



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Assurance Statement for period ending 31 March 2008</b>
<b>Date:</b>	20 June 2008
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Trevor Salmon, Director of Corporate Services
<b>Contact Officers:</b>	Andrew Wilson, Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services Andy Harrison, Acting Corporate Assurance Manager, Audit, Governance and Risk Services

### Relevant Background Information

Each year the Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services presents an annual assurance statement. The statement forms part of the corporate governance arrangements for Belfast City Council. The Council is responsible for the stewardship of public money and must therefore demonstrate that it has adequate and effective systems of risk management, governance and control.

The annual assurance statement is a professional opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's internal control environment, taking account of:

- the key elements of the Council's internal control arrangements, including risk management and governance arrangements
- the results of audit work undertaken in 2007/08 and the management responses / actions taken in respect of audit reports
- future developments which may lead to improvements in internal control.

Information to support the assurance statement is included in the body of the report, which includes a summary of audit work undertaken, issues arising and the actions taken by management to address audit recommendations.

### Key Issues

The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee should note the assurance statement set out at section 2.2 of the attached report.

### Resource Implications

There are no significant resource implications arising from this report.

### Recommendations

The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee is asked to approve the Assurance Statement for the period ending 31 March 2008.

**Key to Abbreviations (including in attached paper)**

AGRS – Audit, Governance and Risk Services  
BCC – Belfast City Council  
BCM – Business Continuity Management  
BIS – Business Improvement Service  
Cfacs – the Council’s old financial system  
COMT – Chief Officers’ Management Team  
CIPFA - Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy  
DMTs – Departmental Management Teams  
ISB – Information Systems Belfast  
LGA – Local Government Auditor  
SAP – the Council’s new financial system  
SOLACE - Society of Local Authority Chief Executives  
VFM – Value for money

**Documents Attached**

Audit, Governance and Risk Services - Assurance Statement for the period ending 31 March 2008.