



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 2ND AUGUST 2006 AT 6.00PM

COMMITTEE ROOM, THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BROMSGROVE

AGENDA

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

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. To confirm the Minutes of the Executive Cabinet held on 12th July 2006 (attached)
4. Public Questions
5. To receive the Minutes of the Performance Management Board dated 14th July 2006 (attached)
6. Issues arising from the Scrutiny Steering Board
 - (a) Report of the Scrutiny Task Group on Consultants (attached)
 - (b) Report of the Scrutiny Task Group on Passport to Leisure (attached)
7. Equality Scheme (attached)
8. Local Code of Corporate Governance (attached)
9. Investors in People Assessment and Staff Survey Report (attached)
10. Gateway Refuge (attached)
11. Strategic Housing Inspection – Action Plan (attached)
12. Improvement Plan (attached)

13. Review of Service Business Planning Process (attached)
14. Independent Remuneration Panel – Future Membership (attached)
15. To consider any other business, details of which have been notified to the Head of Legal and Democratic 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
16. To consider, and if considered appropriate, to pass the following resolution to exclude the public from the meeting during the consideration of item(s) of business containing exempt information:-

“RESOLVED: that under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business 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:-

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Paragraph(s)</u>
17	7, 8 and 9”

17. Spatial Project (to follow – not available to the Public)

K. DICKS
Acting Chief Executive

The Council House,
Burcot Lane,
BROMSGROVE
Worcs.
B60 1AA

25th July 2006

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE CABINET

Wednesday, 12th July 2006 at 6.00 p.m.

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

OBSERVER: Councillor G.N. Denaro, Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E., N. Psirides J.P. and C.J.K. Wilson.

15/06 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs. M. A. Sherrey.

16/06 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Executive Cabinet held on 28th June 2006 were submitted.

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

17/06 **AUDIT BOARD**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit Board held on 13th June 2006 were submitted.

RESOLVED: that the recommendations set out in the Minutes be approved and adopted.

18/06 **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD**

The Minutes of the Meetings of the Performance Management Board held on 16th June 2006 were submitted.

RESOLVED: that the recommendations set out in the Minutes be approved and the remainder of the minutes be noted.

19/06 **SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD**

The Minutes of the Meetings of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 31st May 2006 and 4th July 2006 were submitted.

RESOLVED: that the contents of the Minutes of the Meetings of the Scrutiny Steering Board held on 31st May 2006 and 4th July 2006 be noted.

20/06 **ISSUES ARISING FROM THE SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD**

(a) **Bromsgrove Museum and Tourist Information Centre**

The Cabinet considered recommendations made by the Scrutiny Steering Board regarding options for the future of Bromsgrove Museum which were set out in the report of the Task Group. The Cabinet paid tribute to the extensive work undertaken by the Task Group on this issue and noted the two options which had been put forward. It was felt however, that there may be additional options available and following discussion it was,

RESOLVED: that a Cabinet Advisory Group be set up comprising three members of Cabinet to consider further options for the future of Bromsgrove Museum, including relocation and that the Group report back to Cabinet in October 2006.

(b) Culture And Community Services

Members considered recommendations made by the Scrutiny Steering Board regarding whether Culture and Community Services provided value for money which were set out in the report of the Task Group. The detailed work undertaken by the Task Group was appreciated and it was noted that a number of the recommendations were already in the process of implementation. Reference was also made to the need to consider the volume of background information submitted with Scrutiny Reports. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that the recommendations of the Scrutiny Steering Board contained within the report of the Culture and Community Task Group be approved.

21/06

ANNUAL EFFICIENCY STATEMENT

Consideration was given to a report outlining the Council's approach to delivering the annual efficiency savings as required by the Government and in particular those in relation to 2005/06 and 2006/07. It was

RESOLVED: that the Annual Efficiency Statement for 2006/07 be approved.

22/06

APPOINTMENT OF RETURNING OFFICER AND ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICER

It was reported that there was a requirement to review the appointment of the Council's Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer. It was

RECOMMENDED: that Mr. K. Dicks, Acting Chief Executive Officer be appointed as the Council's Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer.

23/06

STATEMENT OF GAMBLING POLICY

Consideration was given to a report which related to the need to carry out a public consultation on the Council's draft Statement of Gambling Policy in accordance with the Gambling Act 2005. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that the Draft Statement of Gambling Policy attached to the report be approved and the Head of Planning and Environment Services be authorised to carry out the necessary consultation in accordance with the Gambling Act 2005.

24/06

LAND AT VICTORIA ROAD BROMSGROVE

The Cabinet received a report on an approach received regarding the possible disposal of land owned by the Council off Victoria Road Bromsgrove, presently leased on a long term basis to Bromsgrove Rovers Football Club, together with land at the junction of Birmingham Road and Stourbridge Road, Bromsgrove which is currently used as a public car park. The Cabinet noted the approach but was mindful of the current use of the areas of land in question and the future development and planned regeneration of the Town Centre area. It was felt that the disposal of the land to facilitate the development proposed would be likely to detract from the future regeneration of the Town Centre. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that the request that the Council enters into discussions with a view to disposing of the land referred to in the report be refused.

25/06 **CONSTITUTION OF THE APPEALS PANEL**

Consideration was given to a report on the constitution of the Council's Appeals Panel when dealing with appeals relating to Homelessness. It was noted that a twelve month trial period, during which a two-stage appeal process had been in operation, had recently expired. The report contained a number of options for an appeals procedure in future. Members were mindful of the need to have a balance between the needs of applicants to have the benefit of a fair and timely process and the Council's requirement to improve performance to meet Audit Commission targets. It was

RESOLVED: that a one stage process be adopted in accordance with option B in the report which would involve the applicant being given the choice between a paper based review to be undertaken by an independent expert, or an appearance before an appeals panel comprising an independent expert and a representative from the Council's Strategic Housing section.

26/06 **WORCESTERSHIRE LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT – UPDATE AND NEXT STEPS**

Consideration was given to a report which gave an update on the latest developments in relation to the Worcestershire Local Area Agreement and to steps to be undertaken in forthcoming months. It was

RESOLVED: that the progress made be noted

27/06 **COUNCIL PLAN 2007/ 2010**

The Cabinet gave consideration to a report which set out an approach to facilitating the development of a Council Plan for 2007/2010 and to updating the existing Recovery Plan. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the CPA key lines of enquiry and what is required to achieve a score of level 2 be noted;
- (b) that it be noted that on the advice of the Government Monitoring Board, the Council will need to go through a CPA rating in order to come out of voluntary engagement;
- (c) that the need to be able to deliver a significant shift in performance in order to achieve an improved CPA rating be noted;
- (d) that it be agreed that the existing Recovery Plan be extended and updated to match recommendation (c) above and that in particular, it be noted that a stronger emphasis on performance improvement and customer service will be required;
- (e) that it be noted that the development of a Council Plan 2007/2010 which is intelligence led, holistic and supported by resources and managed through a robust performance management framework will be a key component to achieving an improved CPA rating;
- (f) that the delivery of an updated Recovery Plan and Council Plan 2007/2010 to include consultation with partners, scrutiny and staff be agreed and that subject to the amendment of the date of the next meeting of the Government Monitoring Board to 18th July 2006, the timetable and actions set out in the report be approved ;
- (g) that the engagement of I&DeA to undertake this work in order to make the best use of the remaining Top Team development days, to provide continuity with work previously undertaken and provide value for money, be approved;
- (h) that the Council use a balanced scorecard as a technique to develop the Council Plan 2007/2010 and to prioritise the budget process;
- (i) that the offer from Walsall MBC to work with Cabinet and Management Team to update the Recovery Plan in accordance with the response to the Minister's letter be accepted;
- (j) that in view of the timescale involved, public consultations already programmed such as the 2006/07 budget consultation be utilised for consultation on the Council Plan 2007/2010;
- (k) that future consideration be given on how to engage "hard to reach" groups.

28/06

MODERN COUNCILLOR PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the report on the development of the Council's "Modern Councillor Programme". The report referred to the roles and responsibilities of Members and to the "essential" and "desirable" training requirements for each of the roles. The work undertaken on this matter by the Interim Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development and Group Leaders was acknowledged. Following discussion, it was

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that the roles and responsibilities for Councillors together with the training requirements for each role, as contained in Appendices A and B to the report respectively, be approved in principle, subject to the establishment on a cross party basis of a small Group of Members with delegated authority to finalise the details of the roles and responsibilities for Councillors and to progress the development programme;
- (b) that the roles and responsibilities as finalised by the Group referred to in (a) be adopted as part of the Council's Constitution;
- (c) that the procurement of a provider to work in partnership with the Council to deliver its member training requirements be approved;
- (d) that the intention to gain external accreditation in respect of the member development programme be approved;
- (e) that the intention to progress towards the achievement of the I&DeA national charter on member development be approved;
- (f) that a set of protocols be compiled to cover the working relationships between members and between members and officers; and
- (g) that members be required to undertake the appropriate training programme in relation to their particular role either prior to becoming a member of a Committee or Board, or if this is impractical within three months of becoming a member of that Committee or Board and that if a member does not undertake the appropriate training they be removed from the Committee or Board in question.

29/06

SECTION 151 OFFICER

Consideration was given to the need to appoint an alternative Section 151 Officer on a temporary basis. It was

RECOMMENDED: that Ms. J. Pickering be appointed as the Council's Section 151 Officer whilst Mr. K. Dicks is in the role of Acting Chief Executive.

30/06

PROPOSED ITEM FOR SCRUTINY

The Leader of the Council raised the possibility of establishing a Cabinet Advisory Group to consider the cumulative effect of some of the Council's Planning Policies in certain areas of the District. Whilst individual applications had been approved this had resulted in a change of the character of the area. Following discussion and in view of the commitment to focus on improving performance, it was

RESOLVED: that no action be taken in relation to this matter at the present time.

31/06

AMENDMENTS TO CAR PARKING ORDER

Consideration was given to a report relating to a number of minor amendments to the Car Parking Order. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that a maximum waiting time of two hours be applied to Catshill Car Park, Golden Cross Lane, Catshill;
- (b) that the cost of applications to change concessionary parking permits before the expiry of that permit be discounted by an amount equal to one twelfth of the Annual fee for each whole calendar month remaining;

EXECUTIVE CABINET
12th July 2006

- (c) that the changes referred to in (a) and (b) above be implemented from 1st September 2006 and in accordance with Appendices A and B to the report respectively.

RECOMMENDED: that the Head of Street Scene and Waste Management, in agreement with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the relevant Portfolio Holder be authorised to make amendments to the Car Parking Order with the exception of alterations to car parking charges.

The Meeting closed at 7.55 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD

Friday, 14th July 2006 at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E., (Chairman), Mrs. S. J. Baxter, A. N. Blagg, Miss D. H. Campbell JP, and J. A. Ruck

21/06 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. J. D. Luck and P. M. McDonald.

22/06 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 16th June 2006, were submitted.

RESOLVED that, subject to the comments referred to above, the Minutes be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

23/06 **CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE PERFORMANCE**

Consideration was given to a Report from the Head of eGovernment & Customer Services on (i) the current performance of the telephony service provided by the Customer Service Centre, and (ii) the actions planned to provide realistic, sustainable improvements in telephony performance. Mr. Roger Horton, Customer Services Manager, who was also present, was able to supplement the information before the Board, and, following a number of questions from Members, it was

RESOLVED that both the Performance Report and the planned actions for improving telephony performance be noted and approved.

24/06 **LEGAL SERVICES – TEAM PLAN**

Further to the brief, verbal report made at the last Meeting, the Head of Legal Services submitted a more detailed report on the anticipated outcomes it was hoped would be achieved following the recent additional appointments made to the Legal Section Team.

RESOLVED that the Report be noted.

25/06 **IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

The Acting Chief Executive gave a brief verbal update on the current position relating to the Improvement Plan, which was to be circulated at this meeting, but, due to its volume, would be included on the agenda for the next meeting. The document, which takes the Council forward from its earlier Recovery Plan, was comprised of a number of headings, with key sections including Corporate and External; Planning and Environmental; Culture and Community; Street Scene and Waste Management; e-Government; Human Resources, and Financial Services.

Within the first of those headings (Corporate and External), officers would be looking to improve the image of the Council; introduce effective communication and consultation; bring about a more modern and inclusive Council, embracing the Equalities and Diversity agenda; have a clear strategic direction; improve Partnership working (through the Local Strategic Partnership); more public involvement with our decision-making process (through PACT, etc.); embrace more of a Performance culture within the Council, through Service Business planning processes, having priorities in place for staff at every level.

Members were also advised of some of the issues which would be addressed throughout the various Service areas within the Council.

The Chairman congratulated the officers on the work carried out to date in this regard, and it was

RESOLVED that the verbal Report be noted

26/06

COUNCIL RESULTS 2005/2006

The Assistant Chief Executive submitted a report/outturn statement on the Council's results for 2005/2006, and, in so doing, highlighted a number of specific areas where the Council would be concentrating in order to effect improvements over the coming months.

RESOLVED

(i) that, notwithstanding the assurance given that the Council's new Head of Organisational Development and Human Resources was putting in measures to address the increase in the average number of working days lost due to sickness (Indicator BV12 refers), this matter be the subject of a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Board; and

(ii) that, in all other respects, the report be noted and approved.

27/06

SERVICE BUSINESS PLAN REVIEW

Further to Minute No. 16/06 of the last meeting in this regard, the Assistant Chief Executive submitted a report outlining the proposed changes to the Business Planning process through the creation of a standard template, which was appended to the Report. The template covered the following areas, i.e., Introduction from Portfolio Holder and Head of Service; 2006/07 Performance Review; Context; Service Strategy; Key Deliverables, Indicators and Project/Task Milestones; Customer First; Resources; Risk Management, and Benchmarking.

Managers would also receive Guidance Notes with this new document, and would also receive appropriate training in its application. This was noted. Whereupon it was

RESOLVED that the proposed Business Planning process, as set out in the Report, be endorsed.

The Meeting closed at 3.25 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE CABINET

2ND AUGUST 2006

CONSULTANTS TASK GROUP – SCRUTINY REPORT

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor R. Hollingworth
Responsible Head of Service	Acting Chief Executive

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 To consider the findings and recommendations made by the Consultants Task Group which were approved by the Scrutiny Steering Board and are contained within the attached report.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are requested to agree and implement the recommendations contained within the attached report, as amended by the Scrutiny Steering Board which is outlined in 3.3 below.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At the Meeting of the former Policy and Strategy Scrutiny Committee on 31st January 2006, it was decided a Task Group would be formed to consider the use of consultants by this Council and Councillor D. C. Norton was appointed Chairman.
- 3.2 At its meeting on 4th July 2006, the Scrutiny Steering Board considered the attached report.
- 3.3 To ensure there was no misunderstanding, the Acting Chief Executive clarified that Heads of Service did include consultants' fees in their budget if they were aware that their service area would require such expertise within the following financial year. The use of consultants was also included in Business Plans compiled by each Head of Service. However, as typically consultants were not used, Heads of Service did not, as a matter of course, include consultants' fees in their budget. Where the need to use consultants was identified during the course of the year and therefore, they was no budget provision, a report would be submitted to the Executive Cabinet and ultimately on to Council which, in the opinion of the Acting Chief Executive, constituted good financial management.
- 3.4 The following was resolved by the Scrutiny Steering Board:
- i. that the wording of the first sentence of the first recommendation on page 2 of the report be amended to read: "any work involving costs up to £2,000 in any one financial year...";
 - ii. that Councillor Mrs. R. L. Dent be named in the report as a member of the Task Group;

- iii. that the clarification given by the Acting Chief Executive, relating to consultants' fees being included in the budget if the head of Service was aware that their service area would require such expertise within the following financial year, be noted; and
- iv. that, subject to the inclusion of (i) and (ii) above, the report be approved and submitted to the Executive Cabinet requesting that the recommendations contained within the report be implemented.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 If members are minded to concur with the recommendations, there would be improved financial controls over the use of consultants in the future.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There could be an increased demand on staff time within the Legal Section but this demand should be met following recent recruitments made in that Section.

6. CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

- 6.1 The attached report is in accord with the Council's objective to be an efficient and effective Council.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There are no risk management issues associated with this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

CONTACT OFFICERS

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SCRUTINY REPORT

CONSULTANTS — SCRUTINY REPORT

**Task Group Report –
Scrutiny Steering Board
July 2006**

Andy Jessop
Committee Services Officer

The Consultants Task Group comprises of five Members, i.e. Councillors D.C. Norton (Chairman), G.H.R. Hulett, Mrs. J.D. Luck, N. Psirides J.P., and E.C. Tibby and have met on six occasions (i.e. 16th March, 4th April, 26th April, 2nd May, 11th May and 24th May 2006 – see Minutes, enclosed as Appendix 1). After something of a false start – by virtue of the original terms of reference stating that the Group should scrutinise the use of both Consultants **and** Interim Officers – the work eventually undertaken was that of an investigation “ into the use of Consultants over the last two years, and to consider means of controlling their use in the future.”

At the first meeting, the Chairman circulated a list of the range of information which he felt would be appropriate to request from Heads of Service and it was agreed that such should be drawn up into a pro-forma and circulated to all Heads of Service for their appropriate attention. Task Group members were also given a copy, for background information, of a Scrutiny Report on the use of Consultants by Worcestershire County Council (see Appendix 2).

The Group considered the completed questionnaires from the various Heads of Service at their meeting held on the 4th April when it was agreed that, in order to attain a fuller picture, the various officers be invited to attend future meetings of the Group to answer any questions members might have had on their replies and/or to expand on the information given to date (see Appendix 3). At that meeting it was also agreed to approach a like-sized neighbouring local authority to carry out a comparison of their use of Consultants over a similar period (see Appendix 4).

Over the course of the next two meetings (26th April and 2nd May 2006), each senior officer was asked a range of similar questions as members sought to establish what processes were employed in considering the possible use of Consultants. During the discussion with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services in this regard, it was established that, due to his interpretation of what was actually meant by “Consultants”, all of the required information was not set out in his return. Accordingly, having clarified what information was required, further, more detailed, lists of outsourced legal work were provided) over the next two meetings, held on the 11th and 24th May 2006 (see Appendix 5).

During their last meeting, the Group also interviewed Mrs. Claire Felton, Head of Legal Services, on her perception of the use of Consultants by that Section in the future, and were encouraged to hear that, other than in extreme or urgent cases, or due to the complexity of a particular subject, she was confident that, in all other respects, the work could be carried out “in-house”. Also at this meeting, members examined each others thoughts and comments which had been requested to be put down in writing by the Chairman (see Appendix 6), and the following observations and recommendations were made:-

It is the opinion of the Group that, in the past, the use of Consultants has been excessive, and it appears that any Head of Service who has employed Consultants has been able to do so without any checks being in place. It is,

however, acknowledged that a significant amount of the Consultancy work undertaken for the Authority over the last year or so has been due to the Council being subject to the Voluntary Engagement/Recovery process, and it is expected that such use will tail off significantly in due course.

In order to retain an element of control in the future, any Head of Service wishing to avail themselves of any specialist legal knowledge should initially approach the Head of Legal Services but should that Section be unable to provide the necessary help or advice, the Head of Service should be notified and advised to approach the appropriate Portfolio holder, with a robust business case, for subsequent consideration by the Executive Cabinet. In this regard, it is formally recommended that

- (i) any work involving costs up to £2,000 – Departments should be allowed to continue to carry out their own “consultation” work, seeking advice when appropriate from Legal Services, but funding such facility from their own Departmental budget;
- (ii) work costing between £2000-£5000 – the appropriate Portfolio holder should be consulted; and
- (iii) work over £5000 – appropriate Portfolio holder should submit the request (with a robust business case) to the Executive Cabinet for determination.
- (iv) A formal monitoring process should be introduced, i.e., a Portfolio holder should be involved, and there should be some form of progress monitoring. Also, at this level, stage payments should be introduced.

Arising out of the discussions with the various Heads of Service referred to earlier in the Report, the Group would wish to actively discourage the practice currently employed by Financial Services whereby, it was reported that, as a matter of policy, Consultants fees were not included in their Budget, but monies were drawn from balances as required instead.

In conclusion, the Group wish to make a statement expressing their concern over the haphazard way that the hiring of Consultants had been approached by this Authority in the past, and hope that things will change in the future. A further concern was expressed about the previous lack of Member involvement and monitoring at any stage of the process – which has been addressed in the recommendations above.

It was also recommended that the senior officers of the Council should be encouraged to channel their knowledge and expertise of their particular discipline in such a way as to possibly generate an income for the Council (in the same way that the Council had done previously in the Housing Benefit field). Finally, the Group felt that the Council should not continually employ/re-employ a firm of Consultants “because we have always used them”, and should be mindful of Best Value/value for money.

I commend the above Report for your consideration,
Councillor D.C. Norton, Chairman of the Consultants Task Group

APPENDIX 1

**NOTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSULTANTS TASK GROUP
HELD IN THE CABINET ROOM, THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BROMSGROVE
ON 16TH MARCH 2006, AT 2.00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Councillors of Councillors D. C. Norton (Chairman), G. H. R. Hulett, Mrs. J. D. Luck, N. Psirides J.P. and E. C. Tibby.

1. **APOLOGIES**

No apologies for absence were received

2. **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The group considered the initial terms of reference which had been initially approved by the Scrutiny Steering Board. It was **AGREED** that the terms of reference be amended to be as follows:-

"To scrutinise the use of consultants and interim officers by the Council over the last two years and to consider means of controlling their use in the future."

3. **INFORMATION GATHERING**

Members considered the range of information they would need to carry out their work. The Chairman circulated a list of the range of information he felt may be appropriate to request from Heads of Service. The information would give members:-

- an understanding of the numbers of consultants and interim officers employed by the council over the last two years
- the cost of employing them
- the reasons why they were employed
- the benefits their employment brought to the council
- details of who approved their employment

It was **AGREED** that

- (i) the list of information should be drawn up in to a pro-forma
- (ii) the draft pro-forma should be circulated to all members of the task group for comments and that any comments would be submitted to the officers by 21 March
- (iii) the pro-forma would be circulated to the Chief Executive, Corporate Directors and all Heads of Service on 22 March and that they be asked to complete and return them to officers by the end of 29 March.

4. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the task group would be held on 4th April 2006 at 2pm.

The Meeting closed at 3.30 p.m.

**NOTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSULTANTS TASK GROUP
HELD IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BROMSGROVE
ON 4TH APRIL 2006, AT 2.00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Councillors of Councillors D. C. Norton (Chairman), Mrs. R. L. Dent, Mrs. J. D. Luck, N. Psirides J.P. and E. C. Tibby.

1. **APOLOGIES**

No apologies for absence were received

2. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Group held on 16th March 2006 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the Minutes be noted and approved as a correct record.

3. **INFORMATION ON USE OF CONSULTANTS AND INTERIM OFFICERS**

Members considered a range of information returned by the various Heads of Service as contained in the agreed pro-forma, and the following general points were made:

- Members were alarmed to see in some instances the comment “no paperwork”, and stressed that it was surely good practice to have a recorded paper trail
- Concerns were expressed that there was no Member input when appointing Consultants
- Members would like a more detailed breakdown on how the amounts quoted were calculated, i.e. hourly, daily, set fee, etc
- Does every Department budget for Consultants throughout the year?
- Apart from regular “one-to-one’s”, there appeared to be no other reports on the progress of the Consultants work
- It appeared that, on a couple of the responses, some of the questions/answers appeared to be missing

It was **AGREED**

- (i) That, in order to attain a fuller picture, the various Heads of Service be invited to attend future meetings of the Group to answer any questions Members may have on their replies and to expand on the information given to date; and
- (ii) That, by way of a comparison, Wychavon District Council be asked to provide details of their staffing levels and how many Consultants they may have employed during 2004/05 and 2005/06..

The Meeting closed at 2.47 p.m.

**NOTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSULTANTS TASK GROUP
HELD IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BROMSGROVE
ON 26TH APRIL 2006, AT 2.00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Councillors D. C. Norton (Chairman), Mrs. R. L. Dent, G.H.R. Hulett, Mrs. J. D. Luck and N. Psirides J.P.

1. **APOLOGIES**

An apology was received from Councillor E.C. Tibby.

2. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Group held on 4th April 2006 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the Minutes be noted and approved as a correct record.

3. **INFORMATION ON USE OF CONSULTANTS AND INTERIM OFFICERS**

In accordance with the wishes of the Group as expressed at the last meeting, the following Heads of Service were invited to attend to answer questions from members on their earlier written responses to a questionnaire on the use of Consultants:-

Mr. M. Bell, Head of Street Scene and Waste Management
Mr. D. Hammond, Head of Planning and Environmental Services
Mr. A.R. Burton, Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Each officer was asked a range of (similar) questions as members sought to establish (inter-alia) what processes were employed in considering the employment of Consultants.

During the interview with Mr. Burton, it became apparent that, following clarification of the definition of what was meant by "Consultant", the figures contained within his report would be incorrect, and it was **AGREED** that revised figures should be submitted to the Group at the earliest possible opportunity.

At the conclusion of the meeting, members held a brief general discussion, and concern was expressed over the apparent lack of monitoring of outsourced work.

It was also reported that the information requested from Wychavon District Council (for comparative purposes) had still not been received, and that further efforts would be made to obtain this as soon as possible.

The Meeting closed at 4.20 p.m.

NOTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSULTANTS TASK GROUP
HELD IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM, THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BROMSGROVE
ON 2ND MAY 2006, AT 2.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors D. C. Norton (Chairman), Mrs. R. L. Dent, G.H.R. Hulett, Mrs. J. D. Luck, N. Psirides J.P. and E.C. Tibby

1. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Group held on 26th April 2006 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the Minutes be noted and approved as a correct record.

2. **INFORMATION ON USE OF CONSULTANTS**

Further to the meeting held on 26th April 2006, the following Heads of Service were also invited to attend to answer questions from members on their earlier written responses to a questionnaire on the use of Consultants:-

Mr. R. Hazlehurst, Head of Culture and Community
Mr. K. Dicks, Corporate Director (Resources)

Mr. Dicks advised the Group that he had prepared (i) the Corporate response; (ii) the E-Government & Customer Services paper (as Ms. D. Poole had only recently taken up her post), and (iii) the Human Resources & Organisational Development Services paper (as there was currently only an Interim officer in post). He explained that he had also had a significant input into the Financial Services submission, but indicated that, notwithstanding the above comments, both Ms. J. Pickering, Head of Financial Services and Ms. D. Poole., Head of E-Government and Customer Services, who were in attendance, would be willing to take questions from members.

Accordingly. each officer was asked a range of questions, as before, as members sought to establish what processes were put into place when considering the employment of Consultants.

3. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was **AGREED** that the next meeting of the Group be held on Thursday, 11th May 2006, at 2.00 p.m. in the Committee Room, The Council House, Bromsgrove. At that meeting, the Chairman would invite members of the Group to submit their written comments on what they had heard to date, and how they felt the question of the use of Consultants should be handled in the future.

Also at that meeting it was hoped to have (i) Mr. A.R. Burton's "revised" figures, together with some "comparative" figures from Wychavon District Council, as previously discussed, to conclude the Group's deliberations.

From this information it was then intended to prepare a "draft" report, which would be circulated to all members of the Group prior to submission to the Scrutiny Steering Board for consideration.

The Meeting closed at 4.00 p.m.

**NOTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSULTANTS TASK GROUP
HELD IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BROMSGROVE
ON 11TH MAY 2006, AT 2.00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Councillors D. C. Norton (Chairman), Mrs. R. L. Dent, G.H.R. Hulett, Mrs. J. D. Luck and N. Psirides J.P.

1. **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor E.C. Tibby

2. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Group held on 2nd May 2006 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the Minutes be noted and approved as a correct record.

3. **INFORMATION ON USE OF CONSULTANTS**

It was agreed at the last meeting that, at this meeting, the Chairman would invite members of the Group to submit their written comments on the information they had heard to date, and how they felt the question of the use of Consultants should be handled in the future.

Unfortunately, none of the members present were in a position to submit any written representations, but each member gave, in turn, a verbal opinion as to how they saw the situation, and all agreed to provide a written response to the Chairman along these lines as soon as possible.

Consideration was, however, given to a further list provided by Andrew Burton, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, which was requested at the last meeting, setting out a breakdown of outsourced legal work. Notwithstanding this, it was **AGREED** that (i) Mr. Burton be requested to provide further clarification of the information now provided; and (ii) that the Head of Planning Services be requested to provide details of what proportion of his budget was vired to Legal Services.

Members were also informed that communication would continue to be made with Wychavon District Council in an endeavour to ascertain information to enable a comparison to be made with a "like-sized" Authority.

4. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was **AGREED** that the next meeting of the Group be held on Wednesday, 24th May 2006, at 2.00 p.m. in the Conference at that Room, The Council House, Bromsgrove. At that meeting, it was intended that, the Chairman would present a "draft" report for consideration by the Group prior to submission to the Scrutiny Steering Board.

The Meeting closed at 3.15 p.m.

Appendices

Unfortunately, electronic versions of Appendices 2 to 6 are not available. However, hard copies of these documents are available upon request from the Council House and will be available at the Committee Meeting.

Please contact Andy Jessop on 01527 881406 for a copy of the full task group report with appendices

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE CABINET

2ND AUGUST 2006

PASSPORT TO LEISURE TASK GROUP – SCRUTINY REPORT

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Mrs. J. M. L. Griffiths
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Culture and Community Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 To consider the findings and recommendations made by the Passport to Leisure Task Group which were approved by the Scrutiny Steering Board and are contained within the attached report.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are requested to agree and implement the recommendations contained within the attached report, as amended by the Scrutiny Steering Board which is outlined in 3.3 below.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At the Meeting of the former Health and Leisure Scrutiny Committee on 9th December 2003, it was decided a Task Group would be formed to consider the development of a Passport to Leisure Scheme and Councillor Mrs. J. M. Boswell was appointed Chairman.

- 3.2 The Scrutiny Exercise Scoping Checklist stated that:
“Existing similar schemes in similar authorities to be evaluated to determine ‘best practice’ to enable proposals and recommendations to be made to the Executive Cabinet prior to any scheme being introduced in Bromsgrove.”

- 3.3 At its meeting on 4th July 2006, the Scrutiny Steering Board considered the attached report and the following was resolved:
- i. that the following be added as recommendation (d): “Steps be taken to consult neighbouring authorities with regard to reciprocating arrangements”; and
 - ii. that, subject to the inclusion of (i) above, the report be approved and submitted to the Executive Cabinet requesting that the recommendations contained within the report be implemented.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Please refer to the “Financial Implications” section in the attached report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Please refer to the “Legal Implications” section on the last page of the attached report.

6. CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

- 6.1 It should be emphasised that the attached report is directly linked to the Council’s corporate objective of promoting a healthy community and our aim to provide services to all regardless of the ability to pay.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 Please refer to the “Risk Management Consideration” under “Other Implications” section on the last page of the attached report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD

4TH JULY 2006

PASSPORT TO LEISURE COCESSIONARY SCHEME

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Cllr June Griffiths
Responsible Head of Service	Robbie Hazlehurst

1. SUMMARY

1.1 The following report of the Passport to Leisure Task Group sets out the potential to set up a Passport for Leisure scheme in the district and outlines the aims & objectives, organisational arrangements and operational requirements for the introduction of such a scheme.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Members are recommended to: -

- a) Agree the aims and objectives of the scheme, the organisational and operational arrangements to implement and operate it and the proposed charges as outlined in the report and;
- b) Note the estimated costs of implementing and operating the scheme and;
- c) Submit the report to the Executive Cabinet.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The former Health & Leisure Scrutiny Committee established a cross party working group to contribute to the development of a "Passport to Leisure" scheme for Bromsgrove.

3.2 As a result Members and officers have reviewed and appraised several similar schemes operated by other local authorities and have attended presentations by recognised industry experts to establish what is considered "best practice" in this area, what operational aspects need to be considered to deliver an effective scheme and what barriers to participation need to be addressed/removed to ensure the scheme meets its agreed aims and objectives.

3.3 As part of the review two other local authorities were invited to make presentations to demonstrate the benefits of such a scheme, the financial implications and the practical requirements that would be placed upon the Council should it chose to implement such a scheme.

3.4 Members and officers as a result have developed a scheme that they believe will meet the needs of Bromsgrove and deliver real benefits to local residents as follows:

What are the Scheme's Aspirations?

- The scheme will deliver greater sporting and recreational opportunities for target groups (concessions) as specified later in the report, increase participation and associated health benefits and provide equality of access for all.

It has been established that "Physical Inactivity is a cause of some of the UK's biggest killer diseases – heart disease, stroke, diabetes and bowel cancer as well as

a range of other health problems, from depression to osteoporosis. This does not of course cover Obesity were in the past 20 years the UK's obese population has trebled, through the increase of sedentary activities. It is projected in the next 10 years based on the current trend at least 50% of children will be obese. Fat Children all too often become fat adults.

Inactivity among older people is another major health worry. Not only is it adding to the burden of cardiovascular disease, it is also contributing to frailty and dependence in old age and an alarming increase in the number of falls and fractures.

The promotion of active living has been described as "the best buy in public health" by Professor Jerry Morris, one of Britain's most eminent researcher in the field - source: NHS, Health Development Agency and British Heart Foundation – Lets Get Moving.

Excising for half an hour at least twice per week during midlife can significantly cut a person's risk of dementia later in life. People in their late 40's and early 50's who do this could reduce their risk of dementia by about 50%, those who are genetically prone to Alzheimer's disease could see a reduction of about 60%, according to a study in Lancet Neurology, Sweden.

This issue is further compounded as public sector leisure facilities are used less by those who have social, economic and other hardships than those who are more affluent and mobile, sources Leisure & Recreation Management – George Torkildsen 5th Edition.

Increasing activity levels by 10% could save 600 lives and £50 million a year in the West Midlands, source Sign up for Sports- Sport England West Midlands regional Plan 2004 –2008.

- The scheme will increase the Council's knowledge of its users to enhance marketing functions. Introduce performance monitoring of marketing activities and assist in the collation of statistical information for the Cultural block of CPA.
- It will allow the restructuring of fees and charges to financially assist target groups and the socially disadvantaged to access sporting and recreational activities and opportunities whilst also providing local residents with financial benefits in the form of a range of membership packages.
- It will allow the Council to efficiently & effectively target users groups to meet the objectives of the Community Plan, the Corporate Plan and the Equalities and Diversity Policy.

Who is the scheme aimed at?

The 'passport to leisure' scheme will be set up to provide opportunities for the following groups of people:

- Those entitled to a concession based on their ability to meet the criteria, as identified later in the report.
- Those who become centre members via the direct debit system. This system is already operating but will be expanded to include a number of activities not currently covered in the centre's membership packages, for example full centre members will pay a one off monthly fee for all activities, with set exclusions that may or may not be discounted to promote usage (e.g. Parties etc).

The establishment of extended membership packages will be developed following the completion of the Phase 2 refurbishment of the Dolphin Centre. It is however envisaged that the scheme will consist of 3 membership levels offering differential

packages with the existing scheme being the middle level, the scheme may also include membership categories for individuals, couples and families.

Is a charge to be made for the card?

It is proposed that the following charges be made for the different elements of the scheme:
-

- a) **Concession Scheme** - £2.00 per initial application based on administration costs, then £0.00 per renewal until the card expires/is not renewed.

Should a member/card holder wish to reapply or change their category of concession, the card will be classed as a renewal and be subject to the £2.00 initial fee.

For concession users with more than one card (families/dependants) the charge will be based on the one card charge at £2.00.

The concession scheme will allow for family/dependant discounts subject to the criteria proposed later in the report.

- b) **Centre/Health & Fitness Memberships** – There will be no changes at present to the existing system of Direct Debit's (DD's) where a joining fee of £24.00 is charged for the initial membership. Further annual membership charges are not currently applicable provided DD's are maintained, but this will be reviewed as part of a regular review of the membership package.
- c) **Pay and play users** – will continue to be charged an annual membership fee of £24.00, should a member of the fitness suite then wish to join the membership scheme as DD, they will be entitled to the full discounts for that card and be charged a £5.00 conversion charge to cover the administration fees applicable (DD payment forms, new card and system reprogrammed).

Do we wish to charge for annual renewals, lost or damaged cards?

It is proposed that: -

- a) Concession and Fitness Suite members (DD's) who maintain their memberships will not be charged for the renewal of memberships. Should individuals allow their membership to expire or they fail to maintain agreed payment plans they will be required to reapply for membership.
- b) Lost or damaged cards for all valid membership and concession categories will be charged for, at the concession rate card of £2.00 per card. Couples/Family memberships will be charged in these circumstances at the above rate per new card required.
- c) Annual renewal charges will remain in place for all Fitness Suite play and pay members.

Do we wish to limit the times were discounts/concessions are available to peak/off peak sessions, weekdays or weekends?

It is proposed that all membership schemes will be available at all times for all users to ensure that the scheme is effective in the delivery off its aims and objectives and provides real benefits users.

Will the discount be available to the immediately family of the individual concerned/card holder?

It is proposed that

- a) **Concessions** - Dependant upon the nature of the concession and the ability to meet the criteria, the family will be entitled to the discount proposed later in the report. The system will be set up to show the applicant as the main user with other family members (living in the same house) having secondary cards for management, monitoring and marketing purposes. Once a child/dependant reaches the age of 16 yrs they will be consider an adult and be exempt from the scheme unless they remain in full time education.
- b) **Fitness Suite Memberships** – This system is already set up in respect of ‘couple’ memberships. However due to the nature of the activities on offer at the sites family memberships which are currently unavailable will be developed for introduction once the phase 2 Dolphin Centre refurbishment works have been completed.

Are Carers and Personal Assistants they to be included?

It is proposed that because a carer and personal assistant does not participate in the activity for their own benefit but supports the user in the activity, they will be provided with free of charge usage/access to the sites, provided they attend site with the card holder.

Instructed/coached activities

It is proposed that Instructed classes/session (those where a staffing cost is incurred to run the activity) will be discounted/given at a concessionary rate as per the normal scheme to ensure continuity and to prevent unwanted barriers to participation.

Membership/Concessions discounts

It is proposed that membership/concessionary discounts be agreed as follows to be based on: -

Category	Discount	Comments
Single Session Usage	Yes	N/A
Multi User Activities – for example badminton	No	If a holder of a couples or family card wish to make a booking for the family/couple then yes, provided that no none card holder participates in the activity.
Commercial Bookings	No	N/A
Block Booking	No	N/A
Club Bookings	No	N/A

It is proposed that all other centre membership schemes will be removed as part of the introduction of the Passport to Leisure scheme this process. This relates to advanced booking memberships for activities such as badminton. To ensure advanced bookings are available the following benefits will be offered to those who become ‘Passport to Leisure’ card holders:

- 7 Day advanced bookings on all activities,
- Free of charge equipment hire
- Free of charge spectator entrance

Are premium rates to be charged and if so do we take the existing fee and discount down or increase the fees then discount down?

The Service will continue to conduct its annual fees and charges review as normal and base core fees and charges on local comparison, CIPFA information and upper quartile

pricing objectives. This will ensure the transparency of process discount agreed and fees charged.

Number and type of Concession Categories.

It is proposed that the scheme will be banded into groups as detailed below to ensure ease of access, accurate monitoring and to ensure that there is no stigma attached to becoming a member.

Group A = Individual with 50% Concession

<i>Description</i>	<i>Proof Required</i>	<i>Discount %</i>	<i>Duration/ Timescales (Months)</i>
Students in Full time education 16+ Incapacity Benefits	NUS Card or Letter from Head Teacher Letter from benefits agency or other appropriate proof	50% 50%	12 12

Group B = Individual with 30% Concession

<i>Description</i>	<i>Proof Required</i>	<i>Discount %</i>	<i>Duration/ Timescales (Months)</i>
Industrial Disablement Allowance	Letter from benefits agency or other appropriate proof	30%	12
Disablement Benefit	Letter from benefits agency or other appropriate proof	30%	12
Widows Pension	Letter from benefits agency or other appropriate proof	30%	12
Disability Living allowance	Letter from benefits agency or other appropriate proof	30%	12
Disabled Tax Credit	Letter of confirmation from Inland Revenue	30%	6
War Widows Pension	Letter from benefits agency or other appropriate proof	30%	Ongoing

Group C = Family with 50% Concession

<i>Description</i>	<i>Proof Required</i>	<i>Discount %</i>	<i>Duration/ Timescales (Months)</i>
Job Seekers Allowance	JSA Booklet ES40	50%	3
Income Support	Letter from benefits agency or other appropriate proof	50%	6
Severe Disability Allowance	Letter from benefits agency or other appropriate proof	50%	12
Invalid Care Allowance	Letter from benefits agency or other appropriate proof	50%	12
Pension Credit	Letter from benefits agency or other appropriate proof	50%	Ongoing

Group D = Family with 30% Concession

<i>Description</i>	<i>Proof Required</i>	<i>Discount %</i>	<i>Duration/Timescales (Months)</i>
Council Tax Benefit (single occupancy discount does not apply)	Letter from BDC	30%	6
Housing Benefit	Letter from BDC	30%	6

Group E = Individual with 25% Concession or Free Of Charge

<i>Description</i>	<i>Proof Required</i>	<i>Discount %</i>	<i>Duration/Time scales (Months)</i>
Young People on Training Schemes or Modern Apprenticeships	Letter from employer or youth training scheme	25%	12
County Level Sports Person (FANS scheme)	As per Sports Dev. Scheme	FOC	12
GP Referral	Letter from GP	FOC	3

Loyalty Scheme

It is proposed that a loyalty scheme will be developed for all areas of the scheme where points will be awarded for attending session. An agreed range of promotional gifts will then be established with a point's value associated with the gift. Once the points threshold has been reached the users will be able to claim the gift (one per 12 month period) or continue to save points for the next gift. If a gift is claimed the points are then wiped and the collation process resumes again.

<i>Gift</i>	<i>Points Requirements</i>
Pen	25
Drinks Bottle	50
Towel	75
T Shirt	100
Umbrella/Draw String Bag	125

An example of the points system would be that a swim is worth 1 point, a fitness suite session (aerobics or fitness suite) 2 points and coaching/instruction course 3 points.

This will help to promote our various sites/services around the District, as all gifts will be branded, reward attendance on site/at sessions and challenge users to continue with health and fitness programmes to achieve the gift they most desire. The system will be set up to run as long as the card is valid, should the card become invalid the points will then be frozen at that point. The member will then have up to two months to renew the card before the points are lost and the membership details deleted from the system.

Please note should users attend the centre for swimming 3 times per week it would take them 9 weeks to achieve a pen. A cost calculation in this area is as follows, a pen will cost £0.31 but the income from a full paying adult will be £72.90 over the period required to gain

enough points. In terms of a concession user at the highest level of discount applicable the Council would attract income of £36.45 over the period.

Targets/Performance Monitoring?

To ensure the scheme is successful it must be monitored effectively and the information used to improve the scheme and increase its relevance to those we are endeavouring to help (make it more users focused).

Detailed below are the proposed performance indicators for the scheme and a brief explanation as to why they have been chosen:

- a) Total cards in use per year, shown on a month-by-month uptake.** This will track the effectiveness of the marketing and uptake levels of the scheme on a monthly basis to ascertain user patterns for example when are the cards most popular, is the scheme having long term benefits (repeat usage) etc.
- b) % Breakdown of total cards in use** for example concession cards and centre memberships. This will enable the headline figures to be broken down into categories to measure the effect of the scheme and ensure marketing resources are allocated to the Council's priority areas for example if the uptake of concession cards is low in certain categories and there is an awareness from our demographic data that there are a high number of residents in this category it will be possible to conduct a postcode review and target marketing/promotions in these areas more effectively.
- c) Breakdown of users/usage by categories** e.g. low incomes, people with disabilities. As per the above but allowing the concession groups of users to be broken down into individual categories and again targeted based on Council priorities. This will also allow user consultation to be undertaken to ascertain any barriers to usage that exist for example times, price etc.
- d) Equalities monitoring/uptake levels** – from the application form/database process we will be able to measure the uptake and usage within key groups such as ethnic minorities, people with disabilities etc., to meet the Council's equalities and diversity objectives and take appropriate action similar to that identified above to re-dress as participation issues.
- e) Financial** – The cost of the scheme in terms of loss of income/additional expenditure against the (perceived) increase in usage, health and well being by those accessing the facilities more frequently or for the first time.

Future Expansion Opportunities

Initially it is expected that the scheme will cover all Sports Services sites, Sports Development & Arts Development and Sanders Park activities. However the scheme as proposed has the potential to expand to include the Artrix and other local service providers for example; sports shops, cinemas, and local tourist/visitor attractions over the next 3 years. Other areas of associated benefit could include shops, super markets and retail outlets etc who could be persuaded to provide discounts to 'passport to leisure' cardholders.

It is however recommended that initially (12 to 18 months) the scheme be limited to those services within the remit of the Culture and Community Services Department, to ensure the scheme is managed effectively, meets its objectives and can demonstrate its worth before attempting to expand it into other areas.

Having proved its worth it is anticipated that the scheme will be expanded to offer additional benefits to partner organisations e.g. Worcestershire County Council Adult and Children's Services including Youth Services, Health related projects including cardio rehabilitation and corporate organisations wishing to offer health lifestyles to their employees.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 Due to the diverse nature of the Leisure/Fitness industry, the fact that no local authority profile is the same and that this is a new scheme for Bromsgrove the following costing are the best possible estimates based on information received from other authorities running similar schemes.

It is proposed that the scheme is set up to run initially for a two year period to ascertain its viability and true costing, at this point the scheme can then be revised in the light of operational experience or to meet any changes to the Council's Corporate objectives.

Members should be aware that as the scheme becomes more popular the overall level of subsidy provided to cardholders may increase due to increased usage of facilities from target groups. This may generate a reduction or loss of income if all existing users are found to be entitled to concessionary rates, however, this is considered unlikely. It also needs to be recognised that if the scheme is a success concessionary users may prevent full paying users from accessing the facilities thus reducing income. In order to manage this matter, particularly in the early days of the scheme it is proposed that a differential booking period be implemented between centre members (DD's) and concession users as highlighted earlier in the report, this will ensure that there is a balance of full paying and concessionary users particularly at peak times and allow managers a degree of freedom to manage the scheme effectively.

What is difficult to predict at this stage is whether or not the increased profile and benefits of such a scheme will increase income generation by attracting new users to the facilities. The aim of the scheme is to attract new users particularly from target groups who previously may have been excluded from the sports and recreational facilities and opportunities due to financial constraints/barriers. However based upon research of other schemes, usage is anticipated to increase linked to small increases in income generation but the full impact would not be known until the scheme had been operating for at least 12 months

Based upon the experience from other similar schemes the table below outlines the estimated impact on Sports Services budgets based on the concessionary schemes element only:

Income:

<i>Description</i>	<i>Year One</i>		<i>Year Two</i>		<i>Year Three</i>	
	Up Take	Income £	Up Take	Income	Up Take	Income
Joining Fees	3% - 2635	£5,270	5% - 4392	£3,606	6% - 5,720	£1,664
Additional fees	15,810	£21,738	26,352	£36,234	34,320	£47,190
Total	N/A	£27,008	N/A	£39,840	N/A	£48,854

Income projections:

Joining Fees - based on a Population of 87,837 (census 2001 Bromsgrove Profile), a £2.00 charge per card and the national average figure of uptake for concessionary schemes of between 4% and 10% of local population. As we are not charging for annual membership the year 2 & 3 income shows new members only.

Additional Usage Fees – the above figure is based on each concession user using the Dolphin Centre once a month for a swim at the discounted rate (£1.38). This figure has then

been multiplied by twelve months to show a projected annual income, these figures have then been reduced by 50% to take into account the number of existing users who may be entitled to the concession rate.

Expenditure:

<i>Description</i>	<i>Year One £</i>	<i>Year Two £</i>	<i>Year Three £</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Staffing – Scheme Manager (SC6) & Administrative Staff (SC2 – 20hrs)	37,880	39,206	40,578	Based on top of scale and a 3.5% Increase in staffing cost year on year. Includes on costs.
Administration Costs	3,365	3,482	3,604	Based on 15,000 information packs being sent out per year. A 3.5% increase has been applied year on year.
Marketing & Publicity	15,204	11,130	11,520	Based on a launch programme, with campaign reduced once established. 3.5% increase in place year on year.
Promotional Gifts	9,385	11,415	11,120	Purchase levels based on uptake levels above and the progression of users.
IT Infrastructure	1,348	1,395	1,444	Base on User licences for Leisure Flex system as per Sports Services sites. 3 additional licenses required for the Council House, Customer Service Centre and Sanders Park.
Misc	N/A	N/A	N/A	Any miscellaneous unforeseen costs will be meet from existing Sports Services budgets.
Total	67,182	66,628	68,266	

Predicted Net Costs:

<i>Description</i>	<i>Year One</i>	<i>Year Two</i>	<i>Year Three</i>
Income £	27,008	39,840	48,854
Expenditure £	67,182	66,628	68,266
Net Cost £	40,174	26,788	19,412

In recognition of the current financial position of the Council and in view of the forthcoming phase 2 refurbishment of the Dolphin Centre which it is predicted will generate substantial additional income for the Council, it is proposed, subject to Members agreeing to the implementation of the 'Passport for Leisure' Scheme, that its implementation be planned to coincide with the opening of the phase 2 refurbishment of the Dolphin Centre in order to offset the costs.

5. **Legal Implications**

5.1 There are no legal implications

6. **Other Implications**

6.1

Personnel Implications	New staff required and training implications for existing staff. New staffing cost could be mitigated as outlined above
Governance/Performance Management Considerations	The introduction of the 'Passport for Leisure' Scheme will have a positive impact on the Council's ability to address equalities and diversity issues
Community Safety Considerations	The scheme would contribute to the reduction of anti social behaviour by targeting young people and providing access to sporting opportunities thus reducing "time on street corners".
Risk Management Considerations	Maintenance Costs, due to the nature of the scheme and increased usage, costs will increase through damage/vandalism and increased usage. Loss of Income (dependant upon uptake) based on Redditch BC and Telford & Wrekin BC presentations - between £25,000 and £40,000 per annum directly related to discounts provided. Loss of Income relating to loss of existing users due to lower standard facilities if maintenance budgets not increased
Policy Considerations	Would emphasise the Council's corporate objectives of promoting a health community and our aim to provide services to all regardless of the ability to pay.
Equalities Implications	The introduction of the 'Passport for Leisure Scheme will have a positive impact on the Council's ability to address equalities and diversity issues.

Background Papers

Game Plan – DCMS 2002

Sign Up For Sport – Sport England West Midlands 2004

Let's Get Moving – NHS, Health Development Agency & British Heart Foundation

Leisure Card Survey Results – Glasgow Caledonian University

Passport to Leisure Schemes – ISRM & The University of Sheffield

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE CABINET

2ND AUGUST 2006

EQUALITY SCHEME

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Cllr Mrs C Spencer
Responsible Head of Service	C L Felton, Equality & Diversity Officer

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 To seek approval of the Council's Inclusive Equalities Scheme for 2006-2009

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Scheme be approved and that authority be delegated to the Legal Services Manager to make all necessary changes as a result of the consultation exercise and subsequent legislative changes.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Members will be aware that in 2002 laws came into force requiring Councils to prepare Race Equality Schemes, to show how they intended to ensure that Race Equality became embedded into every facet of their organisations. The Council's first-ever Race Equality Scheme was published and provided a good basis for work which was undertaken in the following years, including the establishment of service-specific Equality Champions in 2004, and programmes of awareness training and impact assessment training.
- 3.2 With the passage of time, and with the gaining of experience and expertise about the whole subject of Equality and Diversity, the duties placed upon Councils have developed. Similarly, and perhaps more significantly, the Council itself has recognised that Equality and Diversity *should* be ingrained into its corporate existence, irrespective of any external compunction so to do. With that in mind, therefore, the 2006 restructure of the Council created a new post of Equality & Diversity Assistant, being for the first time the allocation of dedicated resources to a post specifically to assist the Council with further developing its Equality and Diversity programme, and an invaluable means of support to the work undertaken by the writer as Equality & Diversity Officer.
- 3.3 The national agenda on Equality & Diversity has broadened beyond the field of racial equality, and legislation is either already in place or expected shortly to extend duties to other aspects of equality – sex, disability, marital status, religious belief, age, gender preference, or geographical location/income group.

3.4 Therefore the bold step has been taken of preparing a new all-embracing Equalities Scheme, to cover all aspects of the subject in considerably greater detail than has ever been the case previously. This scheme is attached for Members` consideration. It is not proposed in this report to outline each particular section but Members will observe how the Scheme has been constructed. The Scheme sets out the Council`s commitment to Equality generally, and then moves into a consideration of each sphere in turn beginning with geographical location & income grouping.

3.5 The preparation of the Scheme has involved a considerable amount of work by the Equality & Diversity Officers, and has the full support of the Council`s Management. All Heads of Service have been consulted in detail about their parts and roles, and the document can be said to represent a major leap forward in the Council`s Equality and Diversity actions, and shows how the Council will continue to do so in the years covered by the Scheme.

3.6 Once the scheme has been approved by the Council it will be subject to an extensive consultation exercise with key partners and community representatives.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 There have been no costs associated with preparing or launching the scheme other than staff costs. It will be necessary for the Council to undertake a major consultation exercise about the scheme, following its adoption by the Council. Costs and budget provision for this exercise are being explored.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 Publication of the Scheme meets the Council`s legal obligations in respect of the new Disability Standards to do so by December 4th 2006.

6. Corporate Objectives

6.1 The subject of Equality and Diversity must not be thought of as being one of the Council`s Corporate Objectives or priorities. This is because it has to be a fundamental and integral part of each corporate objective and priority, rather than being something in its own right. It is to be part of how the Council works, in every aspect.

7. Risk Management

7.1 There are no implications.

Background Papers

None

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Bromsgrove District Council

Inclusive Equalities Scheme

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Bromsgrove District Council

Inclusive Equalities Scheme

4th December 2006 to 3rd December 2009

Introduction

We are pleased to introduce this new Inclusive Equalities Scheme for Bromsgrove District Council. This Scheme represents the most far reaching commitment to equalities that has ever been made in this Council's history and it should be seen as a major step forward in the way we are approaching our responsibilities in this District and it demonstrates our commitment to making equality and diversity a reality for all who live and work here.

The production of this Scheme follows a considerable amount of research, policy and function scrutiny and consultation and involvement with a wide range of partners and we are proud to say that the results reflect well on these efforts in achieving a tool for the practical implementation of the full range of equality issues.

Every individual in the area served by Bromsgrove District Council expects and should receive fair and equal treatment when accessing our services

Employment opportunities with us should be fair and we recognise that our workforce should represent the diverse nature of the communities we serve.

In everything we do, we aim to remove unfairness and promote equality of opportunity, equal access for all and good relations between people from all backgrounds.

We recognise that people are often treated differently on the basis of many factors –

- race or colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- disability
- gender, marital status
- sexual orientation
- religion, belief or culture
- age
- geographical location and income group

We decided sometime ago to produce an Inclusive Equalities Scheme that incorporates all our legal responsibilities for both service delivery and employment. The Scheme goes beyond the minimum that the law requires and takes into account good practice in all areas of equality.

In the Scheme, we start with our overall Equalities commitment, encompassing geographical location and income group in **Chapter One** – see pages 4 to 8. Then we address each of the other equality issues in separate chapters, dealing with specific needs relating to each one.

There is much talk about moving towards “Diversity” as a unifying approach to all equality issues but it is our view that until we are certain that we have removed all practical barriers that exist for an individual arising because of the separate equality issues, we cannot truly say that we are achieving an approach that relies on treating a person as an individual.

However, by working through our programme of commitments set out in the Scheme, we hope to work towards a more inclusive social model where diversity is understood, accepted and valued, and becomes the norm.

We have some challenging times ahead with new legislation coming into effect this and next year and the establishment of the proposed Commission for Equality and Human Rights.

We look forward to playing our part and combining this with the implementation of our Inclusive Equalities Scheme.

Chapter One –

The Equality Standard for Local Government

1.1 Bromsgrove District Council's Equalities Approach

In 2005, we revisited our Race Equality Scheme and the processes that it had put in place, to ensure that services meet the needs of the community as a whole and that the basis of delivery is fair and equitable.

This review also presented us with an opportunity to re-examine our long-standing commitment to equality of opportunity and to accept that notwithstanding this commitment, this had been isolated to specific areas and services and consequently it had not always been an integral part of the day-to-day working of this authority.

In order to redress the balance, we embarked on an ambitious journey toward social inclusion. Our definition of social inclusion is a society which

Has a shared vision and shared values

Improves the quality of life for all by reducing inequalities

Tackles unfair and unlawful discrimination

Builds strong cohesive communities

Acknowledges that diversity brings added value to the lives of all who live and work and travel to the area

This means that in addition to addressing the statutory requirements, we also have moral duties. Thus, we established that an Inclusive Equalities Scheme would make extremely good business sense. Our Scheme incorporates our Race Equality Scheme (see **Chapter Two** – pages 9 to 23) and the two new forthcoming duties described as our Disability Equality Scheme (see **Chapter Three** – pages 24 to 37) and our Gender Equality Scheme (see **Chapter Four** – pages 38 to 47).

Our Inclusive Equalities Scheme also covers the statutory requirements in relation to The Employment Equality Regulations - Sexual Orientation, Religion or Belief and Age and should be seen to apply across the wider social spectrum including important local issues such as urban/ rural mix, income group and geographical location.

We intend that our Inclusive Equalities Scheme will lay a firm foundation upon which we will continue to build on the promotion of our all embracing approach and thus provide us with a robust framework for evolution and learning. It also provides us with a framework of actions and evidence gathering to achieve nationally recognised standards through The Equality Standard for Local Government.

We will therefore examine everything that we do through the processes described in our Action Plans at the end of each Chapter and in this way seek to demonstrate that over time, we will meet the needs of all minority groups in our district, all men and women, and people with disabilities and of all age groups.

1.2 Our Vision and Values

Our Vision is simple:

“Bromsgrove District will be an attractive, clean, healthy, safe, and prosperous District where an improving quality of life is enjoyed equally by all.”

Our vision is underpinned by a set of values that is shared by members and officers.

Our Values: -

- Putting our citizens first
- Being honest, open and fair at all times
- Valuing and respecting people
- Demonstrating integrity and accountability
- Ensuring quality customer service
- Seeking to achieve value for money
- Working together
- Recognising the need for improvement

1.3 The Local Government Equality Standard (LGES)

The Equality Standard recognises the importance of fair and equal treatment in local government services and employment and this will help us achieve Our Vision and Values and to implement the commitments made in this Inclusive Equalities Scheme.

The Standard has been developed as a tool to enable authorities to mainstream gender, race and disability into council policies and practices at all levels. However, Bromsgrove District Council intends to apply them in addition to sexual orientation, religion or belief and age. We also have a commitment to fairness of treatment in relation to geographical location and income group and consider the effects of rural/ urban mix.

The Standard promotes a framework for delivering an integrated and mainstreamed approach to equality and diversity in employment and training, service delivery, corporate policies and community consultation.

It aims to:

- provide a systematic framework for mainstreaming of equalities
- meet legal obligations
- integrate equalities policies and objectives with Best Value
- tackle institutional discrimination and develop anti-discrimination practices over time, improve performance

The Standard is achieved by working through five levels starting with Level One through to Level Five for excellence. The five levels are :

- | | | |
|-------------|---|--|
| Level One | - | Commitment to a comprehensive equality policy |
| Level Two | - | Assessment and Consultation |
| Level Three | - | Setting equality objectives and targets |
| Level Four | - | Information systems and monitoring against targets |
| Level Five | - | Achieving and reviewing outcomes |

1.4 What we have already achieved

We achieved Level One at the end of year 2005 – 2006 by demonstrating that :

- we are improving equality practice at both corporate and departmental level
- we are earmarking specific resources for improving equality practice
- we are carrying out equality action planning and equality target setting within all departments and service areas
- we are conducting systematic consultation
- we have a fair employment and equal pay policy
- we have an impact and needs/ requirements assessment
- we are progress monitoring
- we audit and scrutinise ourselves

1.5 What we intend to do to achieve Level Two – Assessment and Consultation

We are committed to achieving Level Two by the end of year 2006-2007.

To achieve Level Two, we will have to demonstrate that :

- we have engaged in an impact and needs/ requirements assessment
- we have engaged in consultation with designated community, staff and stakeholder groups
- we have engaged in the development of information and monitoring systems
- we have engaged in an equality action planning process for employment, pay and service delivery
- we are developing a system of self assessment, scrutiny and audit

The Equality Standard for Local Government – Corporate Action Plan

Objective	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
To achieve Level Two	Quarterly assessment of Best Value Performance Indicator 2a	Equalities Officer and Assistant with input from all Departments and CEO	Continuous action to collect data Level Two to be achieved by end of performance year 2006- 2007
To achieve Level Three we will be able to demonstrate that:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we have completed a full and systematic consultation process with designated community, staff and stakeholder groups 	Quarterly assessment of Best Value Performance Indicator 2a	Equalities Officer and Assistant with input from all Departments and CEO	Continuous action to collect data Level Three to be achieved by end of performance year 2007- 2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we have set equality objectives for employment, pay and service delivery based on impact and needs/ requirements assessment and consultation 	As above	As above	Level Three to achieved by end of performance year 2007- 2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> equality objectives have been translated into action plans with specific targets 	As above	As above	Level Three to achieved by end of performance year 2007 - 2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we are developing information and monitoring systems that allow us to assess progress in achieving targets 	As above	As above	Level Three to achieved by end of performance year 2007 - 2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> action on achieving targets has started 	As above	As above	Level Three to achieved by end of performance year 2007 – 2008

Chapter Two - Race

2.1 Introduction

This is Bromsgrove District Council's **Race Equality Scheme** for 2006 – 2009. It supersedes our original Scheme which was adopted in May 2002 and updated in May 2005.

We are committed to the promotion of Racial Equality in the way that we deliver our services and in our quest to become a preferred employer. We aim to recognise the cultural, ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity that our District and society reflect.

This document has been designed to demonstrate how we will put into practice our commitment to the promotion of Race Equality and in particular how we intend to address our Statutory Duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

2.2 The Race Relations Act 1976

The Race Relations Act 1976 brought into being a number of controls to eliminate discrimination based on race. Race is defined as "race, colour, nationality, national or ethnic origin." Discrimination could be direct, indirect, or by victimisation or harassment - all forms are equally unacceptable and likely to be unlawful.

In 1999 the Report of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry by Sir William MacPherson was published which identified the fact of "institutional racism" in one of Britain's main public services.

"Institutional racism" is defined as :

"The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people."

In the course of the Inquiry it became apparent that the 1976 Act left a number of gaps because some elements of public functions were not classed as a service and so failed to deal with situations when a person might suffer prejudice but was unable to take action about it because a "service" was not being provided to that person at the time.

2.3 The Race Relations Amendment Act 2000

In order to close this gap the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 was passed and became law on 2nd April 2001. This widens the scope of the original 1976 Act and outlaws racial discrimination in all public functions. It requires all public authorities to follow a minimum standard, signaling that racial discrimination in the way an authority works is unacceptable and must be eliminated.

One of the specific duties set down by the Act is the requirement to publish a Race Equality Scheme and we did this in May 2002 and updated it in May 2005. Our Race Equality Scheme is set out in this Chapter and now forms part of our Inclusive Equalities Scheme.

Our Race Equality Scheme sets out how we intend to continue to meet the requirements of the Act and specifically our arrangements for:-

Meeting the General Duty

how we will eliminate unlawful racial discrimination

how we will promote equality of opportunity

how we will promote good relations between persons of different racial groups

Meeting the Specific Duties

to produce a Race Equality Scheme which sets out the way we intend to meet the General Duty and the associated Specific Duties

to assess our functions and policies for relevance to race equality

to monitor our policies for impact on race equality

to assess and consult on new policies

to publish the results of any consultation, monitoring or assessment carried out in relation to any current or new policies

to ensure that the public have access to the information and services we provide

to train our staff on the requirements of the Act

Meeting the Employment Duty

to monitor existing staff (and any applicants for jobs, promotion, or training) by their racial group.

This will include monitoring and analysing, according to racial group, all examples of:-

grievances lodged
disciplinary action
performance appraisals
training
staff leaving the Council

2.4 Bromsgrove – geographical location and population breakdown

Bromsgrove is a geographically diverse community - urban and rural – centred around an old Market town with a large commuter population.

The 2001 Census showed :-

	Bromsgrove	Worcestershire	West Midlands	England
White:				
British	95.7	95.5	86.2	87.0
Irish	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.3
Other White	1.1	1.3	1.2	2.7
Mixed :				
White and Black Caribbean	0.3	0.3	0.8	0.5
White and Black African	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2
White and Asian	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.4
Other Mixed	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.3
Asian or British Asian:				
Indian	0.6	0.3	3.4	2.1
Pakistani	0.1	0.5	2.9	1.4
Bangladeshi	0.0	0.2	0.6	0.6
Other Asian	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.5
Black or Black British:				
Caribbean	0.3	0.2	1.6	1.1
African	0.1	0.1	0.2	1.0
Other Black	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.2
Chinese or other ethnic group:				
Chinese	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.5
Other ethnic group	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.4

Source: 2001 Census see www.statistics.gov.uk

Worcestershire has a traditional population of Romany Gypsies including a small number of Irish Travellers. The Council operates a static travellers` site at Wythall, in the District of Bromsgrove. We can also put an adjacent transit site into operation on demand within 24 hours.

In May 2006 The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) published “**Common Ground**” – **Equality, good race relations and sites for Gypsies and Irish Travellers**”. This is a detailed report of the CRE’s year long enquiry into the provision of services to Gypsies and Travellers and the responses of local authorities in meeting the needs of those communities.

Bromsgrove District Council replied to the original request for information from the CRE and we have included in our action plan our arrangements for reviewing the recommendations of the report and examining our services and policies in relation to this significant minority ethnic group in the area which we serve. See page 22.

2.5 Roles and Responsibilities

Bromsgrove District Council is a statutory local government body serving a population of 87,826. We are one of the largest employers in the District employing 450 people. The Council provides a number of services to the District and its communities.

The Council believes that, as a responsible employer and service-provider, we should continue to place racial equality at the very heart of our corporate being. This is demonstrated by policies, practices, service given, manner of behaviour, decisions taken.

Therefore everyone - members of the public, visitors, external organisations or bodies, Councillors, staff – will be treated in the same way in whatever dealing they may have with the Council. Decisions or actions will not be influenced by any form of racial prejudice. Conditions and requirements will not be imposed, or policies adopted, which in any way lead to comparatively unfavourable treatment between racial groups. On the contrary – the Council will continue to strive to ensure that its conduct actively promotes equality at all times and in all areas.

2.6 How and when will we meet the general and specific duties?

In our first Race Equality Scheme we listed all our functions and duties but as these have changed over time, we have produced a new list which now includes our assessment of the relevance of each function and duty to race equality. See **Appendix C** - pages 74 to 82.

This is only the first step of a lengthy procedure which will lead to a further, more detailed Impact Assessments for which we have developed a toolkit for use in each department. See **Appendix D** – pages 83 to 93.

The Council has identified and trained an Equalities Champion in every Service Department. The role of the Champions is to support and guide each manager responsible for the completion of the impact assessment. It is also the role of the Champion to act as equality monitoring officer and ensure that the impact assessments are being carried out in accordance with their department's three-year rolling Equalities Action Plan.

To assess the level of relevance of a particular function or policy to the general and specific duties, we use the following measurements: -

What evidence is there?

This is assessed by using research information, outcomes of consultation, ethnic monitoring of service delivery and whether or not we receive any complaints.

Is there public concern, especially among ethnic minority communities, that certain functions/policies are discriminatory or racist?

This is assessed by using research information, outcomes of consultation, complaints and ethnic monitoring of service delivery.

Since our first Scheme we have set up **The Equality and Diversity Forum** which is used for consultation and measurement of our progress on improving the delivery of our services to the public. They meet every six weeks and play an active part in scrutinising our progress towards meeting the objectives of this Scheme.

2.7 How we will review our plan and timetable

It is our firm belief that this Scheme should not be thought of as being set in stone. In order to maintain its usefulness and validity, it will be reviewed and updated regularly in the light of both comments received on it and our experience in implementing it. It is therefore reviewed in the following ways: -

The Equality Champions` Working Group reviews and monitors impact assessments undertaken in respect of all the functions and services of the Council

The Equalities & Diversity Forum undertakes the evaluation of the Impact assessment outcomes and scrutiny.

Wider Community Consultation – we will embark on a programme of wider community consultation towards the end of this year.

The Scheme is linked strategically to the priorities of Worcestershire County and West Midlands region through the Council's representation on the Worcestershire Equalities Forum and the West Midlands Regional Assembly on Equality and Diversity

2.8 Our Racial Equality Performance Indicators and Targets

A number of national Best Value Performance Indicators have been set up specifically to address racial equality within the Corporate framework these are:-

BVPI 2a The Equality Standard for Local Government

This records the level of the Standard to which the Authority conforms. The Council has achieved Level One and aims to achieve Level Two by 2006-7. For further details of how we intend to do this see **Chapter One**.

This Performance Indicator is the responsibility of Legal and Democratic Services.

BVPI 2b Duty to Promote Race Equality

This measures the effectiveness of our Race Equality Scheme and records the progress being made against the targets in the Scheme.

Spread over a range of criteria the Council has achieved 71% for 2005-06 against a target of 53% and aims to achieve 80% for 2006-07 and 85% for 2007-08.

This Performance Indicator is the responsibility of Legal and Democratic Services.

BVPI 17

This relates to the percentage of local authority employees from minority ethnic communities compared with the percentage of the economically active ethnic minority community population in the authority area.

At Bromsgrove District Council, we analyse the overall numbers of the different ethnic groups that make up our workforce. The overall non white minority ethnic proportion of our workforce in 2006 is 0.99%, which is lower than the non white minority ethnic proportion of the Bromsgrove District area which, in 2001 stood at 2.3 %. The total in 2001 was 4.4% when adding white and non white minority ethnic groups.

Source: 2001 Census [see www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk)

This Performance Indicator is the responsibility of Human Resources and Organisational Development.

BV PI 174

This relates to the number of racial incidents recorded by us per 100,000 population.

“Racial incidents” are any incidents regarded as such by the victim or anyone else. The indicator applies to all of our services including employment.

BV PI 175

This relates to the percentage of racial incidents that resulted in further action. Subsequent action must be recorded in writing and would entail such things as:

Detailed investigations e.g. interviews with alleged perpetrator(s)

Referral to the police or other body (CRE, CAB etc.)

Mediation

Warning to the perpetrator which if oral must be recorded at the time

Relocation of the victim

Removal of graffiti

Traditionally, the reporting of such incidents has been low in the Bromsgrove District. However, because we are taking an ever more proactive stance on this we are seeking to improve our procedures for recording and responding to such incidents. See page 21.

BVPI 174 and 175 are the responsibility of Culture and Community Department.

Our performance on all of these indicators is published in **Council Results** every June.

2.9 Training

It is essential that all Council members and staff have a good understanding of the principles of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and its important implications for service delivery. In view of this the Council has implemented training in the following areas: -

General equalities awareness training for all staff through drama workshops provided by Theatre In.

Specific training for line managers and those responsible for undertaking equality impact assessments with refresher training and impact assessment “surgeries” for managers.

Specific equality training for Equality Champions which has also been made available to Members

Training and Development needs for all Elected Councillors are currently being analysed as part of the Modern Councillor Programme. Equality and Diversity training will be included as part of this process.

2.10 Contact details and Consultation Arrangements

For details of how to contact us see **Appendix A**, page 67 to 71.

For details of our consultation arrangements see **Appendix B** pages 72 to 73.

Race Equality Scheme – Corporate Action Plan

4th December 2006 to 3rd December 2009

The General Duty	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
To demonstrate that Bromsgrove District Council meets the General Duty by explaining :			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how we will eliminate unlawful racial discrimination 	by implementing the Specific Duties – see below	CEO Leader of the Council All Departments supported by Equality Officer and Assistant	Continuous
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how we will promote equality of opportunity 	by implementing of the Specific Duties – see below	CEO Leader of the Council All Departments supported by Equality Officer and Assistant	Continuous
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how we will promote good relations between persons of different racial groups 	<p>Through various local activities and partnerships</p> <p>The Equality and Diversity Forum</p> <p>The Black History Month supported by Probation Service, Police, BDHT and Bromsgrove Black History Group</p> <p>The Holocaust Event</p> <p>The Equality Champions Working Group</p>	<p>To be led by Equality Officer and Assistant</p> <p>Equality Officer and Assistant</p> <p>Culture and Community Services</p> <p>Culture and Community Services</p> <p>Equality Officer and Assistant</p>	<p>Continuous</p> <p>Forum meets every six weeks</p> <p>Black History month annual event in October</p> <p>Holocaust Event every November</p> <p>Meet every quarter</p>

Race Equality Scheme – Corporate Action Plan ctd.

4th December 2006 to 3rd December 2009

The General Duty	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
Corporate support for the work to meet the General Duty and Specific Duties	Commitment to Race Equality to be incorporated in the Corporate Plan	CEO Leader of the Council	Immediate and continuous
Corporate Policy Review	Equality Impact Assessments are carried out in respect of every policy function, process and procedure.	All Departments supported by Equality Officer and Assistant	Continuously in line with Departmental 3 years rolling Equality Action Plans
	Results are fed into service business planning process.	As above	Annual business planning cycle
	New policies will be formulated giving consideration to the Corporate Commitment to Race Equality	As above	Continuous
	Equality Impact Assessment “surgeries” will be held to assist managers with the process	As above	8 th , 18 th and 27 th September 2006 and then ad hoc as required

Race Equality Scheme – Corporate Action Plan ctd.

4th December 2006 to 3rd December 2009

The General Duty	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
Consultation	Through the Equalities and Diversity Forum	Equality Officer and Assistant	The Forum meets every six weeks
	Table a discussion with the with the Bromsgrove Partnership	CEO	The Inclusive Equalities Scheme will be published for wider community consultation by 1st of October 2006 for conclusion by 18 th November 2006 for final publication 4 th December 2006
	Through web site and diversity page	Equality Officer and Assistant with IT Department	
	Wider Community Consultation	Equality Officer and Assistant	
Training and Development	Equalities training offered to all members and line managers	HR OD with support from Equality Officer and Assistant	
	Training and Development needs for all Elected Councillors are currently being analysed as part of the Modern Councillor Programme. Equality and Diversity training is included as part of this process	HR OD and Legal and Democratic	

Race Equality Scheme – Corporate Action Plan ctd.

4th December 2006 to 3rd December 2009

The Specific Duties	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
Produce a Race Equality Scheme which sets out the way we intend to meet the General Duty and the associated Specific Duties	Review and improve existing Race Equality Scheme	Equality Officer and Assistant	<p>To be presented to Leaders Group on 12th July 2006</p> <p>To be presented to Cabinet in August 2006</p> <p>To be presented to full Council by September 2006</p> <p>To be ratified by full Council by September 2006</p> <p>To be published for wider community consultation by 1st of October 2006 for conclusion by 18th November</p> <p>To be published by 4th December 2006</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● assess our functions and policies for relevance to race equality 	<p>Undertake Equality Impact Assessments</p> <p>Offer Equality Impact Assessment “surgeries”</p>	<p>All Departments with the assistance of Equality Officer and Assistant</p> <p>Equality Officer and Assistant</p>	<p>In line with the Business Planning process and the 3 year Equality Rolling Action Plans</p> <p>8th, 18th and 27th September 2006 and then ad hoc as required</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● monitor our policies for impact on race equality 	Develop proportionate means of collecting, analysing data	All Departments with the assistance of Equality Officer and Assistant Legal and Democratic and support of CEO	Continuous

Race Equality Scheme – Corporate Action Plan ctd

4th December 2006 to 3rd December 2009

Specific Duties ctd.	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● assess and consult on new policies 	Undertake Equality Impact Assessments	All Departments with the assistance of Equality Officer and Assistant	As and when required
	Equalities and Diversity Forum to be provided with Executive Summaries	Equality Officer and Assistant	The Forum meets every six weeks
	Inform other partners e.g. Bromsgrove and Redditch Network (B.A.R.N.)	Corporate Policy and Performance with Equality Officer and Assistant	Bi-monthly meetings of B.A.R.N
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● publish the results of any consultation, monitoring or assessments carried out in relation to any current or new policies 	Through Intranet and website pages	CEO Equality Officer and Assistant	In Council Results every June
	Communicate to the Equality and Diversity Forum and publish in Council Results	CEO Equality Officer and Assistant	Forum meets every six weeks In Council Results every June
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ensure that the public have access to the information and services we provide 	Contract with Ethnic Access Link for interpreting services	CEO Equality Officer and Assistant	Ongoing
	“Signpost” to go on all our leaflets, booklets and letters offering alternative formats	CEO Equality Officer and Assistant	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● to train our staff on the requirements in respect of the Specific Duties Act in relation to service delivery 	Equalities training offered to all members and line managers	HR OD with support from Equality Officer and Assistant	Managing Equality and Diversity Training programme October 2006 to January 2007
	Equality Impact Assessment “surgeries”	Equality Officer and Assistant	8 th , 18 th and 27 th September 2006 and ad hoc as required

Race Equality Scheme – Corporate Action Plan ctd

4th December 2006 to 3rd December 2009

Other	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
To review the recommendations of the CRE's Report "Equality, good relations and sites for Gypsies and Irish Travellers	Identify relevant officers and services and arrange a short term Working Group	Equality Officer and Assistant with other identified relevant departments and service providers	Group to be set up by October 2006
	Bring summary of report to the attention of partners		Group to report back by end of January 2006
	Involve the Equality and Diversity Forum Bromsgrove and District Network		
To review and improve the reporting and recording procedures for racial incidents	Involve the Equality and Diversity Forum and other interested parties	Equality Officer and Assistant with other identified relevant departments and service providers	Group to be set up by October 2006
	Arrange review meetings		Group to report back to end of January 2007

Race Equality Scheme – The Employment Duty Action Plan

4th December 2006 to 3rd December 2009

Specific Duties	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
To demonstrate that Bromsgrove District Council meets the Specific Duty for Employment	To monitor, analyse and report on :- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● existing staff ● all applications for jobs at all stages of the process ● applications and delivery of training by ethnic group.	HR OD with Equality Officer and Equality Assistant	Continuous
As above	To research the feasibility of a system to monitor, analyse and report on promotion by ethnic group	HR OD with Equality Officer and Assistant	Research to be completed by end of September 2006
As above	Monitor, analyse and report on all examples of:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● grievances lodged ● disciplinary action ● performance appraisals ● staff leaving the Council by ethnic group	HR OD with Equality Officer and Assistant	Continuous

Race Equality Scheme – The Employment Duty Action Plan ctd.

4th December 2006 to 3rd December 2009

Specific Duties ctd.	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
To demonstrate that Bromsgrove District Council meets the Specific Duty for Employment	General equalities awareness training made available to all staff and members	HR OD with Equality Officer and Assistant	Managing Equality and Diversity Training programme from October 2006 to January 2007
	All staff involved with recruitment and selection receive relevant training	HR OD	Policy in place for those involved in Recruitment and Selection
	Equality impact assessment “surgeries” will be offered to all line managers and equalities champions	Equality Officer and Assistant	8 th , 18 th and 27 th September 2006 and ad hoc as required
As above	Investigate positive measures if areas of under-representation are identified in the monitoring process	HR OD with Equality Officer and Assistant	Continuous
To support the Specific Duty for Employment Bromsgrove District Council will seek to eliminate harassment on the grounds of race	Monitor complaints of harassment and take remedial measures as needed	HR OD with Equality Officer and Assistant	Continuous

Chapter Three - Disability

3.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out Bromsgrove District Council's Disability Equality Scheme as it will be launched on 4th December 2006 and looking further forward to 3rd December 2009. It describes the way that we will meet our legal duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

In its 2005 report "Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People", the Government sets out its vision of disability equality as follows:

"By 2025, disabled people in Britain should have full opportunities and choices to improve their quality of life and will be respected and included as equal members of society".

At present disabled people do not have the same opportunities or choices as non-disabled people. Nor do they enjoy equal respect or full inclusion in society on an equal basis. The poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion experienced by many disabled people is not the inevitable result of their impairments or medical conditions, but rather stems from attitudinal and environmental barriers. This is known as 'the social model of disability', and provides a basis for the successful implementation of the duty to promote disability equality.

Whilst many people have positive attitudes towards disabled people, some express pity, fear, lack of respect, contempt and even sometimes hostility and aggression. These attitudes are hurtful, can lead to discrimination and can also place unnecessary restrictions on disabled people.

Bromsgrove District Council recognises that we have an opportunity to make an enormous contribution towards removing the barriers to equal opportunities for disabled people. We intend to do this by addressing the way in which we run our services and how we employ people. We can also exert influence in the community at large, for example when we provide leisure and other services, when we regulate the activities of others, when we award licenses or planning permission, and when we inspect the performance of other organisations.

All of our functions are listed in **Appendix B** (pages 72 to 73) and are subject to the duty to promote disability equality. They have all been provisionally assessed for their relevance to disability equality on a matrix of High (H), Medium (M) or Low (L). A more in depth Equality Impact Assessment will be carried for those functions which have been assessed as having High or Medium Relevance to Disability Equality. Our Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit is included as **Appendix C** (pages 74 to 82).

Bromsgrove District Council is committed to fulfilling this new duty in the delivery of all our services because we know that one in six of the population has an impairment or a condition and thus a significant proportion of our customers and employees are disabled within the meaning of the Disability Discrimination Act.

We believe that by implementing the requirements of the disability equality duty we will benefit in the following ways :

- better targeted policies
- representation of different groups at all levels
- improvements in perceptions of services, and more satisfaction with services
- greater confidence in services
- filling gaps in services
- better involvement and more participation by service users and members of the public

In terms of policy and service delivery we will benefit from implementing the duty because it will :

- encourage our policy makers to be more aware of issues concerning particular groups
- encourage better co-ordination across our departments and functions (for example, planning, leisure services and customer services)
- contribute to more informed decision-making
- ensure that our policies are properly targeted
- improve our ability to deliver suitable and accessible services, and to carry out our functions so that they meet various needs
- encourage greater openness in our policy-making
- increase involvement of disabled people in our policy-making

Meeting the duty will also bring advantages to us in terms of our employment functions - it will help us to :

- achieve a more representative workforce
- attract able staff
- avoid losing or undervaluing able staff
- improve staff morale and productivity
- improve staff management
- identify and develop good practice

The 2001 Census showed the following relevant statistics for the area covered by Bromsgrove District Council :

Health and provision of care

	Bromsgrove	England and Wales
Good	71.1	68.6
Fairly good	21.2	22.2
Not good	7.7	9.2
With a limiting long term illness	16.7	18.2
Provide unpaid care	11.6	10.0
Permanently sick or disabled	3.6	5.5

Source: Census 2001 see www.statistics.gov.uk

3.2 The Disability Discrimination Act 2005

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 has been amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 so that it now places enforceable duties on all public authorities which they must have due regard to when carrying out their functions.

The General Duty and the Specific Duties come into force on 5^h December 2006.

The General Duty

This duty requires all public authorities to adopt a proactive approach, mainstreaming disability equality into all decisions and activities. It specifically requires us to :

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- encourage participation by disabled persons in public life; and
- take steps to take account of disabled persons’ disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

The overarching goal of the general duty is to promote equality of opportunity, and, the other elements of the duty both support this goal and require due regard in their own right.

The underpinning principle of the duty is the need to take steps to take account of a disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

This underlines the fact that equality of opportunity cannot be achieved simply by treating disabled and non-disabled people alike.

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 also sets out further specific duties which are designed to help us meet the General Duty.

The Specific Duties

To produce a Disability Equality Scheme demonstrating how we intend to fulfill the general duty and specific duties

Involve disabled people in the development of the Scheme

Include a statement in the scheme of

- the way in which we have involved disabled people in the development of the Scheme
- our methods for impact assessment
- the steps we are going to take towards fulfilling the general duty in the form of an action plan
- our arrangements for gathering information in relation to employment, and delivery of our services
- our arrangements for putting the information gathered to use, in particular in reviewing the effectiveness of our action plan and in preparing our subsequent Disability Equality Schemes

Within three years of our Scheme being published, we must have taken the steps set out our action plan and put into effect the arrangements for gathering and making use of information.

We must also publish an annual report containing a summary of the steps taken under the action plan, the results of our information gathering and the use to which we have put the information.

Our Disability Equality Scheme will be published by 4th December 2006.

It should be noted that the general and specific duties do not create individual rights for disabled people. However, a breach of the general duty can be the subject of a claim for judicial review of a public authority's action (or inaction). If the specific duties are not met, the Disability Rights Commission can take enforcement action.

However a member of the public should always try to contact us in the first instance to give us an opportunity to address your concerns.

We would like to hear what you have to say about this scheme, and the Council's performance in the field of Disability Equality in general, whether your comments are critical or positive.

3.3 Bromsgrove District Council – our ongoing actions in relation to disability equality

As an area with a higher than average age than the general population we, at the Council, are aware of the increasing likelihood of acquiring disabilities due to age, or existing disabilities worsening, again due to age. It is estimated that as many as 1 in 6 of the population have a condition or impairment although many of those people will not see themselves as disabled within the meaning of the Disability Discrimination Act.

We have already taken many steps which will help us to demonstrate that we are meeting the General and Specific Duties which come into effect on 5th December 2006 :-

- The Bromsgrove Disabled Access Group meets bi-monthly and we have regular contact with this group. The Group recently carried out a car parking users survey entirely on their own initiative and sent us their report to which we have responded. We are currently identifying solutions to the issues raised in the report.
- The Bromsgrove Disabled Access Group is also represented on the Equality and Diversity Forum who meet every six weeks and who have been consulted and involved in the drawing up of each of the sections of this Inclusive Equalities Scheme.
- We will set up a Disability Forum along the lines of our Equality and Diversity Forum and will approach a wide range of partners in the voluntary and community sector to become involved to help us steer this Disability Equality Scheme through its stages and turn the commitments we are making here into reality.
- We participate in the North Worcestershire Care and Repair service which also provides a Safety Check Inspection to help prevent trips and falls. There is a radio control for Life Line which is a scheme where residents who join scheme can activate the emergency services through a monitor which they wear continuously.
- We have links with Chadsgrove School for disabled children and this year have successfully piloted a Work Experience Programme placement for students with mobility impairments. This programme will continue and will be expanded in the future and is in line with our commitment to improve equality on age grounds and attract more younger people to work in local government – see **Age Equality Policy** pages 59 to 66.

- We already link with national disability awareness campaigns and plan to continue in the future to link with other national campaigns and support and publicise them throughout Council functions and services. We will also seek to develop local campaigns based on our research with the community to address the issues that they have brought to the fore.
- Of all our services, Street Scene is guaranteed to have contact with every household in the District. Because of this, we currently operate a scheme in relation to removal of household waste where because, of disability or age infirmity, our Street Scene workers will provide extra services to the householder in order to safely remove household waste.
- In July 2006 we will complete a comprehensive disability access audit of all our buildings with the assistance of one of our partners, SCOPE and will respond to the results of the audit by improving our premises and access to our services over a period of time.
- We also provide Disabled Access Grants where, subject to certain criteria, a householder can be Grant Aided in order to make adaptations to their property in order to retain their independence. In addition we only charge half fees for such Planning Applications.
- We administer the Blue Badge Scheme for the District and we are currently seeking to appoint a Disabled Access Officer.
- Because we are committed to increasing employment opportunities and attracting more disabled job applicants we are working with Jobcentre Plus to achieve the Positive About Disability Two Ticks Symbol by the end of September this year. This will then be seen on all Council literature.
- We run a Shopmobility Scheme based at the side of the car park on the Asda site in Bromsgrove Town centre from which we loan a range of mobility vehicles free of charge. This provides better access for disabled people and helps to break down barriers caused by social isolation. We are currently arranging for a landline to be connected at the Shop to make it easier for the public to make contact by phone and responding to the request from users for additional vehicles with specific adaptations
- We have sought to follow best practice guidelines from the Royal National Institute for the Blind in the production of this Scheme and are seeking to follow the guidance produced by the RNIB in all our forms, letters and publications. The Scheme and associated documents are available in alternative formats on request.

3.4 Contact details and Consultation Arrangements

For details of how to contact us, see **Appendix A**, page 67 to 71

For details of our consultation arrangements, see **Appendix B**, pages 72 to 73.

Disability Equality Scheme – Corporate Action Plan

4th December 2006 to 3rd December 2009

The General Duty	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
To promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons	By implementing the Specific Duties – see below	CEO All Departments with Equality Officer and Assistant	Continuous
To eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act	By implementing the Specific Duties – see below	CEO All Departments with Equality Officer and Assistant	Continuous
To eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities	Develop relationships with various representative groups and improve access for disabled people, e.g. Bromsgrove Disabled Access Group, Bromsgrove and Redditch Network, BDHT	All Departments with Equality Officer and Assistant	Continuous
Make disabled people aware of their right not to be harassed	Setup a separate Disability Forum involving the Primary Care Trust and other relevant local groups	Equality Officer and Assistant	By end of September 2006
Conduct research on the incidence of harassment in the District	Appoint a Disabled Access Officer	Legal and Democratic	Immediate
To promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons	Identify role models	CEO	Continuous
	Ask local disabled people about what kind of positive images should be used	CEO - All Departments with Equality Officer and Assistant	by 18 th November 2006
	Promote and support national and local disability equality campaigns	CEO - All Departments with Equality Officer and Assistant	Ongoing
	Research issues within the local community and devise and run locally based campaigns	Equality Officer and Assistant	by 18 th November 2006

Disability Equality Scheme – Corporate Action Plan ctd.

4th December 2006 to 3rd December 2009

The General Duty ctd.	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
To promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons	Disability Equality Training based on the social model of disability	HR OD with Equalities Officer and Assistant	Ongoing
To encourage participation by disabled persons in public life; and	Identify Councillor role model	CEO	By December 2006
	Use positive images of disabled people	CEO All Departments with Equality Officer and Assistant	
	Promote and support national disability awareness campaigns	CEO All Departments with Equality Officer and Assistant	
To take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons	Complete access audit to all BDC buildings to be carried out by SCOPE	Legal and Democratic	July 2006
	Implement recommendations of access audit	CEO All Departments with Equality Officer and Assistant	To be completed by September 2007
	Policy for collection of household rubbish in place for identified customers on grounds of disability and age	Street Scene and Waste Management Services	Continuous
	Devise Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire for Shopmobility Scheme	Equality Officer and Assistant	To be completed and ready for use by end of September 2007

Disability Equality Scheme – Corporate Action Plan ctd.

4th December 2006 to 3rd December 2009

The Specific Duties	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
To produce a Disability Equality Scheme demonstrating how we intend to fulfill the general duty and specific duties	To achieve formal ratification of All Inclusive Equalities Scheme incorporating the Disability Equality Scheme through the Council procedures	Equality Officer and Assistant with support from CEO and all Departments	<p>To be presented to Leaders Group on 12th July 2006</p> <p>To be presented to Cabinet in August 2006</p> <p>To be presented to full Council by September 2006</p> <p>To be ratified by full Council by September 2006</p> <p>To be published for wider community consultation by 1st of October 2006 for conclusion by 18th November</p> <p>To be published by 4th December 2006</p>
Involve disabled people in the development of the Scheme	<p>Involve Equality and Diversity Forum and the Bromsgrove Disabled Access Group</p> <p>Use Wider community consultation</p> <p>Engage all groups in the development and finalisation of the Scheme</p>	<p>Equality Officer and Assistant</p> <p>Equality Officer and Assistant with IT and Culture and Community Services</p> <p>Equality Officer and Assistant</p>	<p>Equality and Diversity Forum meet every six weeks and the Disabled Access Group meet</p> <p>Wider Community involvement and consultation to take place between 1st October 2006 and 18th November 2006</p> <p>Publish All Inclusive Equalities Scheme by 4th December 2006</p>

Disability Equality Scheme – Corporate Action Plan ctd.

4th December 2006 to 3rd December 2009

The Specific Duties ctd.	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
Include a statement the scheme of :			
The way in which we have involved disabled people in the development of the Scheme	Document the discussions with The Equality and Diversity Forum and with The Bromsgrove Disabled Access Group	Equality Officer and Assistant	Equality and Diversity Forum meets every six weeks Disabled Access Group meets bi-monthly
Our methods for Impact Assessment	Through the use of the Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit	All Departments with Equality Champions and Equality Officer and Assistant	Continuous process - results are included in the 3 year Rolling Equality Action Plans
The steps we are going to take towards fulfilling the general duty in the form of an action plan which are :			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● our arrangements for gathering information in relation to employment*, and delivery of our services 	Analyse existing data and produce a gap analysis	All departments with Equality Officer and Assistant	Over the next 12 months
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● our arrangements for putting the information gathered to use, in particular in reviewing the effectiveness of our action plan and in preparing our subsequent Disability Equality Schemes 	Discuss and implement plans to act on the data	All departments with the Equality Officer and Assistant	Over the next 12 months

*see Disability Equality Scheme - Employment Action Plan pages 35 to 37

Disability Equality Scheme – Corporate Action Plan ctd.

3rd December 2006 to 2nd December 2009

The Specific Duties ctd.	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
<p>Within three years of our Scheme being published, we will have taken the steps set out this action plan and will have put into effect the arrangements for gathering and making use of the information.</p>	<p>Continuous work to improve the content and awareness of the Scheme</p> <p>Provide assistance to Equality Champions with Equality Impact Assessments</p>	<p>CEO Equality Officer and Assistant with the support of all Departments</p> <p>Equality Champions with Equality officer and Assistant</p>	<p>To be reviewed and revised by</p> <p>4th December 2007</p> <p>4th December 2008</p> <p>4th December 2009</p>
<p>We will also publish an annual report containing a summary of the steps taken under the action plan, the results of our information gathering and the use to which we have put the information.</p>	<p>Feed in results of Equality Impact Assessments and documents their subsequent actions and outcomes</p>	<p>CEO All Departments with Equality Officer and Assistant</p>	<p>To be published by</p> <p>4th December 2007</p> <p>4th December 2008</p> <p>4th December 2009</p>

Disability Equality Scheme – Employment Action Plan

4th December 2006 to 3rd December 2009

Disability Two Ticks Symbol	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
To achieve the standard awarded by Jobcentre Plus to use the Disability Two Ticks Symbol on all Bromsgrove District Council publicity material	Produce evidence of the actions taken to meet the Two Ticks standard	HR OD with Equalities Assistant	To achieve the standard by end of August 2006
	Meet with Jobcentre Plus Disability Access Officer to confirm award of standard	HR OD with Equalities Assistant	August 2006
	To publicise the award of the Two Ticks Symbol	Publicity	By end of September 2006
Interview all disabled applicants who meet the basic criteria for a job and consider them on their abilities	Review our current practices in relation to content of job descriptions and person specifications	HR OD with Equalities	Already in place
	All vacancies to be advertised internally and externally	HR OD	Continuous
	All managers have been given recruitment and selection training and guidance on best practice in relation to all areas of equality	HR OD	Already in place
	Explicit reference made to the Councils commitment to the Disability Two Ticks Standard within the information sent to prospective candidates	HR OD with Equality Officer and Assistant	From September 2006 onwards
	Investigate positive measures if areas of under-representation are identified in the monitoring process	HR OD with Equality Officer and Assistant	Continuous

Disability Equality Scheme – Employment Action Plan ctd.

4th December 2006 to 3rd December 2009

Disability Two Ticks Symbol ctd.	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
Provide a chance at least once a year for disabled employees to discuss what we can do for them to ensure that they can develop and use their abilities	Ensure that this is incorporated in the annual performance review and any interim reviews e.g. during probation	HR OD All line managers	Continuous
	Conduct surveys of disabled employees for feedback	HR OD with Equalities Officer and Assistant	Timetable to be agreed
	Make sure reasonable adjustments are made in all cases	HR OD All line managers	Continuous
Make every effort to keep people in a job if they become disabled whilst working for us	Ensure that this is incorporated in the annual Performance Development Review and ensure that similar opportunities are made available at any time an employee acquires a disability or an existing disability worsens	HR OD All line managers	In line with Annual Reporting Cycle
	Make sure reasonable adjustments are made in all cases	HR OD All line managers	Continuous
Make sure all employees have the right level of disability awareness needed to make this scheme work	Publicise to all employees via Core Brief	CEO HR OD with Equality Officer and Assistant	Follow up sessions for new staff
	Equality and Diversity training including disability has already been delivered to all staff	HR OD	Continuous commitment
	Equality including disability is included in Induction procedures	HR OD	Continuous commitment

Disability Equality Scheme – Employment Action Plan ctd.

4th December 2006 to 3rd December 2009

Disability Two Ticks Symbol ctd.	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
Review the scheme yearly and plan ways to improve, letting staff and Jobcentre Plus know about progress and future plans.	<p>Conduct an internal survey of users of the Scheme</p> <p>Inform Jobcentre Plus of the results and resulting actions</p>	<p>HR OD with Equality Officer and Assistant</p> <p>HR OD with Equality Officer and Assistant</p>	Internal review 3 months before anniversary date of award of the Symbol by Jobcentre Plus
Develop arrangements for gathering information in relation to employment	Analyse existing data and produce a gap analysis	All departments with Equality Officer and Assistant	Over the next 12 months

Chapter Four - Gender

4.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out Bromsgrove District Council's **Gender Equality Scheme**. It describes the way that we will meet our anticipated legal duties under Part 3 of the Equality Act 2006 and how we intend to advance equality between women and men.

It has been 30 years since the Sex Discrimination Act came into force. Since then, great strides have been made in achieving equality between the sexes and tackling sex discrimination. For example, more women are in the labour market and are helped by flexible work patterns and increased childcare provision. Having said that, there is still a long way to go. Women still come second too often in the workplace and other spheres of life, while men face inequalities too, particularly in their increasingly clear wish to play a full role as fathers and get a better balance between work and personal life.

Nationally, women are still being paid less than men and in some instances face discrimination at work despite record numbers of tribunal cases. In the past 30 years there have been 250,000 employment tribunal cases related to sex discrimination and 67,000 linked to equal pay. Record numbers of cases have been heard in the past five years, but gender equality problems remain "stubbornly persistent" according to the Equal Opportunities Commission who have calculated that individuals spent £51 million taking tribunal cases last year, while employers forked out £68 million to defend themselves.

At Bromsgrove District Council, 19.2% of the top 5% of the workforce are women. This is recorded in **BVPI 11a**.

Part-time women workers earn almost 40% less per hour than full-time men, a figure which has barely changed since the 1970s. Most part-time women workers are stuck in jobs below their potential, partly because of lack of flexible working at more senior levels, said the report.

The gender equality duty should also be seen in its context of fitting into the broader equality picture. Women and men, including transsexual people, will experience different forms of disadvantage depending on their age, ethnicity, colour, religion and belief, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status and whether or not they have a disability. For example, only 47% of disabled women are in employment, compared with 53% of disabled men. Of the disabled women in employment, only 52% work full-time. This compares with an employment rate of 75% for non-disabled women and 86% for non-disabled men.

Source - Facts about women and men in Great Britain 2005 - The Equal Opportunity Commission – see www.eoc.org.uk

In order to understand and address questions of gender equality under the duty, we will consider that complexity and whether particular groups of women or men are experiencing particular disadvantages.

Here at Bromsgrove District Council we recognise that we have an opportunity to make a difference by playing our part in the continuing struggle to remove these barriers and achieve the full and equal participation of women and men in the workplace and in society. We also intend to play our part in making our services more responsive to women and men's different needs as this will increase opportunities, reduce inequalities and improve quality of life for all.

All of our functions are listed in **Appendix C** (pages 74 to 82) and are subject to the duty to promote gender equality. Our Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit is shown in **Appendix D** (see pages 83 to 93).

4.2 The Equality Act 2006

The gender equality duty aims to make gender equality central to the way that public authorities work, in order to create :

- Better informed decision making and policy development
- A clearer understanding of the needs of service users
- Better quality services which meet varied needs
- More effective targeting of policy and resources
- Better results and greater confidence in public services
- A more effective use of talent in the workforce

This creates new enforceable duties for public authorities which we must have due regard to when carrying out our functions. These come into effect on 6th April 2007.

4.3 The General Duty

This duty will require us to adopt a proactive approach, mainstreaming gender equality into all decisions and activities. It will specifically require us to :

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment based on gender
and
- Promote equality of opportunity between men and women

This means being conscious of our obligations under the Sex Discrimination Act and the Equal Pay Act and taking steps to ensure compliance. It also means taking active steps to promote gender equality when carrying out our functions and activities.

4.4 The Specific Duties

To help us meet the General Duty, further Specific Duties are set out as follows:-

To produce a Gender Equality Scheme identifying gender equality goals and showing the action we will take to implement these goals

Consult employees and stakeholders as appropriate in drawing up the Gender Equality Scheme

Publish the Gender Equality Scheme setting out the goals and planned outcomes

Monitor progress and publish annual reports on progress

Review the Gender Equality Scheme every three years

Develop and publish a policy on developing equal pay arrangements between men and women including measures to :

- promote equal pay
- ensure fair promotion
- ensure fair development opportunities
- tackle occupational segregation

Conduct and publish gender impact assessments consulting appropriate stakeholders covering :

- all primary legislation
- significant secondary legislation
- all major proposed developments in
 - ◆ employment
 - ◆ policy
 - ◆ services

Develop and publish arrangements and criteria for identifying developments that justify conducting a formal gender impact assessment.

4.5 Aim of the Duties

The aim of the duties is not to establish processes but to make visible and faster progress towards gender equality. In preparing our Gender Equality Scheme and the associated Gender Equality Action Plan we will use the following indicators of progress:

- Gender equality issues, and their budgetary implications, are considered at the beginning of policy making
- It is easy to find a wide variety of data and information to assess effectively how certain actions will affect women and men
- Women and men from all groups of the community feel effectively engaged in decision and policy making around issues that have a direct effect on them
- Service users notice that services are delivered more appropriately and service outcomes by gender begin to improve
- Women and men are making greater use of services that their sex had previously under-used
- Women and men are represented at all levels of the workforce and in all areas of work
- Sexual and sexist harassment of staff and service users is dealt with promptly and systematically, according to agreed procedures, and tolerance of harassment drops within the organisation as a whole
- There is no discrimination against pregnant women and women returning from maternity leave
- The gap between women and men's pay narrows and is eventually eliminated
- Employees and service users with caring responsibilities are receiving greater support from us organisation, including flexible and part-time working opportunities at all levels of work
- Transsexual people feel supported and valued as employees and potential employees
- Barriers to the recruitment and retention of transsexual staff have been identified and removed

Employees are

- ◆ aware of the gender equality duty
- ◆ understand how it will affect their work
- ◆ are trained in gender equality issues at a level appropriate to their role and responsibilities

5. Bromsgrove District Council – our ongoing actions in relation to gender equality

Provision of Maternity leave – we provide the statutory minimum of paid leave plus dependant on length of service, we also provide additional maternity benefits.

Provision of two weeks Paternity leave

Flexible working hours to help full and part time staff with childcare or other care responsibilities

We offer a £3.00 a day subsidy per child for full time nursery or other childcare costs subject conditions. This is available to mothers or fathers and continues as long as the child (or children) are in full time nursery care until they are in school. If the child is minded for ½ day only, the amount of assistance given will be £1.50 a day.

For childcare arrangements in school holidays, parents may claim £2.00 per child per full day or £1 per child for half a day.

Our provisional Gender Equality Scheme will be published by 4th December 2006.

The new duty will be enforceable by law by the Equal Opportunities Commission and subsequently by the Commission for Equalities and Human Rights.

6. Contact details and Consultation Arrangements

For details of how to contact us, see **Appendix A**, page 67 to 71

For details of our consultation arrangements, see **Appendix B**, pages 72 to 73.

Gender Equality Scheme – Corporate Action Plan

4th December 2006 to 3rd December 2009

The General Duty	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Fame
Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment based on gender	By implementing the Specific Duties – see below	CEO All Departments with Equality Officer and Assistant	Continuous
Promote equality of opportunity between men and women	By implementing the Specific Duties – see below	CEO All Departments with Equality Officer and Assistant	Continuous

Gender Equality Scheme

Corporate Action Plan ctd

4th December 2006 to 3rd December 2009

Specific Duties	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
To produce a Gender Equality Scheme identifying gender equality goals and showing the action we will take to implement these goals	Draft Scheme involving all Departmental Managers in the Action Planning Formal ratification of All Inclusive Equalities Scheme through the Council procedures	Equality Officer and Assistant	To be presented to Leaders Group on 12 th July 2006 To be presented to Cabinet in August To be presented to full Council by September 2006 To be ratified by full Council by September 2006
Consult stakeholders as appropriate in drawing up our Gender Equality Scheme	Through the Equality and Diversity Forum and other local relevant forums and partners	Equality Officer and Assistant	The Equality and Diversity Forum meets every six weeks
Publish our gender equality scheme setting out our goals and planned outcomes	To review the draft Gender Equality Scheme against the finalised Code of Practice and the guidance produced by the EOC and revise the Scheme accordingly	Equality Officer and Assistant	Dependant on further guidance to be published by the EOC To be published for wider community consultation by 1 st of October 2006 for conclusion by 18 th November To be published by 4 th December 2006

Gender Equality Scheme

Corporate Action Plan ctd.

4th December 2006 to 3rd December 2009

Specific Duties ctd.	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
Monitor progress and publish annual reports on progress	Analyse existing data and produce a gap analysis Publish results	All Departments with Equality Officer and Assistant CEO	Departmental 3 Year Rolling Equality Action Plans Council Annual Report every June
Review our Gender Equality Scheme every three years	Regular feedback through the Equality and Diversity Forum	Equality Officer and Assistant with input from All Departments	Equality and Diversity Forum meets every 6 weeks Review to be completed between 1 st July and 18 th November 2009 Results published by 3 rd December 2009
Conduct and publish gender impact assessments consulting appropriate stakeholders covering:	Equality Champions using the Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit	All Departments with Equality Officer and Assistant	Results included in 3 Year Rolling Equality Action Plans Results fed into Business Planning in the planning cycle
• all primary legislation	Identify the potential impact	Equality Officer and Equality Assistant	As need arises
• significant secondary legislation	Equality Champions to identify and refer to Legal and Democratic Services	Equality Officer and Equality Assistant	As need arises
• all major proposed developments in employment, policy and services	Equality Champions using the Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit	All Departments with Equality Officer and Assistant	Results included in 3 Year Rolling Equality Action Plans Results fed into Business Planning in the planning cycle

Gender Equality Scheme

Corporate Action Plan ctd.

4th December 2006 to 3rd December 2009

Specific Duties ctd.	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
Develop and publish our arrangements and criteria for identifying developments that justify conducting a formal gender impact assessment.	Through the use of the Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit	CEO Equality Officer and Equality Assistant	In line with the 3 Year Rolling Equality Action Plans To be published in Council Results every June

Gender Equality Scheme – Employment Action Plan

3rd December 2006 to 2nd December 2009

Specific Duties	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
Consult employees as appropriate in drawing up our Gender Equality Scheme	Plan and carry out consultation of Inclusive Equalities Scheme	CEO with HR OD, Equality Officer and Equality Assistant	By 18 th November 2006
Develop and publish a policy on developing equal pay arrangements between men and women including measures to :	Equality Impact Assessment	HR OD	See Job Evaluation timescale
	Publish results	CEO	
• promote equal pay	Job Evaluation Scheme in progress	HR OD	Spring 2007
• ensure fair promotion	Linked to Job Evaluation and PDR	HR OD	Spring 2007
• ensure fair development opportunities	Linked to Job Evaluation and PDR	HR OD	Spring 2007
• tackle occupational segregation	Linked to Job Evaluation and PDR	HR OD	Spring 2007
Conduct and publish gender impact assessments consulting appropriate stakeholders covering all major proposed developments in employment and policy affecting staff	Equality Impact Assessments to be carried out and fed into business planning process	HR OD	In line with 3 year Rolling Equality Actions Plans
Other employment actions	Review of Recruitment and Selection	HR OD	October 2006
As above	Review of advertising	HR OD	October 2006
As above	Review of Job Descriptions and Person Specifications	HR OD All Services Departments	October 2006

Chapter Five – Sexuality

5.1 The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

From 1st December 2003, the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations came into effect. The aim of the Regulations is to eliminate unfair discrimination based on sexuality in employment and vocational training.

Those protected are :

all workers including the self employed, contract workers, office holders, the police and members of trade organisations.

people taking part in or applying for employment related vocational training, re-training or work experience including all courses at Further Education and Higher Education Institutions and training provided by employers or private and voluntary sector providers.

Those not protected are :

members of the regular armed forces, full-time and part-time reservists and unpaid volunteers

5.2 Definition of Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation is defined as –

Orientation towards persons of the same sex (lesbians and gay men)

Orientation towards persons of the opposite sex (heterosexual)

Orientation towards persons of the same sex and the opposite sex (bisexual)

Gender reassignment is a separate issue and unrelated to sexual orientation despite a common misunderstanding that the two issues are part of the same picture. It is unlawful to discriminate against or harass anyone on the grounds that the person intends to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment. These issues are already covered by the Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999. See Chapter Four, our Gender Equality Scheme – pages 30 to 47.

5.3 Unlawful Discrimination

The Regulations make it unlawful for employers to :-

discriminate against job applicants, employees or former employees,
in the recruitment and selection for employment process

in the terms of employment afforded to employees

in the opportunities afforded to employees for promotion, transfer, training or receiving any other benefit

in dismissing or subjecting employees to any other detriment

5.4 Unlawful Discrimination

The Regulations describe the following ways in which discrimination can occur – these are the same definitions as for other anti-discrimination legislation (except for disability).

Direct Discrimination

deciding not to employ someone because of their sexuality

dismissing someone because of their sexuality

Indirect Discrimination

pension benefits are only payable to an opposite sex partner

Discrimination by way of victimisation

if a manager dismissed an employee who had given evidence on behalf of another employee who had claimed sexual orientation discrimination

Discrimination by means of Harassment

When someone is subjected to unwanted conduct on the grounds of sexual orientation which has the purpose or effect of: violating their dignity or creating an intimidatory, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

5.5 Other Relevant Legislation

5.5.1 The Sexual Orientation (Provision of Goods and Services) Regulations

The Equality Bill 2006 includes an order making power that will allow Regulations to be made to prohibit sexual orientation discrimination in the provision of goods, facilities and services, in education and in the execution of public functions.

The Government recognises that discrimination faces lesbian, gay and bisexual people in this area in their day-to-day lives and is keen to ensure that the Regulations have effect where they are most needed. There is no date yet for the implementation of this proposed legislation and the guidance is not yet available from the DTi.

For further information see www.dti.gov.uk

5.5.2 Civil Partnerships

The Civil Partnership Act 2004 came into force on 5 December 2005 allowing two non-related adults of the same sex to register a civil partnership, which has many of the same rights and responsibilities as marriage.

From 5 December the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 will allow employers to restrict employment benefits to married people and people in a civil partnership to the exclusion of those who hold neither status. The Regulations will also require spouses and civil partners to be treated equally in the workplace and for vocational training.

Employers must check that any benefits they provide for spouses of employees, or benefits contingent on marriage such as health insurance for a spouse, or time off before or after a marriage are also available to an employee in a civil partnership, or to their civil partner, if appropriate.

There is no requirement to offer these benefits more widely than spouses and civil partners – i.e. to unmarried opposite-sex couples and unregistered same-sex couples.

Employers must also amend human resource systems and forms and outward facing material and forms to reflect the introduction of civil partnership. Where there is a reference to 'spouse' or 'marriage' there should also be a reference to 'civil partner' or 'civil partnership.'

They should avoid making people identify themselves as either married or in a civil partnership. In most situations because the treatment given to civil partners and married people is the same, there should be no need to identify them separately.

Be aware that some people may want to change their name upon registering a civil partnership, or hyphenate their name with their partners.

5.6 Contact details and Consultation Arrangements

For details of how to contact us, see **Appendix A**, page 67 to 71

For details of our consultation arrangements, see **Appendix B**, pages 72 to 73.

Sexuality – Corporate Action Plan

Corporate	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
Corporate	Commitment to Equality on the grounds of sexuality and the promotion of a culture of acceptance and freedom from harassment to be incorporated into the Corporate Plan	CEO All Departments	Continuous
Corporate Policy Review	Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out in respect of every policy function, process and procedure. Results will be fed into the service business planning process New policies will be formulated giving consideration to the Corporate Commitment to Equality on the grounds of sexuality	All Departments with Equality Officer and Assistant As above As above	In line with 3 years departmental rolling Action Plans
Legal and Democratic	Monitoring of developments in legislation in relation to sexuality Adjust action plans accordingly	Equalities Officer and Equalities Assistant As above	Ongoing

Sexuality – Employment Action Plan

Employment	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
Recruitment and Selection	All vacancies to be advertised internally and externally	HR OD	Continuous
	All managers given recruitment and selection training and guidance on best practice	As above	
	Explicit reference made to the Councils commitment to Equality on the grounds of sexuality within the information sent to prospective candidates	As above	
Training and Development	General equalities awareness training made available to all staff and members	HR OD	Continuous
	All staff involved with recruitment and selection to receive relevant training	As above	
	Equality Impact assessment “surgeries” will be offered to all line managers and equalities champions	As above	
	Training opportunities to be published in the Councils Training Directory	As above	
	Equalities training offered to all members	As above	

Chapter Six - Religion or Belief

6.1 Introduction

The 2001 Census was the first Census to ask a question on religion and the results expressed as percentages for Bromsgrove District were as follows :-

Religion	Bromsgrove	England and Wales
Christian	80.1	71.8
Buddhist	0.1	0.3
Hindu	0.2	1.1
Jewish	0.1	0.5
Muslim	0.3	3.0
Sikh	0.3	0.6
Other religions	0.2	0.3
No religion	11.8	14.8
Religion not stated	6.8	7.7

Source: 2001 Census Office for National Statistics www.statistics.gov.uk

There is little variation between the different wards with all showing the majority religion as Christianity from the lowest at 76.2% (Tardebigge) to the highest at 82.8% (Hagley). Tardebigge has the highest recorded minority religion of 1.5% Muslims followed by Linthurst with 1.0% Sikh.

6.2 The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003

On 2nd December 2003, the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations come into effect. The aim of the Regulations is to eliminate unfair discrimination based on religion or belief in employment and vocational training.

Those protected are :

all workers including the self employed, contract workers, office holders, the police and members of trade organisations.

people taking part in or applying for employment related vocational training, re-training or work experience including all courses at Further Education and Higher Education Institutions and training provided by employers or private and voluntary sector providers.

Those not protected are :

members of the regular armed forces, full-time and part-time reservists

unpaid volunteers

6.3 Definition of Religion or Belief

Religion or belief is not explicitly defined in the Regulations. In most cases it will be clear what is or is not a religion or a similar belief. It will be for the courts to decide in cases where this is in dispute. Factors to be considered are whether there is collective worship, a clear belief system and a profound belief affecting way of life and view of the world. The protection against discrimination extends to all the well known religions and other beliefs such as Paganism and Humanism. The Regulations also cover those without specific religious or similar beliefs.

6.4 Unlawful Discrimination

The Regulations make it unlawful for employers to :-

- discriminate against job applicants, employees or former employees,
- in the recruitment and selection for employment process
- in the terms of employment afforded to employees
- in the opportunities afforded to employees for promotion, transfer, training or receiving any other benefit
- in dismissing or subjecting employees to any other detriment

The Regulations describe the following ways in which discrimination can occur – these are the same definitions as for other anti-discrimination legislation (except for disability).

Direct Discrimination

At interview it becomes apparent that a job applicant is a Muslim – although the person has all the skills and competencies required for the job, the employer decides not to offer the applicant the job because of their religion

Indirect Discrimination

Drivers for a delivery company like to wear baseball caps. The Manager applies a “no headwear rule”. This rule disadvantages Sikhs who wear a turban for religious reasons.

A high street clothing retailer has a uniform requirement that female sales assistants must wear a skirt that shows the legs below the knee and does not allow matching trousers to be worn underneath. This rule disadvantage women who are Muslims.

A group of employees working for a small company based in a rural area ask for facilities to observe Muslim prayers. The Managing Directors office is often used for meetings but their request is refused.

If the refusal was unreasonable this could be unlawful.

Discrimination by way of victimisation

After giving evidence to an Employment Tribunal on behalf of a colleague who had brought a claim of discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief, an employee applies for promotion. The application is rejected even though the evidence shows all the necessary skills and experience. The manager says that the application was rejected because the employee is perceived to be a troublemaker.

Discrimination by means of Harassment

When someone is subjected to unwanted conduct on the grounds of religion or belief which has the purpose or effect of: violating their dignity or creating an intimidatory, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

An employee is subject to continuous remarks about his partner's religious convictions. He finds this offensive and distressing and complains to his manager. He is told not to be so sensitive and the remarks are only harmless workplace banter.

6.5 Religious Observance in the Workplace

The Regulations do not say that employers must provide time and facilities for religious or belief observance in the workplace. However, Bromsgrove District Council will consider whether our policies, rules and procedures indirectly discriminate against workers or employees of particular religions or beliefs and where there is a risk that this might occur, consider what changes can be made.

Many religions or beliefs have a special festival or spiritual observance days. An employee or a worker may request holiday to celebrate festivals or attend ceremonies. Bromsgrove District Council will sympathetically consider such requests where it is reasonable and practical for the employee/ worker to be away from work and they have sufficient holiday entitlement in hand.

6.6 Other relevant legislation

6.6.1 The Equality Act 2006 Part 2

This is expected to come into force by October 2006. It will extend protection against discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in the provision of goods, facilities and services, the management and disposal of premises, the exercising of public duties and in education.

In these areas it will be unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the grounds of the religion or belief (or lack of it) of that person or of someone with whom they are associated.

There are a number of exceptions, for example for organizations which have a purpose related to a religion or belief. Further detailed guidance will be available from the Home Office website before the commencement of these provisions.

6.6.2 The Racial and Religious Hatred Act

This Act was passed by Parliament in 2006 and is expected to become law later this year. The Act creates an offence of “incitement to religious hatred” to protect against extremists stirring up religious hatred because of people’s religious beliefs or lack of religious beliefs. Examples of religious hate crime include :

- using threatening words or behaviour or displaying threatening material with the intention of stirring up religious hatred
- religiously aggravated assault

6.7 Contact details and Consultation Arrangements

For details of how to contact us, see **Appendix A**, page 67 to 71

For details of our consultation arrangements, see **Appendix B**, pages 72 to 73.

Religion or Belief - Corporate and Service Delivery Action Plan

Corporate	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
Corporate	<p>Commitment to eliminating discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief to be incorporated in the Corporate Action Plan</p> <p>Commitment to the promotion of a culture of acceptance and freedom from harassment to be incorporated into the Corporate Plan</p>	<p>CEO</p> <p>All Departments</p> <p>CEO</p> <p>All Departments</p>	<p>Continuous</p> <p>Continuous</p>
Services	<p>Equality Impact Assessment of all services with relevance to Religion or Belief will have been done to ensure that any risk of unlawful discrimination in the provision of goods, facilities and services including housing will have been identified and as far as possible eliminated</p> <p>3 Year Departmental Rolling Equality Action Plans will have been updated</p>	<p>Line Managers in conjunction with Equalities Officer and Equalities Assistant</p> <p>As above</p>	<p>By end of September 2006</p> <p>As above</p>

Religion or Belief - Employment Action Plan

Employment	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
Employee Needs	Consult on the need to provide a permanent Ecumenical Room	HR OD with Equality Officer and Assistant	Immediate
Employee Needs	Develop and consult on a Religion or Belief Observation Policy	HR OD with Equality Officer and Assistant	By end of September 2006
Recruitment and Selection	<p>Review our current practices in relation to content of job descriptions and person specifications</p> <p>All vacancies to be advertised internally and externally</p> <p>All managers given recruitment and selection training and guidance on best practice</p> <p>Explicit reference made to the Councils commitment to Equality of Religion or Belief within the information sent to prospective candidates</p>	HR OD	Ongoing
Training and Development	<p>General equalities awareness training made available to all staff and members</p> <p>All staff involved with recruitment and selection to receive relevant training</p> <p>Impact assessment workshops will be offered to all line managers and equalities champions</p> <p>Training published in the Councils Training Directory</p> <p>Equalities training offered to all members</p>	HR OD	Ongoing

Chapter Seven - Age

7.1 Introduction

By 2006, in the UK, half of everyone aged 16 or over will be over 50.

Currently only 70% of people aged between 50 and state pension age are in work compared to 81% of those aged between 25 and 49.

Increased life expectancy combined with shortfalls in pension will mean increasingly that people will want to retire later.

Around 1 million people choose to work beyond state pension age already.

In local Government 62% of employees are aged over 40 compared to 48% in the economy as a whole and only 8% are aged under 25 as against 16% generally. This clearly shows that Local Government generally, will have to be more attractive to younger people as an employer now and in the future.

Source: Age Positive, Age Partnership Group see www.agepositive.gov.uk

The 2001 Census data for Bromsgrove District Council area showed that of the Resident Population, the spread of age groups across the District by percentage was :-

AGE GROUP	BROMSGROVE	ENGLAND AND WALES
Under 16	19.3	20.2
16 to 19	4.3	4.9
20 to 29	9.2	12.6
30 to 59	44.3	41.5
60 to 74	14.8	13.3
75 and over	8.0	7.6
Average age	40.7	38.6

Source: 2001 Census Office for National Statistics www.statistics.gov.uk

There were some interesting results for the separate Wards showing some with a higher or lower than average age for the District with Hollywood and Majors Green the highest average age at 44.8 yrs and Stoke Heath with the lowest average age at 34.0 yrs.

Forthcoming legislation to make discrimination on the grounds of age unlawful will only apply to employment and vocational training – there will be no protection against discrimination in areas such as access to goods facilities and services including housing.

However, Bromsgrove District Council is committed to ensuring equality of service provision for all age groups and will actively seek to ensure that any particular needs of any age group are met. All Council policies are regularly assessed for their impact on the grounds of age – see **Appendix C** (pages 74 to 82) for our Equality Impact Assessments Toolkit.

7.2 The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

From 1st October 2006, the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations come into effect. The aim of the Regulations is to eliminate unfair discrimination based on age in employment and vocational training.

Those protected are :

all workers including the self employed, contract workers, office holders, the police and members of trade organisations.

people taking part in or applying for employment related vocational training, re-training or work experience including all courses at Further Education and Higher Education Institutions and training provided by employers or private and voluntary sector providers.

Those not protected are :

members of the regular armed forces, full-time and part-time reservists

unpaid volunteers

7.3 Unlawful Discrimination

The Regulations make it unlawful for employers to :-

discriminate against job applicants, employees or former employees,
in the recruitment and selection for employment process
in the terms of employment afforded to employees
in the opportunities afforded to employees for promotion, transfer, training or receiving any other benefit
in dismissing or subjecting employees to any other detriment

The Regulations describe the following ways in which discrimination can occur – these are the same definitions as for other anti-discrimination legislation (except for disability).

Direct Discrimination

not including a manager in a group attending a new company management development initiative on the grounds that he or she is too old

deciding not to employ someone because of their age

dismissing someone because of their age

Indirect Discrimination

where for a job specification states “must be recently graduated” as relatively few people in an older age group are likely to meet this performance criterion.

where a job advert requires a specified number of years of a particular type of experience which a younger candidate might be very unlikely to have.

Discrimination by way of victimisation

if a manager dismissed an employee who had given evidence on behalf of another employee who had claimed age discrimination.

if someone was ignored or “cold shouldered” by colleagues because they claimed that they were not selected for promotion because of their age.

Discrimination by means of Harassment

When someone is subjected to unwanted conduct on the grounds of age which has the purpose or effect of: violating their dignity or creating an intimidatory, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

name calling or teasing or tolerance for a general culture where, for example, the telling of ageist jokes is accepted

bullying of a younger worker by always giving him or her unpleasant or unpopular tasks that should reasonably be shared between colleagues with the same role and responsibilities

having nicknames for older workers for example “granddad” or dinosaur” if it makes that person feel demeaned or insulted

7.4 Retirement

The regulations set a default retirement age of 65 for both men and women – this is to be reviewed in 2011.

This means that an employer can retire employees at or above the age of 65, but not before, unless an employer can satisfy the test of objective justification.

It is not unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of age when, at the time of the person’s job application, he or she is over the employer’s normal retirement age.

Employers will normally be able to dismiss on the grounds of retirement, employees who are over the age of 65 without this being regarded as age discrimination.

Employees will have the right to request to continue working beyond their retirement date - their employer will have a duty to consider such requests.

7.5 Fair Retirement

Bromsgrove District Council is committed to abiding by the process of “**Fair Retirement**”.

A fair retirement is one that:

takes effect on or after our normal retirement age

BDC will give the employee written notice of the date of their intended retirement and tell them about their right to request to continue working. This will be given between 6 and 12 months before the intended retirement date.

For employees retiring on or shortly after 1st October 2006 transitional arrangements for these employees have been produced by the Department for Trade & Industry and can be found on the DTi website.

We also have an Early Retirement Scheme where, in special cases, retirement before normal retirement age is allowed.

7.6 The National Minimum Wage

It will be lawful to follow the age bands and minimum wage levels set out in the national minimum wage legislation.

7.7 Service Related Benefits

An exception is included in the Regulations which allows employers to continue to award benefits to employees using the criterion of length of service. However, for any worker whose service exceeds 5 years, any disadvantage experienced by that worker when compared with another person in receipt of a service related benefit, must reasonably appear to fulfill a business need. (for example, by encouraging loyalty or motivation or reward the experience, of some or all workers). Employers affected by this provision should refer to Regulation 32

7.8 Unfair Dismissal, Redundancy and Statutory Sick Pay

The regulations remove the current age limit for unfair dismissal, statutory redundancy payments and statutory sick pay. It will continue to be lawful for the amount of redundancy payments to be calculated using employee’s age, length of service and weekly pay. It will also be legal to make enhanced payments. Employees affected by this provision should refer to Regulation 33.

7.9 Occupational Pensions

The regulations will generally allow occupational pension schemes to continue as before.

7.10 Contact details and Consultation Arrangements

For details of how to contact us, see **Appendix A**, page 67 to 71

For details of our consultation arrangements, see **Appendix B**, pages 72 to 73.

Age Equality – Corporate Action Plan

Corporate	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
Corporate	Commitment to Age Equality and a culture of acceptance and freedom from harassment to be incorporated into the Corporate Plan	CEO All Departments	Continuous
Corporate Policy Review	Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out in respect of every policy function, process and procedure. Results will be fed into the service business planning process New policies will be formulated giving consideration to the Corporate Commitment to Age Equality	All Departments with Equality Officer and Assistant As above As above	In line with 3 year Departmental Rolling Equality Action Plans As above As above
Consultation	Through the Equalities and Diversity Forum Link with the Bromsgrove Partnership Through our Web page The Bromsgrove Disabled Access Group Wider Community Consultation	Equality Officer and Assistant Assistant CEO Equality Officer and Assistant With IT Department Equality Officer and Assistant Equality Officer and Assistant	The Forum meets every six weeks Bromsgrove Partnership meets bi-monthly By 23 rd September 2006 Group meets bi-monthly 23 rd September to 18 th November
Training and Development	Equalities training offered to all members	HR OD with Equality Officer and Assistant	Ongoing

Age Equality - Employment Action Plan

Employment	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
Consultation will be undertaken through	Staff surveys Team meetings Equality Champions Working Group	HR OD and Equality Officer and Assistant	Ongoing
Monitoring	Review and define the definition of age groups used for data collation Monitoring statistics and reporting the results to SMT.	HR OD with Equality Officer and Assistant As above	Ongoing
Job Evaluation	Job evaluation to ensure that posts are graded fairly and consistently throughout the Council	HR OD	Ongoing
Recruitment and Selection	Review our current practices in relation to content of job descriptions and person specifications All vacancies to be advertised internally and externally All managers given recruitment and selection training and guidance on best practice Explicit reference made to the Councils commitment to Age Equality within the information sent to prospective candidates Investigate positive action initiatives if areas of under representation are identified in the monitoring process	HR OD	Ongoing

Age Equality - Employment Action Plan ctd.

Employment ctd.	Actions/ Targets	By Whom	Time Frame
Training and Development	General equalities awareness training made available to all staff and members	HR OD	Ongoing
	All staff involved with recruitment and selection to receive relevant training	HR OD	Ongoing
	Impact assessment workshops will be offered to all line managers and equalities champions	HR OD	Ongoing
	Training opportunities are published in the Councils Training Directory	HR OD	Ongoing
Retirement	Develop and implement a process enabling employees to continue working after current normal retirement age	HR OD	By 1 st October 2006
	Make job opportunities open to job applicants already over normal retirement age	HR OD	By 1 st October 2006

Appendix A

How to contact us

How we will deal with complaints

We view any complaint, whatever the subject-matter and whatever the source, with the utmost seriousness. The Equality and Diversity Forum and our other equality activities (training, employee awareness, benchmarking for the Local Government Equality Standard etc.) enable a meaningful and direct means of assessing any complaints received and any gaps in provision to be identified.

We also operate a direct Complaints procedure enabling representations to be made in writing or via email to the Equality Officer – see contacts below.

Complaints or representation made through our Customer Service Centre, or to any officer regarding any section so the Inclusive Equalities Scheme or associated policies, will be fed through these channels.

What do you think?

We would like to hear what you have to say about this Scheme, and the Council's performance in the field of equality in general, whether your comments are critical or positive.

If you have any suggestions we'd love to hear from you. Please contact the following:

Person	Role	Telephone	E-mail
Mrs Claire Felton	Equalities Officer	01527 881429	c.felton@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Miss Fiona Scott	Equalities Assistant	01572 881719	f.scott@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Mr Kevin Dicks	Acting Chief Executive	01527 881487	k.dicks@bromsgrove.gov.uk

You can write to any of us at: The Council House, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove, B60 1AA

Or you can complete the contact and consultation form on pages 67 to 71.

A textphone service is available by using telephone number 01527 881291.

Giving Feedback on the Scheme

We welcome comments and compliments about this document and the action we propose.

People who are dissatisfied with the content of our Inclusive Equalities Scheme for any reason or have a suggestion about how we could do things differently are encouraged to let us know.

Please tick the appropriate box and complete the section below and overleaf.

This is a Complaint Comment Compliment

If a comment/ compliment, tick here if you do not want a reply

Your name _____

Your address _____

Postcode _____

Daytime telephone number _____

E-mail address _____

Please give details of your complaint/ comment or feedback

What would you like us to do about it?

Signature

Date

Hand this form in at any council reception area or send it to :

Mrs Claire Felton
Equalities Officer

or

Miss Fiona Scott
Equalities Assistant

At

The Council House, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove, B60 1AA

A textphone service is available by using telephone number 01527 881291.

Q1 What did you find most interesting about the Inclusive Equalities Scheme?

Q2 What did you find least interesting about the Inclusive Equalities Scheme?

Q3 Were you able to find what you were looking for?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q4 If you could not find what you were looking for please explain.

Q5 What, if anything, was your particular personal interest in the Scheme?

Q6 If you have any further comments please state them here.

Thank you for taking the time to reply to this questionnaire.

Completion of this section of the questionnaire is optional, however we would be grateful if you would tell us a bit about yourself. This information will only be used for statistical purposes.

Are you Male Female

What is your age group?

Under 18	<input type="checkbox"/>	40 – 49	<input type="checkbox"/>
18 – 29	<input type="checkbox"/>	50 – 59	<input type="checkbox"/>
30 – 39	<input type="checkbox"/>	60 – 65	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Over 65	<input type="checkbox"/>

What is your Ethnic Group?

White

White British

White Irish

Other White

Mixed

White and Black Caribbean

White and Asian

Other mixed

Asian or British Asian

Indian

Pakistani

Bangladeshi

Other Asian

Black or Black British

Caribbean

African

Other Black

Chinese

Other Ethnic Group

(please specify)

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

Yes

No

Please briefly describe _____

Appendix B

Consultation Arrangements

The formal consultation period for the Inclusive Equalities Scheme will commence on Saturday 23rd September 2006 and close on Saturday 18th November 2006. The Scheme will then be formally published and launched on 4th December 2006.

D.1 Internal Consultation

Internal consultation will be undertaken in the following ways :

- a copy will be sent to all Heads of Departments who will brief staff at team meetings

- a copy will be published for all employees via the intranet

- a copy will be sent to representatives of the Council's Trade unions

- a copy will be sent to the Council's Staff Network representatives

All comments and responses will be collated by Claire Felton and Fiona Scott.

D.2 External Consultation

External consultation will be undertaken in the following ways :

- the Scheme will be published on Bromsgrove District Council's internet website

- the Scheme will be published on www.worcestershire.whub.org.uk in the Ask Me! – Consultation Planner and Finder

- a consultation launch event will take place at Bromsgrove District Council House on Saturday 23rd September 2006 - attendance will be by invitation only

copies will be sent to :

- Members of the Bromsgrove District Council Equality and Diversity Forum

- Members of the Bromsgrove Disabled Access Group

- The Commission for Racial Equality

- The Worcestershire Racial Equality Group/ Worcester Race Equality Council

- Worcestershire County Council

- All Worcestershire District and Borough Councils

- Members of the Bromsgrove and Redditch Network (B.A.R.N.)

- Members of the Bromsgrove Partnership

- Bromsgrove Jobcentre

- The West Midlands Regional Assembly

- Advantage West Midlands

- SCOPE

- MIND

copies will be available for distribution to the general public :

in reception at the Council House, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove
at the Customer Service Centre, in the Dolphin Centre, School Drive,
Bromsgrove
in the Leisure Centres at Woodrush and Haybridge
in the local libraries in

Alvechurch
Bromsgrove
Catshill
Cofton Hackett
Hagley
Rubery
St. Johns
Wythall

All comments and responses will be collated by Claire Felton and Fiona Scott.

If anyone requires this document in large print, Braille or any other format or in another language, please contact :

Person	Role	Telephone	E-mail
Mrs Claire Felton	Equalities Officer	01527 881429	c.felton@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Miss Fiona Scott	Equalities Assistant	01572 881719	f.scott@bromsgrove.gov.uk

A textphone service is available by using telephone number 01527 881291.

Appendix C

List of Functions

Street Scene and Waste Management Services

Function	Race			Disability			Gender			Sexuality			Religion/ Belief			Age			Income/ Location					
	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L			
Refuse & Recycling Collection			•		•				•			•			•		•							•
Grounds Maintenance			•			•			•			•			•						•			•
MOT Testing services			•		•				•			•			•						•			•
Vehicle maintenance			•			•			•			•			•						•			•
Drainage work and Cesspool emptying		•			•				•			•			•			•						•
Street Cleansing			•			•			•			•			•						•			•
Crowd Control		•			•				•			•			•			•						•
Environmental Protection		•			•				•			•			•						•			•
Sustainable Development policies and Agenda 21			•			•			•			•			•						•			•
Car Parking Street furniture		•			•				•			•			•						•			•
Car park and town centre lighting		•			•				•			•			•						•			•
Environmental enhancement projects			•			•			•			•			•						•			•
Street naming and numbering		•				•			•			•			•						•			•
Christmas lighting		•				•			•			•			•						•			•
Cemetery Maintenance			•		•				•			•			•			•						•
Private Sector Housing	•				•				•			•			•			•						•
Pollution of air/land/ water including noise			•			•			•			•			•						•			•
Food Safety	•				•				•			•			•			•						•

Planning and Environment Services

Function	Race			Disability			Gender			Sexuality			Religion/ Belief		Age			Income/ Location				
	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	
Pest Control			•		•				•			•	•				•				•	
Infectious Diseases		•		•					•			•		•			•					•
Health nuisance Control																						
Food inspection of shops and restaurants	•				•			•				•		•			•					•
Inspection of premises for hygiene/health & safety standards	•				•			•				•		•			•					•
Inspection of dwellings for fitness for occupation			•	•					•			•			•		•					•
Disabled Persons Grants		•		•				•				•			•		•				•	
Health Promotion	•			•				•				•			•	•					•	
Inspection licensing and registration of tattooists, acupuncturists, riding establishments, pet shops, caravan sites	•			•				•				•			•		•					•
Quality monitoring of public and private water supplies			•			•			•			•			•			•				•
Local Plans and future development within the District		•		•					•			•			•		•					•

Planning and Environment Services ctd.

Function	Race			Disability			Gender			Sexuality			Religion/ Belief		Age			Income/ Location			
	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L			
Development Control and use of land in accordance with current plans and policies (both local and national)		•			•					•				•					•		
Encouragement of sustainable development making best use of resources and minimisation of environmental impact		•			•					•				•					•		
Preservation of the District's heritage of buildings, landscapes, and spaces of special value		•			•					•				•					•		
Ensuring that buildings are constructed in a suitable and safe manner through Building Control Regulations		•			•					•				•					•		
Strategic Housing	•				•					•				•					•		
Local Land Charges		•			•					•				•					•		
Licensing of private hire vehicles or taxis, and all forms of statutory licensing		•			•					•				•					•		
Administration of the Council Shared Ownership Property scheme	•				•					•				•					•		
Emergency Planning	•				•					•				•					•		

Financial Services

Function	Race				Disability			Gender			Sexuality			Religion/ Belief		Age			Income/ Location			
	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	
Recording of all income and expenditure of the Council			●	●					●			●			●			●				●
Production of annual Revenue and Capital Budgets	●			●					●			●			●		●				●	
Production of annual statements of accounts	●			●					●			●			●		●				●	
Calculation and issue of Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rate invoices	●			●					●			●			●	●					●	
Recovery of unpaid invoices, or unpaid Council Tax/Non-Domestic Rates	●			●					●			●		●		●					●	
Procurement	●			●			●			●			●			●						●
Audit			●	●					●			●			●			●	●			
Council Tax and Housing Benefit	●			●					●			●		●			●				●	

E-Government and Customer Services

Function	Race			Disability			Gender			Sexual Orientation		Religion/ Belief			Age			Income/ Location					
	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L			
Issue of Bus Passes and car park permits	•			•						•					•	•					•		
Operation of a Cash Office	•			•						•			•						•		•		
Customer-facing Revenues & Benefits	•			•						•			•			•					•		
Customer-facing Depot Services	•			•						•				•	•							•	
Customer-facing Environmental Health	•				•					•									•			•	
County function – Blue Badge	•			•						•						•	•					•	
Printing, Photocopying, and Stationery	•			•						•									•				•
Infrastructure of IT equipment			•	•						•						•							•
Software provision and support			•	•						•						•							•
Communications including telephones, email, internet and intranet	•			•						•						•	•					•	

Culture and Community Services

Function	Race			Disability			Gender			Sexuality			Religion/ Belief			Age			Income/ Location		
	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L
Allotments			●		●				●			●		●			●				●
Arts Services		●			●				●			●	●					●		●	
Marketing	●				●				●			●	●					●			●
Museums		●			●				●			●		●				●			●
Play Areas			●		●				●			●		●				●			●
Parks and Open Spaces			●		●				●			●		●				●			●
Sports Development		●			●				●			●	●					●			●
Sports facilities and Leisure Centres including Dual Use Schemes		●			●				●			●	●					●			●
Tourism		●			●				●			●		●				●			●
CCTV Schemes		●			●				●			●		●				●			●
Lifeline Services		●			●				●			●		●	●			●			●
Community Safety		●			●				●			●		●				●			●
Cemeteries Administration		●				●			●			●	●					●			●

Legal and Democratic Services

Function	Race			Disability			Gender			Sexuality			Religion/ Belief		Age			Income/ Location					
	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	H	M	L	H	M	L			
Electoral Registration and Voting	•			•			•					•		•			•					•	
Committee Support and administration		•			•			•				•		•			•					•	
Valuation of Council Properties and assets		•			•			•				•			•			•					•
Interactions with the Local Government Ombudsman		•			•				•			•			•			•					•
Register of Members Interests		•			•				•			•			•			•					•
Purchase and sales of land		•			•				•			•		•			•					•	
Prosecution of offences	•				•				•			•		•			•					•	
Debt collection	•				•				•			•		•			•			•			
Leases and Licences		•			•				•			•			•			•					•
Asset & Facilities Management	•				•				•			•		•			•					•	
Data Protection	•				•				•			•			•			•					•
Town & County Planning Agreements		•			•				•			•			•			•					
Employment Law	•				•				•			•			•			•					
Equalities and Diversity	•				•				•			•			•			•					
Monitoring Officer	•				•				•			•			•			•					
Corporate Law	•				•				•			•			•			•					
Risk Management	•				•				•			•			•			•					

Human Resources and Organisational Development

Function	Race			Disability			Gender			Sexuality			Religion/ Belief			Age			Income/ Location			
	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	
Recruitment	•			•			•				•			•			•			•		
People Strategy and Workshop Planning		•			•			•			•			•			•			•		
Training and Learning	•			•					•		•						•			•		
Health & Safety at Work		•		•					•				•				•					•
Payroll			•			•			•			•			•			•				•
Councillor Development	•			•			•			•			•			•				•		
People Management Policy and Procedures	•			•			•			•			•			•				•		

Chief Executive Services

Function	Race			Disability			Gender			Sexuality			Religion/ Belief			Age			Income/ Location					
	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L	H	M	L			
Corporate Strategy	•			•			•			•			•			•			•					
Performance input	•			•			•			•			•			•			•			•		
Corporate Complaints Monitoring	•			•			•			•			•			•			•			•		
Partnership Working			•			•			•			•			•			•			•			•
Communications Strategy	•			•			•			•			•			•			•			•		
Customer First Strategy	•			•			•			•			•			•			•			•		

1. Introduction

Bromsgrove District Council is committed to providing equality in our service provision and employment opportunities. We value the contribution of individuals and recognise that different groups may have different needs. Our approach to equalities therefore recognises a range of different groups within our society and seeks to ensure fair and equitable services are provided to all. A list of those groups recognised under the policy is listed on page 89.

We have a legal duty to ensure that our policies and practices are fair and equitable. In order to achieve this we need to undertake impact assessments for all our policies and practices. Since our Equality Policy recognises a range of different groups, we have extended our impact assessments to include these other groups.

Equality impact assessments take account of equality dimensions, such as race, disability, gender, sexuality, religion/ belief, age, income and geographical location, marital status if relevant and appropriate will be included in gender and/ or sexual orientation.

It is also important because the Council has adopted the Equality Standard for Local Government (see **Chapter One** – pages 4 to 7) which is a framework for auditing across all equality issues not just race.

This toolkit has been produced to help you to complete equality impact assessments. There is a form at the end of these guidance notes to help you think about the questions you need to consider when undertaking an impact assessment. For a glossary of terms see **Appendix F** – see page 97.

An impact assessment is a way of finding out whether a policy (or proposed policy), affects different groups of people in different ways. It should be part of the normal policy making process. For the purposes of this guidance, the term policy refers to any activity the council does, be that a service we provide, an initiative we run, a policy we write or a procedure we observe.

2. The benefits of undertaking an assessment

By undertaking an impact assessment, we are able to:

- take into account the needs, experiences and circumstances of those groups of people who will be affected by our policies and procedures;
- identify the real and possible inequalities people will experience if the council goes ahead with a proposed policy or procedure;
- think about the other ways in which we can achieve the aims of our policy which will not lead to inequalities;
- increase transparency in the things that we do and improve the public's confidence in the fairness of our policies and procedures;
- generally develop better policy-making, procedures and services;
- become more accountable to the people that we serve.

Impact assessments, and the need to undertake them, stem from the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The need however has now increased considerably because of the two new duties coming into force – The Disability Equality Duty (5th December 2006) and the Gender Equality Duty (6th April 2007).

The relevant Acts all place a general duty on the Council, as a public authority, to proactively promote race, disability and gender equality. The relevant Acts also place specific duties on us, which include assessing and consulting on the impact of policies, undertaking regular monitoring and publishing the results of impact assessments and consultation. The duties are not optional; everyone must undertake equality impact assessments.

3. Who needs to undertake an assessment?

The council expects the relevant service managers to undertake equality impact assessments. However, support is available from Equality Champions in your own service. These Champions have received training to help you and your service areas undertake assessments. They also serve on the Council's Equality Reference Group, which is ensuring a co-ordinated approach to our equality activity across the Council. As well as helping service areas undertake impact assessments, the Equality Champions will also be monitoring compliance and will report on progress on a quarterly basis to the OMT.

Managers – are required to undertake the impact assessments for their service area

Equality Champions – can assist with impact assessments, through providing advice, guidance and information. They will be able to find the answers to any questions that might arise as you undertake your impact assessments.

The law requires all service areas to undertake impact assessments on every service we provide (both to external and internal customers). We recognise that this work will take valuable time, you therefore have three years to undertake all of the impact assessments in your area. You are advised to prioritise which services are to be assessed first. The assessments and their outcomes will be pulled together into a 3-year action plan. Each Service area within the Council is required to produce their own action plan.

We recognise that there is a cost involved in undertaking an impact assessment, not least in terms of your time, so service areas are advised to be realistic in their approach. Your Equality Champion can provide advice on prioritising your impact assessments.

4. Which policies need to be assessed?

All existing policies and procedures need to be assessed for an adverse impact. We also need to carry out impact assessments where we intend to introduce a new service or change an existing service.

As a priority, managers in service areas will be expected to carry out impact assessments on changes in policy or procedure, which affect service delivery. Personnel Services will carry out impact assessments on changes of policy or procedure which affect the employment of staff.

5. How do I complete an assessment?

There are three types of impact assessment:

- Initial Impact Assessment - based on existing information
- Partial Impact Assessment - builds on existing data, outlines the risks and benefits, and takes into account the views of experts and interested groups.
- Full Impact Assessment - builds on the work done in the other assessments, but also includes the results of external consultation, final recommendations, and arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the policy and its impact.

6. Screening for likely impact – an initial assessment

Always begin with an initial assessment. You may already be collecting data from monitoring exercises. You can use any of the relevant data you already have to inform the impact assessment process.

If you are providing a service, which you are not yet monitoring, then you must begin at the very least, to gather data from ethnic monitoring in order to comply with the law. As Bromsgrove District Council is committed to equality for all sections of our communities, you are encouraged to monitor for other groups.

As part of this initial assessment, you must ask a number of questions:

- (i) **Is there any evidence or reason to believe that some groups of people could be differently affected by the policy you are considering or changing?**

(See Equalities Impact Assessment Form pages 90 to 93 for a list of those groups of people we have included in our Inclusive Equalities Scheme). A policy is said to have an adverse impact if it disadvantages one or more group of people. You need to think about the following:

- (ii) **Does the evidence show different outcomes between people of different groups in terms of race, gender, age, disability, and if relevant, in terms of sexual orientation or faith/religious belief, etc?**
- (iii) **Do the differences amount to adverse impact, and if so, which groups are affected?**
- (iv) **Could the policy/service/project or procedure directly or indirectly discriminate against any group of people?**

Clearly some policies are more likely to have equality implications than others. For example, developing a new procurement strategy for the Council is likely to have serious equality implications (and the Commission for Racial Equality has published guidance on those implications).

7. What sort of data can I use?

To begin, you may want to look at whether you have had any complaints of discrimination or unfair treatment from the public; whether any of the information you have from surveys or consultations suggest that differential rates of user satisfaction; or if staff have raised equalities issues about it. Also check all relevant groups have had sufficient opportunity to raise any issues/give feedback.

If there is evidence from an initial assessment of an adverse impact on equality, then the relevant service manager must go onto the next stage, which is to undertake a partial impact assessment.

8. One step further – a partial assessment

A partial assessment goes a step further and takes into account the risks and benefits of the policy. It is a **formal assessment**. It takes account of the views of stakeholders (these are all the interested parties) and “experts”. By experts we mean some managers only consult with “experts” where they need specialist advice or where there is a significant gap in knowledge.

Given the results of this assessment, you may need to go on to undertake a formal consultation (because you have identified an adverse impact), if this is the case, then you need to proceed to undertake a full assessment.

9. A full assessment

A full assessment builds on the picture you already have of the policy, and it may involve formal consultation with the people who are most likely to be affected. It will also include arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the policy and its impact at a later date.

For a full impact assessment, you must set out your own arrangements for consulting with people who are likely to be affected by your policy, and you should publish the results of these consultations.

10. What happens if I do find an adverse impact?

If your assessment does show that your policy is likely to have an adverse impact on some groups of people, you need to think of ways to deal with this. Before making a decision you should also check that by adopting an option that reduces the adverse impact on one group of people, you are not, creating an adverse impact on another group of people. If this however, is unavoidable, think whether you can justify this legally (advice in this situation can be sort from the Equalities Champions Group)

11. Reporting

You should use the attached form to assist you in conducting the impact assessments. The Council has to publish the results of every formal equality impact assessment (i.e. partial and full assessments) – (the Equality Champions Working Group will provide advice on appropriate medium for this). A copy of your form must be sent to your Equality Champion, who will ensure that this is collated corporately. A copy of that report will be held corporately, as failure to record formal assessments will put the Council at risk. There is no need for officers to report back on any initial assessment or screening. It is suggested, however, that you keep good records to demonstrate an audit trail for initial assessments.

Equalities Impact Assessment Form

How to use the form

Question 1

Give the name of the policy/function – e.g.:- “Car Parking Strategy”

Question 2

Provide a brief description of aims and objectives of policy/service. When completing the assessment, always make notes of any changes where a policy is being replaced or reviewed.

Question 3

List your customers (whether internal or external) and how you believe you know who they are.

Question 4

For example – has anyone written in or telephoned?

Is there any staff survey evidence or feedback from consultation to identify any concerns about the fairness of the policy or service?

Question 5

List all actions already undertaken to address Question 4 – e.g.: letters written etc.

Question 6

Look at Equality Groupings listed on the Form.

Are there any groups that are treated differently (either directly or indirectly)?

If so, state how and why.

Question 7

It is understood that there will be some differences in how different groups are treated, but you need to be clear that these are fair and evidenced. All reasons **must** be listed and supported, where possible. If you identify unfair practice, this must be listed and then managed through the **Departmental 3 Year Rolling Equality Action Plan** - see end of the Assessment Form. If you have ticked the “None of These” option in Q6, you will need to show the evidence for this decision.

Question 8

If you are aware of legitimate justification for any unfairness identified in Q7, then you must provide supporting information.

If all adverse impact has been clearly justified, please go directly to Q13.

Question 9

Who are your user groups/customers?

How did you gather their feedback on the policy service provision?

Question 10

Having gathered feedback, how did you use it to assess fairness?

Question 11

Having consulted your user groups about the policy or service, where and how will you report or publish the results?

This may be to the customer or the council. This question is designed to ensure that we communicate to our customers that we will positively act on the issues or information identified.

Question 12

It may be that you have identified areas of unfairness that can not be justified. Here you must list how you intend to eliminate or minimise this.

Question 13:

This is to be completed by Direct Services Departments only.

Question 14:

How do you intend to regularly monitor this policy or service for fairness?

ACTION PLAN:

Your findings to the above questions now need to be structured in your Action Plan. This must include timescales and it must identify the action that is requested and by whom. This action plan should thus ensure this policy or service is now fair.

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Equality Impact Assessment Completion Form

Please note that you must complete this form if you are undertaking a formal impact assessment. You may also wish to use this form for guidance to undertake an initial assessment or screening. Use this form for new and existing policies. Where a question is not applicable to your assessment, please indicate.

1. What is the name of the service/policy/procedure/project etc to be assessed?

2. Briefly describe the aim of the service/policy etc?

What needs or duties is it designed to meet?

3. Who are the Service users and how have you identified them?

4. Have you received any specific information identifying or suggesting this policy is unfair to any equality group?

	Yes	No
Race / Minority Ethnic Groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender (Male /Female)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender Re-assignment (Trans-sexual)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marital Status	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion/ Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Income group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural/Urban mix	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
None of these	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. How did you deal with the issues identified in Q.4?

Race / Minority Ethnic Groups

Disability

Gender (Male /Female)

Gender Re-assignment (Trans-sexual)

Marital Status

Sexual Orientation

Religion/ Belief

Age

Income group

Rural/Urban mix

None of these

6. Does this policy/service affect any of the equality Groups adversely?

	Yes	No
Race / Minority Ethnic Groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender (Male /Female)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender Re-assignment (Trans-sexual)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marital Status	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion/ Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Income group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural/Urban mix	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
None of these	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Please detail the information you have gathered to support your answer to Question 6.

Race/ Minority Ethnic Groups	
Disability	
Gender	
Gender Re-assignment	
Marital Status	
Sexual Orientation	
Religion or Belief	
Age	
Income Group	
Rural/Urban Mix	
None of these	

8. What are the legitimate justifications for any adverse impact?
(If all adverse impact has been justified, please go direct to Q13)

9. Who have you consulted and what methods have you used?

10. What have you done with the results i.e. how do you intend to use the information gathered as part of the consultation?

11. Have you published the results of that consultation, if so, where?

12. If the impact, identified in any of the above questions, cannot be justified, how do you intend to deal with it?

13. Are your Support Services adversely affecting your ability to provide a fair Service (for Front-Line Services only)

14. Provide separate evidence of how you intend to monitor in future

Action Plan Established (based on answers given):-

Action Required	By Whom	By When	Signed when completed	Priority	Outcome Of Action

Signed by the manager undertaking the assessment

Full name (in capitals please)

Position in the council

Dated

When you have completed this form, please retain a copy and give a copy to your Equalities Champion, so that they can report to the Head of Service and the Equalities Group.

Appendix E

Useful contacts and websites

Chapter One – Local Government Equality Standard

Government Equality Standard
IDeA (Improvement and Development Agency),
Layden House,
76-86 Turnmill Street
London EC1M 5LG

Switchboard: 020 7296 6600
Information: 020 7296 6880
www.idea.gov.uk

Local Government Association
Local Government House,
Smith Square,
London SW1P 3HZ

Tel: 020 7664 3000
Fax: 020 7664 3030
www.lga.gov.uk

The Bromsgrove District Equality and Diversity Forum

For details contact Claire Felton or Fiona Scott

Chapter Two – Race Equality

Commission for Racial Equality
3rd floor, Lancaster House
67 Newhall Street
Birmingham B3 1NA

Tel: 0121 710 3000
Fax: 0121 710 3001
www.cre.gov.uk

Chapter Three - Disability

The Disability Rights Commission

You can contact the DRC Helpline by phone, fax, by post, or by using one of our mail forms.

Telephone: 08457 622 633

Textphone: 08457 622 644

You can speak to an operator at any time between 8am and 8pm, Monday to Friday)

Fax: 08457 778 878

Post: DRC Helpline

FREEPOST MID02164

Stratford upon Avon, CV37 9BR

www.drc.org.uk

Office for Disability Issues

6th Floor, The Adelphi

1-11 John Adam Street

London WC2N 6HT

www.officefordisability.gov.uk

The Bromsgrove District Disability Access Group - for details contact
Claire Felton or Fiona Scott at Bromsgrove District Council

Chapter Four – Gender

The Equal Opportunities Commission

Arndale House, Arndale Centre

Manchester

M4 3EQ

Email: info@eoc.org.uk

Fax: 0161 838 8312

Tel: 0845 601 5901

www.eoc.org.uk

www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk

Chapter Five – Sexuality

Stonewall

Address:

46 Grosvenor Gardens

London SW1W 0EB

Telephone: 020 7881 9440

Fax: 020 7881 9444

Minicom: 020 7881 9996

www.stonewall.org.uk

www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk/civilpartnership/

www.ecu.ac.uk/guidance/sexualorientation/

www.dfes.gov.uk/sreandparents/

Chapter Six - Religion or Belief

For online day to day calendar of religious festivals see

www.diversiton.com

For statistical data on religions

Religion in Britain www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=293

Religion in local authorities in England and Wales

www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/census2001/KS_LA_E&W_part1.pdf

Religious affiliation broken down according to ethnicity

www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=460

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/equality-diversity/faith-and-religion/

Chapter Seven - Age

The Employers Forum on Age www.efa.org.uk

The Age and Employment Network www.taen.org.uk

Age Positive www.agepositive.gov.uk

Help the Aged www.helptheaged.org.uk

Age Concern www.ageconcern.org.uk

Appendix F

Glossary of Terms

BARN	Bromsgrove and Redditch Network
BDAG	Bromsgrove Disabled Access Group
BDC	Bromsgrove District Council
BDHT	Bromsgrove District Housing Trust
BV	Best Value
BVPI	Best Value Performance Indicator
CAB	Citizens Advice Bureau
CEHR	Commission for Equality and Human Rights
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CMT	Corporate Management Team
CRE	Commission for Racial Equality
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DES	Disability Equality Scheme
DRC	Disability Rights Commission
ECWG	Equality Champions Working Group
EOC	Equal Opportunities Commission
GES	Gender Equality Scheme
HROD	Human Resources and Organisational Development
IES	Inclusive Equalities Scheme
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PDR	Performance Development Review
RES	Race Equality Scheme
RAA	Race Relations Act
RRAA	Race Relations Amendment Act
SDA	Sex Discrimination Act
SMT	Senior Management Team

Appendix H

Acknowledgements

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE CABINET

2nd AUGUST 2006

LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Margaret Taylor
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Financial Services

1. Summary

- 1.1 To present the updated Local Code of Corporate Governance and Statement of Assurance for 2005/06.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Executive Cabinet is recommended to note and approve the updated Local Code of Corporate Governance and Statement of Assurance for 2005/06.

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 On the 18th May 2005, the Executive Cabinet approved the introduction of a Local Code of Corporate Governance. The document enables Bromsgrove District Council to evidence its commitment to the principles of good corporate governance, to operate in an open and accountable manner and demonstrate high standards of conduct and self governance. The three main principles of corporate governance are:
- Openness and inclusivity.
 - Integrity.
 - Accountability.
- 3.3 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 annually its internal control systems and make a statement on the adequacy of internal control.
- 3.4 As part of this review, the Authority produces a Statement of Assurance, which allows the Council to demonstrate its commitment to corporate governance. The statement summarises how the Council’s 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.

- 3.5 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.

- 4.2 During May 2006, a review was completed of the governance arrangements the Authority has embedded, updated or introduced during 2005/06. Following the review, a number of documents have been added to the Local Code of Corporate Governance:

- Customer First Charter.
- Audit, Scrutiny and Performance Management Boards.
- Housing Strategy Statement.
- Health and Safety Awareness Training.

An updated version of the Local Code of Corporate Governance has been attached in Appendix A.

5. **Statement of Assurance**

- 5.1 Following the governance review, the Statement of Assurance was prepared for 2005/06. The main areas included in the statement are the:

- Authority’s commitment to the principles of good governance.
- Current review mechanism for the Local Code of Corporate Governance.
- Areas that the Authority has shown improvement during 2005/06.
- Areas that require further attention during future financial years.

5.2 A copy of the draft 2005/06 Statement of Assurance has been attached in Appendix B.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 None outside existing budgets.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 The Council is required under Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 to “maintain an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and of its system of internal control in accordance with the proper internal audit practices”.

8. Corporate Objectives

8.1 To be an efficient and effective Council.

9. Risk Management

9.1 The Council is required under Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 to “maintain an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and of its system of internal control in accordance with the proper internal audit practices”. Not fulfilling this requirement would have a negative impact on the Authority.

10. Other Sub Headings

10.1

Procurement Issues	None
Personnel Implications	None
Governance / Performance Management Considerations	Enables the Authority to evidence good corporate governance.
Community Safety Considerations	None
Policy Considerations	None
Environmental Considerations	None
Equalities Implications	None

Background Papers

Executive Cabinet agenda and reports – 18th May 2005.

Contact officer

Neil Shovell - Audit Services Manager
E Mail: n.shovell@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Tel: (01527) 881667

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 and updated in 2006.

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:

K. Dicks

**Acting Chief Executive and Officer
Champion**

Signed:

R. Hollingworth

**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 Local Development Plan
Introduce arrangements for the independent review of the financial and operational reporting processes.	External Audit Letter External Inspectorate Reports Internal Audit Function Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules Audit / Scrutiny / Performance Management Boards

<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 Development Plan Section Business 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 Spotlight Meetings Customer First Charter</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 Development Plan Performance Plans Recovery Plan Housing Strategy Statement Homelessness Strategy Private Sector Housing Strategy</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 Recovery Plan Section Business Plans Customer First Charter Health & Safety Awareness Training
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
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 Inspectorate Reports Local Strategic Partnerships Local Development 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 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 / Service 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
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 Employment / 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 Letter Internal Audit Manual
Publish on a timely basis, within the annual report, an objective, balanced and understandable statement and assessment of the authority's risk management and internal control mechanisms and their effectiveness in practice.	Best Value Performance Plan Annual Accounting and Financial Statements and Financial Report

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. Introduce appropriate systems and processes to ensure that they are complied with.	Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy Articles of Constitution Employee Handbook Gifts and Hospitality Code IT Members Code 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. Introduce appropriate processes to ensure that they continue to operate in practice.	Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy Articles of Constitution Complaints Procedure Contracts Procedure Rules Gifts and Hospitality Code IT Members Code 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

Local Code of Corporate Governance

Statement of Assurance 2005-06

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

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

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

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

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

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

- Unqualified opinion for both the 2003/04 and 2004/05 accounts with the 2004/05 accounts being closed within the statutory timeframe;
- Approval of a Risk Management Strategy and preparation of strategic and department risk registers;
- Implementation of a staff appraisal process and complementary training programme;
- Approval of reviewed Articles of Constitution as part of the recovery plan;
- Introduction of the Customer First Charter;
- Enhanced IT infrastructure; and
- Development of a Central Procurement Unit.

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

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

- Update the Council's internet and intranet websites;
- Implement the Council's Communications Strategy;
- Integrate a complaints procedure into the Customer First Charter;
- Implement the Council's Performance Management Policy;
- Embed a risk management culture;
- Update the Council's Financial Regulations;
- Implement the CIPFA Financial Model in respect of the Budget and Policy Framework; and
- Adopt a revised Training Programme for Members.

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

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

Signed:

K. Dicks

**Acting Chief Executive and Officer
Champion**

Date: 19.6.06

Signed:

R. Hollingworth

**Leader of the Council and Member
Champion**

Date: 19.6.06

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE CABINET

2ND AUGUST 2006

REPORT ON INVESTORS IN PEOPLE ASSESSMENT AND THE STAFF SURVEY

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor C Spencer
Responsible Head of Service	Clare Armour

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The results of the staff survey conducted earlier this year and a summary of the Investors in People Assessment are attached for review by the Cabinet. The actions being taken to address concerns raised by the survey and the IIP assessment are provided in Section 3 of this report.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1
1. To note the contents of the staff survey report for 2006 – Appendix A
 2. To note the summary of the IIP assessment for 2006 - Appendix B
 3. To note the actions being taken to address the issues highlighted in both reports – Appendix C

3. BACKGROUND

Staff Survey

- 3.1 The Council undertook a staff survey during February 2006. This was done using a questionnaire mailed to 408 employees.
- 3.2 The response rate was 53%. Whilst this is not particularly high, it is a good response for an organisation which had just been through a restructure and which has not had a history of seeking staff views.
- 3.3 The highest response rate was for HR (100%) and the lowest was in Streetscene and Waste Management (35%)
- 3.4 One of the most notable aspects of the results is that some areas had consistent positive feedback e.g. E Government and Customer Services.
- 3.5 Seventy five percent of staff were satisfied with their job and two thirds agreed that their opinion counted in developing their job. Nearly all employees were satisfied with the working relationships they have with their colleagues and four out of five stated that their work gave them a strong feeling of achievement.
- 3.6 Feedback on communication issues was less positive with nearly 60% of staff stating that they did not feel informed about developments in the Council. Fifty seven percent of staff felt that their manager provided effective leadership. Less than half of employees agreed that they could explain the aims and objectives of the Council to someone outside the organisation.

- 3.7 Seventy one percent of staff stated that they were aware of training and development opportunities in the Council and 68% stated that they understood why they have undertaken a development activity in the last 12 months.
- 3.8 The results of the staff survey were discussed at CMT in March and it was agreed that Heads of Service should give feedback on the organisational response as well as the figures for their own service. A summary booklet was distributed to all staff including an opportunity for them to provide ideas on how to make things better. It was further agreed that a small action group should be set up to implement actions arising from this survey and the Investors in People assessment.

Investors in People Assessment

- 3.9 The Investors in People Standard is a business improvement tool designed to advance an organisation's performance through its people.

Developed in 1990 by a partnership of leading businesses and national organisations, the Standard helps organisations to improve performance and realise objectives through the management and development of their people. Since it was developed the Standard has been reviewed every three years to ensure that it remains relevant, accessible and attractive to all. The most recent review was completed in November 2004.
- 3.10 Bromsgrove District Council was first recognised as an Investor in People organisation on the 25th of March 1999. The review conducted in March 2002 revealed a number of areas that required attention. The follow up visit conducted in March 2003 revealed that 'significant progress' had been made to implement the agreed retaining recognition action plan and the Council continued to be a recognised Investor in People organisation.
- 3.11 The 2006 review was conducted on the 10th, 11th and 12th of March 2006. Full time and part time were selected for an interview and the sample was constructed to access, new staff and staff working different shift patterns and working out of various locations. It was not possible to speak to Trades Union representatives from each Trades Union, as UNISON does not currently have an elected representative. A total of people 51 were interviewed representing 12.5 % of establishment.
- 3.12 The Council were reported as meeting 1 out of the 10 standards fully although other standards were part of nearly met. A summary of the findings is attached at Appendix B.
- 3.13 The summary of the report is available on the intranet for staff.

Taking the Work Forward

- 3.14 The working group to take these issues forward has now been formed with membership from across the Council. It includes Councillor membership (Councillor Spencer) and is chaired by the Head of Human Resources/Organisational Development. The group has already put together the attached action plan which covers both the staff survey and IIP. This has been approved by the lead IIP assessor who has given positive feedback. The plan and will be put before the IIP assessment panel. If approved, this will give the Council two years to get full IIP accreditation. If the Council fails to do so within 2 years, it will lose its IIP accreditation altogether.

- 3.15 CMT have received copies of the full action plan (Appendix C) and a presentation. Regular reports to CMT will be made on progress and areas of work to be delivered.
- 3.16 The action plan is comprehensive, however a few key actions will deliver many outcomes in relation to the IIP standards. The main areas of work are:
- Management Development – managers need to be clear about what they are expected to do both in terms of performance managing their staff as well as ensuring they have the right skills and knowledge. The new management development strategy will include introducing better training, management “competencies” and setting out clear instructions to managers as to what is expected of them in the Council. People join organisations, but they will leave bad managers.
 - Communication – staff need to have a better understanding of what the Council is trying to achieve as well as their own service. They need to understand what different parts of the Council are there to do so that they can see how they fit in. Many of the required actions are already covered in the Communication Strategy for the Council. However this document states “what” needs to be done. The “how” it is done ie delivering the right messages in the right way, will again, be down to management competence.
 - Workforce Planning – this exercise, which is going on at the moment, will help the Council identify what its medium terms needs are for staff and what skills they require to deliver service objectives. This will help direct learning opportunities into the areas the Council needs.
 - Review of PDR process – the current forms and process are not particularly helpful for managers or staff and will be reviewed.
- 3.16 A further staff survey will take place early next year prior to a reassessment for Investors in People. Originally the next IIP assessment was to take place in April 07, however given the Council’s schedule for CPA and coming out of recovery, a delay to September 07 may be better.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications.

6. Corporate Objectives

- 6.1 This report relates to the “Be and Efficient and Effective Council” objective.

7. Risk Management

- 7.1 The risks of not acting to the results of the staff survey will be a loss of confidence by staff which will affect motivation and performance. Failure to deliver on the IIP actions will lead to the Council losing IIP accreditation.

Background Papers

Appendix A Staff Survey Report
Appendix B Summary of IIP Report
Appendix C Action Plan

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Appendix A

Bromsgrove District Council Employee Survey 2006

**Final Report
20 March 2006**

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1 INTRODUCTION

Bromsgrove District Council commissioned Snap SurveyShop to carry out the data processing and reporting of their 2006 staff survey. The purpose of the survey was to measure employee satisfaction with various aspects of their daily lives at work. It should be noted that the survey was undertaken following a major organisational restructure, which may have had a negative affect on the results.

1.1 Methodology

The approach taken was postal, with a questionnaire being mailed to 408 employees using the Council's internal post. Fieldwork took place over a month, during February 2006, and an overall response rate of 53% was achieved (215 completed questionnaires). This response rate is lower than would be expected for a staff survey, however the recent organisational restructure may have impacted upon this as well as results. A copy of the questionnaire used is appended. The principal contacts for the survey were Helen Parkinson at Bromsgrove District Council and Brigitta Horup at Snap Surveys.

1.2 Analysis of results

Figures in this report are generally calculated as a proportion of respondents who answered each question – that is, excluding No Reply.

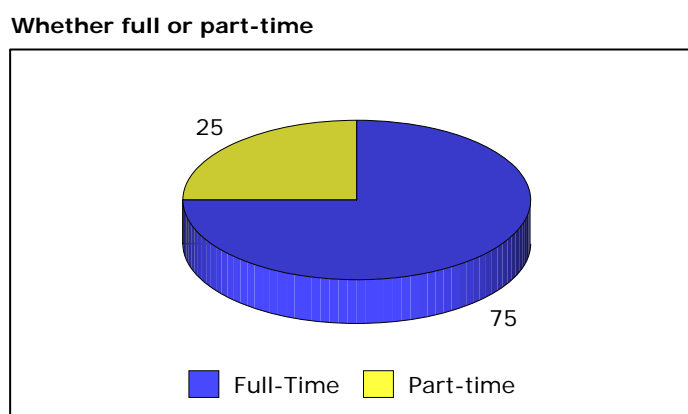
2 RESEARCH FINDINGS

2.1 Profile of Respondents

The following table shows the distribution of respondents across service area and directorate, which ranged from 4 respondents for Heads of Service to 44 in Streetscene and Waste Management Services. The response rate varied quite considerably by service area, from 355 for Streetscene and Waste Management Services to 100% for Human Resources and Organisational Development Services.

Service Area and Directorate	No. responded	Total No. in SA/D	%
Head of Service	4	7	57
Chief Executives Unit	8	16	50
Planning and Environment Services	39	65	60
Culture and Community Services	30	74	41
Legal and Democratic Services	18	36	50
Financial Services	28	48	58
E-Government and Customer Services	22	27	81
Human Resources and Organisational Development Services	10	10	100
Streetscene and Waste Management Services	44	126	35
Services Directorate	113	265	43
Resources Directorate	78	121	64

75% of respondents worked full-time and the remaining 25% part-time.

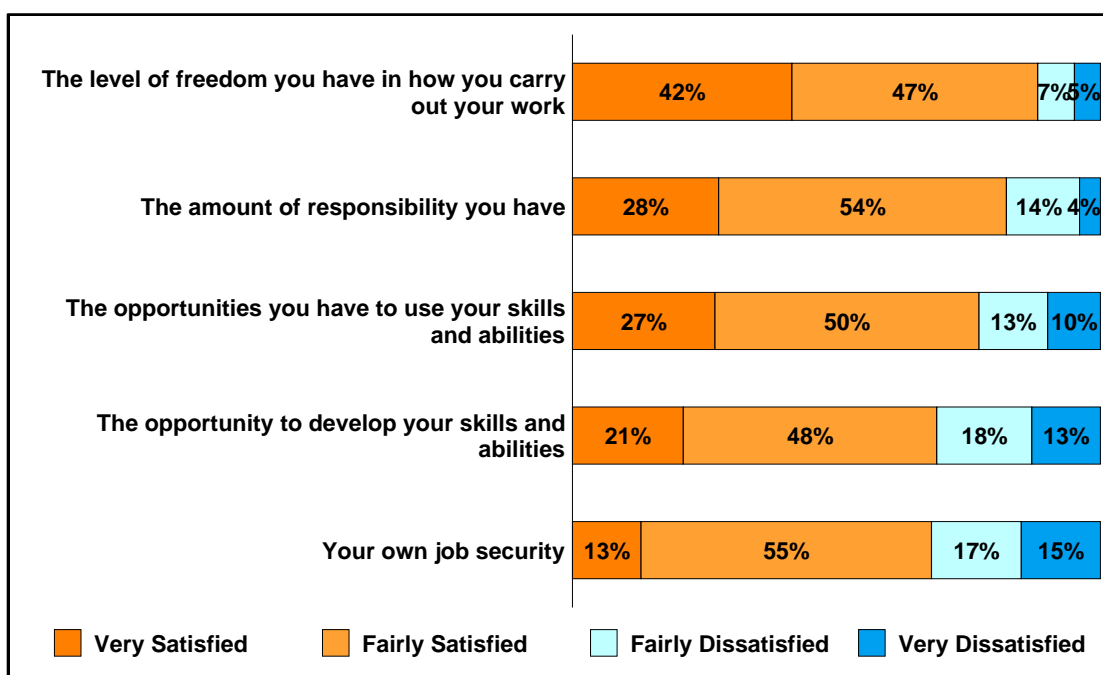


Base: All respondents (204)

2.2 Job Satisfaction

Employees were given a list of five statements in relation to their overall job satisfaction and were asked how satisfied they were with each. Satisfaction with “The level of freedom you have in how you carry out your work” and “The amount of responsibility you have” was high (88% and 83% respectively), and over three-quarters of respondents (77%) were also satisfied with “The opportunities you have to use your skills and abilities”. One in three employees were dissatisfied with “Your own job security” (32%) and “The opportunity to develop your skills and abilities” (31%) however.

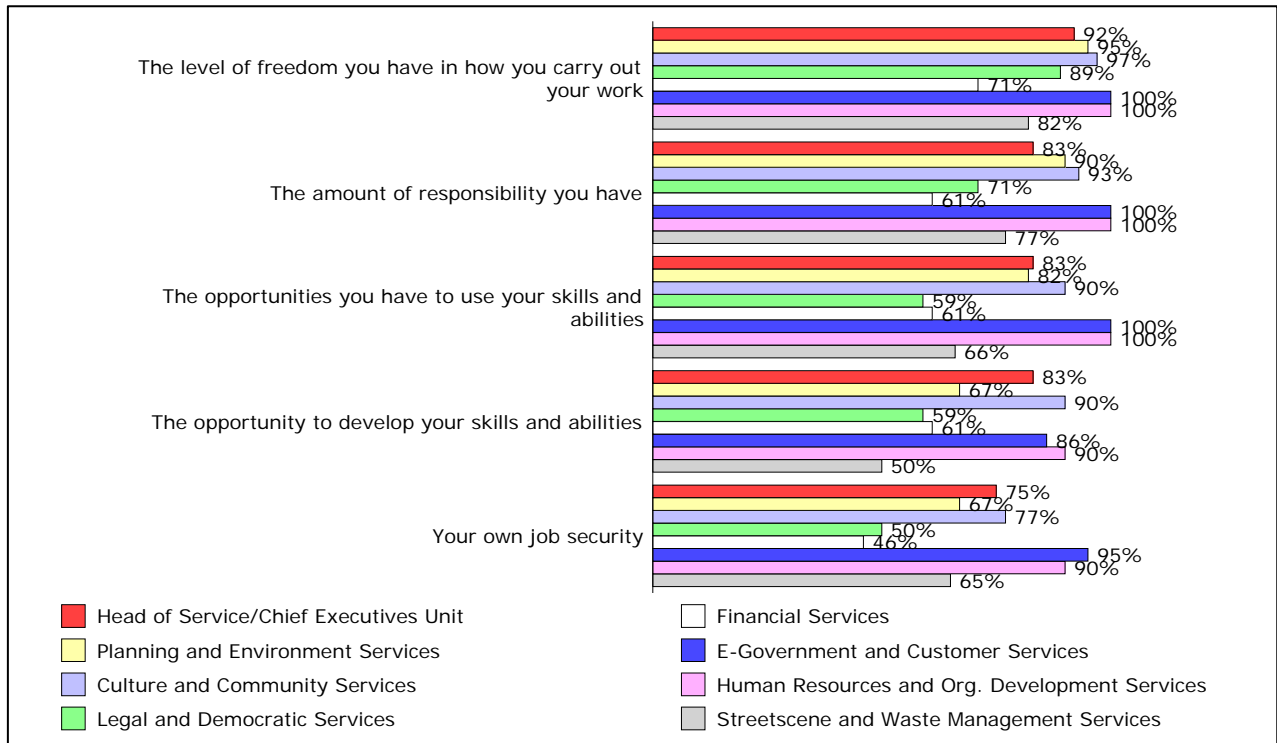
Level of satisfaction with statements on Job Satisfaction



Base: All respondents (211-215)

There were differences in levels of satisfaction by service area. Generally, employees within E-Government and Customer Services (86% to 100% satisfaction across the five measures) and Human Resources and Organisational Development Services (90% to 100% satisfaction) were most satisfied. Those in Legal and Democratic Services (50% to 89% satisfaction), Financial Services (46% to 71% satisfaction) and Streetscene and Waste Management Services (50% to 82% satisfaction) were less satisfied.

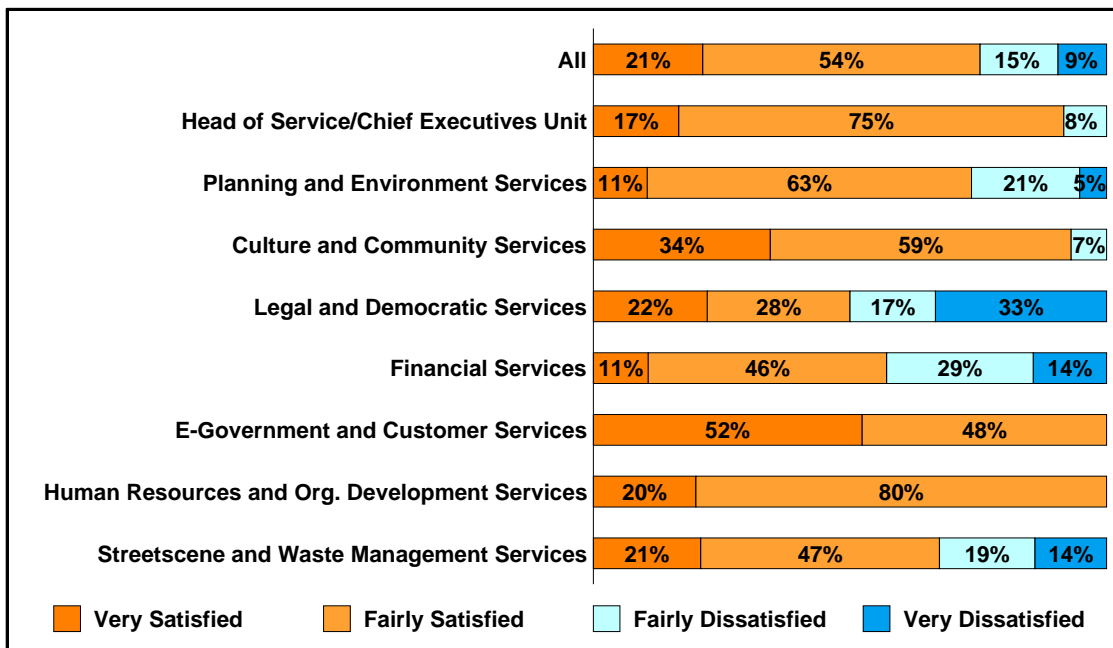
Job satisfaction - % satisfied



Base: All respondents (211-215)

Respondents were also asked how satisfied they were with their job. 75% were satisfied, rising to all employees in E-Government and Customer Services and Human Resources and Organisational Development Services. Satisfaction was lower in Legal and Democratic Services (50%), Financial Services (57%) and Streetscene and Waste Management Services (67%).

Whether satisfied with present job

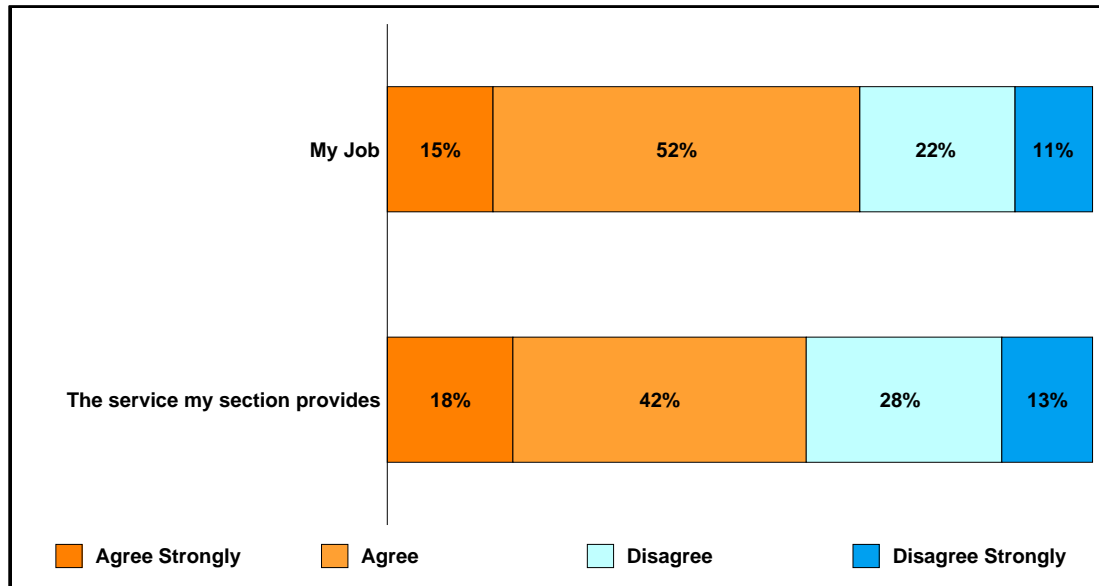


Base: All respondents (211)

2.3 Communication

Two-thirds of employees agreed that their opinion counts in developing their job (67%) and 59% felt it counted in developing the service their section provides.

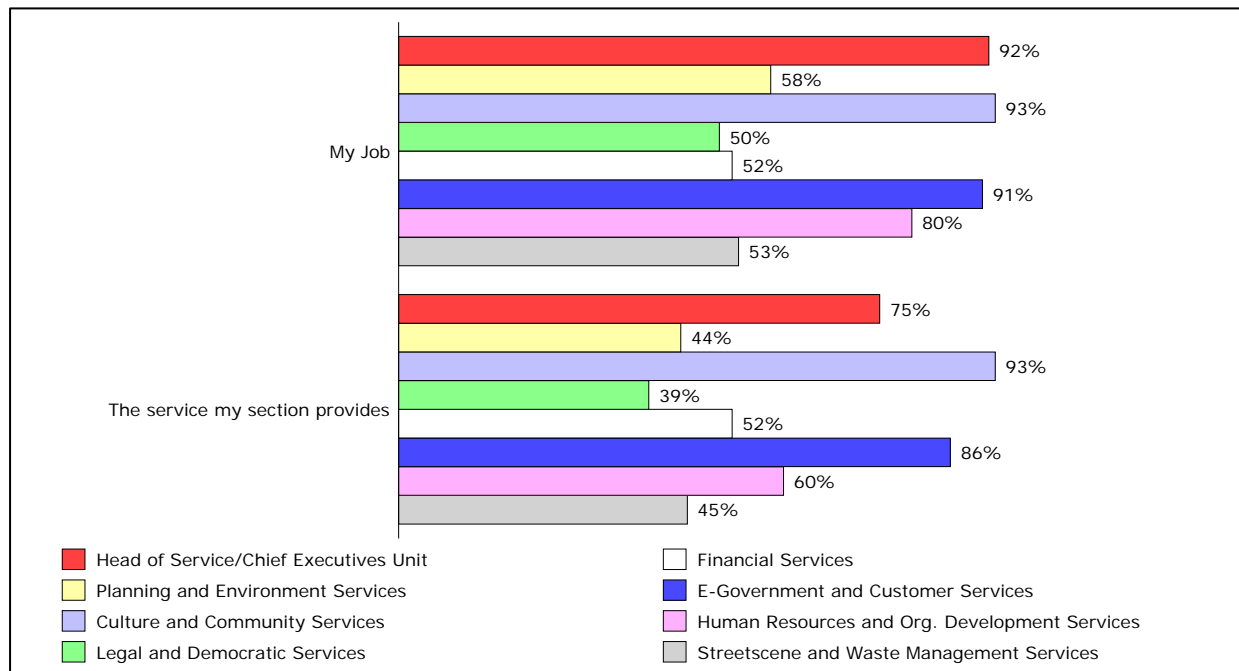
Whether opinion counts



Base: All respondents (211-212)

There were differences by service area, with Planning and Environment Services (58% and 44%), Legal and Democratic Services (50% and 39%), Financial Services (52% for both measures) and Streetscene and Waste Management Services (53% and 45%) less likely to agree that their opinion counts in developing their job and the service their section provides. This compares to approximately nine in ten employees in Culture and Community Services (93% for both) and E-Government and Customer Services (91% and 86%).

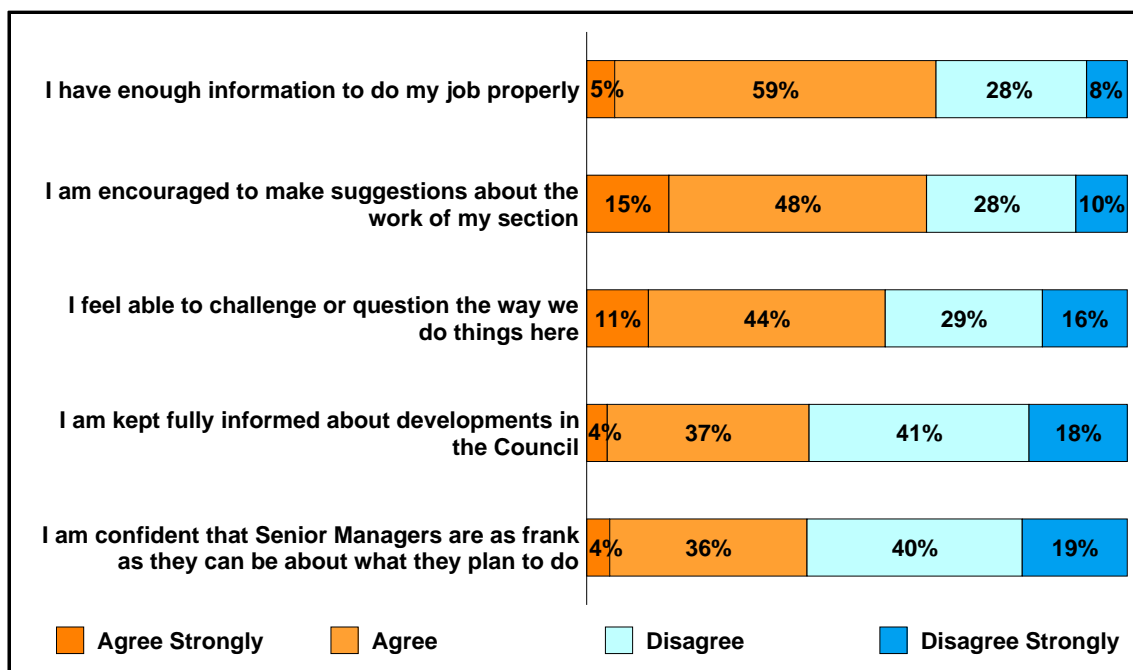
Whether opinion counts - % agreement



Base: All respondents (211-212)

Respondents were then given a list of five statements about communication and were asked to rate how strongly they agree with each. Dissatisfaction was evident across all five measures, ranging from 35% to 59% disagreement. This was particularly the case for “I am confident that Senior Managers are as frank as they can be about what they plan to do” (59% disagreement), “I am kept fully informed about developments in the Council” (59% disagreement) and “I feel able to challenge or question the way we do things here” (55% disagreement).

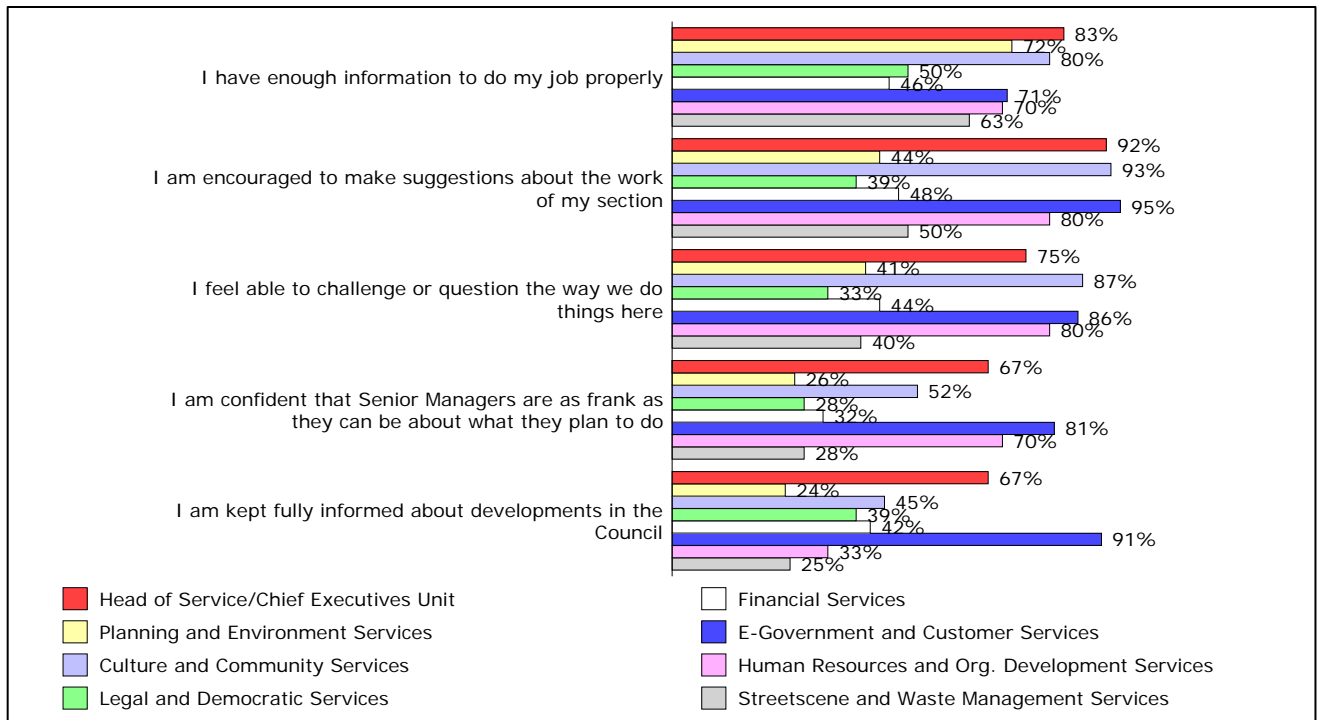
Level of agreement with statements on Communication



Base: All respondents (209-212)

Again there were differences in satisfaction by service area. Head of Services/Chief Executives Unit and E-Government and Customer Services had consistently higher ratings for communication. The other service areas received lower ratings, in particular Streetscene and Waste Management Services (25% to 63% agreement), Financial Services (32% to 48% agreement), Legal and Democratic Services (28% to 50% agreement) and Planning and Environment Services (24% to 72% agreement).

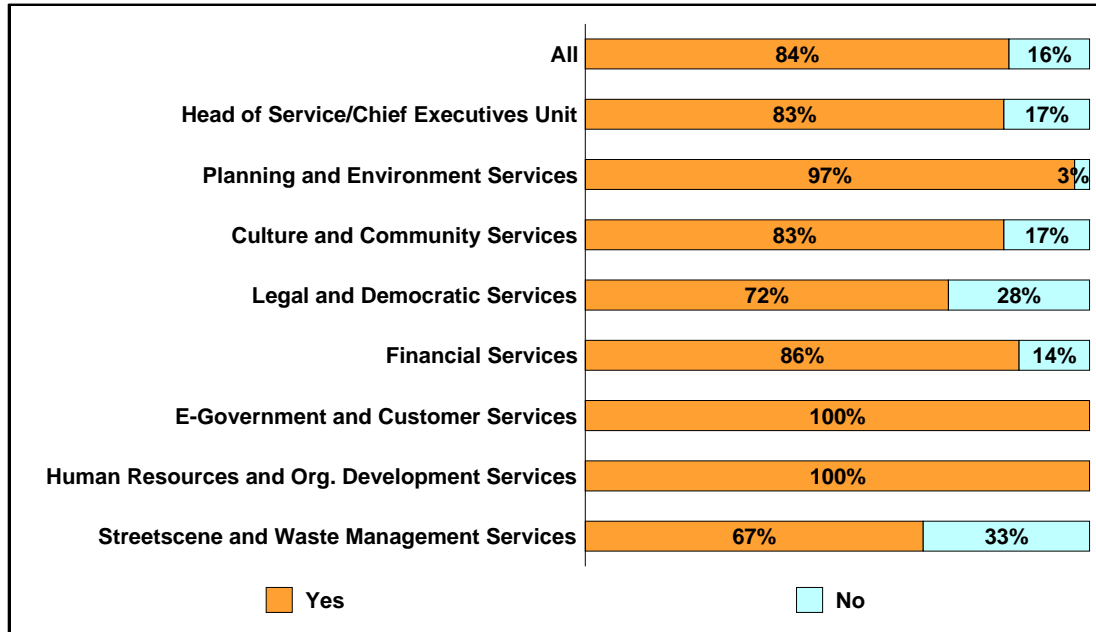
Communication - % agreement



Base: All respondents (209-212)

Turning to the core brief issued by CMT, 84% of employees said they receive it from their manager. This ranged from 67% of employees in Streetscene and Waste Management Services to all employees in Human Resources and Organisational Development Services and E-Government and Customer Services.

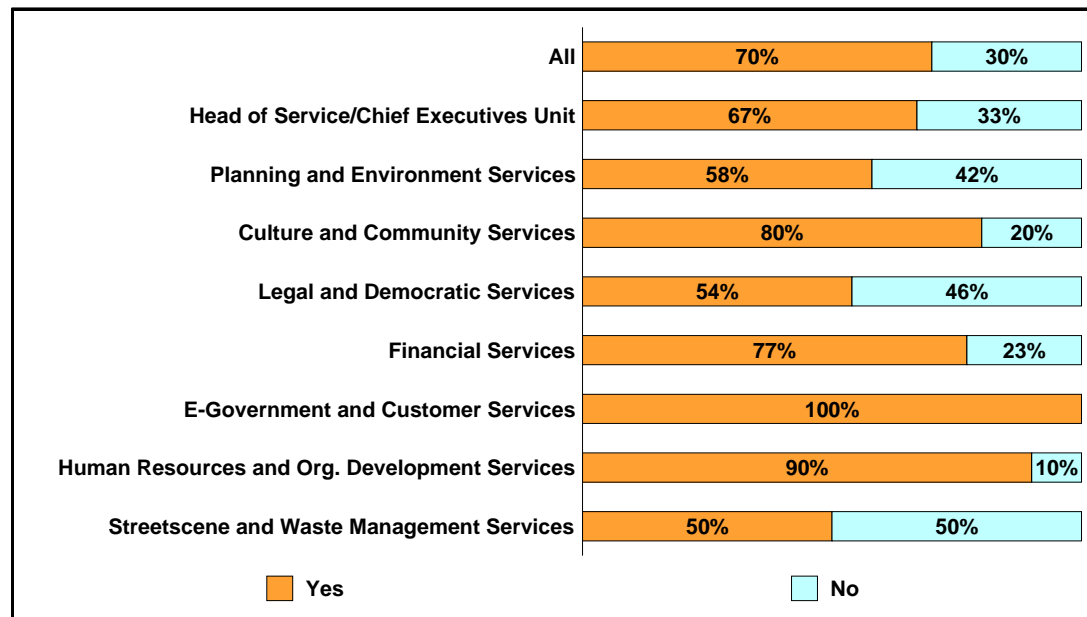
Whether receive the core brief issued by CMT



Base: All respondents (210)

Respondents who said they receive the core brief were asked if they find it useful and informative. 70% stated that they do, ranging from half of employees in Streetscene and Waste Management Services to all those in E-Government and Customer Services.

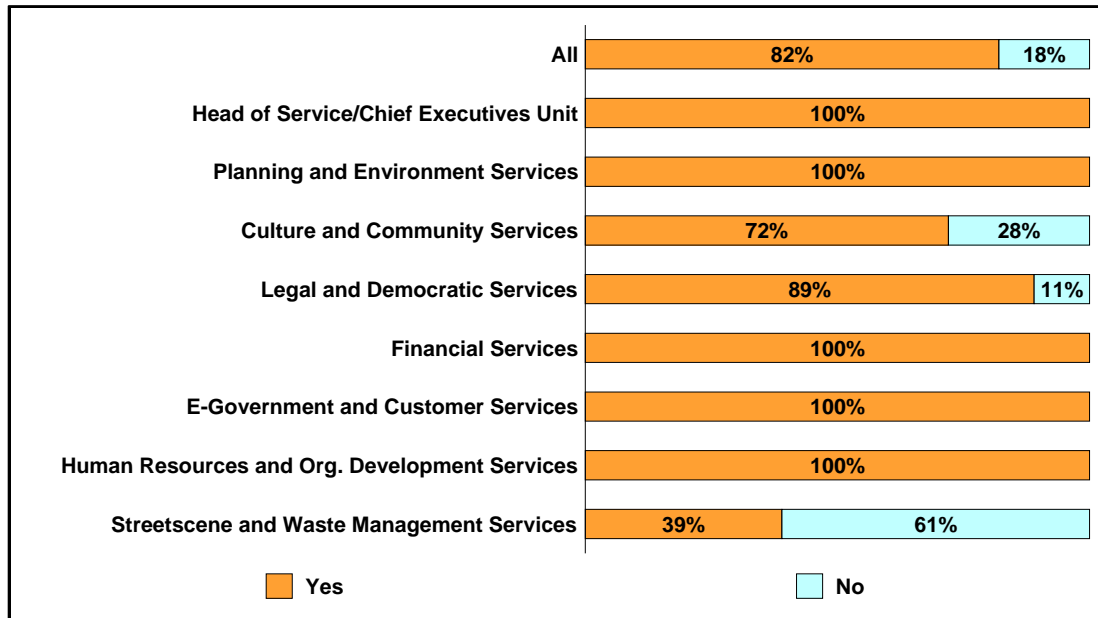
Whether core brief useful and informative



Base: Respondents who receive the core brief (171)

Respondents were also asked if they receive the Chief Executive Bulletin. 82% overall said they do, although this dropped considerably among Streetscene and Waste Management Services employees (39%).

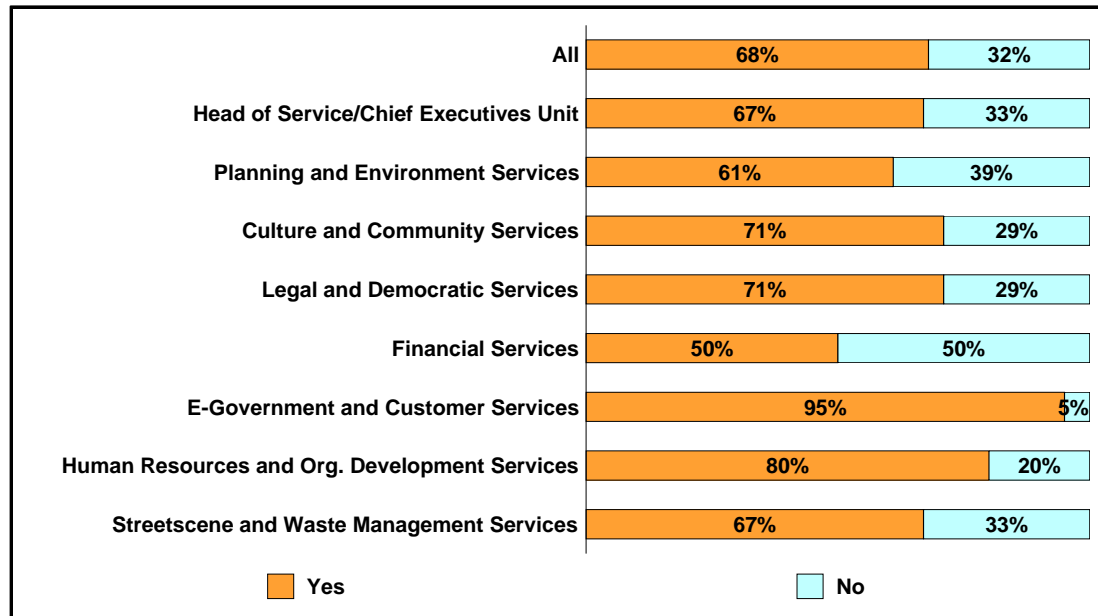
Whether receive the Chief Executive Bulletin



Base: All respondents (205)

68% of respondents who receive the Chief Executive Bulletin said they find it useful and informative. This ranged from half of those in Financial Services to 95% of those in E-Government and Customer Services.

Whether Chief Executive Bulletin useful and informative

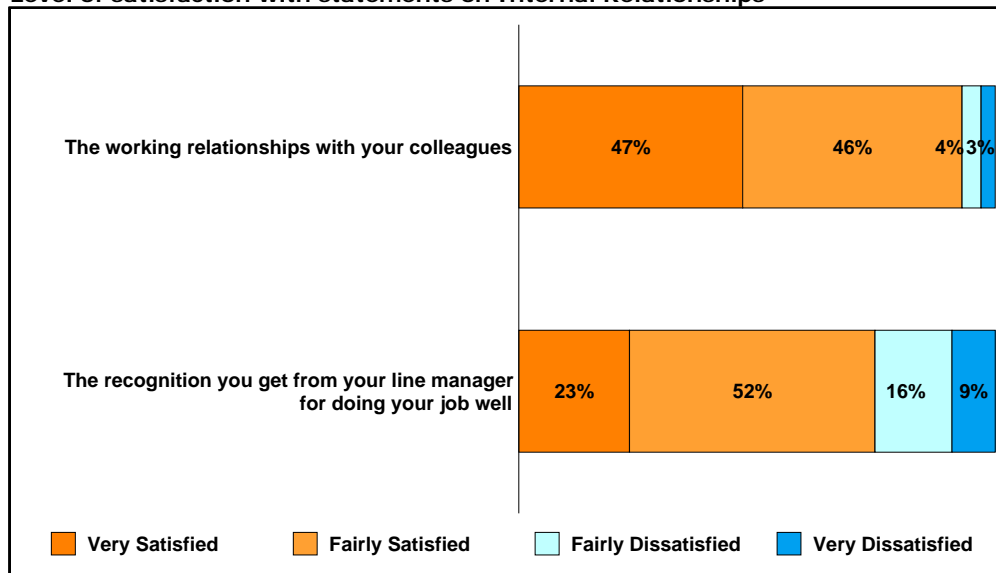


Base: Respondents who receive the Chief Executive Bulletin (163)

2.4 Internal Relationships

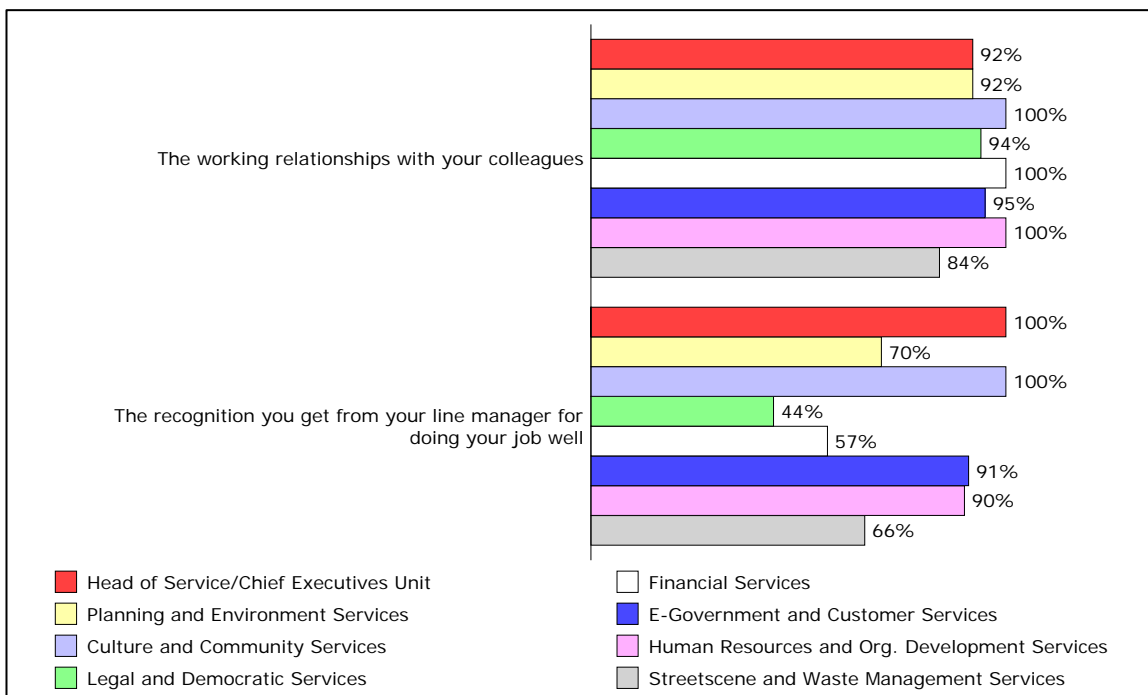
Nearly all employees were satisfied with the working relationships they have with their colleagues (93%) and satisfaction was high across all service areas on this measure (84% to 100%). Almost three-quarters were satisfied with the recognition they get from their line manager (74%), however this dropped to 44% for Legal and Democratic Services and 57% for Financial Services.

Level of satisfaction with statements on Internal Relationships



Base: All respondents (211-213)

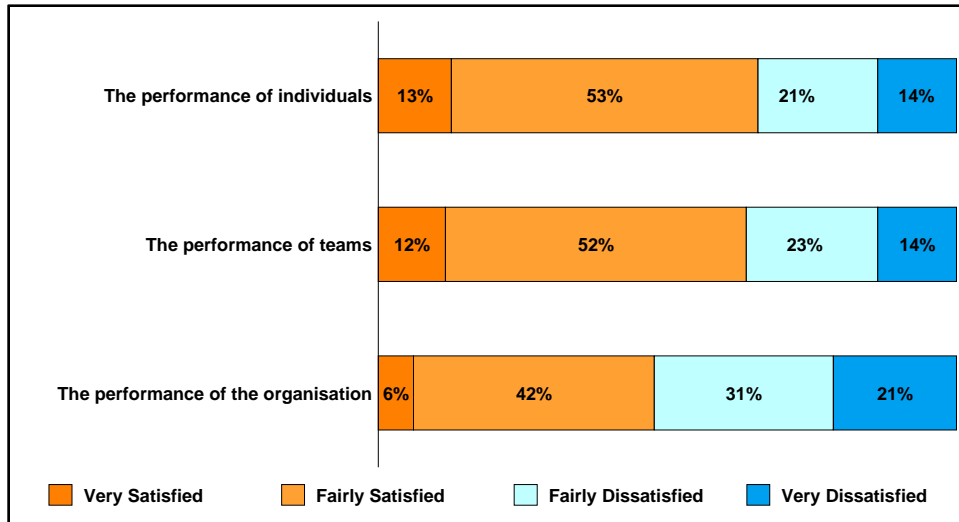
Internal Relationships - % satisfied



Base: All respondents (211-213)

Respondents were also asked how satisfied they were with their level of involvement in decision making that affects the performance of individuals, teams and organisation. Two-thirds were satisfied with their level of involvement with the performance of individuals (66%) and teams (64%), and under half were satisfied with their level of involvement with the performance of the organisation (48%).

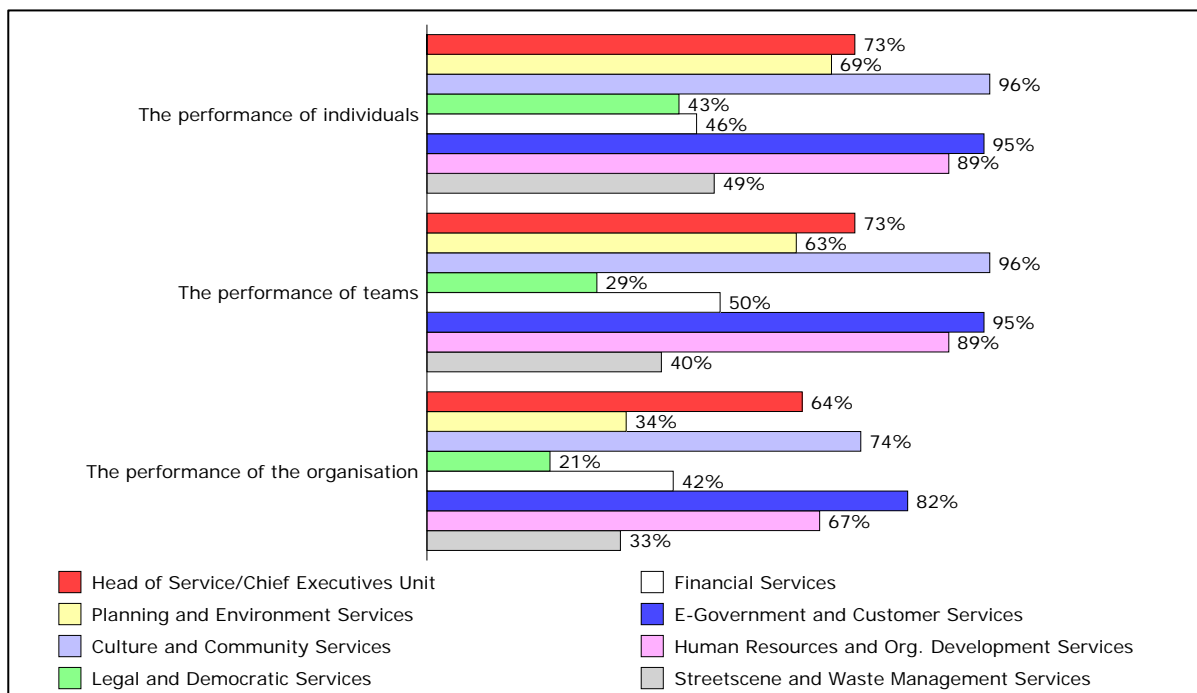
Satisfaction with level of involvement in decision making



Base: All respondents (198-211)

Satisfaction on these measures was noticeably lower for Legal and Democratic Services (21% to 43% satisfied), Financial Services (42% to 50%) and Streetscene and Waste Management Services (33% to 49%). In contrast, results were very positive for Culture and Community Services (74% to 96%) and E-Government and Customer Services (82% to 95%).

Satisfaction with level of involvement in decision making - % satisfied

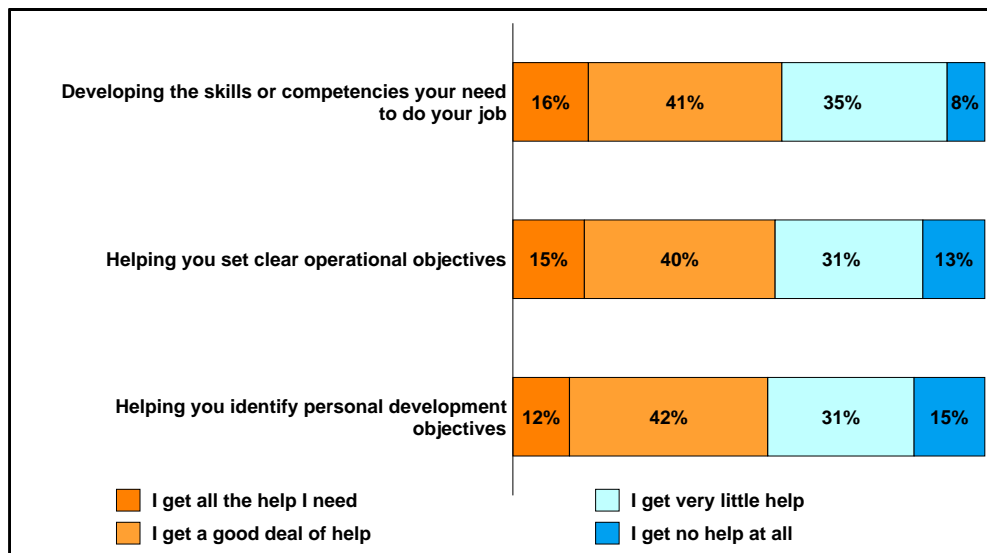


Base: All respondents (198-211)

2.5 Line Management Support

Respondents were asked to rate the level of help they receive from their line manager or supervisor on three separate measures. 54% stated that they either get all the help they need or get a good deal of help with “Helping you identify personal development objectives”. 56% felt they got help with “Helping you set clear operational objectives” and 57% with “Developing the skills or competencies you need to do your job”.

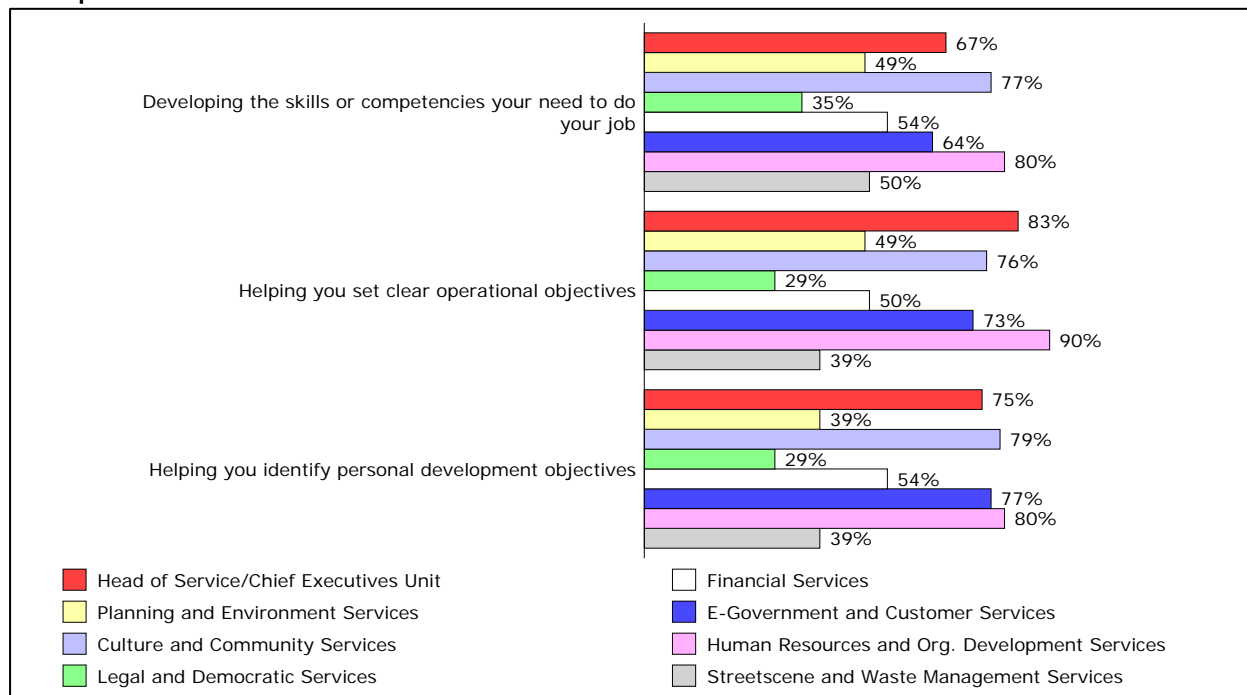
Amount of help given by line manager/supervisor



Base: All respondents (209-212)

The usual pattern among service areas emerged, with lower ratings being given by Legal and Democratic Services employees (29% to 35% said “I get all the help I need” or “I get a good deal of help”), Planning and Environment Services (39% to 49%) and Streetscene and Waste Management Services (39% to 50%). Human Resources and Organisational Development Services achieved the highest ratings on all three measures (80% to 90%).

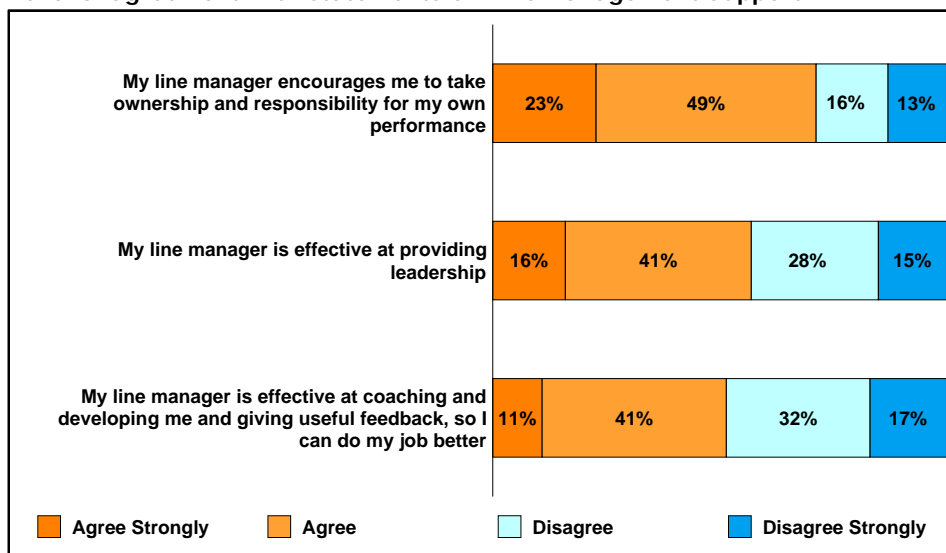
Amount of help given by line manager/supervisor - % "I get all the help I need" or "I get a good deal of help"



Base: All respondents (209-212)

Respondents were also asked to rate how far they agree with three statements relating to line management support. Seven in ten employees (71%) agreed "My line manager encourages me to take ownership and responsibility for my own performance", but agreement fell for the other two measures. 57% agreed "My line manager is effective at providing leadership" and just over half agreed "My line manager is effective at coaching and developing me and giving useful feedback, so I can do my job better".

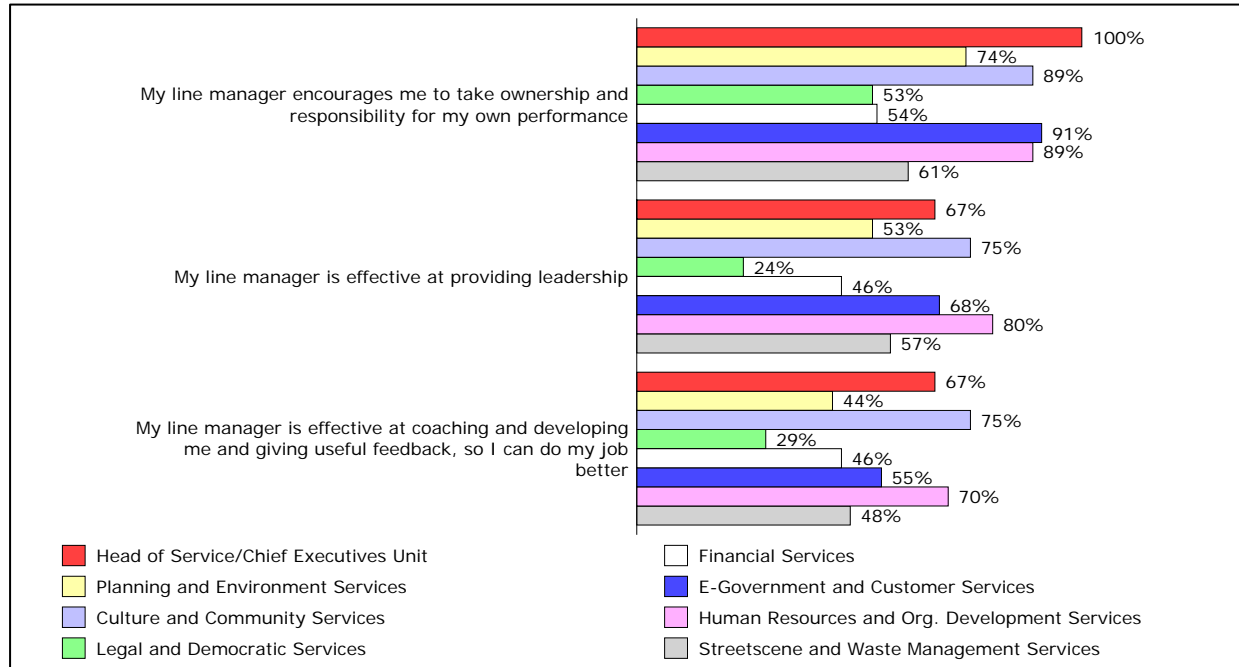
Level of agreement with statements on Line Management Support



Base: All respondents (206-208)

Ratings were particularly low for Legal and Democratic Services (24% to 53% agreement), in contrast to higher ratings achieved across all three measures for Culture and Community Services (75% to 89% agreement) and Human Resources and Organisational Development Services (70% to 89% agreement).

Line Management Support - % agreement



Base: All respondents (206-208)

2.6 Achievement

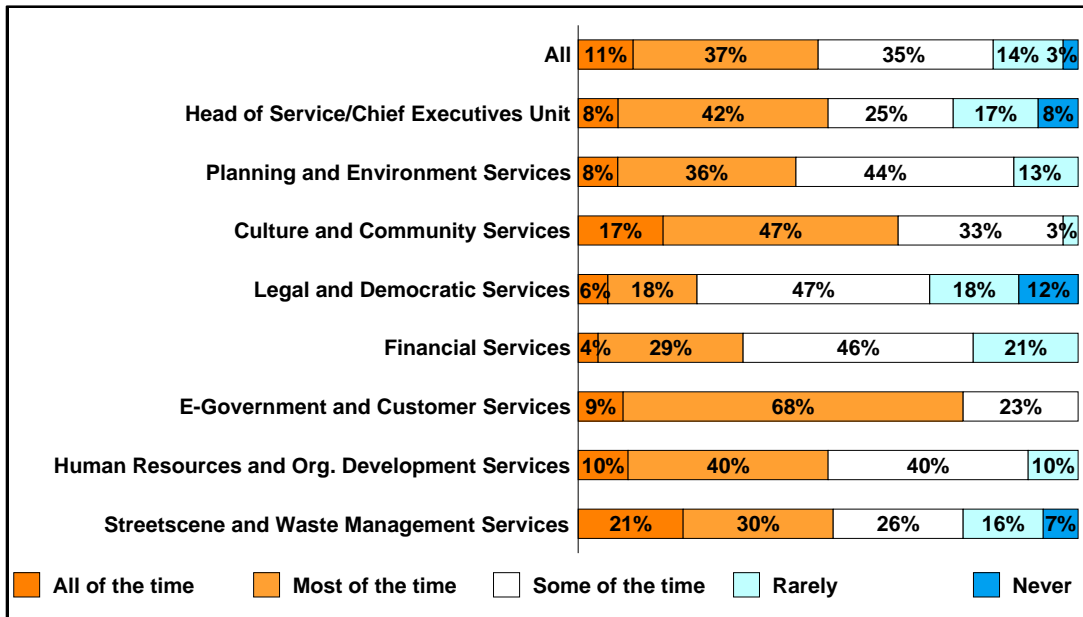
One in three staff (34%) agreed "The Council achieves an effective balance between meeting its targets and providing a good quality service".

Ratings were higher among some service areas, most notably Culture and Community Services (36% to 46% agreement) and Human Resources and Organisational Development Services (20% to 44% agreement).

Four in five employees (80%) rated the performance of their section in meeting its operational objectives in the last 12 months as either "Very good" or "Good". This rose to all employees in E-Government and Customer Services.

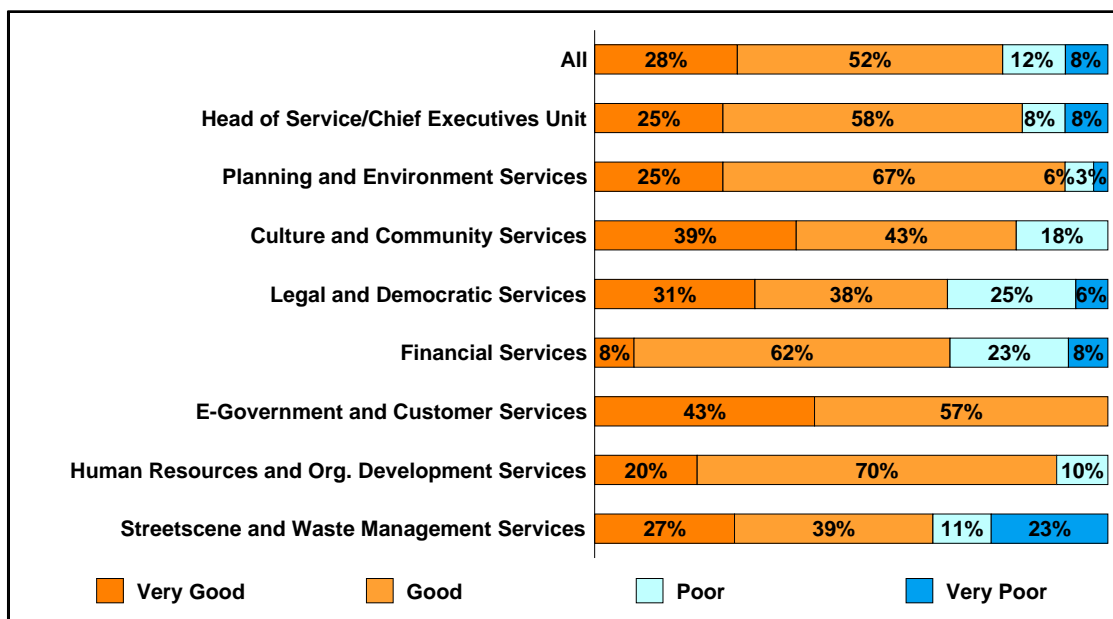
Over four in five employees (83%) stated their work gives them a strong feeling of achievement at least some of the time and almost half (48%) stated it does either "Most of the time" or "All of the time". This fell to 24% within Legal and Democratic Services and to 32% in Financial Services (either "Most of the time" or "All of the time").

"My work gives me a strong feeling of achievement"



Base: All respondents (213)

Rating of performance of section in meeting operational objectives in last 12 months



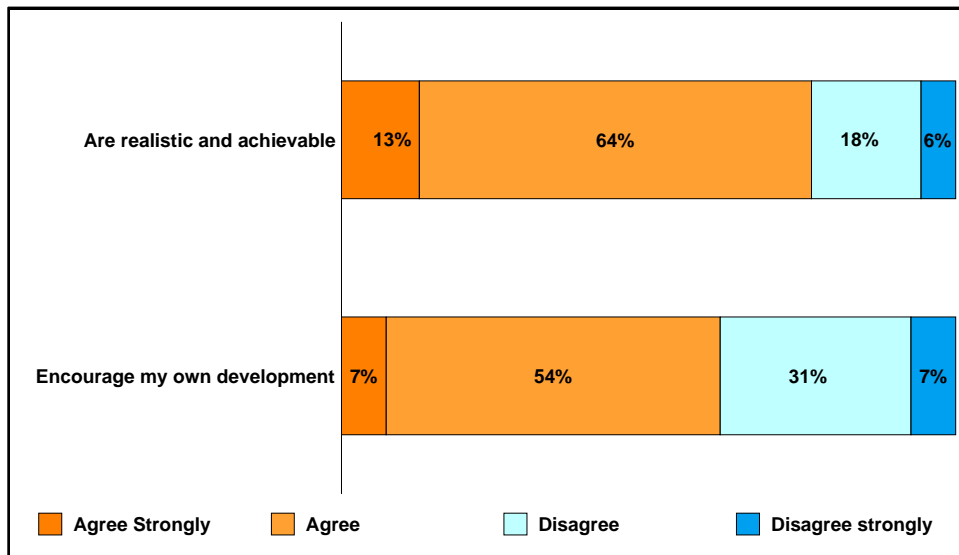
Base: All respondents (205)

45% of employees said that the staffing level in their section/division was usually sufficient to make them feel a satisfactory service was provided at least most of

the time. A third (33%) said that this was either rarely or never the case however, rising to 51% in Planning and Environment Services and 48% in Financial Services.

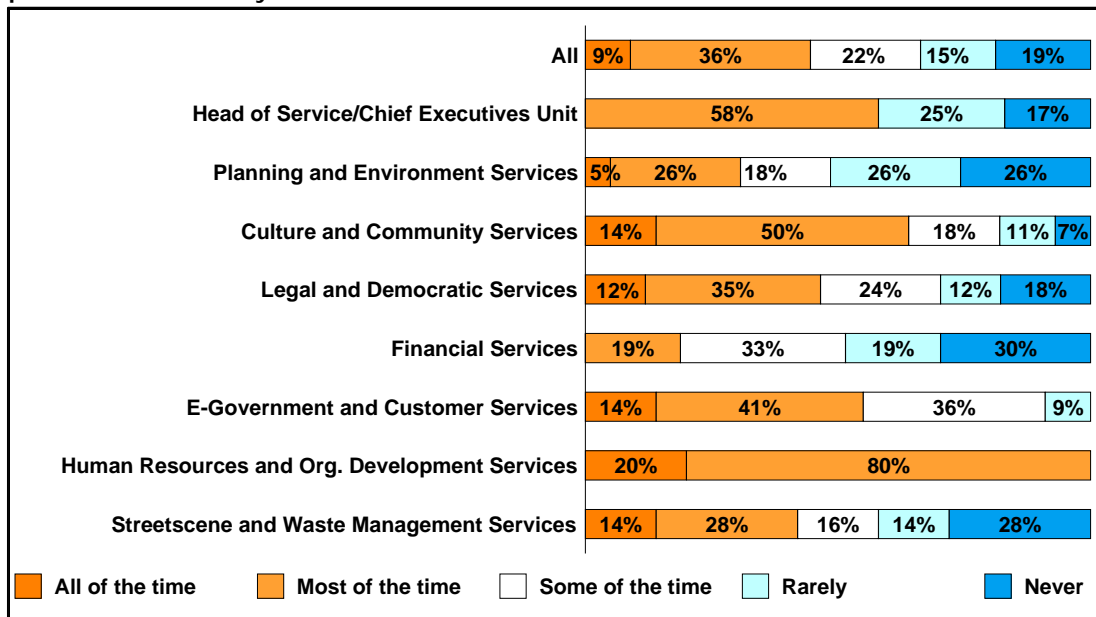
Turning to targets and deadlines set for their work, 77% of employees agreed they were realistic and achievable, and 62% agreed they encourage their own development.

Targets and deadlines set



Base: All respondents (206-213)

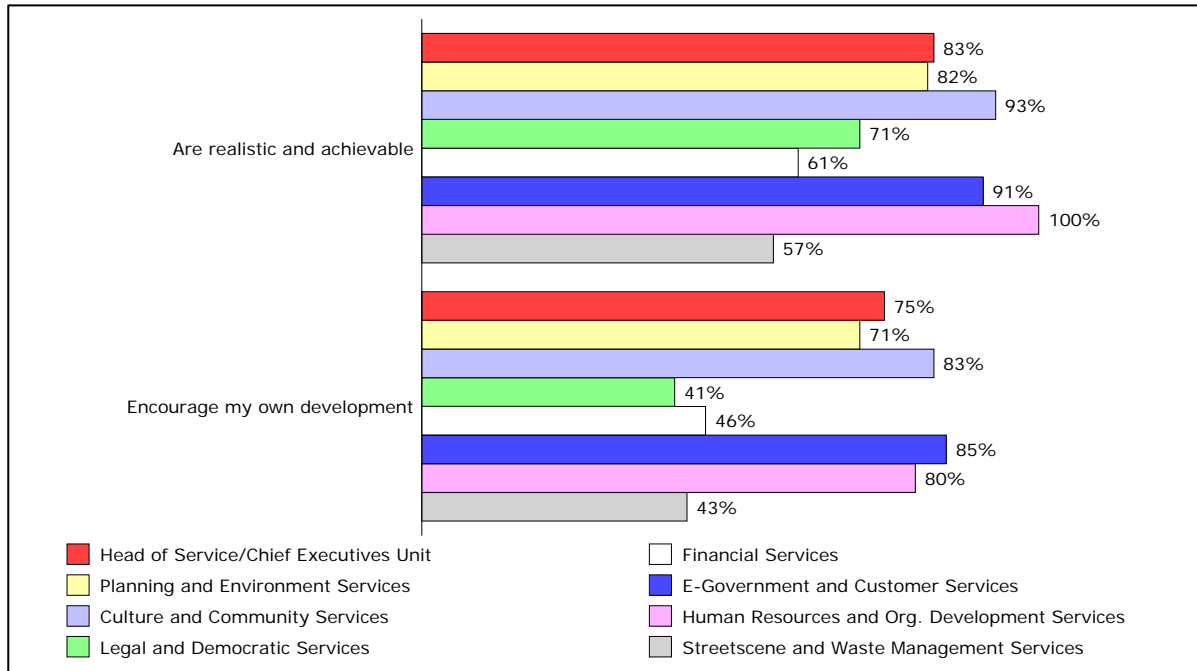
“The staffing level in my section or division is usually sufficient to make me feel we provide a satisfactory service”



Base: All respondents (209)

Results were most positive for Culture and Community Services (83% to 93% agreement), E-Government and Customer Services (85% to 91% agreement) and Human Resources and Organisational Development Services (80% to 100% agreement). Lower ratings were given for Streetscene and Waste Management Services (43% to 57% agreement), Legal and Democratic Services (41% to 71%) and Financial Services (46% to 61%).

Targets and deadlines set - % agreement



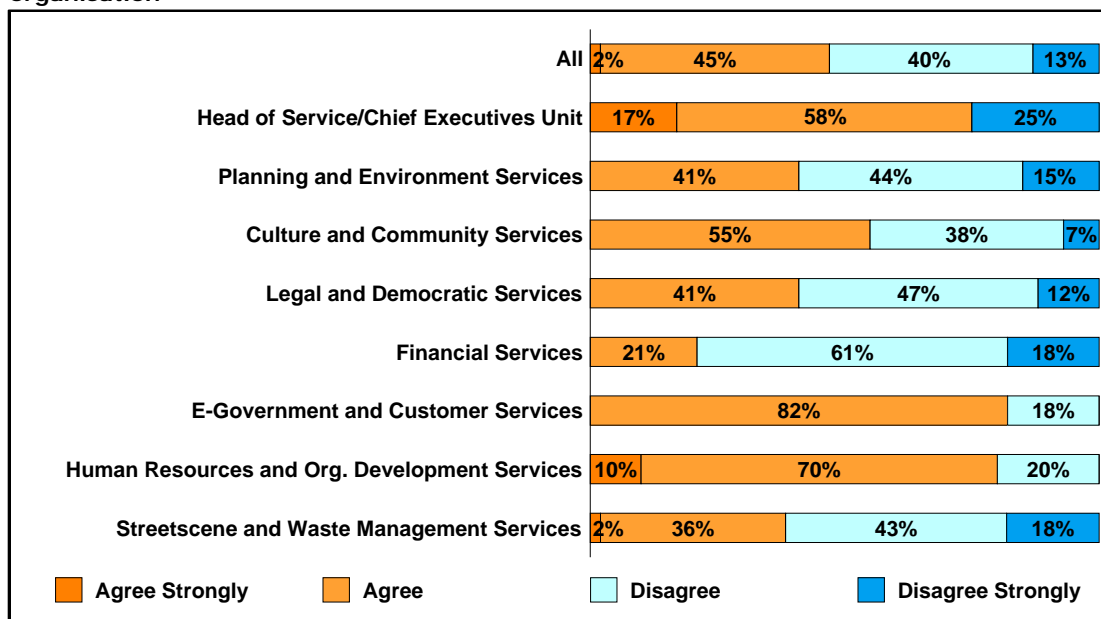
Base: All respondents (206-213)

2.7 The Organisation

30% of employees rated the Council above average as an organisation to work for. This rose to 48% in Culture and Community Services and 43% in E-Government and Customer Services, but fell to 9% among Head of Service/Chief Executives Unit.

Less than half of employees (47%) agreed they could explain the aims and objectives of the Council to someone outside the organisation, rising to 82% in E-Government and Customer Services, 80% in Human Resources and Organisational Development Services and 75% in Head of Service/Chief Executives Unit. Lowest awareness of the Council's aims and objectives was in Financial Services (21%).

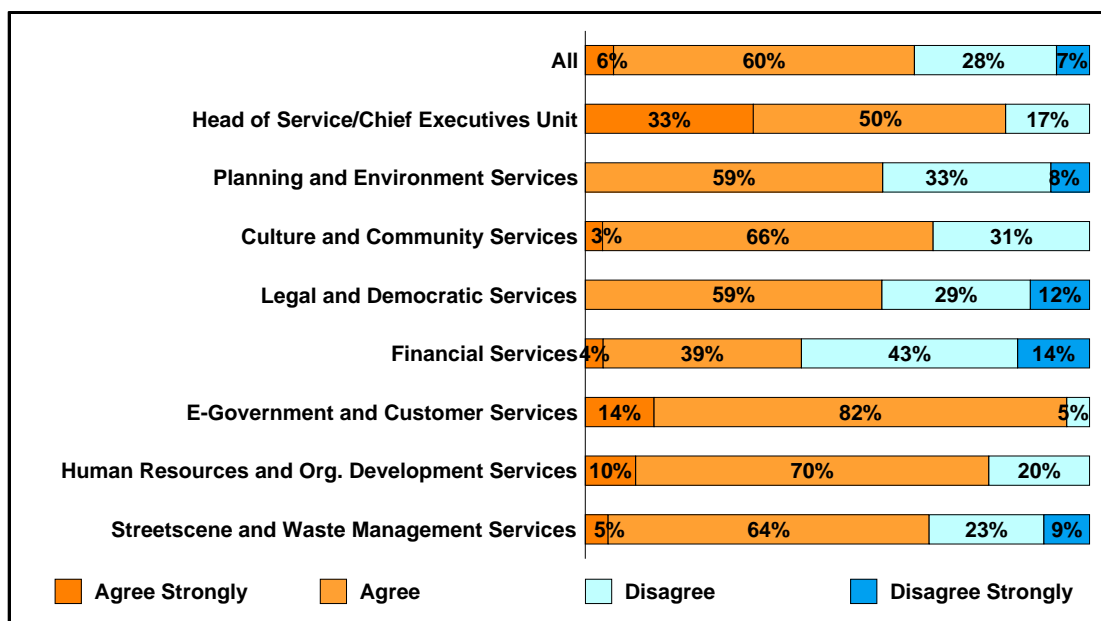
"I could explain the aims and objectives of the Council to someone outside the organisation"



Base: All respondents (212)

Almost two-thirds of employees (65%) agreed that they were clear about how their job relates to the aims and objectives of the Council, with the highest agreement among E-Government and Customer Services employees (95%) and the lowest among Financial Services employees (43%).

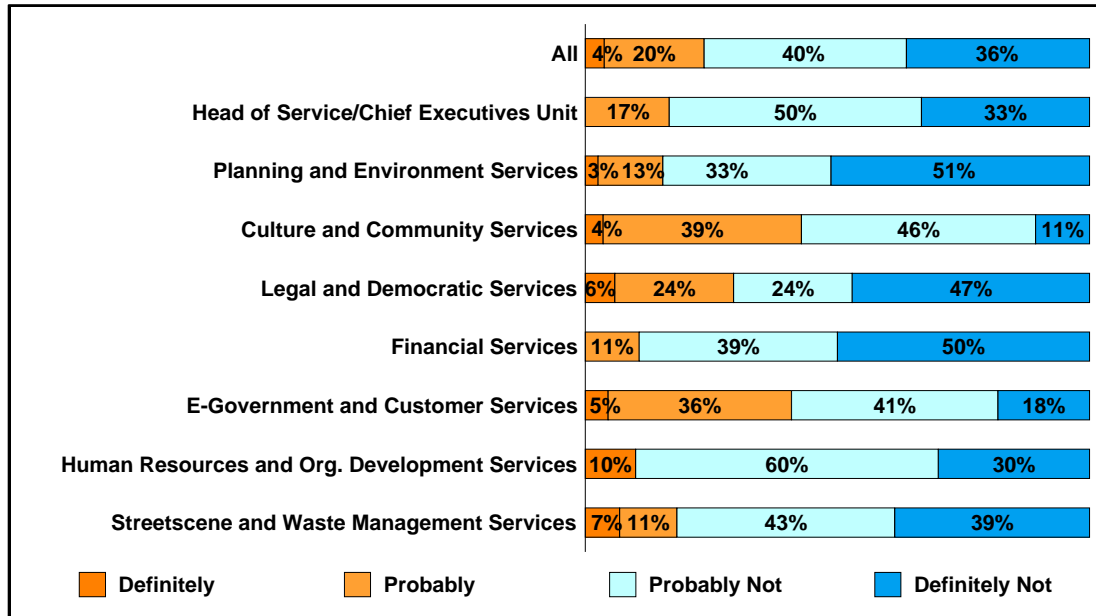
"I am clear about how my job relates to the aims and objectives of the Council"



Base: All respondents (213)

Only a quarter of respondents (24%) said that the Council definitely or probably has well-motivated employees. The highest ratings were achieved in Culture and Community Services (43%) and E-Government and Customer Services (41%), however this was still less than half the sample.

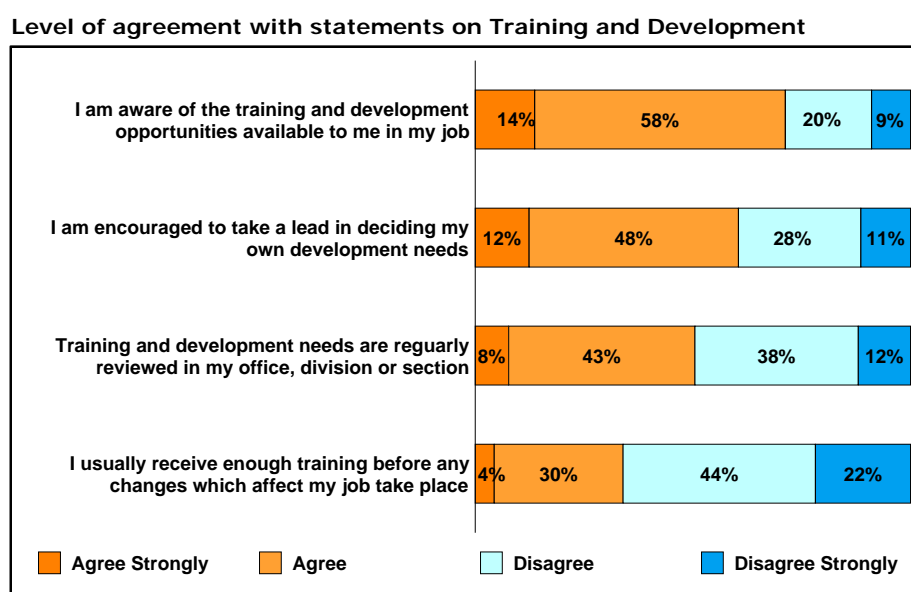
“The Council has well-motivated employees”



Base: All respondents (212)

2.8 Training and Development

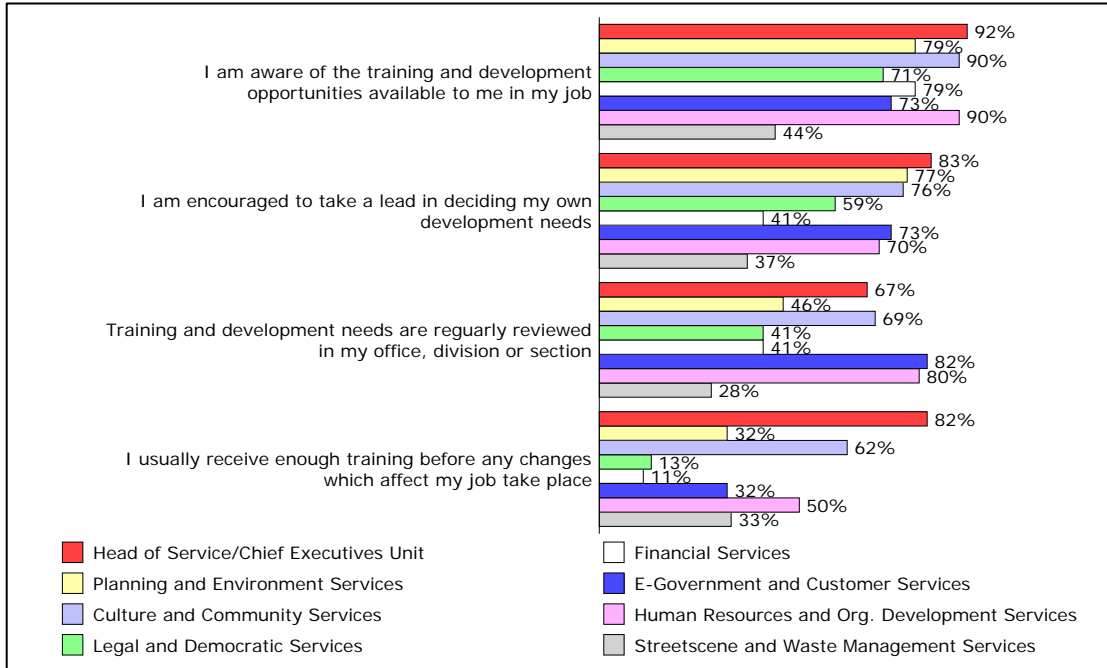
Employees were given four statements relating to training and development and were asked how far they agree with each. Views were quite mixed across the measures, with the majority of employees (71%) agreeing “I am aware of the training and development opportunities available to me in my job”, three in five (60%) agreeing “I am encouraged to take a lead in deciding my own development needs”, half (50%) agreeing “Training and development needs are regularly reviewed in my office, division or section”, and just one in three (34%) agreeing “I usually receive enough training before any changes which affect my job take place”.



Base: All respondents (208-212)

Satisfaction was consistently higher for Head of Service/Chief Executives Unit (67% to 92% agreement) and Culture and Community Services (62% to 90%). E-Government and Customer Services received fairly high scores (73% to 82%), with the exception of “I usually receive enough training before any changes which affect my job take place”, which dropped to 32% agreement.

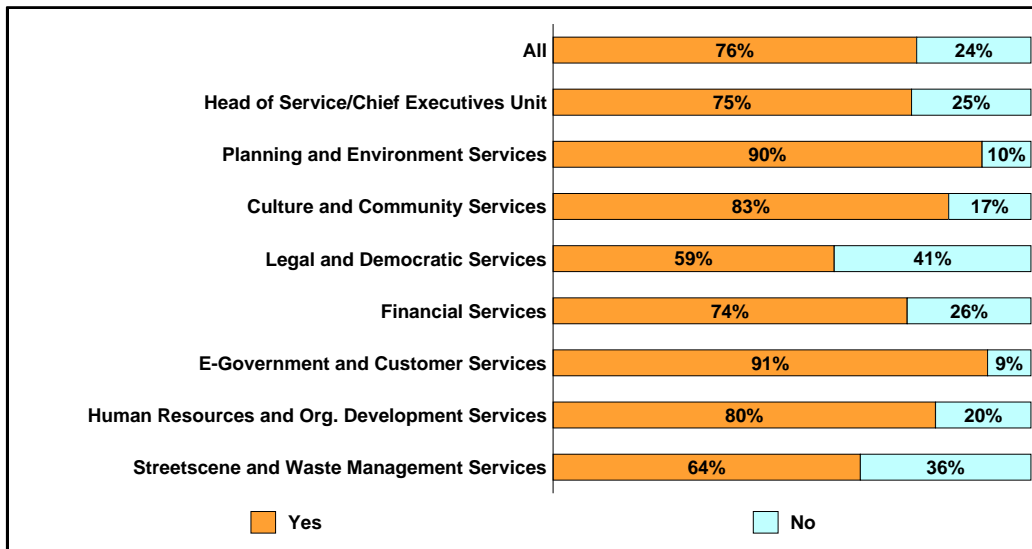
Training and Development - % agreement



Base: All respondents (208-212)

Three-quarters of respondents (76%) felt there is a link between their development and how well they do in their job, rising to 91% of E-Government and Customer Services employees and 90% of Planning and Environment Services employees. Just 59% of Legal and Democratic Services and 64% of Streetscene and Waste Management Services employees agreed there is a link.

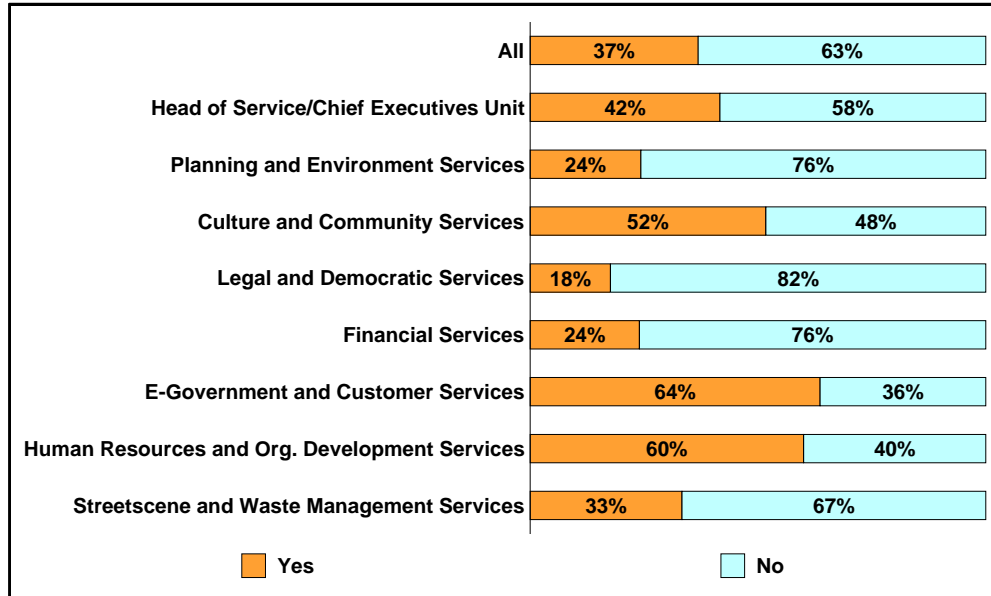
Whether link between development and how well employees do in their job



Base: All respondents (209)

37% of employees said they discuss their expectations with their supervisor/line manager before starting a development activity. This rose to 64% in E-Government and Customer Services and 60% in Human Resources and Organisational Development Services.

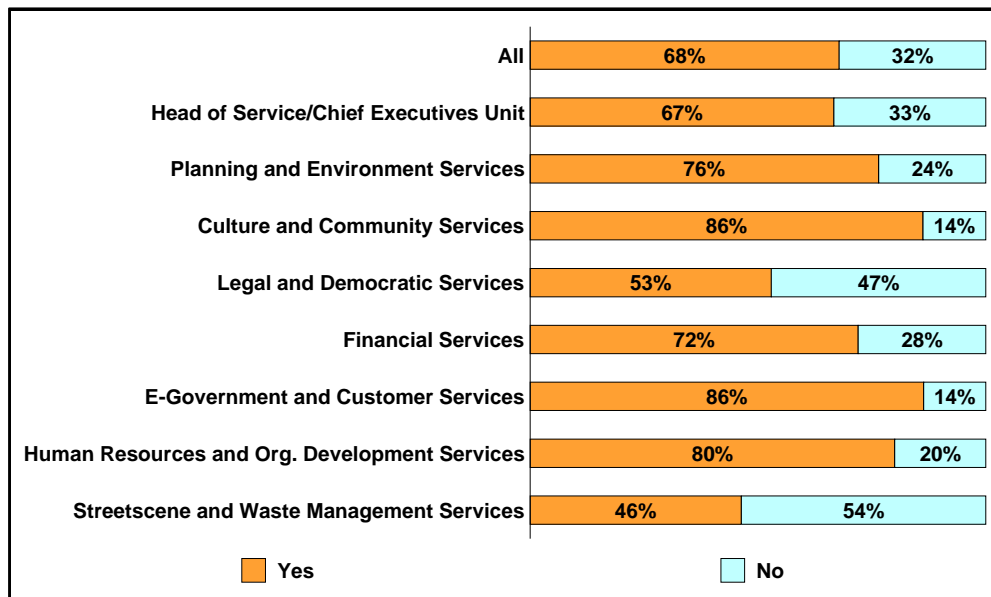
Whether discuss expectation with supervisor/line manager before starting a development activity



Base: All respondents (206)

68% of employees said they understood why they have undertaken a development activity during the last 12 months, although this fell to 46% among Streetscene and Waste Management Services employees and 53% among Legal and Democratic Services employees.

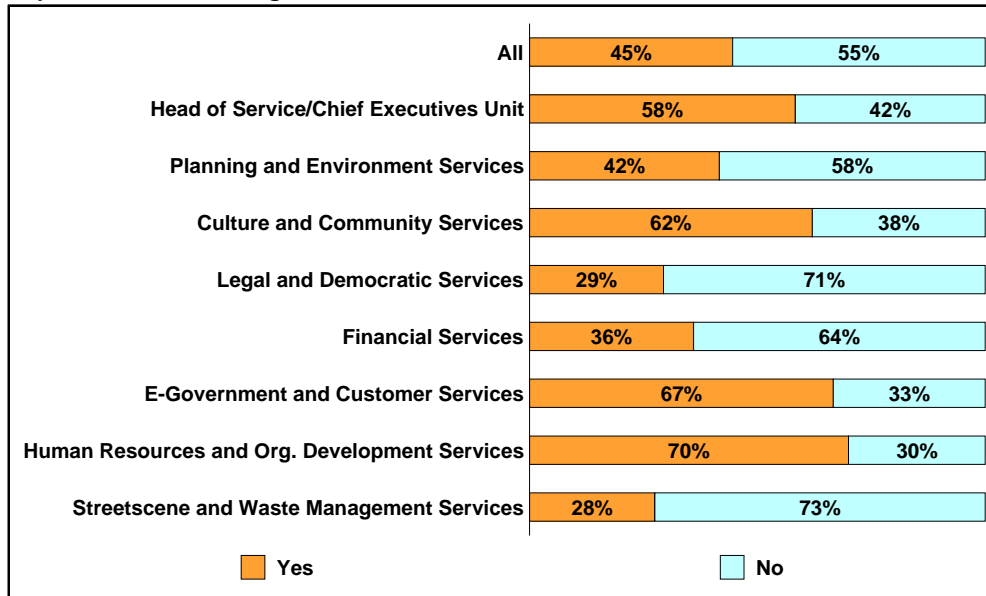
Whether understand why have undertaken a development activity in the last 12 months



Base: All respondents (202)

45% of employees said their development activity is monitored by their supervisor/line manager, falling to 28% in Streetscene and Waste Management Services and 29% in Legal and Democratic Services.

Whether development activity monitored with employees by their supervisor/line manager

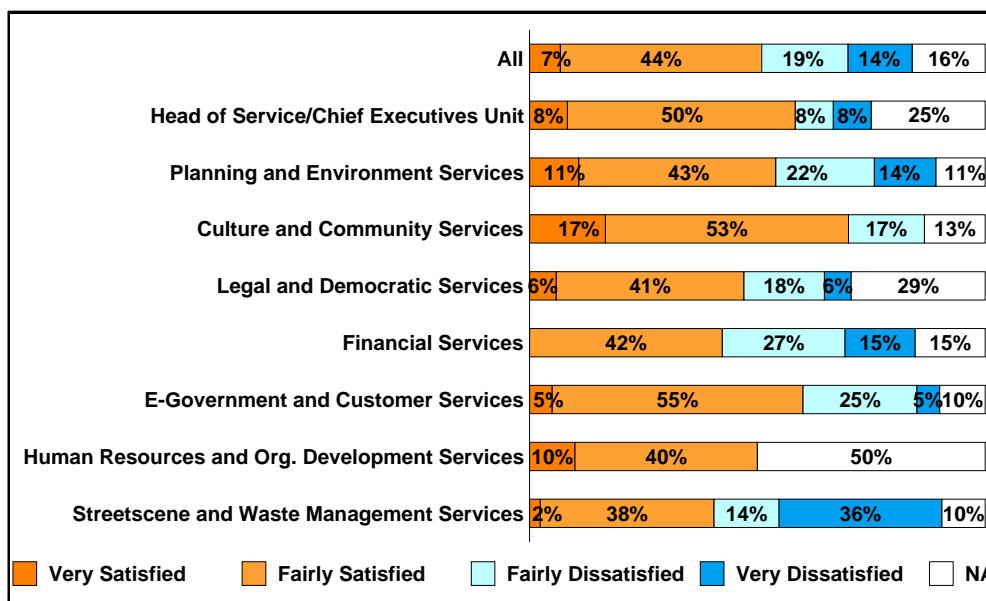


Base: All respondents (202)

2.9 Health and Safety

Only half of employees (51%) were satisfied with the management of issues associated with aggression from the public and 33% were dissatisfied. Satisfaction was around this level for most departments, with the exception of Culture and Community Services where satisfaction rose to 70%.

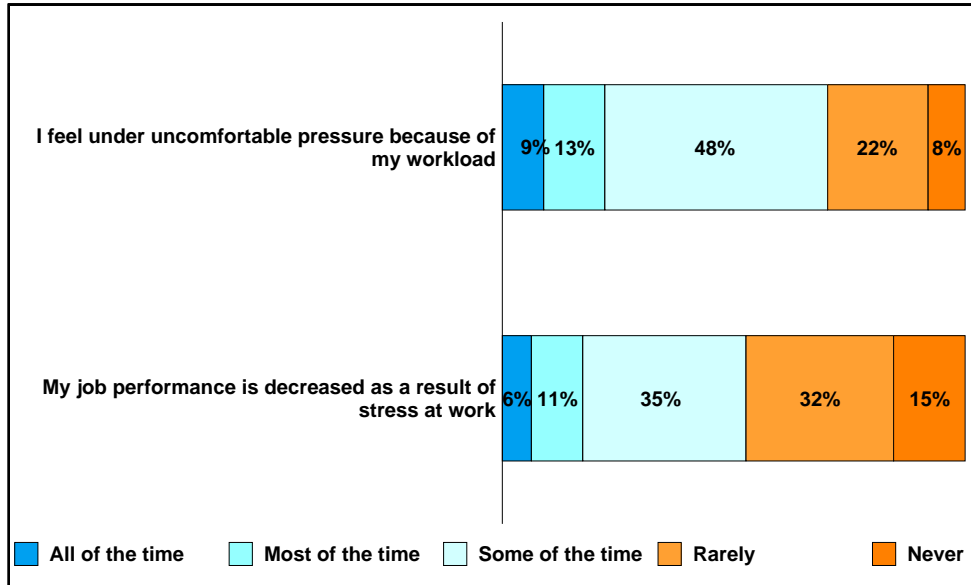
Satisfaction with management of issues associated with aggression from public



Base: All respondents (206)

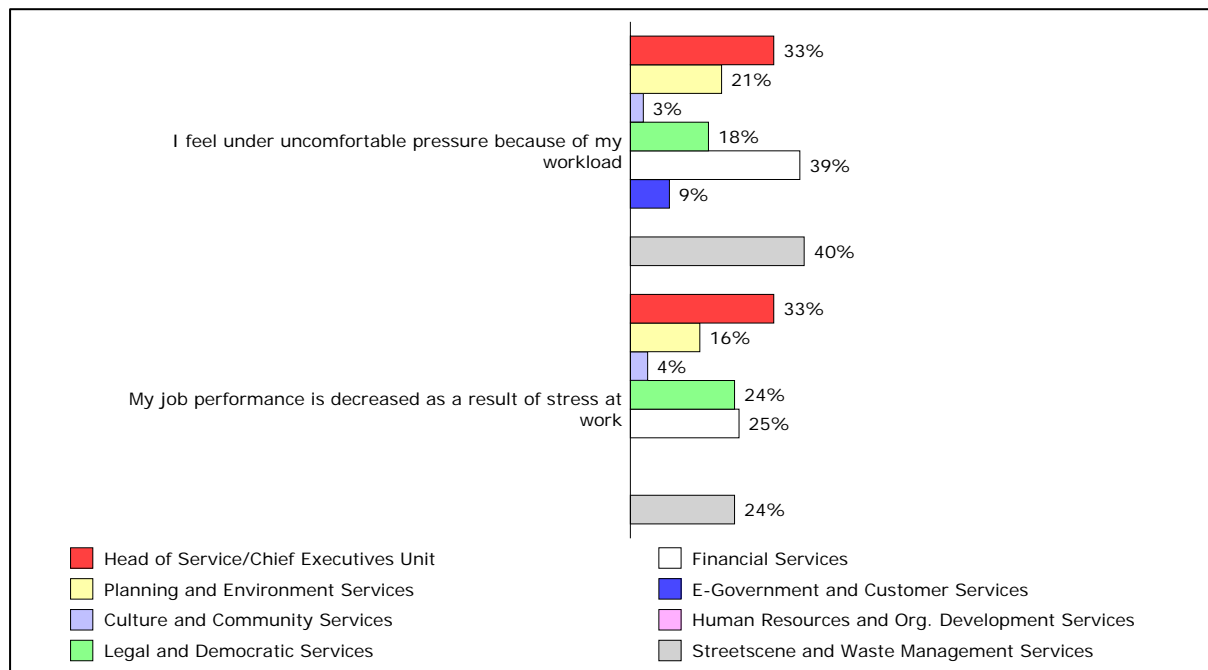
22% of employees said they feel under uncomfortable pressure because of their workload either all of the time or most of the time, and 17% said their job performance is decreased as a result of stress at work either all of the time or most of the time.

Amount of stress and pressure felt in job role



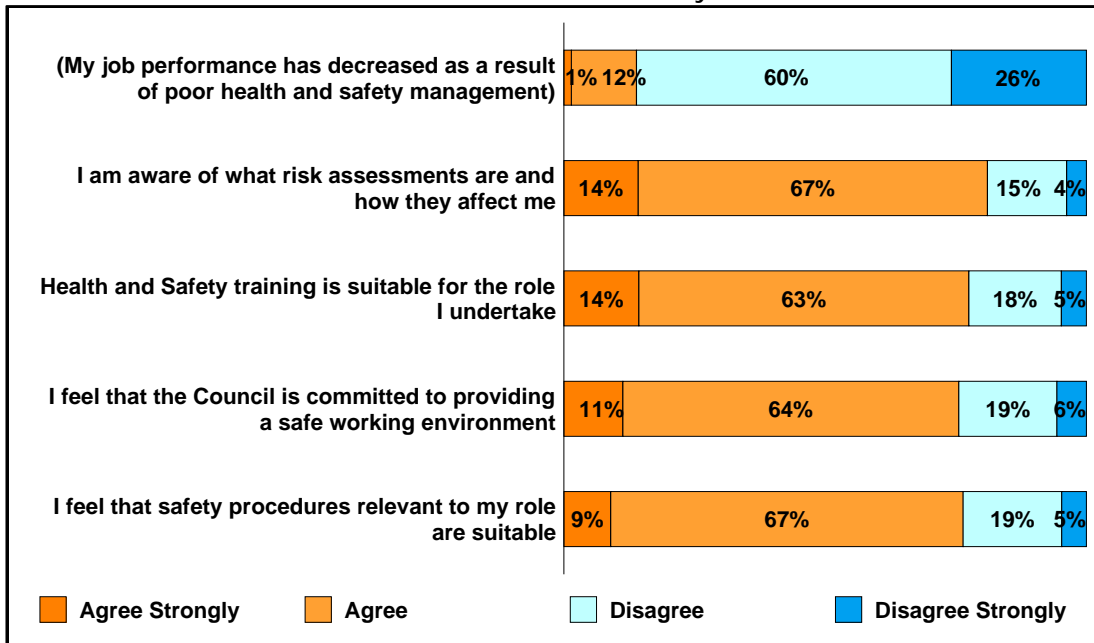
Pressure and stress varied by service area, with it being most apparent in Head of Service/Chief Executives Unit, Financial Services and Streetscene and Waste Management Services.

Amount of stress and pressure felt in job role - % at least most of the time



Employees were given five statements in relation to Health and Safety and were asked to state how far they agree with each. The majority of respondents were satisfied with the health and safety measures employed at the Council, ranging from 76% to 81% agreement on the positive statements and 86% disagreement with the negative statement.

Level of satisfaction with statements on Health and Safety



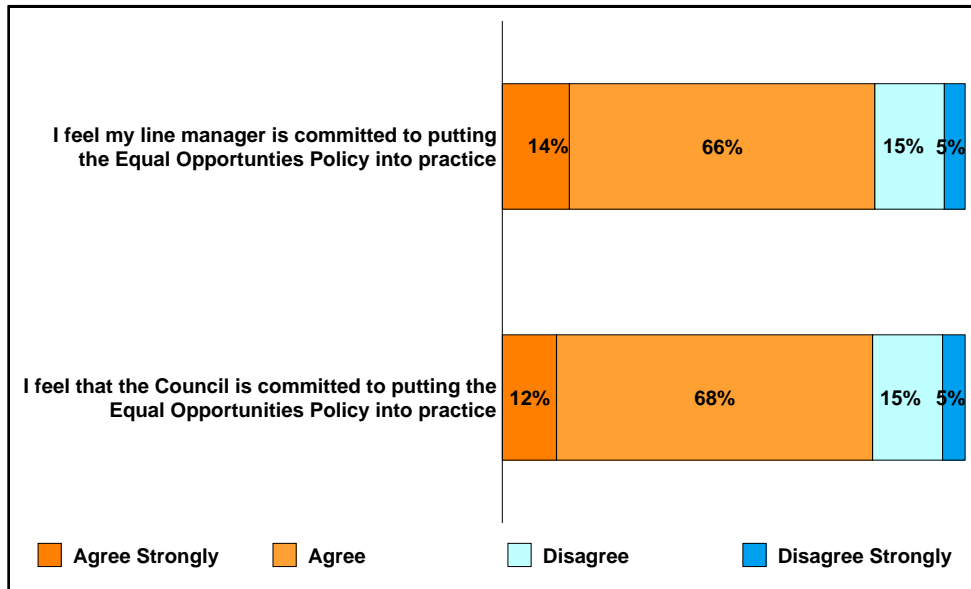
Base: All respondents (209-212)

2.10 Equal Opportunities and Harassment

Results in this section are provided for the Council as a whole, rather than analysed by service area, as communicated to employees in the research questionnaire.

81% agreed "I feel my line manager is committed to putting the Equal Opportunities Policy into practice" and 80% agreed "I feel that the Council is committed to putting the Equal Opportunities Policy into practice".

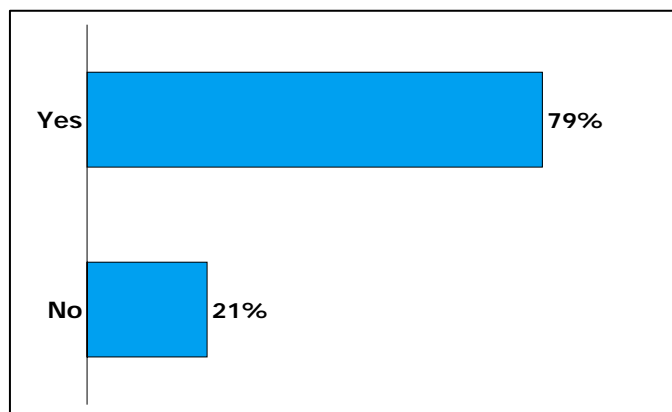
Level of agreement with statements on Equal Opportunities



Base: All respondents (200-205)

79% of staff were aware of the Council's Equality Policy.

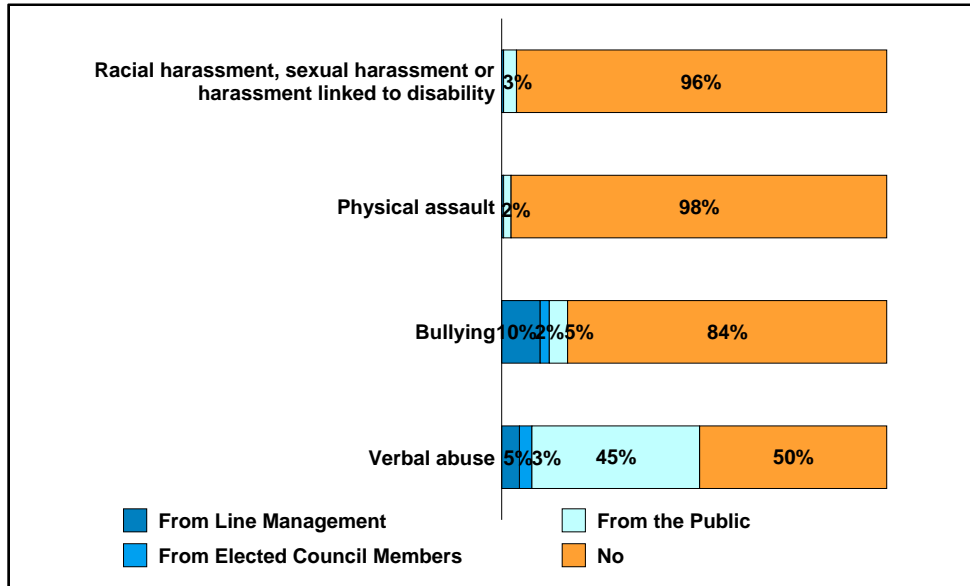
Whether aware of Council's Equality Policy



Base: All respondents (206)

The majority of harassment in the Council comes from the general public, 45% of employees stated they had received verbal abuse from the public in the last 12 months. There was an element of harassment from within the Council itself however. One in ten employees (10%) said they had experienced bullying from line management and 8% had experienced verbal abuse from either line management or elected Council members.

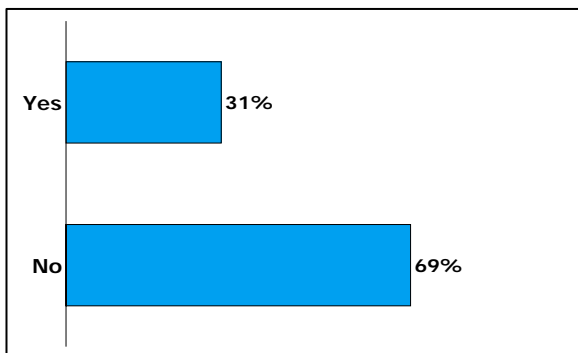
Experience of harassment



Base: All respondents (205-211)

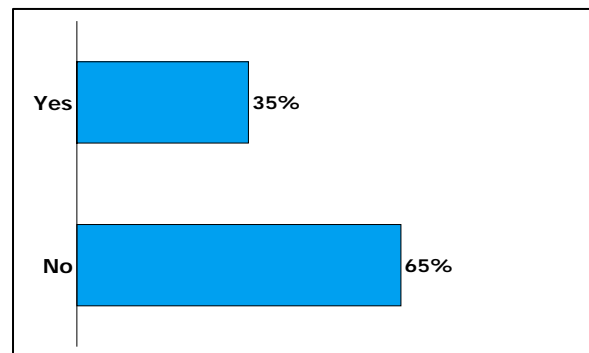
31% of those that had experienced harassment reported it and 35% of these said it was dealt with effectively.

Whether reported harassment



Base: Respondents who had experienced harassment (103)

Whether harassment dealt effectively



Base: Respondents who had reported harassment (26)

3 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Overall, views were quite mixed across the survey, with some areas achieving high levels of satisfaction but others receiving lower levels. It is to be expected, however, that the timing of the survey may have had some negative impact on the findings, with the survey following a major organisational restructure.

The areas where employees were less satisfied are outlined as follows. Firstly, communication. Almost three in five employees (59%) were not confident that senior managers are as frank as they could be about what they plan to do and the same proportion did not feel they are kept fully informed about developments in the Council. 45% also felt they could not challenge or question the way things are done.

Lower ratings were given for line management support, with 54% stating they either get all the help they need or get a good deal of help with "Helping you identify personal development objectives", 56% felt they got help with "Helping you set clear operational objectives" and 57% with "Developing the skills or competencies you need to do your job". Line management support is therefore an area that could be improved.

Dissatisfaction was also evident within various service areas. Throughout the survey, satisfaction was considerably higher within E-Government and Customer Services and Human Resources and Organisational Development Services. In contrast, satisfaction was consistently lower for Legal and Democratic Services, Financial Services and Streetscene and Waste Management Services. There also appeared to be a staffing issue in Planning and Environment Services and Financial Services, with approximately half stating they rarely or never have a sufficient staffing level to provide a satisfactory service.

Throughout the survey satisfaction was higher among part-time than full-time employees, this was especially the case for overall job satisfaction, communication, level of involvement in decision-making, and targets and deadlines.

Although negative areas were apparent and need to be addressed to improve overall employee satisfaction in the future, there were areas that the majority of employees were happy with. These included internal relationships, especially working relationships with their colleagues (93% satisfaction). 74% were also satisfied with the recognition they get from their line manager. Overall job satisfaction across various measures was high, 77% were satisfied with the opportunities to use their skills and abilities, 88% were satisfied with the level of freedom to carry out their work, and 83% were satisfied with the amount of responsibility they have. Four in five employees (80%) also rated the performance of their section in meeting its operational objectives in the last 12 months as good. These positive findings were reflected in the fact that 75% of employees overall were satisfied with their present job.

Summary of the Investors In People Report for Bromsgrove District Council

2006

This document summarises the Investors In People assessment report following a visit to the Council and interviews with staff in March 2006.

Bromsgrove District Council was first recognised as an *Investor in People* organisation on the 25th of March 1999. The review conducted in March 2002 revealed a number of areas that required attention. The follow up visit conducted in March 2003 revealed that 'significant progress' had been made to implement the agreed retaining recognition action plan and the Council continued to be a recognised *Investor in People* organisation.

During 2004, based upon an external assessment of the Council's overall performance, the Council undertook Voluntary Engagement. As a result, forward strategy plans and service/business plans have been developed to improve Council performance. Also, an organisation restructure has been implemented. The implementation of the organisation restructure was completed in February 2006.

In the period 2004/5/6 several key appointments have been made within the Senior Management Team including a significant number of interim appointments to provide direction and continuity whilst full-time replacements were sought.

The Council currently employs 408 people at five locations.

The IIP Review

This review was conducted on the 10th, 11th and 12th of March 2006.

Full time and part time were selected for an interview and the sample was constructed to access, new staff and staff working different shift patterns and working out of various locations. It was not possible to speak to Trades Union representatives from each Trades Union, as UNISON does not currently have an elected representative.

A total of people 51 were interviewed representing 12.5 % of establishment.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS

The Senior Management Team (SMT) were very open and frank during the assessor's briefing prior to conducting staff interviews. A number of very positive steps have been taken or are in the final stages of planning prior to implementation. A very strong commitment to the Standard was demonstrated.

As a result of the assessment programme, it was clearly established that the new SMT have embarked upon a well-structured and planned programme of activities that will engage with staff more effectively and also offer and encourage all staff to become more involved and to receive structured training and development.

However, the journey has not progressed sufficiently to and, in the assessor's opinion, the current review was conducted probably one year before the benefits will have filtered through sufficiently to ensure that the approach is deployed effectively and is embedded and robust.

Discussions post interviews, revealed that the SMT recognised that the review was too early in the implementation cycle but the team clearly felt that the Investors review should be conducted to:

- a) ensure that the planned actions are appropriate to meet the Standard.
- b) gauge the success or failure of the programme to date in the eyes of an independent third party.

Recommendation

At this point, **Bromsgrove District Council** no longer meets all of the requirements of the *Investors in People* Standard. In order for the Council to retain recognition we need to prepare and submit to the West Midlands Quality Centre an action plan that details:

- what steps you will be taking in order to return to the Standard
- the resources allocated
- who has responsibility for each step
- the timescales for completion.

We are still entitled to advertise ourselves as a Recognised organisation and continue to use the logo in the approved manner.

Areas for Development

Managers involving people in the planning process:

Although clearly considered to be desirable, the majority of managers reported that, in the current situation, it had not been possible to fully engage with staff during the planning process.

Organisation's learning & development needs:

Although the SMT have priorities for staff development, these priorities are not linked to service/business objectives through a planned approach that will allow the measurement of the impact of learning and development upon service/business performance.

Team learning & development needs:

Similarly to above, learning and development has yet to be planned as an outcome of the first round of the new personal development review (PDR) process.

Involvement of people in identifying learning and development needs:

Although there was some scepticism regarding the planning and implementation of learning and development needs that had been identified through the recent PDR interviews, the majority of interviewees acknowledged that the new PDR process was a significant improvement over the past rather ad hoc process and were looking forward to undertaking the agreed learning and development actions.

Impact of learning and development actions:

Although learning and development actions have been identified and agreed during the PDR interviews, it was clear that interviewees were not very clear on what the learning and development should achieve for them or for their team.

Strategy for involvement and performance improvement:

Although focus groups and forums have been introduced and a staff survey has been conducted, there is no clear strategy for engaging staff in evaluating and implementing their ideas for performance improvement. Discussions with SMT revealed that an approach to engaging with staff more effectively is considered to be essential and that the strategy has yet to be developed.

Strategies for diversity and equality of opportunity:

SMT and line managers clearly understand and value the diversity of all members of staff and ensure that equality of opportunity is delivered through an effective PDR and universal access to the excellent Training Directory 2006/7.

Staff perceptions of equality of opportunity:

Whilst both managers and staff who were interviewed acknowledged that the follow up on the PDRs was critical, all interviewees reported a great improvement in the opportunity to learn and develop and the majority of interviewees were motivated by the perceived new approach from SMT.

Top managers expectations of Knowledge, skills and behaviours:

Although the SMT acknowledged that they had yet to develop a knowledge, skill and behaviour framework for managers to act as leaders, managers and developers of people, they demonstrated a strong commitment to developing and implementing a Bromsgrove District Council framework.

People's perceptions:

Although a number of interviewees described good leader manager practices that are being exhibited by their line manager, it was clear that a great deal depends upon "*who you work for*" in terms of manager capabilities.

Manager effectiveness

Although the assessor acknowledges "pockets of good practice", the lack of a framework of skills, knowledge and behaviours means that managers and staff alike do not understand what is expected of a manager as a leader, manager and developer of people.

Learning and development actions:

Whilst new staff and people who have changed role reported that induction to the Council and their team was effective, the majority of interviewees were unable to clearly state how their recent development had impacted upon their performance in their role. However, all interviewees stated that the PDR training and the recent diversity training had been well structured and effective.

Most interviewees felt that, as the outcomes of their PDR were planned and implemented, the learning and development would be both more structured and focused upon measurable outcomes. Many positive comments were received regarding the availability of the Council's Training Directory

Investment in time, money and resources:

The SMT have reviewed the learning and development needs of the organisation and have allocated a significantly increased budget that is resourced by a revised HR team that is now represented at SMT following the organisation restructure.

Investment in learning & development improving Council performance:

When the Council's learning and development priorities are planned and implemented, the SMT will be able to evaluate and quantify outcomes and performance improvements and also further develop strategy for improving Council performance.

Examples of performance improvement:

Managers and staff have yet to link learning and development actions to improving performance. The PDR process will undoubtedly underpin future learning and development actions and offers the opportunity to link learning and development objectives to service/business objectives.

Improvements to the strategies for managing and developing people:

Although the assessor has identified that further work needs to be done to ensure that the Standard is met in full, it was clearly demonstrated that SMT, managers and staff are all aware of significant improvements to the processes for managing and developing people that have been identified and that are being implemented

IIP and Staff Survey Action Plan - Timeline

Appendix C

Date	Action	Linked to Outcome	Lead	Progress	Implementation 1 x ☺ = Little 5x ☺ = Fully Implemented
May 06	Staff Forums or roadshows set up where staff can have 2 way discussion with senior management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Involve staff 	CEO	Staff forums set up and held in May 06	☺ ☺ ☺
	Undertake training bid process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Top managers understand learning needs of the council 	CEO	Training bids evaluated and resubmissions requested	☺ ☺ ☺
	Implement management programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Top Managers/ Managers can describe the skills knowledge and behaviours needed to lead, manage and develop people effectively •Managers are effective in supporting staff in relation to personal development, developing skills and setting objectives •Management is consistent across the Council •Managers are effective in supporting staff in relation to personal 	Head of HR/OD CMT Head of HR/OD CMT	Management programme in place through training directory	☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

		development, developing skills and setting objectives			
June 06	Working groups of staff to be involved in developing the vision for the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve staff 	Asst CEO	Champions have been nominated from each area to contribute	😊 😊 😊
	Action plan presented to CMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior commitment to IIP 	Head of HR	Circulated to CMT	😊 😊
	Investigate photos on the address book	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff able to explain aims and objectives of Council • Improve communication 	Head of HR		
	Agree management development strategy for the Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managers can describe the skills knowledge and behaviours needed to lead, manage and develop people effectively 	Head of HR/OD	Draft going to CMT in early July	😊 😊
	Review of violence and aggression policy including communication and reporting of events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council supports staff in dealing with violence and aggression from the public 	Head of HR/OD	Policy being developed by MC	😊 😊
July 06	Hugh B to attend Staff working group to discuss communications plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve communication 	Head of HR		
	Ensure all heads of service hold regular management meetings (at least one per month)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve communication 	CMT		
	Core brief to be standard form of communication,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve communication 	Asst CEO and CMT		

	effectively communicated				
	Use newsletter to inform staff about different services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Staff able to explain aims and objectives of Council 	Head of HR		
	Recommence training on new violence policy until Sept 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The council supports staff in dealing with violence and aggression from the public 	Head of HR/OD		
August 06	Set up profiles of staff on the intranet so staff understand better different roles and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Staff able to explain aims and objectives of Council 	Head of HR/OD		
	Support staff to be able to “swap” jobs on a short term temporary basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Staff able to explain aims and objectives of Council 	Head of HR/OD		
	Embed and review PDR process through updating form, process, re launch etc PRIORITY AREA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Managers understand the impact of learning on the organisation •People understand how learning will impact on them and their team/organisation •Managers are effective in supporting staff in relation to personal development, developing skills and setting objectives •Managers can give examples of how they recognise and value people’s contribution •Managers can give 	Head of HR/OD		

		<p>examples of how they give people constructive feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can give examples of how they are given constructive feedback • People can describe how their contribution is recognised and valued • Managers can describe how they promote a sense of ownership by encouraging people to be involved in decision making • People can describe how they are encouraged to be involved in decision making • Managers can describe how they make sure learning needs are met • People can describe how their learning needs have been met • People can describe how learning has improved their performance and that of their team/ organisation 			
August 06	Review dolphin centre for good practice – ask John to write up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People/Top Managers can give examples of how everyone is encouraged to share ideas 	?		

	Standard items agreed for team meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Top Managers/ People can give examples of how everyone is encouraged to share ideas •People can give examples of how they are given constructive feedback 	CMT		
	Develop managers “toolkit” which describes the actions (rather than competencies) required for a manager in BDC - the Bromsgrove Way. To include promotion of management by walking around	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •People can give examples of how everyone is encouraged to share ideas •Management is consistent across the Council •People can describe what their manager should be doing to lead and develop them effectively •Managers can describe how they are effective in leading, managing and developing staff. 	CMT/ Head of HR/OD	Draft being developed by HP	☺ ☺
	Roll out of new violence and aggression policy including communication and reporting of events and provision of training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The council supports staff in dealing with violence and aggression from the public 	Head of HR/OD		
Sept 06	Managers attend training on business planning including how to involve staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Involve staff 		Business plan project being developed to review process	

	Who's who on the intranet – more information on each service area on new intranet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve communication/ breakdown silos 			
	¼ review of action plan to CMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior commitment to IIP 	Head of HR		
	Build workforce planning into the business planning process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top managers understand learning needs of the council 	Asst CEO		
	Agree standard items for team meetings - through management toolkit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managers understand the impact of learning on the organisation 	CMT Head of HR/OD		
October 06	Review Council vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff able to explain aims and objectives 	Asst CEO		
	Complete workforce plan for the Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top managers understand learning needs of the council • Managers understand the impact of learning on the organisation • Managers can describe how they make sure learning needs are met • Top managers can explain how learning and development has improved the performance of the organisation • Top managers can describe how the evaluation of their investment in people is used to develop the strategy for the 	Head of HR/OD CMT		

		organisation			
	Structured process for engaging staff to volunteer for things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can give examples of how everyone is encouraged to share ideas 	?		
	Implement Modern Manager Framework (competencies) – includes “respect” agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top Managers can describe the skills knowledge and behaviours needed to lead, manage and develop people effectively • Managers are effective in supporting staff in relation to personal development, developing skills and setting objectives • Management is consistent across the Council • People can describe what their manager should be doing to lead and develop them effectively • Managers can describe how they are effective in leading, managing and developing staff • Senior Managers/ Managers are clear about leadership and what is expected and staff understand • Managers can give 	Head of HR/OD CMT		

		<p>examples of how they recognise and value people's contribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Managers can describe how they promote a sense of ownership by encouraging people to be involved in decision making •The Council has well motivated employees 			
	Management Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Top Managers/ Managers can describe the skills knowledge and behaviours needed to lead, manage and develop people effectively •Managers are effective in supporting staff in relation to personal development, developing skills and setting objectives •Management is consistent across the Council 	Head of HR/OD		
November 06	Review of training policy to allow staff to "practice" new skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •People can describe how they are encouraged to be involved in decision making 	Head of HR/OD		
December 06	¼ review of action plan to CMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Senior commitment to IIP 	Head of HR/OD		
	Audit PDR process to ensure it works effectively or learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Managers understand the impact of learning on the organisation 	Head of HR/OD		

	how to improve				
Jan 07	Develop “core” competencies for all staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can give examples of how everyone is encouraged to share ideas • People can describe what their manager should be doing to lead and develop them effectively • Managers can give examples of how they recognise and value people’s contribution • People can describe how they are encouraged to be involved in decision making • People can describe how their learning needs have been met • People can describe how learning has improved their performance and that of their team/ organisation 	Head of HR/OD		
	Use modern management framework (competencies) in job descriptions, for recruitment etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managers can describe the skills knowledge and behaviours needed to lead, manage and develop people effectively • Management is consistent across the Council 	Head of HR/OD		

	Undertake staff survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Management is consistent across the Council •People can describe how their contribution is recognised and valued •People can describe how they are encouraged to be involved in decision making •People can describe how learning has improved their performance and that of their team/ organisation •The Council has well motivated employees •Staff are confident in how the organisation is run 	Head of HR/OD		
	Report on impact of learning on the organisation's performance to CMT – dependent on submission of information from CMT through a “cascade up” approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Top managers can describe how the evaluation of their investment in people is used to develop the strategy for the organisation 	Head of HR/OD		
	Six monthly report to CMT from learning function on improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Top managers can describe how the evaluation of their investment in people is used to develop the strategy for the organisation 	Head of HR/OD		
Feb 07		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 			

March 07		•			
Date to be fixed	Communication of communication strategy	•Improve communication	Asst CEO		
	Staff suggestion scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Involve staff •People/ Top Managers can give examples of how everyone is encouraged to share ideas 	?		
	Implement succession planning	•Managers can describe how they make sure learning needs are met	Head of HR/OD		
	Share ideas and good news on the intranet	•The Council has well motivated employees	?		

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE CABINET

2ND AUGUST 2006

GATEWAY REFUGE

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Peter Whittaker
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Planning and Environment

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The report advises Members of the decision by the Gateway Refuge Board of Trustees to close the refuge for persons suffering domestic violence from the end of June 2006.
- 1.2 The report advises Members of the action that has been taken to ensure the temporary continuation of a service to the vulnerable client group and to develop proposals for a long term replacement of the Gateway service.
- 1.2 The report brings forward for Members consideration proposals regarding the use of the accommodation currently leased to Gateway Refuge.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That Members note the temporary arrangements being put in hand by Supporting People for the provision of services to persons suffering domestic violence.**
- 2.2 **That Members consider the various options set out at 4.4 relating to the future use of the two dwellings currently comprising of the Gateway Refuge for the provision of emergency temporary accommodation for clients suffering or fleeing from domestic violence.**
- 2.3 **That Members approve the transfer of the Gateway Refuge dwellings to Bromsgrove District Housing Trust as set out under Option 5b of the report.**
- 2.4 **That authority be delegated to the Strategic Housing Manager in agreement with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing to conclude the negotiations in relation to the conveyance of the properties to BDHT.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Gateway Women's Refuge is an independent charity opened in the early eighties offering temporary housing and support to women who have suffered

domestic violence. The scheme has been run by a voluntary management group.

- 3.2 The ever increasing demands of running an independent concern and the increasing difficulty in recruiting members to the board has lead the trustees to decide to close the refuge from the end of June. Whilst trustees are saddened that they no longer have the capacity to continue they recognise the service that they have provided over many years. Once the Charity Commission has finalised Gateway's affairs, any surplus monies will be transferred to local charities agreed between trustees.
- 3.2 In response to the news, a meeting was co-ordinated with Adam Russell the Supporting People Manager to consider temporary measures to maintain a service and to decide what options are available in the longer term.
- 3.3 As with many support services funded through Supporting People the longer term strategy inclines towards a segregation of the support service from the management of the housing accommodation. The closure of the refuge therefore opens up an opportunity to re-model the service.

4.0 Proposed Arrangements

- 4.1 Temporary measures to ensure that a support service continues are being put in place by Supporting People by extending the funding and contract with Stoneham Housing Association who currently provide a floating support service to persons suffering DV across Bromsgrove and Redditch. The service will be extended to an additional number of clients to replace the support previously funded through the Refuge.
- 4.2 The Gateway Refuge accommodation is owned by the Council and comprises a pair of semi detached dwellings that have interconnecting doorways and additional communal facilities. Historically the dwellings were leased to Gateway on a rent free basis. In more recent years an internal repairing lease has been agreed and an annual rent paid to the Council that is granted back to Gateway in the form of an annual revenue grant. The two dwellings were retained by the Council at LSVT.
- 4.3 Discussions with Supporting People have lead to a longer term proposal being developed in which it is proposed that:
 - i) The Refuge accommodation be converted into four independent and self contained, one bedroom flats and a one bed-sit studio flat furnished and allocated on temporary tenancies as temporary accommodation for clients fleeing DV.
 - ii) The dwellings be refurbished, converted and managed by an RSL.
 - iii) The contract with Supporting People for the specialist support service be transferred from Gateway over to a selected provider such as Stoneham of Women's Aid who would be separate from the RSL managing the building.
 - iv) The support service be in the form of a floating support service that could be also be available to clients fleeing DV who are allocated other social housing in the District and to provide extended support to

clients as they move on from the temporary flats into permanent housing. The proposed floating support approach is seen to maximise the value of the service funded by Supporting People. The proposal would provide a larger and more flexible service.

4.4 The options that are available for members to consider in respect of the future use of the housing units previously let to Gateway Refuge are as follows:

OPTION	IMPLICATIONS
<p>1. – Sell both properties on the open market, and:</p>	<p>Properties would require some investment prior to marketing to segregate into two separate dwellings.</p>
<p>a. Not re-invest proceeds into housing for DV clients</p>	<p>Would be a major loss of units of accommodation for this client group. The existing building is established and accepted by the neighbouring community. There is a purpose built communal facility that could be re utilised for training/support or utilised as accommodation for single or disabled DV clients.</p> <p>Equipment and furnishings to be left by Gateway for future use would be lost or have to be stored.</p>
<p>b. Re-invest proceeds in purchasing dwellings elsewhere in the District.</p>	<p>This approach would create unnecessary delay in replacing the much needed temporary accommodation for the client group.</p> <p>An option would be to sell the existing accommodation (Valued at £400,000) and re invest the capital income in purchasing alternative self contained units. These dwellings could either be new build or re-purchased ex-council flats that generally represent the best value for money when buying dwellings on the open market. The cost of new build for five units would be in the region of £500,000 plus requiring a grant subsidy of approximately £300,000 and the identification of a site. The cost of re-purchasing five ex Council flats would be in the region of £500,000 requiring a grant subsidy of approximately £360,000.</p> <p>The best VFM properties to purchase are former Council Flats that average at around £90k. Locations of such units may be less secure and inappropriate</p>

	<p>for some vulnerable clients.</p> <p>The benefit of mutual support of clients living in close proximity with benefit of a training/support facility would be lost.</p> <p>Option 1 would inevitably lead to a greater dependence upon the use of Bed and Breakfast.</p>
<p>2. – Retain ownership of both properties and lease to an RSL at market rent for provision of a hostel type supported DV scheme.</p>	<p>RSL's would be reluctant to take on what is a potentially high management cost/risk scheme on this basis. The RSL would likely require the full cost of refurbishment funding from the Council and a commitment from the Council to fund planned maintenance and upkeep of the premises over the next 30 years.</p> <p>Unlikely to be funded by Supporting People - Supporting People are reviewing their strategy for Domestic Violence later this year and have therefore chosen to divert their revenue grant from Gateway to extend the <u>floating support</u> service provided by Stoneham Housing. The SP strategy is to move away from <u>scheme based hostel type housing with support</u>, over to floating support schemes delivering services to special needs clients wherever they are located. Whilst SP favour small grouping of properties for DV with provision of some group work facilities, the view is that floating support services provide better VFM by having the flexibility to serve more clients across the District. So when a client in a DV flat has gained maximum benefit from the support service, the support worker can provide their service to a client elsewhere and not be limited to clients living within a specific scheme.</p> <p>No grant funding would be available by the Housing Corporation as the dwellings / site must be in RSL ownership to qualify.</p>
<p>3. – Retain Ownership of both properties and lease at a peppercorn rent to an RSL for the provision of a hostel type supported DV scheme.</p>	<p>Again, unlikely to be funded by Supporting People who favour the floating support approach.</p> <p>The peppercorn rent approach would</p>

	<p>make this option more economically favourable than a market rent, however planned maintenance of the building would still have to be funded by the Council as a long term revenue commitment as a hostel type scheme would carry much higher risk and maintenance cost to the RSL who, in not owning the property would have no security against the capital outlay necessary to refurbish the scheme.</p> <p>No grant funding would be available by the Housing Corporation as the dwellings / site must be in RSL ownership to qualify.</p>
<p>4. – Retain ownership of both properties and the Council fund conversion into 4 or 5 self contained one bedroom flats for allocation as independent self contained units of temporary accommodation to clients fleeing DV. (Support to be provided by external floating scheme).</p> <p>a) To be let and managed by an RSL in return for a set income.</p> <p>b) To be let and managed by a private estate agent for a management fee.</p>	<p>There are no Council staff remaining with architectural/ project management skills to manage the project since the Council made a strategic decision to transfer the housing stock.</p> <p>The cost of works would be in the region of £180,000.</p> <p>RSL's would be reluctant to become involved as the rental stream from 4 or 5 affordable dwellings with a rapid turnover and high void loss/arrears would not cover market rent payable to the Council.</p> <p>Properties could only be let on an Assured Shorthold tenancy (min 6 months) by a private agent. As the rent would have to be affordable the agent would therefore likely require a higher proportion of rent as a management fee. Council would still be responsible for long term repair and maintenance.</p> <p>Private sector has limited expertise in managing dwellings for special needs.</p> <p>By being a private let rather than an RSL managed property, Housing Benefit would refer rents to the Rent Officer and potentially the rents would be challenged for eligibility for Housing Benefit and clients may not be fully</p>

<p>c) The Council manage the properties itself.</p>	<p>covered by HB. This could potentially limit the accessibility of units to vulnerable clients who are on limited or no income.</p> <p>No grant funding would be available by the Housing Corporation as the dwellings / site must be in RSL ownership to qualify.</p> <p>I would have concerns with regard to a private agents ability and willingness to commit the time and resources needed to manage short term lets, accept nominations and deal with the higher than average maintenance and management issues.</p> <p>The Council now has limited staff resources to provide management and maintenance services of this nature.</p>
<p>5. - Convey the dwellings to an RSL subject to a nomination agreement specifying a condition that the properties only be utilised for temporary accommodation for clients fleeing domestic violence (or in the absence of need, to appropriate priority homeless).</p> <p>The RSL would fund the full cost of refurbishment and conversion to self contained units.</p> <p>The conveyance would be subject to a 'claw back' condition that in the event of the Council giving permission for the RSL to dispose of the properties, the Council would be refunded the difference between the conveyance price and open current market value at the time of the future disposal. This amount would be discounted by the outstanding debt incurred by the RSL on the funding borrowed to refurbish / re-model the buildings into self contained flats</p> <p>Convey dwellings:</p> <p>a) At market value</p>	<p>This is recommended as the most appropriate approach.</p> <p>An RSL is more experienced to manage special needs housing, allocate for shorter temporary periods and allocate dwellings in accordance with local letting and referral arrangements.</p> <p>When enquiring about possible grant support from the Housing Corporation towards the scheme, the Housing Corporation have confirmed that they would expect the cost of conversion / refurbishment to be reflected in the sale price at which the Council offers the dwellings to the RSL. The Housing Corporation focuses their grant support for affordable housing in larger scale schemes and it is their view that projects of this scale fall to the Council to fund.</p> <p>The scheme would not be viable</p>

<p>b) At zero (£1) or a discounted value that would enable the RSL to fund the conversion works and manage the dwellings (including provision of furnishing and white goods) within Hsg Corp / Gov't rent levels over a 30 year business plan period. (The conveyance would be subject to a condition that 60% of any surplus or saving made by the RSL's refurbishment costs against estimated costs would be made as a capital payment to the Council)</p>	<p>because the income stream generated would be insufficient to cover the loan repayment costs that would fall upon the RSL in purchasing and converting the properties into five dwellings.</p> <p>A reasonable approach when assessing the figure that the RSL is able to pay for the dwellings on a break even basis would be as follows:</p> <p><i>RSL's interest and repayments costs (over 30 year period) of borrowing funding to convert the dwellings into flats.</i></p> <p><i>Less</i></p> <p><i>Income from rental stream (after management and maintenance costs, voids and arrears have been deducted)</i></p> <p>Where the resulting calculation proves a break even or loss to the RSL, the Council needs to consider conveying the dwellings at zero cost to the RSL.</p> <p>Where a surplus is proven, then this could be commuted into a capital sum that could be paid to the Council by the RSL. However any surplus on the scheme would only be projected and the RSL takes the risk on whether the surplus is actually generated. It may therefore be a consideration that the capital sum would only become payable to the Council when the scheme actually starts to generate the surplus.</p> <p>Advantage to RSL in gaining ownership of dwellings is that it increases their borrowing capacity as an organisation and therefore enhances their ability to invest in other schemes in the District and improve their Business Plan profile.</p>
<p>6. - Lease the dwellings to an RSL subject to a condition that the properties be converted to self contained units retained for temporary accommodation for clients fleeing domestic violence (or in the absence of need, to</p>	

<p>appropriate priority homeless)</p> <p>On a peppercorn rent for a period of 25 – 30 years, secured to the RSL for the period it takes to repay their outlay investment.</p> <p>With some form of rental income</p>	<p>On the same basis as set out in Option 4 above, it is possible that a surplus could be generated on the scheme. This could be commuted into an annual rental or a capital sum. Again to reduce the risk to the RSL it would be a consideration that this should only become payable when the scheme generates the surplus.</p> <p>Lack of ownership in accommodation would greatly increase risk to RSL and reduce their borrowing capacity thus reducing their potential interest in becoming involved in the scheme</p>
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Preliminary discussions have been held with BDHT who have been asked to consider the proposal of funding the conversion of the Refuge into independent self contained units and managing the dwellings on a long term basis as temporary accommodation for clients fleeing DV. The scheme would be an extension of the pool of self contained temporary accommodation currently developed for the homeless with BDHT, except the units would be specifically retained for clients who have experienced DV.

- 4.5 BDHT are able to consider the project on the basis of **OPTION 5b** above. This would require the Council to transfer the ownership of the two dwellings to BDHT. BDHT are investigating the ability to fund the conversion of the building into four / five self contained units from their own borrowing capacity secured against the rental income. A service charge would also be necessary to reflect the costs of furnishings, white goods and the high rate of turnover in the units which would incur higher than normal management costs.
- 4.6 The Strategic Housing Manager has questioned two elements of the refurbishment costs that have been estimated. BDHT's Senior Surveyor maintains that the costs are not excessive but has reduced the estimated costs by £20k. On this basis, the financial forecast for the scheme indicates that income only exceeds borrowing costs in year 15 and cumulative breakeven is not achieved until year 26 with the loan not being repaid until year 30. The RSL carries the risks or otherwise posed by future fluctuations in interest rates.
- 4.7 BDHT are however suggesting that if the dwellings are conveyed under **OPTION 5b**, in the event of the tendered refurbishment costs coming in under estimate then it would commute 60 % of the saving into a capital payment to BDC.

- 4.8 The proposals have been considered and supported in principle by the Domestic Violence Action Group.
- 4.9 The existing location is favoured for the scheme on the basis of central location and acceptability (being 'middle Bromsgrove') to anyone suffering DV whatever their background.
- 4.10 The qualification of the proposed new arrangements have been checked with the Government Office to ensure that under BVPI 225 (which measures provision of refuge bed spaces per 10,000 population) the Council would not be worsening its performance by changing from a hostel provision to self contained units. The Government Office have confirmed that provided the accommodation is specifically designated for women and their children experiencing DV and is emergency accommodation rather than second stage move on accommodation then it can be counted towards the number of bed spaces. Accordingly the new arrangements will provide 8/9 bedrooms as opposed to the existing 6 rooms in the refuge.

5.0 Financial Issues

The proposal involves the Council in making a decision upon transferring two dwellings to BDHT for the sum of £1. The value of the two dwellings currently let to Gateway (and which make up the Refuge building) is in the region of £400,000. This is based upon investigation into the recent sales of comparable and neighbouring dwellings.

Under the current arrangements, the two dwellings making up the Gateway Refuge create an annual income of £7,617 from the rent paid to the Council by Gateway. The budgeted Council Grant payment to Gateway for 2006/7 is £6,619, in addition to which the Council also has to meet the cost of insuring the premises (£210) and servicing the gas central heating boilers (£140). There is no budget allowance for external repairs and maintenance which consequently could present a financial pressure on the Council in future years. The loss of rental income less these outgoings leaves the General Fund with an annual loss of £648. However a sensible annual budget allowance to plan for future external maintenance of the buildings under the current arrangements would need to be in excess of this amount making the proposed changes at least cost neutral.

6.0 Legal Issues

The Council has a statutory duty to provide temporary accommodation to homeless and potentially homeless clients which includes people suffering domestic violence.

7.0 Domestic Violence and the link to Corporate Objectives

Domestic violence has been defined as 'any violence between current or former partners in an intimate relationship, wherever and whenever the violence occurs. The violence may include physical, sexual emotional or financial abuse'.

While it is recognised that domestic violence can occur between other family members, same sex relationships, and by women against male partners, this

report mainly focuses upon domestic violence where the violence is perpetrated by men towards women with whom they have had a close relationship.

In many cases, domestic violence can have far-reaching physical, social and psychological effects. Violence very often escalates over time and it is often only when serious harm occurs that help is sought from support services and the local authority.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR ASSISTING WITH DOMESTIC VIOLENCE -

Domestic violence cuts across the responsibilities of a broad range of organisations. At a local level organisations involved include the police, the courts, local authority social services and housing departments, health service and voluntary groups..

THE DISTRICT COUNCIL'S ROLE IN ASSISTING IN THE REHOUSING OF VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE. The role of the local housing authority is essentially twofold:

Primarily, under the homelessness legislation, the Local Housing Authority has a statutory responsibility to provide alternative accommodation for households unable to remain in the family home due to domestic violence where that household is defined as being unintentionally homeless and in priority need.

However, besides the need for safe accommodation, victims of domestic violence and their children have a range of support needs including health care, emotional support, access to legal assistance and welfare services. Housing related support services assist in supporting victims when they either reside in or move on from temporary refuge accommodation and in some cases can enable households to remain living safely in their existing home. The local housing authority therefore has a strategic role to play in supporting and enabling refuge and housing related support services, ensuring that they are considered within Housing, Crime Reduction, Supporting People and Homelessness strategies.

Strategically, in addition to supporting Gateway Refuge, the Council more recently encouraged and supported provision of an outreach service by Stoneham Housing Association and grant funded the provision of five units of dispersed self contained accommodation designed to provide tailored housing with support to women who have experienced domestic violence and for whom the Gateway Refuge was inappropriate for a range of reasons.

USAGE OF GATEWAY REFUGE AND DEMAND FROM THE CLIENT GROUP– Usage of the accommodation at Gateway Refuge has historically been high with constant demand for occupation being evident.

An analysis of homelessness statistics over a five year period indicate domestic violence as being the second most common reason for homelessness in the District after parental evictions.

CORPORATE PLAN KEY OBJECTIVES	HOUSING LINKS
To make a major contribution towards achieving a healthy, caring and socially aware community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community involvement and partnership working. • Providing a good standard of secure accommodation for vulnerable people.
To provide a clean, safe and attractive environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting a secure and supported environment, reducing homelessness and providing support to vulnerable clients suffering DV.
To protect and improve our environment and promote sustainable communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and assistance to promote independent living.
To foster and sustain a strong and expanding economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of Housing For All • Ensure sufficient and balanced supply of affordable housing to enable people who have suffered DV live safely near their support and employment contacts.
To provide sustainable culture and leisure opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme fosters mutual support and safe leisure opportunities for clients through the floating support service. • The Refuge building offers a secure garden and play facilities for children.
To be an efficient and effective Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community involvement, partnership working and consultation. • Housing strategy linked to Corporate Development and Recovery Plan

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE CABINET

2ND AUGUST 2006

STRATEGIC HOUSING INSPECTION ACTION PLAN

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Peter Whittaker
Responsible Head of Service	Andy Coel

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Attached is the Strategic Housing Services Action Plan. This plan has been produced following the inspection carried out by the Audit Commission in March 2006 of Bromsgrove District Council's Strategic Housing Service. The housing inspection assessment by the Audit Commission scored Bromsgrove District Council as providing a poor service that has uncertain prospects for improvement.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To receive the attached Housing Inspection Action Plan
2. To note its contents
3. To approve its contents and the arrangements for reporting progress

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Audit Commission report detailed the reasons that informed the score or poor with uncertain prospects for improvement. The report focused on five principal areas. First, the nature and provision of affordable housing and in particular the provision of temporary accommodation especially the condition of the hostels; second, the nature of the homelessness service; third, the engagement with the private sector; fourth, issues surrounding value for money and fifth, the Council's approach to diversity.
- 3.2 The Audit Commission inspection report contained six recommendations. The first of which was to develop a smart, measurable, achievable resourced and time bound (SMART) action plan to address all weaknesses identified in the report and ensure that progress is regularly monitored and reported corporately.
- 3.3 Attached is a copy of the action plan produced in response to this recommendation. The Action Plan provides details of how the District Council will respond to the Audit Commission's inspection findings. It focuses on the six recommendations that concentrate on customer care; diversity; value for money; performance management and leadership and support for strategic housing.

- 3.4 The Action Plan will guide the work of the Strategic Housing Service in order to address the weaknesses identified in the inspection report. The scoring of poor by the Audit Commission means that they will re-inspect the Service within 18 months. The Action Plan will be monitored and progress will be tracked. This will be undertaken by the Corporate Director – Services in association with the Strategic Housing Services Manager.
- 3.5 Progress reports will be produced monthly and these will be presented to the corporate management team and to the Department for Communities and Local Government Monitoring Board.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no additional financial implications, revenue and capital resources are already identified in the pursuit of the Council’s Strategic Housing Service. There may be financial implications surrounding the remodelling of temporary accommodation and the provision of support to vulnerable and at risk individuals and groups, however this will not be drawn from existing Council resources.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are legal requirements within equalities and diversity and the need to operate services for homeless people.

6. Corporate Objectives

- 6.1 The provision of affordable housing; commitment to customer care and the pursuit of equalities and diversity are all within the Council’s corporate objectives.

7. Risk Management

- 7.1 Failure to pursue the actions within the Plan will adversely affect the outcome of any future inspection. Various aspects of the plan contain their own particular risks which include those from not pursuing equalities and diversity and inability to introduce effect customer care.

8. Other Sub Headings

8.1

Procurement Issues - none
Personnel Implications - none
Governance/Performance Management Considerations
Community Safety Considerations – none
Policy Considerations – contains issues surrounding diversity; customer care; affordable housing and work with partner organisations
Environmental Considerations - none

Equalities Implications – Central to the development of the Council's diversity and equalities policy

Background Papers

The Audit Commission Inspection Report of Bromsgrove District Council's Strategic Housing Service

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STRATEGIC HOUSING INSPECTION - ACTION PLAN

KEY RECOMMENDATION R1						
Develop a specific, measurable, achievable, resources and time bound (SMART) action plan to address all weaknesses identified in the inspection report and ensure that progress is regularly monitored and reported corporately.						
Proposed Outcome –						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing improvement and progress against all weaknesses identified. 						
CORPORATE ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Arrangements¹
Develop and approve an action plan to address all weaknesses, corporate and service specific.	05 Aug 06	Agreed by Cabinet.	P. Street	BDHT	CMT	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
AC & PS to examine all weaknesses and key recommendations.	Aug 06	Agree action plan by Cabinet Aug 06	P. Street			Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Develop a quarterly performance report on the action plan to Performance Management Board.	17 Nov 06	Reported to PMB.	P. Street	BDHT	Housing Team	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
From the corporate weaknesses identified, cascade down to each Head of Service and manager a standardised approach to ensure that the weaknesses are addressed within each service area business plan.	30 Jun 06	New draft improvement plan agreed	H. Bennet	WMBC	CMT	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
STRATEGIC HOUSING ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Arrangements²
Deliver on the strategic Housing actions set out below.	May 07	Meeting with inspectors on June 2nd	P. Street	BDC BDHT CAB WEEAC NWC&RA		Quarterly – Performance Management Board

KEY RECOMMENDATION R2

Strengthen the focus on providing effective access and customer care by:

- Introducing, publishing and monitoring service standards in conjunction with customers.
- Establishing systems to gather regular feedback from customers and use this information to inform service development.
- Ensuring that effective monitoring arrangements are in place covering externalised services.

Proposed Outcome -

- Delivery of services in accordance with customer needs
- Increased engagement by customers and increased customer satisfaction
- Greater transparency in the provision of services

Target completion – December 2006

CORPORATE ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Arrangements ³
Introduce Customer First Strategy and raise staff awareness	On-going	As per Customer First Strategic Action Plan	H. Bennett	N/a	Customer First Officer	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Complete staff training on Customer care	30 Nov. 06	All staff trained.	H. Parkinson	Sandstone	Training budget.	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Head of Service / Manager training on imbedding principles of Customer First in each departments BP and service.	30 Sep. 06	Training completed.	H. Bennett	Simon Haslem	Capacity Fund	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Issue clear guidelines to departmental managers upon how to develop individual departmental service standards AND consult with their client groups relevant to the services in developing these standards.	31 Aug. 06	Guidance and templates for business plans issued.	H. Bennett	N/a	Corporate Communications, Policy and Performance Team.	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Develop training for new staff and reminder training for existing staff.	30 Sep. 07	Wave 2 training completed.	H. Parkinson	TBD	£25,000 training budget bit.	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Establish system of gathering customer / officer / partner organisation views for each client group that is inclusive and monitor the diversity of customers responding.	31 Jul. 06	Customer Panel contract established.	H. Bennett	TBD by tender.	£25,000 budget.	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Publicity and launch of Customer First <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pamphlet • Poster • Complaints procedure 	31 Aug 06 30 Sep. 06	Vision agreed at June Cabinet. System in place.	H. Bennett R. Horton	N/a By tender.	N/a £3,000	Quarterly – Performance Management Board

Monitor implementation of Customer First, assess customer stakeholder / partner views and feed back into implementation process.	31 Dec. 06	First survey completed.	H. Bennett	TBC via tender.	£25,000 budget.	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Analyse responses to ensure monitoring is representative	The contract will ensure the Customer Panel is representative.					Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Appoint a HUB employee to have responsibility for monitoring all leaflets that are to be on display, monitor stock and re-order as appropriate.						Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Review image/marketing of Council.	31 Dec.06	Brand agreed and action plan to deliver in place.	H. Bennett	I&DeA	To be identified as part of review.	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Review signposting at HUB and other facilities and ensure adequate training and maps are provided to staff in respect of directing the public to other services.	Completed					Quarterly – Performance Management Board
STRATEGIC HOUSING ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Arrangements⁴
Investigate and fully understand Corporate Strategy (Customer First) and Action Plan	July 06	Corporate dissemination of strategy. Strategic Hsg Team Review meeting.	AC JH JR AG	NONE	N/A	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Completion of Customer Service Training by all Strategic Housing and Planning Officers	Dec 06	All officers trained.	H P	N/A	Budgeted	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Develop a suite of Strategic Housing Customer Questionnaires / feedback forms specific to our services to assess customer views and priorities for improvement after accessing the following services: DFG's Discretionary Grants Mandatory Licensing Empty Homes Landlords forum Caravan site occupants Energy Efficiency Following Homelessness Decision	Sept 06	Forms in draft form by end of August.	AG	OT's BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Basement	Existing staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board

At end of occupation of temp accom Housing Advice / prevention. Housing in new developments.						
Survey customers of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness service • Grants service • Enforcement • Housing Advice • New housing developments • Empty homes/ initiatives 	Sept 06	Agreed customer questionnaires by end August.	AG	OT's BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Basement	Existing staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Develop draft Strategic Housing customer service standards.	November 06	Standards agreed as part of service business plan.	AC		Existing staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Gather and analyse customer service standards of external organisations providing services on our behalf: BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Baseline / BYHF	September 06		AG	OT's BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Basement	Existing staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Meet with each external service provider and compare their service standards with the draft Strategic Housing standards to identify and remedy any shortfall and develop an agreed approach.	December 06	Completion of customer consultation	AC JR JB AG	OT's BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Basement	Existing staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Produce a pamphlet setting out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Strategic Housing Services o Who does what o Customer service standards for each element of the service o Complaints & appeals procedure o Comments & feedback 	December 06	Draft document by October 2006	AG	OT's BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Basement	Feedback cost of free postage	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Disseminate pamphlets to all external service providers, HUB, Baseline, Libraries, Drs Surgeries and hospital.	December 06	Production of full range of pamphlets	Strategic Housing Team		Existing staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Review website to ensure service standards are published and up to date and include customer enquiry and feedback opportunities.	November 06	Agreement of service standards	AG		Existing staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Further develop key indicators with BDHT, CAB	November 06	Consultation with	Strategic Housing	OT's	Existing staff	Quarterly – Performance

and WEEAC & NWC&RA on accessibility of service.		partner organisations	Team	BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Basement		Management Board
Develop clear and specific information for applicants on the DFG prioritization scheme in place.	November 06	Production of draft leaflet for consultation by October.	J.R		Existing staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board

KEY RECOMMENDATION R3

Strengthen the corporate approach to diversity by:

- Developing training for front line staff in dealing with people for whom English is not a first language;
- Ensuring that all Councillors receive diversity training;
- Complete diversity and equality impact assessments in the establishment of all plans and strategies;
- Ensure that translation strap lines are included in all leaflets to indicate their availability in other languages and formats; and
- Display prominent posters indicating the provision of interpreting and translation services at all access points.

Proposed Outcome -

- Demonstration of community leadership and to be able to demonstrate that services are being equitably and sensitively;
- Compliance with legislation and positive practice; and
- Increased customer satisfaction from all members of the community.

Target Completion - December 2006

CORPORATE ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Arrangements ⁵
Equalities and Diversity to form an explicit part of the values, key priorities, objectives and vision in the new Council Plan.	Launch of All Inclusive Equalities Scheme by September 2006	Legal Officers to be included in the business planning process to ensure that E and D is being fed into Service Plans.	C. Felton	Ethnic Access Link Equalities and Diversity Forum Disability Access Group	None	Quarterly – Performance Management Board Equality and Diversity Forum Quarterly – PMB

				Scope Theatre In WREG Worc. Rave Equality Council WEG		Disability Access Group Community Consultation Customer Satisfaction Surveys
Provide and complete training for all front line staff on how to deal with people for whom English is not a first language.	Completed and ongoing	Reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of the service	Claire Felton	Ethnic Access Link E and D forum	None	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Develop training for new staff and reminder training for existing staff.	Continuous	Reviewing and evaluating the service	Claire Felton	Ethnic Access Link E and D forum	None	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Write a procedure for all front line staff to follow in dealing with language, cultural, disability, behavioural and other diversity issues.	Guidance written and distributed for clients with language needs. Disability guidance to be made available by the end of the year in line with new disability standards Cultural and behavioural awareness training provided by Theatre in – further training scheduled	Ethnic Link service launched mid June	Claire Felton	Theatre in Scope Disability Access Group E and D Forum Equalities Champions	None	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
HUB to record diversity of customers	All inclusive Equalities Scheme will include action points on redressing this problem	Corporate data collation in respect of Diversity and effective monitoring of same.	Claire Felton	All service departments	None	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Complete diversity training for all councillors.	All training has been offered to members					Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Include diversity in Induction Training and policy for all new staff and councillors.	Ongoing	All inclusive Equalities Scheme	Training Officer and HR and OD			Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Corporate investigation and consideration of	Sept 2006	Launch of All	C.Felton			Quarterly – Performance

training needs upon making equality and diversity a fundamental foundation in the development of all plans and strategies.		Inclusive Equalities Scheme by September 2006				Management Board
Analysis of all leaflets and publications issued by the Council and development of a corporate image and standard within which translation strap lines become a standardised feature.	In hand	Current project to redesign letter head including "signpost"				Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Display posters indicating the provision of interpreting and translation services at all access points.	Completed					Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Review audit and complete work to access of buildings required to meet the Disability Discrimination Act 1995	December 2006	To ensure all public buildings are accessible to people with disabilities	Facilities Manager		Staffing	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
STRATEGIC HOUSING ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Arrangements⁶
Identify whether partner agencies receive diversity training if not explore the possibility of offering the in house diversity training to partners or encourage them to access training independently.	Sept 06	Meetings with partner agencies completed.	AG / JD	OT's BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Basement	Existing staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Receive and analyse diversity breakdown (quarterly) of customers accessing strategic housing services through: BDHT, CAB, WEEAC, NWC&RA	Oct 06	Meetings with partner agencies to agree reporting format.	AC	OT's BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Basement	Existing staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Review all existing BDC strategic Housing documents, pamphlets and application forms to ensure language strap lines are included on all documentation.	August 06		JB JR		Existing staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Record all Strategic Housing Pamphlets on to a CD	Oct 06	Investigate companies to carry out work and Steve Wetherall to design sleeve.	JD		Existing staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Review all existing external providers documents, pamphlets and application forms to	August 06		JB JR	OT's BDHT	Existing staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board

ensure language strap lines are included on all documentation.				CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Basement		
Develop an increased focus on ensuring that domestic violence services are working well and develop plans to provide additional support, commitment and resources to these services.	August 06	Re-modelling of Gateway Refuge and provision of enhanced floating support services for DV. Report to Cabinet August 06.	AC	Stoneham HA Supporting People BDHT	Existing staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board

KEY RECOMMENDATION R4

Improve the approach towards value for money by:

- Setting out a clear corporate strategy on providing value for money;
- Ensuring that service heads have access to good quality information about the costs of service, across all areas;
- Comparing costs with other service providers and ensuring that this information is routinely reported and shared with external partners.

Proposed Outcome -

- To ensure that resources are used more effectively and efficiently;
- To provide better options for service delivery, leading to improved outcomes for service users;
- The delivery of demonstrably effective, value for money services which provided a balance of cost and quality.

Target Completion – December 2006

CORPORATE ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Arrangements ⁷
Develop a value for money strategy that Heads of Service follow in order to demonstrate that the Council is providing value for money.	Sept 06	Strategy agreed by Executive Board	KD/JP	N/A		Annual - Performance Management Board
Incorporate within the business planning process (incorporating budget process) a VFM framework (requirement to investigate VFM of key service areas) – using wherever possible the 'VfM Profiles' report and web-based tool.	Sept 06	Business planning process reviewed	HB/KD	N/A	Existing staff	Annual - Performance Management Board
Training on VFM strategy and framework and revised business planning process	Oct 06	Training provided	HB/KD/JP	N/A		N/A
Heads of Service to demonstrate Value For Money as part of business planning process	Dec 06	Business plans	HoS	N/A	Existing staff	Annually Performance Management Board
Set up a corporate wide VFM annual performance report to the Performance Monitoring Board that advises upon the Councils progress and VFM against key measures in each department. This to incorporate the Annual Efficiency Statement	Dec 06	Performance Report	KD/JP	N/A		Annually Performance Management Board
Deliver procurement training on how to achieve VFM and demonstrate duty of care (EU rules) –	Dec 06	Training provided	JP	N/A		Annually Performance Management Board

included in procurement strategy and manual (under development)						
STRATEGIC HOUSING ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Arrangements⁸
Supply key information on strategic Housing services (with regard to VFM) as part of business planning process on: a) Homelessness, Housing Advice and Housing Register b) Private Sector Housing Services	a) Oct 06 b) Dec 06	Service Business Plan	DH / AC	OT's BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Basement	Existing staff	Annually Performance Management Board
Revise and adjust Strategic Housing Services as appropriate in response to the findings of the assessment carried out	Ongoing	Service Business Plan	AC / JB	OT's BDHT CAB NWC&RA WEEAC Basement	Existing staff	Annually Performance Management Board

KEY RECOMMENDATION R5

Strengthen the approach to providing effective performance management by ensuring that:

- Individual personal development plans are completed within a set timescale linked to the development of corporate and service plans;
- A consistent reporting framework of both local and national performance indicators is established;
- Training needs against the service objectives are established on a regular basis and training is delivered.

Proposed Outcome -

- Enable weaknesses within service delivery to be identified at an early stage;
- Engage all staff in having common objectives for the Council's priorities; and
- Deliver a more effective strategic housing service.

Target Completion – December 2006

CORPORATE ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Arrangements⁹
Develop Council Plan 2007 – 2010 supported by Council Improvement Plan, service business plans, team action plans and PDRs.	31 Dec.06	Council Plan, Service Business Plans, team action plans and PDRs completed.	H. Bennett	N/a	All managers.	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Action to bring PDR's in all departments up to date and meet identified deadlines in future.	31 Dec. 06	Monitoring on an individual manager basis.	J. Pitman	N/a	HR and all managers	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Review Top 45 PIs to reflect Council priorities.	15 Aug. 06	New set updated and reported to PMB.	H. Bennett	N/a	CMT	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Policy Officer to benchmark all of the Council's services with appropriate authorities (using VfM profile tool) and provide managers with clear and consistent guidance on setting appropriate targets. Thus enabling the Council, through supply of consistent information, to reach a balanced understanding of the resources required to achieve continuous improvement towards top quartile performance.	Dec 06	Areas of focus identified.	Policy Officer	N/A		Annually – Performance Management Board

Increase focus on performing as well as the best local authorities and make plans more specific about setting targets that would bring the Council to the same level as top performers.						Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Develop effective monitoring of the service standards that do exist including waiting times at the customer service centre, in responding to letters, and answering telephone calls.						Quarterly – Performance Management Board
STRATEGIC HOUSING ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Arrangements¹⁰
Carry out a 6 monthly review of all Strategic Housing PDR's	July 06	Existing PDRs reviewed and new staff induction PDR's.	AC		Existing staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Supply national and local PI's collated for all strategic housing services.	Quarterly		JB		Existing staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Update the training needs of Strategic Housing staff as part of 6 monthly PDR review.	6 monthly		AC		Existing staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Develop annual monitoring report to Performance Management Board upon the management performance of BDHT and progress in meeting promises to their tenants.	Sept 2006		AC JB	BDHT	Staff	Annual report to Performance Management Board
Strengthen the performance management within Strategic Housing where there is a lack of effective reporting on issues such as - the outturn of development of affordable housing, the performance on providing grants within the private sector housing Strategy. Measure and report on the whole customer experience Re DFG's showing the time taken to complete DFGs from the point of initial contact.	November 2006	Quarterly report to Performance Board on Hsg Strategy Action Plan commencing Oct 06	AC, JR	OT's NWC&RA BDHT	Existing staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Develop a formal mechanism to enable Strategic Housing and Planning to jointly track and monitor the delivery of housing in the district.	November 2006	Monthly meetings between Head of Service for Planning & Environment / Corp Director with Portfolio Holder to ensure he is up to	AC / DH /PS		Existing staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board

		speed with regional housing issues and becomes an Affordable Housing Champion.				
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KEY RECOMMENDATION R6

Improving leadership and support for strategic housing and addressing the needs of vulnerable people by...

- Ensuring that members play a more prominent and pro-active role in influencing regional housing issues;
- Ensure that members are fully involved in developing a strategy for the future of hostel and temporary accommodation in the district;
- Reconsidering the effect of the planning moratorium of the delivery of affordable housing; and
- Working in a more focussed way with officers in seeking to redress the imbalance in the housing market.

Proposed Outcome –

- Better outcomes for people living in temporary accommodation;
- Clearer partnership working with external stakeholders, set on a firm vision for housing in the district; and
- Improved delivery of affordable housing.

Target Completion – March 2007

CORPORATE ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Arrangements ¹¹
Complete consultation and implementation of Supplementary Planning Documents on Affordable Housing and Managing Housing Supply to enable members to become more actively involved.	Feb 07		DH		Staff recruitment issues	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
CEO of BDHT to become member of the newly revised LSP Board to raise affordable housing agenda from major RSL aspect.	Achieved					Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Monthly meetings between Head of Service for Planning & Environment / Corp Director with Portfolio Holder to ensure he is up to speed with regional housing issues and becomes an	August 2006	Agreed schedule of meetings	PS		Existing staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board

Affordable Housing Champion.						
STRATEGIC HOUSING ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Arrangements¹²
Develop the existing Housing Strategy Officer Steering Group to include Member representation to address key issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hostel re-modelling • Planning Moratorium • Balancing Housing Market 	Ongoing	First meeting by Mid September	AC	BDHT WEEAC CAB Baseline NWCRA	Existing Staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Develop a Strategic Housing Roadshow to provide District and Parish Council Member training including “ Understanding and raising the profile of affordable housing”, new initiatives, homelessness and private sector housing and Lifeline.	Ongoing Develop a programme of visits to PC's by October	1 st DC presentation completed March 06. Stoke PC carried out May 06..	Strategic Housing Team	BDHT CAB Baseline	Existing Staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Progress Hostel de-commissioning / re-modelling strategy for hostels and submit to Cabinet.	Sept 06	Mothballing Wythall Hostel.	AC PS	BDHT	Capital funding Impact on B&B?	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Arrange 'learning from others' visit for Members to other local authorities.	Oct 06	Good practice identified and agreement on changes at BDC	AC PS	TBD	Housing Team	Quarterly – Performance Management Board

ADDITIONAL ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THE FULL REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMISSION

CORPORATE ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Arrangements
Address the capacity issues within the Planning Department	Ongoing		DH		Staff recruitment issues	Quarterly – Performance Management Board

STRATEGIC HOUSING ACTIONS	Target Completion Date	Milestone	Lead Officer	Partner Organisation Involved	Resources	Monitoring Arrangements¹³
Develop clear written guidance to support the planning function on the type, quality and layout of affordable and other social housing being developed in the district	Summer 2007		DH		Staff recruitment issues	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
BDC to continue to work in partnership with BDHT, CAB and Baseline, other RSL.s to reduce use of temporary accommodation for homeless families	On going	<p>Reduced reliance on hostel accommodation and reduction in time spent in temp accommodation.</p> <p>Target one hostel de- commissioned by Nov 06.</p> <p>Introduction of new floating support / prevention scheme by Nov 06.</p> <p>Maximised use of nomination rights to target homeless.</p>	A.Coel	BDC/BDHT	LA Grant. Staff Time.	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Monitor levels and reasons for homelessness reported by CAB and BDHT to improve prevention services.	Quarterly	<p>Better understanding of Homelessness.</p> <p>Reduced use of temporary accommodation.</p>	J.B	BDC/CAB/BDHT	Staff Time	Quarterly – Performance Management Board

Investigate provision of a freephone service for homeless applicants to access BDHT and out of hours service.	October 2006	Budget consideration by Jan 2007. Introduce interim call back policy by July 06.	JB		Existing Staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Re submit budget bid for funding support for the post of County Rural Housing Enabler.	Autumn 2007	Budget consideration Jan 2008. Interim financial support is provided by BDHT.	AC		Existing Staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Fully investigate the benefits of implementing a private sector leasing scheme for Bromsgrove whereby the Council or an RSL provides a defined management service to private landlords in return for the use of private rented properties to be used to meet the Council's nominees.	January 2007	Report for officer / member consideration.	JD		Existing Staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Review and strengthen the SLA for Hostel management with greater specification of number of management visits.	September 2006	Improved management regime, supplemented by already implemented higher degree of monitoring / visits by Strategic Housing Staff.	JB AC	BDHT	Existing Staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Develop and implement a Rent Deposit / private tenancy scheme for over 25's.	November 2006	Commencement of new Housing Initiatives Officer. Cabinet report to Members by Oct 06	JD	Baseline CAB BDHT	Existing Staff Funding - £10k pa	Quarterly – Performance Management Board

Enhance the RSL property data base and monitoring of nomination rights and negotiate higher levels where possible.	October 2006	Improved feedback information through the HIP information gathering process.	AG	All RSL's	Existing Staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Re-submit a bid for provision of a Homelessness 'Spend To Save' Scheme (previously turned down in 06/07 budget process)	October 2006	Cabinet report for consideration by Sept 2006.	JB AC		Existing Staff Funding £5k - £10k pa	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Review and examine the use of Discretionary Housing Benefit Payments to prevent homelessness.	September 2006	Presentation from Coventry CC. July 31 st 2006. Cross departmental panel to consider cases.	AC, PS		Existing Staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Address the lack of written protocols in place at BDHT for joint working with external advice and support agencies in the provision of homelessness services.	December 2006	County Homelessness Officers Group approved protocols (when completed) to be considered for adoption by BDC/BDHT.	JB AC	BDHT	Existing Staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Licence all HMO's that require mandatory licensing to comply with new legislation.	Ongoing	Targets of initial application to production of Licence – 3 weeks. Any subsequent applications – 2 weeks.	JR, KSF		Existing Staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board

Agree schedule of regular review meetings with NWC&RA to monitor annual spend against budgets for DFG and Discretionary Grants.	July 2006	Improved spend against grant budgets.	JR	NWC&RA	Existing Staff	Quarterly – Performance Management Board
Identify empty homes and work to achieve increased usage and performance against BVPI 64.	Ongoing	Commencement of duties of the Housing Initiatives Officer.	JD			Quarterly – Performance Management Board

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE CABINET

2ND AUGUST 2006

IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Roger Hollingworth
Responsible Head of Service	Kevin Dicks, Acting Chief Executive

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present for approval the Improvement Plan (July 2006 – June 2007) of the Council which replaces the existing Recovery Plan.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Executive Cabinet:
- 2.1.1 Endorse the proposed Improvement Plan;
- 2.1.2 Note the position with regard to the CPA and the potential outcome;
- 2.1.3 Request Council to release £350,000 from reserves in order to increase the capacity of the Council to deliver the Improvement Plan; and
- 2.1.4 Approve for inclusion within the Medium Term Financial Plan the additional resource requirements.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council underwent a Corporate Governance inspection in October 2001 which found there were significant failings in the Council. The Council then underwent a re-inspection in March 2003 which concluded that whilst limited improvements had occurred since the previous inspection, progress was still insufficient to reach a satisfactory level and significant challenges were unresolved. In particular, Inspectors highlighted the following key concerns:
- strategic corporate objectives and priorities based on a Community Plan;
 - strategic management and leadership capability and capacity;
 - member-to-member and member-senior officer relations;
 - day-to-day routine financial management and systems;
 - a robust medium term budget aligned with the objectives and priorities of the Council's Corporate Plan.
- 3.2 Senior elected Members recognised the scale of the task and the need to be more open to external guidance and support. The Improvement and Development Agency (I&DeA) was engaged to assess and recommend an Improvement Plan and Senior Management Structure in response to the findings of the CGI report. Moreover, the Audit Commission decided to augment the process of inspection and support by establishing regular quarterly Corporate Governance Inspection monitoring meetings the first of which was held in September 2003.

- 3.3 In June 2004 the Council decided to be proactive and request Voluntary Engagement with the Government in order to secure guidance and support towards achieving progressive improvement in the performance of the Council. The Audit Commission also accepted the Council's request to delay the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) scheduled for September 2004 and the Council accepted a notional rating of "Poor"
- 3.4 Voluntary Engagement reflected a new self-awareness on the part of Members and Officers to tackle long-standing and deep-seated weaknesses within the Council. In response to a letter from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister outlining the Minister's concerns, a comprehensive Recovery Plan was agreed and approved by the Minister in November 2004. The Minister also appointed a Lead Official and Monitoring Board to oversee implementation of the two-year plan.
- 3.5 The Recovery Plan was established to address the Ministers main concerns as follows:
- stabilise the urgent financial control and budgetary issues;
 - provide clear strategic leadership, particularly in terms of:
 - effective operation of full council and its various Committees, with wide member engagement;
 - further improved senior offer / member collaboration;
 - partnership working, notably with regard to the development of the LSP and delivery of the Community Plan;
 - production and implementation of an up to date Corporate Plan with a clear alignment between corporate priorities and the financial planning process.
 - produce and implement a comprehensive organisational development strategy;
 - develop the essential building blocks of effective performance management, risk management and procurement processes;
 - produce and implement comprehensive strategies for communication and consultation
- 3.6 The Recovery Plan is on target to be delivered in accordance with the agreed timescales of March 2007. Members and officers identified the need to review the recovery plan as it was felt to be too inwardly focused and needed to concentrate more on improving service performance and outcomes for local people. To this end we have been working with our new Lead Official However over the last couple of months to develop an Improvement Plan.

4. IMPROVEMENT PLAN

- 4.1 In order to develop the high level areas for inclusion in the Improvement Plan an "away day" was held on Saturday 24th June, this included the Executive Cabinet and the Corporate Management Team (CMT). This event was primarily organised and run by officers and members from the Council however Annie Shepperd (Chief Executive of Walsall) supported by a small team of colleagues provided challenge on the day. The general feeling of all participants was that the day was a success and the approach adopted by Annie was extremely useful. The day was challenging, focussed on business but was also both enabling and empowering.

- 4.2 The main headlines of the Improvement Plan are as follows:
- Corporate and external improvements
 - Improved image / perception of the Council
 - Effective risk managed communication and consultation, internal/external
 - Modern inclusive Council engaging all communities including minority groups.
 - Clear Strategic Direction for Council Developed
 - Progress Towards Tangible Outcomes from Partnership Working
 - Public feel involved in democratic process and able to influence decision-making about what is happening in their neighbourhood.
 - Improve Customer and Performance Culture of Council
 - Planning and Environment
 - Re-development of Bromsgrove Town Centre
 - Re-development of Longbridge Site
 - Improved Housing for the District
 - Improved Planning Service
 - Culture and Community
 - Achieve Suitable Inspection Score for Cultural Services, improve Council's approach to Community Safety, in particular, domestic violence and reporting of racial incidents
 - Street Scene and Waste Management
 - Improved Streetscene and improved collections.
 - E-Government and Customer Services
 - Improved Access to Services Electronically
 - Reduction in Number of Complaints.
 - Improved Customer Service – Customer Service Centre
 - Improved Customer Service – Whole Council
 - Human Resources and Organisational Development
 - Improved Governance
 - Suitably Skilled Workforce
 - Improved Performance in Key HR Measures
 - Financial Services
 - Improved Financial Management and an Improved Benefits Service

4.3 Since the event on 24th June the CMT have been working hard to develop the detailed improvement plan (Appendix A) the main headlines of which were agreed by the Performance Management Board at its meeting on 14th July 2006. The Improvement Plan will be submitted to the next Board meeting for fuller consideration.

4.4 The timescales as set out in the Improvement Plan were established with a view to undergoing a CPA in December 2007 and achieving a fair rating. However it is unlikely that the Council will be allowed to delay a CPA for this long as we are the only Council in the country not to have undergone an inspection. The likely date for a CPA is June 2007; however this very much depends on how the Council progresses over the next few months and could be sooner. It is also worth noting that if the Council does undergo a CPA in June 2007 then, because of the backward looking nature of the

methodology, it is unlikely that the Council will receive more than a “weak” rating. It is essential therefore that the Council delivers against the Improvement Plan over the next few months in order to demonstrate a positive direction of travel.

4.5 The draft Improvement Plan was presented to the Government Monitoring Board on 18th July where it was generally accepted as being a robust plan for improvement; however it was felt to be challenging in terms of what was trying to be achieved in the timescales. The plan was felt to be more outwardly focused and targeting PI’s that were in areas of concern.

4.6 It is recommended that Members endorse the Improvement Plan as set out at Appendix A.

5. ORGANISING TO DELIVER SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

5.1 I have commented earlier in the report about the Improvement Plan being more outwardly focussed and concentrates more on improving service performance and outcomes for local people. It is therefore essential that we organise to deliver service improvement and to ensure that this can be sustained. With regard to officers it is essential that everyone is clear as to who is responsible for what. This is made even more critical with an Acting Chief Executive. The structure with responsibilities is summarised below with more detail provided at Appendix B.

5.2 The Acting Chief Executive will directly manage the following staff:

- Corporate Director (Services)
- Assistant Chief Executive
- Head of Financial Services (Section 151 Officer)
- Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)
- Head of e-Government and Customer Services
- Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development
- PA to Chief Executive / Leader

It has been decided, at this stage, not to backfill the Corporate Director (Resources) post in its entirety (see later in report).

The Corporate Director (Services) will directly manage the following staff;

- Head of Street Scene and Waste Management
- Head of Culture and Community
- Head of Planning and Environment
- Economic Development Manager (due to importance of Longbridge and the Town Centre redevelopment).

- 5.3. Delivery of the Improvement Plan will form part of the part of the developing Performance Management Framework as follows:

Figure 1: Performance Management Framework



Note: The Improvement Plan will form part of Service Business plans for 2007/08 however from an individuals Performance Review and Development (PR&D) perspective it will be a main target for delivery with immediate effect.

- 5.4 Delivery of the Improvement Plan will be monitored at CMT on a monthly basis. Individual areas will be monitored at monthly one to one supervision sessions, however this will be supplemented by immediate feedback on areas of concern.
- 5.5 In order to ensure delivery of the Improvement Plan it is essential that we involve as many staff as possible. We will ensure that Senior Managers (next level down from Heads of Service) are fully engaged in the process. In order to ensure that as many staff are aware of and engaged with the delivery of the improvement plan we will also continue to use the staff champions (who were identified as part of work to formulate the council priorities).
- 5.6 In addition to the above it is accepted that we need to work better together and break down any barriers that exist between departments. An example of this is the running of PI Clinics by Legal Services where officers were working together to identify areas (in this instance enforcement) to improve performance.
- 5.7 It is essential that improvements to the Council are driven from the top of the organisation and I have outlined above how this will be undertaken from an officer point of view. From a Member perspective the Cabinet need to “own” the Improvement Plan and to be individually (portfolio holder) and collectively accountable. In order to ensure this the Improvement Plan will be reported to Performance Management Board (PMB) on a monthly basis and portfolio holders will attend to highlight performance and address any areas of concern. By reporting through PMB this will ensure cross party challenge of the delivery of the Improvement Plan.

6. CAPACITY

6.1 In order to deliver the Improvement Plan there is the need to increase capacity, in certain areas within the organisation. This is summarised as follows together with the approximate cost:

Description	Note	Amount 2006/07	Amount 2007/08	Ongoing costs
Corporate				
➤ Mentoring for Acting Chief Executive	1	65,000	18,000	0
➤ Equality and Diversity	2	10,000	10,000	10,000
➤ Access audit	3	5,800	0	0
➤ Communications Manager	4	28,000	42,000	42,000
➤ Additional resource to drive improvement	5	28,000	42,000	42,000
➤ Increased frequency of Council Chat	6	5,000	10,000	10,000
➤ Inspection preparation	7	10,000	0	0
➤ Peer assessment	8	5,000	0	0
➤ Support for Community Engagement agenda	9	8,000	0	0
➤ Hit squads	10	20,000	10,000	0
➤ Improvement Pot	11	80,000	0	0
Financial Services				
➤ Developing a VFM Strategy	12	15,000	0	0
➤ Embedding VFM approach	13	29,400	40,400	0
Planning and Environmental Service				
➤ External support	14	12,000	0	0
e-Government and Customer Services				
➤ 2 additional Customer Service Advisors	15	31,000	46,000	46,000
Sub-Total		352,200	218,400	150,000
Less: savings from Corporate Director (Resources post) and Risk Management Officer	16		(125,900)	(126,000)
Total		352,200	92,500	24,000

Notes:

1 I have taken on the role of Acting Chief Executive however the DCLG have insisted that I have a strong mentor in order to ensure that I can develop into the role. This is something that I welcome. The Mentors role is to give advice and support from a more experienced Chief Officer with the aim of improving my capacity. The mentor will also provide challenge, support to understand difficult situations and to offer solutions.

I am currently being mentored by Annie Shepperd (Chief Executive of Walsall). To date there have been 4 face to face sessions (including the improvement planning day held at BDC offices on 24th June). The sessions have been extremely useful and have covered such issues as:

- Focus on Performance Improvement
- Managerial / Leadership capacity – additional resource
- Local Neighbourhood Partnerships / Engagement – initial session included Leaders of both Bromsgrove and Walsall
- Planning Service – both PI's and wider issues about delegations / training etc.
- Get out and meet the staff – understand their issues but use it to demonstrate leadership style – felt initially that this was more important than partners.

Annie Shepperd's new role as Chief Executive of Southwark is unlikely to allow her much time to dedicate to this role the Council has approached Bill Roots to see whether he can undertake this role. It is anticipated that the Council will need this support for a period of 12 – 18 months. Appropriate protocols will be agreed when the new mentor is in place.

- 2 A key element of the Improvement Plan is the Council's approach to Equality and Diversity and ensuring that it is embedded within the Council. The funds requested for 2006/07 are to enable consultation to be undertaken on the All Inclusive Equalities Statement, the request for 2007/08 is to address any issues of concern.
- 3 To all also help address the equality and diversity agenda it is essential that the Council undertakes an access audit to its building. This may result in a requirement to undertake additional works.
- 4 One of the main areas for improvement within the Council is still Communications and Consultation and in order to address this it is proposed that we appoint a Communications Manager.
- 5 Performance Improvement is a significant concern within the Council and it is therefore proposed to increase the resources in this area. This includes employment of another Performance Officer and increasing the Assistant Chief Executives remit to include responsibility for challenging Heads of Service performance.
- 6 As mentioned earlier we need to improve communication and as such it is felt that we should increase the frequency of Council Chat to 4 times per year.
- 7 Whilst we are looking to increase the resource available to the Assistant Chief Executive it is felt that some additional resource is required to prepare for the number of inspections that the Council faces over the next few months.
- 8 In preparation for the CPA we will need to undertake a Peer Assessment.

- 9 The Council needs to improve with regard to Community Engagement and this is to enable the Leader to receive expert advice from an improving Council.
- 10 In order to drive service improvement in areas of concern it is felt that we need a sum of money to be able to bring in expertise from outside to “challenge” our service delivery processes.
- 11 The Government Monitoring Board are still concerned at not backfilling Corporate Director (Resources) post however it is felt that this post wouldn’t directly contribute to the delivery of the Improvement Plan, however in order to ensure we can react quickly to areas of concern it is requested that £80,000 be allocated to an Improvement Pot.
- 12 A key area of improvement is value for money and it is felt that we require some expert resource to develop an overarching approach and strategy to VFM. This is something that would have originally fallen to the Corporate Director (Resources).
- 13 We need to embed VFM within the Council and it is therefore proposed to appoint an officer on a 2 year fixed term contract. The remit of the post will be to benchmark the costs of each service area with other authorities and to help deliver the VFM Strategy.
- 14 We have engaged officers from Walsall to help address not only the Performance in planning but also to look at our processes and policies so that we can ensure the improvements are sustainable. They will also look to see how and if we can balance the moratorium with the Government agenda.
- 15 Performance at the Customer Service Centre is still a concern and we are looking to address this by ensuring that the back office and the front office work together better. The County are due to “fund” two additional posts at the CSC however they will not do this until performance improves and we take on more of the County services. It is therefore suggested that we increase the staffing establishment by 2 posts and review the position when the County decide on increased funding.
- 16 Within the restructure it had originally been anticipated that we needed a post of Risk Management officer however after further consideration it is felt that this can be addressed as part of another officers duties and therefore a saving can be offered. It is assumed that the costs of the Corporate Director (Resources) in 2007/08 can offset the costs. However this will need to be reviewed when the post of Chief Executive is resolved.

It is recommended that Executive Cabinet endorse the proposals for increased capacity and request Council to release £350,000 of balances in 2006/07 and include the implications for 2007/08 and ongoing costs in the review of the Medium Term Financial Plan.

- 6.2 As mentioned earlier the Government Monitoring Board is still “nervous” over the capacity within the organisation, however it is probably worth noting that we have increased management capacity over the last few

months and only since July have we had a permanent management team in place.

6.3 The restructuring addressed the following:

- Creation of the Head of Financial Services position
- Creation of the Head of HR & OD position
- Increased resources in HR & OD
- Additional resources in Legal Services
- Creation of the post of Assistant Chief Executive (only filled since November 2006)
- Filling the post of Corporate Director (Services) – filled permanently since November 2006
- Additional resources in Revenues and Benefits
- Rationalisation of structures in Accountancy and Audit and better quality staff as a result

6.4 As identified above we have already increased resources / capacity in HR & OD however we have further increased this with regard to the following:

- Member development (funded by CBF)
- Workforce planning (funded by CBF)
- Job Evaluation – support from WMLGA (budget in place)

6.5 Given the above areas where I feel we are lacking in capacity I do not, at this present time, feel it is necessary to backfill for the Corporate Director (Resources) post however I suggest that we keep this under review.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The Council had Revenue balances of £2.282m as at 31st March 2006 however during the course of the 2005/06 the additional use of reserves was approved. The outturn for the year will be reported to PMB in August and it is likely that some of the original use of reserves may still be required (£277,000). This could reduce the amount of reserves to £2.005m.

7.2 Within the Medium Term Financial Plan it has already been approved that £321,000 and £500,000 of balances will be used in 2006/07 and 2007/08 respectively. This would further reduce the balances to £1,184,000.

7.3 If approved the release of £350,000 would reduce this to £834,000 which is £16,000 below what has previously been assessed as the minimum level of balances. However given that the amount required to cover the actions agreed as part of the 2005/06 has not been finalised (£277,000) and that the amount requested for approval to address the improvement plan includes an Improvement Pot which it is hoped won't be needed it is felt that this is affordable however it will place increased pressure on the Medium Term Financial Plan.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None

9. CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

9.1 One of the Council's priorities is to get out of engagement – the proposals contained within this report are key to that.

10.1 RISK MANAGEMENT

10.1 If the Council does not embrace and deliver the Improvement Plan there is a significant risk of the Government intervening.

10.2 In accordance with the Risk Management Strategy a separate risk register will be developed for the Improvement Plan. Risks for each action have been included within the improvement plan and these, together with the mitigating actions, will form the basis of the risk register. However it is felt that most of these risks will be addressed by the investment of additional resources.

11. OTHER SUB HEADINGS

11.1 Procurement Issues

None

11.2 Personnel Implications

Covered in the report.

11.3 Governance/Performance Management Considerations

Key to addressing the actions needed to get out of recovery.

11.4 Community Safety Considerations

None

11.5 Policy Considerations

None

11.6 Environmental Considerations

None

11.7 Equalities Implications

Actions contained within Improvement Plan are central to addressing the Equalities and Diversity agenda.

Background Papers

- Recovery Plan
- Improvement planning day
- Council Plan

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Appendix A



Improvement Plan – July Update

Corporate & External Improvements					
1.	Expected Outcome	Improved Image/Perception of the Council			
Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
1.1	Upward trend in public perception from baseline set through first wave of surveys (satisfaction survey).	Implementation of customer measures through a new outsourced customer panel, with two waves of surveying complete	31 December 2006 (Wave1) 30 September 2007 (Wave 2)	HB	Budget in place for Customer Panel and staff training.
1.2	Ensure regular consultation with the public on key decisions for the Council.	Establish customer panel. Consultation Policy and Guidance for managers to support use of Panel (including views of young people)	31 July 2006. 31 August 2006.	HB	Budget in place for Customer Panel and staff training. Policy in draft.
1.5	Modernise Council brand	Undertake a review of the Council's marketing, graphic design and reprographics function and develop brand.	30 September 2006	HB	Potential creation of Graphics / Marketing Team dependent on review by I&DeA
1.4	Increase the percentage of positive articles in the local press.	Develop a more pro-active approach to media coverage and positive relationship with the local media Improved service delivery to reduce negative stories. Identify and celebrate success	30 November 2006 See rest of Improvement Plan. On-going.	HB CMT HB	Appoint new Communications Manager. See rest of Improvement Plan. Appoint new Communications Manager

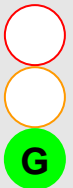
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1.3	Increase the % of employees from minority ethnic communities (BV17a)	Conduct survey of staff (asking staff to fill in gaps in information and analyse through payroll system).	31 August 2006	JP	Head of HR & OD Senior HR Advisor All Managers All staff To be funded from services
		New advertising brand to be developed to promote the Council as a modern, open employer thereby attracting more diverse applicants.	31 August 2006	JP	
		Production and analysis of recruitment statistics collected.	31 August 2006	JP	Head of HR&OD Senior HR Advisor Recruitment/Advertising Agency - to be funded from services CMT To be funded from training budget
		Ongoing training on equal opportunities and recruitment procedures	Ongoing	JP	

Progress Update



Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
1.1	Public Perception														
1.1.1	Award Customer Panel contract.	HB													Price above budget.

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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
1.1.2	Agree focus groups for development of customer standards.	HB													Getting public to attend.
1.1.3	Undertake focus groups.	HB													Political sensitivity.
1.1.4	Develop questions for first Panel survey.	HB													Information on priorities not ready.
1.1.5	Undertake survey.	HB													Problem with contractor.
1.1.6	Feedback results.	HB													Delays by contractor.
1.1.7	Repeat survey.	HB													Budget for 2007/08
1.2	Regular consultation														
1.2.1	Award Customer Panel Contract.	HB													Price above budget.
1.2.2	Agree Consultation Guidance for managers.	HB													Not agreed.
1.2.3	Re-fresh Department's Consultation Plans for next 6 months.	HB													Not completed due to other pressures.
1.2.4	Link requirements to Customer Panel.	HB													Lack of manager understanding of the Panel.
1.2.5	Undertake consultations as required.	HB													Managers not prepared to use Panel.
1.2.6	Departments develop	HB													Business Planning

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	2007/08 consultation plans.															timetable delayed.
1.2.7	Work with contractor to enable 2007/08 consultation plans.	HB														Problems with contractor.
Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks	
1.5	Brand															
1.5.1	I&DeA complete interviews with staff.	HB													Delay by I&DeA	
1.5.2	Draft Style Guide and review completed.	HB													As above.	
1.5.3	Agree actions with CMT.	HB													Unable to agree.	
1.5.4	Agree Style Guide with Leader.	HB													Unable to agree.	
1.5.5	Further actions are dependent on outcome of review.	HB													Costs of implementation.	
1.4	Positive Press Articles															
1.4.1	Agree Job description for Communications Manager.	HB													Budget not available.	
1.4.2	Advertise post.	HB													Poor response.	
1.4.3	Appoint Communications Manager.	HB													Paperwork delays.	
1.4.4	Manager starts.	HB													Change of circumstance.	
1.4.5	More pro-active approach developed by manager.	HB													Poor appointment.	
1.4.6	Press Officer to have	HB													Lack of mgmt	

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	monthly one to ones with each HoS.															supervision.
1.4.7	Press to be a standing item on weekly SMT agenda.	HB														Other pressing business overrides consideration.

Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
1.4.8	ACE to meet with Press Officer every Monday.	MP													As above.
1.3	% workforce BME														
1.3.1	Establish accurate information on workforce profile by sending out pro-forma asking for verification/identification of missing information	JP													Lack of completion.
1.3.2	Start analysing recruitment/HR data on equal opportunities information	JP													Lack of information.
1.3.3	Agree and adopt new corporate employer advertising style	JP													Lack of agreement.
1.3.4	Run equal ops training programme on an ongoing basis.	JP													Non attendance.
1.3.5	New application form for recruitment – removal of personal information	JP													Delay in implementation – managers getting used to forms

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Corporate & External Improvements					
2.	Expected Outcome	Effective risk managed communication and consultation, internal/external			
Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
2.1	Number of press releases used for “banana skins”. Number of press releases used (general)	Executive forward plan required including identification of communication risks. Development of communication Plans for “banana skins”.	31 August 2006 As and when “banana skins” identified.	KD HB	CEO Office. Press Officer.
2.2	% of staff who receive Core Brief. % of staff who know what the Council’s Vision and priorities are.	Employee Survey to check. Agree and publish new Vision and Priorities.	31 January 2007. September Full Council.	HB/JP	Customer Panel. Corporate Communications, Policy and Performance Team.
2.3	% of public who remember seeing Council Chat (name to change). % of public who think the Council is improving.	4 X Council Chat with cross party Member panel to oversee its work.	31 December 2006 and then every three months.	HB	Increased cost of moving to 4 issues and making sure whole district is covered.

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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
2.1	Risk Mgmt of Press														
2.1.1	Establish forward plan.	KD													Overtaken by immediate events.
2.1.2	Monitor plan each month at CMT.	KD													Establishing as part of culture.
2.1.3	Develop communication plans for any “banana skins”.	HB													Capacity to respond.
2.2	Staff Communication														
2.2.1	Continue to send out Core Brief.	HB													Capacity.
2.2.2	Establish staff champions group to improve translation of corporate messages.	HB/JP													Interest from staff.
2.2.3	Launch new Vision.	KD/HB													Energy levels.
2.2.4	Undertake Employee Survey to check whether message received.	HB/JP													Response rate.
2.3	Council Chat														

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2.3.1	Communications Manager in post.	HB														Failure to appoint.
2.3.2	Member's editorial Panel established.	HB														Members unable to agree.
2.3.3	First new edition published.	HB														Budget not available.
2.3.4	Second new edition published.	HB														Budget not available.
Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks	
2.3.5	Third new edition in draft.	HB														Budget not available.

Corporate & External Improvements

3	Expected Outcome	Modern inclusive Council engaging all communities including minority groups.				
Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources	
3.1	Level 2 of Equality Scheme (BV2a)	Diversity objectives (based on consultation with designated community, staff and stakeholder groups) have been translated into action plans contained within business plans, with specific targets so that progress can be monitored.	31 March 2008	CF	Budget will be required to address aspects of equalities e.g. BV156, increased consultation and DDA Audit	

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3.2	All inclusive Race Equality Scheme launched and consulted on.	Launch of consultation by 30 th September – to close 18 th November. Scheme to be formally launched on 4 th December 2006	04 December 2006	CF/HB	Resources required to ensure meaningful and effective consultation process
3.3	Customer Panel includes appropriate BME/disability/other representation.	Panel to be representative of District's population.	30 November 2006	HB	Budget may be required to ensure additional Panel recruitment.

Progress Update	
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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
3.1	Equality Standard														
3.1.1	BVPI 2a quarterly assessment.	CF													Lack of capacity.
3.1.2	Revise 2a working certificate.	CF													Lack of capacity.
3.1.3	Impact Assessment surgeries.	CF													Lack of engagement.
3.1.4	AIES to Leaders.	CF													Lack of Member engagement.
3.1.5	AIES to Cabinet.	CF													Lack of Member engagement.
3.1.6	AIES to full council.	CF													Lack of Member engagement.

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3.1.7	AIES consultation launch - 1/10 to 18/11/2006.	CF														Lack of attendees.
3.1.8	AIES formal launch 4 th December 2006.	CF														Lack of capacity.
3.1.9	Implementing AIES.	CF														Lack of capacity and engagement.
3.1.10	Planning 1 st annual review and revision of AIES.	CF														Lack of capacity.

Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
3.1.11	Input to Council results.	CF													Lack of planning.
3.2	Race Equality Scheme														
3.2.1	BVPI 2b quarterly assessment	CF													Lack of capacity.
3.2.2	Impact Assessment surgeries	CF													Lack of engagement.
3.2.3	AIES to Leaders	CF													Lack of Member engagement.
3.2.4	AIES to Cabinet	CF													Lack of Member engagement.
3.2.5	AIES to full council	CF													Lack of Member engagement.
3.2.6	AIES consultation launch - 1/10 to 18/11/2006	CF													Lack of Member engagement.
3.2.7	AIES formal launch 4 th December 2006	CF													Lack of capacity.
3.2.8	Implementing AIES	CF													Lack of capacity.
3.2.9	Planning 1 st annual review	CF													Lack of capacity.

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	and revision of AIES																	
3.2.10	Input to Council results.	CF																Lack of planning.
3.3	BME representation																	
3.3.1	Award Customer Panel contract.	HB																Price higher than budget.
3.3.2	Recruit to Panel.	HB																Difficulty in recruiting.
3.3.3	Undertake first survey.	HB																Problems with contractor.

Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
3.3.4	Survey every 6 months thereafter.	HB													Problems with contractor.

Corporate & External Improvements

4.	Expected Outcome	Clear Strategic Direction for Council Developed				
Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources	
4.1	Improvement plan approved by Executive Cabinet and Government Monitoring Board (GMB).	Revise existing recovery plan to reflect new priorities.	18 July 2006 (GMB)	CMT/Cabinet	Addressing particular issues within the Improvement Plan will require additional resources – these will be quantified and submitted to Cabinet in August.	

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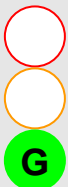


Improvement Plan – July Update

4.2	Council Plan 2007/2010 agreed.	Develop Council Plan 2007/2010 using external facilitation and balanced scorecard. Positive feedback from Progress Assessment.	November Council	SMT/Cabinet	Budget in place and priorities agreed,
4.3	Effective feedback from partners and public on development of Plan and communication of.	Meetings with key partners and feedback of results.	31 July 2006	SMT/Cabinet	SMT/Cabinet time.
4.4	Effective feedback from staff on development of Plan and communication of.	Staff champions appointed. Feedback to staff against points raised.	30 June 2006 31 July 2006	HB HB	Corporate Communications, Policy and Performance Team.

Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
4.5	Progress Assessment identifies clear sense of strategic direction and appropriate rate of progress towards SMART targets.	Self assessment written early and evidence compiled.	31 August 2006	HB	Buy in support.

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Improvement Plan – July Update

Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
4.1	Improvement Plan														
4.1.1	Agreed by GMB.	KD													Lack of agreement.
4.1.2	Agreed by Cabinet.	RH													Funding for plan not agreed.
4.1.3	Communicated to staff.	HB													Message lost in translation.
4.1.4	Reported to Full Council.	RH													Not agreed.
4.1.5	Monthly monitoring at CMT and bi-monthly at GMB.	KD													Slippage.

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Improvement Plan – July Update

Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
4.2	Council Plan														
4.2.1	Write up balanced scorecard.	HB													Capacity.
4.2.2	Further develop measures.	HB													HoS availability.
4.2.3	Agree with CMT.	HB													Disagreement on priorities.
4.2.4	Agree with Cabinet and feed into budget process.	HB													Disagreement on priorities.
4.2.5	Report to Full Council.	HB													Disagreement on priorities.
4.3	Partners and Public														
4.3.1	CEO and Leader to meet with partners.	KD													Poor relationships.
4.3.2	Feedback to partners on results of away day.	KD													Priorities will not match.
4.3.3	Send partners copy of approved Council Plan.	HB													Capacity.
4.3.4	Stakeholder Forum.	HB													Poor attendance.
4.3.5	Separate meeting for Equalities Forum on feedback	HB													Poor attendance.
4.4	Staff														
4.4.1	Listen to staff champions views.	HB													Lack of engagement from staff.

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Improvement Plan – July Update

4.4.2	Feedback to champions on outcomes of away day.	HB														Lack of engagement from staff.
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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
4.4.3	Work with champions on keeping the message current.	HB													Loss of interest.

Corporate & External Improvements

5	Expected Outcome	Progress Towards Tangible Outcomes from Partnership Working			
Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
5.1	LSP priorities on target to be delivered.	New LSP Board established, with performance management and project management framework in place around four identified priorities i.e. town centre redevelopment, affordable housing, Longbridge and LAA.	LSP Board, on-going.	SMT Leader	Corporate Communications, Policy and Performance Team.
5.2	LSP Board members give positive feedback on Council's improvement.	Partners gaining feedback on what the Council's priorities are and Council engaging with partners.	31 January 2007	SMT Leader	Corporate Communications, Policy and Performance Team.
5.3	Council can demonstrate value of partnership working in relation to its agenda and to partners' agendas.	Each Cabinet Member to engage with 3/5 most important partners.	31 October 2006	SMT Leader	CEO and Leader
5.4	Positive feedback from annual stakeholder meeting.	Set up meeting.	30 September 2006	SMT Leader	Corporate Communications, Policy and Performance Team.

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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
5.1	LSP Priorities														
5.1.1	Progress reports on priority projects to LSP Board.	HB													Lack of partnership working amongst Board.
5.1.2	Progress reports to LSP Board with performance indicators.	HB													Lack of accountability to elected Members.
5.1.3	Annual report to LSP Board and to PMB.	HB													Capacity.
5.2	LSP Board Feedback														
5.2.1	Leader and CEO to meet with partners.	KD													Priorities of organizations differ.
5.2.2	Leader and CEO to attend LSP Board.	KD													Local Government re-organisation.
5.3	Value of Partnerships														
5.3.1	Series of meetings established.	KD													Lack of capacity.
5.3.2	Meetings held.	KD													Lack of agreement.

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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
5.4	Stakeholder Meeting														
5.4.1	Meeting agenda and format agreed by LSP Board.	HB													Lack of agreement.
	Meeting invites sent out.	HB													Lack of capacity.
	Meeting takes place.	HB													Lack of attendance.

Corporate & External Improvements

6.	Expected Outcome	Public feel involved in democratic process and able to influence decision-making about what is happening in their neighbourhood.			
Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
6.1	Local community groups reporting positively about the Council.	Implementation of a new approach to neighbourhood management in conjunction with our key partner agencies.	30 April 2007	SMT	Funds from County for pilot and/or budget bid.

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Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
6.2	PACT. Good attendance levels, evidenced of corrective action and support by Council	<p>Review the PACT process in the light of experience to date to ensure it meets community and partners needs and is linked to the proposed new approach to neighbourhood management.</p> <p>Ensure that the priorities arising from PACT are linked to the CDRP Tasking process so that a strategic as well as a local approach will be taken to dealing with the issues arising from the meetings.</p>	30 September 2007	HB	Possible resource implication as a result of the review.
Progress Update					

Ref	Action	Lead													Risks	
			Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.		
6.1	Neighbourhood Mgmt															

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6.1.1	Agree approach with partners.	HB														Lack of agreement.
6.1.2	Formally report to LSP Board.	HB														Lack of agreement.
6.1.3	Formally report to Cabinet.	HB														Lack of agreement.

Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
6.1.4	Feed into budget process.	HB													Lack of funding.
6.1.5	Develop implementation plan (possible pilot).	HB													Lack of capacity.
	Roll out new approach (or possible pilot).	HB													Lack of public interest.
6.2	PACT														
6.2.1	Report from Police to LSP Board on future funding and administration.	HB													Lack of agreement with partners.
6.1	Neighbourhood Mgmt														
6.2.2	Feed results into budget process if required.	HB													Lack of funding.
6.2.3	Roll out new approach	HB													Lack of capacity to support.
6.2.4	Annual review report of PACT and issues raised to LSP Board and PACT.	HB													Lack of capacity to produce report.

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Corporate & External Improvements					
7.	Expected Outcome	Improve Customer and Performance Culture of Council			
Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
7.1	2007/08 service business plans and team action plans written in draft.	Templates agreed, timetable agreed and training for managers.	31 October 2006	HB	Corporate Communications, Policy and Performance Team and Corporate Training budget.
7.2	95% of PDRs completed.	Check that measured correctly. Review of forms and process by HP to ensure that they are fit for purpose and meet manager/ staff / service/organisational needs i.e. link to corporate priorities.	By Sept 06	JP	HR officer & Training Officer time Manager time Training Costs likely for refresher training
7.3	Better use made of Performance Plus	More staff to be trained/have access to the system Use graphics and charts within departments and around the building to track and clearly show performance on a monthly basis	30 November 2006 31 August 2006	HB HB	Additional Licenses maybe required. Free input from other local authority. Performance Plus Officers
7.4	Performance based budgeting.	Service business plans to be costed and include potential savings. Plans to be ready in time to feed into the budget process.	31 October 2006	JP/HB	HoS and Corporate Communications, Policy and Performance Team.

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Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
7.5	Top 45 and Corporate Health indicators reviewed	Key Performance/Business Drivers identified for the Council. Tiered approach developed to performance management involving Corporate Directors and Portfolio Holders (monthly reporting of PIs)	New set in place for quarter 2 2006/07 reporting. Arrangements in place for 31 August 2007.	LB HB	Corporate Communications, Policy and Performance Team. Corporate Communications, Policy and Performance Team.
7.6	Performance framework for LSP established.	Priorities agreed, supported by projects and key performance indicators.	30 September 2006	LB	Corporate Communications, Policy and Performance Team.
7.7	Performance culture and reports to public	Team award scheme. Customer First Posters.	31 August 2006 31 July 2006	SS	Visit Walsall/Customer First Officer.
7.8	Positive feedback from mystery shopping exercise across whole Council in April 2007	Develop budget bid.	30 April 2007	SS	Customer First Officer.
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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
7.1	Service Business Plans														
7.1.1	Agree templates and guidance.	HB													Lack of management understanding.
7.1.2	Undertake training.	HP													Lack of attendance.
7.1.3	Write business plans.	HB													Slippage.
7.1.4	Challenge plans	SMT													Insufficient challenge.
7.1.5	Feed into budget process.	KD													Lack of figures with plans.
7.1.6	Publish agreed plans after budget finalised.	HB													Lack of capacity.
7.2	PDRs														
7.2.1	Check PDRs measured correctly	JP													Lack of data.
7.2.2	Monitor & police PDRs for previous period and current period	JP													Failure to remedy outstanding PDRs.
7.2.3	Review of PDR forms & Process	JP													Lack of comparison.

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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
7.2.4	Implementation of new PDR forms and process effective from next annual appraisal year	JP													New PDR process not embedded sufficiently prior to liP reaccreditation process.
7.3	Performance Plus														
7.3.1	Appoint Corporate Policy and Performance Officer.	HB													Delay in appointment.
7.3.2	Corporate Policy and Performance Officer starts.	HB													Delay in appointment.
7.3.3	Arrange visit from Coventry CC.	HB													Not prepared to give free input.
7.3.4	Update Performance Plus based on results of benchmarking.	HB													Technical problems with updates.
7.4	Performance Based Budgeting														
7.4.1	Link budget templates and business planning templates.	HB													Already completed in draft.
7.4.2	Challenge costed business plans and feed into budget process.	SMT													Poor quality business plans.
7.5	PI Reporting														
7.5.1	Improvement Plan agreed.	HB													GMB challenge.
7.5.2	Measures on template updated for second quarter.	HB													Staff capacity with existing vacancy.

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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
7.5.3	New information collected by officers.	HB													Requirements not communicated.
7.5.4	Top 45 and Corporate Health merged and reported formally to Members.	HB													Staff knowledge to complete with vacancy.
7.6	LSP Performance Framework														
7.6.1	New Board receives first project progress reports.	HB													Lack of engagement.
7.6.2	Board receives second progress reports and PI information every two months	HB													Lack of capacity.
7.6.3	Board receives annual report which is reported onto PMB.	HB													Lack of capacity.
7.7	Performance Culture														
7.7.1	Team Award Scheme agreed by CMT	HB													Lack of support.
7.7.2	Monthly award scheme up and running.	HB													Lack of communication.
7.7.3	Customer First posters agreed and displayed.	HB													Not displayed.
7.8	Mystery Shoppers														
7.8.1	Budget bid as part of business planning.														Business case not robust.
7.8.2	Bid agreed.														Bid not agreed.

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7.8.3	Shoppers procured.														Budget insufficient.
Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
7.8.4	Mystery shopping takes place.														Contact problems.
7.8.5	Results reported to CMT/Cabinet.														Poor quality report.

Planning and Environment

8.	Expected Outcome	Re-development of Bromsgrove Town Centre			
Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
8.1	Submission to Planning Inspectorate of AAP, SA report, SCI, SoC and supporting technical documents.	Develop plans for town centre through proper process.	30 September 2007	PS	Services Directorate.

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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
8.1	Town Centre														
8.1.1	Identification of Consultants to support town centre development	PS													Tendering is extended
8.1.2	Carry out issues and options development	PS/DH/MD													Unforeseen issues arise
8.1.3	Consult on issues and options	PS/DH/MD													Consultation is managed poorly
8.1.4	Respond to representations	PS/DH/MD													Irreconcilable challenges.
8.1.5	Submit to inspectorate	PS/DH/MD													Consultation leads to delays in submission

Planning and Environment

9.	Expected Outcome	Re-development of Longbridge Site			
Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
9.1	Agreement of an area action plan. Planning at an advanced stage and decisions taken on future usage.	Finalise action plan.	30 April 2007	PS	Services Directorate and consultancy.

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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
9.1	Longbridge														
9.1.1	Gather evidence and initial public consultation	PS/DH/MD													Gathering evidence is extended
9.1.2	Submit Preferred options document.	PS/DH/MD													Two local authorities cannot agree on options
9.1.3	Formal Consultation on Preferred Options	PS/DH/MD													Consultation poorly managed
9.1.4	Respond to preferred options consultation														Large number of responses could lengthen process.
9.1.5	Submit Final Document to Inspectorate	PS/DH/MD													Inspectorate objects to plan production.
9.1.6	Formal Consultation on Submission Document	PS/DH/MD													Major objections to proposals

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Planning and Environment					
10.	Expected Outcome	Improved Housing for the District			
Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
10.1	One star promising prospects for improvement re-inspection judgment.	Strategic Housing Inspection action plan in place.	31 October 2007	PS/AC	Resourced Action Plan.
10.2	100 units of new affordable housing built or under construction.	Work with appropriate partners to secure sites and funding.	30 June 2007	PS/AC	S.106./partners. Other capital funds.
10.3	Reduce average length of stay in hostel accommodation from 16 weeks to 8 weeks (BV 183b)	Two offers of accommodation. Close hostels. Supporting people/preventative work.	30 November 2006	PS/AC	Capital receipts and Housing Team.
Progress Update					

Ref	Action	Lead													Risks	
			Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.		
10.1	Housing Re-inspection															
10.1.1	Prepared Inspection Action Plan.	AC														Lack of capacity.
10.1.2	Strengthen focus on customer care.	AC														Lack of capacity.

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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
10.1.3	Strengthen approach to diversity.	AC													Lack of capacity.
10.1.4	Improve approach to VFM.	JP													Lack of capacity.
10.1.5	Improve leadership and support to strategic housing.	PS													Access to portfolio holder.
10.2	Affordable Housing														
10.2.1	Work with RSLs to identify sites and development.	AC													Lack of sites.
10.2.2	Financial contributions will be explored.	AC													Lack of available finance.
10.3	Hostel Accommodation														
10.3.1	Prepare plans for remodeling hostels	AC													Demand increase and supply reduction.
10.3.2	Decant and mothball a proportion of hostel accommodation	AC													Demand increase and supply reduction.
10.3.3	Draw up plans for remodeling and submit planning application	PS													Lack of commitment from BDHT.
10.4.4	Formulate bid to Housing Corporation	PS													Lack of commitment from BDHT.
10.4.5	Provide Council with a financial analysis of remodeling of 3 hostels	PS													Lack of commitment from BDHT.

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11.	Expected Outcome	Improved Planning Service			
Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
11.1	55% of major planning applications determined in 13 weeks (BVPI 109a).	Flexible boundaries for teams. Two consultants to deal with straight forward applications. Delegate report format shortened. Reduce negotiation on application (see next BVPI) Major applications to be dealt with by team leaders	In place In place In place On going Started 1 st July	DH	All Existing
11.2	77% of minor applications determined in eight weeks (BVPI 109b).	As above and two new officers to start in July. Recruitment continued. Development Control surgeries. Determining % of outstanding applications by end of July.	On going On going In place	DH	All Existing
11.3	89% of other applications determined in 8 weeks (BVPI 109c).	As above. Revisit delegation. Break down applications between major/minor and other.	On going On going In place	DH	All Existing

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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
11.1	Improved Planning Services														
11.1.1	Create a planning training programme for Members in consultation with facilitators from Walsall M.B.C.	DH													Financial risk through Member decisions.
11.1.2	Appoint an interim Head of Development and Building Control	DH													Lack of candidates.
11.1.3	Benchmark with Walsall MBC to identify potential solutions to the issue of the Council's housing oversupply and the need to provide larger affordable housing schemes	DH													Circumstances not comparable.
11.1.4	Review Delegated Powers to assess implications of process change relating to reference to Members for refusal of a planning application	DH													By not doing so undermines the ability of staff to determine applications within target deadlines

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Culture and Community					
12.	Expected Outcome	Achieve Suitable Inspection Score for Cultural Services, improve Council's approach to Community Safety, in particular, domestic violence and reporting of racial incidents.			
Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
12.1	One star promising prospects for improvement score by Audit Commission for Cultural Services.	Establish improvement planning group. Contact other local authorities Commence work to achieve TAES. Draft position statement produced Gap Analysis carried out related to KLOE Improvement/Action Plan produced Organise a Peer inspection. Improvement/Action Plan reviewed and updated as a result of the findings of the Peer Assessment. .	July 2006 July 2006 August 2006 September 2006 September 2006 October 2006 October/November 2006 November/December 2006	RH	Culture and Community Services Management Team, Assistant Chief Executive and some consultancy support.
12.2	81.8% score against domestic violence checklist (BV 225) (This is based on being able to answer 9 of the 11 questions by March 2007)	Develop action plan to address all questions in checklist in conjunction with relevant partners.	September 2006	RH	Community Safety Team

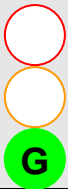
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Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
12.3	100% of reported racial incidents result in further action (BV 174/175).	Establish and implement formal system for reporting and acting on racial incidents	September 2006	RH	Community Safety Team.
12.4	100% of reported racial incidents result in further action (BV 174/175).	Establish and implement formal system for reporting and acting on racial incidents	September 2006	RH	Community Safety Team

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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
12.1	Leisure Inspection														
12.1.1	Improvement Planning Group set up with 1 st meeting on 4 July	RH													Lack of capacity.
12.1.2	Contact made with Worcester City re sharing of their Inspection experience on 5 July	RH													Not converting learning into practice.
12.1.3	TAES Workshop set up for	RH													Not converting

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	22 August															learning into practice.
Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks	
12.1.4	Commence work to achieve TAES.	RH													Not converting learning into practice.	
12.1.5	Draft position statement produced	RH													Lack of capacity.	
12.1.6	Gap Analysis carried out related to KLOE	RH													Lack of challenge.	
12.1.7	Improvement/Action Plan produced	RH													Lack of senior management attention.	
12.1.8	Organise a peer inspection.	RH													Lack of challenge.	
12.1.9	Improvement/Action Plan reviewed and updated as a result of the findings of the Peer Assessment.	RH													Lack of senior management attention.	
12.2	Domestic Violence															
12.2.1	Develop action plan	RH													Lack of capacity.	
12.3	Racial Incidents															
12.3.1	Establish and implement formal system for reporting and acting on racial incidents	RH													Lack of management attention.	

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Street Scene and Waste Management					
13.	Expected Outcome	Improved Streetscene and improved collections.			
Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
13.1	94% of households are covered by kerbside recycling (BV91a).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Re-schedule routes. 2. Purchase new vehicles or modify existing stillage vehicles. 3. Address difficult access and remote locations issues. (Some properties can be serviced using existing equipment.) 4. Address provision of service to multi storey dwellings. (Need to discuss container locations with property owners, BDHT) 	<p>End August 2006.</p> <p>Sept 2006. Quotations have been received</p> <p>Delivery of recycling boxes will commence 3rd July 2006 at minimum rate of 100 month. 1% improvement in the indicator per quarter.</p> <p>Commence discussions August 2006 with aim to install 1st bins Feb 2007</p>	MB	<p>Resources already in place.</p> <p>Sale of 2 existing stillage vehicles will fund modifications for 2 others.</p> <p>Currently hiring kerbside vehicles for H&S reasons. Capital funding required to purchase new kerbsiders</p> <p>Possible capital fund for additional bins. Following initial discussions with BDHT bin requirements to be assessed.</p>

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Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
13.2	Proportion of land/highways acceptable level of litter score – 20 (BV199a).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement new street cleansing regime. 2. Purchase of new vehicles 3. Employment of staff. 4. Ensure inspection regime is carried out on time. July 2007 	<p>Limited commencement August 2006 with roll out thereafter to whole area. Hire vehicles used in first instance until purchased vehicles become available.</p> <p>Tenders currently out awaiting return.</p> <p>JD's, PS's being written for short term contract. Agency staff may be used in interim.</p> <p>Commenced</p>	MB	<p>All necessary resources are available.</p> <p>Vehicle specifications with procurement team.</p> <p>Temporary staff being used for inspection regime.</p>

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Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
13.3	Maintain existing low level of missed bin collections.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Means of measuring success. Reduction in actuals to target. Change the reporting process from those that are missed to those that are collected successfully. Currently in excess of 99% success rate. Use targets to manage crews 2. Monitor crew performance and report to them. Supervisors will investigate reported missed collections and instruct crews on future rectification actions. 3. Recording missed bins on a weekly basis. 4. Modify supervisory management structure to generate greater capacity within the team 	New report being written for CSC to be able to report weekly.	MB	<p>Resources in place</p> <p>Resources in place</p> <p>Resources in place</p> <p>Business case for replacement of Senior Supervisor with Manager being prepared</p>

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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
13.1	Kerbside Recycling														
13.1.1	Re-schedule routes.	KH													Lack of impact on performance.
13.1.2	Purchase new vehicles or modify existing vehicles.	JW													Delay in purchase.
13.1.3	Address difficult access issues.	KH													Intractable problems.
13.1.4	Address provision of service to Multi Storey dwellings.	AW													Budget to deliver.
13.2	Detritus														
13.2.1	Implement new street cleansing regime.	MB													Lack of vehicles.
13.2.2	Vehicle purchase.	JW													Delay in purchase.
13.2.3	Employ staff.	KH													Failure to recruit.
13.2.4	Inspection regime.	KH													Lack of capacity.

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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
13.3	Missed Collections														
13.3.1	Produce new report.	MG													Lack of performance mgmt capacity.
13.3.2	Monitor crews.	KH													As above.
13.3.3	Weekly recording.	MB													As above.
13.3.4	Business case for management structure.	MB													Case not accepted.

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E-Government and Customer Services					
14.	Expected Outcome	Improved Access to Services Electronically			
Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
14.1	New Bromsgrove website launched	<p>Set up Content Assistants group and draft content guidelines</p> <p>Organise training for Content Assistants in the use of the new Content Management System (CMS)</p> <p>Install new CMS</p> <p>Redesign website in line with Worcestershire Hub Partnership's standard web template.</p>	30 September 2006	DP/BF	<p>ICT officer time and Hub resources</p> <p>Departmental Content Assistants time</p> <p>Content Management System software</p>

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Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
14.2	Access to ICT (SOCITM)	Deliver ICT Infrastructure project to provide a stable platform for ICT and web based developments Develop rollout program for PC desktop refresh Develop new website to provide improved access to services and transactions Deliver data element of the Spatial project to cleanse Council data and to enable the development of more integrated back office systems inc: Implementation of corporate EDM system Implementation of back office integration with E-shop CRM system Implementation of mobile working	31 October 2006 30 June 2007 March 2008	DP/BF	ICT officer time Departmental staff time to check cleansed data

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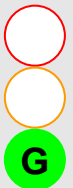


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14.3	Electronic delivery for the most frequently used transactions (SOCITM)	<p>Migration to new ICT infrastructure</p> <p>Continue to develop new website to provide electronic access to high usage services</p> <p>Deliver more online services inline with the priority outcomes for e-government</p>	30 November 2006	DP/BF	<p>ICT staff time</p> <p>Hub resources</p>
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Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
14.4	All staff to have new phones with voicemail/hunt groups and the ability to monitor response times and calls answered across whole Council.	<p>Introduce a corporate telephone answering protocol</p> <p>Migration to new ICT infrastructure including the use of Voice over IP (VoIP) telephony</p> <p>Provide statistics from new VoIP system to support telephony performance monitoring</p>	31 August 2006	DP/BF	ICT staff time
14.5	Core applications to be available 90% of the time during Council service delivery hours.	<p>Use new ICT infrastructure to implement monitoring</p> <p>Produce application availability statistics and communicate to wider organisation</p>	31 October 2006	DP/BF	<p>ICT staff time</p> <p>Monitoring software</p>

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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
14.1	Website														
14.1.1	Set up Content Assistants group and draft content guidelines.	DP													Limited departmental resources.
14.1.2	Organise training for the new CMS.	DP													Content Assistants not able to attend due to workload issues.
14.1.3	Install new Content Management System (CMS).	DP													Technical implementation problems.
14.1.4	Redesign website .	DP													Web design resource issue .
14.1.5	Launch new website.	DP													Technical problems.
14.2	ICT Access														
14.2.1	Improve ICT infrastructure to provide a stable platform for ICT and web based developments	DP													Limited ICT resource Technical problem
14.2.2	Develop rollout program for PC desktop refresh	DP													Limited ICT resource
14.2.3	Develop new website to provide improved access to services and transactions	DP													Web design resource issue Limited ICT resource

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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
14.2.4	Deliver data element of the Spatial project to cleanse Council data and to enable the development of more integrated back office systems	DP													Approval not granted Bromsgrove resources limited to assist with data checking
14.3	E-transactions														
14.3.1	Migration to new ICT infrastructure	DP													Technical issues caused by migration
14.3.2	Continue to develop new website to provide electronic access to high usage services	DP													Limited ICT resource Web development resource limited
14.3.3	Deliver more online services inline with the priority outcomes for e-government	DP													Limited ICT resource Web development resource limited
14.4	Telephone Infrastructure														
14.4.1	Introduce a corporate telephone answering protocol	DP													
14.4.2	Migration to new ICT infrastructure including the use of Voice over IP (VoIP) telephony	DP													
14.4.3	Provide statistics from new VoIP system to support telephony performance monitoring	DP													

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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
14.5	Core Applications 90%														
14.5.1	Use new ICT infrastructure to implement monitoring	DP													
14.5.2	Produce application availability statistics and communicate to wider organisation	DP													

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E-Government and Customer Services					
15	Expected Outcome	Reduction in Number of Complaints.			
Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
15.1	Implementation of new electronic corporate complaints system.	Develop scope to outline system requirements Compare systems prior to selection Purchase and install system Develop training schedule for staff and implement system	30 October 2006	DP/HB/BF	Time to visit Walsall MBC to look at their system. ICT staff time Cost of system purchase
15.2	Reduction in number of complaints.	Establish baseline from which to measure trend Develop complaint handling procedure Use new complaints system to provide monitoring data Establish new baseline for continuous improvement	30 November 2006	DP/HB/BF	Staff time
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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
15.1	Complaints system														
15.1.1	Develop scope to outline system requirements	DP													Funding not agreed
15.1.2	Compare systems prior to selection	DP													Suitable system not found
15.1.3	Purchase and install system	DP													Implementation schedule slippage due to high workload in ICT and limited resources
15.1.4	Develop training schedule for staff and implement system	DP													System not adopted across whole council
15.2	Reduce complaints														
15.2.1	Establish baseline from which to measure trend	DP													Existing data inaccurate or incomplete
15.2.2	Develop complaint handling procedure	DP													Procedure not adopted by whole council
15.2.3	Use new complaints system to provide monitoring data	DP													System failure may reduce accuracy of data
15.2.4	Establish new baseline for continuous improvement	DP													System failure may reduce accuracy of data

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E-Government and Customer Services					
16	Expected Outcome	Improved Customer Service – Customer Service Centre			
Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
16.1	80% of service requests resolved within the Customer Service Centre.	Produce scope for a queue management system Investigate options and produce business case to secure funding Install software system Install large screen for customers Improve knowledge base link in eshop system using new council website Develop Resource Level Agreements with back office service to clearly define levels of responsibility	November 2006 September 2006	DP/BF	CSC staff time ICT Services staff time Back office staff time
16.2	80% of total calls answered within 15 seconds.	Install large screen to display telephone queue/answering data Introduce staff rotation plan to cover telephone answering at peak times Develop Resource Level Agreements with back office service to clearly define levels of responsibility	November 2006 August 2006 September 2006	DP/BF	CSC staff Back office staff time

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Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
16.3	95% of total calls answered.	Install large screen to display telephone queue/answering data Introduce staff rotation plan to cover telephone answering at peak times	August 2006	DP/BF	CSC staff
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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
16.1	Service Requests														
16.1.1	Produce scope for a queue management system	DP													System not available to match scope
16.1.2	Investigate options and produce business case to secure funding	DP													Funding not granted
16.1.3	Install software system	DP													Technical problems
16.1.4	Install large screen for customers	DP													Technical problems
16.1.5	Improve knowledge base link in eshop system using new council website	DP													Web content not of sufficient standard to integrate with eshop
16.1.6	Develop Resource Level Agreements with back office service to clearly define levels of responsibility	DP													Staff not adhering to RLA
16.2	Calls answered (80%)														
16.2.1	Install large screen to display telephone queue/answering data	DP													Technical breakdown of screen
16.2.2	Introduce staff rotation plan to cover telephone answering at peak times	DP													Reduced level of staff to cover peak times due to sickness, leave, training

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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
16.2.3	Develop Resource Level Agreements with back office service to clearly define levels of responsibility	DP													Staff not adhering to RLA
16.3	Calls answered (95%)														
16.3.1	Install large screen to display telephone queue/answering data	DP													Technical breakdown of screen
16.3.2	Introduce staff rotation plan to cover telephone answering at peak times	DP													Reduced level of staff to cover peak times due to sickness, leave, training

E-Government and Customer Services

17.	Expected Outcome	Improved Customer Service – Whole Council			
Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
17.1	80% of total calls answered within 15 seconds.	Introduce telephone answering protocol Use phone system to produce statistics to enable performance monitoring	31 August 2006	DP/BF	Head of E-Government time ICT staff time

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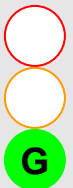


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17.2	95% of total calls answered.	Introduce corporate telephone answering protocol Use phone system to produce statistics to enable performance monitoring	31 st August 2006	DP/BF	Head of E-government time ICT staff time
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Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
17.3	75% of correspondence responded to within 10 working days.	Introduce letter answering guidelines Introduce method of monitoring letter answering and producing statistics to support monitoring process	September 2006	DP/HB/BF	Staff time

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Ref	Action	Lead													Risks	
			Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.		
17.1	Calls – 15 seconds															
17.1.1	Introduce telephone	DP														Protocol not adopted or adhered to by all

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	answering protocol															staff
17.1.2	Use phone system to produce statistics to enable performance monitoring	DP														Technical failure of telephony system could reduce the accuracy of statistics

Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
17.2	Total calls (whole council)														
17.2.1	Introduce corporate telephone answering protocol	DP													Protocol not adopted or adhered to by all staff
17.2.2	Use phone system to produce statistics to enable performance monitoring	DP													Technical failure of telephony system could reduce the accuracy of statistics
17.3	Letter answering														
17.3.1	Introduce letter answering guidelines	DP/HB													Protocol not adopted or adhered to by all staff
17.3.2	Introduce method of monitoring letter answering and producing statistics to support monitoring process	DP/HB													Monitoring data not entered into system

Human Resources and Organisational Development

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18.	Expected Outcome	Improved Governance.			
Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
18.1	Improved Member/Member and Member/Officer relations	Modern Councillor Programme - programme on target and take up by Members.	30/9/06	JP/HB	External consultant to be used – paid for by capacity fund All Group Leaders All Members

Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
18.2	Improved Strategic Management by Members/SMT	Top Team Development Programme	Ongoing	JP/HB	Paid for by Capacity Building Fund CMT Members Senior HR Advisor IDeA

Progress Update					
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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
18.1	Improved Relations														
18.1.1	Paper to Council to get	JP/CA													Council does not

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	approval for “roles” and supporting training programme																	approve new roles
18.1.2	Group leaders to undertake 1:1 interviews with Councillors for training needs analysis	JP/CA																As this is optional, a full picture of training needs may not be achieved.
18.1.3	Write specification for supplier to deliver training programme	JP/CA																Specification needs to invite interest

Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
18.1.4	Agree supplier for delivery of training programme	JP/CA													Supplier will need to be high quality & have experience but at the same time happy to work in partnership
18.1.5	Commence implementation of training programme	JP			Commence implementation of training programme										Funding for temporary admin. support is from capacity building fund. Resource required beyond this
18.2	Improved Strategic Mgmt														
18.2.1	Top Team Development programme														Learning not applied positively back in the



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Human Resources and Organisational Development					
19.	Expected Outcome	Suitably Skilled Workforce			
Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
19.1	<p>Improved knowledge and competence of staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme on target for completion by 31 Mar. 08. • Percentage take up by staff 	<p>Middle Management Training Programme</p> <p>Training Directory programme</p> <p>Management Development Strategy and Management Competencies</p>	<p>Management Development Strategy – Mid July 06</p> <p>Management competencies – Developed September 06 Implemented 07</p>	HP/CS	<p>Training Officer</p> <p>All Middle Managers</p>
19.2	Investors In People Reaccreditation	Action Plan to deliver improvements.	September 2007	JP	HR and OD Team / Responsible Officers on action plan.
19.3	<p>Staff in better position to deliver service objectives</p> <p>Improved organisational capacity</p>	<p>Implementation of People Strategy and workforce plan</p> <p>Development & adoption of capability procedure</p> <p>Implementation of capability procedure (Including Manager training)</p>	<p>Workforce Plan Sept 06</p> <p>Capability Procedure August 06</p> <p>By January 07</p>	<p>JP</p> <p>JP</p> <p>J Pitman</p>	<p>Workforce planning currently due to be completed by October but can be done earlier if additional resources put in.</p>

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Improvement Plan – July Update

Progress Update	
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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
19.1	Competence														
19.1.1	New management development strategy agreed	JP													Not approved and therefore delayed
19.1.2	Approval of the “Bromsgrove Way”	JP													Not approved as seen as not appropriate
19.1.3	Management competencies developed	JP													Industrial relations problems arising from consultation.
19.1.4	Launch of Management Competencies at forum in December	JP													Competencies need to be explained well – see 19.1.3 above.
19.1.5	Develop succession planning policy	JP													Lack of CMT support.
19.2	IIP														
19.2.1	Develop IIP action plan	JP/HP													Completed
19.2.2	Submit action plan to	JP/HP													Action plan not

Appendix A



Improvement Plan – July Update

assessor															approved by panel
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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
19.2.3	Implement actions from staff survey	JP/HP													Actions not achieved on time.
19.2.4	New staff survey	JP/LS													Poor response rate rendering survey invalid.
19.3	Capacity														
19.3.1	Implement people strategy – through HR action plan	JP													Delays in implementation.
19.3.2	Develop workforce plan	JP													May conflict with preparation for Single Status.
19.3.3	Develop capability policy	JP/LS													Consultation process delays implementation and management training.
19.3.4	Implement capability policy – launch and training	JP/HP													Will require significant training resource

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Improvement Plan – July Update

Human Resources and Organisational Development					
20	Expected Outcome	Improved Performance in Key HR Measures			
Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
20.1	Average numbers of working days lost due to sickness (BV12) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Third quartile to top quartile 	New sickness absence policy developed Pilot for new approach to sickness absence in the Depot based on “trigger” points. Heads of service to get monthly sickness absence management reports HR to proactively identify people with sickness issues, raise with, support and advise managers. Use of payroll system in analysing sickness absence.	End of August Mid July 06 July 06 onwards July 06 onwards Oct 06	JP	HR, HoS, managers, trade unions, occupational health and officer time. HR, HoS, Depot Managers, trade unions. HR, officers, TUs, CMT, Cabinet.
Progress Update					

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Improvement Plan – July Update

Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
20.1	Sickness														
20.1.1	Send out regular monthly information to HoS – July 06	JP													Information is not available in timely manner.
20.1.2	Pilot “triggers” in the Depot – July 06	JP													Trigger system does not work.
20.1.3	Identify quick wins for reducing sickness absence levels	JP													No quick wins identified.
20.1.4	Develop new sickness policy – August 06	JP													Consultation on sickness policy takes than originally thought.
20.1.5	Adopt new sickness absence policy	JP													Adoption of policy delayed due to consultation process.
20.1.6	Provide training on new policy and support documentation	JP													Commencement of training linked to development and adoption of policy running to schedule.

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Financial Services					
21.	Expected Outcome	Improved Financial Management and an Improved Benefits Service.			
Ref.	Measures of Success	Actions required	Timescales	Lead	Resources
21.1	Overall score of 2 on Use of Resources including 2 for VFM.	Development and implementation of action plan.	July 06- June 07	JP/HSC/NS	Value for money support from external team
21.2	BFI Score 3 for Benefits Service	To improve the DWP Performance Standard to Level 3. This involves achieving Level 3 (or above) for Performance Measures and Level 2 (or above) for Enabler Score.	June 2007	JP/AB + new R&B Service Manager	Interim R&B service Manager
21.3	Reduction in days taken for processing new benefits claims (BV78a).	To improve the 2005/06 PI from Quartile 3 to Top quartile	June 2007	JP/AB + new R&B Service Manager	Interim R&B service Manager
21.4	Reduction in days taken for processing changes in claimants circumstances (BV78b).	To improve the 2005/06 PI from 3 rd Quartile to top quartile	June 2007	JP/AB + new R&B Service Manager	Interim R&B service Manager
Progress Update					

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Improvement Plan – July Update

Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
21.1	Use of Resources														
21.1.1	KLOE 1 Financial Reporting Statement of Accounts for 2005/06 to be presented to Cabinet and Council before 30 th June 2006	JP													Completed.
21.1.2	KLOE 1 Financial Reporting High level review by ASM and HOF	JP													Staff training and capability ICT system failure.
21.1.3	KLOE 1 Financial Reporting Working papers to be prepared in line with "Prepared by Client" list supplied by KPMG and to be ready for commencement of audit on Monday 21 st August 2006	JP													As above.
21.1.4	KLOE 1 Financial Reporting Detailed closedown timetable prepared and monitored through process.	JP													As above.
21.1.5	KLOE 1 Financial Reporting Covering report to SOA to	JP													Completed.

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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
21.1.6	KLOE 1 Financial Reporting SOA on Website	JP													Staff training and capability ICT system failure Decision to focus resources on service review and have limited resource to complete actions as detailed
21.1.7	KLOE 1 Financial Reporting Liaise with Asst Chief Executive on the most appropriate forum to consult with stakeholders regarding production of summary accounts.	JP													As above
21.1.8	Kloe 2 Financial Management Continued preparation of 3 year Medium Term Financial Plan in line with corporate objectives. Detail reports to cabinet including draft Budget Book linking Council objectives and PI's As part of service review, sensitivity analyses of income streams and	JP													As above

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Improvement Plan – July Update

assessments of likely future income.															
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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
21.1.9	Kloe 2 Financial Management Develop cashflow forecasts	JP													As above
21.1.10	Kloe 2 Financial Management Quarterly reports to Performance Management Board linking financial information to performance (BVPI's corporate Health and Service Business plans)	JP													As above

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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
21.1.11	<p>Kloe 2 Financial Management Annual Report to Cabinet (under capital strategy the Capital Asset Project Group has responsibility for asset management) covering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all land and building held Rolling programme of survey and valuation for maintenance, SOA purposes and legislation e.g. DDA • Identification of surplus assets • Assets held to service delivery (also link to service reviews) • Condition of assets including estimation of useful life and backlog maintenance 	JP													As above.

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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
21.1.12	Kloe 3 Financial Standing Minimum level of working balances and expected use of reserves and balances included within budget report	JP													Staff training and capability ICT system failure Decision to focus resources on service review and have limited resource to complete actions as detailed
21.1.13	Kloe 3 Financial Standing Reserves and Balances to be included within quarterly Monitoring reports to PMB.	JP													As above
21.1.14	Kloe 3 Financial Standing Council tax and NNDR collection rates targets as part of BVPI's. Management of Sundry debt levels. Information to be sent to HoS on monthly basis as part of monitoring information on level of	JP													As above

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	outstanding debt.														
21.1.15	KLOE 4 Internal Control Completion of Corporate and operational risk registers and report to Audit Board	JP													Buy in from HOS Buy in from members

Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
21.1.16	KLOE 4 Internal Control Audit Board charged with responsibility of promoting internal controls.	JP													As above
21.1.17	KLOE 4 Internal Control All reports to Members to have been considered for legal issues before presentation.	JP													As above
21.1.18	KLOE 4 Internal Control HoS to be carry out their view of the operations of internal controls within their area and provide assurance to S151 officer.	JP													As above
21.1.19	KLOE 4 Internal Control Audit Board charged with development of anti-fraud culture. Fraud Newsletter to be produced on quarterly	JP													As above

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	basis.														
21.1.20	KLOE Value For Money Quarterly reports to PMB to link costs to performance and to identify potential overspend with actual plans to address	JP													Staff capability Staff resources Resource required for VFM work Skill set re VFM not apparent in finance team at present.

Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
21.1.21	KLOE Value For Money Develop VFM Strategy	JP													As above
21.1.22	KLOE Value For Money Investigate Audit Commissions on line VFM profile tool	JP													As above
21.1.23	KLOE Value For Money Budget preparation links resources to corporate and business plans	JP													As above
21.2	BFI Score														
21.2.1	New Claims over 50 days - Implement workflow for new claims to ensure that old claims are identified and processed in a timely way	AB/HL													ICT system failure Delays in implementation of workflow
21.2.2	Percentage of new claims decided within 14 days of	AB/HL													Staff Capability Staff Resources

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	receiving information -Implement new procedures for claims with team. Including more proactive communication with customers and external agencies																	ICT failure
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Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
21.2.3	-Benefits Support (Training) Officer to be recruited to coordinate plan across the section	AB/HL													Successful appointment to post
21.2.4	Percentage of cases for which the calculation of the amount of benefit due is correct Procedural guidance detailing how checks are selected and recorded, showing sample covers new claims/change of circs/op/1st payment cases	AB/HL													Staff Capability Staff Resources ICT failure Legislative changes
21.2.5	Written confirmation of training received by checkers - to be updated with changes in staff	AB/HL													Staff Capability Staff Resources ICT failure Legislative changes
21.2.6	Risk assessment reqd - to	AB/HL													Staff Capability

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	show what risks are there if quality checks not done															Staff Resources ICT failure Legislative changes
21.2.7	Check sheet detailing aspects of claim checked – to be reviewed	AB/HL														Staff Capability Staff Resources ICT failure Legislative changes
21.2.8	Similar format required for both benefit and fraud checks, giving details of why errors occurring and by whom	AB/HL														Staff Capability Staff Resources ICT failure Legislative changes
Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.		Risks
21.2.9	Central training spreadsheet to be set up and reviewed quarterly by management team	AB/HL														Staff Capability. Staff Resources. ICT failure. Legislative changes.
21.2.10	Procedural guidance/process maps required for customer service staff	AB/HL														Staff Capability. Staff Resources.
21.2.11	Free standing form for use by customer service staff	AB/HL														Staff Capability. Staff Resources.
21.2.12	Ensure plain English campaign approved	AB/HL														Staff Capability. Staff Resources.
21.2.13	New document code in Iclipse for new form	AB/HL														Staff Capability. Staff Resources.
21.2.14	Working with Landords landlords to be trained in both elements - to be	AB/HL														Interest from Landlords.

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Improvement Plan – July Update

	included in Benefits Landlord forum														
21.2.15	Refresher details to be issued to all staff pending formal training	AB/HL													Interest from Landlords.
21.2.16	Departmental training strategy to include fraud awareness and document verification	AB/HL													Interest from Landlords.

Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
21.2.17	Monitoring of investigation results to review the risk assessment process	AB/HL													Interest from Landlords.
21.2.18	Devise questionnaire to all landlords	AB/HL													Interest from Landlords.
21.2.19	Set up BENEFIT landlord forum	AB/HL													Interest from Landlords.
21.2.20	Issue landlord leaflet/booklet to all landlords	AB/HL													Interest from Landlords.
21.2.21	Ensure landlord leaflets/booklet available at customer service centre	AB/HL													Interest from Landlords.
21.2.22	Written procedures required	AB/HL													Interest from Landlords Staff resources.
	Security	AB/HL													
21.2.23	departmental training	MW													Appointment of

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Improvement Plan – July Update

	strategy to include fraud awareness and document verification														training officer.
	User Focus	AB/HL													
21.2.24	Take Up: Written strategy required	AB/HL													Staff resources
21.2.25	Meetings with other partners to be minuted discussing take up	AB/HL													Staff resources
21.2.26	Meeting to be arranged to discuss take up with partners	AB/HL													Staff resources Interest from partners
Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
21.2.27	Develop multi-agency meeting from existing network	AB/HL													Staff resources Interest from partners
21.2.28	Leaflets/posters to be set up encouraging take up, to include in work benefits	AB/HL													Staff capability.
21.2.29	Consider joint procurement with other local LA's for take up publicity	AB/HL													Interest from other Las.
21.2.30	Complaints: record of checks to be made to ensure correspondence and e-mails are answered within targets set	AB/HL													Staff resource.
21.2.31	Records of action taken to be set up detailing any weaknesses identified through	AB/HL													Staff resource.

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	complaints/comments and subsequent outcomes														
	Resource Management	AB/HL													Staff resource
21.2.32	departmental induction plan to be devised	AB/HL													Staff resource
21.2.33	corporate checks re policies needed to confirm induction procedures and staff codes of conduct	AB/HL													Staff resource
21.2.34	Police checks required on all outside officers – is it done and is there a policy	AB/HL													Staff resource

Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
21.2.35	Where references given, has the referee been contacted by phone to confirm they did complete the reference?	AB/HL													Staff resource
21.2.36	declarations of interest to be reviewed and refreshed annually	AB/HL													Staff resource Appropriateness of training
21.2.37	Corporate Diversity Strategy? Does it include benefits (named)	AB/HL													Staff resource
21.2.38	training strategy required	AB/HL													Appropriateness of training
21.2.39	benefit manual required for benefits staff	AB/HL													Staff resource
21.2.40	training plans and method of monitoring training	AB/HL													Appropriateness of training

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	provided														
21.2.41	cost of claim to be regularly reviewed	AB/HL													Staff resource
21.2.42	benchmark this cost against other LA's	AB/HL													Appropriateness of training
21.3	New Benefits Claims														
21.3.1	new procedural guidelines to be produced detailing timescales. This includes more proactive communication with customers and external agencies	AB/HL													Staff capability Staff training needs
21.3.2	Allocate specific staff members to new claims	AB/HL													Staff capability Staff training needs
Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
21.3.3	Benefit form to have signed declaration so we can contact employer for information directly	AB/HL													Staff capability Staff training needs
21.3.4	phone calls to employers to obtain pay details	AB/HL													Staff capability Staff training needs
21.3.5	procedure for dealing with claimants whereby no earnings certificate has been provided	AB/HL													Staff capability Staff training needs
21.3.6	reports required off Iclipse on a weekly basis - to be discussed in Management meetings weekly	AB/HL													Staff capability Staff training needs
21.3.7	target dates required for document types in Iclipse	AB/HL													Staff capability Staff training needs

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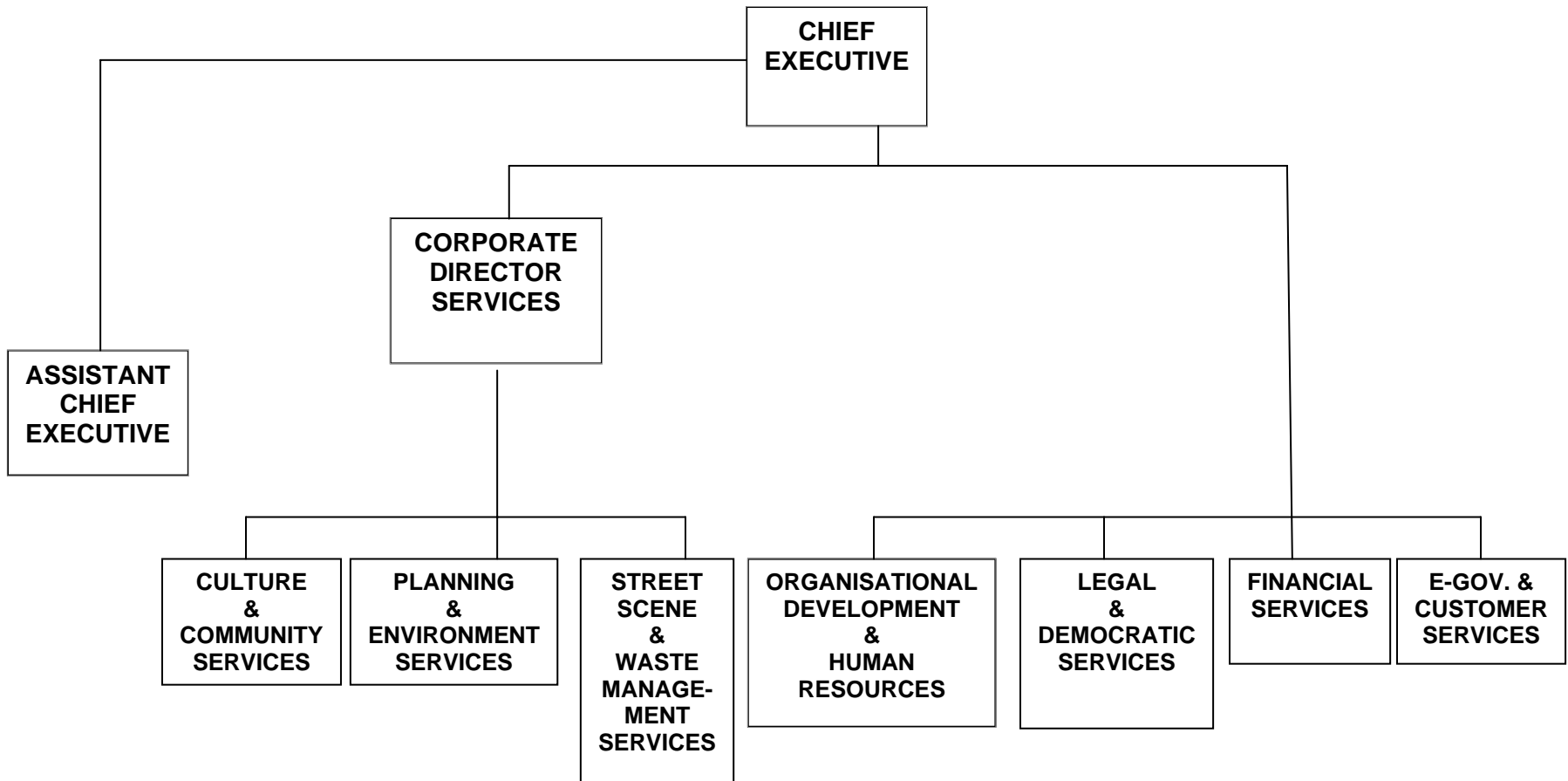


Improvement Plan – July Update

21.3.8	Implement workflow for new claims	AB/HL														Staff capability Staff training needs ICT system failure
21.4	Change of Circumstance															
21.4.1	new procedural guidelines to be produced detailing timescales. This includes more proactive communication with customers and external agencies	AB/HL														Staff capability Staff training needs
21.4.2	Allocate specific staff to COC responsibility	AB/HL														Staff capability Staff training needs

Ref	Action	Lead	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Risks
21.4.3	Introduce workflow for Change of circumstances to allocate and monitor work processed	AB/HL													Staff capability Staff training needs ICT system failure

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE



RESOURCES

Organisational Development & Human Resources	Legal & Democratic Services	Financial Services	E-Government & Customer Services
<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)

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 style="text-align: center;">(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 •Economic Development 	<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.

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE CABINET

2 AUGUST 2006

REVIEW OF SERVICE BUSINESS PLANNING PROCESS

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Roger Hollingworth
Responsible Head of Service	Hugh Bennett, Assistant Chief Executive

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 To present the reviewed business plan template and timetable to Cabinet for approval, as agreed with the Performance Management Board's July meeting.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet:
- a) Endorse the proposed business planning process.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Performance Management Board members received a report at their meeting held on 16th June 2006 which reviewed the 2006/07 business planning process. The Performance Management Board then received an updated business plan template at its 14 July meeting, which it is recommending to Cabinet for approval.

- 3.2 The Service Business Plan template is attached as **Appendix 1**. The template covers the following areas:

- Introduction from Portfolio Holder and Head of Service
- 2006/07 Performance Review
- Context
- Service Strategy
- Key Deliverables, Indicators and Project/Task Milestones
- Customer First
- Resources
- Risk Management
- Benchmarking

There are 11 appendices to the document. These are:

1. Council's Vision and Values
2. Council Objectives 2007-2010
3. Corporate Business Planning Framework
4. Budget Bid: Business Case
5. Option Appraisal: Service Delivery
6. Performance Indicators

7. Agreed Support Service Schedule
8. Divisional Structure Chart
9. Team Action Plans
10. 2006/07 Performance Review
11. Risk Register

3.3 **Appendix 2** details the proposed timetable for rolling out the process.

3.4 Guidance for managers has been produced to support the production of the 2007/08 business plans and training for heads of service and their management teams will be provided during September.

3.5 The Assistant Chief Executive will provide a verbal explanation at Cabinet on each section of the template if required.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 There are no budget implications in this report. The Assistant Chief Executive will provide further details at the meeting if required.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 There are no legal implications.

6. Corporate Objectives

6.1 An updated business planning process will improve the ability of the Council's decision-makers to transmit high level strategic choices into front line service delivery.

7.1 Risk Management

7.1 Business plans underpin service delivery of Bromsgrove District Council and if they are not produced in a timely manner, other processes cannot commence.

8. Other Sub Headings

8.1 Procurement Issues

None.

8.2 Personnel Implications

See workforce planning and training and development section of the business plan template.

8.3 Governance/Performance Management Considerations

As detailed in previous report dated 16th June 2006.

8.4 Community Safety Considerations

It would be good practice for our service business plans to identify their contribution to this agenda.

8.5 Policy Considerations

Service business plans will need to reflect any policy considerations identified through the council plan process.

8.6 Environmental Considerations

Service business plans will need to reflect any policy considerations identified through the council plan process.

8.7 Equalities Implications

See section on customer standards and diversity.

Background Papers

2006/07 Business Plan Template.

Comprehensive Performance Assessment District Council Key Lines of Enquiry.

Contact officer

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Mail:
Tel: (01527) 881412



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**2007/2008
SERVICE BUSINESS PLAN**

DRAFT

SERVICE:

TEMPLATE

Contents

1. Introduction from Portfolio Holder and Head of Service
2. 2006/07 Performance Review
3. Context
 - 3.1 Local Agenda
 - 3.2 National Agenda
4. Service Strategy
5. Key Deliverables, Indicators and Project/Task Milestones
6. Customer First
 - 6.1 Community Engagement
 - 6.2 Customer Experience
7. Resources
 - 7.1 Employee Opinion and Involvement
 - 7.2 Workforce Planning
 - 7.3 2007/08 Divisional Management Team Training & Development Plan
 - 7.4 2007/08 Budget (2006/07 Rolled Forward)
 - 7.5 2007/08 Budget Bids (Unavoidable pressures and growth)
 - 7.6 Budget Savings
 - 7.7 Partnerships
 - 7.8 Support Service Structure
8. Risk Management
9. Benchmarking
 - 9.1 Benchmarking Performance – Areas of Concern

9.2 How are you going to use benchmarking to improve these areas?

Appendices

Appendix 1	Council's Vision and Values
Appendix 2	Council Objectives 2007-2010
Appendix 3	Corporate Planning Business Framework
Appendix 4	Budget Bid: Business Case
Appendix 5	Option Appraisal: Service Delivery
Appendix 6	Performance Indicators
Appendix 7	Agreed Support Services Schedule
Appendix 8	Divisional Structure Chart
Appendix 9	Team Action Plans
Appendix 10	2006/07 Performance Review
Appendix 11	Risk Register

1. Introduction from Portfolio Holder and Head of Service

Insert electronic signature

INSERT Name of Portfolio Holder

April 2007

Insert electronic signature

INSERT Name of Head of Service

INSERT Name of Service

April 2007

2. 2006/07 Performance Review

2.1 During 2006/07 the Service achieved the following:-

KD Ref	Performance Review of 2006/07	Corporate Objective/Priority Ref.
	Eg: title of key deliverable, followed by a short commentary on what was delivered.	

2.2 Other achievements in 2006/07. (Please detail key achievements within 2006/07 that were not planned for as part of the original key deliverables for your Service).

2.3 Performance Assurance Statement: The key deliverables as set out in the 2006/07 performance plan have been delivered. Material exceptions and planned corrective actions are detailed below:

KD Ref	Performance Exception	Corrective Action

3. Context

3.1 Local Agenda

3.1.1 Local context and agenda within which the Service operates, which forms the background to the choice of key deliverables. (See Section 4).

3.2 National Agenda

3.2.1 National context and agenda within which the Service operates, which forms the background to the choice of key deliverables. (See Section 4).

4. Service Strategy

- 4.1 Within the context of the Council's objectives, priorities and MTFP, and based on the context within which your Service operates, outline the Service's strategy for the next 3 years.

Insert your Service strategy here.

5. Key Deliverables, Indicators and Project/Task Milestones

- 5.1 The Service has itself XX key deliverables for 2007/08. These are cross-referenced to the Council Objectives (CO) and priorities. The Service has also set itself key performance indicators (KPIs) and/or project task milestones for each of its key deliverables, so that we can monitor progress.

Ref.	Key Deliverable Title	Council Objective/Priority Ref.

Ref.	Key Performance Indicator	2005 / 2006 Actual	2006 / 2007 Est. Outturn	2007 / 2008 Provisional Target	Measure Frequency

Ref.	Project / Task Title	
Planned position at 30 th Jun 2007		
Planned position at 30 th Sep 2007		
Planned position at 31 st Dec 2007		
Planned position at 31 st Mar 2008		

The Key Deliverables identify priorities for each service and measures of success. Appendix X details all Performance Indicators for each Service and targets for 2007/08. Appendix X provides team action plans in support of key deliverables.

5.2 **Budget 2007/08 (2006/08 Rolled Forward)**

Within existing budget		Yes	No
Budget bid 2007/08	Details of budget bid		

If yes, see Appendix 4.

6. Customer First

6.1 Community Engagement

6.1.1 Key Consultations the Service is planning to undertake in 2007/08.

Consultation to be undertaken	Category of Consultation (A-E) (See below)	Who is being consulted?	How will the results be used?	Estimated Cost (£)	Start Date/ Finish Date	Lead Officer

All consultation needs to be 'categorised' according to the following definitions:

- A Information Gathering
- B Seeking Views
- C Making Choices
- D Generating Ideas
- E Participation/Joint Decision Making

6.2 Customer Standards

6.2.1 Please detail what divisional actions you plan to take in order to meet the new Customer First Strategy customer service standards (set out below):-

Organisational Customer Service Standards	How will the standards be met by the service area?
Service Delivery	
1. Advice and Information should be varied and accessible using the most appropriate channel to meet the customer need:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face to face 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telephone 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter and Fax 	
2. Customer awareness standards for monitoring customer contact including complaints and compliments.	
3. Dealing with customer complaints and compliments.	

Organisational Customer Service Standards	How will the standards be met by the service area?
Staffing	
1. Staff are easily identifiable.	
2. Staff are trained to deliver a customer focused service.	
3. Staff are supported to deliver a customer focused service.	
4. Staff take responsibility for making sure that the customer enquiry is dealt with and brought to a conclusion.	
5. Confidentiality and data protection must be met.	
Environment	
1. Corporate environment.	
2. Creating a safe/clean, professional, welcoming environment.	
3. Clear internal and external signage.	
4. Rooms available for private meetings and pre-arranged appointments.	
5. Public areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must display service standards 	

Organisational Customer Service Standards	How will the standards be met by the service area?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidentiality • Customer performance reports • Up to date leaflets • Toys • Council information 	

6.2.2 Based on the above, what are your key customer standards and how you will measure success against these?

6.2.3 Please detail what actions you are planning to take in 2007/08 to improve the customer's experience and why.

6.2.4 Based on the impact assessment you have undertaken, please detail how your service will address the following diverse issues:

	Action	When	Responsible Officer
Race/Ethnic Minority Groups			
Gender			
Disability			
Gender Re-assignment			
Age			
Sexual Orientation			
Religion			
Income			
Marital Status			
Rural/Urban Mix			

7. Resources

7.1 Employee Opinion and Involvement

7.1.1 Planned actions within the Service as a result of the 2006 Employee Survey and Investors in People assessment.

Issue	Agreed Action	When	Responsible Officer

7.2 Workforce Planning

7.2.1 What impact will your service developments/changes have on your workforce requirements? Please specify in relation to:

Number of Staff	Skills Required	New Roles or Responsibilities	Learning and Development Required

Please confirm for each column whether funding is available.

7.3 2007/08 Divisional Management Team Training and Development Plan

7.3.1 Training and development issues and planned actions for the Service's Management Team during 2007/08.

Topic	Who?	Method/ Intervention	Purpose and Outcome	Resource and Lead	Timescales
Eg: Team Building	Eg: Team A	Eg: Away Day	Eg: Improved team working	Eg: Team Training Budget/team manager	Eg: 30 June 06

7.4 2007/08 Budget (2006/07 Rolled Forward)

Description	Base Budget 2007-08 £
Expenditure: Employee costs Premises costs Transport costs Supplies and Services Contract costs Transfer costs Support Service costs Capital costs	
Gross Expenditure	
Income	
Net EXPENDITURE	

7.5. 2007/08 Budget Bids (Unavoidable pressures and growth)

Business Case 1: TITLE/DESCRIPTION – Appendix 4 template

Business Case 2: TITLE/DESCRIPTION – Appendix 4 template

7.5.1 For 2007/08, the Service is making the following budget bids:

TITLE:
Insert details of budget bid
Insert details of budget bid

7.6 Budget Savings

7.6.1 In order to fund some budget bids, the Council may need to make budget savings in other areas. Appendix 5 sets out potential savings for the Service.

7.7. Partnerships

7.7.1 Partnerships (both internal and external) that are critical to the delivery of the Service's key deliverables, how these are managed and planned actions agreed with the relevant partner(s).

External Partnerships

Name of Partnership	Purpose	How will you ensure this relationship is successfully managed during 2007/08?

Internal Partnerships

Name of Partnership	Purpose	How will you ensure this relationship is successfully managed during 2007/08?

7.8 **Support Service Structure**

- 7.8.1 In order to deliver its Service Business Plan, the Service has agreed a range of support with other services in the Council. These are detailed in Appendix 7.

8. **Risk Management**

- 8.1 The Service manages its risks in accordance with the Council's Risk Management Strategy. The Service's Risk Register is attached as Appendix 11.

9. **Benchmarking**

9.1 **Benchmarking Performance – Areas of Concern**

Please note your areas of concern here

- 9.1.1 Based on your knowledge of Service performance, please detail areas of concern that you wish to focus service improvement activity on.

Please detail areas of service improvement activity here

9.2 **How are you going use benchmarking to improve these areas?**

- 9.2.1 National research

- 9.2.2 Benchmarking partnerships with other high performing organisations

- 9.2.3 Other

Appendix 1

Council's Vision and Values

To be inserted by the Corporate Communications, Policy & Performance Team

Appendix 2

Council Objectives 2007-2010

To be inserted by the Corporate Communications, Policy & Performance Team

Appendix 3

Corporate Business Planning Framework

To be inserted by the Corporate Communications, Policy & Performance Team

Appendix 4

Budget Bid: Business Case

TITLE:			START YEAR: 2007/08
COUNCIL PRIORITY:	KD REF:	KEY DELIVERABLE TITLE	COUNCIL OBJECTIVE/ PRIORITY REF.
BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT			
PROJECT LEADER:			

MEASURE OF SUCCESS			
Success/Evaluation Factor(s)	Target	Target Date	Source of Information

REVENUE COSTS

Element	Cost £'000			
	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	Ongoing
Employee Costs				
Premise costs				
Transport costs				
Supplies and Services				
Other Costs (please specify)				
Total Revenue Cost				
Income				
Savings (describe)				
Total Revenue Income				
Net Revenue Impact				

BUSINESS CASE

HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (of preferred option)	F.T.E. (+/-)

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED (include do nothing)			
Alternative	Net Cost		Reasons for Rejection
	Capital	Revenue	

INTERNAL CONSULTATION (With other service heads/unions/Health & Safety Officer)		
It is vital that all appropriate managers are consulted (incl. HR)		
All IT schemes to be submitted via Head of E-Gov and Customer Services		
NAME/ JOB TITLE	COMMENTS	SIGNATURE

ALL RISK FACTORS THAT COULD DELAY DELIVERY OF THE PROJECT

RISKS OF PROJECT NOT BEING APPROVED

1. Impact on customer satisfaction

What impact will this investment have on customer satisfaction? (e.g. an investment at a leisure centre could improve the facilities or increase the range of services available for customers and thereby increase the level of satisfaction) Please provide both narrative and an estimation of percentage increase.

2. Productivity benefits

How will the funds invested increase the volumes generated? E.g. by investing these funds the volume produced for each £ invested should increase.

3. Opportunity Costs

What is the potential cost to the authority of not investing these funds?

4. Asset savings

How will this investment generate asset savings e.g. being able to dispose of an asset as a result of this investment?

5. Performance improvement

How will this investment help to improve performance? Please list the PI's that will be affected and the expected change.

Assumptions

Please detail the assumptions that have been made that will affect whether a measurable return on investment is achieved.

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BUDGET HOLDER (S)	PORTFOLIO HOLDER (S)

Appendix 5

Option Appraisal: Service Delivery

Ref/Cost Centre	Title	Gross Budget	Reduction 2%	How	Impact/Risks
Ref/Cost Centre	Title	Gross Budget	Reduction 5%	How	Impact/Risks
Ref/Cost Centre	Title	Gross Budget	Reduction 10%	How	Impact/Risks
Ref/Cost Centre	Title	Gross Budget	Reduction 15%	How	Impact/Risks
Ref/Cost Centre	Title	Gross Budget	Reduction 20%	How	Impact/Risks

Appendix 6

Performance Indicators

Ref.	Description	2005/06 Actual	Estimated 2006/07 Outturn	2007/08 Target	Commentary

Agreed Support Services Schedule

The following table details projects where the service is the lead that will have a significant impact on support services, **over and above** the normal workflow.

Project Number	Project Title	Lead Officer	Start Date	Finish Date	<u>AGREED</u> Support

Divisional Structure Chart

Appendix 9

Team Action Plans

Please detail all projects/tasks for your teams for 2007/08. Please prioritise all projects/tasks, i.e. high, medium and low priority.

Project/Task Title	Measure of Success (SMART)	Start Date	Finish Date	Resource	Lead	Priority (H, M, L)

2006/07 Performance Review

KD Ref.	Performance Review 2006/07	Corporate Objective

Risk Register

Timetable for 2007/2008 Business Planning

Date	Action	Who
10/11 July 2006	Top Team Away Days on Council Plan	Cabinet/CMT
01 August 2006	Agree Council Plan 2007/2010	CMT
16 August 2006	Agree Council Plan 2007/2010.	Leader's Group
01 September 2006	Training for Managers starts.	Head of HR & OD.
06 September 2006	Agree Council Plan 2007/2010.	Cabinet
19 September 2006	Agree Council Plan 2007/2010.	Full Council
30 September 2006	Training for Managers completed.	Head of HR&OD/ACE
31 October 2006	HoS plans considered by SMT.	CMT
15 November 2006	Plans considered by Leader's Group and SMT.	Leader's Meeting
06 December 2006	Plans considered formally by Cabinet.	Cabinet
15 December 2006	Plans examined by PMB.	PMB
22 December 2006	Budget Consultation Completed.	ACE
03 January 2007	Budget Consultation results reported.	Cabinet
03 January 2007	Budget Consultation results reported. PMB feedback to Cabinet on examination of plans.	Cabinet
01 February 2007	PDRs start.	CMT members.
07 February 2007	Budget agreed.	Cabinet
27 February 2007	Budget Agreed.	Full Council

28 February 2007	Business Plans Retabled with adjustments from budget process.	CMT
14 March 2007	Business Plans Retabled with adjustments from budget process.	Leader's Group
04 April 2007	Business Plans Retabled with adjustments from budget process.	Cabinet
30 April 2007.	PDRs completed.	All Managers.

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE CABINET

2ND AUGUST 2006

INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL – FUTURE MEMBERSHIP

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor R. Hollingworth
Responsible Head of Service	Head of Legal and Democratic Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 To consider the future membership of the Independent Remuneration Panel and to agree the way forward.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the four current members of the Independent Remuneration Panel be re-appointed to serve on the Panel until 30th September 2008, and that subsequently two of these members be re-appointed for a further period of two years until 30th September 2010;
- 2.2 That new members be appointed to the Panel for a period of four years;
- 2.3 That new members be appointed to the Panel as and when required following public advertisement;
- 2.4 That the Leader, Deputy Leader and the Portfolio Holder for Human Resources and Organisational Development be given delegated authority to appoint new members to the Panel following interview;
- 2.5 That the Bromsgrove Local Strategic Partnership be invited to nominate a representative to serve on the Panel.
- 2.6 That the annual allowance paid to Panel members be increased to £350 with effect from the 2007/08 financial year and that this allowance be increased annually thereafter in line with the rate of inflation.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In November 2001 the Council appointed an Independent Remuneration Panel to make recommendations to the Council on Members' Allowances. The Panel has subsequently reviewed the scheme of Members' Allowances on an annual basis. In addition, arising from consolidated Regulations in 2003, the Panel also has a function to make recommendations to Parish Councils on allowances for Parish Councillors.

- 3.2 When the Panel was originally established it comprised five members, four of whom volunteered their services following public advertisement and who were appointed following interview by the Cabinet. The fifth member was nominated by the local Chamber of Commerce.
- 3.3 At that time the Council did not specify a term of office. However, the Cabinet subsequently agreed to invite the members of the Panel to continue to serve until February 2004. The Panel Members were then re-appointed until 30th September 2006. This report has been prepared in view of the imminent expiry of the term of office.
- 3.4 The Members' Allowances Regulations do not specify any requirements with regard to the period of office of Panel Members. However, government guidance refers to the importance of some continuity of membership as a Panel is likely to become more effective as its knowledge and understanding of Members' Allowances is increased. The guidance therefore suggests that authorities may wish to consider appointing Panel Members for a term of office of several years, such as 3-5 years.
- 3.5 In order to strike a balance between continuity of membership and the need for 'new blood', it is suggested that the existing Panel Members be invited to continue to serve for a further period of two years until 30th September 2008. At that stage it is proposed that two of the Members would stand down and the two remaining members would be re-appointed for a further period of two years until 30th September 2010. In addition, it is recommended that all new Panel members be appointed to serve for a period of four years. In effect, this would result in rolling programme of two new appointments every two years.
- 3.6 As mentioned earlier in the report, the current Panel members were originally appointed following public advertisement and interview by the full Cabinet. In order to streamline the appointment process, it is recommended that authority be delegated to the Leader, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Human Resources and Organisational Development to interview and appoint new members to the Panel.
- 3.7 The Chamber of Commerce's nominated representative was not able to attend meetings of the Panel during its review of Members' allowances for 2005/06 due to other commitments. The Chamber was invited to nominate an alternative representative to serve on the Panel for the review of allowances for 2006/07 but unfortunately they were unable to nominate a person who could devote the necessary time commitment. The Panel therefore operated as a four person Panel during its last series of meetings.
- 3.8 Cabinet Members are asked to consider whether they wish to approach another body such as the Bromsgrove Local Strategic Partnership to nominate a representative to serve on the Panel. It is suggested that any individual nominee would be invited to serve for a four year term of office.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 Panel Members are paid an annual allowance of £250 in recognition of the time and effort involved in serving on the Panel. They are also entitled to claim travel expenses. Budgetary provision exists to meet these costs. The level of the annual allowance has remained unchanged since the Panel was first established in 2001.

4.2 It is recommended that this allowance be increased to £350 from 2007/08 and be increased annually thereafter in line with the rate of inflation. The additional costs will have to be addressed as part of the review of the budget for 2007/08.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 The Council has a legal requirement to appoint an Independent Remuneration Panel as set out in The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

5.2 A Panel must comprise at least three members none of whom is also a member of the Council or is disqualified from being or becoming a member of the Council

6. Corporate Objectives

6.1 This report seeks to complement the Council's objective to be an efficient and effective Council.

7. Risk Management

7.1 There are no risk management issues associated with this report.

8. Other Sub Headings

8.1 None

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

Background Papers

Minutes of the Executive Cabinet

E-mail correspondence with the Chamber of Commerce

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