



TAUNTON DEANE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 18 MAY 2009

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2009/10

Report of Strategic Finance Officer, Maggie Hammond

Executive Summary

This report presents the Council's Annual Governance Statement for 2008/09, prepared in accordance with the corporate governance framework, as required by the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) (Regulations) 2006.

1. Background

- 1.1 The first Annual Governance Statement (AGS) was produced for the financial year 2007/08. Prior to the financial year 2007/08, local authorities were required to prepare a Statement on Internal Control (SIC) as part of the annual Statement of Accounts. The AGS is required to be formally approved by Council and signed by the Council's most senior member and officer (Leader and Chief Executive).
- 1.2 In 2007, CIPFA/SOLACE (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy/Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers) published a framework document and guidance note for 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government'. The framework, which has been given statutory effect under the 2006 Regulations, defines proper practices for the form and content of a governance statement which meets the requirement to prepare and publish a statement on internal control.
- 1.3 The framework identifies six core principles, each with a set of supporting principles, around which, it is suggested, authorities' local codes should be structured. One of the purposes of the Annual Governance Statement is to report publicly on the extent to which the Council complies with its local code. The AGS should be structured in such a way, therefore, that it follows the format used for the local code and details the level of compliance with the core principles in demonstrating the extent to which the Council is delivering the governance principles.

1.4 The core principles, originally developed in 2004 by the Independent Commission on Good Governance in Public Services in the report 'The Good Governance Standard for Public Services' and subsequently adapted by CIPFA/SOLACE for local government purposes, are as follows:

- i) Focusing on the purpose of the authority and on the outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area;
- ii) Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles;
- iii) Promoting values for the authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour;
- iv) Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk;
- v) Developing the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective;
- vi) Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability.

2 ANNUAL CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

2.1 The principal purpose of the Annual Governance Statement is to provide assurance that the organisation's governance framework is adequate and effective. The AGS is a public report which is intended to demonstrate the extent to which the Council complies with its own code of corporate governance on an annual basis, including how the effectiveness of the governance arrangements have been monitored, and any planned actions in the coming period.

2.2 The Annual Governance Statement needs to include the following information: An acknowledgement of responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of governance;

- A brief description of the governance framework;
- A brief description of the process that has been applied in maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness of the governance arrangements;
- An outline of actions taken or proposed to deal with any significant governance issues.

2.3 The Annual Governance Statement 2008/09 is attached.

3 ACTION PLAN

- 3.1 An action plan has been drawn to ensure that issues raised within the AGS are monitored and progress throughout 2009/10.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 It is recommended that:

- i) The Annual Governance Statement for 2008/09 be approved;
- ii) The Corporate Governance Committee monitors progress of the significant issues highlighted in the statement and aids with the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement for 2009/10.

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TAUNTON DEANE BOROUGH COUNCIL

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2008/09

Scope of responsibility

Taunton Deane Borough 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. Taunton Deane Borough Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

In discharging this overall responsibility, Taunton Deane Borough Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

Taunton Deane Borough Council has approved and adopted a Code of Corporate Governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework "*Delivering Good Governance in Local Government*". A copy of the code can be obtained on request.

This statement explains how Taunton Deane Borough Council has complied with the code and also meets the requirements of regulation 4(2) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003, as amended by the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2006 in relation to the publication of a Statement on Internal Control.

The purpose of the governance framework

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and culture and values, by which the authority is directed and controlled and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with and leads the community. It enables the Council to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services.

The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of Taunton Deane Borough Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood and impact should those risks be realised and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The governance framework has been in place at Taunton Deane Borough Council for the year ended 31 March 2009 and up to the date of approval of the statement of accounts. The framework is described to reflect the arrangements in place to meet the six core principles of effective governance.

The Governance Framework

On 17 March 2008 the Council adopted a formal code of corporate governance in line with guidance provided by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounting (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE). This describes how Taunton Deane Borough Council discharges its responsibilities for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, incorporating the six core principles identified by CIPFA/SOLACE. The framework we have in place to ensure we adhere to the code and the key areas of evidence of delivery are as follows:

Focusing on the purpose of the Council and on outcomes for the community creating and implementing a vision for the local area.

Taunton Deane Borough Council is one of a number of organisations (public sector agencies and private, community and voluntary sector groups) represented on the Taunton Deane Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), formed to ensure that the joint efforts and resources of local agencies are combined as far as possible to identify and address the issues that really matter to the residents of Taunton Deane. The LSP have an agreed Community Strategy for Taunton Deane that sets out a broad agenda of action to improve the quality of life in Taunton Deane.

The Council undertook a Place Survey with residents during 2008/09. The survey was conducted to seek residents' views about the Council, its priorities and is an important part of the evidence base that feeds into the production of the Council's Corporate Strategy. The Council have produced a rolling 3-year Corporate Strategy that builds on that broad agenda to clearly establish the Council's own set of ambitions and priorities.

The Corporate Strategy sets out detailed objectives and supporting actions under each of the corporate priorities – specifying what Taunton Deane Borough Council will do to secure improvement in each area. In addition, the Corporate Strategy sets out a series of organisational objectives, embodying “how the Council will deliver services” and meet its statutory requirements.

The Corporate Strategy is the Council's core planning document – from which the Council's Financial Strategy, Medium Term Financial Plan and annual budget, Asset Management Plan, Capital Strategy and Housing Strategy are formed. Service Plans are produced from the Corporate Strategy to show how each service within the Council will contribute to the delivery of the objectives.

Monitoring reports detailing Statutory Indicators and local Performance Indicators & progress against the corporate Strategy are reported to the Strategy & Performance Panel every quarter. This panel was created in October 2007 and has helped to ensure that the Council challenges Value for Money more robustly. The report is also circulated to the Executive and the Core Council Managers Group prior to being submitted to the panel. At the year end the outturn report is also presented to the Executive. A summary of the Council's progress against the Corporate Strategy in line with its Corporate objectives is presented, alongside detailed appendices.

During 2007/08 the Council created a Southwest One partnership with IBM, Somerset County Council and Avon and Somerset Constabulary. This partnership has modernised and reduced the cost of many of the Council's services as well as

improving access to and delivery of customer-facing services enabling the Council to improve services to the Community.

The Council is also working on a collaborative partnership between all the Somerset Councils entitled Pioneer Somerset. It is anticipated that this will offer strong and accountable leadership across the County, reduce duplication, deliver excellent service quality and value for money and give communities a greater say in service provision.

Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles.

During 2007/08 the Council undertook an exercise to set out the roles and responsibilities of each member of the Council's Corporate Management Team. The results of this review are set out in the "CMT Roles and Responsibilities & Priority tasks document published in early 2008. It sets out the link of each Director to a geographical area of the Borough, to the Community Partnership they chair, to Portfolio Holders, to a group of Ward Councillors and Senior Managers. It also sets out specific priority tasks for the Chief Executive and Directors.

During 2008/09 a fundamental review of the structure and ways of working at all levels within the Core Council was started. The established aim of this review is to introduce a new structure and ways of working that will enable the Core Council to:

- Be fit for purpose, delivering our vision, widened roles and ways of working
- Deliver substantial efficiency savings for 2009/10 and beyond

The strategic direction of the organisation and sponsorship of key objectives and priorities is undertaken by the Directors – who meet on a weekly basis with the Chief Executive.

The statutory roles of Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer are well established and have their own control regimes in place to enhance the control environment.

On 16th July 2008 the Medium Term Financial Strategy was approved by the Executive with ratification by Full Council on 7th October 2008.

The value of, and emphasis on, engaging in partnership working has increased significantly over recent years. As such, partnership working is playing an increasingly important role in policy development and service delivery. Locally within Taunton Deane the Council is engaged in a number of significant partnerships such as Southwest One, the Waste Partnership, Project Taunton, Audit Partnership, the Local Strategic Partnership etc. With such significant levels of resources (both financial and human) invested/committed to these partnerships it is absolutely crucial that the Council is sure that each partnership is effective and provides value for money.

Promoting the values for the authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour

Taunton Deane Borough Council has always had a Standards Committee that is designed to be chaired by and have a majority of independent members therefore the Council was already fully prepared for the changes that were brought about by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 concerning standards.

During the year, the committee lost three of its independent members but was very successful in recruiting three more of a suitably high calibre to take on this role.

Due to the changes in the process with the complaints now being dealt with by the Council's standards committee, it was felt that an additional parish councillor would be of benefit to the Committee in case of a conflict of interest should there be a complaint against a parish councillor and therefore the committee now consists of thirteen members, seven independent members, three parish councillors and three borough councillors.

The terms of reference for this committee includes promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Councillors, advising and training on the members code of conduct, dealing with complaints against members and dealing with any issues raised by the Monitoring Officer. The Committee submitted its annual report to the Council's Corporate Governance Committee on 16th March 2009.

During the year further work will continue to raise the profile of the Standards Committee, e.g. the Chief Executive and the S151 Officer will be invited to attend the Standards Committee, Standards Committee independent members will continue to visit parish councils, the Chair of Standards Committee will meet with group leaders to ensure that the ethical governance remains high on the agenda for members.

A new code of conduct for members and employees is due out this year and there will be a need for all members to be further updated on any new code that is introduced.

There have been a couple of by-elections for the Borough Council on 2008 and new members received a detailed induction folder together with individual training from the Monitoring Officer to ensure they were able to carry out their role as quickly as possible. In addition the members of the Committee receive regular training as well as attending the Annual Somerset County Standards training event.

Changes to the process came into force in may 2008 and these changes were widely advertised by the Borough Council. Notice was placed in the Somerset Gazette and leaflets were distributed in the Council's reception, the Citizen's Advice Bureau, Parish Councils, libraries, local post offices and the Wellington Community Office.

Since the implementation of the local assessment process the council has only received four complaints, three of which were referred for investigation and are awaiting decision. The other was dismissed for lack of information. This was

considered to be a low level of complaints and the Standards Committee believes that this is due good ethical governance within the Council and the parish councils.

In July 2008 the Council was inspected by the Office of Surveillance Commissioners on our policies, procedures and use of the RIPA legislation (Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000).

The Inspector concluded that whilst there were some issues to be addressed, he was confident that at the next inspection the procedures required would be in place and effective. The Inspector made 6 recommendations, 5 of these were implemented during 2008/09. The final recommendation, that further training is undertaken, will be addressed during 2009/10.

The Council has established Whistle-blowing and Anti-Fraud and Corruption policies and details of these are published in the Council's staff handbook and are accessible on the intranet. The staff handbook is regularly updated and is accessible by all staff. The handbook contains all key personnel policies, standards, procedures and codes of conduct.

The Corporate Governance Committee deals with the formal approval of the accounts and any external audit reports arising from that, has an overview of the internal audit function, an overview of the strategic risk management process, and deals with any change to the Council's constitution.

Internal and External audit work together to review and provide annual opinions on the control framework, governance and validity of the annual accounts. Various other inspection agencies such as the Audit Commission also look at specific areas of this Council's business.

The Council's internal audit function is delivered via a partnership arrangement – South West Audit Partnership (SWAP). The internal audit function operates to the standards set out in the 'Code of Practice' for internal Audit in Local Government in the UK. Working in partnership has significantly improved the quality of reporting and the extent of the assurance provided.

Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and risk management arrangements

Taunton Deane Borough Council has a published Constitution that sets out the decision-making arrangements and the responsibilities for different functions. There are clear rules of procedure for the running of business meetings and details of delegated authorities to individuals. Although a number of minor changes had been included since 2002, a more substantial review is in progress and it is hoped that this will be finalised later in the year, however substantial amendments have been made to take into account the changes to scrutiny and any legislative changes from the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 which are now being implemented. Further changes may also be required following the implementation of the Local Democracy and Economic Development Act. The work on the constitution is informed by the Constitutional Sub-Committee set up to work its way through the various changes needed. This work would then be taken to the Corporate Governance Committee and then to full Council for its approval.

All significant decisions are made by the Executive which consists of the Leader together with 8 Councillors and carries out all of the Council's functions which are not the responsibility of any other part of the Council. Apart from the Council itself, the Executive is the main decision-making body and makes decisions on matters which have been delegated to it.

Council meetings are open to the public (with the exception of items that are exempt under the Access to Information Act) and the Council makes every effort to advertise meetings, communicate decisions and minutes of meetings to ensure that they are available to the public.

The Executive has a published Forward Plan of Decisions to be taken and meets in public on a monthly basis. Executive Councillors have delegated authority to make certain decisions – and these are published in the Council's Weekly Bulletin. This, together with an appropriate level of delegation to senior managers enables speedy and effective decision-making.

The Scrutiny Function underwent a Peer review by the IDeA in September 2008 and a number of recommendations have been made. The Council are currently considering those recommendations and are making a number of changes to the scrutiny process and set up.

The IDeA found that changes made with the pilot scheme was a positive change and had the potential to deliver the further development the Council is striving for. They confirmed that members spoke positively about the process and were actively engaged, members felt that this contributed to their understanding of the role of councillor. In addition members felt that the use of task and finish groups provided a flexible and adaptable approach. The IDeA felt that there was good officer/member relations.

However the IDeA found that there were areas that needed further work and that there was confusion around the current structure and terminology which impacted on the member ability to work with the new system. This is being addressed and a new amended structure is being finalised which will be easier for all members and officers to understand. It was felt that further training and development was required for both members and officers and is being looked at to ensure the most appropriate training is provided.

The IDeA review team were confident though that the changes to scrutiny function made so far were appropriate and had the potential to enhance the role and impact of scrutiny.

Taunton Deane Borough Council introduced the concept of strategic risk management in March 2003 by the adoption of a Risk Management Strategy, and Risk Management Implementation Plan. The process identifies, prioritises and manages the risks that exist in order to ensure the Council achieves its aims and objectives.

The Council has in place a Risk Management Strategy which is in the process of being revised to reflect the Core Council review and to ensure that Risk Management within the Council is aligned with our partner organisations, The strategy sets out clear limits of responsibility for risk management across the Council. Major projects and partnerships also have risk registers in place and CMT has reviewed the Corporate Risk Register.

Although at a corporate level good progress has been made in implementing risk management with a comprehensive strategic risk register now in place as well as individual registers covering all major corporate projects risk management is still not truly embedded within the Council at a service level.

Members of the Council's Corporate Governance Committee have undergone training in Risk Management during the year and received update reports outlining the current Risk Management arrangements and any future actions.

The Internal Audit function provides management with reports commenting on the effectiveness of risk management arrangements when undertaking individual operational audits.

The Council's overall financial arrangements are governed by its Financial Strategy and MTFP, which set out the financial framework for the delivery of the Council's established Corporate Strategy.

The Council has well-developed robust budget monitoring arrangements. Regular reports are presented to the Strategic Director, with quarterly exception reports considered by Corporate Management Team prior to consideration by members of the Executive and Scrutiny functions.

The robustness of the budget critically depends on the maintenance of a sound financial control environment including effective financial management in each of the Council's service areas. The Financial Regulations, embedded in the Council's Constitution set clear guidelines, procedures and limits in relation to financial activities.

Developing the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective in their roles

The Council aims to ensure that officers and members have the knowledge, capacity and skills they need to undertake their duties. The Council's Performance Management Framework ensures that the links between the Council's Corporate Objectives, Operational Plans and those of individual officers are clear. Staff receive Performance Review and Employee Development interviews every 12 months to discuss their capacity and capability to ensure that they can carry out their jobs. Any identified gaps are then plugged by training and development opportunities. All new members and officers undertake an induction to ensure that they get an appreciation of the policies, procedures, values and aims of the Council.

The Council has undertaken a significant programme of management development over the last year to ensure its leadership team is equipped to support the challenging change programme that lies ahead. In addition, a breakthrough project,

to enable all Members to have the skills to be the very best they can be has been underway throughout the year.

In addition, the Council is in the process of developing the skills of its members and is using the Member Development Charter in order to do this. This will ensure that the members are fully equipped with the skills they need in order to be effective leaders in their community.

In 2008/09 there were issues surrounding the effectiveness of the financial accounts closedown timetable. This led to errors within the accounts which required the accounts to be submitted to the Corporate Governance Committee for re-approval. Southwest One have written an action plan to ensure that this does not happen for the 2008/09 accounts.

Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability

The Council takes account of council taxpayers concerns at the level of council tax, feedback from consultation and the needs and aspirations of local people.

The purpose of consultation is to inform the decisions taken by the Council, to help make the best decisions based on the views of the community and the wider information available to the Council. The Council consults using a variety of methods, which include public meetings, forums, surveys (including the Place Survey), and focus groups.

Within the Council a Consultation and Research Officer is responsible for the development of a forward plan of consultation. This is to help ensure that consultation is consistent, of a high quality and in order to, where possible, avoid members of the public suffering from "consultation overload"; by being invited to take part in a number of different consultation exercises around the same time.

With the annual Council Tax bills a leaflet has been enclosed. This leaflet shares with the tax payers information about the Council's financial strategy, useful information and includes performance information.

The Council has recently started to include a full page spread with the Somerset County Gazette which allows it to communicate the Council's vision and priorities. The paper is widely read and ensures that the Council can effectively reach large parts of the community on a regular basis.

In 2008/09 we carried out equality impact assessments for all areas and most partnerships arrangements and from these, action plans have been drawn to resolve any potential negative impact on any of the equality groups.

Review of effectiveness

Taunton Deane Borough Council has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of its governance framework including the effectiveness of the system of internal control. The review of the effectiveness is informed by senior managers within the Council who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, and also by the work of the internal auditors and by

comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates.

The review for the 2008/09 statement was carried out by a working group made up of Strategic Directors, the Council's Group Auditor and Performance Manager. The review was informed by:

Comments of Internal Audit – Internal Audit are responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the systems of internal control. Their work is based on a 4 year rolling programme based on risk covering financial and operational audits. Audit reports are copied to management and carry an independent opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's internal controls.

Comments of external auditors – External Audit provide the Council with assurance in the form of their Annual Audit and Inspection Letter, Use of Resources Assessment (which includes a value for money judgement) and data quality report.

Comments of other review agencies and inspectorates.

The results of the review were reported to the Council's Corporate Management Team prior to approval by the Corporate Governance Committee in June 2008 (where the accounts are presented for approval).

The Council's Corporate Governance Committee approved a Code of Governance for the Council and a process for assessing the effectiveness of the governance framework on an annual basis in March 2008. During 2008/09 due to other priorities this has not been progressed as an official launch.

The results of the review have been shared with representatives of the Council's Corporate Governance Committee in May 2009 for them to consider. The Council has been informed on the implications of the result of this review and a plan has created to address the weaknesses identified and to ensure continuous improvement of the Council's governance arrangements is in place.

Significant governance issues

During the year the Group Auditor (South West Audit Partnership) brought a number of control issues to the attention of the Council's Corporate Governance Committee. The opinion of the Internal Auditors was that the control framework was reasonable.

There were however a few areas where it was not working well in practice, these included payroll (issues over the authorisation of expenditure and reconciliation of payroll data) and Economic Development (poor web presence and inadequate assessment for projects funded from service budgets). There were a number of weaknesses reported within the Managed Audits undertaken during the year but these are largely historic (lack of procedural guides, poor division of duties and lack of reconciliation between feeder systems and the Council's general ledger) it is hoped that many of these issues will be addressed as part of the implementation of SAP during 2009/10). The Internal auditors were pleased to find that managers have already taken action to deal with these issues or have agreed to management action plans timetabling improvements to the Council's internal control framework.

The annual review of the Council's Governance arrangements did not find any major control issues, but identified a number of actions need to be carried out during 2009/10 to strengthen the control framework.

These include:

Corporate Governance

- To ensure that the Code of Corporate Governance is publicised internally and externally and regularly monitored to ensure that the Council is complying with it.
- Carry out a health check on the Council's ethical governance framework.

Partnership Working

- The review of corporate governance arrangements in relation to partnership working will be on a future scrutiny agenda. Some work is being undertaken by way of guidance for members who sit on outside bodies. This guidance will be issued to them early in 2009
- To ensure the Council realises benefits from the transformation projects, Pioneer Somerset and Southwest One partnership. The Council will continue to ensure that it manages risks which arise from these developments and will ensure that our governance arrangements continue to be fit for purpose.
- A change of the audit plan to include Governance, Fraud and Corruption work including partnership arrangements.
- Performance Management and review of partnerships are being strengthened through the new strategy and corporate theme of the Core Council review.

Scrutiny

To continue to strengthen the council's Scrutiny function and following on from the IDeA per review produce an annual report on the Scrutiny function although it is recognised that significant progress has been made in 2008/09.

Health and Safety / Risk Management

- To finalise the Risk Management Strategy and embed processes to ensure it is fit for purpose, streamlined and effective.
- To take Health & Safety forward, highlighting priority issues needing addressing to raise Health & Safety, knowledge and performance within the Council.
- To formulate plans for service delivery in the loss of facilities following on from the plans developed to prioritise service delivery in the event of a Pandemic Flu type scenario.

Financial Systems Issues

- To review the operation of the internal controls governing the processing of Payroll data in light of the installation of SAP.

Performance / Financial Management

- To develop the Council's Asset Management arrangements.
- To fully review the Constitution and Financial Regulations during 2008/09.
- To implement improvements following the external auditors use of resources assessment 2007/08
- To complete the Core Council Review and thematic working.
- To ensure that the Southwest One action plan, in response to the closure of the 2008/09 accounts is followed.

The Council proposes over the coming year to take steps to address the above matters to further enhance our governance arrangements and periodically report back to the Corporate Governance Committee on progress being made. We are satisfied that these steps will address the need for improvements that were identified in our review of effectiveness and will monitor their implementation and operation as part of our next annual review.

Signed: 

Ross Henley

Leader of the Council

Signed: 

Penny James

Chief Executive

TAUNTON DEANE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**ANNUAL REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE & INTERNAL CONTROL 2007/08
ACTION PLAN**

Finding	Actions	Resp Officers	Completed By
Corporate Governance			
To ensure that the Code of Corporate Governance is publicised internally and externally and regularly monitored to ensure that the Council is complying with it.	Code to be “publicised” to Officers and Members and Partners.	SA	
	To monitor compliance with TDBC’s Code.	SA	
Partnership Working			
To further develop the corporate governance arrangements in relation to Partnership working.	Review of governance of existing partnerships.	SA	
	Develop partnership standards and a checklist for partnership working.	BC	
	Ensure risks are managed on key partnerships – Pioneer Somerset and Southwest One.	BC / SA	Ongoing
To review partnerships and SLAs to ensure their actions support key local priorities in the sustainable Community Strategy that feeds into wider LAA targets.	Follow-up work from Solace Review in 06/07	BC	
Scrutiny			
To continue to develop Scrutiny function.	Report on outcome of scrutiny pilot.	TM	October 2008
	Ensure that recommendations from Task & Finish reviews are progressed and monitored.	CMT	Immediate
Staffing & Customers			
To continue to monitor the levels of staff absence.	Improve data availability and reporting.	KT	
To ensure that staff are	Core Brief.	RJ	

regularly updated on major projects / initiatives that will affect the Council.	Regular staff updates on key projects.	CMT / Change Managers	
To improve Corporate Standard of customer care and satisfaction with Council services.	Scope of CRM Change Project extended to cover non-systems issues.	RS	
Health and Safety / Risk Management			
To review the corporate risk management arrangements to ensure they are fit for purpose.	Review current arrangements and report to CMT on recommended improvement	SA	
To ensure the Council's risk management arrangements are embedded in all key projects and all service areas.	Gap analysis and report to CMT completed. Gaps closed	SA	
To ensure Members are updated, at least annual on how the Council's major risks are being managed.	The introduction of periodic reporting on risk management to Members (Corporate Governance Cttee).	SA	
To implement the new Health and Safety Management System and cascade throughout the authority.	Provide appropriate training and guidance	DW	
To review the Council's business continuity planning arrangements.	Gap analysis to CMT Council wide plan to be completed and published	JL JL	
Financial Systems Issues			
To review the operation of the internal controls governing the processing of Payroll data by Somerset County Council on behalf of Taunton Deane.	Make sure SLA clearly identifies responsibilities for the operation of controls.	KT	
Performance / Financial Management			
To develop the Council's Asset Management arrangements.	New AMP approved by CMT and Members. Ensure the planned	GS	

	<p>review of assets is completed.</p> <p>Ensure the data held on assets is complete and up to date.</p> <p>To develop a robust set of measures to evaluate performance of the Council's Assets.</p>		
To fully review the Constitution and Financial Regulations.	<p>Training on Financial Regulations completed.</p> <p>Financial Procedures Updated to reflect structural changes, and system changes.</p> <p>New contract standing orders approved.</p> <p>New constitution approved by Members.</p>	<p>SA</p> <p>SA</p> <p>SA</p> <p>TM</p>	October but ongoing.
To improve performance management arrangements.	<p>Review of best practice.</p> <p>New reporting style in place at TDBC</p> <p>Review of data quality issues and report to CMT on gap analysis</p>	<p>SA / AGS</p> <p>SA / AGS</p> <p>SA / AGS</p>	