Bracknell Forest Council

NOTICE OF MEETING

Children, Young People & Learning Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Wednesday 3 July 2013, 7.30 pm
Council Chamber, Easthampstead House, Town Square, Bracknell, RG12 1AQ

To: CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

Councillors Mrs Birch, Brossard, Gbadebo, Ms Hayes, Mrs Hamilton, Heydon, Kensall, Mrs McCracken and Mrs Temperton

Church Representatives (Voting in respect of Education matters only)

Reverend Nick Parish (Subject to appointment) and one vacancy

Parent Governor Representatives (Voting in respect of Education matters only)

Mrs C Murray and Mr R Briscoe

Teachers' Representatives (Non-Voting)

Miss V Richardson

cc: Substitute Members of the Panel

Councillors Allen, Ms Brown, Dudley, Thompson and Virgo

Children's Social Care Representative (Non-Voting)

Mrs C Mitchell

ALISON SANDERS
Director of Corporate Services

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Published: 25 June 2013

**Children, Young People & Learning Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Wednesday 3 July 2013, 7.30 pm
Council Chamber, Easthampstead House, Town Square,
Bracknell, RG12 1AQ**

AGENDA

**There will be a private meeting for members of the Panel at 7.00pm in the
Function Room, Easthampstead House**

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1.   **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

2.   **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

3.   **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

     To receive apologies for absence and to note the attendance of any
     substitute members.

4.   **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

     To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the   1 - 8
     Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel
     held on 17 April 2013. Information sought by the Panel at its last
     meeting has been circulated electronically and is appended to the
     minutes.

5.   **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP**

     Members are requested to declare any disclosable pecuniary or
     affected interest, including the existence and nature of the Party Whip,
     in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting.

     *Any Member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or an affected
     interest in a matter should withdraw from the meeting when the matter
     is under consideration and should notify the Democratic Services
     Officer in attendance that they are withdrawing as they have such an
     interest. If the Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is not entered on the
     register of Members interests the Monitoring Officer must be notified of
     the interest within 28 days.*

6.   **URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

     Any other items, which pursuant to Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local
     Government Act 1972, the Chairman decides are urgent.

7.   **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

     To receive submissions from members of the public which have been
     submitted in advance in accordance with the Council's Public
     Participation Scheme for Overview and Scrutiny.

8. **BRACKNELL FOREST YOUTH COUNCIL**

Members of the Youth Council will give a presentation concerning their current activities.

9. **YOUTH PROVISION**

To receive updates in respect of various Youth Service projects.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

10. **QUARTERLY SERVICE REPORT**

To consider the latest trends, priorities and pressures in terms of departmental performance as reported in the Quarterly Service Report for the fourth, and final, quarter of 2012/13 (January to March 2013) relating to Children, Young People and Learning, giving particular attention to outcomes of Ofsted school inspections and an update on school placements.

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Please bring the previously circulated Performance monitoring Report to the meeting. Copies are available on request and attached to this agenda if viewed online.

Panel members are asked to give advance notice to the Overview and Scrutiny Team of any questions relating to the Quarterly Service Report where possible.

11. **SERVICE PLAN 2013/14 - REVISED KEY ACTIONS AND INDICATORS**

To receive and note the revised key actions and indicators in the attached Service Plan 2013/14 as an aide to monitoring the performance of the Children, Young People and Learning Department.

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OVERVIEW AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

12. **ADOPTION SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT**

The Annual Report of the Adoption Service 2013 is attached for the Panel's consideration.

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13. **FOSTER CARE SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2013**

To consider the Annual Report of the Foster Care Service 2012-13.

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14. **COMMON ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK**

To ascertain whether the Common Assessment Framework process has led to improved transitions or opportunities for young people.

15. **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN**

To receive the attached Children and Young People's Plan for information.

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HOLDING THE EXECUTIVE TO ACCOUNT

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting of the Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel will be held on 11 September 2013.

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL
17 APRIL 2013
7.30 - 9.35 PM

Bracknell Forest Council

Present:
Councillors Mrs Birch (Chairman), Allen, Brossard, Gbadebo, Heydon, Kensall, Mrs McCracken and Mrs Temperton

Mr R Briscoe, Parent Governor Representative
Miss V Richardson, Teachers' Representative

Apologies for absence were received from:
Councillors Mrs Hamilton, Ms Hayes and Dr Barnard

Also Present:
Andrea Carr, Policy Officer (Overview and Scrutiny)
Lorna Hunt, Chief Officer: Children's Social Care
Dr Janette Karklins, Director of Children, Young People & Learning
Bob Welch, Chief Adviser: Learning & Achievement
Karen Frost, Early Years Childcare & Play Manager
Rosanna Border, Senior Advisor
Sheila McKeand, Head of Service for Looked After Children
Kashif Nawaz, Deputy Assistant Virtual School Head for Looked After Children

41. **Apologies for Absence/Substitute Members**

    The Panel noted the attendance of the following substitute member:

    Councillor Allen for Councillor Ms Hayes.

42. **Minutes and Matters Arising**

    RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 16 January 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

    The Panel received and noted previously circulated information pertaining to Short Break Care and the Youth Offending Service's prevention service.

    Matters arising

    - Following input from the Panel on the Annual Admissions Arrangements 2014/15 siblings had been categorised as a social criteria in the new policy. A move that should help ensure that the younger siblings of children placed in a school that was not their Designated Area School were not disadvantaged when it came to consideration of their applications to the same school as their sibling.

43. **Declarations of Interest and Party Whip**

    There were no declarations of interest nor any indications that Members would be participating whilst under the party whip.

44. **Urgent Items of Business**

There were no urgent items of business.

45. **Public Participation**

No submissions had been made by members of the public under the Council's Public Participation Scheme for Overview and Scrutiny.

46. **Bracknell Forest Youth Council**

In the absence of the Bracknell Forest Youth Council it was agreed that this item would be deferred to the Panel's next meeting.

47. **Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel**

The Panel were provided with a briefing on the work of the Life Chances Team which had been operational since October 2011.

The Life Chances Team was a virtual team of professionals with responsibility for looked after children drawn from a wide range of services including Early Years, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, the Youth Service, the Youth Offending Service, education and social workers. The Team's work focused on two key priorities: ensuring that resources were effectively and efficiently deployed and providing a service that met the needs of the looked after child in an effective and timely manner; work carried out through the early identification and addressing of problems.

The health, education and placement of all looked after children were continuously monitored and if a child was registered as having issues with two or more of these areas at any one time then additional support was put in place to help solve the problems. If at the Team's next monthly meeting the issue has not been resolved then monitoring and action would continue. If an issue is found to be a common one for the group then this was examined in more detail as a separate piece of work.

Since the Team's inception there had been a number of positive developments including the development of more effective links between agencies, a reduction in the number of education issues recorded and the better understanding of the needs of all vulnerable children. Foster carers had also reported that they feel better supported and that they feel better able to foster children with more complex needs. The development of the Team has also provided a model and a catalyst for resource development in other areas.

The Panel was informed that a Central Government Cross Party Working Group had identified the presence of a designated looked after children governor on a school governing body as being an example of best practice. It was hoped that introducing this across schools in Bracknell Forest would help drive the work of the Life Chances Team forward. The Panel acknowledged the good sense of this suggestion and agreed that the matter would be looked at by the Panel's School Governance Working Group.

The Panel requested an update on the work of the Life Chances Team in six months time.

The Panel congratulated the Life Chances Team for the positive difference that they were making to Looked After Children.

48.   **Quarterly Service Report**

Karen Frost, Head of Prevention and Early Intervention, gave a presentation in respect of Family Focus the Government's Troubled Families initiative.

The programme, initiated in January 2012, was a three year programme which would introduce a systemic change to the way that families that incurred a high cost to the public purse were engaged with and helped. In the first year of the project the Council had engaged with 42 of the 115 families in Bracknell Forest identified as meeting two or more of the criteria set out by Central Government including involvement in crime or anti-social behaviour and children not attending school plus any locally decided criteria including domestic violence, mental health issues and neglect. A further 58 families would be engaged with during the current year.

On a day to day basis the initiative was being run by a virtual frontline team of experts meeting to monitor progress on a fortnightly basis. Additional support was provided by a multi-agency project team that met three times a year and a stakeholder group acting as a Project Board to provide additional support and guidance when problems occurred. Each family on the programme was assigned a named worker who worked with the family helping to resolve problems on a holistic basis. The named worker was also responsible for co-ordinating meetings and ensuring that there was a single family plan reducing the number of visits that a family received from professionals.

The project was well supported by all partner agencies involved and a robust system was being put in place that would enable the secure sharing of case files. A move that would further enhance the partnership working already taking place. Extensive training had been put in place for front line staff to help them improve the way that they engaged with families and this was starting to pay dividends.

It was noted that schools were, through their Family Support Advisors, aware of families involved in the Family Focus project. Where schools did not have Family Support Advisors the development of appropriate links would be explored.

It was agreed that that data relating to the number of Bracknell Forest families within the project meeting the various national criteria would be citculated to the Panel.

The Panel thanked Karen Frost for her update and it was agreed that the presentation would be circulated to the Panel. It was requested that updates were brought to future Panel meetings.

The Panel received an update on the provision of Youth Services within the Borough with a particular focus on the on-going modernisation of the service which aimed to provide the young people of Bracknell Forest with a mix of targeted provision and open access youth centres that provided a wide range of activities. Work tied in with the key outcomes of the Get Us Involved consultation of young people which had highlighted three areas for development: increasing the involvement of young people, providing young people with the opportunity to participate in activities that they wouldn't normally get the opportunity to do and to give young people the opportunity to try out new activities on an informal fun basis without having to worry about whether they are good at the activity.

To help improve the targeting and quality of advice given to young people on a range of matters youth workers were being asked to become the designated youth worker with responsibility for particular key areas including: substance misuse, sexual health and relationships and Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme. Knowledge that would be shared with young people through youth centres and the schools.

It was noted that, although the Youth Services had seen its budget reduced by £405,000 since 2011/12 and three youth centres had been closed, the number of young people accessing youth service provision had only fallen by a relatively small level, from 3569 different individuals in 2011/12 to 3234 individuals in 2012/13, and the number of young people achieving a recognised award through the Youth Service e.g. Berkshire Awards, Duke of Edinburgh Award had increased from 2399 in 21011/12 to 2748 in 2012/13. Statistics that were testament to the provision available and the quality of the work undertaken by youth workers.

Arsing from Members' questions and comments the following points were noted:

- Contracts with external service providers would include provisions that would enable the Council to monitor and quality assure the standard of the service provided
- Many voluntary organisations providing activities for young people wanted support to help them deal with specific topics and it was questioned whether it might be possible to put a system in place that would enable Youth Workers to train and share their knowledge with volunteers
- The Government had recently published Working Together 2013 and the Local Safeguarding Children Board would be working through the implications of the new Section 11 guidance for voluntary and community groups
- The Panel commended the quality of the provision at the Wayz Youth Club
- It was agreed that updates would be given at future meetings

The Panel considered the Quarterly Service Report for the third quarter (October to December) of 2012/13 and the following points were noted:

- Examples of compliments as well as complaints would be included in future Quarterly Service Reports
- Bracknell Forest's attainment of being 40th (out of 150) best authority in the Country for the percentage of pupils attending a good or outstanding primary school was to be commended. It was acknowledged that more should be done to celebrate this achievement particularly in relation to the Borough's economic development
- The Panel noted the outcomes of the current and previous Ofsted inspections of Bracknell Forest schools

49. **Changes Affecting Special Educational Needs**

Rosanna Border, Senior Advisor, provided a briefing on the emerging statutory reform programme in relation to children and young people with special educational needs (SEN).

The reforms were currently going through the second stage of the Parliamentary Committee process and it was expected that the majority of the changes set out in the legislation would be implemented through clauses within Section 3 of the Children and Families Bill that would receive Royal Assent in mid 2014.

The key changes that the Children and Families Bill would introduce were:

- The age range of those eligible for SEN to be increased from 19 years to 25 years old
- The replacement of statements and learning difficulty assessments with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

- The introduction of a statutory requirement to involve young people and families in the assessment process, the development and review of the local offer and in reviewing SEN provision
- The introduction of a mediation advisor to support those appealing to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal
- The introduction of the option of personal budgets enabling families to manage their child's SEN package

Although the authority would not be developing EHCPs until clear guidance about what they would require had been published work was already taking place to develop the systems already in place to enable changes to progress in advance of the legislation. Positive feedback had been given on pilot projects already in place including work with families at Holly Spring Schools to review the local SEN offer available.

The Panel questioned whether schools had the resources available to meet the ongoing budget pressures particularly in light of the presumption that schools and colleges would have to meet up to the first £6,000 of additional cots incurred for each child's SEN Provision. Officers acknowledged the Panel's concerns and stressed that this figure was on top of the existing pupil funding received by schools and officers were working to develop more creative ways of delivering the SEN service. Staff were also working closely with those mainstream schools with high SEN levels. It was also noted that SEN needs often reduced over time as the focus moved to encouraging a child's independence and self advocacy as they grew older. In addition, work undertaken at Kennel Lane and College Hall had found that often a child's SEN needs weren't just about the requirement for additional equipment or material resources and that the attitudes of teachers had a far greater impact on their ability to learn.

The Panel was reassured that the method of funding used for Special Schools would remain unchanged with Kennel Lane School being funded on the basis of £10,000 per pupil plus top up funding according to need and provision would be put into place to charge pupils who lived outside the Borough at a set cost. Notwithstanding this officers would continue to monitor the situation to ensure that funding was equitable and that educational resources met the needs of pupils. It was agreed that the Panel would monitor the situation.

The Panel was informed that autism and social and communication problems were the main growth areas for SEN diagnosis and that the Local Authority remained committed to early identification and intervention through the Margaret Wells Furby Centre. To help ensure that any potential problems were picked up as early as possible in a child's life early years practitioners were receiving training to help them identify any social development or language skills problems. It was confirmed that funding for testing of two year olds came from the Department of Health.

It was agreed that the presentation would be circulated to the Panel.

The Panel thanked Rosanna Border for her update, wished her well in her forthcoming retirement and thanked her for all the positive work that she had carried out for the Borough over the years.

50.   **Education Transport Policy 2014/15**

The Panel received a report containing a draft of the Education Transport Policy 2014/15 which they had been given an opportunity to comment on previously.

It was confirmed that if a child was allocated a place at a school that was not its designated area school and the school had not been named as a preference when applying for a place then the local authority would pay for the child's transport to and from school.

It was agreed that the number of children being provided with transport and the cost of this provision would be circulated to the Panel.

51. **Working Group Update Report**

The Panel received a report providing an update on the progress made to date by the Working Group of the Panel reviewing school governance.

It was reported that the review was drawing to a conclusion and a questionnaire had been circulated to head teachers to gather their views of the effectiveness of the structures in place.

Volunteers were requested for a Working Group to review the provision of school places. It was agreed that the Working Group would consist of Councillors Mrs Birch, Kensall, Mrs McCracken and Mrs Temperton and Mr R Briscoe.

52. **Executive Key and Non-Key Decisions**

The Panel noted the scheduled Executive Key and Non-Key Decisions relating to Children, Young People and Learning.

CHAIRMAN

Family Focus

Information required following the action summary of the children, young people & learning overview & scrutiny panel, 17 April 2013

Action
Data relating to the criteria met by families involved in the Family Focus project to be circulated

Information required
'Troubled families' are households who:

- Are involved in crime and anti-social behaviour
- Have children not in school
- Have an adult on out of work benefits

And cause high costs to the public purse

Families must meet three criteria; at least two of the three criteria above and a locally determined criteria which can be one or more of the following,

CIN
Domestic Abuse
Debt
Housing
Substance Misuse
Neglect
Poverty
Mental Health

The following data has been provided on 35 families.

Family names have been anonymised.

Please note that all the families meet a range of local criteria but this is only counted when it becomes one of the three criteria for Family Focus eligibility.

No of families	Family Name	Attendance	Workless	Anti Social	LA	Criteria
1	A	YES	YES	NO	YES	Mental Health
2	B	YES	YES	NO	YES	Housing
3	Ca	YES	NO	YES	YES	Housing/Sub Misuse
4	Co	YES	YES	NO	YES	Sub Misuse
5	D	YES	YES	YES		
6	Fl	YES	YES	YES		
7	Fr	YES	YES	YES		
8	Fu	YES	YES	YES		
9	Hu C	YES	YES	YES		
10	J	NO	YES	YES	YES	Mental Health
11	K	YES	YES	YES		
12	M	YES	YES	YES		
13	Pi	YES	YES	NO	YES	CP
14	Po	YES	YES	YES		
15	Ri	YES	YES	NO	YES	Mental Health
16	R	YES	YES	YES		
17	Sa	YES	YES	YES		
18	Sp	YES	NO	YES	YES	Sub Misuse
19	SS	YES	YES	YES		
20	ST	YES	YES	YES		
21	VM	YES	NO	YES	YES	Housing/Mental Health
22	Wa	YES	YES	NO	YES	Sub Misuse
23	Wal	YES	YES	YES		
24	E	YES	YES	YES		
25	G	YES	YES	YES		
26	H	YES	YES	YES		
27	Se	YES	YES	YES		
28	Sm	YES	YES	YES		
29	T	YES	YES	YES		
30	W	YES	YES	YES		
31	B	YES	YES	YES		
32	C	YES	NO	YES	YES	Sub Misuse/Housing
33	U	YES	YES	YES		
34	W	YES	YES	NO	YES	Sub Misuse
35	Ca	NO	YES	YES	YES	Sub Misuse/Mental Health
	TOTAL	33	31	28	13	

Bracknell
Forest
Council

QUARTERLY SERVICE REPORT

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING

Q4 2012-13
January - March 2013

Portfolio holder:
Councillor Gareth Barnard

Director:
Janette Karklins

Contents

Section 1: Director's Commentary

Introduction

This is the final quarter report for 2012-13 and I write from our new office base in Ocean House. We successfully moved from Seymour House in March, key services continued to operate using different locations and we were generally up and running within hours of the move. Thank you to the staff and teams who worked hard to make this happen so smoothly.

School Improvement - Only one primary school was inspected between January and March 2013. Crown Wood primary school was judged to 'require improvement'. We are very disappointed with this judgement as we do not feel that it accurately reflects our view of the school or the views of the community it serves. The LA will work with an HMI assigned to the school to support its progress.

Easthampstead Park Community and Jennett's Park Primary school, having been judged to require improvement last term, had useful and constructive visits from HMI who commented on the plans for improvement being implemented by the schools and the effectiveness of the support provided by the LA. Wildmoor Heath primary school remains in special measures but a monitoring inspection from Ofsted reported good progress in all areas of the schools work and governance. A further inspection is expected in the summer.

The majority of our schools are good and outstanding and we are keen to ensure that more become good at their next inspection.

Uplands Primary School has been successful in being designated a Teaching School enabling them to provide training for staff and support for other schools.

A very successful education conference took place in February, organised by headteachers and the LA, with lectures and seminars on school leadership and management.

ICT developments - An ICT Advisory Group of headteachers, senior staff from schools and LA officers met to discuss the major changes proposed for the national curriculum in ICT which will change to have a greater emphasis on computing and programming. Schools have highlighted the need for an extensive programme of staff training and additional resources required to implement all aspects of the new curriculum.

English as an Additional Language (EAL) - The English as an Additional Language (EAL) and Diversity Team has updated its support pack for new arrivals and met with the headteachers and EAL coordinators. This is proving to be a valuable resource for schools when working with pupils for whom English is an additional language. The main aim is to empower teachers with readily available information and resources to support the progress of EAL learners and enable them to attain in line with their potential. This has also been a busy time in working with our secondary schools to prepare a number of pupils for various GCSE language exams. This year, 14 pupils will be attempting GCSE Polish, Urdu, Arabic and Turkish exams while two will be attempting A Level Polish and Dutch exams. Also 15 pupils will be taking the IGCSE English as a Second Language exam. This particular Key Stage 4 qualification has enabled a number of EAL pupils to secure at least a grade C in an English based exam which has supported their transition onto post-16 studies.

Looked after Children Education Support (LACES) - The LACES team has continued to meet its core function around monitoring each child's Personal Education Plan (PEP) through meetings with designated teachers in schools. The team has promoted a more collaborative multi-agency approach to meet the educational needs of LAC. Following input from young people via SilSip, the PEP document and meeting arrangements have been reviewed. All educational settings working with BFC LAC have now received their pupil premium for 2012/13. They will be supported by the Virtual School to ensure that it is well used and creative options are explored to engage LAC in wider educational activities.

Educational provision for LAC at Key Stage 4 is constantly monitored to ensure that it meets their needs. This is achieved through the LACES team working closely with the young person. Additional academic and pastoral support is arranged and provided as required to support them in reaching their potential.

The work of the team has been extended to Care Leavers where a similar dialogue occurs and support provided. The LACES team works closely with Care Leavers attending 6th forms and Colleges of Further Education. Some are either resitting their GCSE exams or are returning to education after a period away from it. They are supported in the same way as a looked after child. The LACES team has been working closely with Care Leavers this quarter to ensure they are adequately prepared for their exams. The Team has also been working closely with four young people who are considering progressing onto higher education. Two Care Leavers were accompanied on their visits to University open days and three were supported in completing their application forms.

NEETS - The LA continues to provide a range of support for young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) including mentoring and support through the government's Youth Contract, bespoke education and training through the European Social Funding Support for NEET young people programme, as well as extended work placements, work pairing and a range of educational opportunties from foundation level learning through to apprenticeships. Currently 5.4% of 16-18 year olds are NEET, but within these figures 3.7% are aged 16, rising to 6.9% at 18, mainly as a result of young people having finished their programmes of study at college or an apprenticeship and now seeking employment opportunities. Our unknown figures continue to be below 1% as we work hard to ensure that all young people who are NEET are known to us and are engaging in planning their future.

School governance - The annual conference for school governors took place on Saturday 26 January with a theme of 'Leadership - Making a Difference'. Evaluation scores for the conference were high with many commenting that it was the 'best ever'.

Adult and Community Learning - Further progress has been made on establishing a Community Learning Partnership with Wokingham Borough Council and Bracknell and Wokingham College. A new programme was published at the beginning of January promoting courses through to July.

Educational Psychology Service - The Educational Psychology Service (EPS) has continued to assist in developing services designed to support families experiencing challenges. The Aiming High Support Team (AHST) has an established assessment and intervention strategy for providing behavioural support to disabled children and their families, and this continues to be reviewed, monitored and adapted or improved. Team members involved with both the AHST and Family Focus projects are working

together, to share good practice and to further develop models of service delivery, for work with families.

Special Educational Needs - Work has been ongoing with the changes to the schools funding for SEN. New guidance, processes and procedures are being developed and have been consulted on in line with the new funding arrangements. This guidance will be sent to schools at the beginning of the summer term. Training around provision mapping and funding changes has been delivered for primary and secondary schools as well as support services. We continue to ensure we are well prepared for the SEN changes.

Education Welfare Service (EWS) - A new service level agreement (SLA) has been developed in consultation with schools. The EWS team leader is making visits to schools in the summer term to explain the new SLA and encourage buy in. Fixed Penalty notices are being issued at an increased rate as more referrals are being received by the service and this is having an impact on school attendance. A total for 149 have been issued since January 2012. The Education Welfare Officer attached to the Family Focus project has been working with several families identified through the Family Focus project.

Safeguarding in schools - Safeguarding training has been delivered to a number of both secondary and primary schools. The rate of permanent exclusions has gone down and the service and schools continue to work in partnership to identify the most appropriate provision for Bracknell forest young people. We are also working with the Independent Schools.

Behaviour Support Team (BST) - The team have developed a range of training packages to schools for training of teaching staff and teaching assistants. The training is aimed at developing a schools capacity to manage behaviour and develop techniques and tools to enhance their capacity to work with children who are experiencing difficulties at home and at school. The BST Family Team has started to work on the new Parenting Strategy. The team continue to deliver parenting courses to those identified through various multi agency forums and run workshops in schools to support parenting.

Safeguarding - The number of children with child protection plans is reduced slightly, there are currently 112 children with child protection plans (end of March 2013). The categories are Emotional: 46 (41%), Neglect: 56 (50%), Physical: 7 (6%), Sexual: 3 (3%). The duration of the plans are : <3 months: 32; 3 - 6 months: 29; 6 - 12 months: 34; 12 - 18 months: 6; 18 - 24 months: 10; 24 - 36 months: 1. All the children with plans for longer than 18- 24 months are also in care proceedings, or in the pre-proceedings process. Alternatives to child protection conferences are being offered by Children's Social Care, when it is appropriate and assessed as safe, particularly to older children, such as Family Group Conferences, Risk Management Panels.

On 21st March 2013 the revised Working Together and the new Assessment Framework Guidance Documents were published as one document and will come into effect 15th April 2013. The new Working Together is 97 pages long as opposed to 390 for the 2010 version. The expectation is that the Berkshire LSCB procedures will be amended to reflect the requirements in the new guidance.

Looked After Children - In February 2013, the Life Chances Team arranged a conference on 'Settling troubled children to learn' presented by Louise Bomber,

Attachment support teacher/ therapist who is now well known in Bracknell Forest for her practical advice in supporting children within schools and in care. The conference was well attended by staff from across the Children's Workforce, including a number of schools. The conference stimulated attendees to consider how to introduce or embed the methodology within their work settings and will be followed up by the Life Chances Team over the coming year.

A national Adoption reform agenda has been introduced with an aim to increase the number of available adopters and reduce the length of time that children wait for Adoption. The expectation is that Local Authorities will radically change existing practice; discussions are being held with the other Berkshire Unitary Authorities to consider options.

Within Bracknell Forest the number of children with plans for adoption has risen significantly; over the financial year; five adoption orders were granted, three of these were within 12 months of the plan for adoption being approved by the Adoption Panel and of these, two children were adopted before their first birthday (this is exceptional as only 77 children were adopted before their first birthday nationally in 2011-12).

The number of children placed with Bracknell Forest approved foster carers has increased gradually over the past three years and reached the highest point in February 2013 when 62 children were placed with our carers (compared with 38 in 2010). This is a reflection of the skills and commitment of the carers; the efficiency of the Family Placement Team and the support provided by the Life Chances Team.

The Bracknell Foster Care Association (Foster4Bracknell) has now elected four officers for Chair, Deputy, Treasurer and Secretary. The first of regular meetings with the Head of Service for LAC and Family Placement Team Manager has been held and plans for developing the Association agreed.

The national Charter for Care Leavers was published and presented at Corporate Parent Advisory Panel in March 2013. This sets out the standards by which the Council promise to support Care Leavers as they move into independence and adulthood.

Specialist Support Services - The Disabled Children's Team has a new Head of Service and some changes to the portfolio, to include vulnerable groups. Family Group Conferencing and Access to Records have moved to the Specialist service alongside a lead for Missing Children and Children at risk of sexual exploitation.

Aiming High continues to thrive and develop. The Aiming High Service distribution list has over 700 parents /carers members, and around 250 professionals working with children with disabilities. The service is well integrated with voluntary and private organisations.

The Disabled Children's team continues to provide long term support to around 150 children. The Sleep Clinic pilot project has been successfully completed with two families. More general information sessions have been provided at Kennel Lane School, Friends of Early Bird, Kerith mums, foster carers, child minders and as a planned part of the adapted Webster Stratton. We have successfully completed an intensive travel training programme with one young person.

Youth Offending Service (YOS) - YOS have completed a Self Assessment of the Restorative Justice and Victim Service. A report on the findings has been presented to the YOS Management Board. The Self Assessment revealed many examples of

positive practice, particularly in relation to due consideration given to the victim's wishes in determining reparation activities for young offenders. An action plan to take forward a small number of improvements has been implemented.

All YOS operational staff have completed a two day training course on working with young people who have Autism. The training, commissioned from the Berkshire Autistic Society was bespoke, focussed on working with parents and young people whose behaviour places them at risk of entering the Criminal Justice System.

The Youth Justice Board's quarterly report on the achievements of Bracknell Forest YOS indicates positive outcomes in relation to all three national youth justice indicators.

Family Focus - Good progress has been made in achieving the required milestones for the national Troubled Families programme. We have met our target for year one and successfully engaged 42 families. We will also be putting forward a payment by results claim forward for the successes achieved with families. The virtual team is in place and working hard with the target group of families. The model of working is proving to be successful as we focus staff resources and energy on intensively working to change behaviours. The virtual team includes EWO, SW, Educational Psychologist, Family Intervention Workers and early intervention support. The team are starting to compile case studies to share good practice.

Early Intervention Hub - The Hub continues to develop and has been well received by schools and practitioners and has been well attended. To date The Hub has received and discussed 186 cases which have led to multi-agency support packages being developed. Work is planned to evaluate the impact of The Hub alongside the impact of the Common Assessment Framework as part of our continued focus on prevention and early intervention.

Human Resources - Following the merger of the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) to form the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), good progress has been made with the introduction of an electronic system for providing disclosure and assessing which posts should be subject to a check. This new system can provide the DBS disclosure far more quickly, with some returned within 5 working days. Training has been provided to schools and the LSCB to provide guidance on these new arrangements. The staffing implications of the budget reductions exercise has been concluded with successful redeployment of four members of staff with two staff dismissed through redundancy.

School Funding - 2013-14 School Budgets have been calculated under the new DfE funding regime which requires a simpler, more consistent approach to funding schools by LAs including the requirement for more special educational needs costs to be met from within the general funding allocated to schools. Implementing the changes, which were signed off by the Schools Forum, represents the culmination of a major piece of work, which has unavoidably resulted in a redistribution of funds between schools. Despite these challenges, schools have worked hard on balancing their budgets and there is no noticeable change in the number of schools contacting the Department with financial difficulties.

Section 2: Department Indicator Performance

Ind. Ref	Short Description	Previous Figure Q3 2012/13 or Annual 2011/12	Current Figure Q4 2012/13 or Annual 2012/13	Current Target	Current Status	Comparison with same period in previous year
Children's Social Care – Quarterly						
NI043	Young people within the Youth Justice System receiving a conviction in court who are sentenced to custody (Quarterly)	0 (Q2)	0 (Q3)	Baseline = 9	G	N/A
NI068	Percentage of referrals to children's social care going on to initial assessment (Quarterly)	86.0%	87.0%	70.0%	G	→
CSP9 .01	Reduce the reoffending rate of the Bracknell Forest local cohort of all young offenders (Quarterly)	0.47 (Frequency) 21.2% (Binary rate) (Q2)	0.48 (Frequency) 22.4% (Binary rate) (Q3)	N/A	N/A	N/A
L092	Number of children on protection plans (Quarterly)	120	112	N/A	N/A	N/A
L123	Initial assessments for children's social care carried out within 10 working days of referral (Quarterly)	85.4%	80.0%	85.0%	A	↘
L140	Percentage of children looked after in family placement or adoption (Quarterly)	64%	64%	68%	A	↗
L161	Number of looked after children (Quarterly)	101	103	N/A	N/A	N/A
Children's Social Care – Annual						
NI060	Percentage of core assessments for children's social care that were carried out within 35 days of their commencement (Annually)	80.6%	78.4%	80.0%	G	↘
NI061	Timeliness of placements of looked after children for adoption following an agency decision that the child should be placed for adoption (Annually)	66.7%	60.0%	67.0%	R	↘
NI062	Stability of placements of looked after children - number of placements (Annually)	10.0%	11.7%	10.0%	R	↘
NI063	Stability of placements of looked after children - length of placement (Annually)	76.2%	68.4%	68.0%	G	↘
NI064	Child Protection Plans lasting 2 years or more (Annually)	4.4%	3.2%	5.5%	G	↗
NI065	Percentage of children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time (Annually)	12.6%	17.3%	12.0%	R	↘
NI066	Looked after children cases which were reviewed within required timescales (Annually)	100.0%	98.0%	100.0%	G	↘
NI068	Percentage of referrals to children's social care going on to initial assessment (Annually)	74.6%	78.2%	70.0%	G	↗
NI147	Care leavers in suitable accommodation (Annually)	89.5%	100.0%	95.0%	G	↗
NI148	Care leavers in suitable education, employment or training (Annually)	57.9%	86.0%	58.0%	G	↗
L123	Initial assessments for children's social care carried out within 10 working days of referral (Annually)	83.9%	84.5%	85.0%	G	↗
Health and Wellbeing – Quarterly						
CSP9 .03	Prevent a rise in first-time entrants into the Youth Justice System (Quarterly)	9 (Q2)	7 (Q3)	67	G	↗
Health and Wellbeing - Annual						
NI058	Emotional and behavioural health of looked after children (Annually)	15.5	15.4	N/A	N/A	N/A
NI112	Under 18 conception rate (Annually)	-60.0	-59.8	N/A	N/A	N/A

NI117	16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, training or employment (NEET) (Annually)	5.6%	6.0%	5.9%	G	↘
Learning and Achievement – Quarterly						
NI086	Secondary schools judged as having good or outstanding standards of behaviour (Quarterly)	66.6%	66.6%	66.0%	G	⇒
NI103.1	Special Educational Needs - statements issued within 26 weeks - excluding exception cases (Quarterly)	100.0%	100.0%	98.5%	G	⇒
NI103.2	Special Educational Needs - statements issued within 26 weeks - all cases (Quarterly)	90.9%	94.4%	85.0%	G	↗
L139	Schools judged good or better by Ofsted (Quarterly)	72%	72%	71%	G	↗
Learning and Achievement – Annual						
NI103.1	SEN - statements issued within 26 weeks - Percentage of final statements of special educational needs issued within 26 weeks excluding exception cases (Annually)	100.0%	100.0%	98.5%	G	⇒
NI103.2	SEN - statements issued within 26 weeks - Percentage of final statements of special educational need issued within 26 weeks (Annually)	72.7%	93.7%	85.0%	G	↗
NI079	Achievement of a Level 2 qualification by the age of 19 (Annually)	83.2% (10/11)	83.2% (11/12)	N/A	N/A	N/A
NI080	Achievement of a Level 3 qualification by the age of 19 (Annually)	61.7% (10/11)	61.0% (11/12)	N/A	N/A	N/A
NI081	Inequality gap in the achievement of a Level 3 qualification by the age of 19 (Annually)	32.0% (10/11)	17.0% (11/12)	N/A	N/A	N/A
NI082	Inequality gap in the achievement of a Level 2 qualification by the age of 19 (Annually)	23.0% (10/11)	11.0% (11/12)	N/A	N/A	N/A
NI091	Participation of 17 year-olds in education or training (Annually)	85.5% (10/11)	86.0% (11/12)	N/A	N/A	↗
Strategy, Resources & Early Interventions - Quarterly						
L141	Number of youth centre attendances (Quarterly)	1,365	2,318	2,000	G	↘
NI067	Percentage of child protection cases which were reviewed within required timescales (Quarterly)	94.3%	95.0%	98.0%	A	↘
Strategy, Resources & Early Interventions - Annual						
NI067	Percentage of child protection cases which were reviewed within required timescales (Annually)	98.3%	95.0%	98.0%	A	↘

Note: Key indicators are identified by shading

Traffic Lights
Compares current performance to target

Comparison with same period in previous year
Identifies direction of travel compared to same point in previous year

G	On, above or within 2.5% of target		↗	Performance has improved
A	Between 2.5% and 7.5% of target		⇒	Performance sustained
R	More than 7.5% from target		↘	Performance has declined

The following are annual indicators that are not being reported this quarter:

Ind Ref	Short Description
L153	Percentage of looked after children reaching level 4 in English at Key Stage 2 (Annually)
L154	Percentage of children looked after (as at 31st March) reaching level 4 in Maths at Key Stage 2 (Annually)
L155	Percentage of children looked after achieving 5 A(star)-C GCSEs (or equivalent) at Key Stage 4 (including English and Maths) (Annually)
NI019	Rate of proven re-offending by young offenders (Annually)
NI111	First time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10-17 (Annually)
NI057	Children and young people's participation in high-quality PE and sport (Annually)
NI072	Achievement of at least 78 points across the EYF Stage with at least 6 in each of the scales in Personal Social and Emotional Development and CLL (Annually)
NI073	Achievement at level 4 or above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 2 (Annually)
NI075	Achievement of 5 or more A(star)-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths (Annually)
NI078	Reduction in number of schools where fewer than 30 percent of pupils achieve 5 or more A(star)-C grades at GCSE(Annually)
NI086	Secondary schools judged as having good or outstanding standards of behaviour (Annually)
NI092	Narrowing the gap between the lowest achieving 20 percent in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the rest (Annually)
NI093	Progression by 2 levels in English between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 (Annually)
NI094	Progression by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 (Annually)
NI102.1	Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers - Key Stage 2 (Annually)
NI102.2	Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers - Key Stage 4 (Annually)
NI104	The Special Educational Needs (SEN)_non-SEN gap - achieving Key Stage 2 English and Maths threshold (Annually)
NI105	The Special Educational Needs (SEN_non SEN gap -- achieving 5 A(star)-C GCSEs including English and Maths (Annually)
NI107	Key Stage 2 attainment for Black and minority ethnic groups (Annually)
NI108	Key Stage 4 attainment for Black and minority ethnic groups (Annually)
L158	Reduction in number of schools where fewer than 60% of pupils achieve Level 4 in both english and maths at KS2 (Annually)
NI052.1	Take up of school lunches - Primary schools (Annually)
NI052.2	Take up of school lunches - Secondary schools (Annually)
NI114	Rate of permanent exclusions from school (Annually)
NI087	Secondary school persistent absence rate (Annually)

Section 3: Complaints

Complaints received

Stage	No. rec'd Q4	Nature of complaints (bulleted list)	Action taken and lessons learned (bulleted list)
Statutory Procedure Stage 1	4	• 1 complaint received regarding standard of service • 2 received for communications • 1 complaint received concerning staff decisions/conduct	• Ongoing Investigation • Not Upheld • Ongoing investigation • Complaint deferred
Statutory Procedure Stage 2	2	• Progression of complaint received regarding standard of service • Regarding Staff decisions/conduct	• Ongoing investigation • Ongoing investigation
Corporate Procedure Stage 1	8	• 4 regarding communications • 3 complaints for staff decisions / conduct • 1 complaint received regarding standard of service	• Partially Upheld • Resolved • Not upheld • Deferred • Upheld • 2 were deferred • Resolved
Ombudsman	0		

Compliments received for Children's Services Compliments provide valuable information about the quality of our services and help identify the areas in which we are working well. Across the Children Young People & Learning, 135 compliments were recorded for Quarter Four.

Section 4: People

Staffing Levels

	Establishment Posts	Staffing Full Time	Staffing Part Time	Total Posts FTE	Vacant Posts	Vacancy Rate
Director	2	2	0	2	0	0
Learning & Achievement (incl Education Library Service)	142	57	85	97.44	6	4.1%
Children's Social Care	130	83	47	111.81	8	5.7%
Strategy, Resources & Early Intervention	168	75	93	114.94	3	1.8%
Department Totals	**442**	**217**	**225**	**326.19**	**17**	**3.7%**

Staff Turnover

For the quarter ending	31 Mar 2013	2.44%
For the last four quarters	1 Apr 2012 – 31 Mar 2013	10.08%

Total voluntary turnover for BFC, 2011/12: 12.69%
Average UK voluntary turnover 2011: 9.3%
Average Public Sector voluntary turnover 2011: 6.7%
(Source: XPertHR Staff Turnover Rates and Cost Survey 2012)

Comments:

There have been organisational changes which have affected establishment post numbers by branch - the SEN team has now moved from Children's Social Care to Learning and Achievement. Additional social worker posts have been established in Children's Social Care to increase capacity in this area. These posts are currently being recruited which has increased the vacancy rate during this period.

Staff Sickness

Section	Total staff	Number of days sickness	Quarter 4 average per employee	2012/13 annual average per employee
Director	2	2	1	1
Learning & Achievement (incl Education Library Service)	142	112	0.79	4.13
Children's Social Care	130	396	3.05	8.78
Strategy, Resources & Early Intervention	168	231.5	1.38	4.19
Department Totals (Q4)	**442**	**741.5**	**1.68**	
Totals (12/13)	**442**	**2433.5**		**5.51**

Comparator data	All employees, average days sickness absence per employee
Bracknell Forest Council 11/12	5.64 days
All local government employers 2011	8.1 days
All South East Employers 2011	6.4 days

(Source: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development Absence Management survey 2012)

Comments:
Long Term Sickness (LTS) cases account for 403.5 days absence, 54% of the department's absence, which have had a considerable effect of the department's absence statistics.

Learning and Achievement
There are no ongoing cases of LTS.

Children's Social Care
There are 2 ongoing cases in this branch.

Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention
There are no ongoing cases of LTS.

N.B. 20 working days or more is classed as Long Term Sick.

Section 5: Progress against Medium Term Objectives and Key Actions

Progress has been monitored against the sub-actions, supporting the Key Actions contained in the Children, Young People & Learning Service Plan for 2012 – 2013. This contains 41 actions to be completed in support of 4 Medium Term Objectives. Annex A provides detailed information on progress against each of these actions:

Overall 4 actions were completed at the end of Quarter 4 (B), while 35 actions are on schedule (G) and 2 were causing concern (A).

The 2 actions that were causing concern are:

Ref	Action		Progress
4.2.1	Recruit at least 8 adoptive families in 2012/13 to meet the needs of children requiring adoption'	A	Seven adoptive families have been approved during the year. The eighth application was due to be presented to the Adoption Panel during March but due to increased demand on Panel time this application has been moved to April. A further two in-family adoption applications have been completed this year.
4.2.2	Recruit at least 12 foster carer households in 2012/13	A	Eleven fostering households were agreed during the year 12/13; eight of these were recommended through the Foster Panel and three were Connected Persons (kinship) foster carers. A further three connected persons assessments were completed but did not progress. Four assessments for Special Guardianship Orders were completed.

Section 6: Money

Revenue Budget

The original cash budget for the department was £12.809m. Net transfers of £0.531m have been made bringing the current approved cash budget to £13.340m. This includes a £0.498m addition from the Corporate Contingency to finance the estimated costs of care and accommodation for Looked After Children which is in line with the agreed budget strategy of the Council to fund the base budget for known costs, and to transfer funds in-year from/to the Corporate Contingency to reflect actual costs as well as the additional staff that have been required to manage increased case loads.

In addition to this amount, there is a budget for Dedicated Schools Grant and other income of £76.330m to fund the Schools Budget which is outside the control of the Council. Within the Schools Budget, £13.025m is managed by the Council on behalf of schools. A breakdown of the budget is available in Annex B1, with Annex B2 showing the budget changes processed this quarter.

The forecast outturn for the department is £12.950m (£0.390m below the current approved cash budget). For the ring-fenced Schools Budget, the forecast outturn is for a £0.034m under spending. The Schools Budget has further income of £0.168m from the ring-fenced under spending from 2011-12, making a total forecast under spending of £0.202m. This is unchanged from the previous period.

A detailed analysis of new variances this quarter is available in Annex B3. The most significant change relates to removing the previously forecast overspending on looked after children which as set out above, will now be financed from the Corporate Contingency.

It is anticipated that a number of carry forward requests will be presented to the Executive in June with the provisional outturn report which relate to projects that started in 2012-13 but will not finish. To complete the works, unspent budget in 2012-13 will be requested to be carried forward into 2013-14. Relevant carry forwards are in the process of being identified.

There are no significant audit issues to report this quarter.

Capital Budget

The original approved capital budget for the department was £18.922m. There has been a further allocation of £2.754m Basic Needs Grant from the DfE to address the shortage of school places, £0.170m DfE grant to develop new free childcare places for the most disadvantaged 2 year olds, with other sources of funding increasing by £0.148m, resulting in an anticipated budget of £21,994m. The Education Capital Programme Board has also endorsed a number of self-balancing budget adjustments on school places projects as scheme details are firmed up and funding is recycle within the programme. All these changes are subject to approval of Full Council before they become part of the approved capital budget.

Within the total anticipated budget, £11.799m is expected to be spent on work completed in the current year, with £10.195m slipping forward into 2013/14 to finalise schemes that cross both years. This mainly reflects the timing of large school expansion and maintenance projects that need to be undertaken during the school summer holidays to minimise the disruption to the education of children.

Expenditure to date is £10.176m representing 86% of the budget expected to be spent this year. The department anticipates all of the total approved budget will be spent by the end of the financial year as the programme is weighted towards the second half of the year. A detailed list of schemes together with their budget, subject to approval of proposed virements, and forecast spend is available in Annex B4.

The following schemes are forecast to over/under spend by at least £20k:

Scheme	Over/Under Spend £000	Comments
None	n/a	n/a.

2013-14 additional fees and charges

The following fees and charges are to be levied in 2013-14 outside those agreed by Council. These were omitted in error from the original schedule for approval:

Consultancy rates available from Learning and Achievement for Curriculum Reviews, Data Analysis, Training, Specialist Advice and Performance Management provided in twilight sessions will be charged at £175 for BF schools and £192 for non-BF schools.

Section 7: Forward Look

Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention

Performance Management and Governance - Complete a review of Creating Opportunities, our joint strategic plan for children, young people and families 2011 – 2014, which will look at progress made and identify key actions for the coming year.

Promote the Children and Young People's Partnership Forum planned for May 16, as an opportunity for partners engaged with the Children and Young People's Partnership to attend the Forum and hear about local developments, including policy and strategy development; to participate in discussion and consultation, and to be informed about activity within the wider children's workforce. The subject will be the Children and Young People's Plan review and the latest developments in Health, including the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

The LSCB annual conference is on Thursday 20 June - the subject is "Neglect and the impact on children and young people". This has been a valued and successful event, and this year with Frank Field as a key note speaker, and an excellent agenda, it is expected to be exciting and interesting.

Complete the annual process for making statutory returns to the DfE which provides valuable data on some of our most vulnerable children and identify how we are performing against national and local indicators.

Youth Service Modernisation Programme – The project is in Phase Three of developing a Commissioning Strategy for Open Access provision. The work on the Town Centre Youth Hub continues. Young people are members of the Programme Board and continue to contribute to decision making with regards to the Hub and the type of services they would like to see delivered.

The delivery of Sexual Health and Substance Misuse Clinics in schools, and within community settings continues. The Youth Service contribution to the PHSE programmes in schools focusing on Health and Well-being, and in particular sexual health, an important element of continuing low levels of teenage pregnancy and sexual health.

Finance – Continue to monitor the 2012-13 budgets and close the financial accounts to the required timetable. Ensure relevant managers are making preparations to implement the budget savings agreed for 2013-14, including those relating to efficiencies and improved service deliveries

Monitor the Department's financial plans, including the capital projects required to deliver sufficient school places; Monitor the impacts arising from the new school funding arrangements that are effective from April 2013. There are significant changes, including simplification of the Funding Formula for Schools, further delegation of services and changes to way that schools are funded for special educational needs.

Identify any schools facing financing difficulties in 2013-14 and develop plans to balance their budgets.

Policy and Commissioning - Development of Early Intervention and Prevention Commissioning Strategy to consultative stage.

HR – Continue with the arrangements for the 2013/14 newly qualified teacher pool and support four schools in recruiting new headteachers; Support schools in undertaking staffing reviews and reductions; review school HR policies and procedures. Review the recruitment and retention of children's social workers. Review the arrangements for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) across the workforce.

ICT - The Server upgrade project in schools is going well and we are on target to migrate all schools over to Windows 7 and Server 2008 platforms by the next quarter.

Work is continuing with our third party Sharepoint provider and we hope to have a fully working Family Focus ICT system in place shortly. This will be an interim solution that will help the sharing of information amongst those professionals working with troubled families.

Planning work is underway on the ICT requirements for those schools that will receive classrooms expansions over the next few months.

Children's Centres – A Children's Centre Peer Challenge, as part of the Children's Improvement Board programme, will take place in April.

Work is underway to set up a Nepalese mothers' group in the Royal Military Academy (RMA).

Work continues with early years' providers to focus on closing the attainment gap and improve performance. Developing the effective use of data will enable more effective targeting of vulnerable children.

As part of the expansion of 2 year old provision, continued work for new provision in Priestwood with the creation of 16 new childcare places (minimum). On-going work to secure new provision in Jennetts Park and working with existing providers to build capacity in identified areas (Crown Wood, The Parks).

Childminders network (Orchard) has been peer reviewed by PACE (Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years) report due this quarter although initial feedback has been very positive.

Family Focus Initiative – Development of robust case studies for use in research and evidence of success. Preparation of cases for payment by results (PbR) claims in July. Identify and engage the second year cohort of families. Rollout the Relateen project (relationship advice for 5-18 yr. olds and their families) for 10 targeted families (up to 100 hours counselling).

Admissions and Property - The annual admissions arrangements from September 2014 have been signed off by the Executive Member and offer letters for secondary places for the September 2013 intake year went out in January, and there are sufficient places available to meet the forecast demand. Primary offer letters for the September 2013 intake year are not due to go out until 23 April, however early indications are that the trend of rising school rolls is continuing and additional surge classrooms are being put in place to ensure there are sufficient primary places to meet the forecast deficits of places in North and South Bracknell.

The awards of contract for the final phases of expansion at Crown Wood and Meadow Vale primary schools are coming to the Executive for decision in April and May 2013 respectively. These expansions are required to be completed in accordance with the Capacity Strategy already approved by the Executive in October 2012.

New school capacity projects are being planned at The Pines, Owlsmoor, and at Garth Hill College, and a new SEN facility is also proposed to create additional SEN places in the Borough now that Kennel Lane school is full.

The re-procurement of the Managing Partner contract currently held by EC Harris is underway, with award of contract decision expected to be taken by the Executive in May 2013, prior to expiry of the current contract in November 2013.

Learning and Achievement
School Improvement - As part of our Service Level Agreement all primary schools receive a termly visit from their assigned LA adviser. For the summer term 2013 the focus of the

meetings will be to finalise an annual report on the performance of each school and priorities for the future.

Adult and Community Learning - Work is beginning on developing the programme for the new academic year with more of a focus on partnership delivery to meet the new funding requirements. The Lifelong Learning team are making appointments to visit schools and internal council departments during the summer term.

Narrowing the Gap and the Pupil Premium - Schools will continue to receive guidance and support in identifying strategies for the effective use of Pupil Premium funding. Secondary schools have also received additional funding for Year 7 pupils who had not achieved Level 4 in either English or mathematics at the end of Year 6. We will monitor the impact of these initiatives on reducing that gap in attainment between all pupils and those in vulnerable groups.

Curriculum - Consultations on the revised National Curriculum, Vocational Qualifications and Accountability Measures for Secondary Schools will close early in the summer term. We will monitor the outcomes of these and discuss implications with schools as required.

Children's Social Care
Safeguarding – Work has been underway to ensure readiness for the implementation of the Single Assessment which has now been published in 'Working Together 2013'. The Single Assessment removes the timescales for Initial and Core Assessments replacing it with a requirement of up to 45 working days to complete an assessment. Implementation will take place from 1st May. Referral and Assessment Procedures will be rewritten to offer guidance on the new assessment process.

LAC - Plans to develop adoption services will be progressed. This will include reviewing existing in-house processes and practice in recruiting adopters and family finding.

The annual Fostering Fortnight will take place 13th - 26th May 2013. Events to highlight the benefits of fostering for your local community will be arranged across the Borough.

A 'Train the Trainer' four day course will be held for eight looked after young people and care leavers. This will provide young people with the skills to deliver training and presentations on topics relating to their experience of being looked after.

Specialist Support Services - Family Group Conferences will focus on increasing the use of FGC's in care proceedings to assist with streamlining and reducing time and resources necessary when going through court process.

Vulnerable groups - A review of current arrangements is under way and significant work is planned for improved management of missing children and those at risk of being sexually exploited.

YOS - A film made by young people working with the YOS prevention service has been nominated for a national award. YOS prevention service staff and two of the young people involved will attend an award ceremony in London.

YOS will be working in partnership with the Youth Service and DAAT to deliver a group work programme to young people who are at risk of sexual exploitation

Further aspects of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act (LASPO) come in force from 1st April 2013. YOS will be working in close partnership with Thames Valley Police to implement the changes to Out of Court Disposals including the implementation of new procedures for managing Youth Cautions.

Annex A: Progress on Service Plan Actions

MTO 1: Re-generate Bracknell Town Centre

Sub-Action	Owner	Status	Comments
1.9.7 Undertake the staff moves within or into Time Square to facilitate the major refurbishment project	CYPL	G	Planned move of staff from Seymour House to Ocean House took place on 18th March. Seymour House is in the process of being de-commissioned. Refurbishment of Time Square will commence early autumn.

MTO 4: To support our younger residents to maximise their potential

Sub-Action	Owner	Status	Comments
4.1 Provide accessible, safe and practical early intervention and support services for vulnerable children and young people in the Borough			
4.1.1 Implement the recommendations of the review of the Common Assessment Framework	CYPL	G	The recommendations following the review of the CAF have now largely been completed. The Early Intervention Hub is in place and since it began has discussed 186 cases. The CAF remains well utilised, and the Family CAF form is increasingly being used by practitioners. The Early Intervention Social Worker is actively engaged with families, and multi-agency engagement in the process is positive.
4.1.2 Implement the Modernisation of the Youth Service Programme	CYPL	G	Phase Two of the programme has now been completed and Phase Three will begin.
4.1.3 Develop and implement the Troubled Families Initiative	CYPL	G	43 families have been identified as meeting the criteria for TF, 37 of these families are now engaged with key workers. A number of families are achieving their milestones e.g. better attendance at school /into work. Claims for payments by results will be made for the July deadline.
4.2 Increase the number and continue to support foster carers			
4.2.1 Recruit at least 8 adoptive families in 2012/13 to meet the needs of children requiring adoption'	CYPL	A	Seven adoptive families have been approved during the year. The eighth application was due to be presented to the Adoption Panel during March but due to increased demand on Panel time this application has been moved to April. A further two in-family adoption applications have been completed this year.
4.2.2 Recruit at least 12 foster carer households in 2012/13	CYPL	A	Eleven fostering households were agreed during the year 12/13; eight of these were recommended through the Foster Panel and three were Connected Persons (kinship) foster carers. A further three connected persons assessments were completed but did not progress. Four assessments for Special Guardianship Orders were completed.
4.2.3 Embed Life Chances Team's systems and processes to ensure timely support to looked after children and their carers	CYPL	B	The Life Chances team continues to meet monthly. A report of the work of the team has been completed. This evaluates the positive impact on the support provided to looked after children and carers and sets out future plans.
4.3 Increase opportunities for young people in our youth clubs and community based schemes			
4.3.1 Increase number of youth work sessions offered by the Youth Service	CYPL	G	The number of youth work sessions offered by the Youth Service has been increased over this period. Project work utilising peer education on

			drug use continues with students from Easthampstead Park School. Young people attending Priestwood Youth Centre participated in a "personal safety" course at the end of February. NRG have been delivering holiday activities - daily across half term and more are planned for the coming year. The Spot at Sandhurst is now open 4 nights a week and out in the community on 2 - starting two new groups this term.
4.3.2 Contribute to an increase in the number of youth club style sessions in the borough provided by others	CYPL	G	The Youth Service continues to work with other providers such as South Hill Park offering arts sessions. Berkshire Youth, KIDS and other voluntary sector providers have been engaged to deliver more services for the coming year. Youth centres have identified their delivery slots in order to increase provision and help complement the work in the community enabling coverage across the week.
4.3.3 Develop on-line access to information regarding positive activities for young people	CYPL	G	The proposal for reviewing and developing the Xpresionz web site is progressing. Young people are engaged in this work, meetings have begun with the IT Team and the 'old' Xpresionz site has been refreshed while this work progresses.
4.3.4 Complete a feasibility study into use of youth facilities in or around the Borough	CYPL	G	Young people are members of the Programme Board and continue to contribute to decision making with regards to the Hub and the type of services they would like to see delivered

4.4 Provide specialist support for families in crisis or significant need through our network of Children's Centres

4.4.1 Provide specialist support for families in crisis or significant need through our network of Children's Centres	CYPL	G	104 individuals (adults and children) have been supported by Home visits. A small number of women have accessed the Freedom Project, which supports women with children on CP/CiN Plans who may be subject to Domestic Abuse.

4.5 Encourage and facilitate enough high quality, affordable inclusive childcare places for those working parents that require one

4.5.1 Encourage and facilitate enough high quality, affordable, inclusive childcare places for those working parents that require one	CYPL	G	4 existing providers have created 24 new places for 2 year olds. 169 vulnerable 2 year olds accessed funded places April 2012-March 2013. A number of childminders have signed up to undertake their level three qualifications in order to expand their knowledge and offer places for funded two year olds.

4.6 Support a wide range of flexible respite services for the carers of children and young people in need

4.6.1 Maintain and develop the existing support for children with disabilities and their carers, through Aiming High for Disabled children and the Disabled Children's Team	CYPL	G	Aiming High continues to support and develop community based activities for children with disabilities. Activities run during school holidays, weekends and after school. These are advertised regularly through the Aiming High Service distribution list, which now has over 700 parent/carer members, and around 250 professionals working with children with disabilities. Work with voluntary and private organisations such as Kerith, Oakwood and John Nike in particular continues to strengthen, which ensures sustainable activities in the longer term. Targeted provision for holiday and Saturday clubs with Kerith Konnections and Kids remains a valuable service and will continue for the coming

			financial year from April 2013.

4.7 Prioritise the safety, health and well being of all young residents in all of our plans for them

Sub-Action	Owner	Status	Comments
4.7.1 Ensure the priorities are communicated across partnerships via meetings, presentations and reports	CYPL	B	This task has been achieved in this year; the priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan have been successfully implemented into wider planning and partnerships activity.
4.7.2 Ensure performance reporting highlights relevant issues of safety and health and wellbeing through monitoring, inspection and quarterly reporting mechanisms	CYPL	G	Performance reporting continues to be undertaken; there is regular analysis of a range of data and information across Children's Social Care, the LSCB, CYP Partnership and other relevant groups and partnerships. The LSCB has received the Annual Complaints Report, and has received performance information from a wider range of partners, including the Police and Health.

4.8 Ensure all children and young people feel safe, are protected from harm and abuse, have their views respected and gain confidence as a member of the local community

Sub-Action	Owner	Status	Comments
4.8.1 Assessment of need and risk are conducted in a timely way	CYPL	G	80.3% of initial assessments were completed in 10 working days and 70.8% of core assessments were completed in 35 working days
4.8.2 Children's views are listened to and form part of the plan for work with the family	CYPL	G	Amendments have been made to all assessments and plans to ensure that children's views are listened to and form part of the plan for the child.
4.8.3 All children with a child protection plan are allocated to a qualified Social worker	CYPL	G	100% of children with CP plans are allocated to a qualified social worker.

4.9 Continue to improve outcomes for looked after children in education, health and employment

Sub-Action	Owner	Status	Comments
4.9.1 Work with the Learning Development and Commissioning Manager 14+ to increase the number of children who are in Employment, Education or Training	CYPL	B	Processes to integrate the work of the Learning Development and Commissioning Manager; Adviza (Connexions); the Looked After Education Service and Children's Social Care Services have been implemented and will continue to do so to address the needs of Looked After Young People and Care Leavers.

MTO 5: Work with Schools & Partners to educate and develop out Children Young People and Adults as Lifelong Learners

Sub-Action	Owner	Status	Comments

5.1 Continue to work with early years providers to close the attainment gap

Sub-Action	Owner	Status	Comments
5.1.1 Continue to work with early years providers to close the attainment gap through specific programmes of targeted support.	CYPL	G	A programme of targeted training has been delivered to 18 early years providers including children's centres. This training introduces delegates to the Environment Rating Scales (ECERS, ITERS) and provides training in using the scales to evaluate and improve their practice: • The ITERS is appropriate for centre-based provision for children up to 30 months of age • The ECERS scales assess centre-based provision for children aged 30 months to five It offers a strong focus on child development and on making the latest research on two year olds accessible and practical to implement.
5.1.2 Implement robust planning for School Places to accurately forecast future requirements	CYPL	G	A detailed timeline for the production of 2013 -14 based forecasts will be agreed by the Pupil Place Planning Board at its meeting at the end of April. An updated system will be used based on a methodology revised in the light of last year's work and latest data. Final draft forecasts are to be

			available by August for capital planning and Government returns.
5.1.3 Provide sufficient pupil places through the Education Capital Programme to meet Basic Need	CYPL	G	The Sandy Lane and Holly Spring capacity projects are now complete, and early indications suggest there will be sufficient secondary places for September 2013. Additional primary places for September 2013 are being created in accordance with the Capacity Strategy approved by the Executive in October 2012.

5.2 Increase the number of schools in the Borough rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted by raising levels of attainment and progress across all phases of learning for all pupils

5.2.1 Provide training and support for headteachers and governors in relation to the judgments made by Ofsted and seek to ensure teaching is of the highest quality.	CYPL	G	Support for schools has continued through visits by school advisers, training courses and the dissemination of materials from Ofsted and other agencies. Links with Ofsted have been strengthened through meetings and discussions with senior HMI.
5.2.2 Undertake supported school reviews to ensure that school self-evaluation is accurate and that school's have identified the correct priorities for improvement.	CYPL	G	LA school advisers have continued to work with schools to review progress and identify areas for further improvement.
5.2.3 Monitor the outcome of inspections of schools and adult learning provision and provide support as appropriate	CYPL	G	The proportion of schools rated good or outstanding has remained constant. Support for school leaders in relation to the new Ofsted inspection framework has continued to be provided by members of the LA school improvement team.

5.3 Support school leaders and governors when considering alternative forms of governance, including forming federations or Academy trusts

5.3.1 Provide information and support to governors and interface with Government agencies and DfE when schools are considering a change of status.	CYPL	G	Information has been provided to headteachers and governors related to Academy status when requested. No schools have commenced the formal process of conversion.

5.4 Increase the number of young people achieving five or more good GCSE passes including English and mathematics and improve the performance of all underperforming groups of children and young people

5.4.1 Analysis of secondary schools performance data and track pupil progress in order to plan and implement appropriate interventions.	CYPL	G	This analysis is undertaken annually and interventions are discussed with schools on an ongoing basis.
5.4.2 Ensure schools analyse the performance of groups of students at risk of underperforming.	CYPL	G	The review of performance data takes place annually in the autumn term and provides the agenda for ongoing discussions with schools.

5.5 Increase the average point score of students taking 'A' level examinations

5.5.1 Analyse post 16 results and option choices and discuss progress with headteachers	CYPL	G	Analysis takes place annually at the start of the autumn term, and provides the agenda for discussion with headteachers (and other senior leaders as needed).

5.6 Support children and young people with special needs, where possible at appropriate provision within the Borough

5.6.1 Progress plans to develop local provision through resource units within the Borough	CYPL	G	One resource unit is starting in Sept 2013 and we are currently exploring other options for secondary and post-16. Sleep Clinic: Pilot completed two families (had hoped for four). The impact was that significant with one family 50% improved sleep. More general information sessions have been run at KLS, Friends of EarlyBird, Kerith mums, foster carers, child minders and as a planned part of the adapted Webster Stratton. These have been very well received. Travel training: Successfully completed an intensive travel training programme with one young person, they are now able to walk independently to and from Kennel Lane school. Made links with Garth Hill School and hoping to transition some pupils on 'action plus' to College from September.
5.6.2 Continue to support schools to meet the needs of children with Special Educational Needs	CYPL	G	Further good progress has been made in preparation for major changes to the provision of support for children and young people with special educational needs. Work has progressed well on 'the local offer'. Headteachers, governors and teaching staff have been briefed on the latest information available from the DfE.

5.7 Complete the refurbishment/building of our special school in Kennel Lane

5.7.1 Complete the refurbishment/building of our special school in Kennel Lane	CYPL	B	This project is now complete

5.8 Encourage and support residents to become school governors

5.8.1 Continue with campaign to recruit school governors through publicising the work of governing bodies and providing support and training.	CYPL	G	This remains an on-going action. Additional opportunities for advertising have been identified and strategies have been discussed with the Overview & Scrutiny Working Group.

5.9 Increase the participation of school leavers in employment, education or training

5.9.1 Continue to work with schools to identify young people at risk on disengaging in education, employment or training and ensuring appropriate interventions are put in place.	CYPL	G	Work is ongoing with schools using our Risk of NEET Indicator (RONI) tool, to identify young people who are at risk of disengaging in education and put interventions in place to ensure that they remain engaged. Meetings have been held with all schools regarding young people who left year 11 in the summer of 2012 and who became NEET to look at potential interventions that could have prevented these occurrences happening. Interventions vary but are bespoke to meet the needs of individual young people. Examples include but not limited to mentoring, alternative curricular, extended supported work placements. The post-16 transition worker has been working with schools and a number of young people from two schools to support their transition into post-16 education and training throughout the Autumn and Spring terms.
5.9.2 Work with education providers to ensure that their curriculum offer meets the needs of young people and that progression opportunities are clearly identified.	CYPL	G	The work of the multi-agency participation group continues to develop curriculum and support young people as they transition in education and training. The relationship with our provider network remains strong and we work closely to develop programmes of curriculum and support to meet the needs of individual young people. Currently we have been looking to develop additional provision

			as a result of a provider ceasing to deliver apprenticeships following changes in apprenticeship requirements.

5.10 Encourage all residents to continue as learners, both in relation to future employment and recreation

Sub-Action	Owner	Status	Comments
5.10.1 Promotion of Lifelong Learning activities available in Bracknell Forest	CYPL	G	Continuous promotion of the Lifelong Learning universal programme to the general public for the last academic term of the year. Working towards delivery and promotion plan for next academic year. Learner numbers slightly below expectation compared to previous years at this point in time.
5.10.2 Work with strategic partners to ensure a wide and varied offer for residents	CYPL	G	Community Project Fund funding is now fully allocated and closed for the remainder of the academic year. Working on a partnership plan and procurement plan for academic year 2013/2014. Initial agreement for Community Learning Trust (partnership) submitted to Skills Funding Agency. Partnership planned with Wokingham Borough Council and Bracknell & Wokingham College.
5.10.3 Source alternative funding to support the provision of Lifelong Learning	CYPL	G	No additional funding secured during the last quarter.
5.10.4 Publicise the European Social Fund Project to ensure referrals to the project in 2012-13	CYPL	G	The Progress project has been widely publicised via the project team to all professionals. Feedback from UK Skills is very slow and is being addressed A number of family members have already been referred and to date I have no current feedback yet.

MTO 11: Work with our communities and partners to be efficient, open, transparent and easy to access and to deliver value for money:

Sub-Action	Owner	Status	Comments
11.8 implement a programme of economies to reduce expenditure			
11.8.5 Develop proposals to help the Council produce a balanced budget in 2013/14	CYPL	G	The budget for 2013-14 has been approved by full Council

Status Legend	
Where the action has not yet started but should have been, or where the action has started but is behind schedule	R
Where the action has not yet started or where the action has been started but there is a possibility that it may fall behind schedule	A
Where the action has started, is not yet completed, but is on schedule	G
Where the action has been completed (regardless of whether this was on time or not)	B
Where the action is no longer applicable for whatever reason	NA

Annex B: Financial Information

Summary Revenue Budget Breakdown

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING DEPARTMENT - TO FEBRUARY 2013								
	Original Cash Budget	Virements & Budget C/Fwds		Current Approved Budget	Spend to Date %	Variance Over/(Under) Spend	Variance This Quarter	
	£000	£000		£000	%	£000	£000	
CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING DEPARTMENT								
Director								
Departmental Management Team	627	-20		607	72%	0	0	
	627	-20		607	72%	0	0	
CO - Learning and Achievement								
School Improvement, Music and Governor Services	860	26		886	58%	-219	-43	1
Advice for 13-19 year olds	568	0		568	71%	-31	0	
Adult Education	22	2		24	157%	-40	-10	2
Education Psychology	295	-4		291	93%	0	0	
Education Welfare and Support	428	4		432	84%	-16	-16	5
	2,173	28		2,201	72%	-306	-69	
CO - Children & Families: Social Care								
Children's Services & Commissioning	1,744	168	a	1,912	92%	20	20	4
Children Looked After	4,762	334	b, e	5,096	81%	20	-250	6
Family Support Services	1,373	-107		1,266	87%	0	0	
Youth Justice	316	7		323	69%	0	0	
Other children's and family services	1,068	19		1,087	88%	-50	-20	3
Management and Support Services	48	-27		21	327%	0	0	
	9,311	394		9,705	85%	-10	-250	
CO - Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention								
Early Years, Childcare and Play	1,969	-28		1,941	78%	-79	-61	7
Youth Service	1,009	-22	c, d	987	78%	0	0	8
Performance and Governance	598	125		723	91%	0	0	
Finance Team	394	42		436	82%	-23	-6	5
Human Resources Team	207	1		208	9%	-12	0	
Property and Admissions	300	-17		283	100%	0	0	
Information Technology Team	272	2		274	85%	0	0	
Extended services and support to families	306	6		312	73%	0	0	
School related expenditure	206	20		226	72%	40	40	9
Seymour House Office Services	130	0		130	84%	0	0	
	5,391	129		5,520	78%	-74	-27	
Early Intervention Grant	-4,693	0		-4,693	100%	0	0	
TOTAL CYP&L DEPARTMENT CASH BUDGET	12,809	531		13,340	74%	-390	-346	
TOTAL RECHARGES & ACCOUNTING ADJUSTMENTS	8,113	0		8,113	-9%	0	0	
GRAND TOTAL CYP&L DEPARTMENT	20,922	531		21,453	43%	-390	-346	
Memorandum items:								
Devolved Staffing Budget				10,940		-79	-2	

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING DEPARTMENT - TO FEBRUARY 2013

	Original Cash Budget	Virements & Budget C/Fwds	Current Approved Budget	Spend to Date %	Variance Over/(Under) Spend	Variance This Quarter
	£000	£000	£000	%	£000	£000
Schools Budget - 100% grant funded						
Delegated and devolved funding						
Delegated School Budgets	67,191	1,363	68,554	86%	0	0
School Grants - Income	-5,249	0	-5,249	69%	0	0
	61,942	1,363	63,305	88%	0	0
LEA managed items						
SEN provisions and support services	5,647	452	6,099	82%	668	0
Education out of school	1,011	60	1,071	99%	0	0
Pupil behaviour	527	0	527	67%	-57	0
School staff absence and other items	1,652	-311	1,341	44%	-62	0
Combined Service Budgets	591	100	691	79%	-36	0
Early Years provisions and support services	3,080	-88	2,992	96%	20	0
Support to schools in financial difficulty	304	0	304	0%	-230	0
Standards Fund LA Managed	0	0	0	0%	0	0
	12,812	213	13,025	80%	303	0
Growth to be allocated	1,273	-1,273	0	0%	0	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-75,627	-473	-76,100	89%	-337	0
Change in general balances	-400	170	-230	0%	-168	0
TOTAL - Schools Budget	0	0	0	0%	-202	0

Virements and budget carry forwards

Note	Total	Explanation
	£'000	
		DEPARTMENTAL CASH BUDGET
	13	Amount reported last period
		Corporate Contingency
a	165	The increase in number of looked after children has had an impact on the case loads being managed by social workers. An allocation from the contingency has been agreed to finance the additional support required to maintain appropriate levels of safeguarding.
b	333	In line with the agreed budget strategy, to finance the anticipated in year increase in costs of supporting Looked After Children, additional funding has been released.
c	-40	The funding originally agreed to support the development of the Town Centre Youth Hub will not be required until 2013-14 and has therefore been returned. A bid for funding will be made in the new financial year.
		Structural Changes Reserve
d	62	Employment Committee has agreed a range of redundancies in the Youth Service following the 2012-13 and 2013-14 budget decisions.
		Inter Department Adjustments
e	-2	A further adjustment has been made to allocations for repair and maintenance works.
	531	**Total**
		DEPARTMENTAL NON-CASH BUDGET
	0	No changes to report.
	0	**Total**
		SCHOOLS BUDGET
	0	Amount reported last month
	0	**Total**

Budget Variances

Note	Reported variance	Explanation
	£'000	**DEPARTMENTAL BUDGET**
	-44	Amount reported last month
		Bringing forward 2013-14 savings proposals
		A number of 2013-14 savings proposals relate to maintaining under spendings and additional income earned in 2011-12. This has been successfully managed in the current year resulting in the following net savings:
1	-43	Additional income from trading with schools
2	-10	Additional income earned at the Bracknell Open Learning Centre
3	-20	Reduction in payments of care leavers maintenance grants
		Staffing
4	185	The increase in number of looked after children has had an impact on the case loads being managed by social workers with additional support required to maintain appropriate levels of safeguarding. This is most acute in respect of numbers of very young children and has required the recruitment of six extra staff above establishment. The total additional cost is estimated at £0.185m of which £0.165m has been funded from an allocation from the Corporate Contingency.
4	-165	Agreed funding from the Corporate Contingency.
5	-22	There has been a delay to recruiting to vacant posts, with a consequential £0.006m under spending occurring in the Finance Team and £0.016m in the Education Welfare Service.
		CO - Children & Families: Social Care
6	83	This period has seen a significant increase in costs associated with children in care as new placements have been required to protect vulnerable children. Overall, an additional 5 placements have been made. Two additional high cost residential placements have been required, which together with increased care for an existing residential placement have resulted in additional costs of £0.073m. There have also been changes to numbers in fostering, where it has been possible to move three children to in-house provision from external placements, saving £0.016m, with increased costs from in-house provision from these three transfers, plus two additional placements amounting to £0.026m. Added to the £0.250m forecast over spending previously reported results in an anticipated year end over spending of £0.333m, which is to be funded through an allocation from the Corporate Contingency.
6	-333	Agreed funding from the Corporate Contingency.

Note	Reported variance	Explanation
	£'000	**CO - Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention**
7	-39	There is a new duty placed on the Council from September 2013 to ensure the most deprived 2 year olds receive 15 hours a week free childcare. In preparation for this, additional places need to be created, for which funding has been set aside in the budget. However, the development of places in the areas with greatest demand has taken longer than expected, which coupled with the DfE making available a new capital grant to create places for 2 year olds has resulted in less spend than anticipated, and a carry forward of unspent budget is requested to enable works required to meet the new statutory duty to be completed next financial year.
7	-14	Prior to the new statutory duty for free childcare for 2 year olds, a pilot project has been in place, targeted at the most vulnerable eligible children and providing 10 hours a week support. Whilst places were offered to fully spend the budget, some parents opted for less than the anticipated 10 hours per week, some withdrew their children whilst others started later than anticipated. In some instances, there were also a lack of available places in the required areas. A carry forward of unspent budget is requested to allow for the intended provision to be made available.
7	-4	Specialist contractors were engaged to supply and fit a new fire exit door with electronic exit and entry keypad at the Rowans Children's Centre. There have been unexpected delays in completion of the work which will not now occur in 2012-13, and a carry forward of unspent budget is requested to enable works to be completed in 2013-14.
7	-4	A training and conference for 100 childminders, planned for January, had to be cancelled at short notice due to inclement weather. The event needs to be held on a Saturday to fit in with work requirements of childminders, and due to the size of venue required, availability of speakers and trainers, it has not been possible to reschedule in the current financial year. A carry forward of unspent budget is requested to enable this significant event to take place in 2013-14.
8	-40	An allocation of £0.040m was agreed from the Corporate Contingency to undertake a feasibility study on a town centre hub for the Youth Service. Whilst some initial work has been undertaken, the programme will continue into next financial year with a resultant under spending, which is requested to be carried forward.
8	40	Agreed funding to the Corporate Contingency.
9	40	There are three areas of school related activities that are now forecast to over spend. Premature retirement / dismissal costs associated with school staff are expected to over spend by £0.015m, income due from other LA pupils in BF special schools from services provided centrally by the Council is anticipated to be £0.015m below budget as fewer placements have been made, and appeals agreed relating to pupil transport to schools outside the normal criteria are expected to cost £0.010m.
	-390	**Grand Total Departmental Budget**

Note	Reported variance	Explanation
	£'000	**DEPARTMENTAL NON-CASH BUDGET**
	0	Amount reported last month
	0	**Grand Total Departmental Non-Cash Budget**
		SCHOOLS BUDGET The Schools Budget is a ring fenced account, fully funded by external grants, the most significant of which is the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). Any under or overspending remaining at the end of the financial year must be carried forward to the next year's Schools Budget and as such has no impact on the Council's overall level of balances. 2012-13 is a one-year budget settlement pending a significant review of Education Funding, which will be implemented from 2013-14.
	-202	Amount reported last period
	-202	**Grand Total Schools Budget**

Summary Capital Budget Breakdown

CAPITAL MONITORING 2012/13
Dept: Children, Young People and Learning

As at: 28th February 2013

Cost Centre Description	Approved Budget £000's	Cash Budget 2012/13 £000's	Expenditure to Date £000's	Estimated Outturn 2012/13 £000's	Carry Forward 2013/14 £000's	(Under)/ Over Spend £000's	Target for Completion	Current status of the project / notes
SCHOOL PROJECTS								
Binfield CE Primary	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Closed	Project closed
Birch Hill Primary	22.0	21.2	21.2	21.2	0.8	0.0	On hold	Masterplan complete. Project on hold
Cranbourne Kitchen	13.4	4.3	4.3	4.3	9.1	0.0	Mar-13	Complete
Cranbourne Primary	54.7	46.4	46.4	46.4	8.3	0.0	Mar-13	Masterplan complete. Project in design
Crown Wood Primary	3,380.2	256.8	228.4	256.8	3,123.4	0.0	Mar-14	Awaiting award of contract for Phase 3.
Crowthorne CE Primary	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	0.0	0.0	On hold	Project on hold
Fox Hill Primary	183.7	155.3	139.7	155.3	28.4	0.0	Mar-13	Project progressing to stage D planning
Great Hollands Primary	152.5	166.2	133.6	166.2	-13.7	0.0	Mar-13	Project progressing to stage D planning
Holly Spring Infant & Junior	3,675.6	3,350.6	2,717.7	3,350.6	325.0	0.0	Jan-13	Phases 3 & 4 complete. Retentions & final account to resolve
Jennett's Park CE Primary	120.4	101.2	101.2	101.2	19.2	0.0	Sep-15	FFE & ICT fit-out to various classrooms
Meadow Vale Primary	2,680.2	1,150.8	1,104.1	1,150.8	1,529.4	0.0	Mar-14	Phase 1 complete. Phase 2 out to tender
Owlsmoor Primary	797.1	603.1	496.6	603.1	194.0	0.0	Sep-13	Phase 2 complete. Phase 3 in design
Pines (The) Primary	318.9	171.9	166.9	171.9	147.0	0.0	Mar-14	Masterplan complete. Project in design
Sandy Lane Primary	347.0	287.1	145.5	287.1	59.9	0.0	Mar-13	Surge classroom complete
Wildmoor Heath Primary	22.0	48.4	21.4	48.4	-26.4	0.0	Mar-14	Masterplan complete. Project in design
Wildridings Primary	22.0	21.4	21.4	21.4	0.6	0.0	Mar-13	Project on hold
Winkfield St Mary's CE Primary	6.9	4.9	4.9	4.9	2.0	0.0	Mar-13	Masterplan complete. Project on hold
Wooden Hill Primary	22.0	23.7	21.2	23.7	-1.7	0.0	On hold	Masterplan complete. Project on hold
Masterplans	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0		Allocated to projects
Educ Capital Programme - Primary	**11,822.4**	**6,417.2**	**5,378.4**	**6,417.2**	**5,405.2**	**0.0**		
Brakenhale Capacity Works	1,705.5	828.2	728.7	828.2	877.3	0.0	Mar-14	Phase 3 complete. Phase 4 in design
Edgbarrow - additional places and post 16	118.5	125.0	99.1	125.0	-6.5	0.0	Mar-13	Retentions outstanding.
Edgbarrow - Expansion	25.0	19.8	19.8	19.8	5.2	0.0	Mar-13	Masterplan complete. Project on hold
Garth Hill College Rebuild	300.0	41.0	-71.6	41.0	259.0	0.0	Mar-13	Retentions & outstanding defects to resolve
Garth Hill Expansion	1,288.9	25.1	25.1	25.1	1,263.8	0.0		Undergoing Option Appraisal
SEN Buildings	1.9	6.2	0.2	6.2	-4.3	0.0		Undergoing Option Appraisal
Wick Hill 14-19 Diplomas	3.0	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.9	0.0	Sep-12	Complete
Project Management Overheads	266.1	13.5	0.0	13.5	252.6	0.0	Mar-14	To be allocated to projects
Educ Capital Programme - Secondary	**3,708.9**	**1,059.9**	**802.4**	**1,059.9**	**2,649.0**	**0.0**		
Kennel Lane Rebuild	2,309.9	2,293.6	2,232.8	2,293.6	16.3	0.0	Sep-13	Build complete. Retentions & final account to resolve
Educ Capital Programme - Special	**2,309.9**	**2,293.6**	**2,232.8**	**2,293.6**	**16.3**	**0.0**		
Retentions - Schools	**-9.0**	**2.8**	**-0.2**	**2.8**	**-11.8**	**0.0**	Mar-13	Retentions outstanding.
Devolved Capital	**1,253.0**	**830.0**	**777.0**	**830.0**	**423.0**	**0.0**	On-going	In progress
Section 106 Developer Contributions	164.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	164.6	0.0	Mar-14	Under review
Section 106 Developer Contributions	**164.6**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**164.6**	**0.0**		
SCHOOL PROJECTS	**19,249.8**	**10,603.5**	**9,190.4**	**10,603.5**	**8,646.3**	**0.0**		

40

Percentages   86.7%   100.0%   0.0%

Cost Centre Description	Approved Budget £000's	Cash Budget 2012/13 £000's	Expenditure to Date £000's	Estimated Outturn 2012/13 £000's	Carry Forward 2013/14 £000's	(Under) / Over Spend £000's	Target for Completion	Current status of the project / notes
CAPITAL MAINTENANCE / CONDITION								
Planned Maintenance (Schools)	**1,616.4**	**871.5**	**794.7**	**871.5**	**744.9**	**0.0**	Sep-13	In progress
Fire Risk Management (Schools)	428.4	106.1	68.8	106.1	322.3	0.0	Sep-13	In progress
Fire Risk Management	**428.4**	**106.1**	**68.8**	**106.1**	**322.3**	**0.0**		
Asbestos Management (Schools)	25.0	20.7	20.7	20.7	4.3	0.0	Sep-13	In progress
Asbestos Management (Schools)	**25.0**	**20.7**	**20.7**	**20.7**	**4.3**	**0.0**		
Legionella Management	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0	0.0	Sep-13	In progress
Legionella Management	**5.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**5.0**	**0.0**		
Disabled Access (Schools) Management	110.6	95.8	37.1	95.8	14.8	0.0	Sep-13	In progress
Disabled Access Management	**110.6**	**95.8**	**37.1**	**95.8**	**14.8**	**0.0**		
ROLLING PROGRAMME	**2,185.4**	**1,094.1**	**921.3**	**1,094.1**	**1,091.3**	**0.0**		
Percentages			84.2%	100.0%		0.0%		

	Approved Budget £000's	Cash Budget 2012/13 £000's	Expenditure to Date £000's	Estimated Outturn 2012/13 £000's	Carry Forward 2013/14 £000's	(Under) / Over Spend £000's	Target for Completion	Current status of the project / notes
OTHER PROJECTS								
Capita One (EMS) Upgrade	107.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	107.9	0.0	Mar-15	Continuing with revised implementation of modules
Education ICT	14.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	14.7	0.0	Mar-13	Under review
ICT projects	**122.5**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**122.5**	**0.0**		
South Bracknell Youth Centre / 1 Great Hollands Square - You	91.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	91.6	0.0	Mar-13	Under review in the context of the planned Youth Hub.
Youth Service Website Development	29.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	29.8	0.0	Mar-14	Under review
Youth Facilities	**121.4**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**121.4**	**0.0**		
Retentions - Non Schools	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**		
Aiming High for Disabled Children	88.6	40.0	38.7	40.0	48.6	0.0	Aug-13	Projects underway for completion by Aug 2013
Asbestos Management (Non-Schools)	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0	0.0	Mar-13	Under review
Brakenhale Minibus External Funding	21.2	21.2	21.2	21.2	0.0	0.0	Mar-13	Complete
Larchwood Outdoor Play Surface	30.0	20.3	4.2	20.3	9.7	0.0	Mar-13	Construction in progress for completion end of May
Places for 2 year olds	169.7	20.0	0.0	20.0	149.7	0.0	Mar-14	In progress
Other	**314.5**	**101.5**	**64.1**	**101.5**	**213.0**	**0.0**		
OTHER PROJECTS	**558.4**	**101.5**	**64.1**	**101.5**	**456.9**	**0.0**		
Percentages			63.2%	100.0%		0.0%		
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	**21,993.7**	**11,799.1**	**10,175.8**	**11,799.1**	**10,194.6**	**0.0**		
Percentages			86.2%	100.0%		0.0%		

Agenda Item 11

TO: **CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL**
        3 JULY 2013

SERVICE PLAN 2013/14 – REVISED KEY ACTIONS

1   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   The purpose of this report is to present the Children, Young People and Learning
        Service Plan for 2013/14 which includes revised key actions for the year.

2   RECOMMENDATION

2.1   That the Service Plan content set out in Annex A be noted.

3   REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

3.1   To enable the Panel to note the annual departmental Service Plan 2013/14 which
        forms a key part of the Council's overall planning framework as an aide to monitoring
        the performance of the Children, Young People and Learning Department.

4   ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1   None.

**5   ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS / EQUALITIES
        IMPACT ASSESSMENT / STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES /
        CONSULTATION**

5.1   Not applicable.

Background Papers

None.

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CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING

SERVICE PLAN

April 2013 - March 2014

Executive Member:
Councillor Gareth Barnard

Director:
Janette Karklins

March 2013

Contents:

Glossary

AHDC	Aiming High for Disabled Children
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic Groups
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CMHT	Community Mental Health Team
CMT	Corporate Management Team
CYPL	Children Young People and Learning
CYPP	Children and Young People's Joint Strategic Plan
C&YPP	Children and Young People's Partnership
DAAT	Drug and Alcohol Action Team
DFE	Department for Education
LDD	Learning Difficulties / Disability Team
DMT	Departmental Management Team
EAL	English as an additional language
EHE	Elective Home Education
EIA	Equality Impact Assessment
EOTAS	Children educated other than at school
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
FAST	Family and Adolescent Support team
FS	Foundation Stage
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IT	Information Technology
KS	Key Stage
LA	Local Authority
LAC	Looked After Children
LDD	Learning Difficulties and Disability

LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board
NGA	National Governors Association
NQT	Newly Qualified Teachers
NEET	Young People Not in Employment Education or Training
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
OLC	Open Learning Centre
PCSfC	Primary Capital Strategy for Change
PEP	Personal Education Plan
PESSCL	PE, School Sport and Club Links strategy
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PVI	Private, Voluntary and Independent sector
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
SACRE	Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education
SEN	Special Education Needs
TaMHS	Targeted Mental Health Services in Schools
YOS	Youth Offending Service

Section 1: Services included in this plan

Children, Young People and Learning is organised into three branches, each led by a Chief Officer. The branches are; Children's Social Care; Learning and Achievement; and Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention. A summary of the services which each branch provides are detailed below. A theme that runs through all of the work of the Department is that of early intervention and prevention – addressing issues wherever possible before they reach crisis point.

DIRECTOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING		
Chief Officer - Learning and Achievement	**Chief Officer - Children's Social Care**	**Chief Officer – Strategy Resources and Early Intervention**
• School Improvement Service • Governor Services • Lifelong Learning • Educational Psychology • Pupil Referral Service • Special Educational Needs Team • Looked After Children's Education Services • Targeted Services -Behaviour Support -Educational Welfare -Safeguarding and Inclusion	• Duty and Assessment Team • Under 11's Team • Family Adolescent Support Team • Over 11's Team • After Care Team • Family Placement Team • Disabled Children's Team • Youth Offending Service • Domestic Abuse Perpetrators Service • Family Group Conferencing • Family Intervention Project.	• Early Years, Childcare and Play. • Youth Services • Performance Management • Conference and Review Team • Statutory Complaints • LSCB • Parent Partnership • Child Participation • Policy and Research • School Admissions • Education Capital & Property • Human Resources • Finance • Commissioning and Policy • ICT

1. LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT

The Learning and Achievement Branch includes the School Improvement Service and a range of targeted support services. Members of the branch provide support and challenge to schools as well as specialist training to raise standards and improve educational outcomes for children and young people living in the borough.

School Improvement Service:
The School Improvement Service provides challenge and support for school leaders, governors, teachers and staff to help ensure that all children and young people receive a good education. This is achieved through a small group of experienced and specialist advisers and advisory teachers working in partnership with school based staff including headteachers and leading practitioners. Intensive support is provided for those schools where pupil progress is not yet in line with national

expectations and where internal monitoring or an Ofsted inspection have identified the need for rapid improvement.

More detail on the work of these teams can be found at:

http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-learning/learning-and-achievement/school-advisory-team.htm

Governor Services:
Bracknell Forest Borough Council is committed to supporting all school governors in its schools to ensure that they have the knowledge, skills and support necessary to carry out their roles and responsibilities.

More detail on the work of Governor Services can be found at:

http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/learning/learn-schools/learn-school-governors

Lifelong Learning:
The Borough Council's adult and family learning provision is managed by the Lifelong Learning Team. The service includes a broad programme of tasters and short courses designed to motivate new learners, an intensive family learning programme to help parents and carers support their children's education and a skills for work and life programme.

More details on the work of the Lifelong Learning Team can be found at:

http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-learning/learning-and-achievement/lifelong-learning.htm

Targeted Services:
Targeted Services provides a range of specialist teams that support and improve outcomes for young people and their families in schools in Bracknell Forest.

Targeted Services comprises of 4 teams.

1. BST School Support Team
The BST school support team have specialist teachers and behaviour support assistants that have a wide ranging set of skills to address and identify both school needs and those of its children and families.

2. BST Family Support Team
The Family support Team works in close co-operation with the school team, the family support team work in the home providing specialist interventions to families. The aim is to enable parents to become confident in their parenting and provide positive behaviour management skills to help them to effectively manage challenging behaviour.

3. Education Welfare Service
The Education Welfare Officers specialise in working with schools to develop effective systems, procedures and interventions and work in partnership with organisations to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence. The team also identify children missing education and work with the school advisory team to monitor the education of elective home educated children.

4. Safeguarding and Inclusion Team
The Safeguarding and Inclusion team is responsible for Safeguarding in Education, Anti Bullying and Inclusion. The team consists of the Team Leader for Safeguarding and Inclusion, the Anti Bullying Co-ordinator and the Inclusion Support Officer.

More information on Targeted Services can be found on:

http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-learning/learning-and-achievement/lac-targeted-services.htm

Educational Psychology:
The Educational Psychology Service plays a role in identifying and assessing the needs of children with special and additional educational needs. It provides consultative support to schools, settings and other services/agencies where issues impinge on the health, emotional, social and educational development of children and young people. It helps schools with the development of their Special Education Needs (SEN) provision, and the Learning Difficulties and Disability (LDD team) with implementation of statutory processes for those pupils who may require a statement of Special Educational Needs.

More information on the Educational Psychology Service can be found at:

http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-learning/learning-and-achievement/children-and-families-access-and-inclusion/educational-psychology.htm

Pupil Referral Service:
The Pupil Referral Service provides suitable education for pupils who, for a variety of reasons, are not able to receive education in school. When young people are excluded from a secondary school they may be reintegrated into another mainstream school, but some pupils will only learn in a particular teaching environment, which is provided within the Pupil Referral Service.

More Information on the Pupil Referral Service can be found at:

http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/learning/learn-schools/learn-pupil-support-services/learn-pupil-referral-service.htm

Special Educational Needs Team:
The Borough is responsible for the special educational needs of all children living in the Borough. The responsibility extends from birth to the age of 19 or when the child leaves school, whichever is the earlier.

The team are responsible for arranging the special provision, usually either through supplementary resources to a mainstream school or through placement in a special school. Some special provision is made through joint arrangements with the Health Authority or Social Care.

More information on the SEN Team can be found at:

http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-learning/children-and-families-social-care/childrens-social-care-specialist-services/special-education.htm

Looked After Children Education Services:

The Looked After Children's Education Services (LACES) team work with children who are looked after to ensure they are integrated into their schools and obtain maximum benefit from their education. The team visit the schools attended by LAC to ensure that each has a suitable Personal Education Plan (PEP) and monitor the use of the pupil premium.

2. CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

Children's Social Care is responsible for assessing the help and support needed for children and their families with specialist needs, including Child Protection.

Duty and Assessment:
The Duty and Assessment team is the "front door" to all of Children's Social Care Services, providing advice and information to the public and professionals and undertaking assessments when the child and family appear to need support.

More information on the Duty and Assessment can be found at:

http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-learning/children-and-families-social-care/childrens-social-care-safeguarding/duty-and-assessment-team.htm

Family Adolescent Support Team:
The Family Adolescent Support Team [FAST] is linked to the Duty and Assessment Team both teams work closely together to support young people on the edge of care. The main aim of the Team is to strengthen the family & prevent family breakdown.

More information on the work of the Family Adolescent Support Team can be found at:

http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-learning/children-and-families-social-care/childrens-social-care-safeguarding/family-and-adolescent-support-team-fast.htm

Under 11's Fieldwork Team:
The Under 11's Team offers services to the most vulnerable children aged under 11 years and their families, working in partnership with children, parents and other agencies. The team assesses families who are in crisis, and also supports young children who are in care. All their work is towards promoting children's welfare and life chances.

The team includes the **Bracknell Family Centre**. The centre runs structured Day Programmes for families in crisis. It also offers Family Support through individual, family and group work sessions, and play therapy. The Centre is for under 11s, though direct work with older children can be offered.

More information on the Under 11's Fieldwork Team can be found at:

http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-learning/children-and-families-social-care/childrens-social-care-safeguarding/under-11s-team.htm

Over 11's Fieldwork Team:

The Over 11's Team works with secondary age group children up to the age of 18 years, who are in need of specialist services, including those on the edge of care, looked after children and those with child protection plans

More information on the work of the Over 11's Fieldwork Team can be found at:

http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-learning/children-and-families-social-care/childrens-social-care-health-and-wellbeing/over-11s-team.htm

After Care Team:

The After Care Team works with young people who had been looked after up to age 16 years and beyond. The team supports young people during the transition into living independently and learning how to cope with adult responsibilities, including paying bills, employment, education, training, housing and social activities.

More information on the work of the After Care Team can be found at:

http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-learning/children-and-families-social-care/childrens-social-care-health-and-wellbeing/after-care-team-act.htm

Family Placement Team:

The Family Placement Team supports all aspects of Fostering and Adoption including recruitment, training, assessment and the support of foster carers and adopters. Post-adoption support is offered to young people who have been adopted; birth relatives and adult adoptees. There is also a Short Break scheme offering respite support for children with disabilities.

More information on the work of the Family Placement Team can be found at:

http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-learning/children-and-families-social-care/childrens-social-care-health-and-wellbeing/family-placement-team.htm

Disabled Children's Services:

The work of the teams and staff within the Disabled Children's Service is primarily focussed on addressing the needs of those children in our community who have complex needs, including learning and physical disabilities. The service seeks to give children in difficulty a voice and an opportunity to develop their full potential.

The Disabled Children's Team undertakes the assessment of children with complex needs, working closely with other agencies to minimise the effects of a child's disability and to give them the opportunity to lead lives that are as normal as possible.

Larchwood is a short break care unit, providing respite care for children/young people who have learning difficulties and disabilities. The unit is registered for children and young people aged between 5-18 years however the majority are aged 10+.

More information on the work of these services can be found at:

http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-learning/children-and-families-social-care/childrens-social-care-specialist-services.htm

Youth Offending Service:
The YOS is made up of professionals from a variety of agencies. It provides services for young people aged 10-17 who have offended and are sentenced by the Youth or Crown Court, to be supervised under a range of Youth Justice Court Orders. The service is provided with due regard for the victims of these offences. A prevention service is also provided for those young people aged 8 – 14 years who are at risk of entering the youth justice system for the first time.

The Family Intervention Project is located within the YOS. Family intervention projects work with the most challenging families and tackle issues such as anti-social behaviour, youth crime, inter-generational disadvantage, worklessness in families. They take an intensive and persistent multi-agency approach to supporting the whole family and helping them overcome their problems, co-ordinated by a single dedicated key-worker.

The Domestic Abuse Perpetrators Service is located within the YOS. This Service is a one to one domestic violence and abuse intervention orientated at fathers in families. The programme helps men to explore and challenge their own behaviour, and try out 'new solutions to old problems'

More information on the work of the Youth Offending Service can be found at:

http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-learning/children-and-families-social-care/youth-offending-team.htm

3. STRATEGY, RESOURCES AND EARLY INTERVENTION

Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention has a broad remit which includes early intervention, prevention and strategic services including a range of direct support to all of the Borough Schools and across the Department. It provides a key overarching quality assurance role which includes supporting operational staff in day to day performance monitoring, in particular Children's Social Care, and in key regulatory inspection activity. The branch provides a direct link with colleagues in Corporate Services in relation to ensuring the Department works within the wider corporate framework for management and delivery of services and support to our communities.

Early Years Childcare and Play:
The Early Years Childcare and Play Service provides a range of support, training, advice and funding to providers of early education and childcare to ensure Bracknell continues to improve the quality and availability of provision for children and their families. The Team has also been responsible for the development and management of the Children's Centres within the borough.

More information on the work of the Early Years Childcare and Play service can be found at:

http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-learning/performance-and-resources/early-years-childcare-and-play.htm

Youth Service:
The Service operates Youth Centres, projects including Duke of Edinburgh, Adventure Education and Youth Forum, Mobile Provision and a range of other activities. It works mainly with young people aged 13-19, although some centres have clubs for 11-13 year olds.

More information on the work of the Youth Service can be found at:

http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-learning/performance-and-resources/youth-service.htm

Performance Management and Governance Team:
The Performance Management and Governance Team leads the development of the performance management framework across the department, including performance monitoring of all national and local performance indicators. It co-ordinates department performance and policy returns, manages web and intranet (BORIS) publishing and coordinates Data Protection, Freedom of Information, Copyright and Licensing issues. It provides statistical analysis, pupil forecasts, numbers on roll, School Census data, demographic and trend analysis to support school place planning

The Team also delivers a range of independent functions which include the Parent Partnership service, the Independent Reviewing Officer for Looked After Children, the Independent Chair for Child Protection Conferences, the LSCB Business Manager, Complaints Management of the statutory complaints function for children, Child Participation, Policy and Research and the Children's and Young People's Partnership activity.

More information on the work of the Performance Management and Governance Team can be found at:

http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-learning/performance-and-resources/performance.htm

ICT Services:
The ICT Team provides a range of ICT services which includes support for the effective use of ICT in school management and administration. It provides technical support and training for schools, and within the Department. The ICT Team also plays a key role in liaising with the Corporate Centre on key IT Projects, and supports the development of IT when there is a new school being built, or when schools systems are being upgraded.

More information on the role of ICT services can be found at:

http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-learning/performance-and-resources/ecsl-ict.htm

Admissions and Property Team:
The Admissions Service prepares and manages a coordinated scheme for admissions to Primary and Secondary Schools in the Borough. Work undertaken within the team includes school places availability, consulting and setting term dates,

responses to School Admission Appeals. The Team also provides a central system for coordinating applications for free school meals.

The Property Service provides information and advice to local building managers on all aspects relating to their premises, and support for the management, monitoring and procurement of schools property related contracts. The Team also leads the education capital programme which includes new school build, school refurbishment and modifications.

More information on the work of the Property and Admissions Team can be found at:

http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-learning/performance-and-resources/admissions-and-property.htm

Human Resources:
The Human Resources Team provides ongoing support to managers within the Department and in schools, in all HR related matters. This includes guidance and assistance with recruitment, managing employee relations and industrial relations. The Human Resources Team works closely with schools, and supports the implementation of workforce remodelling in schools and children's services.

More information on the work of the Human Resources Team can be found at:

http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-learning/performance-and-resources/ecsl-human-resources.htm

Finance:
The Finance Team is responsible for the service revenue and capital budgets, in the Department, making allocations to establishments and services and monitoring budgets and accounts. The Team provides ongoing support to cost centre managers and schools, and provides and operates the scheme for funding to schools. The Team provides an effective link to the Corporate Centre and plays a key role in the allocation of budgets across the Council.

More information about the work of the Finance Team can be found at:

http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-learning/performance-and-resources/ecsl-finance.htm

Commissioning and Policy:
This role provides Support to the department and the Children and Young People's Partnership in the ongoing development of commissioning. Traded services to schools are managed through this role.

More information about the work undertaken in this area can be found at:

http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-learning/performance-and-resources/policy-and-commissioning.htm

Section 2: Where we are now

The following areas should be highlighted as areas of strategic importance within the CYPL Department and will shape the forward direction and plans:

Children and Young People's Partnership
The Children and Young People's Partnership has continued to meet with the core purpose of ensuring the delivery of the priorities in the Children and Young Plan, and monitoring the impact of this on outcomes for children, young people and families.

The Partnership Board is a small executive group, meeting on a monthly basis. The Forum has a wider representation from across the Children's Workforce, providing an opportunity to engage in strategy and policy planning and dissemination of information and practice.

The CYP Partnership reviewed Creating Opportunities – the joint strategic plan for children, young people and families, and published the review in May 2012. This review is available at:

http://www.bracknellforest.gov.uk/bracknellforestchildrenandyoungpeoplespartnership

Creating Opportunities – Positive Futures a prevention and early intervention strategy for children, young people and families 2012 – 2014, was completed and published in September 2012. This Strategy provides a framework to support the ongoing development of a framework for prevention and early intervention across services for children, young people and families, and supports the Council in its wider approach to prevention and early intervention.

http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/creating-opportunities-positive-futures.pdf

A key task for the Partnership in this year has been establishing a link with the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board, and this has been successful in ensuring a clear link through terms of reference, and ensuring the priorities of the Children and Young People's Plan are recognised and incorporated into the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. We will continue to develop this link as the Health and Wellbeing Board moves from Shadow form in April 2013.

A key focus in the coming year will be on the development of a new Children and Young People's Plan for 2014.

Local Safeguarding Children Board
The LSCB ran a successful conference in June 2012 on the theme of "Safeguarding Vulnerable Children". 250 members of staff and volunteers from organisations representing the breadth of the partnership attended the event. A key focus of the conference was in ensuring that the learning from the Serious Case Review undertaken in Bracknell Forest was disseminated, and a number of specialist workshops explored the themes for learning.

Young people have been involved in the LSCB, and in 2012 developed a powerful DVD on the subject of Domestic Abuse. This was played to the audience at the conference, and is now available as a tool for practitioners to use in their work settings with children, young people and families.

The LSCB has a new website which is independent from the Council and gives information to public and professionals. This can be accessed on www.bflscb.org.uk

The LSCB has produced an annual report, this is a statutory requirement which provides an account of the work it has undertaken in the last year, and demonstrates the impact of the LSCB. The report makes recommendations for consideration by the Children and Young People's Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Board. The report and Executive Summary can be accessed at:

http://www.bflscb.org.uk/reportsandleaflets.htm

A key focus for the LSCB in the coming year will be in the implementation of the revised guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children, which will lead to a review of policy and practice for safeguarding arrangements.

Inspection and Regulation
Within the year there have been developments nationally in relation to new Inspection frameworks which are beginning to be implemented, and will continue into 2013.

School and Adult Learning Inspection
Ofsted announced the results of its consultation on changes to the way it inspects schools, further education and skills, and initial teacher education in May 2012. The changes, which came into effect from 1 September 2012, are intended to support headteachers and principals in their work to provide the best possible education for pupils and learners.

Children's Centres
Changes are proposed to Children's Centres inspection to align them more with legislative requirements for Children's Centres. The focus is on improved outcomes for young children and their families in order to reduce inequalities in child development and school readiness. Approaches to this are currently being piloted, with the new framework coming in 2013.

Safeguarding and Looked after Children
Ofsted have recently concluded consultation on proposed new inspection frameworks to replace the framework for Safeguarding and Looked after Children (SLAC) that has been in place for the last three years.

The proposed Multi-Agency Framework for the Inspection of Child Protection Arrangements, and a separate Inspection on Looked After Children to include Fostering and Adoption have been deferred, and Ofsted is now preparing consultation on a new framework for safeguarding and looked after children. We await further information on this development.

Performance Improvement
We have already established a Performance Improvement Board, led by the Chief Officer Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention, this Board has been established to ensure that effective monitoring is in place of inspection and regulation activity and to ensure that we are able to prepare for and respond effectively to new inspections as they begin to be implemented.

Sector Led Improvement

We are taking an active role in sector led improvement activities in the South East Region. Dr Janette Karklins, Director Children, Young People and Learning is the Chair of the South East Regional Improvement Board and in addition to leading peer review and peer challenge in other areas, we have hosted two peer reviews locally as well. The Department will continue to participate in this programme; a further peer review is planned for April 2013, with a focus on Children's Centres.

School Places

Extensive work has taken place to ensure sufficient school places are available across the borough, and the capital programme has been building additional forms of entry and bulge classes as needed. A School Places Plan has been produced providing information and analysis on current and future school place requirements.

SEN developments

In May 2012 the coalition government published *Support and Aspiration: a new approach to special educational needs and disability – Progress and next steps*, to report on progress following the 2011 *Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Green Paper*. That report provided proposals to reform provision for children and young people with special educational needs or with disabilities.

Once the Government have considered the proposals by the Select Committee, they will introduce a Bill to Parliament in early 2013. The changes to SEN and disability will be part of the Children and Families Bill which will also include measures affecting adoption and family law. The Bill will then go through the Parliamentary process and MPs and members of the House of Lords will be able to propose further changes.

This will be a significant part of our work plan in 2013.

Children's Social Care

Children's Social Care has experienced increasing numbers of children becoming looked after, and increasing numbers of children who are subject to a Child Protection Plan. The volume of referrals has remained high, and there have been many developments to ensure that the ongoing needs continue to be met, this includes identifying additional resources and the development of the Life Chances Team, to track and support children who are looked after.

Work continues to reshape service delivery in a way that meets increasing demands, and there will be a particular focus on implementing the recommendations of the Eileen Munro Review of Child Protection, supporting the development of prevention and early intervention and in developing further the Fostering and Adoption Service.

Revised safeguarding guidance "Working Together to Safeguard Children and Young People" is expected before the spring, and this will inform the shape of some of our future developments in Children's Social Care and in the wider arena of safeguarding.

Education Outcomes:

Educational outcomes continue to improve and the number of schools graded as good or outstanding has increased and remains above the national average.

In 2012 overall results remained in line with or above national levels of attainment with good performance and improvement in some areas, particularly in the Early Years and at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Detailed analyses are available showing progress in narrowing the gaps in attainment for pupils eligible for a free school meal or a member of a black or minority ethnic group.

Priorities include improving rates of progress in English in primary schools and further improving outcomes at Key Stage 4 and post 16. The professional development of school leaders also remains a priority in order to plan for succession as experienced staff retire.   We will also continue to work with schools to reduce exclusions and develop alternative provision for children and young people who would benefit from a period away from their school.

Workforce

Bracknell Forest employees remain a key focus with a number of priority areas:

- Recruiting people into the workforce, including a focus on recruiting experienced social workers.
- Developing and retaining skilled and experienced staff.
- Strengthening inter-agency/multi-disciplinary team working.
- Promoting strong leadership, management and supervision.
- Safeguarding children and young people, including multi-agency safeguarding training and safer workforce.

We continue to focus on recruitment and retention in difficult areas such as social workers and maths and science teachers, and this will remain a priority in the coming year.

Capital Programme:

The main focus of the CYPL capital programme continues to be capacity and condition of our schools. Capacity works to provide sufficient pupil places are a high priority in response to the pupil forecasts in the School Places Plan 2012-16, which show a continued increase in numbers over the next five years. New housing development is a key driver and we are already planning for a new primary school at Amen Corner and two more in North Warfield from 2016 onwards. If the Site Allocations Development Plan Document is approved in 2013 this will require provision of a further four new schools at TRL and Blue Mountain. Expansion of existing schools will also continuing, and Holly Spring Juniors, Crown Wood, Meadow Vale, Jennett's Park, Owlsmoor, The Pines, Brakenhale and Garth Hill College are all subject of works to create additional school places. In addition a number of "surge" classrooms are being planned across the Borough to meet local needs where schools are too small to be expanded in all year groups. The capital programme also includes a significant planned works programme to address the condition of school buildings, and in addition the department will continue to implement disabled access works for individual pupils and staff where and when these are required.

How does the service meet with user expectations?

Participation and engagement of children, young people and adult learners is strongly embedded within the ethos of the Department.

The statutory complaints procedure for Children's Social Care ensures that young people receiving support from the Department are able to make a complaint regarding any aspect of the service they receive. There is an advocacy service available for young people who require such support to express their views.

A Child Participation Officer plays a key role in enabling children and young people who are looked after to have a voice. The role supports the Children in Care Council, and a range of activities designed to support young people to have their say. In this year a number of residential activities have taken place for looked after children, which has enabled them to participate in activities and express their views about a range of subjects.

The role of the Independent Reviewing Officer is key to ensuring that children in care are able express their views, this ranges from young people completing a consultation form before their review meeting, supporting young people to chair their own meeting, and meeting with them prior to review meetings to discuss any issues.

The Youth Services engage on a daily basis with young people and through direct work are able to discuss a range of issues that may impact on them, such as substance and alcohol misuse, sexual health, keeping safe.

The annual BAFTA's, run by Bracknell Forest Council's youth service, gives teenagers the chance to celebrate their achievements and aims to recognise the success and good work of the borough's young people aged between 13 and 19.

The LSCB actively engages with young people to support development of key messages on safeguarding, this year young people from one of our schools made a film about the impact of Domestic Abuse called The Lobster, this DVD is now available as a tool to use to support other young people and raise awareness of issues.

Children's Social Care has embedded in practice seeking feedback via evaluation questionnaires which inform ongoing discussions about service development. Child Protection Conferences seek feedback from parents and professionals at the end of each conference via a short questionnaire. In this year there has been some qualitative research with parents who have had children subject to a child protection plan in the past. This has provided some rich information for consideration, and will inform future thinking about working with parents who have children on a child protection plan.

A significant survey was undertaken with young people this year in relation to the programme to modernise the Youth Service. The views have been incorporated into the planning, and a number of young people remain involved in a modernising the youth service board, which is exploring the feasibility of developing a Town Centre Youth hub.

The views of adult learners are sought regularly in order to evaluate courses and plan future provision.

Children's Centres undertake an annual satisfaction survey based around the Ofsted inspection framework. They also consult on a regular basis with services users and other professionals to inform service planning and delivery. All services are evaluated and monitored to ensure they meet the needs of the local community and that there is a positive impact.

Section 3: Service Delivery

All Indicators which are reported through the Department's Quarterly Service Report are as follows:

Children, Young People & Learning

Ind Ref	Short Description	2012/13 Actual	2012/13 Target	2013/14 Target
Children's Social Care				
L092	Number of children on protection plans (Quarterly)			
L123	Initial assessments for children's social care carried out within 10 working days of referral (Quarterly)			
L140	% children looked after in family placement or adoption (Quarterly)			
L161	Number of looked after children (Quarterly)			
NI 019	Rate of proven re-offending by young offenders (Annually)			
CSP 9.01	Reduce the reoffending rate of the Bracknell Forest local cohort of all young offenders (Quarterly)			
NI 043	Young people in the Youth justice System receiving a conviction in court who are sentenced to custody (Quarterly)			
NI 058	Emotional and behavioural health of children in care (Annually)			
NI 060	Core assessments for children's social care that were carried out within 35 working days of their commencement (Annually)			
NI 061	Stability of looked after children adopted following an agency decision that the child should be placed for adoption (Annually)			
NI 062	Stability of placements of looked after children: number of placement (Annually)			
NI 063	Stability of placements of looked after children: length of placement (Annually)			
NI 064	Child protection plans lasting 2 years or more (Annually)			

NI 065	Children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time (Annually)			
NI 066	Looked after children cases which were reviewed within required timescales (Annually)			
NI 068	Referrals to children's social care going on to initial assessment (Quarterly & Annually)			
NI 111	First time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10-17 (Quarterly)			
CSP9.03	Prevent a rise in first-time entrants into the Youth Justice System (Quarterly)			
NI 147	Care leavers in suitable accommodation (Annually)			
NI 148	Care leavers in employment, education or training (Annually)			
Learning and Achievement				
L139	Schools judged good or better (Quarterly)			
NI 073	Achievement at level 4 or above in both English and Maths at KS2 (Floor) (Annually)			
NI 075	Achievement of 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths (Annually)			
L153	Percentage of children looked after reaching level 4 in English at key stage 2 (Annually)			
L154	Percentage of children looked after reaching level 4 in maths at key stage 2 (Annually)			
L155	Percentage of children looked after achieving 5 A(star) – C GCSEs at Key Stage 4 (including English and maths) (Annually)			
L 158	Reduction in number of schools where fewer than 60 % of pupils achieve level 4 or above in both English and Maths at KS2 (Annually)			
NI 086	Secondary schools judged as having good or outstanding standards of behaviour (Quarterly & Annually)			
NI 087	Secondary schools persistent absence rate (Annually)			

NI 091	Participation of 17 year-olds in education or training (Annually)			
NI 092	Narrowing the gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the rest (Annually)			
NI 093	Progression by 2 levels in English between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 (Annually)			
NI 094	Progression by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. (Annually)			
NI 102.1	Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving the expected level at Key Stages 2 (Annually)			
NI 102.2	Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving the expected level at Key Stages 4 (Annually)			
NI 103.1	Percentage of Special Educational Needs - statements issued in 26 weeks as a proportional of all (Quarterly & Annually)			
NI 103.2	Percentage of Special Educational Needs - statements issued in 26 weeks excluding exceptions (Quarterly & Annually)			
NI 104	The Special Educational Needs (SEN)/non-SEN gap - achieving Key Stage 2 English and Maths threshold (Annually)			
NI 105	The Special Educational Needs (SEN)/non-SEN gap - achieving 5 A*-C GCSE inc English and Maths (Annually)			
NI 107	Key Stage 2 attainment for Black and minority ethnic groups (Annually)			
NI 108	Key Stage 4 attainment for Black and minority ethnic groups (Annually)			
NI 114	Rate of permanent exclusions from school (Annually)			
NI 117	16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, training or employment (NEET) (Annually)			
Strategy, Resources and Early Interventions				
L141	Number of youth centre attendances (Quarterly)	Quarterly		
NI 052.1	Take up of school lunches – Primary (Annually)	Annual		

NI 052.2	Take up of school lunches – Secondary (Annually)	Annual		
NI 067	Child protection cases which were reviewed within required timescales (Quarterly & Annually)	Quarterly & Annual	Moved from Children's Social Care	
NI 072	Achievement of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage with at least 6 in each of the scales in Personal Social and emotional Development and Communication, Language and Literacy (Annually)	Annual	Moved from L&A	
NI 112	Under 18 conception rate/1000 girls (Annually)	Annual		

Section 4: Medium Term Objectives and Key Actions

MTO 1: Re-generate Bracknell Town Centre

Ref	Key Action Description	By when	Lead Officer	Links to related strategies/plans
1.9.1 Implement an Accommodation Strategy to rationalise the number of buildings used by the Council				
Supported by sub-actions:				
1.9.6	Move CYPL to Ocean House	March 2013	Commissioning and Policy Manager	Accommodation Strategy
1.9.9	Move, ECC, CYPL and ASCHH to final locations in Time Square	March 2014		
1.9.14	Implement flexible and mobile working across all town centre offices	March 2014		

MTO 4: Support our younger residents to maximise their potential, including work to:

Ref	Key Action Description	By when	Lead Officer	Links to related strategies/plans
4.1 Provide accessible, safe and practical early intervention and support services for vulnerable children and young people in the Borough				
Supported by sub-actions:				
4.1.1	Embed and monitor the impact of the Early Intervention Hub	March 2014	Head of Performance Mgt and Governance	Creating Opportunities – Children and Young People's strategic Plan 2011 – 2014. Creating Opportunities – Positive Futures a prevention and early intervention strategy for children, young people and families in Bracknell Forest 2012 – 2014.
4.1.2	Implement the Troubled Families Initiative and work with families who meet the criteria for Family Focus.	3 year project 2012- 2015	Chief Officer Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention	As above

4.1.3	Provide targeted support to young carers via commissioned service Kidz.	March 2014	Chief Officer Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention	As above

4.2 Increase the number and continue to support foster carers				
Supported by sub-actions:				
4.2.1	Recruit at least 8 adoptive families in 2013/14 to meet the needs of children requiring adoption	March 2014	Head of Service Looked after Children	Creating Opportunities – Children and Young People's strategic Plan 2011 – 2014. LAC Commissioning strategy
4.2.2	Recruit at least 10 foster carer households in 2013/14	March 2014	Head of Service Looked after Children	As above

4.3 Increase opportunities for young people in our youth clubs and community based schemes				
Supported by sub-actions:				
4.3.1	Increase number of youth work sessions offered by the Youth Service.	Ongoing	Acting Head of Youth Service	Creating Opportunities – Children and Young People's strategic Plan 2011 – 2014.
4.3.2	Contribute to an increase in the number of youth club style sessions in the borough provided by others	Ongoing	Acting Head of Youth Service	As above
4.3.3	Develop on-line access to information regarding positive activities for young people	Ongoing	Acting Head of Youth Service	As above
4.3.4	Implement phase three of the Modernisation of the Youth Service Programme, including the development of options for the Town Centre Youth Hub	Ongoing	Chief Officer Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention	As above

4.4 Provide targeted support for families in need through our network of Children's Centres to support early intervention and prevention.				
4.4.1	Provide targeted Family Outreach support from Children's Centres	Ongoing	Head of Early Years childcare and Play	Creating Opportunities – Children and Young People's strategic Plan 2011 – 2014.
4.4.2	Provide targeted early intervention parenting programmes from Children's Centres.	Ongoing	Head of Early Years childcare and Play	As above

4.5 Encourage and facilitate enough high quality, affordable, inclusive childcare places for those working parents that require one				
4.5.1	Encourage and facilitate enough high quality, affordable inclusive childcare places for those working parents that require one, through Childcare Sufficiency Strategy and monitoring	Ongoing	Head of Early Years childcare and Play	Creating Opportunities – Children and Young People's strategic Plan 2011 – 2014. Childcare Sufficiency strategy

4.6 Support a wide range of flexible respite services for the carers of children and young people in need				
Supported by sub-actions:				
4.6.1	Continue to implement the support and services within the Aiming High initiative and seek ongoing opportunities to further develop support and services available	Ongoing	Head of Specialist Services	Creating Opportunities – Children and Young People's strategic Plan 2011 – 2014.

4.7 Prioritise the safety, health and well being of all young residents in all of our plans for them				
Supported by sub-actions:				
4.7.1	Ensure the priorities are communicated across partnerships via meetings, presentations and reports.	Ongoing	Head of Performance and Governance	Creating Opportunities – Children and Young People's strategic Plan 2011 – 2014. Community

				Safety Strategy LSCB Business Plan
4.7.2	Ensure performance reporting highlights relevant issues of safety and health and wellbeing through monitoring, inspection and quarterly reporting mechanisms	Ongoing	Head of Performance and Governance	As above

4.8 Ensure children and young people feel safe, are protected from harm and abuse, have their views respected and gain confidence as a member of the local community				
Supported by sub-actions:				
4.8.1	Children's Views are listened to and form part of the plan for work with the family	Ongoing	Head of Service Safeguarding	As above
4.8.2	Workforce Strategy in place to support recruitment of skilled and experienced staff across the Department.	Ongoing	Head of Human Resources	Workforce Strategy
4.8.3	Safer Workforce Training in place and regularly reviewed.	Ongoing	Head of Human Resources	LSCB Business Plan Workforce Strategy

4.9 Continue to improve outcomes for looked after children in education, and employment				
Supported by sub-actions:				
4.9.1	Continued focus on the development of support for Care Leavers to improve education/ employment and training opportunities.	Ongoing	Head of Service Looked after Children Learning, Development and Commissioning Manager	Creating Opportunities – Children and Young People's strategic Plan 2011 – 2014.

MTO 5: Work with schools and partners to educate and develop our children, young people and adults as lifelong learners:				
Ref	**Key Action Description**	**By when**	**Lead Officer**	**Links to related strategies/plans**
5.1 Continue to work with early years providers to close the attainment gap				
Supported by sub-actions:				
5.1.1	Implement the Every Child a Talker Programme to further improve and	Ongoing	Head of Early Years childcare and Play	Creating Opportunities – Children and

	develop speech and language skills of children in early years.			Young People's strategic Plan 2011 – 2014.
5.1.2	Implement the disadvantaged funding for two year olds in 2013.	March 2014	Head of Early Years childcare and Play	As above
5.1.3	Track progress of two year olds to monitor impact of additional funding/resources		Head of Early Years childcare and Play	As above

5.2 Increase the number of schools in the Borough rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted by raising levels of attainment and progress across all phases of learning for all pupils				
Supported by sub-actions:				
5.2.1	Provide training and support for headteachers and governors in relation to the judgments made by Ofsted and seek to ensure teaching is of the highest quality.	Ongoing	School Advisory Team	Creating Opportunities – Children and Young People's strategic Plan 2011 – 2014.
5.2.2	Undertake supported school reviews to ensure that school self-evaluation is accurate and that school's have identified the correct priorities for improvement.	Ongoing	School Advisory Team	As above
5.2.3	Monitor the outcome of inspections of schools, and adult learning provision and provide support as appropriate	Ongoing	Chief Officer Learning and Achievement	Children and Young People's Joint strategic Plan 2011 – 2014

5.3 Support school leaders and governors when considering alternative forms of governance, including forming federations or Academy trusts				
Supported by sub-actions:				
5.3.1	Provide information and support to governors and interface with Government agencies and DfE when schools are considering a change of status.	Ongoing	Chief Adviser Learning and Achievement	Creating Opportunities – Children and Young People's strategic Plan 2011 – 2014.

5.4 Increase the number of young people achieving five or more good GCSE passes including English and mathematics and improve the performance of all underperforming groups of children and young people				
Supported by sub-actions:				
5.4.1	Analysis of primary schools performance data and track pupil progress in order to plan and implement appropriate interventions.	Ongoing	School Advisory Team	Creating Opportunities – Children and Young People's strategic Plan 2011 – 2014.
5.4.2	Analysis of secondary schools performance data and track pupil progress in order to plan and implement appropriate interventions.	Ongoing	School Advisory Team	Creating Opportunities – Children and Young People's strategic Plan 2011 – 2014.

5.5 Increase the average point score of students taking 'A' level examinations				
Supported by sub-actions:				
5.5.1	Analyse post 16 results and option choices and discuss progress with headteachers.	Ongoing	School Advisory Team	Creating Opportunities – Children and Young People's strategic Plan 2011 – 2014.

5.6 Support children and young people with special needs, where possible at appropriate provision within the Borough				
Supported by sub-actions:				
5.6.1	Progress plans to develop a new SEN resource to meet the increase in demographic changes	April 2014	Chief Adviser Learning and Achievement	Creating Opportunities – Children and Young People's strategic Plan 2011 – 2014.
5.6.2	Continue to support schools to meet the needs of children with Special Educational Needs	Ongoing	Head Of Targeted Services	As above
5.6.3	Implement the changes required by the emerging draft legislation on Reform of provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and the DfE reform of school funding for SEN pupils.	Sept 2014	Senior Adviser for Inclusion and Diversity	As above

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5.8 Encourage and support residents to become school governors				
Supported by sub-actions:				
5.8.1	Continue with campaign to recruit school governors through publicising the work of governing bodies and providing support and training.	Ongoing	Chief Adviser Learning and Achievement	Creating Opportunities – Children and Young People's strategic Plan 2011 – 2014.

5.9 Increase the participation of school leavers in employment, education or training				
Supported by sub-actions:				
5.9.1	Continue to work with schools to identify young people at risk of disengaging in education, employment or training and ensuring appropriate interventions are put in place.	Ongoing	Learning Development and Commissioning Manager	Creating Opportunities – Children and Young People's strategic Plan 2011 – 2014. 14 – 19 Strategy

5.10 Encourage all residents to continue as learners, both in relation to future employment and recreation				
Supported by sub-actions:				
5.10.1	Promotion of Lifelong Learning activities available in Bracknell Forest	Ongoing	Head of Adult and Community Learning	Creating Opportunities – Children and Young People's strategic Plan 2011 – 2014. Adult and Community Learning Strategy.
5.10.2	Work with strategic partners to ensure a wide and varied offer for residents	Ongoing	Head of Adult and Community Learning	As above
5.10.3	Source alternative funding to support the provision of Lifelong Learning	April 2014	Head of Adult and Community Learning	As above
5.10.4	Examine potential for joint City Deal bid based upon Skills & Learning in Reading, Wokingham and West Berkshire	March 2014	Chief Adviser Learning and Achievement	

5.11 Ensure systems in place for effective pupil and school place planning				
Supported by sub-actions:				
5.11.1	Robust Planning for School Places, to accurately forecast future requirements.	Ongoing	Commissioning and Policy Manager	As above Education Estates Strategy
5.11.2	Provision of Sufficient Pupil Places, through the Education Capital Programme to meet Basic Need.	Ongoing	Head of Property and Admissions	As above Education Estates Strategy

5.12 Coordinate Services to Schools				
Supported by sub-actions:				
5.12.1	Prepare and promote a range of services for schools to buy for a three year period from 1 April 2013.	Ongoing	Policy and Commissioning Manager	As above
5.12.2	Monitor take up of Services to Schools.	Ongoing	Policy and Commissioning Manager	

MTO 6 : Support opportunities for Health and Wellbeing				
Ref	**Key Action Description**	**By when**	**Lead Officer**	**Links to related strategies/plans**
6.2 Support the Health and Wellbeing Board to bring together all those involved in delivering health and social care in the borough				
Supported by sub-actions:				
6.2.4	Work collaboratively with colleagues in health to develop joint working and delivery of services for children and young people	Ongoing	Director Children, Young People and Learning	Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy

MTO 11: Work with our communities and partners to be efficient, open, transparent and easy to access and to deliver value for money:				
Ref	**Key Action Description**	**By when**	**Lead Officer**	**Links to related strategies/plans**
11.8 Implement a programme of economies to reduce expenditure				
Supported by sub-actions:				
11.8.5	Develop proposals to help the Council produce balanced budget in 2013/14	Ongoing	Director Children, Young People and Learning	Creating Opportunities – Children and Young People's strategic Plan 2011 – 2014.

11.10 Children and Young People's Partnership provides the opportunity to develop and agree joint priorities for improvement.				
Supported by sub-actions:				
11.10.1	Review the progress made against the priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan during 2012	June 2013	Head of Performance Management and Governance	Creating Opportunities – Children and Young People's strategic Plan 2011 – 2014.
11.10.2	Identify new actions for the final year of the Children and Young People's Plan (2014-2017)	January 2014	Head of Performance Management and Governance	Creating Opportunities – Children and Young People's strategic Plan 2011 – 2014.
11.10.3	Develop a three year Children and Young People's Plan (2014-2017)	April 2014	Head of Performance Management and Governance	Creating Opportunities – Children and Young People's strategic Plan 2011 – 2014.

Agenda Item 12

TO: **CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL**
3 JULY 2013

APPROVAL OF THE ADOPTION SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2012 – 2013
Director of Children, Young People and Learning

1   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   The Adoption Service Annual Report 2012 – 2013 is noted.

2   RECOMMENDATION

2.1   **That the Adoption Agency Annual Report 2012 - 13 (annex) attached is noted.**

3   REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

3.1   The annual review for the Adoption Service is a requirement under Part 1, section 4, of the Local Authority Adoption Service (England) Regulations 2003.

4   ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1   None. This is a statutory requirement that the Adoption Service Annual Report is approved annually.

5   SUPPORTING INFORMATION

5.1   The Annual Report takes into account the new Adoption regulations implemented in 2011. This is in essence an updating of regulation requirements with few substantial changes required for Bracknell Forest's practice and procedures.

5.2   The Government has introduced an ambitious Adoption Improvement Reform agenda which seeks to radically increase the number of children placed with adoptive families within reduced timescales. Part of this agenda includes establishing larger adoption agencies through amalgamation or joint arrangements between existing agencies. Discussion and planning towards meeting this requirement is in hand but unlikely to be in place during this financial year.

6   ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

6.1   The relevant legal provisions are contained within the main body of the report. This report meets with the requirement under the regulations to produce annual statements.

Borough Treasurer

6.2   The Borough Treasurer is satisfied that sufficient resources exist to meet the proposals in the Adoption Service Annual Report 2012 – 2013.

Equality Impact Assessment

6.3   As is described in the Annual Report the service aims to achieve the best possible outcome for any child receiving services, taking into account all factors of ethnicity, religion, language, culture and disability. These outcomes have not changed since the previous EIA.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

6.4   The strategic risk identified is that if the service does not complete an annual review the Council will be in breach of the National Minimum Standards. There are no changes completed or proposed in the content of the service that will constitute a strategic risk.

Other Officers

6.5   The Children's Social Care Management Team has considered and endorsed this.

7   **CONSULTATION**

Principal Groups Consulted

7.1   Family Placement Service, Children's Services Management Team and the Department Management Team. A copy of the Annual Report is also provided to the Ofsted Inspectorate, and it is available on the Council's public website.

7.2   Method of Consultation

The relevant staff from the Family Placement Team have contributed to this Review. Adoptive families have been given a copy of this paper.

Representations Received

7.2   There have been no representations received.

Background Papers

The Adoption Agency Annual Report 2012 – 13 **[annex 1]**

Contact for further information

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ANNUAL REPORT 2012 – 2013

1. Introduction

1.1 This report should be read in conjunction with the Annual Statement of Purpose. The Statement of Purpose sets out the legislative and regulatory context in which Bracknell Forest Council acts as an Adoption Agency.

1.2 This report provides details of activity over the year April 2012- March 2013 and sets out the plans for development up to 31st March 2014.

1.3 Over the last three years there has been a significant increase in the numbers of Bracknell Forest children with plans for adoption, from three in 2010 to seventeen at March 2013. In 2011 – 2012 no adoption orders were granted whilst during 2012 – 2013 there were eight.

1.4 During the year the Adoption Agency has continued to build on work to improve timescales for children needing adoptive placement and for the assessment and approval of adopters. This has been achieved through the appointment of social workers and an assistant team manager with knowledge and experience of adoption and through further development of monitoring and tracking systems.

2. Adoption Inspection – Ofsted

Bracknell Forest Adoption Agency was inspected by Ofsted in March 2012. The inspection identified areas of strength in the adoption service and concluded that many areas of the service are good or outstanding. However the timescales required to place children identified as in need of adoption and the length of time that some assessments of prospective foster carers took to become approved adopters did not meet the requirements set out in the regulations. The numbers of children and prospective adopters involved were very small (both under five) so the percentage of those who did not meet the criteria was significant. Although action had already been taken to address the timeliness of decisions, the numbers that fell within the specified timeframe of measurement (the previous twelve months) did not meet requirements so limited the overall judgement to satisfactory. The Ofsted definition of a satisfactory service is that the provision is sound. A copy of the inspection report is available on the Bracknell Forest Council website as well as the OFSTED website. Four recommendations were made which have all been appropriately addressed and resolved.

3. The Family Placement Team

3.1 Children's Social Care's Family Placement Team provide most of the required functions of the Adoption Agency. Other functions are provided through the arrangement with the other five Berkshire Unitary Authorities acting as a Consortium and also through the Berkshire Adoption Advisory Service (BAAS), hosted by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead who maintain the Adoption Panel.

3.2 The functions of the Adoption Agency include:

- Preparing and presenting reports to be considered by the Adoption Advisor at Berkshire Adoption Advisory Service and the Agency Decision Maker for children who are looked after and adoption is their care plan.

- Presenting reports to the Panel and the Agency Decision Maker on the prospective match of Bracknell children with adopters or other Local Authority children with Bracknell adopters.
- Recruiting and assessing a pool of adopters as part of the Berkshire Consortium and presenting them to Adoption Panel for approval.
- Supporting Bracknell adopters throughout the adoption process until Adoption Orders are made.
- Providing post adoption support to any adoptive family living in Bracknell and for three years following the making of an adoption order for those children who have been placed by Bracknell Forest.
- Sign posting prospective adopters of children from overseas to the service provided by Parents and Children Together – Reading.
- Provide counselling for adopted adults.
- Provide mediation services for both adopted adults and birth family members.

4. Summary of Bracknell Forest Activity

4.1 For the year 01/04/2012 and 31/03/2013:

- As at 31st March 2013, seventeen children in total have plans for adoption agreed as in their best interests. Ten of these were agreed during 2012-13. Five children have definite links or plans for permanent placements.
- Six children were matched with adopters.
- One placement of a Bracknell child matched to adopters did not proceed to placement. (This child was subsequently placed with adopters four months later and is settled and thriving).
- Seven applications by adopters were approved. An eighth family were ready for approval in March 2013 but were moved to Adoption Panel in April 2013 due to the high demand on panel space.
- Five adoption orders were granted. Three of these were within 12 months of the plan for adoption being recommended by adoption panel.
- Two children were adopted before their first birthday (nationally only 77 children were adopted before their 1st birthday in 2011/12 so this is exceptional performance).
- One child was adopted from overseas.
- Two in family (step parent) adoptions were made.
- Two children from another local authority were placed with Bracknell Forest approved adopters.
- One adoption order was granted on a child placed from another local authority with Bracknell adopters.
- There were no disruptions to a child's placement with prospective adopters.

4.2 Six adoption preparation groups and eight Information Days have been available for prospective adopters across Berkshire over the year. These are arranged through the Berkshire Adoption Consortium. Bracknell Forest was responsible for one preparation group and two Information Days between 1st April and 31st March 2013. These were well attended by prospective adopters from both Bracknell Forest and the other unitary authorities. The increase from four to six Preparation Groups annually is

in response to the demand to increase the number of approved adopters to meet the needs of children waiting for placement.

4.3   Currently ten households are in the process of being assessed as prospective adopters. These comprise of:
One application delayed until the April Panel due to the priority given of Panel time to matches between children and adopters.
Two families are ready for presentation to Adoption Panel in April 2013.
One family is currently 'on hold' at their own request with a plan to complete the process in the summer 2013.
One family are the current foster carers for the child they are seeking to adopt.
Three assessments are in process.
Two further applications are anticipated during April 2013.

5.   Developments during April- September 2012

5.1   Since 1st April 2012 there have been changes to the regulations and processes within the Adoption Agency as a result of the national focus on adoption. The aim has been to reduce the barriers that may lead to delay in placing children for adoption; this includes radical changes in processes and a drive to increase the number of approved adopters. Some of these changes have been formally implemented and others put forward as part of consultations though with a clear expectation that Local Authorities should adapt practice and potentially organisation of adoption services where appropriate without delay.

Changes include:

§   From 1st September 2012 the requirement for Adoption Panel to consider plans that adoption would be in the child's 'Best Interests' was removed, giving the Agency Decision Maker the opportunity to make the decision at a time that may be more congruent with the Court timetable.   In order to maintain a quality assurance process it has been agreed with the Berkshire Adoption Advisory Service (BAAS) that they will quality assure the reports prior to the Agency Decision Maker making the decision. BAAS' oversight of the process and information provided i.e. legal advice and medical reports will contribute a similar level of scrutiny and comment as the Adoption Panel but will provide greater flexibility as cases will not be delayed. This new process is in place and working effectively.

§   The Family Justice Review (November 2011) identified the need to address delays in the court processes which in turn delay progressing plans for children to be placed for adoption. Local Courts are formally adopting proposals made in the review to set a strict time limit of 26 weeks for the completion of care proceedings. This started to be implemented during the early summer (2012) and the first cases heard under the new system were completed in early winter. The change has implications for resources as all options, including the possibility of placing children within their family network, have to be explored alongside plans for permanency through adoption.

§   This has presented challenges in terms of ensuring that Permanency Planning and Family Finding is progressed with allocated workers at an early stage. New systems are in place to ensure that the timescales can be met.

The first Adoption 'score card' was published in May 2012. This has been developed by Government to highlight the performance of individual authorities, particularly in terms of timescales for the child's journey through the care system into permanency. The first published score card was based on data from 2007 – 2010. In Bracknell Forest during this time the number of children requiring adoption was very small, between none to three a year, and consequently there were a similar low number of adopters approved and percentage scoring unhelpful. Over the past eighteen months there has been a significant increase in both children with plans for adoption and in the number of adopters being approved.

§ The Adoption 'score card' published in November 2012 showed that Bracknell had made significant improvements. Although the numbers continue to be small and are therefore not publically available comparisons with other Local Authorities show that:

- Bracknell Forest is listed as 7th best in England and Wales for the average length of care proceedings.

- Bracknell Forest is listed as 10th best in England and Wales for the average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family.

§ National Government has set out a number of other changes to address delays in children being placed for adoption. There have been significant changes to the process and time allowed to complete adoption assessments and a reduction in the time allowed by courts to complete care proceedings. The proposed changes to the recruitment and assessment process are to be implemented at the beginning of September 2013 and take the form of a two stage application process with a reduction in timescales for completion of assessments/ approval of adopters from 8 to 6 months. Currently the Adoption Agency is working on developing new processes around this including the introduction of a new style of Prospective Adopters Report.

§ In order to meet the increase in demand, the establishment of the Family Placement Team has been increased by one social worker. This, together with other developments in process and training, has enabled the team to grow in confidence and competence. This is evidenced in the quality of assessment reports; number of children placed quickly after the Court order and feedback from adopters.

6.   Training and Development

6.1   In July 2012 a training morning was held on 'Concurrent Planning', attended by Children's Social Care and colleagues from other Berkshire adoption teams. The Coram Foundation have a well established Concurrent Planning project and a parent who has adopted three children through this route gave a well received presentation of her experience. Research shows that the sooner a child can make an attachment with their primary carer the better the outcome for them in later life. Children with secure attachments grow into more confident and secure adults. One way of addressing this is through Concurrent Planning where a child can be placed with prospective adopters who are also approved as foster carers. This may be considered in situations where at the point of an infant or young child becoming

Looked After there is a strong possibility that the ultimate plan will be for permanency through adoption.

6.2 The annual Children's Social Care 'away day' was held in October 2012 and featured several presentations from BAAS on 'Attachment'.

6.3 In February 2013 a conference, led by Louise Bomber, Attachment support teacher/therapist was well attended by professionals across the Children's workforce, including schools, foster carers and social workers. The focus was on support for children with disrupted or poor attachment experience, including adoption and the conference has been a catalyst for further developments.

6.4 The Adopters Charter is a national government initiative which sets out what adopters and prospective adopters can expect from adoption agencies. Bracknell Forest's Adoption Charter was launched with the support of adopters at a well attend cheese and wine event on 6th December 2012.

6.5 In order to address the increasing need to place children as soon as possible with adopters, the Department of Education provided Bracknell Forest with an Adoption Improvement grant in November 2012. This funding has been used to increase publicity; commission independent workers to complete assessments of adopters and to review and streamline the internal processes relating to adoption.

6.6 A one year 2013-14 Adoption Reform Grant has been offered by the Department of Education to support the requirements for improvement in adoption. Some of the funding will be used to pay the increased flat rate fee to be charged by all Agencies who place children with another Agency's approved adopter.

6.7 Discussions with the six Berkshire Unitary Authorities has already taken place to consider the optimum use of our resources. In the short term, plans are also being finalised by the six Berkshire Authorities to arrange an 'Activity Day' where prospective adopters can have sight of children with plans for adoption in a relaxed setting. Discussions about wider reconfiguration of services are also in place.

7. **Inter-country Adoption Arrangements**

7.1 Bracknell Forest has a Service Level Agreement with a local voluntary agency PACT (Parents and Children Together) for that agency to provide an adoption service for those seeking to adopt from overseas. This service is currently renewed on an annual basis. PACT provides prospective inter country adopters with information about the overseas adoption process, including an enquiry service so that prospective adopters can make an informed decision as to whether inter country adoption is appropriate for them PACT assess prospective adopters, who will be presented to the PACT adoption panel for consideration of their application. Post Adoption support is, however, provided by the local authority in the area in which the adopter resides.

7.2 During 2012-13 there was very little activity undertaken for Bracknell Forest by PACT, apart from one placement from the Indian sub-continent. Although historically PACT have offered advice to very low numbers of Bracknell Forest residents, this lack of enquiry may be indicative of a national trend away from inter-country adoption.

8.   Post-adoption Support Services

8.1   The post-adoption service is provided by an experienced social worker assisted by other members of the Family Placement Team.

8.2   Post adoption services include the counselling of adopted adults and mediation services for both adopted adults and birth family members. Requests for these services have continued to increase significantly following the Adoption and Children Act 2002. The service continues to provide information and support to a wide and varied population. Post Adoption services range from low level provision such as regular newsletters and support groups to more specialised or individual services, such as financial support; support over contact; direct work; therapeutic provision and liaison with schools. Where further specialist services are required the post adoption support worker can "signpost" adopters to the most suitable resource, such as CAMHS, the Post Adoption Centre and other provision.

8.3   Approximately 30 children and families will, at any time, be receiving a post adoption support service involving social work support from Bracknell Forest. Some families are given a high level of support to prevent adoption breakdown. The authority works with adoptive families to support placements and whilst this may on occasions require individual work the general approach is to work with the family as a whole. The details of adoptive families, who are not directly receiving a service, are held on the post adoption database and these receive regular invites to training, groups and events. Adoption allowances are being paid in respect of 24 children due to their specific needs.

8.4   Around nineteen adults received a service in relation to access to birth records or mediation, with ten families active at any one time. Several of these cases are quite complex and the agency continues to support people who have only recently found out that they are adopted, often with quite devastating feelings of loss for the adoptees.

8.5   Electronic forms tailored to post adoption needs have been developed. However, further development is being progressed to ensure that the Post Adoption service is in keeping with the introduction of the 'single assessment framework' across Children's Social Care. All children already receiving a service have written plans. All assessments are shared with families and formally reviewed. The electronic system allows for closer monitoring of demand and resources required to meet need, which is anticipated to increase as adoption services develop within Bracknell Forest.

8.6   Following a period of development and planning, the post-adoption worker has launched a service for adopters and their children. This service is called the 'Berkshire Adoption Advice and Consultation Service' (BAACS) and is a collaboration between the two post-adoption workers from Bracknell and Wokingham and a clinical psychologist. This Berkshire wide service first offered appointments in April 2012 and offers families a place to discuss issues and receive advice. There have been a total of 26 enquiries between 1st April 2013 and 31st March 2013. This resulted in 17 referrals being received of which 17 families have either been seen or have appointments confirmed. A review of the service was completed during the first quarter of 2013. Initially PACT was funding the clinical psychologist however after 31st March 2013 the cost will be shared by the six authorities within the Berkshire Adoption Consortium funded out of existing budgets.

9.   **Special Guardianship**

9.1   The Family Placement Team is involved in the preparation of reports for court in Special Guardianship applications along with the child's social worker (where the child is looked after), and in the provision of special guardian support services once the order has been granted.

9.2   During the year 1.04.12 to 31.03.2013, fourteen Special Guardianship assessment processes have been completed and a further application regarding one child is in the process of assessment. Five applications have resulted in the making of Special Guardianship Orders with a further three awaiting the outcome of court proceedings. Six applications were assessed as not being suitable. The post adoption worker is supporting eleven Special Guardianship arrangements, all at a low level following a period of quite high involvement.

10.   **In-family adoptions**

10.1   In family' adoption work relates to the preparation of reports for the court in consideration of an application to adopt a specific child, already living with the family, who wish to change the legal status in order to acquire parental responsibility for the child. The child is not "looked after".

10.2   Two adoption orders have been granted in respect of two in family adopters this year.

11.   **Complaints**

11.1   No complaints have been received in respect of adoption and post adoption support over the last year.

12.   **Summary**

12.1   The adoption service has continued to see an increase in demand over the period of 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013. As the number of younger children becoming looked after has risen, there has been a consequential increase in the family finding activity.

12.2   Adoption is now a key national priority; the increased number of children needing adoptive families has led to a shortfall in the number of prospective adoptive families able to meet their needs. The greatest impact of this shortfall is for children who are over three years old, and for those children with complex needs. National initiatives are being taken to promote adoption and the Family Placement Team have a proactive recruitment plan, alongside initiatives being developed with the Berkshire Adoption Consortium.

12.3   The national focus is also on the timescales for children to be placed with adoptive families and greater scrutiny of all aspects of the 'child's journey' from the point of becoming looked after until placed with an adoptive family. Children's Social Care have already implemented changes in order to reduce undue delay and continue to monitor progress in order to further develop service. However, we are ever mindful that the needs of children remain paramount and that the quality of assessments and matching of children to the right family remain the ultimate priority.

12.4   Overall the work of the Family Placement Team has increased significantly and brought with it the challenge of meeting individual demands of the various timescales in different parts of the service. In addition to recruiting and supporting adopters and family finding for children with plans for adoption, the team works with fostering, step parent adoption, post adoption support, connected persons assessments of potential permanent and foster carers, family finding for long term fostering, a short break fostering service and private fostering assessments. The team also provides a Duty Service each day to identify any placement required across Children's Social Care and cover for those on leave etc. Social Workers in the team also provide regular training for foster carers both pre approval and post approval. To meet the needs of the foster carers this training is often held at weekends and evenings. During the past year the team has completed a total of 35 assessment across the service (fostering, adoption, private fostering, in family adoption, connected persons assessments) in addition to supporting fifty one fostering households. In real terms the work of the team has more than doubled since 2009 and the increase in the establishment of the family placement team has enabled this to happen. There is in addition to increased joint work with the social work teams.

12.5   Despite these pressures there have been highlights this year in exceptional practice and outcomes for some of the children needing permanence through adoption: including two children placed and adopted within their first year and one child with developmental needs placed at birth with foster carers who subsequently adopted her. 2013- 2014 will be another challenging year but the ability of the service to meet the needs of children has grown and is in a good position to meet the challenge.

Sheila McKeand
Head of Service, Looked After Children
Date: 30.4.2013

Agenda Item 13

APPROVAL OF THE FOSTERING SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2012 - 2013
Director of Children, Young People and Learning

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To note the Fostering Service Annual Report 2012 – 2013.

2 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 **That the Fostering Service Annual Report 2012 – 13 [annex 1] attached is noted.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

3.1 The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services, published by the Secretary of State for Health under section 23(1) of the Care Standards Act 2000 place a requirement on Fostering Services to produce an annual report, with a clear statement on the aims and objectives of the service and what facilities they provide.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 None. This is a statutory requirement that the Fostering Service Annual Report is approved annually.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

5.1 Revised National Minimum Standards and Guidance and Regulations of the Children Act 1989 Fostering Services came into effect on 1st April 2011. Policies and procedures have been updated to include the changes required and implementation of the new requirements is in process.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

6.1 The relevant legal provisions are contained with the main body of the report. This report meets with the requirements under the reulations to produce annual statements.

Borough Treasurer

6.2 The Borough Treasurer is satisfied that sufficient resources exist to meet the proposals in the Fostering Service Annual Report 2012 - 2013.

<u>Equality Impact Assessment</u>

6.3　The service aims to achieve the best possible outcome for any child receiving services taking into account all factors of ethnicity, religion, language, culture and disability.　The service also seeks to recruit carers who have a range of backgrounds and experiences so that they can meet the needs of children in their care.　These outcomes have remained the same since the EIA completed in 2010.

<u>Strategic Risk Management Issues</u>

6.4　The strategic risk identified is that if the service does not complete an annual review the Council will be in breach of the National Minimum Standards. There are no changes completed or proposed in the content of the service that will constitute a strategic risk.

<u>Other Officers</u>

7　CONSULTATION

<u>Principal Groups Consulted</u>

7.1　Family Placement Service, Children's Services Management Team and the Department Management Team.　A copy of the Annual Report is also provided to the Ofsted Inspectorate and it is available on the Council's public website.

<u>Representations Received</u>

7.2　There have been no representations received.

<u>Background Papers</u>
Fostering Service Annual Report 2012 – 2013 **[annex 1]**

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BRACKNELL FOREST FOSTER CARE SERVICE

ANNUAL REPORT 2012 - 2013

1.   Introduction

1.1   This Annual report should be read in conjunction with the Foster Care Statement of Purpose 2013-2014. The Statement of Purpose sets out the legislative and regulatory context under which Bracknell Forest Council carries out the functions of the fostering service.

1.2   This report provides details of activity over the financial year April 2012 to March 2013 and plans for the forthcoming year.

2.   Foster Panel

2.1   The first meeting of Bracknell Forest Panel was in March 2012 with a newly appointed Panel Chair. The Panel has met on the second Monday of the month on eight occasions during 2012-2013. A training session has also been held for Panel members.

2.3   The 2011 guidance and regulations allow panel members to remain on the panel with no maximum or minimum tenure. This enables those panel members who choose to remain on the panel the opportunity to do so. Fostering panels do not have fixed membership. Panel members will be drawn from a 'central list' of people with the qualifications and experience to be a panel member. However as a new panel it has been important for panel members new to the role to gain experience and so to date the panel has operated with all members being present.

3.   Panel membership 2012-2013

Name	Role	Comment
Sarah Neville	Independent Panel Chair	Current
Gareth Barnard	Executive Member for CYP&L	Current
Judi Arnold	Children Social Care (inc Disabled Children)	Current
Sharon Hickson	Looked After Children Health Team Manager	Withdrew from panel due to availability
Madeline Cockburn	Children's Social Care	Current
Hilary Mason	Independent (Education Psychology experience)	Current
Lyn Brown	Foster Carer (Independent)	Current
Gill Garbut	Independent (Education experience)	Appointed as panel member in November 2012
Liz Norris	Independent (Education experience)	Appointed as Panel member in March 2013
Helen Fenton	Panel Adviser	
Lyn Veale / Hilary Davis	Panel Administrators	Current

3.1 The Panel membership meets the requirements of the Fostering Services Regulations 2011. Several members of the Joint Foster Panel continued to be members of the new Panel. Their considerable experience combined with the support of the experienced Chair has made a considerable contribution to the development of the panel.

3.2 Recruitment to the panel is ongoing. However in order to ensure quality, it is important to build the panel and panel members experience at a steady pace. Therefore the timing of introducing new panel members needs to be carefully considered. The recently appointed LAC Nurse with responsibility for Bracknell Forest is expected to join the panel during the second half of 2013. There is a need to recruit panel members able to provide minority ethnicity and diversity expertise or who have care experienced.

3.3 Due to the changes in arrangements a business meeting was not held in 2012 but will be arranged in 2013 to consider the Chair's Annual Report. A successful training day was held jointly with the Family Placement Team in December 2012. The agenda included considering Foster Home Reviews and matching for permanence. Panel members also have the opportunity to attend training lunchtime seminars or conferences run by the department.

3.3 Feedback from applicants is positive in relation to the quality of information provided about panel; applicants feeling welcomed and the extent to which they felt important issues are considered. Applicants are also invited to make suggestions on how fostering applications are processed or how the panel process can be improved. Any concerns raised in the feedback are addressed individually with the applicant.

4. Panel Business

4.1 Summary of Panel Recommendations (April 2012 to March 2013)

	Cases heard
New approvals	
Long term (non kinship)	2
Short term	4
Short Breaks	2
Family & Friends (Connected Persons)	0
Total	**8**
Reviews	18
Issues of Concern	1
Private Fostering arrangements	0
Long term match (non kinship)	3
Supported Lodgings	0
Safeguarding and support	0
Resignations	6
Applicants not approved	1
Total number of items considered	**29**

4.2   Bracknell Forest Approved Carers (as at 31 March 2013)

Total of Approved Fostering Households	53	
(NB: several households approved for more than one group)		
For specific long term placements (non kinship)	9	
For short term placements	38	
For short breaks care	8	
For specific relatives or friends	5	
Supported Lodgings	4	
Parent and Child	1	
Out of the short term placements, six are able to offer short breaks care Eight are approved for long term as well as short term		

4.3   Carers are often approved for one or a sibling group of two or three children. However, where the carers are not used to their full approval, this is usually due to the need to match the needs of the child or children already placed with any new placement. Good matching of child with the carer and family reduces the risk of disruption later on.

5.   Fostering Reviews

5.1   The foster carer's annual review of approval addresses all relevant aspects of the National Minimum Fostering Standards and Regulations 2001. The reviews are chaired by an assistant team manager of the Family Placement Team for consistency. All the completed reviews are further scrutinised by the team manager who monitors compliance with the regulations before final sign off.

5.2   There has been a review of the forms and format of reviews during 2012 which involved consultation with foster carers, family placement workers and Foster Panel. Improvements include the introduction of formal Personal Development Plans and clearer presentation of information about checks. Further work is required but overall the new format seems to be working well.

5.3   Thirty two reviews have been carried out within 12 months of the previous review. Eleven reviews of foster households approved within the last twelve months were presented to the Foster Panel and seven reviews seeking a change of approval terms. All first reviews were presented to Foster Panel within a year of the carer's approval as required by the regulations. This is an improvement in performance in comparison to the previous Joint Panel where time was limited and reviews often deferred.

6.   Outcome of OFSTED inspection of the Fostering Service

6.1   The Fostering Service was last inspected by Ofsted in June 2011. The outcome of this inspection indicates that there is a strong and effective fostering service in Bracknell Forest. It is particularly pleasing to note that the Inspectors found outstanding provision in relation to helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do and also in the area of helping children make a positive contribution. Overall the inspection report positively reflects some of the quality of the work being offered to our vulnerable children.

6.2   The inspection report is available upon request from the Family Placement Team. It is also available on the OFSTED website.

6.3   The system of inspecting Fostering Services is changing as a part of a change to the overall system of inspections. The details of the new inspection have not been confirmed but are likely to be part of inspecting Safeguarding and Looked After Children Inspections. The theme of the 'child's journey' through care will underpin future inspections.

7.   Data about Children Looked After by Bracknell Forest

Total number of Looked after Children March 2013	103	This is a sustained increase from an average of 75-85 over previous years
Males	51	
Females	52	
Percentage aged 11 and over	57.3%	(59/103)
Percentage from black and minority ethnic groups	24.3%	This is all ethnicities except white British for all LAC placements (out of 103)
Number in Bracknell Forest foster placements	57	
Number placed with independent fostering agency carers	18	
Number placed with other local authority carers	0	
Total number in fostering placements	75	Includes connected person/ kinship placements; Independent Foster Care Agencies and BFC carers. ,

8.   Summary of relevant National Indicators data for March 2011

8.1   Percentage of looked after children aged under 16 years and in care for 2.5 years or more who have been in their current placement for at least 2 years is 68.4% (13/19). This is improving performance but a number of variables, including the lower average age of children becoming looked after will affect the percentage measure.

8.2   Percentage of looked after children with three or more placement moves in the last year 11.7% (12/103). Analysis of this cohort shows that most were teenagers who were experiencing unsettled periods in their lives and the small increase from the previous years figure is indicative of children with more complex needs being placed in foster care.

8.3   Percentage of children adopted (and Special Guardianship Orders granted) from the Authority in the last year is 9.5% (8/84). This is an increase from 6.3% in the previous year. At 31st March 2013 there are 17 children with plans for adoption which represent a significant increase on previous years.

9.   Foster Care

9.1   2012 -2013 has been a challenging year. The comparatively high number of new carers approved in the previous year have required support to learn and settle in their new role. We have also seen the resignation of a few significant long standing foster carers due to retirement after offering many years service to Bracknell Forest.

9.2   Currently there are 12 fostering households approved for placement of three children which is a significant improvement in the capacity of the fostering service to meet this need. However it is not practicable to reserve these placements so none currently have a sibling group of three placed together. Twenty fostering households are approved for two children or one child and a sibling group of two children. Fifteen fostering households are approved for one child. Five Connected Persons (kinship) foster carers are approved for seven looked after children connected with them.

9.3   The team were very pleased to receive a record 14 applications to foster over the year. However it was disappointing that towards the end of 2012 four who were anticipated to be positive assessments did not progress to approval. This meant that there was insufficient time to achieve the target of approved foster carers by March. However, the quality of approved carers remains the first priority in the assessment process and increased monitoring processes are now in place to identify issues as early as possible in the assessment process.

10.   Short Breaks Care

10.1   The authority has eight carers approved specifically for short break care to children with disabilities. This is the largest number for at least five years. Six foster carers can offer short break care in addition to short or long term foster care.

10.2   A matching process for children and short break carers has been introduced this year. Monthly meetings are now held between the Family Placement and Disabled Children's Managers for this purpose. Short break carers now offer day care placements to support families who have a child with a disability. The overall aim is to improve the range of support and flexibility of the service.

10.3   In addition to short break care there are two established 'shared care' arrangements for children with a disability. This is where the child spends two or more nights per week with a foster carer and the remaining time at home with parents. These arrangements allow the child to remain part of their birth family and avoid the need for full time care.

11.   Recruitment

11.1   During the year a campaign was organised by the Recruitment and Publicity Officer, focusing on signposting new enquirers to informal fostering information sessions/coffee.

11.2   The information sessions ran regularly at various local venues, including 'pop up' sessions at Time Square. The aim was to improve accessibility for information – through telephone, email, website or face to face.

11.3   Promotions included:

§   advertising regularly in the local newspapers with dates of sessions;

§   posters displayed in local venues(community centres, doctors, schools, etc;

§   utilising a connection with the Bracknell Bee's Ice hockey team;

§   advertising - specifically seeking long term placements within the Borough and within travelling distance outside.

11.4   Analysis from this and other year's campaigns and experience of previous years show that a combination of local press coverage/ advertising and our website are the most successful methods of recruitment followed closely by our information and local events.

11.5   Enquiry Figures

§   73 enquiries about fostering, short break and supported lodgings enquires were received during the year April 2012-March 2013.

§   Three fostering preparation groups were organised over the year, all arranged for weekends and evenings for the convenience of prospective foster carers.

§   Of the twenty seven households who attended, a total of fourteen applications were made.

§   In total, 14 households were assessed and eight fostering households were approved at Panel for fostering, short break and supported lodgings during this year.

§   The conversion rate from numbers of enquiries made to approval as foster carers is 11% for 2012 – 2013 which compares well with the national statistic (Fostering Network) of 5%.

§   The average time taken for a fostering assessment, from formal application to approval following consideration by Fostering Panel was approximately six months which compares favourably nationally.

11.6   Recruitment Aims.

During 2013-2014 we aim to recruit ten more foster placements. We will target our recruitment activities to encourage applications from households who may meet the needs set out below. However, we know that carers do develop skills and interests as they become more experienced so the primary consideration is to recruit carers who have the capacity to learn and develop and may in due course be able to widen their interest.

Target
§   three households to replace carers who are considering retirement due to their ages or change of circumstances;

§   three short term foster carers;

§   five long term foster carers;

§   one parent and baby foster placement;

§ one long term placement for a child with physical care needs.

Within these numbers we are seeking to recruit two black or minority ethnic households

12. Additional Information

12.1 The number of children requiring fostering placement has continued to increase. This significant increase is putting a lot of pressure on placement availability and this will put additional pressure on current placements. Although we will continue to recruit we will also continue to need to place children with Independent Fostering Agencies to meet the demand for placements and to provide the opportunity for an appropriate match to meet the child's needs.

12.2 LASPO

In accordance with The Legal Aid Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act (LASPO), all children and young people remanded into Youth Detention Accommodation (YDA) automatically acquire LAC status and from 1st April 2013, funding for remands to YDA has transferred from central government to local authorities. In response to this, we have reviewed our provision of alternatives to remand into YDA including access to remand foster placements. Currently we are not proposing to change our current provision as numbers over the past 3 years of secure remands have been extremely low, and do not justify the cost of reserving specific remand foster places for young people who could potentially be remanded to YDA. Were a remand bed to be required it would be commissioned on a spot purchase basis from an Independent Fostering Agency. This will be monitored over the next year.

12.3 From 1st April 2012 Bracknell Forest has been part of a South East Region framework agreement with eleven local authorities, to commission placements from 40 Independent Foster Agencies. This arrangement has reduced the cost of some independent agency charges and ensured that quality standards are maintained.

12.4 An Assistant Team Manager of the Family Placement Team now has responsibility to oversee the placements of children in independent agencies in order to ensure that the quality of care remains at the standards we require. This has proved an effective method of support for children's social workers in dealing with issues that arise with these placements.

12.5 The Life Chances Team is a 'virtual' team set up in October 2011 consisting of representatives from all the professional teams and services who work with Bracknell Forest's Looked After Children. The team meet once a month to discuss concerns relating to individual looked after children and make specific plans to address them; champion the needs of looked after children in their respective services and are developing training opportunities for the wider children's workforce.

12.6 The family worker employed to work to the Life Chances Team is managed by the Family Placement Team. She provides practical support directly for foster carers and has proved effective in her role. This practical support has enabled children with challenging behaviour to remain in their local placement. She has also developed relationships with the team of foster carers through completing a range of practical tasks with them. The knowledge gained about foster carers and the children/ young

people they care for has allowed her to provide effective direct support in emergency or crisis situations.

13   Fostering4Bracknell Association

13.1   The Foster Care Association was set up in 2009 by Bracknell's foster carers. It is an independent association supported by a small grant. The purpose of the Foster Care Association is to provide support for each other and to contribute to the recruitment of new foster carers. The Association is very active, a variety of social activities are arranged throughout the year, usually including children but occasionally for carers only. Foster carers are always well represented at recruitment activities and information evenings and give a talk to prospective foster carers at preparation groups.

13.2   One of the most significant developments for Bracknell Forest foster carers over the past four years is the gradual movement towards a 'fostering community'. The social activities shared by carers, their own children and those they foster has led to looked after children getting to know other carers and their families and makes the occasional 'respite' arrangement from their substantive placement a more positive experience than moving to strangers.

13.3   Representatives of Fostering4Bracknell routinely meet the Head of Service, Looked After Children, and are also invited to attend the Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel once a year to present their Annual Report.

13.4   The annual foster carer conference was held on 10th November 2012 with a theme of 'Effective Communication with resistant children.' There was also a presentation about Information Security and a consultation about the new format for Foster Home Reviews.

14.   Connected Person assessments

During the year 1.04.12 to 31.03.2013 the increase in care proceedings led to a rise in the number of Connected Persons (Kinship) assessment that have needed to be completed within short timescales to the requirements of the court. Fourteen Special Guardianship assessments have been completed and a further application regarding one child is in the process of assessment. Five applications have resulted in the making of Special Guardianship Orders with a further three awaiting the outcome of court proceedings. Six applications were assessed as not being suitable.

15.   Summary

15.1   This has been yet another busy year for the Family Placement Team in terms of placements. There has been an increase in the number of children requiring foster care and a significant increase in the number of children needing long term placements. The team has continued to work hard to keep young people in local Bracknell Forest, in-house placements thereby enabling them to maintain links with their families and communities.

15.2   Overall the work of the Family Placement Team has increased significantly and brought with it the challenge of meeting the individual demands of the various timescales in different parts of the service. In addition to recruiting and supporting foster carers, the team works with adoption, step parent adoption, post adoption

support, connected person's assessments of potential permanent and foster carers, family finding for adoption and long term fostering, a short break fostering service and private fostering assessments. The team also provides a Duty Service each day to identify any placement required across Children's Social Care and cover for those on leave etc. Social Workers in the team also provide regular training for foster carers both pre approval and post approval. To meet the needs of the foster carers training is often during evenings and weekends. During the past year the team has completed a total of 35 assessment across the service (fostering, adoption, private fostering, in family adoption, connected persons assessments) in addition to supporting fifty three fostering households. In real terms the work of the team has more than doubled since 2009.

15.3   Next year will see further challenges across the service with the introduction of new processes for applications to adopt and a similar proposal for a two stage process for foster carers. The introduction of new legislation and changes to regulations always requires additional time and thought however the team is positive and well placed to move forward.

Helen Fenton
Team Manager
Family Placement Team
Date: 15.04.2013

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TO: CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL
       3 JULY 2013

**CREATING OPPORTUNITIES - A JOINT STRATEGIC PLAN FOR CHILDREN AND
YOUNG PEOPLE IN BRACKNELL FOREST 2011 – 2014 - REVIEW OF PROGRESS
Director of Children, Young People and Learning**

1   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   The purpose of this report is to introduce the review of progress against the Joint
       Strategic Plan for Children and Young People in Bracknell Forest 2011 – 2014.

2   RECOMMENDATION

**2.1   That the Panel considers the progress achieved to date against the Joint
       Strategic Plan for Children and Young People in Bracknell Forest 2011 – 2014.**

3   REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

3.1   To enable the Panel to review progress to date in respect of the implementation of
       the Joint Strategic Plan for Children and Young People in Bracknell Forest 2011 –
       2014.

4   ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1   None.

5   ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS / EQUALITIES
       IMPACT ASSESSMENT / STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES /
       CONSULTATION

5.1   Not applicable.

Background Papers

None.

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FINAL DRAFT

Bracknell Forest
Partnership
Children and Young People's Partnership

Creating Opportunities

A joint strategic plan for children and
young people in Bracknell Forest
2011 - 2014

REVIEW OF PROGRESS
1 April 2012 – 31 March 2013

Final Draft 24-06-13

FINAL DRAFT

1.   INTRODUCTION

1.1   This review highlights the progress made in the last year (April 2012 to March 2013) against the priorities in *Creating Opportunities – A joint strategic plan for children and young people in Bracknell Forest 2011 – 2014.*

http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/creating-opportunities-2011-to-2014-full-plan.pdf

1.2   The plan, published in April 201, was based on consultation with key partners and stakeholders, performance data from national and local indicators, inspection outcomes and a comprehensive needs analysis of children and young people, with additional information from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

1.3   The priorities in the plan consist of four Outcome Priorities, and six Underpinning Priorities which will remain in place for the duration of this plan. These priorities are laid out in the table below:

Outcome Priorities

OP 1	Raise levels of attainment and pupil progress across all phases of learning for all pupils
OP 2	Improve physical and emotional health and wellbeing from conception to birth and throughout life
OP 3	Safeguard and protect children and young people
OP 4	Improve outcomes for all children and young people, especially the more vulnerable.

Underpinning Priorities

UP 5	Support children and young people through key transitions in their lives
UP 6	Embed prevention and early intervention into the routine delivery of all services to children, young people and families
UP 7	Close the gap between children from low income backgrounds and their peers
UP 8	Strengthen parents and families through effective family support and engagement
UP 9	Support children and young people to become active citizens within their communities
UP 10	Ensure good quality service provision through effective commissioning

2. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTNERSHIP

2.1 The Children and Young People's Partnership represents the agencies and organisations that provide support and services to children, young people and families in Bracknell Forest. The aim of the Partnership is to:

> "*enable all children, young people and families to lead healthy and fulfilled lives, to play an active role within their community and realise their aspirations and potential through the well coordinated provision of support and services*".

2.2 The Partnership has a responsibility for ensuring that the joint strategic plan for children and young people is developed, and that progress against the plan is monitored.

2.3 **Links to Other Partnerships**

The Children and Young People's (CYP) Partnership is clear that many of the priorities it has identified cannot be achieved in isolation and that the role of other strategic partnerships is crucial in ensuring successful outcomes.

The **Bracknell Forest Partnership** sets the overarching priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Children and Young People's Partnership is one of a number of partnerships supporting delivery of these. In the past year the CYP Partnership has provided regular progress and update reports to the Bracknell Forest Partnership to ensure it remains appraised of ongoing action to deliver priorities.

http://www.bracknellforestpartnership.org.uk

The **Community Safety Partnership** has a key focus on reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and works in partnership with the Children and Young People's Partnership and the Local Safeguarding Children Board on jointly agreed safeguarding priorities, which include domestic violence, e-safety and substance misuse.

http://www.bracknellforestpartnership.org.uk/360

The **Local Safeguarding Children Board** *(LSCB)* is responsible for securing the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements and coordinating activity to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. The LSCB produces an annual report in which it makes recommendations to the Children and Young People's Partnership on ways in which safeguarding activity can be improved. A list of the recommendations made in the 2012 Annual Report can be found at annex 1.

http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/safeguardingchildrenboard

The **Health and Wellbeing Board** is a new statutory board which is made up of people who work in social care for adults, children, young people and families, people who work in different parts of the health service and people who represent patients and those who use health and social care services. The Health and Wellbeing Board is responsible for producing the Health and Wellbeing Strategy which identifies health and wellbeing priorities to inform commissioning of health services locally. These priorities link closely to the priorities in key Council and partnership plans. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy can be accessed at:

http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/BF-JHWS-Final.pdf

The **Children and Young People's Voluntary and Community Sector Forum** (CYPVCS) is a sub group of the main Voluntary and Community Sector Forum (VCSF), which acts as a platform for elected representation onto key strategic bodies and facilitates the two way feedback process. The Forum works together with Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action, as the generic support for all voluntary, community and faith activity, to provide a package of joined up capacity building and support to these organisations. Both the CYPVCS Forum and BFVA are represented on the Children and Young People's Partnership Board together with other key groups.

3. INSPECTION

3.1 Many of our services are regulated by Ofsted, including social care, schools, early years and adult learning. These inspections are important as they provide external validation of the quality of the services that are provided to children, young people and families in the borough, and they include consideration of the way in which partners work together to achieve positive outcomes.

The list below shows some of the inspection outcomes from the last year:

§ The outcomes of the Safeguarding and Looked After Children Inspection in October 2011 rated safeguarding as good, services for looked after children as good, and gave a judgement of good capacity to improve. Whilst this inspection took place in October 2011, it is the most recent inspection, and we continue to ensure the recommendations have been fully met across partner agencies.

§ 75% of primary schools in the borough have been rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted.

§ Early Years provision is amongst the top ten in the country with 83% of providers rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted.

§ Inspection of Adult and Community Services November 2012 rated good in all four aspects of its work.

§ Adoption Inspection reported in April 2012 rated us as satisfactory overall with much good and outstanding practice.

All published Ofsted inspection reports in relation to Bracknell Forest can be found at:

http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/bracknell-forest

4. NEEDS ANALYSIS AND JOINT STRATEGIC NEEDS ASSESSMENT

4.1 The Children and Young People's Needs Analysis brings together a range of data and information providing a comprehensive overview of Bracknell Forest at borough and ward level. This needs analysis coupled with information from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment provides a more detailed picture of the needs across the borough and how these can differ when looking at smaller geographical areas.

The needs analysis can be found at:
http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-and-young-peoples-needs-analysis.pdf

4.2 The JSNA has been used to identify a range of commissioning priorities for the Health and Wellbeing Strategy; this is a new requirement of the Health and Wellbeing Board and identifies a range of commissioning priorities. These include:

- Housing

- Ageing population with impact on long term conditions

- Mental health to include CAMHS, depression and dementia

- Early intervention for children and families in need

- Health checks

- Stroke prevention

- Smoking cessation

- Alcohol

- Recommission a sexual health and teenage pregnancy service

- Reduce domestic abuse sexual abuse and violent crime

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
http://www.berkshirewest.nhs.uk/page_sa.asp?fldKey=362

It is our intention to review and update the Children and Young People's Needs Analysis during the latter half of 2013, alongside the refresh of the JSNA.

5   PROGRESS AGAINST PRIORITIES

5.1   This section identifies progress that has been made against the Outcome Priorities in the plan, and identifies areas on which action will focus in the coming year to secure ongoing and sustained improvement. A summary of the progress against the action plan is attached as annex 2.

Outcome Priority 1:

Raise levels of attainment and pupil progress across all phases of learning for all pupils

Progress in 2012

Early Years Foundation Stage
The percentage of pupils at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (age 5) achieving at least 78 points and also 6+ in Personal and Social Education and Communication, Language and Literacy has risen by 15.5% this year to 69%. (The national average for 2012 was 64%).

The gap between the weakest 20% of children and the average point score narrowed by 0.6% to 25.4% (The national average in 2012 was 30.1%).

Results for boys have also improved in all areas of learning.

Key Stage 1
In Key Stage 1 (age 7), there has been an improvement in the % of pupils reaching level 2 or above in reading, writing and mathematics. This is shown in the table below:

Subject	Year	Bracknell Forest	SE	National
Reading	2012	89%(86)	88%(87)	87% (85)
Writing	2012	86% (81)	85% (83)	83% (81)
Mathematics	2012	93% (91)	92% (91)	91% (90)

Cohort   1335

Level 2 or above (2011 results in brackets)

Key Stage 2
In Key Stage 2 (age 11) data shows the attainment for all pupils in English and mathematics and in English and mathematics combined. The expected level of attainment is Level 4. Overall results show substantial improvement from 2011.

Subject	Year	Bracknell Forest	SE	National
English	2012	85% (82)	86 (82)	85 (82)
Mathematics	2012	84% (79)	84 (80)	84 (80)
Eng and maths	2012	79% (72)	79 (74)	79 (74)

Cohort   1157

Level 4+ (2011 results in brackets)

Key Stage 4

Results show that the proportion of young people obtaining 5 or more GCSE grades A* - C including English and mathematics improved from 59.6% to 61%, the highest ever.

The proportion of young people achieving the other main measure of attainment at Key Stage 4 (5 or more GCSE grades A* - C) has risen by 2%.

It is reported that nationally there has been a fall in GCSE results for the first time in twenty five years, with a decrease in the proportion of examinations awarded at least a C grade in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

	Year	Bracknell Forest	SE	National
5+A*-C	2012	90.2% (88.1)	81.5% (79.3)	81.1% (79.6)
5+A*-C incl. Eng and maths	2012	61.5% (59.6)	59.5% (59.6)	58.6% (59.0)

Education attainment for pupils attending the Pupil Referral Service has improved, with 50% of students achieving the equivalent of 5 or more GCSE grades A* - C and 94% achieving the equivalent of 5 or more GCSE grades A* - G.

Post-16

The A* - E pass rate at A Level remained high, with 98.1% of entries resulting in a pass grade, compared to a reported 98% nationally and 97.8% in 2011. The average points score for young people completing their advanced level studies fell from 765 last year to 739. This may reflect the reported national fall in the proportion of A* and A grades awarded.

School Exclusion Rates

The number of permanent exclusions from secondary school in 2011/12 [published in July 2012] was 28, this equates to 0.17% of the secondary school population.

Areas for further action:

- Continued emphasis on good educational outcomes for all children and young people. (School Advisory Team).

- Launch the new Education Vision for Children and Young People.

- Continue to target and support vulnerable groups to achieve their potential and narrow the gap in attainment; including those from minority ethnic groups, those with English as an additional Language, children with SEN, and those on free school meals.

- Monitor and support looked after children and care leavers in their education career.

- To reduce the number of permanent exclusions from secondary school.

Outcome Priority 2:

Improve physical and emotional health and wellbeing from conception to birth and throughout life.

Progress in 2012

- In Bracknell Forest approximately half (49% to 52%) of mothers were still breastfeeding six to eight weeks after birth during the first three quarters of 2012/13.

- There were 248 admissions to accident and emergency (A&E) departments for children and young people (0-17 years) in Bracknell Forest during 2011/12. This is a decrease of 1% (2) from the previous year. Only two of these injuries were recorded as non-accidental.

- The (average rolling) teenage pregnancy rate in Bracknell Forest for Q3 2011 was 19.6 (per 1000 15-17 year olds). This is lower than the South East (26.7) and England (32.0). However both national and regional rates have seen continuing reductions whereas Bracknell Forest has not seen a decrease since 2008.

- The percentage of 11-12 year olds classified as obese in Bracknell Forest was 15.9% (2009/10 to 2011/12 combined). Nationally it was 19%. For 4-5 year olds the percentage was 7.8%. The highest wards (above 20%) for 11-12 year olds were Old Bracknell, Great Hollands South, Bullbrook and Owlsmoor. This differed for 4-5 year olds where Crowthorne, Harmans Water, Priestwood and Garth, Wildridings and Central had the highest rates (above 10%).

- There were 70 young people (u18s) in drug or alcohol treatment during 2012/13. This compares with 69 in the previous year.

Areas for further action:

- Children's Centres to deliver a range of programmes to promote physical and emotional health and wellbeing to include a focus on breast feeding, healthy eating in particular targeting those families who are considered 'hard to reach'.

- To complete a sexual health needs assessment.

- Continue to support and target young people in relation to teenage pregnancy and sexual health via universal services, health drop-in and targeted youth support activity.

- To improve strategic links to the Alcohol and Substance Misuse Group and continue targeted multi-agency action to address key substance misuse issues.

- To complete a needs assessment to inform universal and targeted emotional health and wellbeing support.

Progress in 2012

- At the end of March 2013 there were 112 children who were on a Child Protection Plan. This number can vary from month to month and 2012 has seen an increase in numbers which have risen to 127 at one point during the year. There has been a significant amount of analysis to provide an understanding of the reasons for this.

- The rate of Child Protection Plans per 10,000 population at the end of 2011/12 was 30.8, this was lower than the South East average (33.7) and the England average (37.8). The figure for the end of 2012/13 will not be available until October 2013.

- During 2012/13 the numbers of children looked after have remained stable 100 in March 2012 and 103 in March 2013.

- Whilst the number of looked after children has remained fairly stable there has been an increase in the children who are subject to an interim care order or a full care order (45% of the cohort).

- The rate of children looked after per 10,000 population at the end of 2011/12 was 37.6, this was lower than the South East average (47.0), and the England average (59.0).

- There were 560 Children in Need in Bracknell Forest on 31 March 2013. These are children and young people who are not looked after, or on a Child Protection Plan, but need support or intervention from Children's Social Care under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

- There were 1,829 domestic abuse incidents (both crime and non-crime) during 2012/13. This is an increase (11.5%) from the previous year. In 2012/13 nearly half (44.8%) of these were repeat incidents which is greater than 2011/12 (41%).

- In the quarter October to December 2012 there were 454 domestic abuse incidents recorded and children were identified as being in the household in 230 of these. From these 230 domestic abuse incidents 438 children were linked to the incidents on the crime recording system. The trend data suggests that the number of domestic incidents where there were children in the household has been rising.

- It is of note that throughout the ongoing programme of Ofsted school inspections there have been no safeguarding issues identified, and the support provided to schools through the School Advisory Team is of a high standard.

- There has been a focus on children and young people at risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE) and work has begun on the development of a CSE Strategy which will draw together the many strands of work ongoing across partner agencies.

- A new Anti-Bullying Coordinator came into post in May 2012 and an update on the progress against the Anti-Bullying strategy, *Taking Action Together* was completed. Much progress has been made including better access to information for children and young people, workshops and activities for young people in schools, development of The Lobster DVD (a film to support schools in PSHE activity), training for staff and a range of community activities to raise awareness and understanding. The strategy is on track to be completed by 2014.

Areas for further action:

- Continue to work with partners to identify and address the risk factors that lead to children and young people requiring child protection support, or becoming looked after by the local authority.

- Continue to work with partners to support delivery of the Domestic Abuse Action Plan.

- Ensure the CYP Board priorities are linked to the appropriate partnership groups (in particular the LSCB, Community Safety Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Board).

- Implement the recommendations from the LSCB Annual Report into the actions above where relevant and appropriate.

- To implement the Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy across partner agencies.

Outcome Priority 4:

Improve outcomes for all children and young people, especially the more vulnerable.

Progress in 2012

- The local authority has established the Virtual School and has in place a Virtual School Head and an Assistant Virtual School Head. This ensures that looked after children receive appropriate education and achieve well. During 2011/12, 78% of looked after children gained at least 1 or more GCSE A*-G grade with 7 out of 10 in the Year 11 cohort securing a qualification which enabled them access to further education, and a small number moving on to other apprenticeships.

- The Life Chances Team led by Children's Social Care is a virtual team comprised of representatives of all the agencies and specialist services who have a responsibility for looked after children. This team, established in October 2011, has met on a monthly basis to monitor outcomes for looked after children, identifying where there may be issues or difficulties, and developing a plan to address these and improve outcomes. As this model has proved to be successful it is now planned to implement a similar model for Care Leavers.

- The proportion of children living in poverty (as defined by the Department for Work and Pensions) in Bracknell Forest has risen slightly and has increased from 11.6% to 12.2%, this slight increase is in line with the South East average which has increased from 15.4% to 16% and England average which has increased from 21.3% to 21.9%.

- The borough average for entitlement to free school meals in January 2013 was 8.5% (8.1% in 2012).

- There were 292 CAFs completed in 2012/13; a reduction of 11% on the previous year (329). There were also fewer reviews completed in 2012/13 (53%) compared to 2011/12 (63%). The reduction may be due to the introduction of the Early Intervention Hub which considers other forms of assessment in addition to CAF.

- The Early Intervention Hub was launched in November 2012. It replaced the three Integrated Care Pathways model previously in existence and was designed to enable multi-agency discussion and support for children and young people with additional needs. The Hub considered 192 cases between November 2012 and

March 2013, 13% of these have been successfully stepped down from Children's Social Care.

- The number of first time entrants (aged 10-17 years) into the Youth Justice System increased to 67 during 2011/12 (from 40 the previous year). However in the year 2012/13 the figure dropped to 34.

- Data for young people not in education, training or employment (NEET) shows that the percentage has increased slightly in 2012/13 (6.0% compared to 5.6%). Participation at age 16 remains good. The NEET group is largely young people who are 17 and 18 year olds. Many of whom have achieved level 3 qualifications and completed apprenticeships but are unable to find work.

- Adviza (formerly Connexions) has continued to be commissioned individually by several schools across the authority to deliver impartial information, advice and guidance (IAG). This involves working with high numbers of young people in 1-2-1 and group sessions to ensure they have excellent guidance coupled with good information to make strong decisions and make positive transition to their next destination.

- In addition to support directly paid for by Bracknell Forest and education providers, Adviza delivered 2 projects to intervene early and prevent young people becoming NEET after year 11. The funding for these 2 projects was directly 'won' by Adviza and benefitted Bracknell Forest with delivery of the Right Track and Energise projects in Bracknell Forest schools. We await the final outputs upon Year 11 destinations to ascertain the impact in 2013 but in 2012 90% of participants on Right Track entered education, employment or training as their first destination.

- The number of claimants of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) under 16 years in Bracknell Forest totalled 705 (Aug 12 rounded figures) and represents approximately 3% of the under 16 population. There were also another 315 DLA claimants aged 16-24 years.

- The number of homeless households has remained fairly static over the last year (2012/13) with approximately 75 children and young people (aged 0-17 years) each quarter which represents around 50 families. This is more than double the number in 2010/11.

- The Young Carers Project run by Kids has been in place for 18 months and has worked to target and raise awareness of Young Carers, and to provide support to them appropriate to their identified needs, including group activity and one to one support where needed.

- National Census data suggests there are in excess of 500 young people up to the age of 24 who may be young carers so there is more work to be done to consider how appropriate support can be offered to those who may need it.

Areas for further action:

- Update Child Poverty Strategy actions.

- Implement and monitor the impact of funding for disadvantaged two year olds.

- Continue to implement the Family Focus initiative and monitor impact on outcomes for targeted families (more detail on Family Focus is on page 16).

- Develop a model for clear pathways to support for children and families at all levels of need.

- Development of targeted youth support for identified vulnerable groups.

- Continued focus on employment, education and training for vulnerable young people.

- To monitor the impact of the Young Carers Project and consider future service developments to support young carers.

6 UNDERPINNING PRIORITIES

6.1 The underpinning priorities are important as they support the delivery of the four outcome priorities and have a significant focus on children, young people and families who may be vulnerable or disadvantaged in some way. This section provides a summary of some of the achievements during 2012/13:

Underpinning Priority 5:

Supporting children and young people through key transitions in life.

Children and young people experience transitions at many stages during their life, and it is important to ensure the systems in place support this process so that transition can be smooth and that any difficulties and issues are picked up as early as possible.

Some examples of work in the past year which have an impact on transition include:

- **Transition meetings** held in schools regarding looked after children, to review and discuss arrangements for education provision. These meetings occur at transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2, Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3, Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4, and then during Year 11 to consider post 16 options. Twelve transition meetings were held between January 2012 and February 2013.

- **Pathway Planning for Looked After Children**: Children's Social Care have continued working to improve the Pathway Planning process for children and young people who are due to leave the care of the local authority. A new process has been implemented with the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) initiating the Pathway Plan through the LAC Review process. There is improved liaison between the IRO and the After Care Team to ensure plans remain in place and are monitored. The Life Chances Team has provided a mechanism to monitor the needs of those children and young people who are looked after, and a similar model is being implemented for Care Leavers.

- **Transition Programme to Secondary School**: this programme supports children who are identified by primary schools as being in need of additional support during their transition to secondary education. The programme provides information sessions which are delivered in primary schools on subjects such as bullying, relationships, hopes and anxieties over changing schools. Young people are identified as a result of these sessions and are provided with additional support in transition. In 2012, 194 children completed the transition programme in 25 primary schools.

- Work has been underway to review and put in place a new strategy to support the transition of children with disabilities from child to adult services. The new strategy called "My Bright Future" Supporting Young People Approaching Adulthood 2013-2018 has been approved and is now in the process of being implemented.

We will continue to focus on transition as an underpinning priority in the coming year and will continue to target young people from vulnerable groups as identified in Outcome Priority 4.

Underpinning Priority 6:

Embed prevention and early intervention into the routine delivery of all services to children and young people.

Prevention and Early Intervention remains a high priority in the ongoing delivery of the Children and Young People's Plan.

Some of our early intervention support is provided through our Children's Centres, Early Years, Childcare and Play Services. Health Visitors and Midwives are very significant in early identification of need and early help support and the close working links made with Children's Centres has enabled a range of support to be provided.

Bracknell Forest has four Children's Centres, which have been developed as a "hub and spoke model", i.e. there are four fixed locations and a range of outreach and community support being offered within the identified reach of each Children's Centres.

Each Children's Centre provides a variety of Universal and Targeted services which include:

- **Family support,** providing advice on parenting, child development and relationships.

- **Child and family health services** such as health visitor clinics, ante-natal advice, information on healthy lifestyles (some of the centres have training kitchens), speech and language support or help to give up smoking.

- **Visits from the Family Information Service** which offers advice to parents and carers on all types of family services and activities.

- **Links with Job Centre Plus and Lifelong Learning** offering help and advice to those people who would like help in getting back to work.

- **Support to access Early Years** provision such as a pre-school, after-school or holiday club.

Two Children's Centres have undergone an Ofsted inspection and were graded as satisfactory with many good features.

The Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy was developed and published during the 2012/13 period. The Strategy sits underneath the Council's overarching approach to Prevention and Early Intervention. It was formally launched at the Children and Young People's Partnership Forum in September 2012.

http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/creating-opportunities-positive-futures.pdf

An Early Intervention Hub was established in November 2012 to support the Early Intervention Strategy. The Hub is composed of professionals from a variety of agencies who meet on a fortnightly basis to consider the needs of children and young people where a Common Assessment (CAF) or other assessment has been completed. The Hub has discussed the needs of 192 children between November 2012 and March 2013.

An Early Intervention Social Worker has been appointed to work with families at a lower level of need and reduce the risk of them needing support at a higher level of need.

There have been 292 CAF assessments completed in the year, some of these assessments when completed are referred to the Early Intervention Hub, others have resulted in a single agency referral, or a "team around the child" approach.

The voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) in Bracknell Forest provide a variety of activities, services and support across all interest areas, complementing those provided by statutory partners. Organisations support children and families from an early stage and are therefore key to the prevention and early intervention agenda. Over one third of children and young people in the borough attend some form of voluntary, community or faith sector service or activity.

Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action (BFVA) is the generic support for voluntary, community and faith activity in the borough, and provides a range of capacity building services and practical support to the sector including funding advice, learning and development and a Volunteer Centre which encourages and facilitates volunteering activity from residents and local companies. Volunteering opportunities are also promoted to Schools and Bracknell & Wokingham College through direct project work and also in partnership through the Bracknell Forest Careers Events.

The Children and Young People's Voluntary and Community Sector Forum (CYPVCS), supported by BFVA; provides a voice for the wider CYP sector through representation and networking events.

During 2012/13, 113 staff and volunteers from 34 organisations supporting children, young people and their families have accessed a range of learning opportunities including governance, first aid, health and safety, risk assessment and volunteer management. In addition local CYP groups have received direct support through a dedicated Funding Advisor to successfully apply for over £190,000 of funding, contributing to an overall figure of £430,000 since the beginning of the Big Lottery funded project in July 2009.

The Youth Offending Service (YOS) commissioned an external evaluation which considered outcomes for all cases referred to the YOS Prevention Service during its first year i.e. June 2011 - June 2012. Outcomes in relation to offending were positive with a high % of the cohort who did not offend following the programme.

Aiming High for Disabled Children has continued to provide a range of support to disabled children, young people and their families:

- The Aiming High Team have worked with a range of partners to ensure disabled children and young people have access to support which includes Saturday clubs, holiday schemes, other interest clubs such as swimming, karate.

- Basic Behaviour Management - eight courses ran between January 2011 and September 2012. A total of 65 parents attended.

- Adapted Webster Stratton Parenting Course - Three courses ran between November 2010 and January 2012, attended by 22 parents.

- Intensive Support for Individual Families - A number of families have received intensive individualised support devised by the Aiming High Support Team, Educational Psychologist and Behaviour Specialist (19 families by October 2012) In these cases, the interventions are developed in close partnership with parents/carers and consistency of approach across home, school and respite care is a key priority.

FINAL DRAFT

> **Underpinning Priority 7:**
>
> **Close the gap between children from low Income and disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers.**

A review of the Child Poverty Strategy has shown a number of areas of progress:

- Family learning takes place in the Open Learning Centre and increasingly out in the community. Working with the Children's Centres and schools, families are identified as requiring help to support their children's learning as well as improve their own basic skills in maths and English. Whilst they are learning to support their children, they are encouraged to undertake qualifications in Literacy, Numeracy and IT.

- Staff in Children's Centres have been trained to provide support and guidance with regard to debt management and budgeting. All centre sessions are free or low cost and some sessions offer free childcare. Support is provided to access further training to increase earning potential. Workshops are provided by the Citizens Advice Bureau and one to one support for debt management is available through Christians Against Poverty. Sessions are available to working parents in the evenings and at weekends.

- Foodbank vouchers and other charitable organisations are available to provide support as appropriate.

- Family Information Service staff are trained to offer advice on benefit entitlements and help with managing money and debt. Training has been organised for Family Support Advisors in schools and Family Outreach Workers in Children's Centres on money/debt management through Shelter.

- The number of people taking advantage of the Leisure Saver Scheme rose during 2012/13 to 572 including 147 children and young people.

- The Leisure & Culture Division offers a wide range of free access provision for children and young people including play areas, open spaces, multi-use games areas (MUGAs) and kick about areas.

- The Young People in Sport Scheme made over 50,000 contacts with children during 2012/13 by offering sports coaching opportunities free of charge to local schools.

One of the areas of work undertaken by the School Improvement Team has been to focus on work to narrow the gap in performance between pupils eligible for free school meals and those not eligible. Analysis had shown locally that while performance figures in the South East and nationally have remained relatively static the figures for Bracknell Forest have fluctuated. Actions that have been undertaken to address this include:

- Working with schools to ensure Pupil Premium information is published and provide advice and guidance on content as needed.

- Working with schools to support effective use of Year 7 "Catch-Up" funding.

- School Advisers ensuring particular reference to vulnerable groups including those on FSM when discussing attainment.

- Working with school governors in understanding the Data Dashboard and in challenging the use of targeted funds.

This work will continue in 2013/14 and progress will be closely monitored.

Underpinning Priority 8:

Strengthen parents and families through effective family support and engagement

A focus on family has been evident in much of the work undertaken by all partner agencies and is a core strand of Government policy.

Support for parents has been offered via structured parenting programmes and between September 2011 and July 2012 the Behaviour Support Team (BST) ran 12 groups for a total of 155 families. Children's Centres also ran a number of parenting courses which were attended by 95 parents during 2012/13.

Intensive support is offered via the Family Intervention Programmes, targeted support is offered by Parenting Early Intervention Workers based in the Drug and Alcohol Action Team and the Community Mental Health Team. The YOS Parenting Service provides support to parents of young people who offend or are at risk of offending. Group work, and outreach support is offered via Children's Centres. Many of our Voluntary Community and Faith sector organisations provide effective family support through targeted work, groups, clubs and informal networks.

The Aiming High Support Team have developed an adapted Webster Stratton programme, and this continues to be successful in supporting parents of children who have disabilities.

The Family Nurse Partnership led by Health is a targeted programme to work with vulnerable parents pre birth through to 2 years old. This programme has been in place in Slough and has been part of a randomised control trial in other areas of Berkshire. This is now rolled out across Berkshire.

Good progress has been made in achieving the required milestones for the national Troubled Families programme, locally known as Family Focus. We have met our target for year one and successfully engaged 42 families. We will also be putting forward a payment by results claim for the successes achieved with families. The virtual team is in place and working hard with the target group of families. The model of working is proving to be successful as we focus staff resources and energy on working intensively with families to change behaviours. The virtual team includes an Educational Welfare Officer, a Social Worker, an Educational Psychologist, Family Intervention Workers and an Early Intervention Social Worker. The team are starting to compile case studies to share good practice.

Underpinning Priority 9

Support children and young people to become active citizens within their own communities

The Youth Service has maintained a strong focus on engagement and young people have been actively involved in the Youth Modernisation Project, with membership on the Programme Board. Members of the Youth Council also present the work they are doing to a range of audiences, including the Children and Young People's Partnership and the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Children and Young People.

A special project on participation was commissioned by the Director of Children, Young People and Learning during 2012 which has looked at the variety of systems and mechanisms in place to ensure children and young people are able to express their views. There are many examples of good participation across the range of services working with children and young people and a new approach for participation currently in development will provide the mechanism to develop this area of work further.

The Children in Care Council named SiLSiP [Say it Loud Say it Proud] meets on a regular basis and were engaged in a range of positive activities over the summer which included taking young people on a residential activity break, Ready Steady Cook, an Olympics Day and working on a film project.

SiLSiP have a newsletter which is sent to its members and highlights what has happened as a result of their engagement. This is a positive example of providing young people with some evidence of the impact that expressing their views has had on service development. Representatives from the group also attend the Corporate Parenting Panel on a regular basis to discuss key issues that are important to them.

There is also an annual awards ceremony for looked after children to recognise their achievements; this is attended by a range of people including the Mayor, Elected Members, Chief Officers and Senior Managers.

There has been an increased focus on ensuring the voice of the child is heard in Child Protection processes, Children's Social Care staff regularly use the "Three Houses Tool" to seek the views of the child, and there is an increased uptake of advocacy for children going through child protection.

The Rights Respecting Schools programme continues to be delivered through our schools and young people are actively involved in activities to promote citizenship.

Active participation of children and young people remains an area of importance and in the coming year we will continue to focus on opportunities for children and young people to actively participate and have a voice within their own communities.

Underpinning Priority 10

Ensure good quality services through effective commissioning

The challenges in relation to the Government's austerity measures remain and this year are likely to continue to be a feature of planning and commissioning in the future.

It means that resources have to be even more carefully aligned with priorities and where they will have the most impact.

We have regularly updated the Children and Young People's Needs Analysis, and contributed to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment between the local authority and health. This year has also seen the development of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy which identified some key commissioning priorities for health and social care services.

Our Children and Young People's Plan identified the key priorities that have been agreed, and these priorities continue to form a key strand of planning across a range of partners.

The Children and Young People's Partnership will agree its Commissioning Framework in May 2013, and will seek to develop close links and joint working with the Health and Wellbeing Board and other key partnerships.

Recent examples of effective commissioning include: Kids (Young Carers Project), Adviza (formerly Connexions) providing information, advice and guidance and targeted support to young people, and CAMHS post diagnosis service. Within the Department for Children, Young People and Learning a contracts database flags up when contracts are due for renewal and enables forward planning.

A simple monitoring and evaluation framework has been developed this year within the Children, Young People and Learning Department and this is being used to evaluate some individual projects. The action plan for this document has this year used the framework to gather evidence of progress and impact and this can be seen as annex 2.

As we are entering into the final year of the current plan we will be looking at reviewing the Children and Young People's Needs Analysis, and contributing to the revision of the JSNA. The information from these will inform work on developing new priorities from 2014 onwards.

7.   CONCLUSION

This plan summarises the good progress made in the last year against the priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan. Strong partnership working, joint planning and a focus on keeping children and young people at the heart of our work has been evident throughout this review.

We face continued challenges in terms of resources and the need to work in partnership is clear, in terms of front line delivery and in seeking opportunities to share and join up resources where it is relevant and appropriate. The Children and Young People's Partnership is committed to ensuring that the priorities remain central to the planning and delivery of our services and that wherever possible we will work with others to continue to address the needs identified.

The underpinning priorities have once again proven to be very important in securing targeted work with some of our more vulnerable children, young people and families and they remain so in the coming year. This will include the delivery of key programmes such as Family Focus (nationally known as Troubled Families), prevention and early intervention support, funding for disadvantaged two year olds, ongoing modernisation of the Youth Service, targeted work with young people at risk of becoming NEET, targeted work with young people at risk of offending and changes in the way that health services are commissioned and delivered.

Dr Janette Karklins
Director Children, Young People and Learning
Chair Children and Young People's Partnership Board.

Annex 1 LSCB Annual Report – Recommendations

Areas for consideration	Action Requested	Progress To Date
Section 11 development areas	To ensure that organisations commissioned by statutory partner agencies to provide services to children, young people or families adhere to Bracknell Forest LSCB's minimum safeguarding standards and have completed a satisfactory Section 11 self-assessment.	It has been agreed that any services that are commissioned will be required to demonstrate that they are compliant with the requirements of Section 11. There is a standard form of wording that has been agreed to include in any contracts / SLA's that are agreed.
Learning from SCR	To ensure that the learning from the Serious Case Review informs the strategic priorities of the CYP Plan; and directly informs the development of the Early Intervention Hub and the continued development of 'Shared Processes' i.e. Common Assessment Framework (CAF) particularly.	The priorities in the CYPP remain consistent and there is a focus on safeguarding priorities which takes into account key issues highlighted in a range of meetings including the work of the Early Intervention Group (formerly Shared Processes), and the SCR recommendations. It also monitors the work of other key partnerships where there is joint working underway, for example the Community Safety Strategy and work on Domestic Abuse.
Quality Standards	To ensure that the learning from the 4 Case Review informs the strategic priorities of the CYP Plan; and directly informs the development of the Early Intervention Hub particularly.	As above the CYPP priorities remain consistent with the needs and issues identified through a range of activity including performance management, working groups and partnerships. The development of the Early Intervention Hub has taken into account issues identified and strives to address these through the multi-agency approach to early intervention.
Ensuring Effectiveness (Quality Standards)	That the CYP Partnership reviews the progress it has made with implementing the learning from QSCR analysis and considers how the findings could inform the development of the Early Intervention Hub.	The Early Intervention Hub has now been in place since November 2012, it took into account learning from a range of processes during development, and links closely with the Family Focus initiative in promoting a whole family approach to assessment and working with those in need. Work will take place during 2013 to evaluate the Hub and consider ways to develop this approach further within the early help framework.

Annex 2 – Review of Actions 2012 -13

Outcome Priority 1: Raise levels of attainment and pupil progress across all phases of learning for all pupils				
Actions	**Lead**	**Input (what you did)**	**Output (How much you did)**	**Outcomes (what difference did it make?)**
1.1 Continued emphasis on good educational outcomes for all children and young people.	Chief Adviser, Learning and Achievement	Provided support for headteachers, senior leaders and governors of schools.	Regular visits to all schools based on an assessment of need and current performance.	Improvement in test and examination outcomes at all key stages. More schools rated as good or outstanding through Ofsted inspection.
1.2 Improve educational attainment for boys.	Chief Adviser, Learning and Achievement	Analysis of performance data related to groups of pupils, including boys.	Discussed performance of groups of pupils with headteachers and senior leaders highlighting where there were issues.	Whilst the gap in performance remained similar for Key Stages 1 and 2 the gap at Key Stage 4 for the 5 or more good GCSE passes narrowed.
1.3 Continue to target and support vulnerable groups to achieve their potential and narrow the gap in attainment; incl. those from BME, EAL, SEN and FSMs.	Rosanna Boarder	BME/EAL: Meetings with headteachers and teachers to arrange appropriate training. Organised intervention sessions to enable pupils to access the curriculum and arranged information evenings for families with children at primary and secondary schools to raise awareness.	Delivered training aimed at sharing appropriate teaching and learning strategies. Assessed pupils and set up groups with content designed to support learning across the curriculum. Organised after school and evening	Teachers more confident in working with BME/EAL pupils and aware of planning appropriately and tracking progress more accurately. More pupils included in regular lessons rather than withdrawn. Raised levels of self-esteem with more

| | | Promoted the effective use of Pupil Premium Funding for pupils eligible for free school meals.

Training to school managers and SENCOs in understanding the changes required to implement the revised school funding arrangements, ongoing changes in the inspection framework and emerging legislation from section 3 of the Children and Families Bill. | information sessions.

Circulated good practice guidance and discuss at headteacher and Chairs of Governors Forums.

Training delivered to share information and identify the priorities schools need to address to meet these requirements. | proactive role in school life.

Increased number of families aware of FSM entitlement. Schools have increased their understanding of the revised funding arrangements, the current, proposed legislative changes and changed OFSTED requirements. They have identified the priorities within the school's provision to ensure that SEN pupils achieve their potential.

Performance gap has narrowed at Key Stage 2 but widened at Key Stage 4. The impact of the performance of a relatively small number of pupils in the cohort has been analysed and reported to schools. |
| 1.4 Continue to monitor and support looked after children and care leavers in their education career. | Virtual School Head (Chief Adviser, L&A) | LAC and care leavers progress and attainment database established.

Personal Education Plans, transition and planning meetings arranged.

More prudent use of the pupil | Database used to monitor progress, attainment and attendance of LAC with data collection system set up (for both LAC in borough as well as those placed in other LA's).

Relevant meeting | Regular and accurate record of attainment and attendance. Information reviewed by Virtual School staff and concerns discussed with schools to determine appropriate solutions. |

		premium identified. Provision for LAC at KS4 reviewed.	arrangements for LAC reviewed in partnership with feedback from young people. Pupil premium funding discussed as part of the PEP to aid agreed educational targets. KS4 provision for LAC reviewed with increased opportunities created to enable them to access further education.	Robust financial control in place to monitor pupil premium spending. Closer partnership working with school sixth forms, Bracknell and Wokingham College, and other further education providers has led to a clearer understanding of the needs of LAC and care leavers.
1.5 To reduce the number of permanent exclusions from secondary school.	Head of Targeted Services	Provided support to schools. Developed partnership working with schools and other providers. Development of the Early Intervention Hub enabling earlier support. Used fair access protocols more robustly.	Individual discussions with all secondary head teachers. Chair the fair access panel is enabling better multi-agency working and tracking. Developed alternative options and provision with other partners and providers. Encouraged schools to reorganise early intervention and inclusion support looking at internal provision and management	Permanent exclusions reduced. 2011 to 2012 - total 27 2012 to 2013 – 5 as of April 1st 2013.

Outcome Priority 2: Improve physical and emotional health and wellbeing from conception to birth and throughout life.				
Actions	**Lead**	**Input (what you did)**	**Output (How much you did)**	**Outcomes (what difference did it make?)**
2.1 Children's Centres to continue to work with midwives and health visitors to further increase the rate of breast-feeding, in particular targeting those mothers who are 'hard to reach'.	Children's Centre Operations Manager			
2.2 Re-commission sexual health and teenage pregnancy services (JSNA action).	JSNA – Angela Snowling	This action has not been completed, it is an action taken forward to 2013/14.		
2.3 Continue to support and target young people in relation to teenage pregnancy and sexual health via universal services, health drop-in and targeted youth support activity.	Youth Service Manager	Delivery of Health Clinics in schools and within the community – 1 addtional session has been started since October 12 at Coopers Hill. PHSE and schools information sessions have now been delivered – 135 sessions have been booked Specific promotional activities have been deliverd at schools, Newbold College	5 Health clinics being delivered 6 – 9 schools and college sessions being delivered a week in PHSE Over 1000 young poeple have attended promotional activities and over 800 young poeple came through the	Sustained reduction in Teenage Conception rates.

		and Bracknell and Wokingham College	Clinics in 2012/13	
2.4 Targeted multi-agency action to address key substance misuse issues regarding the use of mephedrone.	DAAT	A strategic group was established to oversee the delivery of the actions in the mephedrone strategy. An additional worker was employed to deliver targeted outreach services. An specific educational programme was commissioned	The actions in the mephedrone strategy have been delivered. Outreach services were delivered in Sandhurst, Owlsmoor and supported accommodation venues. Sessions were delivered in all 6 schools to the appropriate year groups	39 young people entered treatment during the first three quarters of the year who were using mephedrone or other amphetamines (54% of the under 18 treatment population) compared to 26 (19%) in the previous year.

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Outcome Priority 3: Safeguard and protect children and young people				
Actions	**Lead**	**Input (what you did)**	**Output (How much you did)**	**Outcomes (what difference did it make?)**
3.1 Continue to work with partners to focus on the risk factors that lead to child protection action.	Chief Officer Children's Social Care	CSE mapping / output know our young people and what the risks are. Established Risk management panels. Commissioned an organisation, Symbol-offering tailored support to parents with cognitive difficulties	Multi-agency panels with managers overseeing robust CIN plans or suggesting alternative plans Young people are seen and offered appropriate supports Families are offered care packages which address risk and need	Identifying young people early and acting upon any identified risk. Young people are kept safe Risks are reduced and unmet needs of children are met and children are kept safe

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3.2 Continue to work with partners to focus on the risk factors that lead to children becoming looked after by the local authority.	Chief Officer Children's Social Care	Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Service	Individual work with male perpetrators who have children on CP Plans, using 'strength to change' programme	29 Children in families where the father has engaged with DAPS have come off CP Plans since October 2011
		Family Intervention Project	Intensive support provided to families who have complex and multiple problems	Many families have achieved positive outcomes and children have been diverted from becoming LAC
		Provision of Family Group Conferences.	Increase of 14% in referral rate this year over last. (7% year on year – last 5 years)	Higher than national average conference rate (78% against 61%) Reported contribution to increasing Family autonomy and self responsibility, early case closure, avoiding CP and LAC, and de-escalation of Family difficulties. Reduction of re-referral into Duty Team.

		Aiming High – provision of short breaks	Increased the number and range of short breaks available for disabled children. Continually improving the skills of staff working with disabled children.	Provides positive experiences for children and young people. Parents/carers are provided with a break from caring. Reduced the need for care placements.
3.3 Continue to work with partners to reduce incidents of domestic violence.	Domestic Abuse Forum	Developed and delivered a programme of DA training to local practitioners	Introduction to DA training. MARAC and DASH training. HBV and FM training PICADA facilitator training Cyber stalking training.	Introduction to DA – 21 delegates trained to identify the signs of DA and how to support those identified. MARAC and DASH – 42 delegates trained so that they are able to identify high-risk cases of DA and refer cases to MARAC. HBV and FM – 13 delegates trained to identify DA involving HBV and FM and to be able to support victims and their children. 7 PICADA facilitators trained to enable PICADA programmes to continue which support children (and their mothers) who have witnessed DA. Cyber stalking training – 24 delegates trained in recognising how victims can be

				stalked online and how to put measures in place to protect them.
		Provision of a 1:1 perpetrator programme (DAPS)	As at the end of December 2012, the DAPS service had received 55 referrals and each case was dealt with by the Domestic Violence Worker who uses the Strength to Change Programme.	29 Children in families where the father has engaged with DAPS have come off CP Plans since October 2011
		Provided specialist provision for children and young people who have witnessed DA (PICADA Programme)	PICADA 3 ran in February – May 2012 with 7 children and 6 mothers attending. PICACA 4 ran in October-December 2012 with 5 mothers and 7 children attending.	14 children and 11 mothers completed the PICADA programmes which enabled them to receive remedial support to the domestic abuse they received/witness
		DASC Project – provided enhanced support to medium-risk victims of DA and their children as well as increased supervision/management of perpetrators by co-ordinating all agency intervention in the family and referring where gaps are identified	An additional 15 cases were added to the DASC cohort in December 2012, following another scope to determine the most prolific medium-risk cases (May-November 2012). This took the case load to 21 cases. 8 cases have been closed overall since January 2012. In April 2012, an enhanced IOM worker joined the team conducting 1 to 1 sessions with DASC perpetrators and victims to	One of the DA targets is to reduce the number of repeat incidents of DA committed by the 2011/12 DASC cohort from 68 to 50 incidents. As at the end of December 2012, the number of repeats was far below that at 21 incidents. In addition, the number of repeats for December, January and February were 0, 1 and 1 respectively which was very low considering that Christmas and New Year are historically

			carry out counselling/relationship management/anger management/stress management sessions. Enhanced police supervision of the DASC cohort was also put into place in October 2012 whereby police officers would attend the home and check that all was OK.	high-risk periods for DA.
		Promoted the feature of positive relationships to children, young people, parents and carers		The Lobster' play resource was produced and shown at LSCB Conference in June 2012. A resource pack was fully completed in December 2012 for roll out. 'Stepping Up' programmes were delivered by YOS with young men on supervision to YOS in Qs 1 and 2. Children's Centres work with families with children under 5 years and offer universal services and signpost to organisations that can offer specific support for their needs.
3.4 Implement the recommendations of the Eileen Munro review of	Chief Officer Children's	Appointment of a Principal Social Worker	To ensure clear communication between front-line facing staff and champion	Bi monthly meeting with frontline workers to hear issues. Worked on areas such

child protection including the development of prevention and early intervention.	Social Care		best practice.	as supervised contact and methods of recording to assist practice development.
		Appointment of Development Practitioner	To coach and mentor social workers through court and complex case work.	Appointed to start 1st May 2013
		Developed a single assessment training programme to respond to the Munro recommendations regarding single assessment.	All relevant social workers trained, changes made to electronic systems and a "go live" date agreed.	Service enabled to implement Single Assessment from May 2013
		Range of front line audits undertaken.	CP Themed audit 'The Voice of the Child'	Confirmed that child's voice is being heard in the majority of cases, an improvement on the previous year. Ensuring the 'lived experience' of the child is taken into account when progressing plans
		Contribute to Early Intervention Hub through Social Care and YOS attendance at meetings.	YOS and CSC are represented at Hub which has increased referrals to the YOS prevention service	Attendance at the Hub has enabled improved communication regarding cases. An increase in the number of cases identified to receive support through the YOS prevention service which reduces the risk of entering the youth justice system for the first time

		Developed YOS Prevention Service to broaden the scope .	Increased the age limits to engage a wider group of children and young people.	Reduced the number of young people coming into the Youth Justice system by 50%, compared to the same period last year.
		Development of tools to support Social Workers in direct work with children	Introduction of Three Houses Tool which is used to record the child's voice when preparing reports.	This is a powerful tool to use at Case Conferences to ensure the child's views are heard.
		Increased the use of Advocacy for children and young people.	Advocate is able to attend Case Conferences when requested by child/YP	Child's voice heard and contributed to decision making in cases.
3.5 Implement the recommendations from the LSCB annual report into the actions above where relevant and appropriate (see appendix 1 of the CYPP Review).	CYP Partnership Board			

Outcome Priority 4: Improve outcomes for all children and young people, especially the more vulnerable.				
Actions	**Lead**	**Input (what you did)**	**Output (How much you did)**	**Outcomes (what difference did it make?)**
4.1 Continue to reduce the levels of young people NEET.	Learning, Development and Commissioning	Work with schools, colleges and training providers to ensure a coherent range of education opportunities	The participation group works with all young people who are NEET.	Number of NEET young people is on a downward trend, despite the difficult economic climate we operate

	Manager 14 Plus	leading to sustainable employment for young people who are NEET. Analysis of NEET figures by each school.	The cohort is dynamic as some young people become NEET, while others move into Education, Employment and Training. Discuss with schools possible interventions to support young people preventing them becoming NEET. Transition coordinator supports young people identified of being at-risk of becoming NEET as they transition into post-16 education and training.	in and changes in the IAG provision offered to young people. All schools are now aware of the number of their previous year 11 cohort who became NEET and the range of interventions available to support NEET reduction. 80% of young people being supported by the transition coordinator remain engaged in education and training.
4.2 Continued focus on implementing the actions in the Child Poverty Strategy.	Head of Prevention and Early Intervention	Child Poverty Strategy actions have been reviewed	Progress has been made across all areas of the Strategy.	Focus on a small number of hey actions for 2013/14
4.3 Implementing the funding for disadvantaged two year olds.	Inclusion and Development Officer	A project plan was developed to identify areas where additional spaces are required to meet the new statutory duty A SEF was completed for the national Achieving 2 year olds project to identify strengths and areas for development		38 new childcare spaces have already been developed a further 32 spaces are currently being developed, work is ongoing to develop more spaces as need is identified. An outreach worker was appointed in January 2013 to work with families and settings 25 families have accessed support from the Outreach

				worker.
				Promotional material has been developed
				Training for providers has been identified and delivered to upskill the workforce
				More training has been planned for the Summer term 2013
				25 providers have engaged in the delivery of 2 year old funding
				In the financial year 2012-13 169 children accessed 2 year old funding.
4.4 Implementing the Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy	Head of Performance and Governance	The Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy was developed and published during the 2012/13 period	The Strategy sits underneath the Council's overarching approach to Prevention and Early Intervention. It was formally launched at the Children and Young People's Partnership Forum in September 2012. The Shared Processes Group is being reviewed and will become an Early Intervention Group that reports to the	A new Early Intervention Hub has been developed as part of the Strategy. It has considered the needs of xx children, young people and families since its launch in November 2012. A range of creative solutions have been identified to support families at an earlier stage in their difficulties. An Early Intervention Social Worker has been appointed to

			LSCB and the CYP Board	work with families at a lower level of need and reduce the risk of them needing support at a higher level of need. To date xx families
4.5 Implementing the Youth Modernisation Programme.	Head of Youth Service	Delivery of the Modernisation Agenda: To implement new job profiles for the full time – substantive and part time staff. Deployment of the team. Agree a the new Service Plan. Agree new work programmes for all the full time staff in line with their new job profiles. Performance manage the team. Develop a new staffing structure Support the closure and commissioning of Whitegrove and N Ascot (Edgbarrow returned to school usage) Ensure that the team are		All staff have had their new job profiles, written, negotiated, evaluated and implemented – against this the new Delivery plans have been written to take on the new emphasis placed on targeted young people and more responsibility in line with their level of responsibility, such as; budget management, planning, recruitment and training.

		cognisant with Early Intervention and Prevention as their new location for the future. Commissioning Strategy development for universal provision.		
4.6 Continued focus on employment, education and training for vulnerable young people.	Learning, Development and Commissioning Manager 14 Plus	Continuing to work with our network of education providers to ensure that there is sustainable employment routes for young people completing their programmes.	There has been an increase in the range of provision available which combines education and employment opportunities. For example, extended work placements, work pairing, apprenticeships.	Increasing young people want employment rather than education alone. We are responding by working with employers to take on young people and support them to ensure that education and training is provided alongside the employment.

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Unrestricted

TO: CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL
        3 JULY 2013

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REPORT
Working Group Lead Member

1   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   This report introduces the attached draft report resulting from the review of school governance undertaken by a working group of this Panel.

2   RECOMMENDATION

2.1   **That the Panel agrees and adopts the attached report of the review of school governance undertaken by its working group for sending formally to the relevant Executive Member.**

3   REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

3.1   To seek the Panel's agreement to the attached report for sending formally to the relevant Executive Member.

4   ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1   None.

5   ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS / EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT / STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES / CONSULTATION

5.1   Not applicable.

Background Papers

None.

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A Review of
School Governance

**by a working group of the
Children, Young People and Learning
Overview and Scrutiny Panel**

June 2013

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Acknowledgements

1.   Foreword

1.1   The vision for education in Bracknell Forest is for all schools to be "good" schools, in a wider meaning than is used in an Ofsted inspection.

1.2   Bracknell Forest has 38 schools and each has its own governing body, representing a huge number of very dedicated volunteers drawn from parents, staff, business and the wider community.

1.3   Since 1988, school governing bodies have had increased responsibilities, with a more important role as schools have gained increasing autonomy. They are responsible for the strategic direction of their school, for safeguarding, curriculum, achievement, leadership appointments and financial health. It is an extremely responsible role ensuring children and young people receive the best education possible to enable them to achieve their full potential and aspirations.

1.4   The Ofsted inspection framework now places greater emphasis on school governance and the role of the school governors. The Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel therefore agreed that a working group should review school governance in Bracknell Forest.

1.5   Members of the group attended and joined in the discussion groups at three different meetings. These discussions provided excellent feedback. Three different questionnaires were issued and responses analysed, our aim being to highlight and share good practice. We reviewed the support provided by Bracknell Forest Governors' Services.

1.6   Taking part in this review was a very enjoyable experience for all members of the working group and has led to a number of recommendations.

1.7   This has been a very positive piece of work both for governance and for the local authority. Governors value the support of the local authority and the strong services provided by its Governor Service Team. Bracknell Forest values the input of governors and their views on how to become even more effective.

1.8   There are many people to thank but the most important group is the governors themselves for giving us your time and sharing your experiences. We hope we have repaid your participation and enthusiasm by highlighting the importance of your role.

1.9   I would like to thank all fellow members of the group for their support and Andrea Carr for providing officer support, attending all meetings both internal and external, and drafting this very full report.

1.10 I commend the findings and recommendations to the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning, Councillor Dr. Gareth Barnard.

Councillor Mrs Mary Temperton
(Lead Working Group Member)

2. Executive Summary

2.1 The new inspection framework of the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) places greater emphasis on the role of school governors and governance arrangements in schools. Following some concerns regarding school governance arrangements in Bracknell Forest schools raised by Ofsted inspection reports, the Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel established this Working Group in autumn 2012 to review school governance in the Borough's schools with a view to identifying areas for improvement and disseminating good practice.

2.2 During the course of the review the Working Group gathered information and evidence from many sources in order to evaluate the effectiveness of governance in local schools and identify good practice which could be shared to secure improvements. These sources included Council officers who provided background information and knowledge, and school governors of all types together with headteachers who met the Working Group and completed questionnaires to explain their governance practices and comment on any related issues. The Working Group also attended meetings of the Link Governors Forum and annual Governors Conference to gather information and views. Members had regard to relevant documents including extracts from Ofsted inspection reports concerning local school governance, the statutory guidance on the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012, an Ofsted report relating to good governance practice and minutes of meetings of governing bodies.

2.3 This report describes the work of the Working Group between September 2012 and June 2013 and sets out its findings. The report is organised in the following sections and Members hope that it will be well received and look forward to receiving responses to their recommendations.

Part 3   Gives background information in respect of school governance and summarises how the review was undertaken.

Part 4   Summarises the information and evidence gathered by the Working Group.

Part 5   Contains the conclusions reached following the review.

Part 6   Sets out the Working Group's recommendations to the Council's Executive and to the Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

2.4 The Working Group comprised:

Councillor Mrs Temperton (Lead Member)
Councillor Mrs Birch
Councillor Ms Hayes
Councillor Mrs McCracken
Mrs Cauchi (former Parent Governor Representative member of the Panel)
Mr Jackson (Kerith Centre and former Parent Governor)

3. Background

3.1 There are in excess of 300,000 school governors across England making them the largest group of unpaid volunteers nationally. Governors are responsible for the conduct of maintained schools in England and they control over £80 billion of public money. Since 1988 school governing bodies have assumed greater responsibilities and their role has become more important as schools have gained increasing autonomy. The governing body complements and enhances school leadership by providing support and constructive challenge, agreeing and monitoring school budgets, ensuring that all statutory duties are met, appointing the headteacher and holding him/her to account for the impact of the school's work on improving outcomes for all pupils. It is an extremely responsible role seeking to ensure that children and young people receive the best education possible.

3.2 There is evidence to show that there are links between the effectiveness of the governing body, school improvement and pupil performance. The effectiveness of governing bodies is judged by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector's (HMCI's) Annual Report for 2009/10 identified that:

'Governors are most effective when they are fully involved in the school's self-evaluation and use the knowledge gained to challenge the school, understand its strengths and weaknesses and contribute to shaping its strategic direction. In contrast, weak governance is likely to fail to ensure statutory requirements are met, for example those related to safeguarding. In addition, where governance is weak the involvement of governors in monitoring the quality of provision is not well enough defined or sufficiently rigorous and challenging.'

3.3 The work of governing bodies is largely hidden from public view as it takes place within schools and one aim of this review has been to promote the role and raise the profile of governors to ensure that they receive the recognition that they deserve and to facilitate recruitment of suitable candidates. This is needed to fill the local 10% governor vacancies and to improve schools by strengthening leadership, accountability and capacity for innovation.

3.4 Last year Lord Hill, Under-Secretary of State for Schools, stated: *"It is absolutely clear to me that the most important decision-making group in any school is the governing body. We need to ensure that governing bodies have the best possible people, representing a range of different groups and with the right mix of skills."*[1]

3.5 Also, public pronouncements from the Secretary of State for Education and HMCI have similarly highlighted the crucial importance of appropriately skilled governing bodies to school improvement and the very real dangers of anything less.

3.6 Recognising the importance of effective governance in the Borough's schools, which is highlighted by the new Ofsted inspection framework placing greater emphasis on school governance and the role of school governors, the Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel appointed this Working Group to undertake a review of school governance, particularly in the

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[1] As reported by School Governor One-Stop Shop

light of some criticism of governance in local schools in Ofsted inspection reports.

3.7 The key objectives and scope of the review, matters excluded from the scope, key documents, background data, areas of research and specific review questions were agreed at the outset by the Working Group, and are set out in the scoping document attached at Appendix 1.

A Governors' Meeting at Great Hollands Primary School

4. Investigation, Information Gathering and Analysis

Introductory Briefing and Discussion

4.1 At its first meeting the Working Group considered the scope of the review in the light of a discussion concerning school governance with the Director of Children, Young People and Learning and the Senior Adviser (Secondary).

4.2 The Director advised that a new Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspection framework operational from September 2012 placed a greater emphasis on the role of school governors and governance and required schools to evidence their work in this area. The Working Group welcomed this approach as it felt that governing bodies should have a greater involvement in the running of schools and that they needed to demonstrate that they were knowledgeable and capable of challenging and probing performance with sufficient rigour.

4.3 As school governors represented the largest voluntary group in the country consisting of approximately 300,000 in number it was unsurprising that difficulties in recruitment to vacancies occurred. The Council assisted with recruitment and provided case studies. The national governor vacancy rate varied between 12% - 15% and at the time of the meeting the local rate was 10% as some governors had retired over the summer and replacements were yet to be recruited. The Bracknell Forest rate subsequently reduced to 9%. Agenda papers for the Education Governor Appointments Committee informed where vacancies lay. Governor exit interviews did not currently take place and the Working Group felt that there would be some merit in recommending the introduction of such interviews in the future.

4.4 Parent governors were felt to possess unique knowledge of experiences for pupils and parents and the merits of transferring them to a different category of governor when their children graduated from the school was highlighted. As some governors, particularly parents, were motivated to take on the role in order to tackle a particular issue their child had with the school and did not adopt a school-wide view of governance, the importance of a thorough induction and pre-induction discussion with the headteacher to prevent a narrow view was emphasised. Any parent was at liberty to apply to fill a parent governor vacancy and, in the absence of other nominations, would assume the role without an election. The preparation of a leaflet to explain the role of governors and their responsibilities would be helpful. As 7 new schools were due to be built in the Borough in the future, governance preparation measures were welcomed and would set a standard for self-governing academies.

4.5 The majority of Members of the Working Group had been or remained governors and one expressed the view that in their experience the secondary school in question did not actively recruit or encourage parents to become governors at Year 7 and remain as their children progressed through the school. However, governing body meetings were well attended and all governors were actively involved in the running of the school.

4.6 Although safeguarding practices had previously involved monitoring playground activity and behaviour, there was now a greater awareness of safeguarding and it was a central theme to all school activities and policies. Some governing bodies made an individual governor responsible for safeguarding and working with a dedicated member of school staff. Whilst schools were previously judged

against the policies and procedures they had in place, there had been a recent shift by Ofsted towards judging the application of them in practice and following a child's journey through the school to ascertain how they were affected. A reminder to draw attention to the importance of safeguarding was due to be circulated to schools shortly after the meeting.

4.7 One local primary school had been placed in special measures following its last Ofsted inspection in December 2011 when the inspector had referred to an acting chair of governors. The school had concentrated on improving governance arrangements and safeguarding in preparation for re-inspection. The most recent re-inspection in 2013 was positive and had found that:

"The governing body organises its work more effectively to ensure that the school's leaders are held to account through regular and close checking on the school's progress. They are knowledgeable about the school's strengths and areas of development and have high ambitions for the improvement of the school."

4.8 A paper explaining the structure and work of the Governor Services Team was circulated. The Team was managed by the Senior Adviser, Secondary and comprised 1.7 full time equivalent (FTE) officers and 0.7 FTE administrative assistant who worked well together with schools and clerks to governing bodies in a supportive manner. The Team worked to a Service Level Agreement (SLA) and enjoyed 100% buy back of services by the local authority's schools. A separate but similar SLA was in place with the one academy in Bracknell Forest. Membership of the National Governors' Association (NGA) was included as part of the SLA. The current Governor Services Team had been in place for a number of years and prided itself on its close working relationship with the schools in the Borough. There was regular contact with governing bodies by e-mail and telephone, particularly with regard to advice, guidance and queries. Termly meetings/briefings to discuss issues and to disseminate messages and new duties and responsibilities etc. were held for:

- Chairs of governors with the Director of Children, Young People and Learning and the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning
- Clerks to governing bodies
- Link governors

4.9 An annual Governors' Conference was held in January which regularly attracted 100 delegates representing the great majority of schools in the Borough. The aim each year was to present a keynote speaker of national standing and workshop sessions which reflected significant issues facing governing bodies.

4.10 The Governor Services Team also sought to support school governors and enhance their capacity to challenge schools appropriately through the provision of an extensive training and development programme. This typically offered a choice of 10 - 12 courses per term and also access to the Governor E-Learning (Gel) programme. Governors were able to request additional training events for example in relation to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. Courses were led by a combination of Bracknell Forest staff and external trainers with extensive experience of supporting governing bodies. Course attendance was good and the sessions invariably received a high level of very positive feedback.

4.11 Induction training for new governors was provided each term. A key aspect of the training programme in the past year had been the introduction of a self-evaluation toolkit which enabled governors to evidence their work and included a portfolio which enhanced the opportunity to demonstrate effectiveness. It was hoped that governing bodies would use the toolkit to critically appraise themselves and all had received initial training in this regard, with two or three representatives from each governing body attending. Subsequent sessions had focused on each of the four sections of the toolkit:

- Strategic leadership
- Monitoring and accountability
- Support and challenge
- School improvement and effective governance

4.12 A Member advised that as the toolkit was detailed and lengthy, the school at which she taught was working through it in stages and found that it broadened teachers' and governors' thinking. Another school had appointed a working group of three governors to undertake the self-evaluation. When inspecting schools, Ofsted looked favourably on those using the toolkit.

4.13 An Introduction to Human Resources has been supported by specific sessions on Performance Management and Recruiting Safely and Fairly. Link governors were consulted on key elements for inclusion in the programme, which during the current year had also included:

- Safeguarding for Governors and The Common Assessment Framework
- E-Safety and Cyberbullying
- Exclusions Impact and Procedures
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Changes to the Ofsted Framework and What is expected of Governors?
- What sort of Governor am I … and how does this impact on effective governance?
- Being An Effective Clerk and Minute Taking

4.14 The local authority had also been pleased to support the Development Programme for chairs and aspiring chairs provided by the National College of School Leadership.

4.15 The difficulty in assessing the outcomes of the training and toolkit was an issue. Feedback in respect of the training via an evaluation form indicated that governors were very satisfied with the support provided by the Governor Services Team. The Team had been audited and the resulting report was favourable finding that it delivered all that it intended to although there was some scope to adopt a different approach to seek improvement.

4.16 There was a concern that schools may not take advantage of the opportunities to share resources and skills owing to an unawareness of the support on offer which could possibly lead to isolation. A review of the SLA in 2013 could address these issues.

4.17 Minutes of governing body meetings were gathered by the Team to ascertain attendance levels and the Working Group was provided with copies to gauge attendance and quality of debate. The merits of meeting governors to explore what did or did not motivate them was recognised.

4.18 A paper which provided feedback in respect of the Link Governor Forum meeting held on 3 July 2012 was tabled. This indicated what successfully contributed to good governance at schools and what would make governance more effective. Most schools had a link governor and the Forum, which met in different schools to enable link governors to explore other schools for comparative purposes, was valued and normally attended by at least twenty governors. As the Forum represented all schools, a Working Group meeting with link governors as part of a Forum meeting was planned as a beneficial exercise that would be more effective than visiting a selection of schools to meet them. Questions to link governors would be prepared in advance.

4.19 The crucial role of chair of governors was highlighted and some were thought to be more effective than others. Some chairs had been in place for very many years possibly leading to a stale and outdated approach. Although the law provided for chairs to be elected for between 1 and 4 years, many were repeatedly re-elected annually by their governing body, possibly in a customary fashion,. Dislodging underperforming chairs or governors was a sensitive issue and providing support and encouragement to enhance governing body effectiveness and discourage under performance was promoted. Although limiting the term of office of chairs was one possibility to boost fresh thinking, there was no legal basis to support this and arrangements would need to be agreed with governing bodies. Succession was considered to be an issue and increased involvement of deputy chairs and mentoring could assist in this area. There was a wish to improve the effectiveness of governing bodies and expand their knowledge and skills base. As the re-structuring of the governing body of a previously failing school had strengthened it greatly, it was suggested that governing body structures and meeting arrangements should be examined to identify any link between structure and success. It was felt that the dynamic between different types of governors could possibly influence the effectiveness of governing bodies.

4.20 Subsequent to the meeting, the Working Group agreed the review scoping document (Appendix 1) in the light of the discussion with the Director and the Senior Adviser.

4.21 With regard to Key Objective 5 of the scoping document concerning Ofsted comments in respect of governance, the Senior Adviser reported that some Bracknell Forest schools, including the primary school that had been placed in special measures, had now been inspected under the new framework and that the inspections had included some matters that were not part of the framework. This sought evidence of the work of governing bodies and its impact in particular. Inspectors were impressed where self-evaluation by governing bodies had taken place. As there was no longer a 'satisfactory' grade in Ofsted inspections, the importance of attaining 'good' or 'excellent' ratings was highlighted and the extracts of Ofsted inspections provided examples of best practice to achieve these in governance. One Member advised of an inspection experience where the school being inspected had been requested to identify weaknesses, but not strengths, when inspected by Ofsted. Another Member gave an example of a school compiling a file of relevant information including minute extracts to evidence work of governors.

New Legislation Concerning School Governing Bodies

4.22 At a subsequent meeting a Governor Services Officer advised the Working Group of the effect of new legislation concerning the constitution of governing

bodies further to Key Objective 7 of the review. Copies of the statutory guidance on the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 were circulated at the meeting for the Working Group's information. The guidance was considered to be informative advice for chairs of governors. Members noted that although the legislation featured minimal requirements in terms of the number of governors on a governing body and removed the maximum number obligation and reduced the minimum number for small and rural schools, its main aim was to make governing bodies more effective by concentrating on the relevant skill sets of governors which differed from the existing stakeholder model. Required skills should be identified by a skills audit of existing governors. However, reducing the size of governing bodies did not necessarily improve their effectiveness as a certain number of governors were required to cover obligations such as sourcing an independent governor without an interest to serve on a disciplinary committee.

4.23 Remaining stakeholder requirements consisted of a minimum of 7 governors including at least 2 elected parent governors. Elections were thought to dissuade some potential governors from standing for nomination. In the event of insufficient nominations for parent governors, governing bodies were able to appoint governors of their choice with relevant expertise, provided they met the qualifying criteria set out in regulations. Associate members could be appointed to serve on one or more committees and attend full governing body meetings to bring expertise and experience but with limited voting powers. There was a requirement for 1 elected staff governor in addition to the ex-officio headteacher governor and it was possible to appoint a further staff member as a co-opted governor. In the event that a headteacher chose not to take up his/her ex-officio seat on the governing body it would remain vacant. Local authority governors would be limited to 1 per governing body and under the new constitution they were nominated by the local authority and appointed by the governing body if considered suitable ensuring that no one was imposed on the governing body. Regulations required that foundation governors out numbered all other types of governor by 2 and there was now no stipulation that they needed to be parents. There were no changes in the case of governing bodies of voluntary aided/controlled schools where there was a requirement for at least 2 foundation governors representing no more than a quarter of all governors. A new model governing body would consist of:

1 staff member
2 parent governors
1 local authority governor
1 headteacher governor
Co-opted governors replaced the former category of community governors. Governing bodies may have any number of co-opted governors although the number would need to be specified in the constitution.
Plus foundation governors in church schools.

4.24 Schools would need to reconstitute their governing body in order to implement the new regulations. To date, 2 schools had indicated their intention to do this and several others, including a secondary school, had expressed an interest in doing so. The decision whether to reconstitute was one for individual governing bodies and if they were operating effectively it was not necessary for them to do so and they could continue to operate under the existing legislation and regulations. However, it was felt that all schools should consider reconstitution as it should facilitate developing the skills sets of governing bodies and filling any gaps. It would also offer the opportunity to refresh governing bodies and it

was possible that there would not be a role for all existing governors following reconstitution. Providing support under two systems would complicate matters for the Governor Services Team.

4.25 The merits of having a governing body federation with specialist skills to work with several schools in addition to their own individual dedicated governing bodies was highlighted. There were regulations to govern federations and, although there were presently none in Bracknell Forest, they existed in Hampshire and Kent, the latter having 25 schools in one federation. However, some governing bodies in the Borough undertook some activities in a cluster. Although governors appreciated sharing expertise locally, all governing bodies were different and individual and therefore federations had not been sought in Bracknell Forest to date. The Council encouraged governing bodies to work together as it was felt that there was much to be gained from it.

Skills Audit of Governors

4.26 The Working Group discussed with officers the best approach for governing bodies to undertake a skills audit of governors to reflect their strengths and development requirements as a means to improve effectiveness as part of the self-evaluation process. The Council did not hold skills audit information. A Bracknell Forest governor skills audit form had been developed to draw the attention of governing bodies to the importance of skills audits and to assist them with undertaking audits. The form was similar to that produced by the NGA and an example was circulated at the meeting for the Working Group's information. The form provided opportunities for individual governors to promote themselves and their skills and for governing bodies to look afresh at their membership and effectiveness. Although the form had been improved previously, the Working Group felt that it was not widely understood and could be made more 'user friendly' focusing on the skills required of governors by asking governors to set out their skills in place of the current tick box approach.

4.27 A skills audit provided an opportunity to upskill governing bodies as identification of skills gaps could inform targeted recruitment of governors, such as community governors who could bring the required business skills and knowledge, to fill the skills gaps. Some local businesses encouraged their employees to undertake community activities and seconding someone from the business sector onto a governing body was to be encouraged.

Meetings with the Link Governors Forum and with Parent Governors and Chairs of Governors

4.28 As the next stage of the review, the Working Group compiled questionnaires for link governors, parent governors and chairs of governors. As previously agreed, the Working Group attended the next meeting of the Link Governors Forum. Separate meetings were arranged with parent governors and chairs of governors for the same purpose of meeting them to gain their views on school governance and to obtain responses to the respective questionnaires. A further questionnaire to chairs of governors concerning the structure of governing bodies was subsequently compiled to evidence whether structures had any impact on the effectiveness of governing bodies. Summaries of the responses to the questionnaires compiled for the three types of governors and for information concerning governing body structures are attached at Appendices 2, 3, 4 and 5, respectively. The questionnaires were circulated in advance of the meetings and outcomes shared with all schools via this report.

4.29 The Link Governors Forum meeting commenced with a tour of the host school, Uplands Primary School at Sandhurst. The agenda included some standard items such as training and development to be provided in the spring 2013 term and local and national developments leading to a discussion item which would be broadened to include discussing governance with the Working Group. The latter discussion item was mirrored at the subsequent meetings with parent governors and chairs of governors. Feedback in respect of the discussion topic at the previous Forum meeting, concerning what contributed to good governance and what would make it more effective, was also given.

Training and Development

4.30 The Forum was advised that Uplands was designated as a Teaching School and was in an alliance with a group of other local schools to provide training. It would be possible for the group to link with other education authorities to increase capacity. The National College was providing training for chairs of governors and those who aspired to assume the role. The development programme, which facilitated self development, consisted of 3 whole days which could be spread over terms and participants received a certificate on completion of the course. The National College provided subsidies for the training of chairs and aspiring chairs with a full scholarship for participants from small schools where the pupil number was 100 or less, and a part scholarship for participants based in schools which were rated as satisfactory or required improvement. As training fees could be an issue for some schools, the Governor Services Team sought to subsidise costs also where possible. Experienced governors were leading training across Berkshire and a leaflet detailing a leadership development programme, which trained chairs to lead governors' meetings, had been circulated to clerks and chairs and was tabled at the meeting.

4.31 The draft governor training programme for the spring term was discussed. It was suggested that performance management training sessions should be held in the summer and early autumn to prepare governors for undertaking performance management in the autumn term. The introduction to education finance course had been moved to the summer term and it was noted that previous feedback in respect of this training, which had been delivered by the Council's relevant Group Accountant, indicated that it had been excellent. Outside trainers were also utilised. Safeguarding for governors training would be provided in February and it was acknowledged that all should attend this type of training. Some training in respect of managing sites and buildings, including health and safety, was sought. As there had been mixed feedback regarding the offsite school visits training and suggestions that a greater focus on governors' responsibilities was required, this course would be re-considered. Training in respect of the impact of the self-evaluation toolkit would be developed for the spring term and a request for committee chairing training was made.

4.32 It was noted that leadership would be the theme of the next annual Governors' Conference, which would take place on 26 January 2013 at Easthampstead Park Conference Centre. A key note speaker and workshops concerning the family focus initiative, becoming more acquainted with the school and improving teaching would feature.

4.33 The Forum was advised that under its new inspection framework, Ofsted sought evidence of effective governance and there was a raised profile for governors. Some schools had now been inspected under the new framework and the compiling of an evidence portfolio to demonstrate good governance had been successful. Guidance to inspectors focused on particular lines of enquiry which challenged governance and held chairs of governors, teachers and management to account. Delivery of the pupil premium and fulfilling of statutory duties including safeguarding were also inspected. A link governor who was also an Ofsted inspector advised that schools should consult the inspection handbook on the Ofsted web site. Pages 42 and 43 related to shared leadership and management ambitions and gave descriptions of how these would be graded in an inspection. Governors were advised to ask themselves how Ofsted would question them as a governor in respect of these issues. It was suggested that those governors who had undertaken training could feedback points of learning. The Governor Services Team would consider circulating a questionnaire or similar via clerks to obtain and share relevant information. As clerks would become involved in the self-evaluation process the merits of training them at a later date was highlighted.

Discussion on Effective Governance

4.34 The Senior Adviser introduced the discussion concerning the review of effective governance and explained the role of Overview and Scrutiny in local government. The Lead Working Group Member explained the scope of the review and its aims and purpose. It was acknowledged that governors were volunteers and they were thanked for the time and effort they contributed to the role.

Discussions with Link, Parent and Chairs of Governors

4.35 All governors attending the 3 respective meetings with the Working Group to discuss effective governance were thanked for their attendance and for responding to the relevant questionnaire. Having received an explanation of the purpose of Overview and Scrutiny in local government, the aims of the Working Group's review and its possible impact on the Governor Services Team, governors were invited to offer views relating to the following in particular: length of tenure and effectiveness of chairs of governors; induction of new governors; the merits of a cabinet of specialist governors to share expertise; the self-evaluation toolkit and evidencing effective governance; local authority support; the merits of encouraging experienced parent governors to remain on governing bodies after their children have graduated from the school; and visits by governors to other schools.

4.36 The meetings with governors were well attended and representative of numerous primary and all five local authority secondary schools in the Borough. At each meeting the governors split into small discussion groups facilitated by Working Group members and officers as an effective format to complete the relevant questionnaire and to discuss related matters. Answers and views expressed in response to the questionnaires included the following:

<u>Chairs of Governors and Effectiveness</u>

a) As some chairs had been in place for many years, succession planning with a limited term of office was welcomed to overcome any staleness and bring fresh ideas and innovation whilst freeing chairs of long terms of office.

b) Former chairs of governors could assist new chairs by supporting them.

c) In terms of the effectiveness of chairs and governors, the following factors were identified:

- Availability of time to attend governors' meetings and school events. This was a particular issue for people in full time employment.
- An accumulation of experience and knowledge.
- A six year tenure limit for chairs of governors in the interests of efficiency. Many chairs had been fulfilling the role for considerably more years.
- The ability of parent governors to distinguish between the roles of governor and parent when required. Chairs of governors could assist to ensure impartiality. This became less of an issue for those who remained governors after their children had graduated from the school as their focus changed and became more objective.
- Although recruiting governors to fill skills gaps on governing bodies was desirable, the difficulties in recruiting to vacancies often precluded this and governing bodies were grateful for any interest in the role and the skills and experience brought. It was possible to co-opt governors with particular skills to fill gaps such as financial knowledge. Some governing bodies had approached local companies in this regard but had received a limited response.

<u>School Visits</u>

d) Visiting other schools and governing bodies by invitation would facilitate sharing of knowledge and expertise.

e) Governors felt that it was courteous to notify headteachers of their intention to visit the school and found that primary schools were more accessible than secondary schools. Links between teachers and governors existed at some schools and consisted of reporting and discussing progress in specific areas although it was felt that the information should be shared with all governors.

<u>Communication and Data</u>

f) The governors' section of school websites, governors' newsletters, holding open meetings and visiting the school all contributed to beneficial communication.

g) Having all information on a similar level and in the same format to facilitate comparison was identified as means to increase governing body effectiveness. A governor commented that data should be in a format of governing bodies' choice as the form of that presented to governing bodies frequently changed hampering interpretation, understanding and the ability to challenge performance. Some governors wished to

challenge the effectiveness of their governing body in addition to that of the school.

h)   Few governing bodies had formal systems in place to communicate and interact with parents.

Governing Body Federation

i)   Advantages and disadvantages associated with the concept of governing body federation of specialist and expert governors from outstanding rated schools advising several schools were identified. There was limited support for such a facility as each school was individual with its own culture and it was doubtful whether governors of this calibre with the necessary time commitment and familiarity with many schools could be recruited without the provision of payment.

Serving on Multiple Governing Bodies

j)   The majority of governors served on one governing body only although they acknowledged that once the necessary skills had been acquired, additional governing body membership would merely be a matter of contributing additional hours. However, time constraints and an interest focusing on the school(s) attended by their child(ren) were factors for parent governors.

k)   There was increasing pressure on governors and they held more responsibility than in the past.

Parent Governors

l)   Most parent governors had become aware of the vacancy they filled via word of mouth or contact with the school.

m)   Competition for election as a parent governor varied considerably from 1 applicant in some instances to 6-7 applicants in others. Unusually, there had been no applicants for the most recent vacancy at a Bracknell Forest secondary school. In the event that there were more applicants than positions vacant, parent governors would be elected by other parents and not the governing body.

n)   Learning about the school and the education system with a view to securing improvement and gaining some inside influence were the main aspects that interested parents in becoming governors.

o)   In terms of expectation of the role of parent governor, a governor reported a lack of awareness of the requirements of the role when applying for it and a subsequent realisation that it was more taxing and time consuming than anticipated. Parent governors were generally of the view that there was a 2 year learning curve before they were fully comfortable in their role and felt equipped to contribute and challenge performance.

p)   One new parent governor had been given a contact but little induction material and felt the need to seek information and establish a 'buddy' system. Some schools represented at the meeting had 'buddy' models in

place and a 'buddy' or mentoring system was identified as the most effective and rapid method of inducting new parent governors, particularly when the 'buddy' or mentor was another parent governor relatively new to the governing body and appreciative of fresh ideas and approaches. As there was no standard induction material circulated to new governors and the information provided by individual governing bodies varied significantly, it was suggested that standard material advising on good practice should be made available. Induction training should be expanded to include negative aspects and challenges to improve governors' preparedness for the role and minimise early resignations. The importance of early induction training was highlighted to speed governors' ability to carry out their role. Repeated training to reinforce knowledge and understanding was also suggested.

q) Parent governors indicated their intention to fulfil their four year term as a governor, having invested two years in becoming familiar with the role they wished to employ their knowledge and experience. However, many were undecided whether to re-apply for a further term, particularly if their child(ren) had graduated from the school. Encouraging them to remain on governing bodies in a different governor role after their children had moved on would be beneficial as expertise and experience would be retained.

r) Championing the voice of parents and promoting the teacher, parent and child triangular relationship were considered to be importance roles for parent governors. Role issues were identified and reference was made to the 'What Hat are you Wearing?' training for parent governors which explored potential conflicts of interest being both a governor and a parent and how to deal with them. Some parent governors felt that they were often treated as parents and not as governors and advised that difficulties arose where they wished to tackle teaching issues and weaknesses involving their own child. However, when other parent governors were experiencing the same problem it ceased to be a personal issue.

s) The timing of governor meetings was an issue for some parent governors owing to childcare responsibilities.

t) Some governors experienced difficulties relating to their fellow governors, some of whom were retired headteachers or teachers, owing to different backgrounds, age and depth of knowledge. As it was thought that teachers could be unaware of the role and purpose of governors, it was suggested that governors should increase their visibility and involvement by attending school events to raise their profile with teachers and parents, possibly wearing identification badges. This was particularly the case at secondary schools where parent governors were less likely to transport their children to school. Early receipt of school calendars of events would assist. Some schools displayed photographs of governors and this was welcomed.

u) Although one secondary school gave parent governors a membership choice between two committees, they were not permitted to be members of the exclusion panel. As governors' duties were broad, it was felt that they should select their area of particular interest, undertake relevant training and develop some related expertise. At one school a governor oversaw training to ensure that governors received the training relevant to

their committee membership. Committees fed back progress to the full governing body. Governors were seldom aware of the training undertaken by their colleagues or in receipt of feedback. Although e-learning had been found a lengthy and difficult process, it was an option in the absence of the timely availability of other forms of desired training. A skills audit had been undertaken at some schools.

v) Some schools formed part of clusters with other nearby schools for teachers but there was no similar provision for governors. As parent governors did not have any specific means of networking or interaction, they sought the establishment of a parent governors' forum with termly meetings to share issues, provide mutual support and prevent isolation.

w) As some parent governors had advised that it had taken up to two years to become fully conversant and confident as a governor, early attendance at an induction course, which were run at least once per term, was considered to be beneficial. It was acknowledged that chairs of governors should seek to identify methods of improving integration of new governors to facilitate their early involvement and contribution and to maintain their initial interest and enthusiasm. Language and jargon could be a barrier. Informal governing body induction processes were pursued by many schools and enabled new governors to attend meetings to decide which committee they could best contribute to. New governors at one school commenced with an informal meeting with the chairs of governors, when their role and commitments were explained to them, followed by a tour of the school and attending all committees as an observer during the first term to decide where their interests lay. Newsletters and school induction material was provided in addition to the local authority induction pack. The adoption of an open door policy by chairs of governors was considered beneficial. As Kennel Lane Special School differed from mainstream schools, it required more specialist training than the generic local authority training provided.

x) An introductory session provided at the Governors' Conference was praised and it was suggested that it be repeated throughout the year as a form of pre-induction. The take away pack was also appreciated. Details of the itinerary of Governors' Conferences were included in the Bracknell Forest governors' newsletter. Repeating and dissemination of training was welcomed and governors were advised that the Link Governors Forum was intended to be the vehicle to share good practice and training.

Reconstituting Governing Bodies

y) There was limited support for re-constituting and streamlining governing bodies as governors, particularly those who were members of smaller governing bodies, were already overburdened and a reduction in their number would exacerbate this. Many governing bodies experienced difficulty in recruiting governors to fill vacancies and one school had recently achieved full membership of its governing body for the first time in many years.

Governor Services Team / Training

z) Governors felt that Bracknell Forest Council was very supportive and the Governor Services Team should be continued and made use of by all

governing bodies as the training it provided was effective and appreciated. A more focused service involving visits to individual schools as in the past was sought as this was thought to have greater effect than individual governor membership of the NGA. However, only two schools had sought individual support and advice visits recently and another school had received support from current and retired Council officers in specific areas.

aa)   Although the local authority provided beneficial training and other support and information, re-structuring of the Council in recent years had led to a department previously dedicated to education being split and becoming multi-functional resulting in fewer education officers being available to advise governing bodies. It was therefore sometimes necessary for schools to consult external advisers which incurred costs.

bb)   Further training, mentoring and support were identified as areas to strengthen governing bodies.

cc)   Training in respect of chairing meetings and the procedures for performing the discipline committee role were identified as benefits. Governors were generally not in favour of permanently excluding pupils unless absolutely necessary.

dd)   Networking opportunities and feedback at the conclusion of training sessions were welcomed by governors, particularly as individual schools could feel isolated.

ee)   Every governor would become a member of the NGA and be eligible to receive its newsletters in the future.

Self Evaluation Toolkit

ff)   With regard to the self-evaluation toolkit, one governing body had found it too cumbersome and had discontinued its use whilst another had observed that not all governors, particularly those not closely involved in its implementation, were supportive of it. A further governing body had approached the toolkit by addressing a module at a time and had identified some positive deliverable actions. Evidence of the outcomes of the actions had been recorded in the absence of a tick list. Three governors at one school had been trained in respect of using the toolkit during its first year of operation and when this was rolled out to more governors during the second year there was greater acceptance of it and progress against all four modules had been measured and traffic light colour coded. The aspects coded red became the action plan. The chairs of governors had been discouraged from involvement in its use. Although some governing bodies had initially felt intimidated by the toolkit, they changed this view when they implemented it and enjoyed the challenge it presented, finding that it united them.

Teacher Appraisals

gg)   As Ofsted inspections now considered teaching quality, teacher appraisals took place. Although governors were not permitted access to appraisal documents, they were able to enquire as to the outcome.

Analysis of Questionnaire Responses and Meetings with Governors

4.37 The Working Group felt that the meetings with governors had progressed very well and had been a valuable source of feedback. In total, 105 questionnaire responses from all categories of governors were received. In considering the outcomes of the meetings and the responses to the governors' questionnaires, the Working Group recognised the following points which had emerged:

Parent Governors

i)   Parent governors had expressed a wish for a forum where they could network with other parent governors and share experiences and remedies to issues. At the last Link Governors Forum the possibility of holding an evening event during the year featuring a keynote speaker had been discussed. A similar event could be arranged for parent governors. Networking time at the conclusion of training events and forums to give parent governors the opportunity to reflect on learning points and how they may be applied by governing bodies was also sought. The Governor Services Team welcomed the opportunity this would provide to receive feedback from governors at the conclusion of training events and the Link Governors' Forum to measure their success and usefulness. Although a past attempt by the Bracknell Forest Governors' Association to establish networking opportunities had failed, possibly due to the lack of a facilitator, it was felt that a similar provision would be more welcome and appreciated at present owing to the increased demands on governors.

ii)   The 'Which Hat are you Wearing' training course for parent governors in respect of role conflict could be utilised as a networking opportunity or organising a follow up session with networking would be an alternative option.

iii)   In terms of parent governor election competition, nominees were deemed to be elected in the absence of other contenders as the role was advertised and election nomination papers circulated. Although governor advertising took place, it did not list specific vacancies and it was therefore suggested that the Governor Services Team should consider whether this was worthwhile expenditure. It was acknowledged that there were alternative methods of promoting the role of governor including stalls at fairs / events and summer activities.

Induction and Training

iv)   The questionnaire response that new governors did not feel sufficiently equipped or experienced to become fully involved until they had been in the role for two years indicated that governing bodies needed to consider how to speed induction and integration of new governors in order to secure their contribution and involvement as soon as possible. Use of 'buddies'/ mentoring, individual school induction handbooks including the history and make up of the school and its aspirations, attending a meeting of all committees and web information advising on the basics of the role of governors had been identified by responders as being helpful. Provision of an information sheet to accompany nomination forms was suggested as a means to provide an early indication of the role, requirements and time commitment. Information concerning the latter was not available on

the Council's website. Shadowing another governor prior to committing to applying for the governor role was a further possibility. It was felt that the chairs and clerks of governors were key to successful induction and could put new governors at their ease, introduce them to others and provide information. Inclusion of a list of the most common acronyms in the Bracknell Forest handbook was suggested to assist understanding. As governors benefitted from contact with others, establishing a contact group would give the opportunity for new ones to ask questions and seek information from more experienced governors. Although Council induction sessions had previously consisted of two half day sessions, they now took place over the course of a full day and gave a networking opportunity at the lunch break when governors could exchange contact details as Bracknell Forest was not permitted to do this for confidentiality reasons.

v) The majority of governors had praised training sessions and e-learning. The latter could be pursued by any governors waiting to attend scheduled training. Separate training in respect of monitoring had been requested. The spring term training programme would include summer sessions and the timing of performance management training.

vi) All training should deliver key messages and feature a summary sheet of key points of learning for highlighting and discussion at the conclusion of the session and for cascading back to governing bodies.

vii) Requests for additional governor training had included sessions in respect of use of the pupil premium, roles in the disciplinary committee and dealing with complaints from parents. The number and complexity of such complaints had risen and the Council was spending an increasing amount of time advising in this area. A further session in respect of the quality of teaching and learning had also been sought to enable governors to be clear that appropriate measures were in place to test the quality. Feedback from the first session had been positive and it would be repeated in the summer term. There was a cost attached to individual schools' training as it did not form part of the Service Level Agreement with the Council. It was suggested that training could be tailored to individual schools' level of success. Although a Chairs' Briefing was already in existence, it was brief and operated at a strategic level and perhaps needed to be more interactive to meet governors' needs. There was a requirement of local authorities to provide advice regarding supporting pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and there was a concern for the Council at achieving this without incurring costs. There had been national development in the area of SEN.

viii) 10 governors were enrolled to undertake the National College's development programme for chairs and aspiring chairs and it was suggested that they could be requested to attend meetings of other governing bodies to share the learning points.

ix) Preference had been expressed for a whole day induction training session including a lunchtime networking opportunity in place of the previous two half day sessions. The training organised by the Council was generally considered to be very good by governors.

x) Governors had given a clear message that they would appreciate a time window at the conclusion of training sessions to discuss the implications of what they had learned and how it may be applied by their governing bodies. A previously prepared summary sheet of learning to cascade to fellow governors to maximise learning opportunities was welcomed. It was agreed that this could form a recommendation resulting from the review together with networking opportunities as part of all training sessions and governors' forums. It was suggested that the summarising could include group discussion around delegates' three main learning points which could be captured and subsequently circulated by clerks.

xi) Reference was made to the Sutton Report which sought to weigh the costs against the benefits and outcomes of training. Although Bracknell Forest training sought to deliver key messages, it was possible for the Council to fund one to one style training to assist individual schools with their particular concerns.

xii) Many governors had made reference to the value of an acronym sheet and receiving chairs of governors' explanation of unfamiliar matters at governing body meetings.

Self-Evaluation Toolkit

xiii) There was a view that the self-evaluation process was cumbersome hampering progress and should be pursued by more experienced people.

xiv) The self-evaluation toolkit facilitated the keeping of records as a central inspection store to evidence effectiveness without reliance on the minutes of governing body meetings. The toolkit guided governing bodies and provided the necessary evidence that they had undertaken self-evaluation and implemented the outcomes. Although some governors had felt that the toolkit was a burden to follow, it was not necessary for them to follow it strictly and it could be adapted to meet individual schools and governing bodies. New governors could look at the toolkit and bring a fresh view as to whether it had been followed. The Governor Services Team welcomed governor feedback on use of the self-evaluation toolkit and saw this review work as the best feedback received on its implementation and would revisit it and consider the next stages to inform future training requirements to build on the initial and unit training already delivered. It was hoped that schools which had developed use of the toolkit would showcase their work to encourage and assist other schools which were at a less advanced stage.

Skills Audit

xv) Although governing bodies were able to identify skills gaps, there was often limited or no opportunity to fill them owing to a lack of volunteers and they valued commitment, time availability and enthusiasm more highly, particularly as new governors could be trained and developed once recruited. Business professionals released from their place of work to lend their skills to governing bodies as part of their own professional development could be of benefit. Also, governing bodies could appoint governors or associate members with required specialist skills.

xvi) The Ofsted inspection framework indicated that governance should be reviewed at schools which were graded as satisfactory Level 3. Consultation was taking place in respect of renewing the framework. A new aspect featured local authorities being inspected in the event that there were several schools with poor inspection outcomes in their area to evaluate and challenge support provided to schools and governors and to identify any issues. As only 2 days notice of Ofsted inspections was given, opportunities to make pre-inspection preparations were limited. However, a general programme of pre-Ofsted visits made to schools by trainers who would ask challenging questions similar to those asked by Ofsted to assist schools prepare for inspections was favoured and could form a recommendation of the report. The programme should prioritise schools in most need of improvement. The preparation sessions could vary to reflect the type and size of school in receipt, include a tick list of actions to evidence effective governance to Ofsted inspectors, and feature a workshop with governors to raise their awareness of their role and inspection requirements, provide learning points and act as a self-evaluation tool. Some head teachers in Bracknell Forest were Ofsted inspectors and could assist in this area. Although such support was not included in the SLA with the Council, it could be provided as a bought in service or offered free of cost to schools at risk.

xvii) It would be beneficial for governors to visit schools whose governing bodies received outstanding Ofsted inspection ratings in order to discover their good practice and emulate it. However, it was acknowledged that arranging learning visits to other schools for a group of governors was problematic to achieve.

xviii) In order to counteract any Ofsted criticism relating to skills audits, governing bodies would be able to demonstrate that they had committed and enthusiastic governors. Having a board of experts as a skills resource to consult would also help to alleviate criticism.

Website

xix) It was suggested that the governor related content of the Bracknell Forest website be evaluated and a further recommendation be made as to what aspects the information should focus on to assist the Governor Services Team when it reviewed the content. One responder had commented that the membership of governing bodies often consisted mainly of professional people who did not reflect the make up of the school and community. Although this was considered to be an issue which could be highlighted in the report, there was no obvious solution as the expertise of professionals was also required.

xx) It was agreed that the Governor Services Team should be requested to explore the possibility of introducing an on-line feedback forum where comments concerning training and valuable learning points could be posted in addition to producing a summary sheet at training sessions.

<u>Clerks</u>

xxi) Although the majority of governors had stated that their clerks were well trained, knowledgeable and supportive, one governing body had experienced difficulty in recruiting a clerk of suitable calibre. Bracknell Forest was intending to link with Hampshire County Council to offer more in-depth training for clerks leading to a recognised qualification. The cost of the course was £480 per clerk.

<u>Governing Body Membership</u>

xxii) Very few governors were members or more than one governing body owing to the time constraints involved. It was felt that this would be particularly demanding for new inexperienced governors. The governor information provided on the Bracknell Forest website possibly gave an under estimation of the time that governors needed to contribute to the role.

<u>Governing Body Federations</u>

xxiii) Governing bodies expressed limited support and enthusiasm for the scenario of governing body federations advising several schools as each school was individual with differing cultures, strengths and weaknesses. However, a Member welcomed the concept of a central pool of governors with specialisms who could be called upon by all governing bodies to advise and remedy issues as required. For example, recruitment advice had benefited one governing body which experienced some initial difficulty in recruiting a new headteacher. The wording of the job advertisement had been found to be crucial and a successful recruitment had been achieved on the second attempt. The Council could be responsible for maintaining a list of such pool governors, who could meet informally on occasions during the year to include networking sessions where all other governors were welcome to attend to discuss issues and obtain advice. It was felt that this could be achieved economically at a convenient time such as Saturday mornings.

<u>Promoting the Role of Governor</u>

xxiv) Members acknowledged that the Working Group's review had already raised the profile of governors and they sought to promote the role. Trialling the placing of information stalls manned by existing governors at appropriate events such as school fêtes and Borough events was suggested as a means of achieving this and boosting recruitment of suitable candidates to fill vacancies. As the Governor Services Team already possessed promotional leaflets and banners these could form a bank of material which governing bodies could borrow for use at school events to promote the role of governors. One school experiencing difficulties in recruiting parent governors utilised A3/4 posters featuring the strap line 'Your School Needs You' and a number of bullet points to explain what the role involved. Potential candidates were invited to coffee mornings and to meet existing governors to gain an insight into the role.

xxv) With regard to the time commitment required of a governor, it was suggested that the information disseminated should not refer specifically

to a timeframe in case it discouraged applications but highlight that the role required a considerable commitment.

Succession Planning

xxvi) Although succession planning for chairs of governors could be successful and questionnaire responders had been largely in favour of it, there was nothing in current regulations to enforce a time limit in respect of the tenure of chairs of governors. Responders had acknowledged that it was dependent upon willing candidates with the necessary skills, experience, expertise and commitment being available. Some schools did employ succession planning and approached it in varying manners including potential candidates shadowing chairs towards that latter part of their tenure and training vice-chairs to assume the role. Attending meetings of all committees and becoming familiar with their terms of reference also occurred.

Governor Services Team

xxvii) Findings to assist the Governor Services Team to advertise governor vacancies, explain the role of governors and measure the effectiveness of alternative forms of governor induction training was welcomed. The concept of new governors attending a meeting of all governing body committees to establish which one(s) they were most suited to was valued.

Best Practice

xxviii) The identification of best practice from the questionnaires and meetings with governors would be identified and collated into best practice for recommending for adoption by governing bodies.

Governing Body Structure

xxix) Analysis of the chairs of governors' responses to the questionnaire concerning the structure of governing bodies indicated that:

- Governing bodies had numerous committees and sub groups with responsibilities in areas such as finance; sites and buildings; curriculum, pastoral and pupil progress; staffing; performance management; and strategy. The majority of these met on a termly basis.
- Many chairs of governors inherited a governing body structure, some of which were dictated by a constitution or diocesan rules. However, adjustments were made subsequently if considered necessary.
- Streamlining the structure by reducing the number of committees or by combining them was felt to be effective by sharpening their focus and relieving the burden on governors of attending many meetings.
- Virtually all responding governing bodies had a code of conduct.

School Governance - Learning from the Best

4.38 During the course of the review the Working Group had regard to the above named report relating to good school governance practice published by Ofsted

in May 2011. The aim of the report was to help all governing bodies to become excellent by showcasing examples of highly effective governance that strengthened leadership and contributed to improved outcomes in case studies of 14 schools graded as having outstanding governance. The report considered the principles and practices that contributed to the outstanding governance and explained what outstanding governing bodies, and the headteachers of the schools they served, contributed towards their effectiveness. Although no single model of success was seen, the report identified some of the key characteristics of these 14 governing bodies. It illustrated how they approached their work efficiently and effectively, identified the contribution that they and the schools' leaders consider they made to strengthening school leadership and suggested a number of key questions that governors might want to consider when reflecting on their own effectiveness and journey to excellence.

Ofsted Inspector Comments

4.39 The Working Group considered extracts from Ofsted reports of inspections of Bracknell Forest schools concerning governance arrangements and found that, although the quality of governing bodies varied across the Borough, excellent practice had been highlighted in one secondary school and one primary school in particular. Leadership and management of the secondary school were outstanding and the headteacher was ably supported by the senior leadership team and governors who shared a clear vision of how to take the school forward with the needs of individual students at its heart and helped ensure that it was communicated effectively within and outside the school. Governors' contribution to the primary school's success was rated as outstanding because they provided an excellent balance of challenge and support and held the school to account for its performance at all levels. Messages from the inspection report extracts were that the qualities of enthusiasm, belief in the school, commitment and knowledge were required for a school to attain an excellent inspection rating. A summary of the inspection report extracts is attached at Appendix 6.

5.   Conclusions

From its investigations, the Working Group concludes that:

5.1   School governors carry out a very important role for the community, and particularly the education system. These are unpaid voluntary roles and all governors deserve our thanks for the time, effort and commitment they give for the benefit of Bracknell Forest's children and young people. This review has raised the profile of governors and the meetings with all governors progressed very well and were a valuable source of feedback to supplement the questionnaire responses.

5.2   Extracts from Ofsted inspection reports of Bracknell Forest schools' governance indicates that the quality of governing bodies varies across the Borough, but is never less than satisfactory and often good or outstanding. The qualities of enthusiasm, belief in the school, commitment and knowledge are required for a school to attain an excellent inspection rating. Outstanding performance should not go unnoticed and inspection comments should be shared to enable governors to question, challenge, assess and compare their performance with that of other governing bodies.

5.3   All governors need to be fully aware of preparations for Ofsted inspections. A general programme of pre-Ofsted visits made to schools by advisers who would ask challenging questions similar to those asked by Ofsted to assist schools prepare for inspections is favoured. The programme should prioritise schools in most need of improvement. The preparation sessions could vary to reflect the type and size of school, include a tick list of actions to evidence effective governance to Ofsted inspectors, and feature a workshop with governors to raise their awareness of their role and inspection requirements, provide learning points and act as a self-evaluation tool. Some headteachers in Bracknell Forest are Ofsted inspectors and could assist in this area. Although such support is not included in the Service Level Agreement with the Council, it could be provided as a bought in service.

5.4   The self-evaluation toolkit facilitates the keeping of records as a central inspection store to evidence effectiveness without reliance on the minutes of governing body meetings. The toolkit guides governing bodies and provides the necessary evidence that they have undertaken self-evaluation and implemented the outcomes. Although some governors feel that the toolkit is a burden to follow, it is not necessary for them to follow it strictly and it can be adapted to meet individual schools and governing bodies. New governors can look at the toolkit and bring a fresh view as to whether it has been followed. The Governor Services Team see this review work as the best feedback on implementation of self-evaluation received and will revisit it and consider the next stages.

5.5   Governing bodies expressed limited support and enthusiasm for a governing body federation advising several schools as each school is individual with differing cultures, strengths and weaknesses. The concept of a central pool of governors with specialisms who can be called upon by all governing bodies to advise and remedy issues as required has been identified by the Working Group as an alternative. The Council could be responsible for maintaining a list of such experienced governors, who could meet informally on occasions during the year to include networking sessions where all other governors are welcome to attend to discuss issues and obtain advice.

5.6 The majority of governing bodies have not re-constituted to implement the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 as they require a reasonable quorum of members to undertaken their responsibilities independently.

5.7 The majority of questionnaire responders support a time limited tenure for chairs of governors to promote fresh ideas and approaches. Although succession planning for chairs can be successful and is largely favoured by governing bodies, it is dependant upon the availability of willing candidates with the necessary skills, experience, expertise and commitment being available to assume the role. Some schools do employ succession planning and approach it in varying manners including potential candidates shadowing chairs towards that latter part of their tenure, training vice-chairs to assume the role and attending meetings of all committees to become familiar with their roles and functions. When schools have devoted energies into succession planning it has reaped benefits and one primary school whose governors' contribution to the school's success was described as outstanding by Ofsted had for several years had two vice chairs with different roles to enable the support and succession aspects to be fully effective.

5.8 Many qualities required of chairs of governors and of governors have been identified by chairs and include personal qualities such as charisma, confidence, decisiveness, commitment, honesty and a sense of humour, also skills/abilities such as leadership, management, recruitment, organisational, analytical and team building.

5.9 Although the Bracknell Forest skills audit form has been improved it is felt that it is not widely understood and could be made more 'user friendly'. It would be beneficial for the form to be reviewed with a view to making it more easily understandable focusing on the skills required of governors by asking governors to set out their skills in place of the current tick box approach.

5.10 Although governing bodies are able to identify skills gaps, there is often limited or no opportunity to fill gaps owing to a lack of volunteers and they value commitment, time availability and enthusiasm more highly, particularly as new governors can be trained and developed once recruited. Business professionals released from their place of work to lend their skills to governing bodies as part of their own professional development are of benefit. Also, governing bodies can appoint governors with required specialist skills who are of benefit when they can make a long term commitment to governing bodies.

5.11 Information stalls manned by experienced governors at appropriate events such as school fêtes and Borough events would assist with raising the profile of the role of governor and recruiting suitable candidates to fill vacancies. The Governor Services Team has a bank of promotional material and banners that can be borrowed for use at school events for this purpose. There is a possibility that drawing potential applicants' attention to the time commitment required of governors could discourage applications.

5.12 The Council provides good training which is appreciated by governors who have given a clear message that they would appreciate networking opportunities included as part of all training sessions and governors' forums. A time window at the conclusion of training sessions to discuss the implications of what they have learned and how it may be applied by their governing bodies

would be welcomed by governors. A previously prepared summary sheet of learning points to cascade to fellow governors to maximise learning opportunities is favoured. The summarising could include group discussion around delegates' three main learning points which could be captured and subsequently circulated.

5.13   Parent governors have expressed a wish for a forum where they can network with other parent governors and share experiences and remedies to issues. Although a Chairs' Briefing is already in existence, it is in the form of briefings and operates at a strategic level. Chairs of governors would also welcome opportunities for discussion and networking at the conclusion of sessions.

5.14   The governors who have enrolled to undertake training for chairs and aspiring chairs of governors could be requested to attend meetings of other governing bodies to share the learning.

5.15   It would be beneficial to review the governor related content of the Bracknell Forest website to ensure inclusion of a description of the role of governors and signposts and links to other sources of information and websites without repeating other information available elsewhere, and to explore the possibility of introducing an on-line feedback forum where comments concerning training and valuable learning points could be posted in addition to producing a summary sheet of training sessions.

5.16   Use of 'buddies', individual school induction handbooks, attending a meeting of all committees and web information advising on the basics of the role of governors have been identified by responders as means of integrating and inducting new governors and facilitating their early involvement and contribution. Acronym sheets and receiving chairs of governors' explanation of unfamiliar matters at governing body meetings would also assist induction.

5.17   One questionnaire responder has commented that the membership of governing bodies often consists mainly of professional people who do not reflect the make up of the school and community. Although this is considered to be an issue, there is no obvious solution as the expertise of professionals is also required.

5.18   The Governor Services Team is responsive to requests for additional training and support, which have included use of the pupil premium, roles in the disciplinary committee and dealing with complaints from parents.

5.19   The good governance practice identified by this review is principally: challenging performance, chair of governor succession planning with a limited term of office, strengthening the induction process by providing mentoring, promoting safeguarding, utilising self-evaluation to evidence effectiveness to Ofsted inspectors, and undertaking skills audits to focus governor recruitment to fill skills if possible.

6. Recommendations

6.1   It is recommended to all that every opportunity continues to be taken to recognise and promote the valuable role of school governors, with the aim of ensuring that all schools are good schools and have a full complement of governors committed to the success and wellbeing of the school and its pupils as a means to achieving this status.

It is recommended to the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning that the following recommendations be made to governing bodies:

6.2   Governors be regularly encouraged to concentrate on ensuring safeguarding practices are sound, and challenging the performance achieved by their schools. This should include holding the school to account for any issues preventing an excellent Ofsted rating.

6.3   All governing bodies be encouraged to implement succession planning. Related to this, the Council explore with governors the introduction of a school policy on the maximum tenure of chairs of governors. This should recognise the value of continuity and knowledge retention, balanced by the need to introduce fresh thinking and approaches periodically.

6.4   Building on good practice already in place, the induction of new governors be improved by more widespread: use of 'buddies' or mentors; individual school induction handbooks; attendance of a meeting of all committees to enable the governor to identify which he/she is best suited to serve; use of web information advising on the basics of the role of governors; acronym sheets and receiving chairs of governors' explanation of unfamiliar matters at governing body meetings as means of integrating and inducting new governors and facilitating their early involvement and contribution.

6.5   All governing bodies be requested to adopt a code of conduct.

6.6   All governing bodies be reminded of the importance that the membership of governing bodies ideally needs to reflect the communities served by the school. Governing bodies should be mindful of this when recruiting new governors.

6.7   All governing bodies be asked to carry out 'exit interviews' of governors at the point they stand down, as a valuable learning resource. The knowledge gained should be shared, in non-personalised form, among all governing bodies.

6.8   Information stalls be introduced, run by experienced governors, at appropriate events such as school fêtes and Borough events, to assist with raising the profile of the role of governor and recruiting suitable candidates to fill vacancies. Governors note that the Governor Services Team has a bank of promotional material and banners that can be borrowed for use at school events for this purpose.

It is recommended to the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning that the relevant officers implement the following recommendations:

6.9   A general programme of pre-Ofsted visits be made to schools by advisers who ask challenging questions similar to those asked by Ofsted, to assist schools to prepare for inspections. The programme should prioritise schools in most need

of improvement, and sessions should vary to reflect the type and size of school. This should include a tick list of actions to evidence effective governance to Ofsted inspectors, and feature a workshop with governors to raise their awareness of their role and inspection requirements, provide learning points and act as a self-evaluation tool. Although such support is not included in the Service Level Agreement with the Council, it should be available as a bought in service or offered cost free to schools at risk.

6.10 Consideration be given to the concept of a central pool of governors with specialisms who can be called upon by all governing bodies to advise and remedy issues as required. The Council be responsible for maintaining a list of such pool governors, who could meet informally on occasions during the year to include networking sessions where all other governors are welcome to attend to discuss issues and obtain advice.

6.11 With a view to making the Bracknell Forest skills audit form more easily understandable, focusing on the skills required of governors by asking governors to set out their skills in place of the current tick box approach, the Link Governors Forum be invited to identify the skills required of governors as part of a review of the form. The re-designed form must take account of confidentiality and be circulated to all governing bodies in the Borough to assist them with undertaking skills audits.

6.12 It be explained more clearly to governors that the self-evaluation toolkit does not have to be followed strictly and it can be adapted to meet individual schools and governing bodies. New governors be encouraged to look at the toolkit and bring a fresh view as to whether it has been followed. The Governor Services Team re-visit the implementation of self-evaluation and consider the next stages.

6.13 A forum meeting every six months be established for parent governors where they can network with other parent governors and share experiences and remedies to issues.

6.14 The Chairs' Briefing, which is in the form of briefings and operates at a strategic level, be extended to provide chairs with opportunities for increased interaction and for discussion and networking at the conclusion of sessions.

6.15 The quality of advertising material for recruiting governors be reviewed. This could usefully include a leaflet to explain the role of governors and their responsibilities. With regard to the time commitment required of a governor, the information disseminated should not refer specifically to a timeframe in case it discourages applications but not understate that either, as the role requires a considerable commitment.

6.16 The governor related content of the Bracknell Forest website be evaluated, specifically to: explore the possibility of introducing an on-line feedback forum where comments concerning training and valuable learning points can be posted; producing a summary sheet of training sessions.

6.17 The good practice identified by this review be collated and circulated to all governing bodies and they be encouraged to discuss and consider it for adoption.

7. Glossary

FTE	Full Time Equivalent post
GEL	Governor E-Learning
HMCI	Her Majesty's Chief Inspector
NGA	National Governors' Association
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
PGR	Parent Governor Representative
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SLA	Service Level Agreement

BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 2012/13

WORK PROGRAMME 2012 – 2013

Terms of Reference for:

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP

Purpose of this Working Group / anticipated value of its work:

1.	To undertake a review of the effectiveness of the governance arrangements in Bracknell Forest schools.

Key Objectives:

1.	To develop an appreciation of the respective role and remit of the different types of governors and the importance of sound governance.
2.	To evaluate the effectiveness of the chair of governors' role and ascertain how this can be further developed around improved succession planning in particular.
3.	To investigate whether the chairs of governors' role should be time limited.
4.	To consider the benefits of governing bodies covering more than one school or sharing governors' skills between different schools to make the best use of available expertise.
5.	To review Ofsted comments in respect of governance in Bracknell Forest Schools, and the arrangements being made to ascertain and achieve effective governance in all schools.
6.	To consider the support and training given to school governors.
7.	To review the effect of the new legislation concerning local authority and community representation on governing bodies.

Scope of the work:

1.	The performance of the governing bodies of all schools in Bracknell Forest.
2.	The governing body Self-Evaluation Toolkit.
3.	The structure of governing bodies and skills of governors.

Not included in the scope:

1.	The governance arrangements of academies.
2.	

Terms of Reference prepared by:	Andrea Carr
Terms of Reference agreed by:	School Governance Overview & Scrutiny Working Group
Working Group Structure:	Councillors Mrs Birch, Ms Hayes, Mrs McCracken & Mrs Temperton and Mrs Cauchi (former PGR) and Mr Jackson (Kerith Centre)

Working Group Lead Member: Mrs Temperton

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Dr Barnard

Departmental Link Officer: Martin Surrell

BACKGROUND:

1.   Following some concerns regarding school governance arrangements in Bracknell Forest schools raised by Ofsted in inspection reports it was agreed to add this review to the Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel's work programme to enable the Panel to establish a working group to undertake a review of school governance with a view to identifying any possible improvements.

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS FOR THE PANEL TO ADDRESS:

1.   Are school governance arrangements sufficiently robust?
2.   Is there best practice in the Borough which can be shared with other schools?
3.   What can be done to improve governance arrangements?
4.   Should governance practice be amended to enhance succession planning?

INFORMATION GATHERING:

Witnesses to be invited

Name	Organisation/Position	Reason for Inviting
Janette Karklins	BFC, Director of Children, Young People and Learning	To provide information on governance arrangements and any associated concerns.
Martin Surrell	BFC, Senior Adviser (Secondary)	To provide information on governance arrangements and governor support / training provided.
Governor Services Team Members	To advise on new legislation and related matters.	
Headteachers	Bracknell Forest schools	To advise on governance arrangements.
Chairs of Governors (primary, secondary & Kennel Lane)	Bracknell Forest schools	To advise on governance arrangements.
Link governors	Link Governors Forum	To meet governor representatives of most schools and obtain answers to previously agreed questions.
Parent governors	Bracknell Forest schools	To explore any particular issues affecting parent governors.

Site Visits

Location	Purpose of visit
Schools	To gain first hand knowledge of schools' governance arrangements in practice.
Governors' Conference	To explore issues affecting school governors.

Key Documents / Background Data / Research

1. Ofsted Best Practice on School Governance and inspection reports of other schools
2. Table of Ofsted Comments on Bracknell Forest Schools
3. Strengthening Public Accountability on the School Governing Body - Centre for Public Scrutiny Policy Paper April 2006
4. Minutes of local governing body meetings

TIMESCALE

Starting: Autumn 2012   Ending: Spring 2013

OUTPUTS TO BE PRODUCED

1. Report of the review with findings and recommendations.

REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

Body	Date
Report to the Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel.	3 July 2013

MONITORING / FEEDBACK ARRANGEMENTS

Body	Details	Date
Reporting to Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel by Executive Member.	Oral or written report	2013

Link Governor Questionnaire Results – Summary

3. How did the governor vacancy come to your attention?	4. What interested you in becoming a governor?	5. Were you the only applicant or elected in contest with others?	6. Are you on more than one GB?	7. Does your school have its own induction book or programme? If so, is it effective?
• Via school and BFC newsletters. • Council website. • Word of mouth.	• To contribute experience and skills to improve the school and support the community. • To increase involvement in own children's school and influence its development. • Personal development. • Past teachers wishing to maintain links with the school and education.	• The majority of link governors were the only applicant for the position and not elected in contest.	• No link governors are on more than 1 governing bodies	• The majority of schools represented have some form of induction programme. • New governors find the induction useful and seek early diarising and access to it.

8. Is your school using the self-evaluation toolkit? If so, how is it being used & what is the school's experience of using it? How many governors are involved in the process?	9. Is there a succession procedure in place for the chair of governors?	10. Is the length of time an individual can be chair limited? If not, do you think it should be?	11. How do you communicate and interact with parents?	12. Is there anything that you think could improve school governance in Bracknell Forest? (E.g. a group of trained governors serving on GBs of more than 1 school).	13. Please add any other comments / suggestions for improvement?
• Schools represented are	• 8 schools represented	• The tenure is limited at a	• Newsletters, parents'	• Governor virtual office to ensure	• Secure governors with

using the toolkit with the possible exception of two where the respondents are unaware of its use and a third where the headteacher has his/her own self-evaluation process and the governors are yet to become involved. • A small group of governors are working on the application of the toolkit in the majority of schools.	have a succession procedure in place and another 5 are working towards it. • Schools are in favour of succession planning with regular elections.	number of schools whilst governors at several other schools are unaware if a limit exists. • Most respondents are in favour of having a limit to promote fresh ideas and thinking.	evenings, school website, events, e-mails, questionnaires and assemblies. • One governor responded to the effect that communication and interaction with parents was an issue which needed addressing.	that key documents and calendars are readily available. • Advice of experienced and trained governors. • Small manageable governing bodies. • Information on important changes / initiatives e-mailed to governors. • More mentoring of new governors and courses tailored to the school e.g. Kennel Lane. • Compensation for the use of consultative governors' specialist skills. • Facilitate visiting other schools' governing bodies and sharing good practice. • More model	financial, IT & PR/marketing skills and experience. • Proforma for sharing learning from training courses with FGB. • Make the governor role more appealing and less daunting to prospective governors. • More training.

				policies which can be easily located on websites.	

Parent Governor Questionnaire Results – Summary

3. How did the governor vacancy come to your attention?	4. What interested you in becoming a governor?	5. Were you the only applicant or elected in contest with others?	6. Are you on more than one GB?	7. Is the role of governor as you expected?
• Via school e.g. letter, newsletter, notice, parents' evening. • By word of mouth.	• To give something back to the school. • To get involved in raising school standards. • To be more involved in and learn about the school attend by own children. • To make an impact. • An interest in education.	• Approximately 50% of respondents were elected and the remaining 50% were appointed without competition.	• No governors are members of more than one governing body.	• The role requires greater time commitment and involvement than expected. • It takes a new governor up to 2 years to become fully versed in the role, possibly leaving only 2 years remaining to make a valid contribution.

8. Are you intending to complete your full four year term of office and would you re-apply following that?	9. What could be done to improve pre-application information, the induction to being a governor and the induction process?	10. Does your school have its own induction book or programme for new governors?	11. Were you mentored or given a 'buddy' governor when you commenced your role?	12. Do you feel that you are a central part of your GB or that you are on the periphery lacking full involvement?	13. Have you ever experienced a conflict of interest in your role as governor?
• All governors intend to complete their 4 year term. • Governors are divided around whether they will re-apply for a	• The BFC induction is excellent. • Undertaking induction in the early months is vital to effectively resume the role as	• The majority of schools have an induction programme for new governors. • Some governors have a mentor or	• Many new governors were mentored or allocated a buddy. • Those that were not mentored or 'buddied' would	• A lot of effort is required to become proficient and fully involved. • Time is a factor and those with greater time	• Few governors have experienced a conflict of interest and where they did it was as a result of an issue with their own child

further term – those that will intend to follow their child to secondary school or become a different type of governor when their child leaves the school e.g. community governor.	soon as possible. • A wealth of information is provided/available. • Open day/evening welcomed to supplement knowledge. • Would like mentor/buddy. • A summary of what the role involves and the time commitment required. • Links to relevant websites and information on base level of knowledge required. • Opportunity to discuss the role with existing governors and shadow them before applying. • Have a plan for the 1st year concerning training and development.	buddy. • Clerks are helpful and supportive. • An individual school guidance book and buddy are sought.	have liked to have been.	availability can become involved more easily and rapidly.	or one they knew personally. • Governors recognised that the roles of parent and governor need to be split. • Another governor can be called upon to look into an issue in the case of a conflict of interest.

14 Do you have sufficient knowledge and training to challenge the performance of your school? Is there anything that hampers or eases such challenge?	15. Does the training provided meet your requirements? If not, in what areas do you need further training? Have you undertaken any governor e-learning courses?	16. Do you share your expertise with other governing bodies?	17. Is there succession planning in place for the role of chair?	18. Is the term of office of the chair of governors limited on your GB? If not, do you think it should be?	19. How does your governing body communicate and interact with parents?	20. Any other comments / suggestions for governance improvement.
• The on-line tools assist. • LEA training is good. • Visiting and observing other governing bodies would be useful. • Challenge can be perceived as criticisms and it is important to demonstrate that this is not the case. • A head teacher resisted challenge. • Confidence to speak up is a	• A summary of key training points for cascading to the governing body is sought. • Networking time at the conclusion of training sessions to discuss the merits of the training and their impact would be useful.	• Further interaction with other governing bodies to share expertise is welcomed.	• The majority of schools represented do not have succession planning in place although some are considering it. • Most respondents are in favour of succession planning. • Where succession planning exists it usually involves the vice chair assisting and shadowing the chair.	• The majority of chairs are elected for a fixed term but can be re-elected indefinitely at the end of the term. • Some respondents welcome a strictly fixed term whilst others feel it depends on the effectiveness of the chair and quality of possible replacements.	• Newsletters. • Parents' evenings. • Playground interaction. • Questionnaires • Dedicated area of the school web site.	• Opportunities to observe other governing bodies. • Promote information sharing across governing bodies. • Further training opportunities. • A governors' forum / e-mail group to share information, advice and practice. • A parent governors' forum.

challenge.					
• It is difficult to accrue the necessary knowledge without an education background.					
• Data should be presented in a clearer format.					
• The chair and vice chair are relied on for guidance.					
• Sub committees of governing bodies allow a greater focus on issues.					

Chair of Governor Questionnaire Results – Summary

1. Is your governing body considering re-constitution to implement the Constitution Regulations 2012 concerning the make up and role of governing bodies?	2. Does your governing body use the self-evaluation toolkit? If so, how is it used and how effective is it?	3. Has your governing body undertaken a governor skills audit? If so, what skills gaps, if any, have been identified?	4. When recruiting new governors does your governing body seek to fill any identified skills gaps?
• 14 responders are not considering or have decided against re-constitution (including 2 voluntary aided schools). • 5 responders are considering re-constitution although 1 is doubtful that it will be pursued. • 2 responders are unaware of the regulations.	• 18 schools are using the toolkit in some form whilst 1 has not commenced its use. 2 schools found it was not sufficiently tailored to the school or focussed on the improvements required and have discontinued its use. • Most schools allocated the self-evaluation to a small group of governors or a committee who worked through the sections, building up a file of evidence and feeding back progress to the FGB. The self-evaluation has been used to highlight areas for training and development including induction, to prepare governor objectives, to identify skills gaps, and to formulate an improvement action plan. • The majority of schools are finding the self-evaluation effective as it promotes	20 of the 21 responding chairs of governors indicated that they have undertaken, or are in the process of undertaking, a skills audit. The remaining governing body has a skills audit included on its work programme for later this year. The formality of the process varies and the timings of the audits are dictated by membership changes. 7 of the schools identified skills gaps in the areas of human resources, finance, interpreting data, specific school knowledge, project management and architecture/ building/site management. The link governor of one governing body uses the audit outcomes to inform governor training and development. Another governing body feels that its audit had been too focussed on career based skills and will repeat the process with a governor competencies focus. A third feels	The majority of responders indicate that they seek to fill skills gaps when recruiting if possible but are not often in a position to do so and are pleased to recruit keen and competent volunteers with sufficient time who can be trained and developed. The remaining responders place the commitment and enthusiasm of individuals above a skills audit and are prepared to mentor them and work in a team effort. Governors who are elected or appointed via dioceses or the local authority are often outside the influence or control of the FGB. 1 Chairs of governors feels it is sad that increasingly governing body membership consists mainly of professionals who do not reflect the school population or the local community.

	learning and awareness of the governing body's role and performance, generates areas for discussion, highlights areas for improvement and offers assurance of good practice where relevant.	that their audit did not give a sufficiently broad picture and intends to investigate further.	

5. Is succession planning for the chair of governors in place at your school?	6. What qualities do chairs of governors and governors need to be effective?	7. Is sufficient support provided to facilitate effectiveness? If not, what additional support would improve effectiveness?	8. How do you integrate new governors to facilitate their early involvement and contribution?
• 9 of the responding governing bodies do not have succession planning in place at present but many seek it and hope to establish it in the future. 3 have partial systems and the remainder have succession involving vice chairs or mentoring of a potential candidate. • Volunteers to assume the role of chairs and possibly vice chairs are becoming increasingly reluctant owing to the need to commit to the increasing scope, workload, level of responsibility and time commitment.	• Time availability. • Personal qualities:- charisma, confidence, decisiveness, commitment, honesty, supportiveness, encouraging, trustworthiness, discretion, diplomacy, sensitivity, patience, sympathy, understanding, inclusivity, positive, reliable, realistic, networker, consensus builder, strategic and clear thinker, enthusiastic, tactful, intelligence, appreciative, professional, objective, consistent, constructive, forward looking, adaptable, informative, strategic, visible, awareness, partnership worker and relationship builder.	• The local authority provides plenty of excellent training, guidance and support in terms of the Governor Services Team (GST), education and SEN advice, finance, HR, legal, building matters, School Improvement Plans and chairs' briefing. The GST should be retained and there is some concern over the reducing number of education advisers to assist schools. Also, support from other experienced chairs of governors has been beneficial. • Additional support that would improve effectiveness: - GST proactively reaching out to individual chairs of	• Provide an induction pack. • Offer a school handbook with information concerning the school, expectations and 'do's and don'ts'. • Encourage new governors to attend the basic BFC induction training at the earliest opportunity. • Treat new governors in a welcoming supportive manner. • Introduce new governors to the Chairs of governors, head and clerk. • Offer a tour of the school and relevant information. • Encourage new governors to become familiar with the SIP. • Minimise use of jargon. • Mentoring system. • Invite new governors to attend

• Skills/abilities:- leadership, management, recruitment, organisational, analytical, team building, listening and communicating, report and letter writing, data interpretation, performance monitoring, conducting meetings effectively, time management, delegation, questioning and clarifying, people skills and able to challenge without offending. • Knowledge/experience:- good education; understanding of the education system; knowledge of school structure, staff and building layout; dealing with complaints from parents and any capability proceedings; finance; and building/estate management.	governors. - regular support to monitor governing body effectiveness. - New content to refresh training. - Training tailored to schools' level of success. - In-depth training meetings at individual schools. - New training: to defuse and deal with parental complaints; on the role of the Chairs of governors in capability meetings; on how to conduct meetings; for head and chair jointly every 6-12 months covering important aspects e.g. new Ofsted framework, use of pupil premium and effectiveness. - More work in the area of chair and vice chair partnership to strengthen the leadership role in governance. - Networking between chairs to give support and expert advice possibly through a support mechanism. - Chairs' briefing for new chairs.	all committee meetings to promote learning and enable them to decide which one to join dependent on skills and interest. • Encourage new governors to ask questions at meetings and offer opinions. • Invite new governors to join a working party.

Governing Body Structure Questionnaire

2. What is the structure and composition of the Full Governing Body at your school? (i.e. the number of committees and sub groups, their areas of responsibility and the frequency they meet.)	3. What made you decide on the structure of the Full Governing Body?	4. What changes could be made to improve the Governing Body's effectiveness?	5. Does your Governing Body have a Code of Conduct?
Although the numbers vary, all respondents have committees, sub committees and ad hoc working groups/ panels of the full governing body with remits in areas including the following: - Finance/Resources - ICT - Procurement - Sites/Buildings/Premises - Health and Safety - Strategic Planning - Personnel/Staffing/Pay Review - Curriculum and Standards - Admissions - Attainment and Achievement - Performance Management	The structure of several of the responding governing bodies is largely historical featuring a logical breakdown and distribution of roles and responsibilities designed to maintain parent involvement and to blend this with the experience, knowledge and skills of other school stakeholders whilst maintaining a good working relationship with senior leadership teams and headteachers. However, they are developing minor modifications seeking to balance efficient	Reduce and/or combine committees. Review and modify the structure when a need for improvement arises. Introduce a governors' Virtual Office to assist with communication and measuring effectiveness. Formalise activities into Governor Objectives and/or establish a full governing body Action Plan which are reviewed regularly to ensure implementation. These would naturally deliver the School Development Plan focusing on the management and running of the governing body as a way of tracking its effectiveness and impact within the school. Identify core competency requirements and implement a skills audit to identify and analyse the gaps to determine if the governing body has the relevant experience and, if not, use the outcomes to inform recruitment and appropriate training to enable governors to be confident in their roles and be constructively challenging as well as supportive. Earlier distribution of meeting papers to facilitate preparation by reading all information relevant and having challenging questions construed in advance.	All but 3 of the 21 respondents have a code of conduct in place and 2 of those that currently do not are preparing to implement a code. 1 respondent annually reviews the code and another is developing a separate code that is specific to the work of governors when they

- Pastoral/Pupil Wellbeing - Discipline/Appeals The questionnaire responses indicate that full governing bodies have between 2 and 7 committees each although the majority have 5-6 with secondary schools tending to have more than primary schools. Full governing bodies typically meet once or twice per term and their committees meet once or twice per term or less often depending on their remit e.g. disciplinary/appeals committees meet as and when required. Full governing bodies and committees may have additional meetings arranged if necessary to consider urgent matters. Those governing bodies with fewer committees allocate their committees a wider remit which can result in the need for more frequent meetings. All governing bodies utilise 1 or 2 ad hoc working groups/panels to undertake	decision-making and effective governance with some concessions to ensure compliance. A number of governing bodies regularly review their structure, some of whom have identified the need for adjustments. The governing bodies of voluntary aided schools are subject to diocesan requirements. Governor vacancies have influenced the governing body structure of 1 school as it sought to avoid overburdening governors with numerous meetings. Some governing bodies have combined their committees in the interests of streamlining, reducing repetition and focusing practices whilst reducing burdens. Others have introduced steering/scrutinising	Focus agenda items towards enhancing effectiveness and awareness of governor actions and how these impact on the school and its well being, including items such as progress against a skills audit and the management of the code of conduct. Establish a "floating member" system for new governors to enable them to experience all governor related activities for the first year. They can then select the committees where they may be best suited to serve. Have a mentoring system in place to support new governors. Ensure that chairs of governors have the necessary ability and willingness to fulfil their responsibilities. Be more strategic and pursue long term planning, possibly with the assistance of a strategic committee. Maximise governor effectiveness by increasing their knowledge of the school and encouraging them to visit school regularly and help in classes, observe lessons, accompany visits etc. Availability of an allowance to cover the cost of baby sitting/carers would assist. Raise governing bodies' profiles within schools and provide them with a face to promote their identity to staff, pupils and parents enabling them to be more approachable and opening more lines of communication from some who would not previously know whom to speak with. Photographs of the governing body on a photo board in schools' reception areas would assist. Funds allowing, buy in speakers to address the whole governing body in discussions that are specific to the school. Undertake self-evaluation to identify areas for improvement across the board in preparation for Ofsted inspections given the emphasis it now places on governance in schools. A series of short workshops would enable all awareness, knowledge and skills to be enhanced and shared, and not rest with a small number of governors. Completion of a governor	visit the school for the purpose of observing in classrooms and learning environments.

specific functions when required and some allocate particular responsibilities to governors such as Special Educational Needs and Safeguarding. The membership of governing bodies varies from 12 to 20 governors consisting of headteacher, staff, local authority, parent, community, foundation and parochial church council governors.	groups to monitor effectiveness and governing bodies' role in the overall strategy for schools. Working groups tend to be given tight focused briefs and the knowledge and expertise gained by their members can benefit full governing bodies.	questionnaire would assist with identification of areas in need of attention. Identify the reasons for, and address, any instances of lack of involvement of governors to ensure a good spread of the workload. Actively recruit to fill governor vacancies. Regularly meet and work more closely with the headteacher and senior leadership team to develop governor skills and good open transparent working relationships. Allocate more time either inside or outside governing body meetings to discuss governor business to facilitate team working to ensure the smooth running of schools. Remove the claw back threshold on year end finances as it curtails planning of capital projects. Place greater emphasis on key issues and school improvement. Give consideration to making meetings more effective and include some time for strategic issues in addition to operational ones. As much of the full governing body meeting is governed by local authority legislation, greater freedom in how governing bodies carry out their business e.g. agreeing minutes on line and make communication of committee business electronic rather than reporting all to the full governing body in order to create time for strategic working in addition to operational working at full governing body meetings. Hold chairs and vice chairs discussions prior to full governing body meetings to provide updates on developments in different areas and sharing of achievements and aspirations. Ensure that clerks to governing bodies are highly effective, knowledgeable and proactive, utilising additional training if necessary.	

		Actively seek governors from outside the school community to complement the parent voice, possibly by approaching local businesses to recruit such expertise. Encourage every governor to assume a specific role e.g. English as an additional language, gifted and talented etc. to enable a sharper focus on all the operating factors of schools and how they may be improved strategically.	

Extracts from Ofsted Inspection Reports of Bracknell Forest Schools Concerning Governance

Number	Date of Ofsted Inspection	Inspectors' Comments
1.	5 July 2007	"Governors are involved as partners with the leadership team in driving up standards and creating a school where every child feels valued and achieves well."
2.	21 January 2009	"Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher provides strong leadership and has a clear vision of how to take the school forward with the needs of individual students at its heart. He is ably supported by the senior leadership team and governors, who share this vision and help ensure that it is communicated effectively within and outside the school."
3.	20 May 2009	"Governors support the school well and have improved their organisation and have undertaken training, so that they are now also good at challenging and questioning the school when necessary."
4.	30 June 2009	"Governors' contribution to the school's success is outstanding because they provide an excellent balance of challenge and support and hold the school to account for its performance at all levels."
5.	30 September 2009	"Governors are very supportive of the school and constantly challenge it to develop; they have excellent systems for the monitoring and quality assurance of its work. They have an excellent understanding of its strengths and areas for development. A new school development plan has been produced in consultation with the whole school community and skilled governors have played a major role in its construction."
6.	21 October 2009	"Senior leaders, including governors, have worked effectively since the last inspection to improve the school. Good procedures to safeguard pupils are carefully monitored by senior staff and governors to ensure all requirements are met and that pupils are kept very safe."
7.	27 April 2010	"Governors make an exceptional contribution to the work and direction of the school. They have high levels of insight and are extremely well organised and thorough in their approach."
8.	9 June 2010	"He [the headteacher] has developed a strong network of leadership at all levels and a shared commitment to high expectations for pupils' achievements and personal development. Assisted by the support and challenge of the highly effective governing body, they have a clear view of the school's strengths and have

put in place effective strategies to address any weaknesses that are identified."

9.	30 June 2010	The headteacher, supported well by governors, staff and key leaders, provides a clear vision for how the school can move forward. ….Governors, too, are increasingly involved in checking how well the school is doing and playing a key role in developing the school's extended services."
10.	3 November 2010	"Governors ensure that safeguarding procedures are of good quality and that all statutory requirements, including child protection and risk assessment, are regularly reviewed and approved. Their work shows they are fully involved in setting the school's priorities. Governors are seeking new ways of monitoring the achievement of different groups of learners so they can hold the school to account fully for its performance."
11.	23 November 2010	"The governing body fulfils all its legal obligations well and gives good attention to the welfare of pupils and staff by ensuring that safeguarding and child protection arrangements are robust and of good quality. As well as supporting the school, the governing body holds the school to account well for its work."
12.	1 December 2010	"Many governors are very experienced and knowledgeable about the school. They take a strategic view of the school's development and have risen to the many challenges presented by its rapid growth. They hold leaders to account for performance of the school effectively. They are going through a period of transition and some governors are still developing their understanding of their roles. Governors and the school's business manager effectively oversee the school's extremely robust procedures for safeguarding pupils."
13.	17 February 2011	"The governing body, which has a good balance of new and experienced members, has a clear understanding of its role. Governors are aware that they now need to evaluate the impact of the school's recent work within the community in order to plan most effectively for the next steps."
14.	9 March 2011	"As part of the successful efforts to improve its effectiveness, the governing body established a separate committee to monitor closely the outcomes for pupils and to hold the school to account for them. ….The governing body has ensured that procedures for protecting children and keeping them safe are robust and fully understood."
15.	30 March 2011	"Close attention is paid by leaders, managers and the governing body to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities and that there is no discrimination. As a result, all groups of pupils are making good progress. The governing body has monitored the school's activities rigorously, including its procedures and policies for safeguarding pupils. These policies are robust and ensure the site and staff are maintained and

vetted carefully".

16.	10 May 2011	"The governing body keeps a sharp eye on assessment information and members are quick to question any fluctuations or explore any emerging trends, reflecting the school's strong commitment to equal opportunities and determination to quickly spot and eradicate any discrepancy in the achievement of different groups. Several members of the governing body are recently appointed and finding their feet, but they are building up their understanding through regular visits with more experienced colleagues which focus on current development priorities. The governing body consults parents and invites staff members to its meetings. It ensures that policies for the safeguarding of pupils are implemented effectively by regularly reviewing the compliance with regulations, undertaking risk assessments and ensuring that child protection policies are implemented. Some documents need updating, however."
17.	24 May 2011	"The governing body is supportive of the school. Since the last inspection, it has seen a considerable turnover of membership and welcomes training opportunities to develop expertise and challenge the school's work. The governing body is closely involved in school improvement, and its awareness of the community and knowledge about pupils' progress provide the information needed to challenge the school's work."
18.	21 September 2011	"The governing body is effective and governors' regular visits to monitor provision in the school enable them to provide suitable challenge as well as support for the school. The governing body ensures that pupils' well-being and health and safety receive prominent attention. As a result, safeguarding procedures are robust and all vetting and child protection arrangements are of good quality."
19.	28 September 2011	"The governing body is enthusiastic and fully supportive of the school. While committees are used effectively to ensure governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school, they are not yet fully effective in holding the school to account for its actions."
20.	3 October 2011	"Support provided by the governors is satisfactory. As a result of recent appointments, the governing body is making good progress towards developing its full capacity. Governors are very committed to raising achievement in the school and have responded well to the recommendations of an external review. These identified greater involvement and links with subject departments and a more robust in-depth approach to self-evaluation."
21.	5 October 2011	"The effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory. Members of the governing body are closely involved with the school, frequently coming in and helping with events. They have surveyed parent and

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carer opinion, and supported the school in the development of its grounds and entrances, making it safer for pupils. They are developing a clearer understanding of how well the pupils are doing by being linked to subjects and were supportive of the headteacher during recent staff changes. They challenge the school adequately, based on their appreciation of pupils' current needs, and they communicate well with parents and carers. However, they have not always ensured the school has addressed disparities between achievement across key stages, subjects and groups of pupils."

22.	8 November 2011	"The role of the governors has been strengthened considerably. They are well led and organised, know the school well and understand performance data. They provide a well-judged balance between supporting the school and holding it effectively to account."
23.	9 November 2011	"The Headteacher and members of the governing body have a clear and critical vision for school development. Through rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning and careful tracking of pupils' progress, the school recognises its strengths and ensures that weaknesses are properly identified and promptly addressed. Procedures to ensure pupils are safe in school are firmly embedded. The governing body plays an important role in this by visiting the school regularly to check on the effectiveness of the safeguarding policy, and carrying out health and safety audits to the premises.
24.	7 December 2011	"The executive headteacher has a clear agenda for school improvement. Along with the acting Chair of the Governing Body, meetings have been held with parents and carers to begin to communicate their expectations. The governing body has started to put systems in place and develop its skills, but these are at the early stages of being implemented and are not yet adequately driving improvement."
25.	10 January 2012	"The senior leadership team, middle leaders, members of the governing body and key administrative staff are united in their drive to improve standards in all areas of the school's work. Lessons are monitored regularly and feedback is provided against agreed criteria."
26.	18 January 2012	"Members of the governing body are often visible around school, are highly supportive and fully understand its strengths and areas for improvement. Their involvement with pupils is particularly noteworthy and their keen appreciation of the local area, and its families and neighbours, make them a genuine asset across all the school's activities."
27.	6 March 2012	"The governing body provides appropriate challenge to school leaders. It ensures that statutory requirements for safeguarding are met."

28.	21 March 2012	"The governing body provides effective support and a good level of challenge. Governors receive regular updates on the quality of teaching in order to monitor improvements."
29.	24 May 2012	"Senior leaders and managers, including members of the governing body, have a clear and ambitious vision for the school, which is shared by all staff."
30.	27 June 2012	"Governors support senior leaders and have effectively challenged them to raise standards of attainment. Reports to governors on the quality of provision and its evaluation are regular but not always challenged and probed with sufficient rigour."
31.	3 July 2012	"The contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school."
32.	11 July 2012	"The contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
33.	12 September 2012	The governing body is strong and it carries out its responsibilities to evaluate and appropriately challenge the school's performance to the highest standard. Governors ensure the efficient management of financial resources. This leads to mostly effective deployment of staff and resources."
34.	20 September 2012	"Presents sustained challenge to the headteacher and senior team and keeps fully abreast of strengths, weaknesses and developments, on a strict 'no surprises' basis. Has managed the budget through a turbulent period including taking difficult decisions with regard to staffing, such that a tight savings plan is now on course to be met. Meets statutory requirements, including those relating to safeguarding and the promotion of equalities."
35.	28 November 2012	"The governing body meets regularly with school leaders and has built a very clear understanding of how well pupils are doing. Members closely involve themselves with all aspects of school life, bringing their own expertise to bear. They forge close links with parents, making sure they are there at consultation meetings. They keep abreast of pupil progress meetings and often question and challenge the school's leaders on the fine detail of the results of testing. The governing body keeps a watchful eye on school spending, particularly that linked with pupil premium, ensuring this funding has the desired impact. The governing body has good understanding of how the management of staff performance is closely linked with pupils' achievement and how salary progression is fairly used. They have supported the training of staff where

necessary and monitor closely how successful this has been. Members have undergone training to support the safety and well-being of pupils. They have helped the school to remain a safe and secure environment for children and ensured that all safeguarding requirements are met."

36.	5 December 2012	The governing body has a good understanding of the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement and has compared this new school's initial performance to a similar new school that opened three years ago. The governors challenge and support senior leaders well. Link governors to subjects have recently been appointed. They have planned visits to observe learning and to talk to staff and to pupils. Governors have an on-going training programme in place. Through their processes of self-evaluation they have identified, for instance, the need for training in the analysis and understanding of pupil-progress information. This has been arranged. Governors ensure good value for money. For instance, they monitor the spending and effectiveness of the pupil premium funding as well as the outcomes of the school's appraisal procedures, ensuring that only the most successful teachers are rewarded. All statutory duties are met, including arrangements for safeguarding.
37.	7 March 2013	"Members of the governing body are a committed and active team. They undertake regular training to support the school through their links with subject areas, and to increasingly challenge school leaders about the impact of their work. They do not challenge the school sufficiently to check initiatives are leading to pupils making good progress. Recent training on the use of school data to analyse the work of the school has raised their ability to challenge the school more rigorously. Their knowledge of strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching is improving but is not yet detailed enough. The progress of pupils receiving extra support through the pupil premium is as good as other pupils in the school, although governors have not scrutinised achievement data, as measured in average points scores, related to this. Governors are aware of performance management and ensure that staff progression is linked to their impact on pupils' progress. The professional development of the governing body is enhanced not only by courses but also regular meetings with governors from other schools to share up-to-date information about their roles"
38.	21 May 2013	The governing body is well informed and decisive. Governors set demanding targets for the Principal based on a very good understanding of student and staff performance. They have insisted on changes in leadership in some posts and performance has subsequently improved. They strictly insist that staff progress in pay only when performance targets are met. They pay special attention to the effective use of pupil premium funding to secure equal opportunity for eligible students. They review and revise policies of support development priorities. They review the safeguarding policy

annually. They visit school regularly and keep themselves fully briefed on developments in education.
The governing body plays a significant part in maintaining improvement at Garth Hill.

For further information on the work of Overview and Scrutiny in Bracknell Forest, please visit our website on http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/scrutiny
or contact us at:

Overview and Scrutiny, Chief Executive's Office, Bracknell Forest Council, Easthampstead House, Town Square, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 1AQ,
or email us at overview.scrutiny@bracknell-forest.gov.uk
or telephone the O&S Officer team on 01344 352283

This document can be made available in large print, in Braille or on audio cassette. Copies in other languages may also be obtained. Please contact the Chief Executive's Office, Easthampstead House, Bracknell, RG12 1AQ, or telephone 01344 352122.

Agenda Item 17

**TO: CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
3 JULY 2013**

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROGRESS REPORT
Assistant Chief Executive

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report highlights:

(i) Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) activity during the period September 2012 to April 2013.

(ii) Significant national and local developments in O&S.

2 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 To note Overview and Scrutiny activity and developments over the period September 2012 to April 2013, set out in section 5 to 6, and Appendices 1 and 2.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

3.1 The Chief Executive has asked for a six monthly report to be produced on O&S activity.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 None.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Overview and Scrutiny Structure and Membership

5.1 Council appointed Mr Robin Briscoe, Primary Parent Governor Representative, to the O&S Commission, and the Commission appointed Mr Briscoe to the Children, Young People & Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel. The membership of the O&S Commission and Panels was set again by Council and the Commission respectively at their annual meetings on 15 May 2013. The vacancies of the representatives of both the Church of England also the Catholic Diocese remain to be filled, and officers are in contact with the church authorities on that.

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme and Working Groups

5.2 The programme for 2012-13 was approved as part of the Annual Report of O&S for 2011-12, including formal consultation with the Corporate Management Team and the Executive. The programme continues the increased focus on contributing to policy development and pre-decision scrutiny, through short reviews; with fewer major reviews reviewing important topics in depth, over several months.

5.3   A routine report was submitted to O&S Commission meetings, monitoring progress against the O&S Work Programme using traffic light indicators.

5.4   The table at Appendix 1 sets out the current status of the O&S Working Groups, along with the list of completed reviews.

Overview and Scrutiny Commission

5.5   The O&S Commission met on 22 November 2012, and in 2013 on: 30 January, 28 March, 2 May and 15 May (Annual Meeting). The main items included: agreeing the Annual Report of O&S for 2012-13; determining with the O&S Panels the work programme for 2013-14; reviewing the service plans and quarterly performance reports for the Corporate Services Department, the Chief Executive's Office and the Council as a whole; meeting the Police and Crime Commissioner also representatives of Thames Valley Police and the Community Safety Partnership to review their performance and the refreshed Community Safety Plan; consideration of the 2013-14 budget proposals; proposals for Council Tax support and technical changes; receiving briefings on work of the Economic and Skills Development Partnership, the Customer Contact Channel Strategy, and the response to the 'Community Right to Challenge'; considering the results of the survey of residents' views; adopting the report of the Commission's Working Group which reviewed the preparations for the Community Infrastructure Levy, and considering the Executive's response to that report. At each of its meetings, the Commission also reviewed corporate items on the Executive Forward Plan, and monitored the delivery of the O&S work programme, with particular reference to the Commission's own Working Groups.

5.6   The O&S Commission's next meeting is on 1 July. Meanwhile, the Commission is running a Working Group on Delegated Authorities.

Environment, Culture and Communities O&S Panel

5.7   Meetings of the Panel were held on 23 October 2012, and 22 January and 30 April 2013. During the meetings the Panel considered and commented on: Quarterly Service Reports for the relevant quarters; the Thames Valley Vision for carbon reduction; car club schemes; service delivery options for public realm services in 2014; O&S Work Programme 2013-14; the Local Flood Risk Strategy; 2013-14 budget proposals; departmental Service Plan 2013-14 and Revised Key Actions; the annual report of the Activate GP Referral Health Scheme; Climate Change Action Plan; Air Quality Management Areas; and scheduled Executive key and non-key decisions. The Panel received progress updates in respect of the Local Development Framework, the Recycling Incentive Scheme and the transfer of Public Health services. A Working Group of the Panel has been reviewing the emerging Bus Strategy for the Borough and the Panel has monitored its progress (see Appendix 1). The next meeting of the Panel is taking place on 25 June.

Health O&S Panel

5.8   The Panel met on 27 September 2012, and in 2013 on 24 January and 18 April. The main items considered at those meetings included: considering how the architecture of the new NHS structures will help to deliver better health services in Bracknell Forest, in discussion with representatives of NHS England (Thames Valley Area Team) and the Bracknell Forest & Ascot Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) ; monitoring the progress on delivering the reforms to health arising from the Health and Social Care Act, specifically reviewing the Primary Care Trust's (PCT) draft 'Quality Handover Document' as part of the national transfer of healthcare responsibilities, the transfer of Public Health responsibilities to the Council, setting up the Health and Wellbeing Board, and establishing Local Healthwatch; considering the South Central Ambulance Service's performance on cardiac arrest survival rates; and receiving a briefing concerning possible changes to the pathway for surgical services dealing with disorders of arteries and veins. At each of its meetings, the Panel also

considered scheduled Executive Key and Non-Key Decisions relating to Health, and monitored the progress of its Working Groups.

5.9   Between formal meetings, the Panel's activities have included: producing letters in April 2013 commenting on the performance of three NHS Trusts in relation to their 'Quality Accounts'; producing jointly with the Executive the Council's response to a consultation by the PCT on the 'Shaping the Future' programme for health services in East Berkshire (endorsed by Council). The Panel recently commenced a Working Group to review what has been and can be learnt locally from the Francis report on the appalling failures concerning the Mid Staffordshire NHS Trust. The Panel's next meeting is on 11 July.

Joint East Berkshire with Buckinghamshire Health O&S Committee

5.10   This Committee, formed jointly with Slough Borough Council, the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, and Buckinghamshire County Council had previously suspended its meetings from February 2011, owing to resource constraints and the absence of formal consultations on NHS service changes affecting the whole of East Berkshire. However, in view of the proposals by the PCT and Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals Trust on the 'Shaping the Future' (STF) programme for health services in East Berkshire, since January 2012 the Committee resumed meeting regularly. The Committee agreed a joint response to the consultation document, which was consistent with the Bracknell Forest response; it supported two of the proposals but said no consensus could be reached on the third (the removal of the Minor Injuries Unit).

5.11   The O&S Commission decided in 2011 to end the Council's involvement in the Joint Committee, unless there was a need to respond to a statutory consultation affecting health services in East Berkshire. Accordingly, on 16 May the Chairman of the O&S Commission informed the three other councils that whilst members might choose to meet informally, Bracknell Forest did not agree to re-commencing formal committee meetings and could not provide any Officer support for this Joint Committee unless the need to respond to a statutory consultation arises.

Children, Young People and Learning O&S Panel

5.12   The Panel met on 3 October 2012, and 16 January and 17 April 2013 when it received the minutes of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel and considered and commented on: Quarterly Service Reports for the relevant quarters; the annual report of School and Children's Centre inspections 2011-12; 2013-14 budget proposals; study programmes for 16-19 year olds; pupil places and admission appeals; the Bracknell Forest Local Safeguarding Children Annual Report 2011-12; Annual Admission Arrangements 2014-15; 2013-14 O&S Work Programme; 2011-12 Annual Report of the Independent Reviewing Officer for Children's Social Care; changes affecting special educational needs; scheduled Executive key and non-key decisions; and the Education Transport Policy 2014-15. A working group of the Panel is currently reviewing school governance and the Panel has been monitoring its progress (see Appendix 1). The Panel's next meeting is being held on 3 July.

Adult Social Care and Housing O&S Panel

5.13   Meetings of the Panel took place on 9 October 2012, and 15 January and 23 April 2013. The main items considered at the meetings included: Quarterly Service Reports for the relevant quarters; Approaching Adulthood Strategy for Children and Young People Moving into Adulthood; Long Term Conditions Strategy; Sensory Needs Service; 2013-14 budget proposals; 2013-14 O&S Work Programme; departmental Service Plan and Revised Key Actions; redesign of Housing and Benefit Services; benefit changes; Fixed Civil Penalty – Overpayment of Housing or Council Tax Benefit; the Local Council Tax Support Scheme; the Strategy for Older People in Bracknell Forest 2013-16; and scheduled Executive key

and non-key decisions. The Panel received updates in respect of the transfer of Public Heath functions and new legislation. It also monitored the progress of its working groups (see Appendix 1) reviewing the Modernisation of Older People Services and substance misuse, agreed the reports of the reviews and considered the Executive responses. The next meeting of the Panel is taking place on 18 June when it will consider its next piece of review work.

Other Overview and Scrutiny Issues

5.14   The O&S Annual Report for 2012-13 was adopted by Council on 24 April.

5.15   Responses to the feedback questionnaires on the quality of O&S reviews are summarised in Appendix 2, showing a consistently high score across the various questions posed.

5.16   Quarterly review and agenda setting meetings between O&S Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen, Executive Members and Directors are taking place regularly for the Panels (every two months for the O&S Commission).

5.17   The O&S Chairmen and Vice Chairmen are meeting on a regular basis to consider cross-cutting O&S issues. They last met on 10 April, and their next meeting is planned for 4 September.

5.18   External networking on O&S in the last six months has included the Head of O&S attending a South East Employers Local Democracy and Accountability network event in March and representing South East councils at meetings of the National O&S Forum, run by the Centre for Public Scrutiny.

6   Developments in O&S

6.1   The *Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations* 2013 continue the core health scrutiny provisions for local authorities to review and scrutinise matters relating to the planning, provision and operation of the health service in their area. They replace the previous 2002 and 2004 regulations on health scrutiny. Under the new system of health scrutiny, local authorities have greater flexibilities in how they discharge their health scrutiny functions. Certain elements of the previous regulations have been preserved but there are new obligations on NHS bodies, relevant health service providers and local authorities around consultations on substantial developments or variations to services to aid transparency and local agreement on proposals.

7   ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Statutory Scrutiny Officer

7.1   The monitoring of this function is carried out by the Statutory Scrutiny Officer on a quarterly basis. Good progress has been made on the agreed programme of work by Overview and Scrutiny for 2012/13. Scrutiny Panels have continued to focus on areas of importance to local residents, and the quality of the work done continues to be high.

Borough Solicitor

7.2   Nothing to add to the report.

Borough Treasurer

7.2   There are no additional financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

7.3   Not applicable. The report does not contain any recommendations impacting on equalities issues.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

7.4   Not applicable. The report does not contain any recommendations impacting on strategic risk management issues.

Workforce Implications

7.5   Not applicable. The report does not contain any new recommendations impacting on workforce implications.

Other Officers

7.6   Directors and lead officers are consulted on the scope of each O&S review before its commencement, and on draft O&S reports before publication.

8   CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

8.1   None.

Method of Consultation

8.2   Not applicable.

Representations Received

8.3   None.

Background Papers

Minutes and papers of meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and Panels.

Contact for further information

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Doc. Ref CXO\Overview and Scrutiny\2012-13\progress reports

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY CURRENT WORKING GROUPS
Position at 30 April 2013

Overview and Scrutiny Commission								
WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	PROGRESS OF REVIEW	REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Community Infrastructure Levy	Leake (Lead), Angell, Mrs Birch, Heydon, Virgo and Worrall	Bev Hindle	Richard Beaumont	√	Completed	Completed	√	Review completed, though letter sent to Leader on 26.4.2013 concerning the Executive Response
Delegated Authorities	Angell (Lead), Mrs Birch, Gbadebo, Finnie and Leake	Alison Sanders	Richard Beaumont	√	Around 75% complete			Information gathering almost complete

Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel								
WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	PROGRESS OF REVIEW	REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Francis Report on NHS Mid Staffordshire Hospital	Mrs McCracken (Lead), Baily, Finch, Heydon, Kensall, Ms Wilson, Mrs Temperton,	Glyn Jones	Richard Beaumont					First meeting held on 9 May

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	and Virgo							

Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	PROGRESS OF REVIEW	REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Bus Strategy Working Group	Finnie (Lead), Brossard, Ms Brown, Gbadebo and Leake	Bev Hindle / Sue Cuthbert	Andrea Carr	√	Review underway and three meetings have taken place			One further meeting is anticipated

Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel

WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	PROGRESS OF REVIEW	REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
School Governance	Mrs Temperton (Lead) Mrs Birch, Ms Hayes, Mrs McCracken, Mrs Cauchi (former PGR) & Mr Jackson (Kerith Centre)	Martin Surrell	Andrea Carr	√	Review commenced on 13 September 2012			Review should be completed in June 2013
School Places	Mrs Birch, Kensall, Mrs McCracken, Mrs Temperton and Mr Briscoe (PGR)	Bob Welch	Andrea Carr		Review expected to commence in late June 2013.			Not yet commenced.

Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel								
WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	PROGRESS OF REVIEW	REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Substance Misuse	Virgo (Lead), Blatchford and Brossard	Jillian Hunt / Mira Haynes	Andrea Carr	√	Completed.	√	√	Executive response was considered by the Panel on 23 April 2013.
Modernisation of Older People's Services	Allen (Lead), Brossard, and Mrs Temperton	Mira Haynes	Andrea Carr	√	Completed.	√	√	Executive response was considered by the Panel on 15 January 2013.

Completed Reviews

Date Completed	Title
December 2003	South Bracknell Schools Review
January 2004	Review of Adult Day Care Services in Bracknell Forest (Johnstone Court Day Centre & Downside Resource Centre)
May 2004	Review of Community & Voluntary Sector Grants
July 2004	Review of Community Transport Provision
April 2005	Review of Members' Information Needs
November 2005	The Management of Coronary Heart Disease
February 2006	Review of School Transfers and Performance
March 2006	Review of School Exclusions and Pupil Behaviour Policy
August 2006	Report of Tree Policy Review Group
November 2006	Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) – Review of the ASB Strategy Implementation
January 2007	Review of Youth Provision
February 2007	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2006
February 2007	Review of Library Provision
July 2007	Review of Healthcare Funding
November 2007	Review of the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy
December 2007	Review of the Council's Medium Term Objectives
March 2008	2007 Annual Health Check Response to the Healthcare Commission
April 2008	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2007/08
May 2008	Road Traffic Casualties
August 2008	Caring for Carers
September 2008	Scrutiny of Local Area Agreement
October 2008	Street Cleaning
October 2008	English as an Additional Language in Bracknell Forest Schools
April 2009	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2008/09

Date Completed	Title
April 2009	Healthcare Commission's Annual Health Check 2008/09 (letters submitted)
April 2009	Children's Centres and Extended Services in and Around Schools in Bracknell Forest
April 2009	Older People's Strategy
April 2009	Services for People with Learning Disabilities
May 2009	Housing Strategy
July 2009	Review of Waste and Recycling
July 2009	Review of Housing and Council Tax Benefits Improvement Plan
December 2009	NHS Core Standards
January 2010	Medium Term Objectives 2010/11
January 2010	Review of the Bracknell Healthspace (publication withheld to 2011)
January 2010	14-19 Years Education Provision
April 2010	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2009/10
July 2010	Review of Housing and Council Tax Benefits Improvement Plan (Update)
July 2010	The Council's Response to the Severe Winter Weather
July 2010	Preparedness for Public Health Emergencies
October 2010	Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults in the context of Personalisation
October 2010	Review of Partnership Scrutiny
December 2010	Hospital Car Parking Charges
January 2011	Safeguarding Children and Young People
March 2011	Review of the Bracknell Healthspace (Addendum)
April 2011	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2010/11
June 2011	Office Accommodation Strategy
June 2011	Plans for Sustaining Economic Prosperity
July 2011	Review of Highway Maintenance (Interim report)
September 2011	Performance Management Framework

Date Completed	Title
September 2011	Review of the Council's Medium Term Objectives
October 2011	Plans for Neighbourhood Engagement
October 2011	Regulation of Investigatory Powers
October 2011	Site Allocations Development Plan Document
January 2012	Common Assessment Framework
February 2012	Information and Communications Technology Strategy
April 2012	NHS Trusts Quality Accounts 2011/12 (letters submitted to five Trusts)
April 2012	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2011/12
June 2012	Commercial Sponsorship
July 2012	Communications Strategy
November 2012	Proposed reductions to Concessionary Fares Support and Public Transport Subsidies
November 2012	Modernisation of Older People's Services
January 2013	Preparations for the Community Infrastructure Levy
February 2013	Substance Misuse
February 2013	'Shaping the Future' of Health Services in East Berkshire
April 2013	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2012/13
April 2013	NHS Trusts Quality Accounts 2011/12 (letters submitted to three Trusts)

Results of Feedback Questionnaires on Overview and Scrutiny Reports

Note – Departmental Link officers on each major Overview and Scrutiny review are asked to score the key aspects of each substantive review on a scale of 0 (Unsatisfactory) to 3 (Excellent)

	Average score for previous 16 Reviews[1]
PLANNING Were you given sufficient notice of the review?	**2.8**
Were your comments invited on the scope of the review, and was the purpose of the review explained to you?	**2.9**
CONDUCT OF REVIEW Was the review carried out in a professional and objective manner with minimum disruption?	**2.8**
Was there adequate communication between O&S and the department throughout?	**2.7**
Did the review get to the heart of the issue?	**2.7**
REPORTING Did you have an opportunity to comment on the draft report?	**2.9**
Did the report give a clear and fair presentation of the facts?	**2.6**
Were the recommendations relevant and practical?	**2.5**
How useful was this review in terms of improving the Council's performance?	**2.7**

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[1] Road Traffic Casualties, Review of the Local Area Agreement, Support for Carers, Street Cleaning, Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities, English as an Additional Language in Schools, Children's Centres and Extended Services, Waste and Recycling, Older People's Strategy, Review of Housing and Council Tax Benefits Improvement Plan, 14-19 Education, Preparedness for Public Health Emergencies, Safeguarding Children, Safeguarding Adults, the Common Assessment Framework, and Modernisation of Older People's Services.

**TO: CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL
02 JULY 2013**

**EXECUTIVE KEY AND NON-KEY DECISIONS RELATING TO
CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING
Assistant Chief Executive**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report presents scheduled Executive Key and Non-Key Decisions relating to Children, Young People and Learning for the Panel's consideration.

2 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel considers the scheduled Executive Key and Non-Key Decisions relating to Children, Young People and Learning appended to this report.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 To invite the Panel to consider scheduled Executive Key and Non-Key Decisions.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 None.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

5.1 Consideration of Executive Key and Non-Key Decisions alerts the Panel to forthcoming Executive decisions and facilitates pre-decision scrutiny.

5.2 To achieve accountability and transparency of the decision making process, effective Overview and Scrutiny is essential. Overview and Scrutiny bodies are a key element of Executive arrangements and their roles include both developing and reviewing policy; and holding the Executive to account.

5.3 The power to hold the Executive to account is granted under Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 which states that Executive arrangements of a local authority must ensure that its Overview and Scrutiny bodies have power to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the Executive. This includes the 'call in' power to review or scrutinise a decision made but not implemented and to recommend that the decision be reconsidered by the body / person that made it. This power does not relate solely to scrutiny of decisions and should therefore also be utilised to undertake pre-decision scrutiny.

6   ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

No advice was sought from the Borough Solicitor, the Borough Treasurer or Other Officers or sought in terms of Equalities Impact Assessment or Strategic Risk Management Issues. Such advice will be sought in respect of each Executive Forward Plan item prior to its consideration by the Executive.

7   CONSULTATION

None.

<u>Background Papers</u>

Local Government Act 2000

<u>Contact for further information</u>

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CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

EXECUTIVE KEY AND NON-KEY DECISIONS

REFERENCE	I041147

TITLE: Children and Young People's Engagement Strategy

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To approve a strategy to shape the direction of youth engagement across the services, including engagement with parents/carers.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: None

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive Member for Children, Young People & Learning

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: None.

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: Not applicable.

DATE OF DECISION: 25 Jul 2013

REFERENCE	I041127

TITLE: Children, Young People and Learning Asset Management Plan 2013-16

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To approve the Children, Young People & Learning Asset Management Plan for 2013-16.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Within existing budget.

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive Member for Children, Young People & Learning

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: Schools, Governing Bodies, Diocesan Authorities

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: Meetings with interested parties

DATE OF DECISION: 2 Aug 2013

REFERENCE	I041215

TITLE: Child Poverty Strategy - Review and Next Steps

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To provide a progress report to the Executive on the implementation and impact of the Child Poverty strategy to date and to consider the next steps in the Council's approach to Child Poverty.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Not known

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: Not applicable.

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: None

DATE OF DECISION: 15 Oct 2013

REFERENCE	I037634

TITLE: Construction Framework Procurement Plan

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To approve the procurement plan for the Construction Framework.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Within existing budget.

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive Member for Children, Young People & Learning, Director of Children, Young People & Learning, Director of Corporate Services, Executive Member for Transformation & Finance

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: Head of Procurement
Category Manager
Assistant Borough Solicitor
Education Capital Programme Board

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: Meetings with interested parties

DATE OF DECISION: Not before 14 Feb 2014