cost of maintaining the Sports Centre car park would be approximately £2000 per annum, leaving a net predicted income of £3808 per annum.

- 4.4 The cost of bringing the Dolphin Centre car park to the same standards as other pay and display car parks, including equipment and appropriate signage is approximately £44,500. £40,000 is included in the approved Capital Programme for 2005/06, leaving a shortfall of £4,500.
- 4.5 Based on the predicted revenue income identified above there would be a payback of £4,500 within a 15 month period providing the assumptions on income are achieved.
- 4.6 The cost of implementing the works to bring the Sports Centre car park up to the required standards have in reality turned out to be less than the £44500 estimated, and will now be met from the original budget figure of £40000.
- 4.7 Officers do not believe that the removal of 19 paying spaces from the School Drive car park will have an adverse effect on the overall admission charge revenue budget for 2005/2006. This is principally because there is adequate capacity throughout Council operated car parks to allow drivers who would normally have parked in these spaces to park elsewhere.
- 4.8 The construction of the multi storey car park has substantially increased spare capacity in the Council operated car parks, and therefore the ability to absorb displacement from the dedication of these spaces has been enhanced.
- 4.9 The chart below specifies the gross admission charge revenue from the School Drive car park for the previous financial year. Members will note that from August to March the capacity of the car park was reduced by approximately 24%, and that revenue did not fall by the same amount for the corresponding period.

School Drive Gross Revenue 2004/2005



5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Car Parking Order will require amendment to include the arrangements for staff parking, and also to include the Dolphin Centre car park as a parking place in the schedule of the Car Parking Order. This has already been incorporated in another report reviewing the car parking operation in Bromsgrove which will be presented during 2005.
- 5.2 The Car Parking Order will also require amendment to incorporate the use of spaces dedicated to customers of the Customer Service Centre.
- 5.3 The change of use of this car park will require planning permission, and planning application B/2005/0207DB is already being determined.

6. Personnel Implications

- 6.1 The proposed introduction of this number of spaces will increase the number of pay and display spaces from 1336 to 1373, or an increase of less than 3%. This low increase, combined with the proximity of the car park to an existing pay and display car park, could be readily policed by existing parking attendants without any current requirement for an increase in personnel.

Background Papers

N/a

Contact officers

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE CABINET

18TH MAY 2005

RESTRUCTURING UPDATE

Report of the Chief Executive Officer

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform Members of the outcome of the consultation to reorganise the senior management structure as set out in the report to Executive Cabinet last month (13th April 2005).

2. RECOMMENDATION

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 Note and approve the minor amendments and next steps arising from the consultation to reorganise the senior management structure of the organisation as set out in sections 4 and 5 in the report and supporting appendices.
- 2.2 Endorse the proposals, contracting arrangements and the financing of the assessment/development centres and the interim support for HR and the interim posts of Assistant Chief Executive and Head of Financial Services.
- 2.3 Delegate to the Chief Executive in conjunction with the Corporate Director (Resources), leader of the Council and the Portfolio holder for finance to agree acceptance of the lowest quote for the assessment/development centres (should the cost exceed £30,000).

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In the report to Executive Cabinet (13th April 2005) the Chief Executive highlighted her review and proposals to restructure the organisation as one element towards the Council's drive for improvement and recovery, and to provide a framework from which purposeful change would flow.
- 3.2 The review and subsequent proposals sought to ensure;
- a) support for the delivery of the District's Community Strategy, the Council's Corporate Plan and Corporate Objectives, the Service Plans and the Best Value Performance Plan,
 - b) constructive comments from Members, staff, Trade Unions, and other stake holders were considered and embraced where appropriate,
 - c) clarity of accountability and line management responsibility,

- d) a reduction in bureaucracy and an improved performance management culture,
- e) an improved closeness to the customer and more effective communication,
- f) improvement in the Council's ability to "get things done".

3.3 The report also highlighted the challenges and drivers for change facing local authorities over the next few years, whether rooted in: the new comprehensive performance assessments (CPA) beyond 2005, the new 10 year vision setting out national expectations, the need to ensure corporate governance and operational management arrangements are efficient and effective, and the determination to progress services strongly to meet customer and citizens needs in line with the overall improvement agenda.

3.4 In summary the proposals included:

- The retention of the two corporate director posts combining strategic leadership with the overview of operational responsibilities and an involvement with external organisations and cross cutting issues.
- A strengthening of the Financial Services Section and the creation of a Head of Financial Services.
- The establishment of an Assistant to the Chief Executive (ACE) concentrating initially on community leadership, performance management, communications, and the interpretation of Government policy and funding opportunities to benefit B.D.C.
- A reduction in the Officer Management Team (OMT) layer of management to seven Heads of Service.
- An amalgamation of services which have a common relationship and make better sense to the public as a more logical and strategic "fit" with the potential to improve the delivery of those services through more consistent management, a better use of resources, less duplication and thereby have the ability to achieve the Council's six corporate objectives.
- The need to introduce flexibility in the staffing structures, to break down the 'silo mentality' and encourage creativity and generic management abilities alongside improved skills across the organisation.
- The creation of a new Senior Management Team to be known as the Executive Management Team (EMT) and comprising the Chief Executive, the two Corporate Directors, the Assistant Chief Executive and the Head of Organisational Development and Human Resources.

3.5 The proposed new management structure was described diagrammatically at Appendix 4 in the original report (13th April 2005) and the broad functions for each Head of Service within the two directorates (Resources and Services) were set out in that report, Appendix 5 and 6 respectively. Appendix 7 described the areas of work in which initially the Assistant Chief Executive would be involved. These are

now attached as Appendix A, B, C and D respectively, with the appropriate amendments arising from the consultation (shown in italics).

4. KEY ISSUES ARISING FROM CONSULTATION

4.1 Consultation has been undertaken in a number of ways including presentations to Trade Unions, OMT, open presentations and invitations to other staff, individual discussions as requested, as well as small group/team meetings as required. While the report to Executive Cabinet contained exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1971, the main thrust of the proposals and the appendices were available on line for staff comment.

4.2 The consultation period was extended to May 13th to provide sufficient time to discuss queries, constructive comments and address any concerns.

I would like to thank all staff and representatives of the Trade Unions and Staff Network for their positive comments and contributions to this process.

I have summarised the main issues raised up to 9th May (when this report was circulated) and will report verbally to Cabinet should I receive additional feedback.

4.3 The key issues raised have been:

- General agreement to the overall principles in the restructuring, and a wish to reduce bureaucracy but clarify and simplify accountabilities.
- Support in the main for the groupings of services and a general belief this will bring improvements for customers and the community.
- Queries about the location of some functions within two or three areas of the Corporate Directorates (see paragraph 4.4 for more detail).
- Clarification of the location of some services, not specifically mentioned, e.g.
 - Parks, allotments, open space, play and recreation - these will be part of the Culture and Community Services grouping.
 - Cemeteries were not highlighted in the earlier report. It is proposed to relocate the responsibility to Culture and Community Services.
 - The strategic housing role embraces the private sector housing function, the mandatory and discretionary grant work, the monitoring of the HIA, caravan sites, HMO's, empty homes initiatives and the implementation of the new Housing Act provisions.

For these reasons it is now proposed to relocate the 'travellers' responsibilities to the strategic housing team as part of the Culture and Community Services Group, but to emphasise the need for cross team working with Planning and Environmental Services as planning has regulatory responsibility with regard to illegal encampment and the annual gypsy count.

- Street Scene and Waste Management Services will embrace both client and contractor roles as part of the 'soft split' initially. A new vision for the service is in development and will be brought for Executive Cabinet consideration in July, with subsequent business plans produced.
 - Freedom of information and data protection has been highlighted as part of the new Legal and Democratic Services work, but arising from the consultation it is recognised this will require a new approach to records management.
 - Land drainage is included as part of the work linked to Highways and Engineering design within the Street Scene and Waste Management grouping, but collaborative work will be required with Planning and Environmental Services.
 - More support for scrutiny has been suggested.
 - Strong support has been voiced to strengthen communications within and beyond the organisation.
- Two concerns have been raised in connection with the position of the Assistant Chief Executive post, including the suggestion it should be available for OMT applications. One officer has also proposed the ACE should have a senior manager and other officers to support the role and range of work, the other suggested a retention of more administrative posts.
 - Other verbal comments have been received in support of the post, particularly with regard to performance management, maximising external funding opportunities, interpretation of the Government agenda linked to Council policy and partnership work and enhancing the Council's reputation.
 - There has been general support from staff for an independent assessment/development centre process to be adopted for Heads of Service appointments, although one member of OMT has voiced concerns.
 - The Trade Unions and Staff Network representatives have expressed a preference to progress the next phases of the restructure below Heads of Service as quickly as possible. They have acknowledged that advertising the new Heads of Service posts internally and externally at the same time, will expedite recruitment, and would support OMT members having a guaranteed interview with the results of their respective assessment/development centre shared with the interview panel.
- 4.4 Other changes to the Services and Resources Directorates are suggested as follows but further amendments and refinements may be required as more detailed work on the restructure is cascaded.

(i) Services Directorate

- 'Travellers' to move from Planning and Environmental Services to Culture and Community Services but joint working and collective responsibility is required as highlighted in Paragraph 4.3 above.
- Operation of CCTV and Lifeline to move from Street Scene and Waste Management to complement the Community Safety functions in the new Culture and Community Services grouping.
- Pest Control to move from Street Scene and Waste Management to Planning and Environment Services. Dog patrols to remain with Street Scene and Waste Management.
- Agenda 21 and sustainability to remain as a parent responsibility within Planning and Environmental Services, but extensive work is required on a multi agency basis with Housing colleagues and with Street Scene and Waste Management.
- In relocating all the Licensing functions to Planning and Environmental Services, it is recognised a review will be required including assessment of the enforcement support necessary.

(ii) Resources Directorate

- One objection was received with reference to placing Audit within the Financial Services groupings. Following discussion it is felt appropriate to have day to day management in this grouping, particularly given the synergies with procurement and risk management. The wider development role of Audit is recognised in the modernisation agenda and the dotted line responsibility to the 151 Officer (Corporate Director Resources) and the Chief Executive will ensure the wider opportunities are maximised.
- It is recognised that in transferring Member Development to the Organisational Development and Human Resources, cross working with Legal and Democratic Services will be important to ensure maximum support and benefit to Members.

5. NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 Following detailed discussions it is proposed to advertise simultaneously the Heads of Service posts and the Assistant Chief Executive post internally and externally to minimise the recruitment timescale and any uncertainties for staff within the organisation. Short listed candidates will be required to progress through an assessment/development centre process, with a further sifting taking place in advance of the interview panel. Existing Members of OMT will be guaranteed an interview having first completed the assessment centre, and a skills matching exercise/discussion.
- 5.3 Specifications for the procurement of specialists to manage the assessment/development centre process have been sent to seven companies in line with the original report (April 13th 2005). Within that report it had been estimated that the cost of the assessment/development centres would be

approximately £6,000 however this was based on the cost of running them for internal candidates only.

5.4 Proposals have now been received back from six companies (one company chose not to quote) which are currently being evaluated. From an initial financial assessment some of the quotes received back exceed £30,000 (the amount above which the Contracts Procedure Rules state requires a full tendering procedure to be entered into). The cost is based on a number of assumptions and will depend heavily on the number of applications that are raised. Whilst some of the quotes exceed the £30,000 threshold this does not now require the need to go out to formal tender as:

- a) the quotes were sought and made in good faith in accordance with the contracts procedure rules;
- b) a significant number of quotations were received which guarantees there is sufficient competition to ensure that the Council is achieving value for money.

The Chief Executive and the Corporate Director (Resources) will continue to assess the proposals that have been submitted for the assessment/development centres and will ensure that the Council achieve best value for money and that the procurement process followed is in accordance with Contracts Procedure Rules and financial Regulations.

If the costs exceed £30,000, in recognition of the need to expedite the process it is suggested that delegated authority is given to the Chief Executive in conjunction with the Corporate Director (Resources), leader of the Council and the Portfolio holder for finance to agree acceptance of the lowest quote. The costs will be met from the resources highlighted in Section 6.

5.5 To ensure steady progress and dedicated specialist H.R. support and advice throughout the restructuring process, it is proposed to appoint an interim H.R. advisor. The contract will be 2/3 days per week to complete the restructuring. The costs of which will be met from the resources highlighted in Section 6

5.6 Arising from the Council's recovery plan and our determination to progress with the priorities for improvement, it is proposed to appoint an interim Assistant Chief Executive to further support this work, 3/4 days per week, until a permanent appointment is made. In addition due to the urgent need to progress with the improvements needed on revenues and benefits and procurement it is proposed to appoint an Interim Head of Financial Services, again 3/4 days per week until a permanent appointment is made.

5.7 An estimated timeline for the restructuring has been produced at Appendix E to project manage the first phase.

As the recruitment will now include internal and external candidates, the assessment/development centres have been deferred to June, with interviews scheduled for July (subject to 5.1 above).

5.8 A politically balanced panel of Members is proposed as part of the interview and appointment process, for which appropriate training will be undertaken.

- 5.9 The job descriptions are currently being amended in line with the minor changes arising from the consultation. The West Midlands Local Government Association is also providing independent evaluation of them.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 As set out in the previous report (13th April 2005) the Council has received approval from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) under the Local Government Act 2003 for capitalisation of revenue costs of £750,000 to support the restructure of the Council's overall improvement. In addition the Council has £149,000 set aside from within its revenue budget to fund the overall improvements.
- 6.2 Subject to agreement of full Council, it is proposed that the costs for the interim HR specialist post to support the restructure process together with the costs for the interim Assistant Chief Executive, the interim Head of Financial Services and the assessment/development centres be met from the £899,000 that it has available from its own resources to fund the overall improvements. Initially these costs can be met from the £149,000 referred to above and as such does not require approval of full Council.

7. LEGAL & EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The process to complete the restructure will be in line with the principles of the Council's policies, including consultation with representatives of the Trade Unions and Staff Network.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

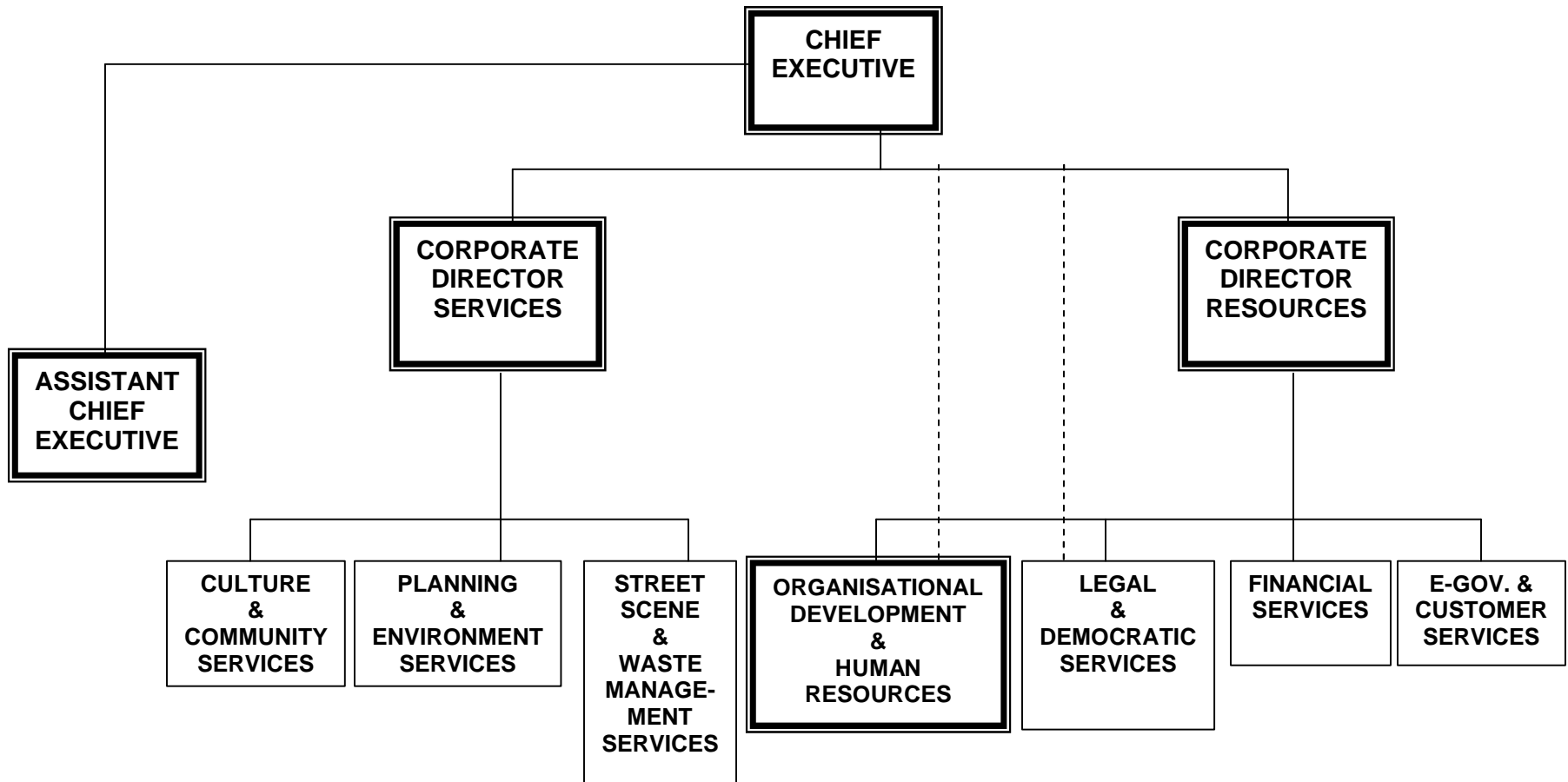
Executive Cabinet Report of 13th April 2005.

CONTACT OFFICER(S)

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PROPOSAL FOR NEW MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE APRIL 2005



**CORPORATE DIRECTOR
RESOURCES**

<p>Organisational Development & Human Resources</p>	<p>Legal & Democratic Services</p>	<p>Financial Services</p>	<p>E-Government & Customer Services</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Human Resources & Welfare •Organisational Development •Training & Development •Health & safety •Diversity/Equalities •Social Inclusion •Workforce Planning •Succession Planning •Payroll •Member Development <i>(Linked with support via Legal & Democratic Services)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Professional Legal Advice & Services •Election & Electoral Services, Periodic Electoral Review •Civic Support •Democratic Services & Member Support •Corporate Administration/ Central Post Opening & Reception •Knowledge Management •Monitoring Officer Role, Probity & Standards •Advice to Parishes •Freedom of Information, Data Protection, <i>Records Management</i> •Property, Assets & Facilities Management, <i>Building Maintenance</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Accounts & Financial Management & Advice •Corporate Income & Debt Management •Procurement •Revenues & Benefits •Audit (additional reporting Line to Corporate Director, Resources) •Risk Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •I.C.T. •E Government •E Commerce •Website •Printing & Reprographics •Customer Service Centre •Business Process Re- engineering (BPR)

APPENDIX C

CORPORATE DIRECTOR SERVICES

Culture & Community Services	Planning & Environment Services	Street Scene & Waste Management Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Community Cohesion & Community Safety •CCTV & Lifeline Operation & Development •Community Transport/Bus Passes/Concessionary Fares •Grant Aid •Health Education/Interventions •Arts Development •Sports & Recreation Development •Children & Young People, Play •Older People •Parks, Open Spaces •Cemeteries •Voluntary Sector & Community Networks, Grant Aid •Tourism Development •Museum •Leisure/Sports Centres/Dual Use Facilities •Housing Strategy and Enabling Role etc. <i>(Linked to work with Planning and Environment Services)</i> •Travellers 	<p>(Regulatory Services)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Planning & Local Development Framework •Development Control •Building Control •Licenses (all) •Land Charges •Environmental Health/Protection/Enforcement •Public Health & safety •Food Safety •Emergency Planning •Conservation •Improvement Grants •Agenda 21 & Sustainable Development <i>(Linking work with Street Scene & Waste Management and Culture & Community Services)</i> • Pest Control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Car Parks/Shopmobility •Street Scene •Street Cleansing •Grounds Maintenance •Highways •Cesspools/Sewers •Public Conveniences •Refuse & Recycling •Waste Management, Policy, Promotion, Management •Fly Tipping, Bill Posting •Abandoned Vehicles •Dog Controls •Engineering Design & Land Drainage •Street Naming & Numbering

ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE

- Work with Members and Chief Executive to develop vision, Corporate Plan, linked to Community Objectives
- LSP & other strategic partnerships, including health improvement partnerships, supporting people programme, strategy for older people, Local Area Agreements, LPSA etc.
- Development and delivery of corporate strategies, *interpretation of Government Policy*
- Consultation and community engagement, understanding and addressing the needs of the community, customer and citizen.
- Customer, comments, complaints and service review in relation to customer feedback.
- Performance management, EFQM, and other quality standards.
- BV reviews, continuous improvement agenda, production of BVPP.
- Inspections, delivery and achievement of Recovery Plan, CPA.
- External reputation, media, PR, marketing and promotion.
- Community programmes linked to policies of social inclusion, diversity and active communities.
- Special projects/innovation, research analysis, and funding opportunities.
- Economic Development

APPENDIX E

	ACTION	11/04/2005	18/04/2005	25/04/2005	02/05/2005	09/05/2005	16/05/2005	23/05/2005	30/05/2005	06/06/2005	13/06/2005	20/06/2005	27/06/2005	04/07/2005
Cabinet Approval	SN	13/04/2005												
General Letter to H of S	TC/KD	14/04/2005												
Letter to H of S (Holding)	TC/KD		22/04/2005											
Prepare New Job Descriptions	SN/KD/CS			25/04/2005										
Consultation Period to OMT Members	N/A			25/04/2005		13/05/2005								
Get new job descriptions evaluated	KD/CW			27/04/2005	06/05/2005									
Quotations for Recruitment process (adverts etc.)	LM			25/04/2005	06/05/2005									
Appoint agency for Recruitment process (adverts etc.)	KD/LM			25/04/2005	06/05/2005									
Specification for Assessment Centres	KD			27/04/2005										
Letter to H of S (Detailed)	TC/KD			29/04/2005										
Update Job Descriptions	TC/LM			29/04/2005	06/05/2005									
Quotations for Assessment Centres (received back)	SN/KD/CS			27/04/2005	06/05/2005									
Appoint Interim HR help to assist with process	SN/KD			29/04/2005	06/05/2005									
Appoint Assessment Provider	SN/KD/CS					13/05/2005								
Individual Interviews - Consultation Process	SN/KD/CS			27/04/2005		13/05/2005								
Update report for Cabinet	SN					09/05/2005	18/05/2005							
Consider Outcomes of Consultation	SN/KD/DN/RH						20/05/2005							
External advert	KD							23/05/2005						
Close of applications	N/A										13/06/2005			
Assessment Centre Interviews	?													
Appointees take up post (external)	N/A													Plus 3 months
Prepare Service Plans	KD/CS													