

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council – Assurance Statement 2011-2012

In accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 (amended 2006), Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council is required to conduct a review at least once a year of the effectiveness of its governance arrangements, including its system of internal control and arrangements for risk management.

To facilitate this, Directors are required to complete and certify a self assessment questionnaire on at least an annual basis. This questionnaire acknowledges the responsibility of the Director in disseminating corporate messages and monitoring practices that uphold the council's governance framework within their Directorate.

The governance framework is defined as

“The systems and processes, and cultures and values by which local government bodies are directed and controlled and through which they account to, engage with and, where appropriate, lead their communities.

Delivering Good Governance in Local Government – Framework, CIPFA, 2007

The assurance statements provided by each Director will be used together with other assurance sources (e.g. internal and external audit opinions) to develop the 2011-2012 Annual Governance Statement for Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council which is included as part of the Statement of Accounts.

In completing this exercise, it is acknowledged that the governance framework and system of internal control can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions are authorised and properly recorded and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or will be detected within a timely period.

Statement from

This statement is given in respect of the governance framework in place within my service area during the 2011-2012 financial year.

I acknowledge my responsibility in ensuring that council policies and procedures are followed and that proper systems of governance and internal control are maintained within the services areas of my directorate. This responsibility incorporates the requirement to monitor and review the operation of these systems as part of the council's risk management processes.

The information provided in the following sections of the document is given to the best of my knowledge in connection with the service areas for which I have responsibility. Where I am unable to confirm all, some or any of the following, I have provided details in the column headed 'Additional Comments'.

Officer completing this statement:

Date completed:

SERVICE ASSURANCE STATEMENT – CHECKLIST OF KEY CONTROLS

Reference	Area of Responsibility	Confirmed (Yes/No)	Evidence	Additional Comments
1	Policy Objectives and Plans			
1.1	I can confirm that: All officers in my service have access to the Corporate Performance Plan.	Yes/No		
1.2	All officers in my service have access to their Section Business Plan.	Yes/No		
1.3	That the activities defined within my Departmental Sections Business Plan contribute to and reflect the corporate polices and strategies/	Yes/No		
2	Compliance			
2.1	I can confirm that: Services delivered are within the rules of the Council's Constitution.	Yes/No		
2.2	My staff are aware of the following policies: Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy Confidential Reporting Code (Whistleblowing) Information Security Policy	Yes/No Yes/No Yes/No		
2.3	My staff have been given guidance on their responsibilities under the: Data Protection Act Freedom of Information Act Publication of Transparency Information	Yes/No Yes/No Yes/No		

Reference	Area of Responsibility	Confirmed (Yes/No)	Evidence	Additional Comments
3	Management Structure and Staffing			
	I can confirm that:			
3.1	My service has a clearly defined management structure.	Yes/No		
3.2	All officers in my service have clearly defined job responsibilities.	Yes/No		
3.3	All officers in my service are aware of their roles and responsibilities.	Yes/No		
3.4	All officers in my service have received sufficient training in order to fulfil their role and these are reviewed on a regular basis	Yes/No		
3.5	All officers received their annual appraisal and that the results have been sent to Personnel Services.	Yes/No		
3.6	Authorisation levels for financial transactions have been reviewed and are appropriate for the role and responsibility of the officer concerned.	Yes/No		
4	Performance Management			
	I can confirm that:			
4.1	My staff are aware of the Council's Performance Management Framework (Spotlight).	Yes/No		
4.2	Adequate controls are in place to ensure the accuracy of performance information generated by my service area including procedure notes.	Yes/No		

Reference	Area of Responsibility	Confirmed (Yes/No)	Evidence	Additional Comments
5	Risk Management and Business Continuity			
	I can confirm that:			
5.1	My staff are aware of the Council's Risk Management Strategy	Yes/No		
5.2	My staff are aware of the Council's risk register, which details the strategic risk to the Council.	Yes/No		
5.3	I and my staff have received adequate training to support us in identifying risks that affect my service and its delivery.	Yes/No		
5.4	Risks affecting my service and service delivery are recorded in the departmental risk register.	Yes/No		
5.5	The risk registers have been reviewed in June and December of the current financial year.	Yes/No		
5.5	My staff are aware of the Council's Business Continuity Plan.	Yes/No		
5.6	My staff are aware of the services business continuity plan and their role within it.	Yes/No		
5.7	The Business Continuity plan has been reviewed in January of the current financial year.	Yes/No		

Reference	Area of Responsibility	Confirmed (Yes/No)	Evidence	Additional Comments
6	Partnership/Joint Working and Shared Service Arrangements			
	Where an arrangement exist within my service I confirm that:			
6.1	The arrangements follow the guidance issued.	Yes/No		
6.2	The arrangements have been subject to a risk assessment by both parties.	Yes/No		
6.3	Charges to be made or received have been correctly accounted for.	Yes/No		
7	Financial Management			
	I can confirm that:			
7.1	Income from fees and charges for my service has been Levied at appropriate levels. Collected, or pursued in instances of non-payment. Banked in accordance with financial guidelines.	Yes/No Yes/No Yes/No		
7.2	Controls are in place to ensure that expenditure is properly authorised.	Yes/No		
7.3	My service conducts budgetary control on a regular basis and variations are reported to financial services in accordance with budgetary control guidelines.	Yes/No		
7.4	My service holds and regularly reviews its inventory in accordance with financial regulations.	Yes/No		

8	Fraud and Litigation			
	I can confirm that:			
8.1	I have no knowledge of any fraud that may have an adverse financial effect on the Council.	Yes/No		
8.2	I have no knowledge of any litigation or claims involving the Council which require disclosure in the financial statements as at 31 March 2012. (in that the Council would be liable to costs or a fine)	Yes/No		