

2006-07 Assurance Statement

The Manager of Resource Services

This formal assurance statement on the Authority's system of Internal Control is based upon the systems audited by Internal Audit, both financial and non-financial during the year 2006/2007.

In addition to this the assurance statements provided by the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Chief Financial Officer (s151), Monitoring Officer, Heads of Service and Heads of Unit support the conclusions being made within this statement.

In our opinion and to the best of our knowledge the Authority's system of Internal Control in the main operates satisfactorily. This is further evidenced by external evaluators such as CPA inspection, which classified the Authority as a "Good" Authority, the Audit Commission, in their annual audit letter and other inspectorate reports such as the Planning Inspectorate.

However, during 2006-2007 certain issues arose which we believe relevant to the preparation of the Statement on Internal Control, within the Statement of Accounts.

These issues being:

Outstanding Issues Brought Forward:

- The Authority's Risk Management Strategy has been reviewed and updated. The key enhancements include the introduction of a standard approach (common language) to risk terminology, the formalisation of reporting procedures and the introduction of Key Performance Indicator's to measure how effectively risks are being managed and the extent to which risk management procedures are embedded across the Authority.
- Implementation of the Satellite Navigation system has been completed during 2006-07. Benefits are being achieved in identifying and providing evidence to support reportable delays with respect to waste disposal.
- Register of Interests. Procedures have been developed across a number of Departments, however, further action is required to ensure that all qualifying interests are disclosed across Departments.
- The Business Continuity Plan has been reviewed and updated. Formal testing procedures will be developed and deployed during 2007-08.

Reportable Issues for Inclusion Within the 2006-07 Statement:

- Register of Interests. Procedures have been developed across a number of Departments, however, further action is required to ensure that all qualifying interests are disclosed across Departments. Internal Audit will be conducting a review of this area, for both Officers and Members, during 2007-08.
- The Business Continuity Plan has been reviewed and updated. Formal testing procedures will be developed and deployed during 2007-08. This will provide a key feed into the development of the Disaster Recovery plan.

Emerging Issues for Consideration:

- Awareness and monitoring of the implications of the outputs from the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 on the medium and long-term financial strategy.
- LSVT – management of the corporate “overhang” through cost absorption.
- Partnership Risk – the Authority will need to review its approach to Partnership Risk, and consider associated control issues as and when the number and complexity of partnership activity changes.

It should however, be noted that action plans to address the weaknesses have been implemented and when fully incorporated will ensure that the control in relation to these issues operate efficiently and effectively.

Internal Audit will monitor the progress of the action plans and evaluate the effectiveness of the actions in addressing the issues identified.

The Authority’s system of Internal Control can only provide reasonable (not absolute) assurance that assets are safeguarded and that errors or irregularities are prevented or detected within a reasonable period.

This statement is given to the best of my knowledge.

Mr V Rimmington
Manger of Resource Services
Gedling Borough Council
June 2007