



NOTICE OF MEETING

The Executive

Tuesday 21 October 2014, 5.00 pm

Council Chamber, Fourth Floor, Easthampstead House, Bracknell

To: The Executive

Councillor Bettison (Chairman), Councillor , Councillors Ward, Dr Barnard, Birch, Brunel-Walker, Mrs Hayes, McCracken and Turrell

ALISON SANDERS

Director of Corporate Services

EMERGENCY EVACUATION INSTRUCTIONS

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- 3 Use the stairs not the lifts.
- 4 Do not re-enter the building until told to do so.

If you require further information, please contact: Katharine Simpson

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Published: 27 January 2015



The Executive
Tuesday 21 October 2014, 5.00 pm
Council Chamber, Fourth Floor, Easthampstead House,
Bracknell

Sound recording, photographing, filming and use of social media at meetings which are held in public are permitted. Those wishing to record proceedings at a meeting are however advised to contact the Democratic Services Officer named as the contact for further information on the front of this agenda as early as possible before the start of the meeting so that any special arrangements can be made.

AGENDA

	Page No
1. Apologies	
2. Declarations of Interest	
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 Interest is not entered on the register of Members interests the Monitoring Officer must be notified of the interest within 28 days.	
3. Minutes	
To consider and approve the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 23 September 2014.	1 - 12
4. 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.	
5. Polling District and Polling Places Review 2014	
To consider the Electoral Steering Group's proposals for changes to Bracknell Forest's polling districts and locations as part of a review carried out as required by the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013.	13 - 40
6. Amendment to the Council's Policy on Directed Surveillance and Use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000	
To seek approval to amendments to the Council's Policy on Directed Surveillance and Use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources.	41 - 62

7. **Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report**
 To consider the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Annual Report 2013/14 regarding the effectiveness of safeguarding and child protection practice in Bracknell Forest. 63 - 106
8. **Annual Report on the Statutory Roles and Responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services 2013/14**
 To consider the annual report on the activities of the Director Children, Young People and Learning and the Lead Member for Children, Young People and Learning as identified in the Department for Education Statutory Guidance on the Roles and Responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services. 107 - 148
9. **Complaints against Bracknell Forest Council in 2013-14**
 To consider a report on complaints made against the Council in 2013/4 with a view to endorsing the approach taken to dealing with and learning from complaints. 149 - 160

Exclusion of the Press and Public

Agenda item 10 is supported by annexes containing exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. If the Executive wishes to discuss the content of these annexes in detail, it may choose to move the following resolution:

That pursuant to Regulation 4 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) Regulations 2012 and having regard to the public interest, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of item 10 which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972:

- (3) *Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).*

NB: One email has been received in response to the 28-day notice of a private meeting. The writer has stated:

"I would like to raise my lack of approval for the democratic process being adopted for the above meeting, in private, for issues of public interest that outweigh the issue of disclosure of confidential information."

10. **The Blue Mountain Programme: Delivery Strategy for the Learning Village and Community Facilities**
 To seek approval of the delivery strategy for the Learning Village (a nursery, two form entry primary and seven form entry secondary with post-16 all through school) and community facilities at Blue Mountain, Binfield 161 - 192

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**EXECUTIVE
23 SEPTEMBER 2014
5.00 - 5.55 PM**

Present:

Councillors Ward (Vice-Chairman, in the Chair), Dr Barnard, Brunel-Walker, Mrs Hayes, McCracken and Turrell

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Bettison and Birch

13. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive on 22 July 2014 together with the accompanying decision records be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

14. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

15. Executive Decisions

The Executive considered the reports submitted on the items listed below and the decisions taken are recorded in the decision sheets attached to these minutes and summarised below:

Item 5. Provision of Short Breaks (Aiming High)

RESOLVED that, having regard to the equalities screening record appended to the Director of Children, Young People and Learning's report,

- i. Option A as detailed in Appendix 4 of the Director of Children, Young People and Learning's Report be progressed
- ii. That the 2015-16 Commitment Budget is updated to include savings against the Aiming High budget of £106,000

Item 6. Enforcement Policy (Regulatory Services)

RESOLVED that the revised draft Enforcement Policy (attached as Annex A to the Director of Environment, Culture and Communities report) be approved or the purposes of consultation over an 8 week period.

Item 7. Community Hubs - Strategic Housing Areas

RESOLVED that:

- i. the development of community hubs at the Warfield and TRL sites and the expansion of Farley Wood community centre using S106 funds be endorsed

- ii. the proposed approach to the management of the centres outlined in paragraphs 5.26-5.29 of the Director of Corporate Services' report and discussions on this with the Parish and Town Councils and other interested parties be endorsed

Item 8. Update on Customer Contact Strategy

RESOLVED that:

- i. The content of the Director of Corporate Services' report and the progress made on the Customer Contact Strategy and Channel Strategy to date be noted
- ii. The extension of the current Customer Contact Strategy and the Channel Strategy into 2015 be supported
- iii. The development of a new Customer Contact and Channel Strategy, and a Digital Strategy, to establish the direction of travel for the Council beyond 2015 be supported

Item 9. Office Accommodation Strategy - Progress Report

RESOLVED that:

- i. The progress made on the first phase of the Office Accommodation Strategy be noted
- ii. The work being undertaken on Phase 2 be endorsed

Item 10. Business & Enterprise Work Programme

RESOLVED that:

- i. The work plan for the Business and Enterprise Service (BES) as set out at Annex One of the Assistant Chief Executive's report be endorsed
- ii. The draw down of funds from the Economic Development Reserve to fund the plan for the period up to 31 March 2016 be endorsed

Item 11. Corporate Performance Overview Report

RESOLVED that the performance of the Council over the period from April to June 2014, highlighted in the Overview Report in Annex A of the Chief Executive's report be noted.

Item 12. Education Capital Programme - Cranbourne Primary School Award of Contract

RESOLVED that the contract for the construction works for the new classrooms at Cranbourne Primary School under the Education Capital Programme, previously approved by the Executive, be awarded to Tenderer A as detailed in Appendix A of the Director of Children, Young People and Learning's report, subject to the final lump sum not exceeding the amount set out in paragraph 18 of the restricted Appendix A attached to the Director of Children, Young People and Learning's report.

CHAIRMAN

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	I048967
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1. **TITLE:** Provision of Short Breaks (Aiming High)
2. **SERVICE AREA:** Children, Young People and Learning
3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To approve revised provision of short breaks for young people with disabilities/learning difficulties.

4. **IS KEY DECISION** Yes
5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive
6. **DECISION:**

That, having regard to the equalities screening record appended to the Director of Children, Young People and Learning's report:

- i. Option A as detailed in Appendix 4 of the Director of Children, Young People and Learning's Report be progressed
- ii. That the 2015-16 Commitment Budget is updated to include savings against the Aiming High budget of £106,000

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

The results of the consultation have indicated Option A is the preferred option and this is broadly in line with the budget saving. This option is further endorsed by officers who have refined Option A to meet their commissioning needs

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

When the consultation commenced a wide range of options were considered. These gradually were refined into three, Options A, B and C (see Appendix 2 of the Director of Children, Young People and Learning's report).

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** All stakeholders, including young people and parent/carers.
10. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Report of the Director of Children, Young People & Learning.
11. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None

Date Decision Made	Final Day of Call-in Period
23 September 2014	30 September 2014

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	I048441
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1. **TITLE:** Enforcement Policy (Regulatory Services)
2. **SERVICE AREA:** Environment, Culture & Communities
3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

The nature of the Environment & Public Protection Division's work is such that it must have an Enforcement Policy for most of its regulatory functions. The Policy must set out the procedure that will be adopted when seeking regulatory compliance. Our current Enforcement Policy was adopted by the Executive in June 2012. It now requires updating following the issue of the Regulators Code on 6th April 2014. This report therefore seeks approval for a revised Enforcement Policy.

4. **IS KEY DECISION** Yes
5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

That the revised draft Enforcement Policy (attached as Annex A to the Director of Environment, Culture and Communities' report) be approved or the purposes of consultation over an 8 week period

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

The Policy has been reviewed by officers in light of changes to the legislative framework.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

None.

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** The Public
10. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Report of the Director of Environment, Culture & Communities
11. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None

Date Decision Made	Final Day of Call-in Period
23 September 2014	30 September 2014

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	I048637
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1. **TITLE:** Community Hubs - Strategic Housing Areas

2. **SERVICE AREA:** Corporate Services

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To seek endorsement for the provision of community hubs at new strategic housing sites.

4 **IS KEY DECISION** Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

That:

- i. the development of community hubs at the Warfield and TRL sites and the expansion of Farley Wood community centre using S106 funds be endorsed
- ii. the proposed approach to the management of the centres outlined in paragraphs 5.26-5.29 of the Director of Corporate Services' report and discussions on this with the Parish and Town Councils and other interested parties be endorsed

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

The Local Planning Authority (LPA) needs to be able to defend its requests for infrastructure contributions from new development. The LPA indicates that the proposed community hubs are needed to support new and existing communities and have identified their inclusion in the newly adopted Site Allocations Local Plan (SALP). The two proposed community hubs and one extended community centre are likely to be viable for delivery but they need to be supported as Council policy to strengthen our case for provision. Community hubs are listed as infrastructure in SALP policy and in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan; however, the LPA needs to ensure that CMT and the Executive are committed to the development of community hubs to support their negotiations with developers and the prioritisation of these facilities as these will be subject to negotiation from developers. Details of the provision are in section 5.4 'Multi-functional Community Hubs' of the draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning document May 2014.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The Council could choose not to provide community hubs in the new housing development. However, evidence from Jennetts Park and The Parks shows that community centres are highly valued by residents as a place to meet, get to know each other and access services and activities, supporting community cohesion and engagement. The Jennetts Park Community Centre is very well used and the Community Association running it is generating significant income from it to reinvest in community activities such as a Kids Club.

The provision of these hubs is also a requirement of the policies in the SALP adopted by the

Council in July 2013.

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** Bracknell Forest Council Planning Officers, Corporate Management Team and Ward Councillors.
10. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Report of the Director of Corporate Services
11. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None

Date Decision Made	Final Day of Call-in Period
23 September 2014	30 September 2014

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	I048540
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1. **TITLE:** Update on Customer Contact Strategy

2. **SERVICE AREA:** Corporate Services

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

Update report on Action Plan relating to the Customer Contact Strategy 2011-2014

4 **IS KEY DECISION** No

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

That:

- i. The content of the Director of Corporate Services' report and the progress made on the Customer Contact Strategy and Channel Strategy to date be noted
- ii. The extension of the current Customer Contact Strategy and the Channel Strategy into 2015 be supported
- iii. The development of a new Customer Contact and Channel Strategy, and a Digital Strategy, to establish the direction of travel for the Council beyond 2015 be supported

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

Good progress has been achieved in the delivery of the Customer Contact and Channel Strategies, and it is still relevant in the current climate. The investigations into a number of potential channel developments have resulted in further work being required to deliver the benefits offered by these channels, and this work will take place over the coming year.

In addition, developments in the digital world since the original strategy was written now give us an opportunity to rethink how we enable customers to interact with the Council. To establish the right strategy for the future requires some considerable research and consultation with Elected Members as well as with Officers across the Council, therefore the development of the new strategy should take place through 2014-2015.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

Significant progress has been made through the existing strategy, and the Council could leave it in place as it is. However this is likely to miss opportunities that arise from developments in the digital world and new systems / technologies.

A new strategy could be developed more quickly, to come into effect in 2014. However, the current one is still relevant, with a number of actions arising from the current strategy still being delivered. In addition, a new Council elected in 2015 might want to review its Customer Contact Strategy, therefore a strategy adopted now could require significant re-work

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** Departmental Management Teams and Corporate Management Team
10. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Report of the Director of Corporate Services
11. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None

Date Decision Made	Final Day of Call-in Period
23 September 2014	30 September 2014

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	I048963
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1. **TITLE:** Office Accommodation Strategy - Progress Report

2. **SERVICE AREA:** Corporate Services

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To provide an update on phase 1 of the Council's Accommodation Strategy and seek endorsement of phase 2 of the Strategy.

4. **IS KEY DECISION** Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

That:

- i. The progress made on the first phase of the Office Accommodation Strategy be noted
- ii. The work being undertaken on Phase 2 be endorsed

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

To allow the rationalisation of the Council's property portfolio to progress and achieve the changes agreed in the Office Accommodation Strategy.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

There were a range of options for the phase 2 Easthampstead House works schedule including moving the minority groups room to 2nd floor but there was insufficient free space available. Other options were to move the mayoral suite and use the fourth floor as the space for the Construction and Maintenance team.

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** None.

10. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Report of the Director of Corporate Services

11. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None

Date Decision Made	Final Day of Call-in Period
23 September 2014	30 September 2014

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	I046759
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1. **TITLE:** Business & Enterprise Work Programme

2. **SERVICE AREA:** Chief Executive's Office

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To endorse the draft Work Programme for the Business & Enterprise Team.

4 **IS KEY DECISION** Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

That:

- i. The work plan for the Business and Enterprise Service (BES) as set out at Annex One of the Assistant Chief Executive's report be endorsed
- ii. The draw down of funds from the Economic Development Reserve to fund the plan for the period up to 31 March 2016 be endorsed

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

The Council's sixth strategic priority is to "sustain economic prosperity" for the Borough. The Council has recently created a dedicated team to support the delivery of this priority and the team's work plan is presented for endorsement.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

None. The work plan is a fundamental requirement to ensure that the new team has a clear and deliverable programme of work to support economic development within the borough.

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** Key stakeholders involved in the Bracknell Forest economy and internal consultation across Council departments.

10. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Report of the Assistant Chief Executive

11. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None

Date Decision Made	Final Day of Call-in Period
23 September 2014	30 September 2014

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	I047846
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1. **TITLE:** Corporate Performance Overview Report

2. **SERVICE AREA:** Chief Executive's Office

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To inform the Executive of the Council's performance over the first quarter of 2014-15

4. **IS KEY DECISION** No

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

That the performance of the Council over the period from April to June 2014, highlighted in the Overview Report in Annex A of the Chief Executive's report be noted

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

To brief the Executive on the Council's performance, highlighting key areas, so that appropriate action can be taken if needed.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

None

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** N/A

10. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Report of the Assistant Chief Executive

11. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None

Date Decision Made	Final Day of Call-in Period
23 September 2014	30 September 2014

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	I046268
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1. **TITLE:** Education Capital Programme - Cranbourne Primary School Award of Contract

2. **SERVICE AREA:** Children, Young People and Learning

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To approve the award of contract for the Cranbourne additional classrooms works.

4. **IS KEY DECISION** Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

That the contract for the construction works for the new classrooms at Cranbourne Primary School under the Education Capital Programme, previously approved by the Executive, be awarded to Tenderer A as detailed in Appendix A of the Director of Children, Young People and Learning's report, subject to the final lump sum not exceeding the amount set out in paragraph 18 of the restricted Appendix A attached to the Director of Children, Young People and Learning's report

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

The value of this contract requires Executive approval under the Council's Contract Standing Orders.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

Doing nothing is not an option because the Council has a statutory duty to provide sufficient pupil places.

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** Cranbourne School, Education Capital Programme Board

10. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Report of the Director of Children, Young People & Learning.

11. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None

Date Decision Made	Final Day of Call-in Period
23 September 2014	30 September 2014

**TO: EXECUTIVE
21 OCTOBER 2014**

**POLLING DISTRICT AND POLLING PLACES REVIEW 2014
Director of Corporate Services – Democratic & Registration Services**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report sets out the Electoral Steering Group’s proposals for changes to Bracknell Forest’s polling districts and locations as part of a review carried out as required by the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013. Any changes will take effect from the publication of the revised register on 1 December 2014. If an election were to be called prior to publication the existing polling districts and places would be used.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Electoral Review Steering Group proposals are agreed for recommendation to Council:

(i) That no changes are made to the following polling districts and polling places which meet the statutory criteria and provide reasonable and accessible facilities:

BA	BD	BE	BF	BG	BH	BJ	BK	BM	BN
BP	BQ	BT	BW	CS	SJ	SO	SP	SQ	WG
WM	WN	WP	WQ	WS	WV	WW	WX	WY	WZ

(ii) That no changes are made to polling district CN (Crowthorne) noting that the TRL site is a long term development area and therefore will be kept under review as development progresses

(iii) That a new polling district BC is created to cover those properties in the Wykery Copse development, Peacock Lane and Waterloo Road which are currently located in BB and that the Jennett’s Park Community Centre, Tawny Owl Square, is designated as the polling place for the new BC polling district (see Map1). Electors in the revised BB polling district will continue to vote at Farley Wood Community Centre.

(iv) That a new polling district BLP is created for The Parks and surrounding roads and that the Parks Community Centre is designated as the polling place for the new BLP polling district (see Map 2). Electors in the revised BL polling district will continue to vote at St Paul’s Church.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

3.1 The proposals seek to update the current scheme to enable Bracknell Forest to implement fully the guidance of the Electoral Commission. In particular the proposals seek to meet the recommended number of electors allocated to polling stations across the Borough.

- 3.2 All proposals are made to ensure that there is a balance of the electorate within each polling district; that polling places are convenient and easily accessible for voters; and that future demand arising from new building and development has been taken into account.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The Electoral Review Steering Group received and considered the views of the Returning Officer, set out in Annex A and the representations received in response to the consultation, set out in Annex B.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

- 5.1 The Boundary Commission, in conducting the Periodic Electoral Review [PER] in 2002/3, undertook a full review of electoral arrangements in the Borough and as a result a number of Borough and Parish wards were re-drawn and the number of Borough councillors increased to 42. A full review of polling districts and polling places followed in order to ensure that convenient and accessible voting facilities were provided for the electorate, particularly in these changed areas. A further review was undertaken in November 2011.
- 5.2 The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 introduced changes to the timing of the compulsory reviews of UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places. The requirement now provides that a local authority must carry out and complete a review of polling districts and polling places within 16 months of 1 October 2013 and every five years thereafter. The revised register must be published by 1 December 2014. Completing the polling district review in time for publication of the revised register means that any changes can be reflected in it, and that no subsequent alterations to the structure of an already published register will need to be made, which avoids the potential need to publish a further revised register. If the review is not completed in time for changes to be made to the December register, the change would have to be by publication of an additional revised register before the implementation date of 31 January 2015.
- 5.3 Although polling districts and polling places for local government elections are not automatically part of the review the Electoral Commission recommend that a review of local government polling arrangements is conducted simultaneously.

Polling districts

- 5.4 A polling district is a geographical sub-division of an electoral area i.e. a Borough ward, a Parish/Town Council or a Parish/Town Council ward. It is the smallest unit of electoral area. Polling districts cannot include more than one of either a Parish/Town ward, a Parish/Town Council or a Borough ward, whichever is the smaller. Each Parish ward, or if the Parish is un-warded the whole Parish, must be a polling district. **The designation of polling districts is a Council function.**

Polling places

- 5.5 A polling place is a geographical area or building in which a polling station is located. There cannot be more than one polling place for each polling district, however, as there is no legal definition of what a polling place is, it can be as large as the polling district or as small as a particular building. Currently all polling places are listed as

the polling district. This has the advantage of giving the flexibility of being able to change the location of a polling station without the time associated with re-designing a specific location. A building is also identified as the preferred polling place in order to satisfy the Electoral Commission's guidance that a building should be designated.

The designation of polling places is a Council function.

Polling station

- 5.6 A polling station is the actual room or building within which voting takes place. The polling station should be located within the polling district unless there are no suitable facilities available. **The selection of a polling station for a particular polling district from within a polling place is the responsibility of the Returning Officer.**

Current review

- 5.7 The review is not one of electoral areas, only the polling districts and the polling places. The following cannot be considered as part of the review:
- The boundary of the Bracknell parliamentary or neighbouring parliamentary constituency or local authority boundaries
 - The names of local authorities or electoral areas within or bordering Bracknell Forest
- 5.8 Changes can be made to a polling district including the merging of polling districts and the creation of new ones (subject to 5.4 above). This would require the Returning Officer to provide a polling station in the changed or new polling district.
- 5.9 Whilst there is no requirement to change any existing arrangements, reasons must be given for any change or decision to make no change. All decisions must be consulted upon, be measured and practical. The whole process should be as transparent and open as possible to avoid potential conflict.
- 5.10 Wokingham Borough Council reviewed their polling districts and polling places from October 2013 to end of March 2014. In the case of those polling districts and polling places which fall within the Bracknell Constituency no changes were made to the existing arrangements.
- 5.11 In deciding whether to change the current arrangements or maintain the status quo, the Council will be required to demonstrate that:
- the reasonable requirements of electors have been met
 - accessibility to the proposed polling stations for electors with a disability has been considered
- 5.12 The review was conducted by the Electoral Review Steering Group, comprising Councillors Birch (Chairman), Mrs Temperton, Turrell (Vice-Chairman) and Ward. The Steering Group minutes are attached as Annex C. In conducting the review the Steering Group considered the current arrangements and any particular areas where further investigations were required. The following principles were observed:
- Changes should be kept to a minimum and alterations sought only where necessary

Unrestricted

- No polling station should have more than 2500 electors (excluding postal voters) assigned to it
- Polling stations should not have fewer than 1,000 electors registered to vote at them as this delivers poor value for money
- Polling districts need to contain suitable premises to be used as a polling place at an election time

5.13 Other factors taken into account included:

- accessibility for electors who are disabled
- physical barriers that divide a ward such as railway lines, large open spaces and main roads which can act as a barrier to voters
- the disposal or changes to buildings used as polling places which may mean that they cease to be available as polling stations and alternatives must be identified
- the disruption to other users of proposed venues
- ensuring where possible, continuity for voters in where they go to vote
- transportation links to polling places
- turnout at previous elections

Timescale for the review

5.20 The polling district review should be completed in time for publication of the new register on 1 December 2014. The key milestones are set out below:

1 April	- Notice of the review published
14 April	- All councillors, local MPs, local political parties, agents at recent elections and disabled groups advised of the proposals and invited to comment.
16 May	- Deadline for receipt of comments on the proposals
June/July	Adjustments made to the proposal to reflect responses to the consultation or to explain why it is not recommended that they are accepted
29 July	- Electoral Review Steering Group considered the Returning Officer's proposals
21 October	- Executive considers Steering Group recommendations
26 November	- Council approves the recommendations
27 November	- Publication of final agreed scheme (including full explanation of all decisions made including the reasons adopting or not; amendments received during the consultation process).

27 November to
1 December Incorporation of changes into the register.

1 December Publication of new register incorporating the new polling district boundaries.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

6.1 Nothing to add to the report.

Borough Treasurer

6.2 The creation of two polling districts/polling places will attract costs in the region of £3000 which will be met from the elections budget.

Equalities Impact Assessment

6.3 The purpose of the review is to ensure that current arrangements as far as practicable, offer convenient and accessible voting facilities to all the electorate, including those who are disabled.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

6.4 The risks to the conduct and integrity of elections could occur where cross boundary voting is undertaken. However, there are measures that can be taken to ameliorate the situation and where appropriate, these have been detailed in the report.

Other Officers

6.5 None

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

7.1 All councillors, local MPs, local political parties, agents at recent elections and disabled groups were asked to comment. All electors were consulted via the website.

Method of Consultation

7.2 Letters and emails to stakeholders, notice at the Council offices and via the website

Representations Received

7.3 These are set out in Annex B

Appendices

Annex A – Returning Officer's Proposals by Borough Ward

Annex B – Responses to Public Consultation

Annex C – Electoral Review Steering Group Minutes
Map 1 – Proposed BC Polling District
Map 2 – Proposed BLP Polling District

Background Papers

None

Contact for further information

Ann Moore, Democratic & Registration Services – 01344 352260
ann.moore@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Iain McGlashan, Democratic & Registration Services - 01344 352235
iain.mcglashan@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

RETURNING OFFICER'S PROPOSALS BY BOROUGH WARD**1. Ascot**

Polling District	Electors	Postal voters	Polling station electorate	Polling Place	Disabled Access
WX	3,394	419	2,975 (2 stations)	North Ascot Community Centre, Fernbank Road, Ascot SL5 6LA	Yes
WY	822	115	707	St Martin's Church Hall, Church Road, Chavey Down, Ascot SL5 8RR	Yes

The Periodic Electoral Review (PER) in 2002 agreed to retain the division of this Borough ward into two Polling Districts to enable convenient and accessible polling facilities to be provided for the electorate in this large geographical area.

North Ascot Community Centre is centrally located in the Polling District WX, has good parking capacity and good facilities for staff. After the last review and following representation by the Council's Health and Safety advisor, the path alongside the building has been resurfaced and made even. Additionally, the entrance door area has been improved and is now accessible by all electors.

Alternative locations suggested previously have included North Ascot Youth & Community Centre in Mill Ride, which was investigated but the current location is one of long standing and is well known in the locality.

No representations have been received relating to this Polling Place.

Returning Officer's Proposal for WX: No change

St Martin's Church Hall is located in the northern part of the Polling District WY. This Polling District is geographically large with a small electorate and any location would involve transport and travelling.

No representations were received relating to this Polling Place.

Returning Officer's Proposal for WY: No change**2. Binfield with Warfield**

Polling District	Electors	Postal voters	Polling station electorate	Polling Place	Disabled Access
BA	4,437	697	3,740 (2 stations)	Binfield Memorial Hall, Terrace Road South, Binfield, Bracknell RG42 4DJ	Yes
BB	1,749	227	1,522	Farley Wood Centre, Turnpike Road, Binfield, Bracknell RG42 1FW	Yes
WM	694	110	584	Brownlow Memorial Hall, Newell Green, Warfield, Bracknell RG42 6AB	Yes

The 2002 PER led to the creation of this ward in 2003. Polling Districts BA and BB cover the un-warded Parish of Binfield. The BB Polling District was formed some years ago to accommodate the Farley Wood development and to ensure that voters in that area had accessible voting facilities particularly as the Memorial Hall was at capacity.

The WM Polling District covers the area of the St Michael's ward of Warfield Parish Council.

The three polling stations in the ward are located within their respective Polling Districts in venues well known to the community and afford good disabled access, parking and facilities for staff.

The parliamentary constituency boundary for both Borough ward and Parish Council currently sits in the middle of Peacock Lane. This setting creates a situation for the residents of Wykery Copse development, occupants of the two residential units at Peacock Farm Public House and the three further properties on that road plus two properties on Waterloo Road as their polling station is at Farley Wood and voting for them involves a six mile round trip by car.

Representations relating to the current arrangements have been received and are shown in Annex B (items 3, 7, 8 and 12).

The options for consideration are:

- (i) No change - electors at Wykery Copse remain in Binfield Parish, Binfield with Warfield Borough Ward and Windsor Constituency and continue casting their votes at Farley Wood Centre.
- (ii) To ease the strain of travelling to the current polling station, a targeted campaign is initiated before the 2015 elections to promote postal voting amongst the Wykery Copse voters.
- (iii) Create a new Polling District (BC) for the Wykery Copse and associated properties (188 in total at present) and designate the Jennett's Park Community Centre as their Polling Place. The proposed Polling Place is outside the Polling District however the proximity and convenience of the Jennett's Park Community Centre is considered to be advantageous to local electors.
- (iv) Either (i) or (ii) above and undertake a Community Governance Review with a view to adjusting the boundaries of Binfield Parish Council and the Great Hollands Ward of Bracknell Town Council to place Wykery Copse residents etc in the Great Hollands Town Ward.

At the last review the view of the Head of Community Engagement and Equalities was sought regarding the future electoral arrangements for the residents of Wykery Copse and these are set out below:

"I still believe that the A329 is a strong natural boundary and that therefore Wykery Copse residents should be able to use the Jennett's Park community centre to vote. I also believe that the Wykery Copse area would identify more with Jennett's Park which is why the Community Cohesion and Engagement Working Group recommended a Community Governance Review when they last considered the issue. However, there should be further consultation with residents to test that thinking".

In relation to the remaining properties in the BB Polling District, the proposed development of Blue Mountain Golf Club is unlikely to have much residential occupation by 2019 so no proposal is made in relation to that development at this time.

For Polling District WM, Brownlow Memorial Hall offers excellent facilities for all groups of electors and staff, although the egress onto the busy Warfield Road and the junction with Forest Road must be navigated with care.

No representations were received regarding these Polling Places.

Returning Officer's Proposals for BA, BB and WM:

- a) no change to the Polling Districts and Polling Places for BA and WM
- b) the creation of a new Polling District BC to cover those properties in the Wykery Copse development, Peacock Lane and Waterloo Road which are currently located in the BB Polling District (see Map 1)
- c) the designation of Jennett's Park Community Centre, Tawny Owl Square, Bracknell as the Polling Place for the new BC Polling District
- d) electors in the revised BB Polling District to continue to vote at Farley Wood Community Centre

3. Bullbrook

Polling District	Electors	Postal voters	Polling station electorate	Polling Place	Disabled Access
BE	4,557	677	3,880 (2 stations)	Bullbrook Community Centre, Bullbrook Row, Bay Road, Bracknell RG12 2NL	Yes

Bullbrook Community Centre is a well known local community building which has recently undergone some refurbishment work. It offers good facilities for all voters and staff in a central location. Although the A329 London Road dissects the ward/Polling District, the creation of a new Polling District to the south of the road would not be justified by the numbers and cost. The 2002 PER took this into account and made no changes to the long standing polling arrangements.

No representations have been received relating to this Polling Place.

Returning Officer's Proposal for BE: No change

4. Central Sandhurst

Polling District	Electors	Postal voters	Polling station electorate	Polling Place	Disabled Access
SP	3,993	626	3,367 (2 stations)	Sandhurst Town Council Offices, Memorial Park, Yorktown Road, Sandhurst GU47 9BJ	Yes

The current polling station has been in use since 1999 and is located in the modern Town Council offices affording plentiful car parking, access for all voters and good facilities for staff.

No representations have been received relating to this Polling Place.

Returning Officer's Proposal for SP: No change

5. College Town

Polling District	Electors	Postal voters	Polling station electorate	Polling Place	Disabled Access
SO	4,022	732	3,290 (2 stations)	College Town Infants School, Branksome Hill Road, College Town, Sandhurst GU47 0QF	Yes

Schools in the Borough are only used as polling stations in exceptional cases to avoid disruption to pupils and parents. College Town Infants School is currently used as the polling station for this Polling District as it is the only known suitable public building in the area.

Requests have been received from two councillors (Annex B) for a polling station to be provided at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst (RMAS), that every cadet is encouraged to apply for a postal vote and that political parties be allowed to deliver leaflets and letters to residents at the site. There are 644 properties at the RMAS, 264 are designated for married personnel. The site currently has 331 electorate, 310 are in married quarters with the remainder in accommodation for single service personnel or cadets. The main RMAS Commissioning Courses start in January, May and September of each year. Each intake numbers approximately 200 cadets and each lasts for fourteen weeks. All cadets are assigned to different accommodation blocks every time they finish a commission. This makes canvassing and registration a difficult process.

Unit Registration Officers (UROs) are appointed to all MOD units to help inform and encourage the registration of all eligible service personnel. A change of URO at RMAS will occur in August 2014 and an Electoral Services Officer (ESO) will arrange a meeting with the new URO to discuss how to engage new cadets to register under Individual Electoral Registration (IER), postal voting and elections 2015. The Cabinet Office portal will enable all new cadets/residents to register online. The ESO will also highlight the need for the registration website to be made known to all current RMAS residents.

Due to security access issues at RMAS, there is difficulty getting permission to enter the accommodation blocks used by single service personnel or cadets. The nature of the courses the cadets follow also means that they are often away on exercises day and night. A visit during daytime would not be welcomed nor would door to door visits be possible.

The Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) employs a canvasser to visit the married accommodation and this arrangement has worked well in obtaining replies from the residents. It should be noted that a number of residents at the RMAS are Nepalese nationals who are not entitled to be registered as that country is not a member of the Commonwealth or European Union.

Service Personnel and their spouse/civil partner are also entitled to register as service voters for a five year period in respect of an address where they have lived or would live as a civilian. As a result many of the personnel at RMAS might already be registered somewhere else.

The current URO has been contacted regarding the possibility of having a polling station designated at RMAS. He undertook to make enquiries. However clarification would have to be sought as to how voting and canvassing by political parties could occur at a time of heightened military activity when camps such as RMAS are virtually on "lock down". The current URO has indicated that given sufficient notice it might be possible for political parties to be given permission to campaign at the married quarter's. The issue of party campaigners attending will be pursued with the new Unit Registration Officer.

The view of the ERO is that RMAS has a very transient population. The population churn is very high and the various security levels assigned to each accommodation is such that electoral registration is proving to be very difficult. Experience suggests that most residents at RMAS prefer to register at their family home address. Therefore, the number of electors registered at RMAS is likely to remain at around 400.

Returning Officer's Proposal for SO: No change

6. Crown Wood

Polling District	Electors	Postal voters	Polling station electorate	Polling Place	Disabled Access
BF	3,015	380	2,635 (2 stations)	Crown Wood Community Centre, Opladen Way, Bracknell RG12 0PE	Yes
WW	3,009	347	2,662 (2 stations)	Forest Park Community Centre, Horndean Road, Forest Park, Bracknell RG12 0XQ	Yes

The present Crown Wood ward for the Borough Council was created following the 2002 PER and comprises of Crown Wood ward of Bracknell Town Council (Polling District BF) and the Forest Park ward of Winkfield Parish Council (Polling District WW). Both Polling Places are well known, located in central positions and offer good facilities for all voters and staff.

Returning Officer's proposal for BF and WW: No change

7. Crowthorne

Polling District	Electors	Postal voters	Polling station electorate	Polling Place	Disabled Access
CN	4,048	639	3,409 (2 stations)	Crowthorne Parish Hall, Heath Hill Road South, Crowthorne RG45 7BN	Yes

This is a well known and well located venue which offers good facilities for all voters.

The Returning Officer has noted the representation from the Labour Party (Annex B) that when the development on the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) site commences, the residents in Broadmoor be included in any Polling District that may be created for the TRL development area. No recommendation is proposed until the TRL development proposals are confirmed.

Returning Officer's proposal for CN: No change, but it is noted the TRL site is a long term development area.

8. Great Hollands North

Polling District	Electors	Postal voters	Polling station electorate	Polling Place	Disabled Access
BH	3,164	346	2,818 (2 stations)	Great Hollands Community Centre, The Square, Wordsworth, Bracknell RG12 8UX	Yes
BQ	2,036	281	1,755	Jennett's Park Temporary Community Centre, Peacock Lane, Bracknell RG12 8SS	Yes

The Polling Place for BH Polling District is located in the centre of the Polling District, is well known, in a good location and serves all of the local electorate well.

The BQ Polling District was created after the 2007 review to accommodate the new development at Jennett's Park. The current Polling Place for BQ is the community centre for Jennett's Park, located at Tawny Owl Square, next to the school. During the 2015 elections, this polling station will be located at the main hall of the community centre.

Returning Officer's proposals for BH and BQ: No change

9. Great Hollands South

Polling District	Electors	Postal voters	Polling station electorate	Polling Place	Disabled Access
BJ	3,912	747	3,165 (2 stations)	Woodenhill Primary School, Staplehurst, Bracknell RG12 8DB	Yes

Woodenhill Primary School has been the designated Polling Place for Great Hollands South Ward for a number of years. The Headteacher's response is included in Annex B. A good working relationship exists with the school and the Electoral Services Team. Sufficient notice is always given to the Headteacher prior to an election to assist in ensuring that election/s will not disrupt school activities on the day.

Returning Officer's proposal for BJ: No change

10. Hanworth

Polling District	Electors	Postal voters	Polling station electorate	Polling Place	Disabled Access
BD	3,039	377	2,662 (2 stations)	Birch Hill Community Centre, Leppington, Bracknell RG12 7WW	Yes
BK	3,302	519	2,783 (2 stations)	The Pines Community Centre, Hanworth Road, Bracknell RG12 7WX	Yes

Birch Hill (Polling District BD) and Hanworth (Polling District BK) form two Bracknell Town Council wards. Both Polling Places are well-known to residents and offer good, all-round facilities.

Two responses in support of the Pines Community Centre facilities have been received and are included in Annex B.

The Returning Officer's proposal for BD and BK: No change

11. Harmans Water

Polling District	Electors	Postal voters	Polling station electorate	Polling Place	Disabled Access
BL	4,963	625	4,338 (2 stations)	St Paul's Church, The Square, Harmans Water, Bracknell RG12 9LP	Yes, albeit via a ramp the Council provides at every election
WV	1,472	209	1,263	Martins Heron & The Warren Community Centre, Whitton Road, Martins Heron, Bracknell RG12 9TZ	Yes

Harmans Water Borough ward contains BL and WV Polling Districts.

BL Polling District

The elector number (including postal voters) for this Polling District was 4,495 at the last review. At that time 3,913 were polling station electors whereas now that number has risen to 4,338. The increase is mainly due to the number of voters at the development called "The Parks" which is the former RAF Staff College site. It must be noted that further development continues at this site. St Pauls Church is the current Polling Place and two polling stations are currently allocated. There is a growing concern that the increasing electorate at The Parks will cause queues at major and/or combined elections.

Members will recall the scenes witnessed in other parts of the country at the 2010 General Election when a number of polling stations had disturbances at 10pm when electors who had been in queues for a considerable time were unable to vote at the close of poll. The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 changed the rule relating to the arrangements at close of poll. The current law stipulates that any voter, who at the close of poll is at the polling station, or in a queue outside the

polling station, for the purpose of voting shall (despite the close of the poll) be entitled to apply for a ballot paper. Polling station staff therefore will either have to accommodate all voters present at 10pm inside the Polling Place or will have to designate an officer to stand at the end of the queue and remain until all voters present at 10pm have voted.

A third polling station inside the church has been considered. However, feedback from polling station, Council and elections staff since 2003, indicate that locating three polling stations on this site will not facilitate easy access and egress of voters. Furthermore it is believed that the layout for three polling stations is more than likely to result in frequent instances of ballot papers being deposited in the wrong ballot box which will cause delays at the ballot paper verification stage of the count.

An alternative option would be to relocate the three polling stations to Harmans Water School. The school has previously been used as a Polling Place however, this would necessitate the closure of the school.

Following completion of the community centre on The Parks development, ESOs have investigated the possibility of this site being designated as the Polling Place for electors at The Parks and the surrounding area and having one polling station located there. Map 1 shows the proposed new Polling District. It is recommended that this new Polling District is created and the new community centre designated as their Polling Place.

The proposed new Polling District will have an electorate at 1 June 2014 of 1242 of whom 187 had a postal vote. The creation of a new Polling District will also allow for the imminent increase in the number of electors following the ongoing construction on the site. The designation of the community centre at The Parks as a new polling station will:

- reduce the number of voters from 4338 to 3284 at St Pauls Church and will ensure efficient polling activities on election day
- provide a more accessible polling station to the residents of The Parks. Currently, voters have to walk or drive 2.5 km to and from St Pauls Church in order to cast their votes.

A representation from one of the ward members has been received which opposes the creation of an additional Polling Station.

Returning Officer's proposal for BL Polling District:

- (a) create a new Polling District BLP for The Parks and surrounding roads, as detailed on Map 2**
- (b) designate the community centre on The Parks as the Polling Place for the new Polling District**

WV Polling District

Electors in Polling District WV vote at Martins Heron and the Warren Community Centre, which is a modern building, well located and offers good access and facilities for all.

No representations have been received relating to this Polling Place.

Returning Officer's proposal for WV: No change

12. Little Sandhurst and Wellington

Polling District	Electors	Postal voters	Polling station electorate	Polling Place	Disabled Access
SQ	3,234	539	2,695 (2 stations)	Methodist Church Hall, Scotland Hill, Sandhurst GU47 8JR	Yes
CS	912	112	800	Crowthorne Parish Hall, Heath Hill Road South, Crowthorne RG45 7BN	Yes

The SQ Polling District is the Little Sandhurst ward of Sandhurst Town Council and the CS Polling District is the Crowthorne South ward of Crowthorne Parish Council. The Methodist Church Hall in Scotland Hill is a long established Polling Place, with no obvious alternative venue.

No representations have been received relating to this Polling Place.

Returning Officer's proposal for SQ: No change

Crowthorne Parish Hall is outside the CS Polling District. However it is a well known location which is accessible to all.

No representations have been received relating to this Polling Place.

Returning Officer's proposal for CS: No change**13. Old Bracknell**

Polling District	Electors	Postal voters	Polling station electorate	Polling Place	Disabled Access
BM	1,710	204	1,506	Easthampstead & Wildridings Community Centre, Rectory Lane, Bracknell RG12 7BH	Yes
BN	2,628	353	2,275	Easthampstead Baptist Church Hall, South Hill Road, Bracknell RG12 7NS	Yes

Old Bracknell is a large ward with over 4000 electors. Prior to the PER it had been divided into two Polling Districts and the review did not change that arrangement, as the two Polling Places within the Polling Districts were convenient and accessible to all.

No representations have been received relating to this Polling Place.

Returning Officer's Proposal for BM and BN: No change.**14. Owlsmoor**

Polling District	Electors	Postal voters	Polling station electorate	Polling Place	Disabled Access
SJ	3,953	524	3,429 (2 stations)	Owlsmoor Community Centre, Yeovil Road, Owlsmoor, Sandhurst GU47 0TF	Yes

The needs of the electors are well served by this relatively modern building that is well-known locally and offers good access and facilities.

No representations have been received relating to this Polling Place.

Returning Officer's Proposal for SJ: No change

15. Priestwood and Garth

Polling District	Electors	Postal voters	Polling station electorate	Polling Place	Disabled Access
BG	2,932	380	2,552 (2 stations)	Bracknell Methodist Church Hall, Shepherds Lane, Bracknell RG42 2DD	Yes
BP	2,863	335	2,528 (2 stations)	Priestwood Community Centre, Priestwood Court Road, Bracknell RG12 1TU	Yes

Garth (Polling District BG) and Priestwood (Polling District BP) are both Town Council wards.

No representations have been received relating to this Polling Place.

Returning Officer's Proposal for BG and BP: No change

16. Warfield Harvest Ride

Polling District	Electors	Postal voters	Polling station electorate	Polling Place	Disabled Access
WG	4,362	701	3,661 (2 stations)	Whitegrove Youth & Community Centre, County Lane, Warfield, Bracknell RG42 3JP	Yes
WQ	1,662	309	1,353	Whitegrove Youth & Community Centre, County Lane, Warfield, Bracknell RG42 3JP	Yes

These are separate Polling Districts as they are both Parish wards (WG being Whitegrove and WQ Quelm). The Polling Place is not within the WQ Polling District. Whitegrove Youth & Community Centre is a modern facility, with two rooms that can be deployed as separate polling stations. It is a very well located building being part of the main shopping area for the Warfield Parish, between the library and medical centre, with ample free parking and has easy access and egress to all voters.

No representations have been received relating to this Polling Place.

Returning Officer's Proposals for WG and WQ: No change.

17. Wildridings and Central

Polling District	Electors	Postal voters	Polling station electorate	Polling Place	Disabled Access
BT	902	193	709	Kerith Centre (K2 Building), Church Road, Bracknell RG12 1EHL	Yes
BW	2,584	351	2,233 (2 stations)	Wildridings Primary School, Netherton, Bracknell RG12 7DX	Yes

The two Polling Districts relate to two Parish wards on the Town Council (BT being the Town Centre ward and BW covering the Wildridings ward).

No representations have been received relating to this Polling Place.

Returning Officer's Proposal for BW: No change.

Following its designation as the polling station for BT, the K2 building at the Kerith Centre has worked well for electors and polling staff.

No representations have been received relating to this Polling Place.

Returning Officer's Proposal for BT: No change**18. Winkfield and Cranbourne**

Polling District	Electors	Postal voters	Polling station electorate	Polling Place	Disabled Access
WN	304	63	241	The Carnation Hall, Chavey Down Road, Winkfield Row, Bracknell RG42 7PA	Yes
WP	812	160	652	Warfield Park Community Hall, The Plateau, Warfield Park, Bracknell RG42 3RH	Yes
WS	1,792	246	1,546	The Carnation Hall, Chavey Down Road, Winkfield Row, Bracknell RG42 7PA	Yes
WZ	1,129	171	958	The Royal British Legion Hall, Hatchet Lane, Winkfield SL4 2EE	Yes

This Borough ward was created following the 2002 PER. It joined the Warfield Park parish ward (made up of the WN and WP Polling Districts) of Warfield Parish Council ward, with the Winkfield and Cranbourne Parish ward (comprising the WS and WZ Polling Districts) of Winkfield Parish Council. Both the Royal British Legion and Carnation Hall are well-known and well located buildings offering good access and facilities and serve their electorate well.

Annex B includes a representation from the Labour Party for a portable polling station to be placed on the car park of the Squirrel Public House. It has been suggested that this would be convenient for the number of residents living in the area of North Street which has increased recently due to new development. The distance from the Squirrels Public House to the Royal British Legion is 2 km which would result in a round trip of 4km. The cost of a mobile polling station varies between £1200 to £2000. If a portable polling station is to be used it will not be viable to continue to

also use The Royal British Legion hall. If a portable polling station is approved and established for WZ Polling District there is a possibility that representations will also be received for other areas across the Borough to be given the same facility, for example those where the school is the designated Polling Place. The cost of hiring these facilities outweighs any benefits to voters.

Returning Officer's Proposals for WN, WP, WS and WZ: No change

19. Parliamentary Polling arrangements for that part of the Bracknell Parliamentary constituency in the Wokingham Borough Council area

Polling District and Parish ward	Electors in 2013	Number of polling stations	Polling Place	Disabled Access
FAB (Finchampstead North Parish Ward)	4376	2 or 3 depending on whether there is a combined election or Parliamentary election	California Ratepayers Hall, Finchampstead Road, Wokingham RG40 3RL	Yes
FBB1 (Finchampstead South Parish Ward)	3272	2	Finchampstead Baptist Church Centre, Gorse Ride North, Finchampstead RG40 4ES	Yes
FBB2 (Finchampstead South Parish Ward)	1254	1	Finchampstead Sports Pavilion, The Village, Finchampstead, Wokingham RG40 4JU	Yes
XWB (Wokingham Without Parish Ward)	5412	3	Oaklands Junior School, Butler Road, Crowthorne, Wokingham RG45 6QZ	Yes
FCB (Lower Wokingham Parish Ward)	879	1	Oaklands Junior School, Butler Road, Crowthorne, Wokingham RG45 6QZ	Yes

Wokingham Borough Council undertook their review of Polling Districts and Places between 1 October 2013 and 20 March 2014.

The decision of Wokingham Borough Council for the Wokingham Polling Places that fall in the Bracknell constituency is noted.

RESPONSES TO THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION

No	Relevant Polling District	Date	Person	Comment	Source
1	SO	5 April 2014	Cllr Bob Angel	He would like consideration given to the provision of a polling station at RMAS. The suggestion came as a result of difficulties in party workers being allowed access to the base.	verbal
2	CN	14 April 2014	Cllr Bob Wade	I see no immediate changes in Crowthorne, however over the next 5–7 years there will be 1,400 more dwellings which will require another polling station (in the Old TRL area?)	email
3	BB (Wykery Copse area)	14 April 2014	Cllr John Harrison	I would suggest the creation of a new polling district for the area of district BA covered by the now established development at Wykery Copse and other areas of BA cut off from the Binfield Memorial Hall by the Berkshire Way, which could share a polling station with BH at Jennetts Park Community Centre. The reason for this is that residents in this area are closer to the BH polling station and will find it far easier to walk there whereas a long journey to Binfield Memorial Hall may deter electoral participation.	email
4	CN	21 April 2014	Richard Thomas – UKIP Bracknell	We have looked at this, and feel there is no problem with the current stations. Obviously you will need to look at new stations to take account of major new developments, such as the TRL site.	email
5	BK	23 April 2014	Mrs Anne Dellbridge (resident)	As a family we are happy that the Pines Community Centre is a good and convenient place for the residents of Hanworth to register their votes.	phone

No	Relevant Polling District	Date	Person	Comment	Source
6	BJ	24 April 2014	Mrs Joanna Quinn, Headteacher Wooden Hill	Wooden Hill Primary School is used as a polling station. Our school can usually accommodate the use of our facilities when the date of the election is known in advance of one year - as we can then schedule one of our INSET days on this date. The use of our school as a polling station for unexpected or short notice elections is not ideal as this usually requires the school to be closed to pupils, meaning that pupils will lose one day of education. It should also be noted that when the elections take place in our school and these are then INSET days, this does also restrict our school staff to have full access to the kitchen and toilets. All of our teaching staff are required to be present during INSET sessions and these usually take place in the school setting.	email
7	BB (Wykery Copse area)	25 April 2014	Mr James Dillon (resident)	<p>As a resident of Wykery Copse I have to do a 5 mile round trip to vote, when there is a polling station within walking distance at Jennett's Park Community Centre.</p> <p>I propose that the border of Great Hollands North polling district is moved from Peacock Lane, north to the A329 to include the Wykery Copse estate. It has never made sense for this estate to be under the Binfield with Warfield polling district. The facilities we use, such as the community centre, parks and school are within the Great Hollands North district so it makes sense for us to vote under that district too.</p> <p>I feel being under Binfield with Warfield we are isolated from The Jennett's Park development and lumped into a district only because the boundary is where it is for legacy reasons. The residents here would not use Binfield or Warfield facilities and feel those representing that ward are not best to represent the interests of Wykery Copse residents.</p>	email

No	Relevant Polling District	Date	Person	Comment	Source
8	BB (Wykery Copse area)	25 April 2014	Mrs Pauline Murray (resident)	I live in Butler Drive (RG12 8DA) on the Wykery Copse development on Peacock Lane but the opposite side to Jennett's Park. Currently we are Binfield with Warfield and I understand there is a suggestion of moving the boundary so that Wykery Copse lies in the Great Hollands area. I would like to say that I am happy with the arrangements as they are. Our Binfield councillors are working hard on our behalf and the half mile (10 minute) walk to Farley Copse Community Centre is not inconvenient.	email
9	SO	1 May 2014	Cllr Andy Blatchford	I am asking that every intake of cadets should be encouraged to take advantage of the Postal Vote and that unfettered access should be allowed to deliver leaflets and addressed letters to residents in the RMA. I also think that there is a case to review whether the RMA should have its own Polling station.	email
10	Warfield Parish	1 May 2014	Clerk to Warfield Parish Council	My Members have reviewed the polling districts/places for Warfield and have no comment to make.	email
11	BL	4 May 2014	Cllr Shelagh Pile	My ward has 2 polling stations which cover the areas however we now have The Parks estate coming on stream slowly but if the promised foot path between The Parks and Harmans Water is put in then there would be easy access to the polling station at St Pauls church so I don't feel that a 3rd polling station would be required.	email

No	Relevant Polling District	Date	Person	Comment	Source
12	BJ CN WZ	11 May 2014	Cllr Mary Temperton for Bracknell Labour Party	<p>Here are the views of the Bracknell Labour Party:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It would be good to find an alternative to Wooden Hill School as a polling station, but realize that this is unlikely. Using the front class room worked for a by-election but I do not think it would work for main elections as the voters have to vie with school children and parents from 8-9 and from 2.30-3.30. The Preschool building/nursery is in the school grounds and accessible via a gate and path. Parking is possible and disabled access is good. Both rooms would need to be cleared, however. 2. Residents in Broadmoor feel 'disenfranchised' as the only polling station is a long way away from them. Wild Moor Heath School has been suggested as a possible polling location. When the development on TRL takes off, could these residents be included in with the TRL polling station? 3. Winkfield and Cranbourne. The number of residents living in the area of North Street has increased recently due to new development. Locals have suggested over half the people voting at the Royal British Legion Hall now live in this area and have to drive to the polling station. Could a portable polling station be put on the car park of the Squirrel Public House? <p>I realise all the above would be solved if everyone voted by postal vote but with individual registration coming on line, I am anxious that as many residents feel they are supported to vote.</p>	email
13	BB (Wykery Copse area)	14 May 2014	Clerk, Binfield Parish Council	Houses at Wykery Copse, Jennett's Park - being south of the A329M it would be more convenient for residents to vote at the Jennett's Park Polling Station	email

**ELECTORAL REVIEW STEERING GROUP
29 JULY 2014
2.00 - 2.43 PM**



Present:

Councillors Birch, Mrs Temperton and Turrell

Apologies for Absence were received from:

Councillor Ward

1. Election of Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor Birch be elected Chairman of the Electoral Review Steering Group.

2. Appointment of Vice-Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor Turrell be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Electoral Review Steering Group.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

The Head of Democratic and Registration Services presented a report on proposals for changes to Bracknell Forest's polling districts and locations, as part of a review undertaken as required by the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013.

The Steering Group reviewed the current arrangements and considered any particular areas where further investigations were required, and formulated recommendations for changes to be effected from the publication of the revised register on 1 December 2014.

The Returning Officer made proposals for polling districts in Binfield with Warfield Ward:

- no change to the Polling Districts and Polling Places for BA and WM;
- the creation of a new Polling District BC to cover those properties in the Wykery Copse development, Peacock Lane and Waterloo Road which were currently located in the BB Polling District;
- the designation of Jennett's Park Community Centre, Tawny Owl Square, Bracknell as the Polling Place for the new BC Polling District;
- electors in the revised BB Polling District would continue to vote at Farley Wood Community Centre.

The Steering Group supported these proposals.

The Returning Officer had made a proposal regarding polling district CN in Crowthorne Ward, for the Group to note that the TRL site was a long term development area. The Steering Group supported this proposal.

The Returning Officer made a proposal for the BL Polling District in Harmans Water Ward:

- to create a new Polling District BLP for The Parks and surrounding roads;
- to designate the community centre on The Parks as the Polling Place for the new Polling District.

The Steering Group supported these proposals.

There had been a request from two councillors for a polling station at the Royal Military Academy (RMA) in Sandhurst. The Group discussed this option but decided that it was not practical to have a polling station at the RMA and suggested instead that people on the site be encouraged to use postal votes. The Group was confident that the current arrangements did not disadvantage anyone based at the site from voting.

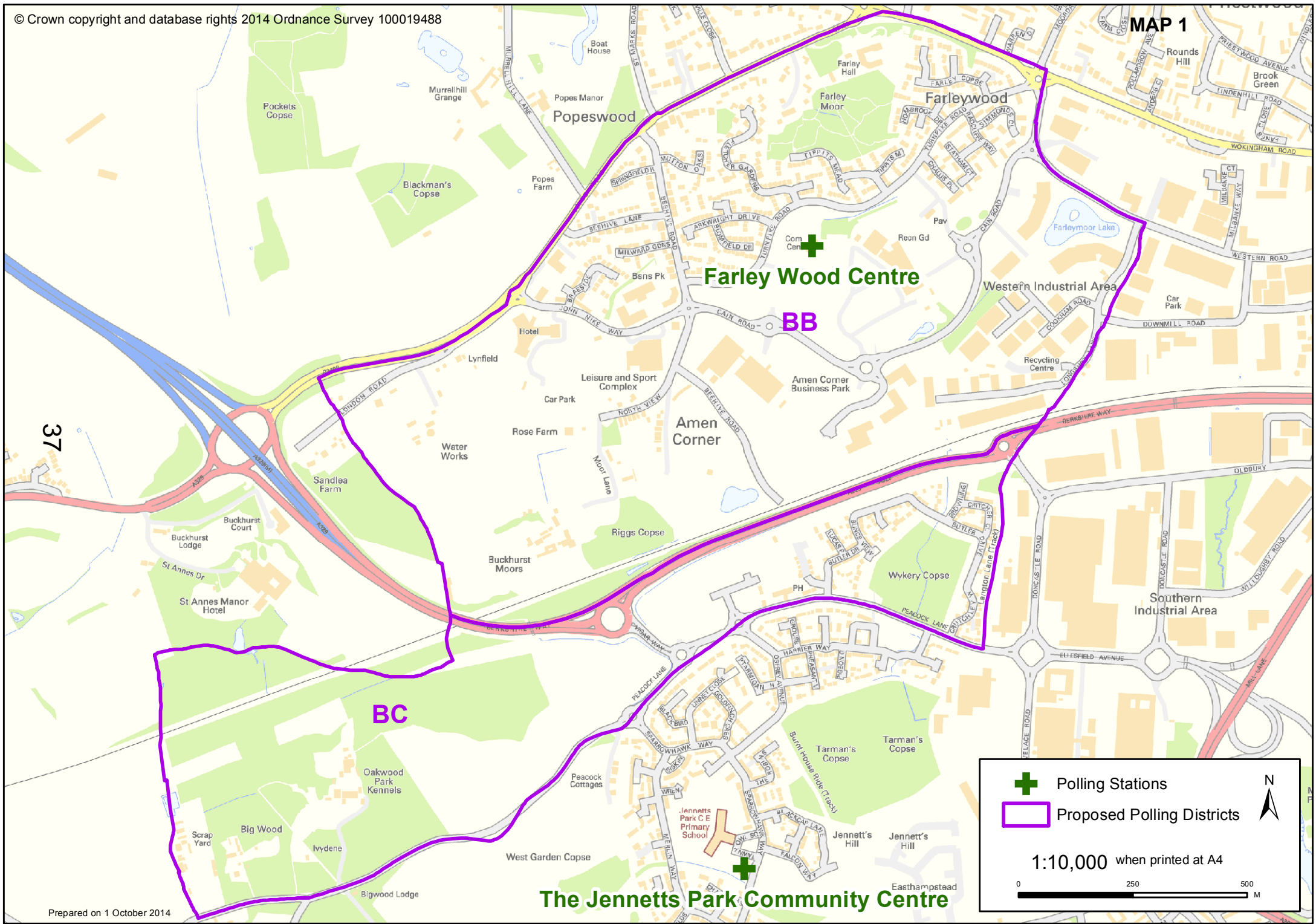
Schools were only used as polling places where there was no suitable alternative and there were currently three polling districts where schools were designated as polling places. It had been suggested that an alternative be found for Woodenhill (BJ) polling district but it was recognised that a suitable alternative was not available.

The Group discussed the request for there to be a portable polling station in the Squirrel public house car park and considered whether this could replace an existing polling station, rather than providing an additional one. There had been no representations regarding this and the Group suggested that people be encouraged to use postal votes in this area.

It was agreed that the Chairman would sign the minutes outside the meeting.

RESOLVED that the Returning Officer's proposals set out in Annex A are supported and recommended to the Executive and Council.

CHAIRMAN





37

Farley Wood Centre

BB

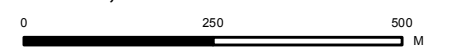
BC

The Jennetts Park Community Centre

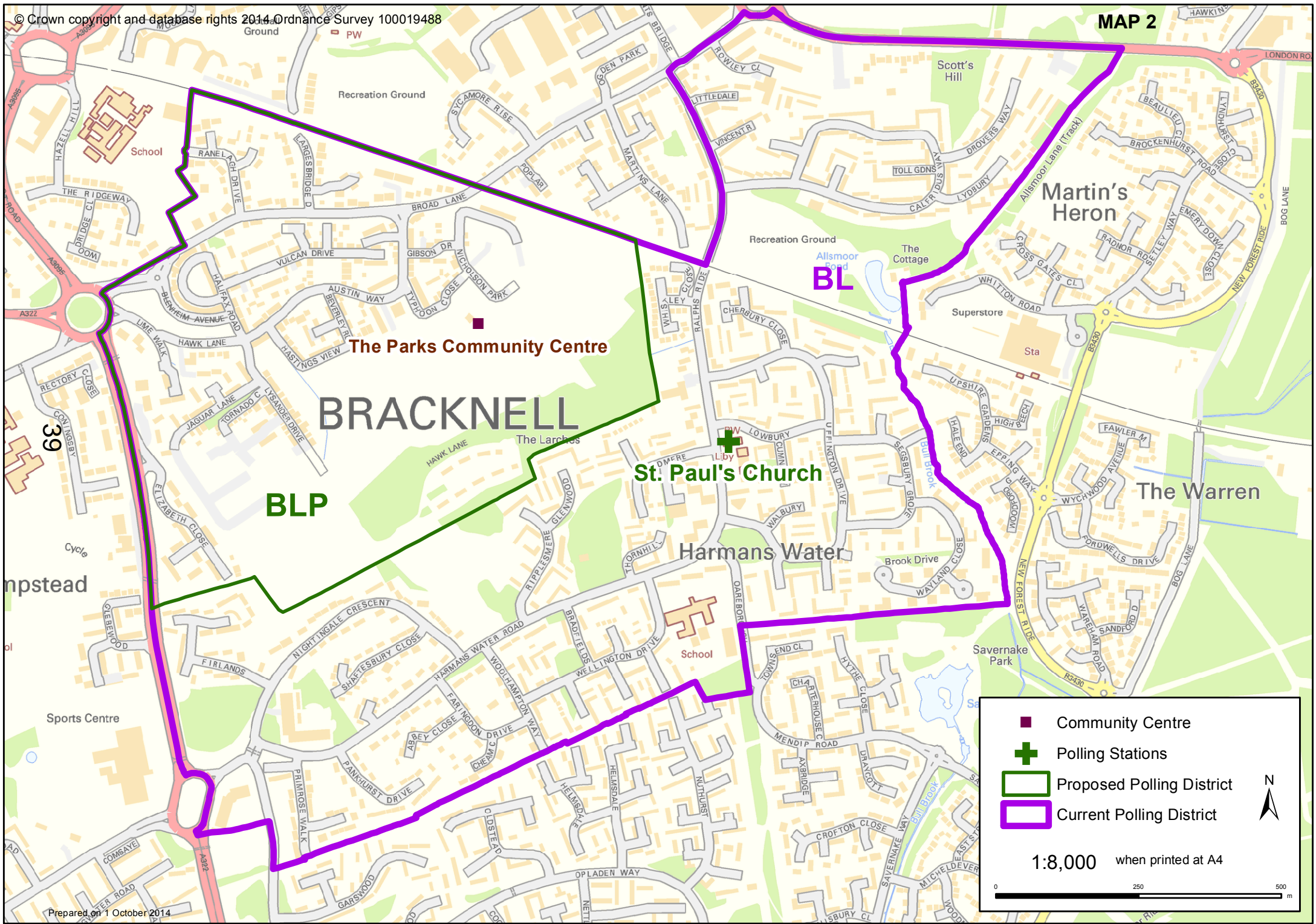
-  Polling Stations
-  Proposed Polling Districts



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BRACKNELL

BLP

BL

- Community Centre
- + Polling Stations
- Proposed Polling District
- Current Polling District

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TO: EXECUTIVE
21 OCTOBER 2014

AMENDMENT TO THE COUNCIL'S POLICY ON DIRECTED SURVEILLANCE AND USE OF COVERT HUMAN INTELLIGENCE SOURCES UNDER THE REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000 (RIPA)

Director of Corporate Services – Legal

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval to the draft amendments to the Council's Policy on Directed Surveillance and Use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources.

2 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 **That the draft policy on Directed Surveillance and Use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources at Appendix be approved.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 3.1 To implement the recommendations of the Assistant Surveillance Commissioner following an inspection and a review of the Council's Policy on Directed Surveillance and Use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) and the Human Rights Act 2000.
- 3.2 To ensure that the Council's Policy on Directed Surveillance and Use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources is up to date.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 None.
- 4.2 The Council should have a Policy which is up-to-date, reflects good practice and the statutory Code of Practice in relation to the use of RIPA.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 On 13th March 2014, the Council's policy and procedure was subject to an inspection by an Assistant Surveillance Commissioner from the Offices of the Surveillance Commissioners. He also undertook a review of the Council's RIPA Policy on the Use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources.
- 5.2 As part of his review, the Commissioner made the following key recommendations which would involve a change to the Council's current RIPA Policy:-
- 5.2.1 The Director of Corporate Services should relinquish her current role as an Authorising Officer for RIPA but should remain the Senior Responsible Officer for RIPA.

- 5.2.2 The Council's current Policy should be updated to incorporate a reference to the Council's Central Register of authorisations. A central record of all applications for authorisation under RIPA is kept by the RIPA Monitoring Officer.
- 5.2.3 Paragraphs 7.1, 8.1, 10.1, and 13.4 of the current Policy which includes references to urgent oral authorisation should be deleted. This is because it is no longer necessary due to the change in the legislative requirement that now applies to RIPA. Magistrates' Court approval now needs to be sought in respect of all applications under RIPA.
- 5.3 The Council's operational use of RIPA was also the subject of the inspection and the Commissioner made the following additional recommendations:-
 - 5.3.1 That all applications for juvenile "test purchases" in respect of the sale of alcohol to underage persons, address the issues of necessity and proportionality in relation to each of the listed premises which is subject to RIPA applications. This generally applies to covert directed surveillance of shop premises.
 - 5.3.2 That Officers should undertake training which specifically addresses the issues of necessity and proportionality. This is an essential aspect of the RIPA application which is now subject to judicial approval.
 - 5.3.3 Further training should also be provided for officers in the completion of RIPA forms.
 - 5.3.4 That the Council should consider establishing a detailed training schedule itemising the training provided to all Officers with RIPA responsibilities.
 - 5.3.5 The Commissioner also recommended some minor changes to the layout of the Central Record.
- 5.4 The Commissioners' recommendations set out in paragraphs 5.3.1 -5.3.4 are being implemented as a matter of good practice.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The Borough Solicitor is the author of this report

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 There are no financial implications directly arising

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 Not required

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 None

Other Officers

6.5 None

Background Papers

Office of Surveillance Commissioner's Inspector's Report 13th March 2004.

BFBC Policy on Directed Surveillance and Use of Covert Intelligence Sources March 2010.

Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. Changes to the provisions under the Regulation of Investigatory Act 2000 (RIPA).

Contact for further information

Alex Jack, Borough Solicitor - 01344 355629

Alex.jack@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Anthony.Iginiyesu, Senior Solicitor – 01344 353078

Anthony.Igibiniyesu@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

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**Policy on Directed Surveillance and use of Covert
Human Intelligence Sources**

VERSION	Version 5
DATE AGREED	October 2014
NEXT REVIEW DATE	October 2015
AGREED BY	Executive
COVERAGE	This Policy applies to service areas within Bracknell Forest Council
AUTHOR(S)	Borough Solicitor and Assistant Solicitor - Information Management and Corporate Governance

AMMENDMENT SHEET

Amendment Number	Details	Amended By	Date
Version 1	Policy 31.8.04 updated 11.12.06		
Version 2	Updated	Alex Jack – Borough Solicitor Nicola Thurloway – Assistant Solicitor	March 2010
Version 3	Updated in accordance with Revised Code of Practice	Alex Jack – Borough Solicitor Nicola Thurloway – Assistant Solicitor	April 2011
Version 4	Updated to take into account recent law including Protection of Freedoms Act and various Statutory Instruments and Home Office guidance	Alex Jack- Borough Solicitor Nicola Thoday – Assistant Solicitor	November 2012
Version 5	Updated to take account of the Inspector's Report of the 13 March 2014	Alex Jack Borough Solicitor and Anthony Igbiniyesu – Senior Solicitor	

POLICY ON DIRECTED SURVEILLANCE AND USE OF COVERT HUMAN INTELLIGENCE SOURCES

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In some circumstances it may be necessary for Council employees in the course of their duties to make observations of persons in a covert manner (i.e. carried out in a manner calculated to ensure that the persons subject to the surveillance are unaware that it is or may be taking place) or to use covert human intelligence sources. By its very nature, that sort of action is potentially intrusive and could expose the Council to a legal challenge as a potential breach of Article 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights, which establishes a “right to respect for private and family life home and correspondence”, incorporated into English Law by the Human Rights Act 1998. Also, there is a risk that if covert surveillance and covert human intelligence sources are not conducted properly the evidence obtained may be held to be inadmissible in court on the basis that it is unfair to use it as it was gathered contrary to Article 8 – right to privacy and infringes the defendants right to a fair trial as guaranteed by Article 6 – right to fair trial.

2. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this policy is to ensure that all covert surveillance carried out by Council employees including any involving covert human intelligence sources is carried out in accordance with the law.

Indeed RIPA recognises the Council’s right to infringe an individual’s right to privacy where any covert surveillance can be shown to be both necessary and proportionate and where it has been authorised by an appropriately designated officer within the organisation. Thus it is important to note that the requirements of RIPA provide protection for both the Council and the individual officers involved and should not be viewed as a mere exercise in bureaucracy

When carrying out such surveillance or using such sources officers should also bear in mind the **Codes of Practice** on Covert Surveillance and the Code of Practice on Human Intelligence Sources issued by the Home Office.

3. **SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS**

- 3.1 This policy applies in all cases where “directed surveillance” is being planned or carried out and “covert human intelligence sources” are used or planned to be used.
- 3.2 Directed surveillance is defined as surveillance which is covert, but not “intrusive” and undertaken:
- for the purposes of a specific investigation or specific operation
 - in such a manner as is likely to result in the obtaining of private information about a person (whether or not the person is specifically identified for the purposes of the investigation or operation).
- 3.3 Directed surveillance does not include surveillance which is an immediate response to events or circumstances where it is not reasonably practicable to obtain an authorisation as set out in this Policy.
- 3.4 Directed surveillance does not include intrusive surveillance. Surveillance becomes intrusive if the covert surveillance is carried out in relation to anything taking place on any residential premises or in a private vehicle and involves the presence of an individual or surveillance device on the premises or in the vehicle. The Council does not have the power or ability to authorise intrusive surveillance.
- 3.4 To fall within the meaning “use of a covert human intelligence source” there must:-
- be a source, and
 - the use of that source must be covert

A person is a “source” if they establish or maintain a personal or other relationship with someone else for the covert purpose of:-

- using the relationship to obtain information or to provide access to any information to another person, or
- covertly disclosing information obtained by the use of or as a consequence of the existence of such a relationship

In everyday language a “source” is an informant or officer working undercover. The other party to the relationship with the source must be unaware of the use or disclosure of information obtained as a result of the relationship.

4. **NEED FOR AUTHORISATION AND JUDICIAL APPROVAL**

- 4.1 Whenever it is proposed to conduct directed surveillance or to use a covert human intelligence source an authorisation should be sought under Part II of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. The authorisation does not take effect until such time (if any) as the Magistrate has made an order approving it

5. **GENERAL RULES OF AUTHORISATIONS**

5.1 Necessity and Proportionality

An authorisation should not be granted unless the directed surveillance/use of covert human intelligence source is both necessary and proportionate.

In terms of **necessity**, the directed surveillance/use of covert human intelligence source must be considered to be necessary to the operation on the following ground:-

- for the purpose of preventing or detecting conduct which constitutes one or more criminal offences

AND

- the offence is punishable by a maximum term of at least 6 months of imprisonment

Or

- is an offence under ;

section 146 of the Licensing Act 2003 (sale of alcohol to children)

section 147 of the Licensing Act 2003 (allowing sale of alcohol to children);

section 7 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 (sale of tobacco to persons under eighteen)

Even if the proposed activity is considered to be necessary, the person considering the application for authorisation must consider whether the activities are also **proportionate**.

The following elements of **proportionality** should therefore be considered;

- Balancing the size and scope of the proposed activity against the gravity and extent of the perceived crime or offence;
- Explaining how and why the methods to be adopted will cause the least possible intrusion on the subject and others;
- Considering whether the activity is an appropriate use of the legislation and a reasonable way, having considered all reasonable alternatives, of obtaining the necessary result;
- Evidencing, as far as reasonably practicable, what other methods have been considered and why they were not implemented.

The proposed activity will not be proportionate if:-

- the intrusiveness is excessive in relation to the value of the information to be obtained, or
- the information sought could be obtained by less intrusive means

Where an individual is suspected of claiming a false address in order to abuse a school admission system operated by the Council it is likely that a RIPA Authorisation is not necessary as

less intrusive and overt means could be explored to obtain the information required.

The Authorising Officer should consider the issue of proportionality with particular care in relation to relatively minor offences, instead, other less intrusive methods such as general overt observation of the location should be used. In rare instances where such offences are especially problematic or occurring with particular frequency and the problem cannot be resolved by overt measures, RIPA authorisations may be considered appropriate but care should be taken to ensure that the amount of private information obtained is kept to the minimum necessary".

5.2 Collateral Intrusion

“Collateral intrusion” means intrusion into the privacy of persons other than those who are the subject of the investigation. Measures should be taken to minimise both the risk of such intrusion and the extent of such intrusion. An application for authorisation should consider the risk of such intrusion and the Authorising Officer must take such risk into account in reaching a judgment as to whether or not the proposed directed surveillance/use of covert human intelligence source is proportionate. If the investigation unexpectedly interferes with the privacy of persons who are not covered by the authorisation, the Authorised Officer should be informed.

5.3 Management of Covert Human Intelligence Sources

An Authorising Officers should not grant an authorisation for use of a covert human intelligence source unless he/she is satisfied of the following:-

- (a) that at all times there will be an officer who will have day-to-day responsibility for dealing with the source on behalf of the Council and for the source’s security and welfare
- (b) that at all times there will be another officer (senior to the officer having responsibility under (a) above) who will have general oversight of the use made of the source

- (c) that at all times there will be an officer responsible for maintaining a record of the use made of the source, and
- (d) that records maintained by the Council that disclose the identity of the source will not be available to persons except to the extent that there is a need for access to them to be made available to those persons

5.4 The safety and welfare of the source and foreseeable consequences to others should be taken into account in deciding whether or not to grant an authorisation. A risk assessment determining the risk to the source in acting as a source of information to the Council, and in particular identifying and assessing the risks should the identity of the source become known, should be carried out. The welfare and security of the source after the operation has ceased should be considered at the outset. The officer having responsibility under 5.3(a) above (i.e. the officer with day-to-day responsibility for the source) should report to the officer having general oversight any concerns about the personal circumstances of the source, insofar as they might affect.

- the validity of the risk assessment
- the conduct of the source, and
- the safety and welfare of the source

If appropriate such concerns should be reported to the Authorising Officer who will need to determine whether or not to allow the authorisation to continue.

6. WHO CAN GRANT AN AUTHORISATION?

- 6.1 Subject to 6.4 below, the law permits authorisations for directed surveillance and use of covert human intelligence sources to be granted by officers of at least Service Manager status.
- 6.2 A list of those Officers designated as Authorising Officers is shown as **Annex A** to this document. Once an application has

been granted by the Authorising Officer, the authorisation then requires judicial approval before it can take effect.

- 6.3 Authorising Officers should not normally authorise investigations in which they are directly involved.
- 6.4 In the following instances an authorisation may only be granted by the Chief Executive, and in his absence, by any of the authorising Directors for RIPA surveillance involving the:-
 - (a) use of a juvenile Covert Human Intelligence Source (CHIS).
 - (b) surveillance involving the potential acquisition of confidential information. Confidential information means information which is; legally privileged information, confidential personal information or confidential journalistic material.
- 6.5 An Authorising Officer will receive training and is not able to authorise before then. Thereafter, each Authorising Officer shall receive further training/refresher training on at least a biennial basis.
- 6.6 The Senior Responsible Officer for RIPA, as recommended in the revised Code of Practice, is the Director of Corporate Services

7. THE PROCESS OF OBTAINING AN AUTHORISATION

- 7.1 The Investigating Officer seeking an authorisation should apply through their own line management structure unless it is impracticable in the circumstances (e.g. because no Director or Assistant Director in the relevant department is available).
- 7.2 An application for authorisation for directed surveillance or use of covert human intelligence sources should be made in the appropriate standard form which is available via the Home Office website at

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/counter-terrorisim/regulation-investigatory-powers/ripa-forms>

- 7.3 Both the Investigating Officer seeking the authorisation and the Authorising Officer shall have regard to any guidance notes issued by the Home Office and the Legal Section on the use of those forms.
- 7.4 The Authorising Officer shall return the completed Form to the Investigating Officer. The Investigating Officer will use the Judicial Application /Order form at Annex B of the Home Office Guidance, seek judicial approval via a Magistrate in order for the application to take effect.
- <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/counter-terrorism/ripa-forms/local-authority-ripa-guidance/local-authority-england-wales?view=Binary>
- 7.5 The authorisation does not take effect until such a time (if any) as the Magistrate has made an order approving it.
- 7.6 In each case, the role of the Magistrates is to ensure that the correct procedures have been followed and the relevant factors have been taken account of. If the Magistrate refuses to approve an authorisation, the authorisation is quashed.
- 7.7 A copy of the Form and record of the Magistrate's decision (on the Judicial Application/ Order Form at Annex B of the Home office Guidance) will be provided to the RIPA Monitoring Officer after the hearing for it to be added to the Central Record.
- 7.8 The Borough Solicitor has already designated (under section 223 of the Local Government Act 1972) certain Investigating Officers to present RIPA applications in the Magistrates Court.

8. **DURATION OF AUTHORISATION**

- 8.1 In the case of directed surveillance, written authorisations cease to have effect after three months (unless renewed). In the case of covert human intelligence sources an authorisation expires after one month if the source is a child and one year if the source is an adult.

9. REVIEW OF AUTHORISATION

- 9.1 Once granted an authorisation should be reviewed regularly to assess whether or not the investigation continues to be necessary and proportionate. The date of review is event driven, for example a test purchasing application should be reviewed after the date of the test purchase.

The Authorising Officer should specify how often a review should take place and use the appropriate form from the Home Office (see 7.3 above) to conduct a review (i.e. a review of the use of directed surveillance or reviewing the use of covert human intelligence source.) This information will be held on the Central Record.

10 RENEWAL OF AUTHORISATION.

- 10.1 Judicial approval is required if an authorisation is being renewed. An application for renewal of authorisation should not be made until shortly before the authorisation is due to expire. An authorisation may be renewed more than once for at least three months in the case of directed surveillance or, in the case of covert human intelligence source, one year.
- 10.2 An application for renewal should be made to the officer who granted the original authorisation unless there is very good reason not to do so (e.g. because the original authorising officer is on annual leave).

Applications for renewal should be made using the appropriate Home Office forms (i.e. renewal of directed surveillance or renewal of authorisation to use covert human intelligence source). Officers seeking an authorisation for renewal and Authorising Officers shall have regard to Code of Practice issued.

- 10.3 Once the application has been renewed by the Authorising Officer the completed Form will be provided to the Investigating Officer who will seek judicial approval (see 7.5-7.8) via Magistrate in order for the renewal to take effect. The renewal does not take effect until such time (if any) as the Magistrate has made an

order approving it. This information will be held on the Central Record.

11. CANCELLATION AND CEASING OF AUTHORISATIONS

- 11.1 The Authorising Officer who granted or last renewed the authorisation must cancel it if he/she believes that the investigation is no longer necessary or proportionate. If the original Authorising Officer is no longer available the duty falls upon the person who has taken on that role. All authorisations should be cancelled or renewed before they cease to have effect.
- 11.2 Although authorisations cease to have effect after the relevant time expires (see paragraph 8) an authorisation should be reviewed, renewed or cancelled before the expiration of the time limit.
- 11.3 As soon as a decision is taken to cease the operation an instruction must be given to those involved to stop the directed surveillance/using the covert human intelligence source. A form (see 7.2 above) recording the cancellation should be completed and forwarded to the RIPA Monitoring Officer for inclusion in the Central Record.

12 ROLE AND DUTIES OF RIPA MONITORING OFFICER

- 12.1 The Council's RIPA Monitoring Officer is the Senior Solicitor (Anthony Igbiniyesu) and has the following responsibilities:-
- Central responsibility for quality control of the RIPA process including providing comments/ advice for future applications
 - Training
 - Raising awareness of RIPA throughout the Council and
 - Management of records in accordance with paragraph 13 below.
 - Keeping the Central Record (a register of all authorisations) updated.
- 12.2 Any Authorising Officer seeking guidance in authorisations or any RIPA related matter should contact Anthony Igbiniyesu.

13. RECORDING AUTHORISATIONS/REVIEWS/RENEWALS/ CANCELLATIONS

13.1 There shall be a Central Record which shall be kept by the RIPA Monitoring Officer. The role of the Central Record is to keep a complete record of all authorisations and to monitor the quality of authorisations. There will also be a summary record maintained of all the completed forms.

13.2 A copy of the originals of forms authorising or cancelling directed surveillance or use of a covert human intelligence source should be sent by internal email to the RIPA Monitoring Officer. The RIPA Monitoring Officer shall retain all such forms for a period of not less than three years. A copy of such forms shall be retained by the relevant department for at least three years. The original forms shall be retained by the relevant department together with:-

- a record of the period over which the surveillance has taken place
- the date and time when any instruction was given by the Authorising Officer

Relevant departments must ensure that any data is processed in accordance with Data Protection legislation.

13.3 In the case of use of covert human intelligence sources, records should be maintained in such a way as to preserve the confidentiality of the source and the information provided by the source.

13.4 Records to be kept in relation to Covert Human Intelligence Sources

The following matters must be included in the records relating to each source;

- (a) the identity of the source;
- (b) the identity, where known, used by the source;

- (c) any relevant investigating authority other than the authority maintaining the records;
- (d) the means by which the source is referred to within each relevant investigating authority
- (e) any other significant information connected with the security and welfare of the source;
- (f) any confirmation made by the person granting or renewing an authorisation for the conduct or use of a source that the information in paragraph (d) has been considered and that any identified risks to the security and welfare of the source have where appropriate been properly explained to and understood by the source
- (g) the date when, and the circumstances in which, the source was recruited;
- (h) the identities of the persons who, in relation to the source;
 - (i) has day to day responsibility for their security and welfare;
 - (ii) has oversight of the use made of the source
 - (iii) has responsibility for maintaining a record of the use made of the source
- (i) the periods during which those persons specified in (h) above have discharged those responsibilities;
- (j) the tasks given to the source and the demands made of him in relation to his activities as a source;
- (k) all contacts or communications between the source and a person acting on behalf of any relevant investigating authority;
- (l) the information obtained by each relevant investigating authority by the conduct or use of the source;

- (m) any dissemination by that authority of information obtained in that way; and
- (n) in the case of a source who is not an undercover operative, every payment, benefit or reward and every offer of a payment, benefit or reward that is made or provided by or on behalf of any relevant investigating authority in respect of the source's activities for the benefit of that or any other relevant investigating authority.

14. CODES OF PRACTICE

14.1 Two Codes of Practice have been issued by the Secretary of State relating to Directed Surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources (CHIS) respectively. These came into force on 6 April 2010. Copies of both Codes are available on the Home Office website www.homeoffice.gov.uk/ripa

15 TEST PURCHASING AUTHORISATIONS

15.1 When conducting covert test purchases operations at more than one establishment, a separate authorisation is not required for each premises although each must be identified at the outset and necessity, proportionality, and collateral intrusion addressed in relation to each of the premises.

16 CCTV

16.1 Because CCTV is usually overt (i.e. members of the public are made aware that a CCTV system is in operation) an authorisation is not normally required for the use of CCTV material. However, there may be occasions when a covert CCTV system is used for the purposes of a specific investigation or operation in which case an application for directed surveillance may be required. The advice of the RIPA Monitoring Officer should be sought in such circumstances.

16.2 In the event of a Police request for directed surveillance using CCTV cameras they will need to follow their own internal procedure for obtaining authorisation in the first instance. In such cases a copy of the relevant Police authorisation should be

obtained by the Officer receiving the request and forwarded to the RIPA Monitoring Officer to confirm its validity.

17 INTERNET /"CHAT ROOMS"/SOCIAL NETWORKS

Authorisations under RIPA are not ordinarily required for participating in open online chat or posting on a social networking website (in a business capacity). However when steps have been taken to, store, monitor or establish a relationship with a person authorisation should be sought. CHIS authorisation should be obtained if steps are to be taken to develop online relationship with other participants with the view to gathering information. The advice of the RIPA Monitoring Officer should be sought when access to a site is obtained via membership (such as face book) with a view to carrying out an investigation.

18 NON COMPLIANCE

18.1 Evidence gathered in breach of the procedures described in this document will not automatically be excluded by a Court. However the defendant may argue that reliance by the prosecution on evidence obtained in breach of Article 8 – right to privacy denies him his right to a fair trial as guaranteed by Article 6 and that the case should not proceed. In addition, the admissibility of evidence is a matter for the Courts discretion and they will decide whether the evidence is put forward in such a way that the proceedings are fair as a whole. Therefore RIPA should be complied with at all times.

18.2 Apart from the above, non-compliance with RIPA may still result in:-

- a claim against the Council for a breach of Article 6 and/or 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights
- a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman
- referral to a RIPA Tribunal
- censure by the Office of Surveillance Commissioners

ANNEX A

RIPA Authorising Officers

- Chief Executive; Timothy Wheadon
- Director Children, Young people and Learning; Janette Karklins
- Director Environment, Culture and Communities; Vincent Paliczka
- Chief Officer Environment and Public protection; Steve Loudon
- Chief Officer Housing; Simon Hendey
- Head of Regulatory Services; Robert Sexton

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TO: EXECUTIVE
21 OCTOBER 2014

LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2013 /14
Independent Chair Local Safeguarding Children Board

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Annual Report 2013/14 regarding the effectiveness of safeguarding and child protection practice in Bracknell Forest is provided to the Councils' Executive for information.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **The Executive is asked to note the report (attached as annex 1) and the key messages arising from it.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013) provides the statutory framework for the safeguarding responsibilities of those working with children and young people, including the responsibilities of the LSCB. Working Together requires the LSCB Chair to publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area. The annual report should cover the preceding financial year, and should be submitted to the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council, the local Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

4 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 Statutory regulation supporting the implementation of Section 14 of the Children Act 2004 requires that the central focus of the LSCB is to:

- Ensure the effectiveness of local services safeguarding and child protection practice.
- Co-ordinate services to promote the welfare of children and families.

In addition Regulation 5¹ of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006 sets out the following specific LSCB roles and functions that support the objectives set out below:

- Developing policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authority.
- Communicating to persons and bodies in the area of the authority the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, raising the awareness of how this can best be done and encouraging them to do so.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and their Board partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advising them on ways to improve.
- Participating in the planning of services for children in the area of the authority.

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/90/regulation/5/made>

- Undertaking reviews of serious cases and advising the authority and Board partners on lessons to be learned
- 4.2 Regulation 6 provides for the inter-agency LSCB Child Death Review process, with Regulation 5 (3) providing for the LSCB to have discretion in respect of its engagement in any other activities *“that facilitates, or is conducive to, the achievement of its objectives”*.
- 4.3 The report summarises the main areas of activity in the last year, some areas to note are:
- Ongoing management oversight by Council Members and Senior Officers of the roles, responsibilities and key issues regarding safeguarding activity and impact. This includes the LSCB Independent Chair attending a meeting bi-annually with the Director Children, Young People and Learning, The Lead Member for Children, Young People and Learning and Chief Executive. The Leader of the Council also joins this meeting annually.
 - Agreement across the six Berkshire Unitary Authorities to take a lead on a specific sub group to ensure consistency and accountability for each area of work identified. Bracknell Forest LSCB has the Pan Berkshire lead for the Section 11 Sub Group.
 - The continued high level of participation from Bracknell Forest Council in relation to reviewing the progress made across all departments of the Council in implementing and reviewing the Section 11 safeguarding self assessments.
 - The continued efforts to engage and further develop safeguarding links with the Voluntary and Community Sector including running a series of lunchtime consultation events.
 - The completion of a Serious Case Review during 2013/14. The report cannot be published until criminal proceedings have concluded, however due to the approach taken to complete the review there has been good multi-agency participation and learning throughout the process.
 - The joint commissioning of a large survey of children and young people completed by the Children’s Society.
 - Ongoing work to raise awareness of the impact of Child Sexual Exploitation including an effective drama production called Chelsea’s Choice targeted at young people.
 - Completion of a Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy, and cohesion between the Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy Group and the Operational Group.
 - A successful conference on the subject of neglect which saw 200 professionals attending and had the Right Honourable Frank Fields as the key note speaker.
 - Continued delivery of a range of multi-agency safeguarding training which reported that 93% of participants felt had some impact on their professional practice.
 - The LSCB has overseen the development of the Continuum of Need document which sets out local arrangements for managing early help through to thresholds for Children's social care.
 - The LSCB has also developed the Learning and Improvement Framework which sets out how all partner organisations will contribute to and undertake learning to improve safeguarding practice.

- Progress noted against all areas of the targeted priorities of the LSCB Business Plan.

4.4 The report identifies targeted priorities for the new Business Plan for 2014- 2017 which in addition to the original priorities include two new priorities. The seven priorities for the coming three years are:

TP 1	To support further implementation of the framework for early help, and evaluate its impact on families
TP 2	Reduce the impact of domestic abuse on children, young people and families
TP 3	Reduce the impact of substance and alcohol misuse on children, young people and families
TP 4	To further develop the co-ordination of protection and support to young people at risk of child sexual exploitation
TP 5	Develop a greater understanding of neglect and reduce the impact this has on children, young people and families
TP 6	Reduce the impact of parental mental illness on children and young people
TP 7	To increase the understanding of the harm associated with the misuse of technologies, it links with bullying and the further development of proactive strategies to support children / young people and their families

4.5 The report provides a range of key messages which are aimed at those responsible for key partnerships and strategic planning across all organisations working with children, young people and families. It is expected that these organisations will take on board the messages and ensure they are embedded within policy and practice where relevant and appropriate.

5 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 The LSCB does not work directly with children, young people and families. Its main function as a Board is to ensure the effectiveness of safeguarding of partner agencies. Within these functions the LSCB would address any equalities issues that arose in the course of its activity.

6 STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

6.1 This report provides an account of the LSCB activity in the past year. Within this account the report provides a list of key messages which are designed to provide partner agencies with some focus on areas of development which may help to reduce the risk of harm to children and young people in the future.

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**Bracknell Forest
Local Safeguarding Children Board**

Annual Report

April 2013 to March 2014



Safeguarding children together

www.bflscb.org.uk

Chairs Foreword

Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) are local strategic partnerships working together with a collective responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

As the Independent Chair of the Bracknell Forest LSCB I am delighted to present this Annual Report for the period 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2014.

This report describes the achievements and challenges for the Board and its partners in ensuring the ongoing improvement and development of safeguarding practice for children and young people in the borough.

As a Board we have made significant progress in addressing safeguarding issues for our children and young people but we recognise the importance of ensuring this is sustained going forward.

The LSCB Business Plan is a key document for the Board and our work this year has been focused on ensuring we have been able to address the targeted priorities identified in the plan, in addition to fulfilling core statutory responsibilities.

Much of our work is achieved through strong partnership working which is the only way to address some of the complex challenges that face people on a daily basis.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMGov, 2013) demonstrates the Government's Commitment to strengthening the role of LSCBs in monitoring and scrutinising the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements. Since November 2013, LSCBs are now subject to a review of their effectiveness by Ofsted and their ability to hold partners to account and improve safeguarding practice.

This Annual Report provides evidence of the scrutiny and challenge that has been undertaken throughout the year and highlights partner's contributions to developing a culture of constructive challenge and continuous improvement.

As the Chair of the LSCB I would like to record my thanks to all those who are involved in the Safeguarding Children Board and to all those in the workforce who continue to demonstrate their commitment, passion and energy to protecting children and young people to secure positive outcomes and positive futures.

Alex Walters

Independent Chair, Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Children Board

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Annual Report is published by Bracknell Forest Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and is intended to give those working with, and planning services for children, young people and their families an overview of the work of the LSCB, its achievements and the challenges for its work in the future.

The first section of this document provides information about Bracknell Forest and about the context in which the LSCB undertakes its role, its statutory mandate and the structure of the Board, LSCB Forum and its Sub Groups.

The remainder of the report provides details the range of work undertaken during the year to ensure children and young people are appropriately safeguarded, their welfare is promoted through services delivered locally and the way in which partner agencies are held to account on the effectiveness of their safeguarding arrangements.

This Annual Report will be presented to the Bracknell Forest Partnership, the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, the Community Safety Partnership and the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner.

1.1 About Bracknell Forest

Bracknell Forest lies 28 miles west of London, at the heart of the Thames Valley and within the county of Berkshire. The town of Bracknell was developed as a 'new town' after the Second World War initially housing families who relocated from London. Since its inception as a new town the population has grown from 23,408 in 1951 to 115,058 (ONS mid 2012 estimates based on 2011 Census)

Bracknell Forest contains six parishes, 18 wards and covers an area of 109 sq km. Bracknell Forest Council is a small authority which gained unitary status when the former Berkshire County Council was split up in 1998.

The Borough's population is 115,058 of which 28,500 (25%) of the population is aged between 0 – 18 years.

There has been a decrease in the 0 – 14 age group as a percentage in Bracknell Forest from 21% in 2001 to 19% in 2011; this is still slightly higher than the national average which is 18%. There has been an increase in the 0 – 4 age group from 7,699 to 8,027; this increase has significance in terms of school place planning.

Bracknell Forest is one of the least deprived areas of the country (ranked 291 out of 326 local authorities in England on the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010). Property prices and levels of car ownership are significantly higher than the national average and average free school meals eligibility remains relatively low in the national context 8.5% in January 2013.

These headline figures mask significant pockets of deprivation. Five wards in the borough have free school meal entitlements ranging from 11.9% to 17.3%. Poverty in Bracknell Forest has risen and is now 11.4% (as defined by the Department for Work and Pensions). Six wards in the borough have child poverty figures above the South East average of 14.6%, and one ward is above the England average of 20.1%.

The 2011 Census showed that 84.9% of the population of Bracknell Forest was 'White British' and the BME population was 15.1%. The presence of the Gurkha regiment at the Royal Military Academy in Sandhurst has led to a significant settled Nepali community in the Borough.

Since 2001 the proportion of school pupils from Minority Ethnic Groups has increased steadily from 6% to just over 17.9% in January 2013.

9.6% of pupils have English as an Additional Language (EAL) and 79 different languages are spoken in our schools, although many of these in very small numbers.

The % of pupils at the Early Years Foundation Stage achieving a good level of development was 58%, compared to 52% nationally during 2013/14.

In 2013, 90.8% young people achieved 5 + A* to C grades in GCSE, and 63.4% achieved 5+ A* -C including English and mathematics. Both are above the England and South East averages for attainment.

The number of Bracknell Forest students who took A level examinations in 2013 has risen to 414 (366 in the previous year). 99% of these resulted in a pass grade, with the average points score increasing to 741.

Approximately 16,468 pupils are on roll in primary, secondary and special schools in Bracknell Forest. There is some cross-border movement of pupils between Bracknell Forest and neighbouring authorities, primarily Wokingham, Windsor and Maidenhead, Hampshire and Surrey.

1.2 Vulnerable Children and Young People

There are 28,500 children and young people (25% of the total population) in Bracknell Forest aged 0 – 18 and the large majority of these children will be happy healthy and achieving well.

A small minority of children and young people will be affected by events in their lives which will mean they require some support from professional agencies; the severity of the events will determine what level of help may be needed.

The LSCB has a key responsibility to have oversight of the safeguarding practice of all those agencies working with children and young people with a particular focus on children and young people who are more vulnerable.

The information below identifies the numbers of children who have received support from Children's Social Care during the year 2013/14 and the children who have received early help support through a Common Assessment Framework (CAF or Family CAF) or a referral to the Early Intervention Hub (more information on early help is included later in this report).

Child Protection Plan:

On 31 March 2014 there were **108** children and young people made subject to a child protection plan because they were likely to suffer significant harm. This is slightly lower than the number at the end of 2012/13 which was 112 children.

This is the equivalent of 40.6 per 10,000 of the under 18 population of children and young people, which is above the previous years average for the South East region (32.1 per 10,000) and England (37.9 per 10,000) and is therefore subject of ongoing scrutiny and will continued to be monitored during 2014/15.

**Comparative figures for 2013/14 are not yet available.*

Looked After Children:

On 31 March 2014 there were **113** children and young people who were 'Looked After' by the Local Authority which is an increase on the number at the end of 2012/13 which was 103 children.

This is the equivalent of 42.5 per 10,000 of the under 18 population of children and young people. Although locally the number of LAC is higher it remains lower than the previous year average for the South East region of (47 per 10,000) and that for England (60 per 10,000).

**Comparative figures for 2013/14 are not yet available.*

S17 Child in Need

On 31 March 2014 there were **554** children and young people who were identified as Children in Need as defined in S17 of the Children Act 1989 (these are children whose health and development was considered to have been at risk of significant impairment). This is similar to the number at the end of 2102/13 which had 555 children identified under S17. This is the equivalent of 208.3 per 10,000 of the under 18 population of children and young people.

Early Help Assessment (CAF):

On 31 March 2014; **345** early help assessments using the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and the Family CAF were completed which is an increase on the previous year of 26% (273 completed in 2012/13).

Early Intervention Hub Referrals:

The Early Intervention Hub is a multi-agency meeting held on a two weekly basis to provide coordinated support at tier 2 (targeted support provided early to avoid the need to escalate a case to tier 3 statutory intervention), received **364** referrals in 2013/14.

1.3 About the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)

The LSCB was first instituted as a statutory board in April 2006, and has become an established inter-agency forum that brings together senior managers who represent a broad range of organisations working together to promote the welfare of, or protect, children and young people in Bracknell Forest.

The LSCB is independently chaired and a key element of the Chair's function is to hold to account the partner members of the LSCB, both individually and collectively.

This critical role reflects the statutory requirement recently re-issued in the updated guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMGov, 2013)¹.

This guidance in association with the underpinning legislative obligations² makes clear the requirement for LSCB's to have in place robust scrutiny of partner organisations and to ensure that its independent function is not subordinate to, nor subsumed within, other local structures.

Statutory regulation supporting the implementation of Section 14 of the Children Act 2004 requires that the central focus of the LSCB is to:

¹ <http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/documents/Working%20TogetherFINAL.pdf>

² <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents>

- Ensure the effectiveness of local services safeguarding and child protection practice.
- Co-ordinate services to promote the welfare of children and families.

In addition Regulation 5³ of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006 sets out the following specific LSCB roles and functions that support the objectives set out below:

- 1 (a) Developing policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authority including policies and procedures in relation to:
 - The actions to be taken where there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare, including thresholds for intervention.
 - Training of persons who work with children or in services affecting the safety and welfare of children.
 - Recruitment and supervision of persons with children.
 - Investigation of allegations concerning persons who work with children.
 - Safety and welfare of children who are privately fostered.
 - Cooperation with neighbouring children's services authorities and their Board partners.
- (b) Communicating to persons and bodies in the area of the authority the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, raising the awareness of how this can best be done and encouraging them to do so.
- (c) Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and their Board partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advising them on ways to improve.
- (d) Participating in the planning of services for children in the area of the authority.
- (e) Undertaking reviews of serious cases and advising the authority and Board partners on lessons to be learned

Regulation 6 provides for the inter-agency LSCB Child Death Review process, with Regulation 5 (3) providing for the LSCB to have discretion in respect of its engagement in any other activities *"that facilitates, or is conducive to, the achievement of its objectives"*.

1.4 How does the LSCB Operate?

The LSCB meets six times a year on a bi-monthly basis, it is responsible for:

- Ensuring compliance with the statutory functions required of the LSCBs in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013.
- Monitoring progress against the Business Plan.
- Scrutinising and challenging sub group activity.
- Monitoring Serious Case Review and Individual Management Review action plans.

³ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/90/regulation/5/made>

- Receiving and commenting on annual reports on safeguarding activity.
- Agreeing and managing the Partnership Forum agenda.
- Developing the use of shared resources across partner agencies to enable the LSCB to carry out its duties and propose efficiencies.

The LSCB Partnership Forum meets three times a year and focuses on:

- The views of children/young people in relation to safeguarding issues and the services provided to them and their families.
- Discussion areas that are brought to the partnerships attention because of excellence or concerns.
- Sharing information and informing all partners on strategic developments.
- The consideration of national developments local initiatives and associated learning.
- The dissemination of information on 'lessons learned'.
- Supporting partners in their effective communication of safeguarding 'messages' within their own agency and within multi-agency settings.
- Participating in a rolling programme of workshops designed to extend members knowledge and understanding of specific issues to inform strategic governance and prepare for Announced Inspection.

The LSCB Sub Groups (appendix A) report directly to the LSCB. The primary function of the sub-groups is to undertake activity to meet the statutory functions of the LSCB and the strategic priorities identified in the business plan. All sub-groups have terms of reference, which are approved by the Executive, and are subject to an annual review.

The LSCB Independent Chair works closely with all LSCB partners, and plays a key role in holding agencies to account. The Independent Chair provides an effective link between the LSCB and a range of regional and national strategic activity and developments. The Chair is a member of the National Association of Independent LSCB Chairs and is now the South East regional lead and chairs their regional network meetings and sits on the Board of Directors. The benefit of this is that the Chair is able to represent local views at regional and national level and to bring in new and developing ideas to inform local developments and ideas.

The LSCB Independent Chair meets bi-annually with the Lead Member for Children's Services, the Chief Executive and the Director Children, Young People and learning and the Chief Officer for Children's Social Care; the Leader of the council attends this meeting annually. A report is presented to this meeting by the Independent Chair which provides an independent view of the effectiveness of the LSCB and of the safeguarding arrangements within all partner agencies; this report is also shared with the LSCB.

The Chief Executive has a responsibility to hold the Independent Chair to account for the effective working of the LSCB (Working Together 2013)

During 2013/14 the number of days allocated for the Independent Chair was increased from 25 to 30 recognising the increased levels of work associated with the role.

Membership of the LSCB is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it reflects the needs and priorities of the Business Plan; work is currently underway to strengthen the LSCB to include representation from adult mental health services and Public Health.

A list of members of the LSCB is attached as appendix B.

Outcome:

Council Members and Senior Officers including the Chief Executive have an oversight of the roles, responsibilities and key issues regarding safeguarding activity and impact. They are apprised of progress and challenges and as a result of a meeting during 2013/ 14, additional resources were allocated to appoint a Quality Assurance Officer for 18.5 hours a week to support the development of the Learning and Improvement Framework for the LSCB.

The Business Manager supports the Chair in the ongoing management of the LSCB, and Forum business activity. The Business Manager works with local organisations and regional networks to support the Chairs of the various sub-groups, providing advice, guidance and undertaking tasks and activities as relevant.

The part time Partnership Performance Officer and LSCB Quality Assurance Officer provide support to the LSCB in implementing a range of tasks and activities associated with its core responsibilities including audit and quality assurance functions.

The Independent Chair, Officers of the LSCB, Forum and Sub-Group Chairs all have a collective responsibility to ensure they are able to represent the LSCB priorities within the range of roles and responsibilities they hold. In addition they ensure that safeguarding priorities and actions are integrated within wider strategic planning and inform partnership plans to secure joint working and the most effective use of resources.

1.5 Regional Collaboration across Thames Valley

The risks to children and young people referred to in this report have increasingly resulted in agencies across the Thames Valley area working more collaboratively. Despite some of the challenges resulting from continued changes in respect of key leaders and officers within neighbouring Board's, Bracknell Forest LSCB has continued to support the development of this approach through more structured management of the shared sub group activity. A regional perspective and oversight of this work is maintained through an Independent Chairs and Business Managers forum. This is intended to ensure better communication and joint strategic planning, while also attempting to secure the most efficient use of limited resources. This forum also provides for collective challenge of key partner agencies where this is necessary.

Outcome:

As a result of the discussions that have taken place in relation to the Pan-Berkshire LSCB sub-groups an agreement was reached that each LSCB would take a lead on one group which will provide greater consistency for the operation of the group and clearer lines of accountability and reporting. Bracknell Forest has the lead on the Section 11 group.

2. EFFECTIVENESS OF LOCAL SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS

This section looks at how well organisations (individually and collectively) work to keep children and young children safe. Consideration will be given to what has worked well and where it has not worked well, how we identify what lessons have been learnt and what might need to change or improve as a result.

The LSCB assesses the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements in various ways, including:

- Section 11 safeguarding self-assessments undertaken by individual organisations.
- Individual case analysis/auditing activity (including Serious Case Reviews).
- Reviews of safeguarding incidents.
- Reviews of all Child Deaths.
- Reviews of performance management information provided by partner agencies.
- Receiving feedback from frontline staff, families and children / young people.
- The work of the LSCB's Sub Groups.

2.1 Section 11 Self Assessments

Bracknell Forest LSCB has an established strategy to support organisations working with children/young people and their parents/carers to undertake self-assessments in relation to the safeguarding standards set out within Section 11 of the Children Act 2004.

This work began in 2009 with statutory partner organisations undertaking self-assessments of their performance. Similar approaches were then adopted in regard to schools (including private and independent schools) with consideration then being given to equivalent safeguarding standards within voluntary, community, faith and early years services.

During 2013/2014:

The LSCB continued to work closely with the other five LSCB's operating across Berkshire and collectively sought to audit the Section 11 compliance of 9 statutory partner organisations operating across the region.

The process has been coordinated and monitored by a Pan Berkshire Section 11 Sub Group which has alerted the LSCB to the challenges of undertaking such work with limited resources, and the need for partners to identify additional capacity to support improvement.

During the period covered by this report the sub group further developed the existing strategy and revised its terms of reference which include:

- Improvements to the original terms of reference included the adoption of a new 'mid-term review' at 18 months rather than annually to monitor the progress made against improvements previously recommended.
- A revision of the membership in particular new membership arrangements for NHS England's Local Area Team and Clinical Commissioning Groups.

Challenges during the period included:

- *Securing adequate support to fully implement the agreed strategy.*
- *Engaging LSCBs across Berkshire to ensure a 'S11' self-audit was completed in respect of all Local Authorities.*
- *Changes in the commissioning and governance arrangements in health.*

As a result of the challenges outlined above, the panel secured the following assurances:

- That a new sub-group chair should be appointed and provided with dedicated professional support and administration and that attendance at the meetings would be addressed as this had been an issue. Bracknell Forest LSCB is the lead on this.
- That the six Berkshire local authorities would participate in joint S11 scrutiny; progress has been made to ensure this takes place during the autumn of 2014.

Outcome:

Whilst there have been some challenges across Berkshire local authorities in participating in S11 scrutiny, Bracknell Forest has participated fully in the process with each Department of the Council completing a self assessment. They have also continued to review their progress against the required standards and have submitted details of this to the LSCB through the S11 Group.

- That clarification would be provided in respect of the very significant changes in health and how the panel would receive completed audits in respect of tertiary service such as the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC).
- That further work is also to be undertaken to address disparity in the approaches being taken by health in regard to s11 in different parts of the county.

Through the work of the S11 Group it has become apparent that most agencies have made progress in the making and sustaining improvements, however the revision of the LSCB's systems for engaging them and capturing evidence of these improvements is of importance and expected to be undertaken by the autumn.

The LSCB continues to monitor the effectiveness of the Pan Berkshire approach via its learning and improvement Sub-Group, which is in turn overseen by its supporting LSCB.

The following areas were common themes of development for a number of statutory partner agencies:

- Ensuring that there is shared responsibility for safeguarding in senior leadership teams i.e. moving from a focus on one lead individual for safeguarding to corporate responsibility for safeguarding.
- Ensuring that safer workforce checks and processes are fully embedded in organisations, including making sure that staff and volunteers know when to contact the LADO.
- Ensuring compliance with Information Sharing agreements, and making sure that frontline staff and volunteers receive training on information exchange (in the context of the pan-Berkshire Information Sharing and Assessment agreements).

- Ensuring that beyond adherence to minimum standards for safeguarding training, organisations clarify which staff/volunteers should attend targeted or specialist safeguarding (Working Together Groups 3-8) training.

Voluntary and Community Sector Engagement

An action identified in the 2012/13 Annual Report was the need for further work to develop the support voluntary, community and faith groups received in ensuring minimum safeguarding standards were in place and understood by staff/volunteers.

The Board has continued to work with Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action (BFVA) to engage with local groups and has made available a number of consultation events during 2013/14 to develop a better understand of the safeguarding issues they encounter and ensure they are clear about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children and young people.

Outcome:

As a result, work continues to ensure ongoing links between the Board, BFVA and local groups, as well as improved regular communications through the BFVA newsletter. Use of self-audit materials continues to be developed and it is hoped that a number of groups will choose to access the support offered by Safe Network managed by the NSPCC (www.safenetwork.org.uk).

2.2. Individual Case Reviews:

Serious Case Reviews (SCRs)

During the period covered by this annual report, a SCR was commissioned by the LSCB in respect of a child who sustained unexplained serious injury. Charges have now been made in relation to alleged offences committed against the child and are the subject of an ongoing prosecution at the time of completing this report.

As a result of the criminal proceedings underway the LSCB is not able to publish the findings from the review at this time. This section therefore relates to the learning from a new process and further details of the SCR will be included in the 2014/15 report as appropriate.

Once the decision was made that the case met the criteria for a SCR the LSCB made the decision to use the Significant Incident Learning Process (SILP) approach to conduct the review.

An independent reviewer was commissioned and led the process which included a focus on the combined accounts of partner agencies involvement with the child and the child's family, together with the key themes that emerged from 2 inter-agency learning events to which frontline workers and managers were invited.

Outcomes:

Whilst the SCR cannot be published due to ongoing criminal proceedings it is important to note the learning by the LSCB and partner agencies of a new approach to undertaking a SCR has been significant; and the learning events were central in terms of multi-agency engagement in the review and learning from the information as the review progressed. This has meant that practitioners have not had to wait for a report and recommendations but have instead been able to take away the learning and implement in practice within their own agencies in real time.

Although the report is not yet published action plans have been developed in response to improvements identified and will be monitored by the LSCB to ensure required improvements are made and sustained.

2.3. Review of Safeguarding Incidents and Case Reviews

Partnership Review

The findings of the SCR also echoed a number of areas highlighted within the LSCB's 'Partnership Review' which concluded in 2013/14. It commissioned an Independent Author to lead a review in respect of a young child who sustained non accidental injuries, but did not meet the criteria for a SCR.

The LSCB agreed to use a systems approach to consider this case, based on the Welsh Government's Practice Review methodology, the review involved multi-agency front-line staff and resulted in an action plan designed to ensure the following areas of learning were disseminated and included:

- The adversity associated with homelessness and challenges to service provision when families move outside of the jurisdiction of partner agencies.
- The importance of understanding the dynamics and challenges of working with domestic abuse where families deny its existence/reject support offered.
- The necessity to assess individuals parenting/caring responsibilities when commissioning/addressing 'anger management' problems.
- Understanding detail of the range and location of marks that should give rise to concerns in regard to young children as stated within the LSCB Bruising Protocol.
- The importance of early resolution in respect of contradictory medical opinion and necessity for children to be thoroughly examined.
- The learning from the review to be shared with neighbouring LSCB's.
- The need for the LSCB to ensure a range of appropriate safeguarding training is available commensurate with the varying roles and responsibilities of professionals from different disciplines.

The SCR Sub Committee also considered other examples of cases that partner agencies had felt raised concerns in respect of the management of child protection and where learning had been identified.

In Case 1 a young person was alleged to have committed serious sexual offences and the educational establishment they attended had reviewed their response to the emerging concerns regarding inappropriate behaviours and identified learning which has informed their training and policy development.

In Case 2 a young person with serious mental health problems was unable to access appropriate services within the timescales appropriate to their needs. The trust responsible for the provision of services undertook a review and shared the learning that was identified.

2.4. Child Deaths

The LSCB has a statutory responsibility for ensuring that a review of each death of a child, normally resident in their area, is undertaken by a Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP). This follows a separate but related process in which an initial 'Rapid Response' is made by a team of key professionals who come together for the purpose of enquiring into and evaluating each unexpected death.

Bracknell Forest LSCB works in partnership with 5 neighbouring LSCB's and jointly commissions a Pan Berkshire CDOP to operate as a Pan Berkshire LSCB Sub Group and to fulfil the requirements identified in Working Together 2013.

Panel membership is drawn from organisations represented on the LSCB, but has the flexibility to co-opt other relevant professionals where necessary and that are accountable to the LSCB Chairs.

The key purpose for reviewing child deaths is to learn lessons and reduce child deaths in the future. However, the panel also identify areas in which all professionals, including healthcare and social care professionals can learn and improve the care they provide to children in order to help reduce the rates of child deaths.

As part of its function it routinely collects data on the following risk factors; maternal obesity, maternal smoking, co-sleeping, smoking parent/carer, domestic abuse, IVF, alcohol, late bookings and consanguinity of parents.

Across the six Berkshire authorities there has been a continued reduction in the number of child deaths as shown in the table below:

2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
80	57	42 (of these 5 related to child deaths in Bracknell Forest)

Due to the small number of child deaths during the period and out of respect for the privacy of their families, details of their individual circumstances are not reported here. However, none of the children were subject to child protection plans or any statutory orders at the time of their deaths and the learning in regard to the broader themes emerging from the work of the CDOPs is available at:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-child-death-reviews

The local reduction reported last year was fully investigated and while it coincided with a reduction in the numbers of multiple births that year (which are known to carry an increased risk related to low birth weight) it remains difficult to attribute causes for the reduction however, the panel took consistent action to promote:

- Neonatal reviews and thematic risk factor monitoring;
- A 'one at a time' message for those undergoing IVF treatment

Outcomes:

As a result of the findings of the CDOP a consistent set of recommendations for “Safe Sleeping” were developed and adopted by all agencies.

From September 2013, a rota of ‘rapid response’ health professionals has provided cover over weekends and bank holidays to enable these home visits to take place within 24 hour timeframe as required, although the number of cases in which this is necessary has been very small.

In order to provide consistency and clarity across the county, work has begun to review the health rapid response guidelines, in particular to look at the interface between child death rapid response and child protection procedures in those cases where there are concerns that abuse or neglect may have played a part in the death.

Key Learning identified by CDOP:

- Work on genetic conditions that began in 2013-14 will continue in 2014-15 and an evaluation will inform county wide approaches.
- Reducing rates of neonatal deaths remains a priority. Infections are more common in neonatal deaths where the child is born with a low birth weight and risk factors in the household such as smoking may be contributing factors.
- Accidental deaths and in particular drowning accidents are preventable and the panel recommend use of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) swimming pool accident guidance available at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg179.htm>

2.5. Performance Monitoring and Reporting

Bracknell Forest LSCB (in collaboration with neighbouring LSCBs) has sought to further consolidate the information it gathers in respect of partner agencies performance. The dataset used during this period reflected local priorities determined by the LSCBs and helped determine the extent to which organisations ensured children and young people were kept safe.

The LSCB aims to collate, analyse and report this data to partner agencies on a quarterly basis and where necessary commission further scrutiny to be undertaken. The information gleaned also informs the Board’s strategic priorities and future business planning.

A list of the data routinely monitored by the LSCB is contained in appendix C

During 2013/14 the LSCB has been encouraged by the following developments which are in addition to the progress made against performance for the targeted priority areas.

Child Protection Plans: There was a small decrease in the number of children and young people subject to Child Protection Plans in 2013-14. At the end of March 2014, 108 plans were in place, a decrease of just under 4% from the same time the previous year. This however remains a volatile area and numbers can increase / decrease on a monthly basis.

The LSCB receives a six monthly report from the Child Protection Conference Chair which provides an analysis of the conference activity and analysis of the key presenting factors; the combination of Neglect, Domestic Abuse and Drug/Alcohol in particular appear to continue to present a major risk in the lives of the children and young people subject to such plans.

School exclusions: The use of the Fair Access Panel has continued to ensure that no children in Bracknell Forest have been permanently excluded from school during 2013/14. This is a positive outcome for our children and young people and reflects a positive approach by schools and the local authority in managing and supporting children and young people who may be at risk of exclusion.

First time entrants to the Youth Justice System: In the last three years there has been a steady decrease in the numbers of young people entering the youth justice system. The number of first time entrants to the Youth Justice system has decreased by 49% from 34 to 26 between 2012-13 and 2013-14.

This coincides with the redirection of focus and resources into early intervention work with young people at risk of offending. The Youth Offending Prevention Service works with young people following the early signs of the risk of offending and deters them from going on to become offenders in the criminal justice system.

Victims of Crime (under the age of 18 years): The total number of children/young people recorded as being victims of crime, and who as a result were injured, reduced by 10% to 44 when compared with the previous year. There was also a welcomed reduction in the number of children/young people who were victims of robberies. This 40% reduction (to 6) is cautiously welcomed given the relatively small numbers who were robbed (10) in the previous year.

Sexual offences against u18 year olds: Although there has not been a repeat in the significant reduction in sexual offences recorded in previous years, it would appear that the trend reported in 2012/13 (66 offences) has not returned to the higher level seen in previous years and despite a slight increase (67 offences) during 2013/14, the overall yearly trend has remained steady.

The LSCB is of course aware that most child victims do not report such offences and while such data is important the findings of research in regard to the true prevalence of sexual abuse is equally important to informing our appreciation of the likely scale of such harm.

The LSCB will continue to monitor performance information and in particular will be focusing on:

The impact of homelessness: The number of families who were statutory homeless in 2013/14 was 110 (compared to 90 in 2012/13), within these families there were 202 children (compared to 110 in 2-12/13). The main reasons for this have been financial problems and loss of tenancies. The LSCB will undertake further work during 2014/15 to gain a better understanding of the issues and the impact on children and young people.

Young Carers: 150 young carers are currently known to Bracknell Forest Council. 70% of these children/young people are between the ages of 10 and 16 and 1/3 of them have a medical, disability or special educational need of their own. 83% are thought to be caring for an adult and 46 % are caring for a brother or sister (some are caring for both).

It is estimated that there is likely to be twice as many young carers in the Borough and following the implementation of the Local Authority's 'Strategy for Young Carers 2013 – 2017', the numbers already identified is expected to increase. The LSCB will continue to monitor the number of young carers, but more importantly receive assurance as to

the support they receive and the impact of the care they provide on their health and wellbeing.

Private Fostering: Despite the efforts of the Local Authority and partner agencies to accurately identify private fostering arrangements the numbers of cases reported to them remains very small. In 2012/13 the number of children known to be privately fostered was only 2 and while this had increased to 3 by March 2014, the LSCB is aware that it is very unlikely that this represents the true extent of such arrangements for children/young people in the Borough. As a result this remains an area that the LSCB will continue to scrutinise and proactively raise awareness of with partner agencies.

Missing Children: During the period 1/12/12 to 19/9/13 there were 232 missing children reports, this related to 97 individuals with 46 of those who were missing a number of times (Missing Children Report to LSCB). Work has been underway to review the way in which Missing Children procedures are managed and supported and during 2014/15 Missing Children will be monitored as part of the remit of the Child Sexual Exploitation Operations Group.

2.6. Involvement of Children/Young People and Families

The LSCB continues to encourage partner agencies to ensure children/young people are consulted and/or involved in any area of their work that might impact on their lives. The Board is aware of the ongoing work within local youth services to engage with schools, youth groups and the youth parliament and the progress being made to improve the use of information technology and social media.

Bracknell Forest Survey of Children and Young People:

The LSCB and the Children and Young People's Partnership jointly commissioned the Bracknell Forest Survey of Children and Young People 2013. The survey was undertaken by The Children's Society in order to provide independence and impartiality. The survey used an online survey to gain the views of 2,500 children between the ages of nine and sixteen living in Bracknell Forest, with an additional 200 children and young people taking part in focus groups which explored further findings from the survey.

The survey questionnaire covered a wide range of aspects of children's lives and provides an important insight into children's well-being in Bracknell Forest.

Key findings from the survey:

- Most children in Bracknell Forest aged eight to fifteen are relatively happy with their lives while around 8% of children have low overall well-being. This proportion is similar to the national average.
- Children's well-being declines with age. Also, children who say they are disabled or have difficulties with learning, those who are eligible for free school meals and those who are not living with their family are more likely to have low well-being.
- Children's levels of happiness with many aspects of their lives are similar in Bracknell Forest to the national average. Children in Bracknell Forest are happier than average with their prospects for the future, their money/possessions, and the amount of choice that they have, their home and their school. They are slightly less happy than average with their health and appearance.

- In terms of school and learning, children in Bracknell Forest appear to be relatively happy with most aspects of school life, and slightly happier than the national average with their relationships with teachers.
- Children in Bracknell Forest generally expressed positive views about their local area, on or above the national average.
- Around a quarter of the children surveyed said that they had been bullied in the last three months. This included bullying in school, going to and from school and in their local area, but also bullying online and through texting. Experiences of being bullied are linked with lower than average overall well-being.

The findings from the survey were presented widely to partners and stakeholders including a Member Development Session. A final report with key recommendations has been shared widely with all our partners so that they can consider the issues and respond appropriately to the views expressed in key plans and strategies.

The survey report can be found at:

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/bracknellforestchildrenandyoungpeoplespartnership>

Engagement of children/young people in some of the quality assurance activity undertaken to date has not been as successful as had been hoped. The age of the children involved within the serious case review and partnership review precluded their direct involvement, although panel members strove to ensure that the reviews remained child centred and were informed of the impact on the children in question and by similar perspectives within published articles and research.

[Agency activity to involve children, young people and families](#)

Whilst the direct involvement of children and young people in LSCB activity has been challenging the LSCB remains appraised of work being undertaken directly with children, young people and families on a regular basis.

This includes:

- The LSCB receives the annual report of the IRO which demonstrates the involvement of children, young people and families in their LAC review process. Child participation is 100% and there are a range of creative ways in which participation is encouraged.
- The Children in Care Council (called SiLSiP in Bracknell Forest) has played an active role in planning and developing services. Supported by a Participation Officer SiLSiP present information to the Corporate Parenting Panel, they have an opportunity to meet with the Director and Lead Member of Children's Services, and in 2013/14 they developed a training package called "Do They Know", aimed at practitioners and managers at all levels; it has been delivered by looked after young people to members of the Corporate Parenting Panel, to the Director of Children, Young People and Learning and other senior managers and a range of practitioners. The training continues to be rolled out and there has been interest from other authorities in the training.
- The LSCB receives the annual report of the Statutory Complaints function which provides an overview of the number and type of complaints made against Children's Social Care under either the Corporate or Statutory Complaints Procedure. The LSCB has noted that in the year 2013/14 there were no complaints made by

children and young people and that this has been an area of work identified for further development by the Complaints Service.

- Targeted activity with children and young people in schools includes the use of the Lobster DVD developed by young people on the subject of domestic abuse.
- Ongoing delivery of Chelsea's Choice a drama production for young people in Secondary School about the risks of Child Sexual Exploitation.
- A campaign led by Bracknell Forest Community Safety Partnership (CSP), is targeted at primary school pupils across the borough. Six schools have already taken part in a pilot of Digiduck's Big Decision Workshop, in which year one children (aged five and six) build on their understanding of jokes and how they can sometimes be hurtful. Another six borough primary schools will be welcoming Digiduck into classrooms this term.
- Each Child Protection Conference provides an opportunity for parents and professionals attending to complete an evaluation form about their experience of the conference. These are completed regularly by participants and feedback is reported to the LSCB through the CP Chair reports and continues to inform development and improvement in CP Conferences. Work is underway to look at how children and young people can be more involved including the use of advocacy in conferences.

In order to ensure more systematic support for the involvement of children/young people in the work of the LSCB, the Partnership Forum committed to redesign its future agenda to ensure that children and young people can directly and indirectly engage with its members. This approach will ensure that at each meeting of the Forum, time will be ring-fenced to ensure members consider the views of children/young people whether or not they physically attend.

2.7 LSCB Sub Groups

During 2013/14 the LSCB undertook a review of its role, functions and structure to ensure that it was able to address key priorities and target resources appropriately through sub group activity with a focus on quality assurance and the development of the new learning and improvement framework.

As a result of the review the LSCB decided that it would rationalise its sub-group structure and streamline a number of groups under the new and emerging learning and improvement framework which led to the following sub groups being discontinued to be replaced by a new LSCB Learning and Improvement Sub Group (LISG) to be in place from 2014 onwards.

- Serious Case Review Sub Group
- Raising Awareness Sub Group
- Quality Standards and Case Review Sub Group

Serious Case Review (SCR) Sub Group

During 2013/14 the SCR sub group met on a bi-monthly basis and through its work ensured that the LSCB was able consider notifications of cases where it was thought that learning could lead to improvements in services for children/young people, including cases requiring a SCR.

To assist the LSCB in managing such notifications the group developed a new SCR/Case Review notification protocol for partner agencies and a process to agree

how referrals and requests for information from partner agencies will be dealt with. This included cases that fell below the threshold for undertaking a SCR, but where learning could be established to ensure improvements in local arrangements to safeguard children/young people.

As previously reported, during this period the sub group also oversaw a 'Partnership Review' in relation to a young child who sustained not accidental injuries.

The SCRSG also recommended to that a SCR be commissioned in respect of a child, already referred to in the earlier part of this report and it is anticipated that a report in respect of that review will be published following the conclusion of the associated criminal proceeding.

Outcome:

The LSCB has been keen to embrace the opportunity to adopt different methodologies appropriate to the circumstances of the cases notified. The Partnership Review and the SCR have both used methodologies that have involved front line staff and attempted to engage parents / carers in the process. As a result the LSCB has been able to reflect on the merits of the approaches and plan to undertake formal survey of those involved to inform a set of standards to support the commissioning of future reviews.

The sub group also received the minutes and monitored the actions of the pan Berkshire CDOP Panel, received and discussed national SCRs undertaken and considered the NSPCC's thematic analyses of SCR findings.

There has been excellent agency engagement in the work of this sub group with almost 100% attendance at each meeting which is hoped will continue with this group now becoming part of the Learning Improvement Sub Group.

Quality Standards and Case Reviews Sub Group

During 2013/14 the Quality Standards and Case Review (QSCR) Sub-Group provided an important quality assurance role, combining audit and scrutiny functions to ensure the effectiveness of services to children / young people and their families.

The QSCR sub group has met formally on 5 occasions during 2013/14, but additional work was also undertaken by some members of the group outside of these meetings.

Much of the sub group's capacity has been taken up with conducting Multi-Agency Case File Audits and developing a quality assurance and learning improvement framework. The cases audited support the work of the SCR Sub Group in respect of the reviews commissioned and further enabled the LSCB to identify areas of good practice and those requiring improvement.

Auditing Activity

Substance Misuse

As this was one of the LSCB's targeted priorities, the sub-group commenced an in-depth review of cases where substance misuse was identified as a key issue resulting in child protection interventions. The Findings from these case file audits identified a number of areas of good practice as well as areas for improvement.

Within the practice reviewed, skilled staff demonstrated their ability to engage family members previously identified as being 'unwilling to cooperate'. In contrast to earlier contacts with other professionals, these staff addressed barriers in respect of language, culture and gender and clearly approached these with sensitivity.

The panel also identified a number of specific actions that were immediately addressed by the agencies involved, as well as those that related to themes previously identified and highlighted the need for improvement.

These included the importance of:

- Sensitive engagement with families, recognising the impact of adversity on individuals' ability to co-operate and the use of professional interpreters where this is necessary.
- Thorough assessments of substance misuse during pregnancy, and to ensure a detailed assessment of an individual life experiences is gathered, including evidence of previous substance misuse and engagement with services.
- Staff development plans that promote inter-disciplinary collaboration and consider the merits of work placements within partner agencies / services.
- Employers ensuring staff communicate any significant changes in family circumstances / case management to partner agencies.
- Employers ensuring staff are informed of how to gather, record and present information regarding vulnerable children / young people.

The above recommendations have been combined with existing action plans established from previous audits and have been disseminated within partner organisations. Progress against these actions is now be monitored by the LISG.

Domestic Abuse

The previous audit work undertaken by the Quality Standards and Case Review sub group in regard to Domestic Abuse continues to be monitored by the Domestic Abuse Executive group and also forms part of the above combined action plan monitored by the LSCB Executive.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Sub Group

The CSE Strategic Sub Group was developed during 2013/14 and supports the LSCB Targeted Priorities (To work with partner agencies to develop a strategy for the coordination and provision of support to young people at risk of CSE).

The Strategic CSE Group has developed a CSE Strategy and has been working closely with the CSE Operational Group to implement and monitor the strategy. Members of the group have attended a number of regional and national events to ensure they are informed of the latest developments in this area of work. The Group also incorporates some of the wider factors that contribute to the risk of CSE including E safety.

In February 2014 there were 27 young people who were being monitored by the CSE Operations Group which has now been reduced down to 17 as a result of improved monitoring and risk assessment tools. The work of the Operations Group includes monitoring missing children as part of its remit.

A key piece of work planned for 2014/15 is 'Problem Profiling' of CSE in the borough which will further inform the LSCB work in relation to this group of children/young people.

The LSCB has maintained a programme of auditing and is conducting an ongoing multi-agency case file audit in respect of CSE. One of the cases in question has been selected for further stage of audit and it is intended that the young person, their parents/carers and professionals (in direct contact with them) will be offered the opportunity to contribute their views in regard to the services provided.

Outcomes:

- Chelsea's Choice has been delivered to schools and targeted around 1,200 young people. A second round planned in 2014.
- E safety training sessions for the workforce.
- Quality Standards and Case Review Sub Group completed an in-depth multi-agency case review of three CSE cases – learning from these audits being taken forward through the new Learning and Improvement Group.
- CSE training programme in operation with targeted multi-agency workshops being delivered to practitioners. CSE e-learning package also developed and available for practitioners.

The CSE Strategy can be accessed at: <http://www.bflscb.org.uk/publications.htm>

Training and Development Group

Bracknell Forest LSCB commissions multi-agency training through Bracknell Forest Council and has a strong track record of providing professional development opportunities to a diverse workforce, including staff from both statutory and voluntary agencies.

More recently e learning has supplemented group based courses in respect of specific topics such as CSE and many areas of the LSCBB Training Programme have been developed in collaboration with neighbouring LSCBs.

The delivery of training is co-ordinated by the East Berkshire Training Group, with the overall strategy being managed via a Pan Berkshire LSCB Sub Group. During 2013/14 work was undertaken to develop the evaluation of the training delivered and the merits of different methodologies were the subject of a small scale evaluation.

While the Pan Berkshire collaboration has to an extent ensured good levels of co-ordination, it is an area identified as being in need of further review and evaluation. This work is scheduled to commence in September 2014, following the appointment of a new Chair of the strategic sub group.

Locally, the training provided is detailed in a Training Calendar, which is disseminated across partner agencies and available on the LSCB website. It details a comprehensive range of training available across the scope of universal, targeted and specialist safeguarding training.

During 2013/14 over 50 safeguarding courses were provided across Berkshire offering learning in respect of

Children with Disabilities

Safer Care

Parental Mental Health

Domestic Abuse

Disguised Compliance

E Safety

Child Sexual Exploitation

Substance Misuse

The provision of training in relation to specific topics, compliments the core Universal and Targeted Training provided on a rolling inter-agency programme of inter-agency training and which is delivered on a single agency basis where the capacity of LSCB training cannot accommodate the volume of staff wanting to access it. This is an area under constant review as the LSCB strongly promotes inter-agency training as its preferred approach.

Outcome:

Analysis of participant's course evaluations evidenced high levels of satisfaction in respect of the inter-agency training attended and in a sample of staff who had attended multi-agency training in East Berkshire 93% reported that it had impacted on their practice. "The survey did however highlight some of the challenges of inter-agency training and it appearing that for some staff such as childminders courses may have contained too much information and been overwhelming. As a result consideration will be given to the pathways for these staff to help prepare them for safeguarding training and revisions made to courses where this is necessary.

A further ongoing theme identified by the LSCB relates to the involvement of men in the lives of their children and the extent to which services engaged with them. As a result the need for improvement in these areas has been included in core safeguarding training and 2 specific inter-agency workshops were commissioned to help explore this issue in more detail.

Early Intervention Group

The Early Intervention Group has met quarterly during 2013/14 and went through a period of reforming due to a change in the terms of reference. This enabled a greater focus on early intervention and the group has regularly monitored the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and Early Intervention Hub through regular receipt of reports and data. In addition the group has been able to support the CAF / Early Intervention Officer to address challenges as they arise, this includes practical and organisational issues such as the timings of the meeting, procedural issues and to highlight where there may be gaps in provision.

The LSCB received the annual report for the CAF and the EI hub for the period of 2012/13 this year and will receive the 2013/14 reports later in 2014.

The group has supported a joint Pathways Project with West Berkshire to develop and refine models for early intervention. This project has included the collection of professional views undertaken independently by The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), support of the project leads undertaken by Interface Associates, a joint learning event in July 2013 with West Berkshire which brought together a multi-agency audience to further develop and refine a model for early intervention, a joint training session for practitioners from Bracknell Forest and West

Berkshire on family and parenting work, and an independent survey of families who have used early intervention support undertaken independently by NfER.

Outcome:

As a result of the Joint Pathways project a range of practitioners have been involved and consulted on the review of the multi-agency threshold document and contributed to the new thresholds being agreed which clearly identify the threshold for early help and for a referral to the Early Intervention Hub and to Tier 3 services.

The views of families using these systems have been incorporated into the process.

New threshold document can be accessed at:

<http://www.bflscb.org.uk/publications.htm>

The group oversaw the ongoing work commissioned by the LSCB on neglect and a “Really Useful Guide to Neglect” to help practitioners working with children and young people to recognise neglect was produced and published.

Outcome:

The “Really Useful Guide to Neglect” has been widely disseminated to practitioners across Bracknell Forest, and is used in CAF training to raise awareness. The document has been linked on the Pan Berkshire Policies and Procedures pages and is also available on the LSCB web site and the Council’s safeguarding web pages.

<http://www.bflscb.org.uk/publications.htm>

Raising Awareness

During 2013/14 the Raising Awareness Sub Group continued to work closely with a number of the LSCB’s Sub Groups in order to ensure that key messages were communicated to the workforce and wider public.

The work of this group has now been subsumed within the Learning and Improvement Sub-Group where partner agencies will be expected to take greater responsibility for ensuring information is disseminated.

During 2013/14 the group gave prioritisation to ensuring that learning from cases of Child Sexual Exploitation was communicated. Activity to support this involved the co-ordination of productions of ‘Chelsea’s Choice’ (a CSE based drama production), a leaflet campaign to over 1,200 children within local schools and the distribution of guidance for professionals

In addition schools also used a Barnardo’s leaflet to further inform Parents, Carers, Young People and Professionals about CSE. This was further supported by inputs on CSE from CEOP, Barnardo’s and the use of ‘My Dangerous Loverboy’ training materials within in PSHE time in schools.

To support the work to reduce the use of Mephedrone by young people in the Borough, the group produced leaflets for young people and proposed further work be done to ensure feedback is sought from young people on this leaflet and other methods of communicating information to them.

LSCB Conference

The annual LSCB Conference was also a significant achievement with a focus on neglect the key note speaker was The Right Honourable Frank Field (MP) who spoke passionately about the impact of poverty on neglect. Professor Brigid Daniel (Professor of Social Work at the University of Stirling) presented her research and a range of workshops enabled 200 practitioners to learn more about neglect and work underway on a local and national level to identify, understand and address issues of neglect within families.

The conference was evaluated highly with 74% of participants saying it was excellent and 26% saying it was good.

LSCB website: <http://www.bflscb.org.uk/index.htm>

Work has continued on the development of the LSCB website as a platform for making information more accessible and to assure its contents more frequently than in previous years. This work remains ongoing with a new format being developed for 2014/15 which will enable improved information and accessibility.

LSCB Safeguarding Cue Card

This was updated by the Raising Awareness Group and over 2,000 copies have been printed and circulated to practitioners giving important guidance on key safeguarding issues such as how to raise concerns, the role of the LADO.

LSCB Newsletter

Key issues relating to safeguarding children/young people were also disseminated with the LSCB Newsletter and further highlighted the key priorities for the Board as well as learning established from the work of other LSCB's.

Policies and Procedures Group

The Group meets on average four times a year and following the agreement for each of the Berkshire LSCB's to host one of the Pan Berkshire Groups the Policies and Procedures Group is hosted by Slough LSCB. A new chair took over the meeting in January 2014, prior to that the Chair arrangements had been less stable. The Group has revised terms of reference to reflect the new arrangements.

A mixed range of activity has been undertaken during the year and a key focus of the group has been in ensuring that the policies and procedures on the system were reflective of the revised Working Together Guidance. Discussion and comparison has taken place across the six Berkshire authorities including an analysis of the similarities and differences in content.

Outcome:

Policies and Procedures supporting the workforce across Berkshire have remained under review and updated as relevant, this includes:

- Updating the CSE Policies and Procedures – there has been agreement across the six authorities to use a single tool to assess risk of CSE.
- Allegations against staff and carers.
- New threshold documents updated on the system and the local authority referral assessment and referral procedures.
- Policy on Female Genital Mutilation updated

3 LSCB TARGETED PRIORITIES

The LSCB Business Plan (2011 – 2014) identified a number of targeted priority areas which were felt to be important in safeguarding children and young people. These were:

TP 1	Reduce the impact of domestic abuse on children, young people and families
TP 2	Reduce the impact of substance and alcohol abuse on children, young people and families
TP 3	Develop an understanding of neglect and the impact this has on children, young people and families.
TP 4	Develop and implement the framework for Early Help and monitor the impact this as on children, young people and families
TP 5	To work with partner agencies to develop a strategy for the coordination and Provision of support to young people at risk of child sexual exploitation.

TP 1: Reduce the impact of domestic abuse on children, young people and families

The Domestic Abuse Forum Sub Group reports to the Community Safety Partnership which has a lead in the development and implementation of the Domestic Abuse Strategy. The LSCB monitors progress through a regular report on progress presented to the LSCB and through ongoing audit and quality assurance activity.

Examples of progress during 2013/14:

- The level of domestic abuse recorded crime increased when comparing figures for 2013/14 and the previous year. Domestic abuse non-recorded crime (i.e. where a crime has not been committed but the incident has been reported to the police) decreased by 7% during the same period.
- There has been a reduction in the number of repeat incidents of domestic abuse committed by the 2012/13 Domestic Abuse Service Coordination Cohort which was 116 incidents in 2012/13, reduced to 63 incidents in 2013/14.
- In February 2014, 11 children attended a specialist provision for children and young people who have witnessed domestic abuse (PICADA).
- 40 referrals to the Domestic Abuse Perpetrators Programme (down on the 2012/13 figure of 54 referrals). An evaluation of the project was concluded and published in 2013 http://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/WDAB01/WDAB01_home.cfm
- A total of 20 children came off a child protection plan in 2013/14 where domestic abuse was the primary factor, which exceeds the target set of 10, but is lower than the 2012/13 figure of 25.
- Youth Offending Service delivered 2 programmes called “Stepping Up” to young men in year 11 at the Pupil Referral Unit.
- Children’s Centres have been running a “Freedom Programme” throughout the year aimed at low level domestic abuse.
- The number of referrals to MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) has increased by 16% between 2012/13 and 2013/14.

- The number of children in the households of cases discussed at MARAC has increased to 127 (this may include some double counting).

The Domestic Abuse Service Co-ordination (DASC) oversees all the ongoing work that is in place with a cohort of medium risk cases where children are on Child Protection Plans or are CIN and where there are high repeat rates of domestic abuse. DASC ensure referrals for support to victims are made to Berkshire Women's Aid as well as to services for perpetrators of DA. This approach to DA is currently the subject of an external evaluation being undertaken by Cambridge University and whose results are due to be reported in October 2014.

The LSCB is aware that Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA) evaluation of local Domestic Abuse had recommended that the number of Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) held within Bracknell Forest was fewer than they would estimate should be held for the size of our population.

As a result, the Board was pleased that during 2103/14 the number of MARAC increased by 16% and considered inter-agency responses to cases involving 127 children.

Domestic abuse has remained a key feature in respect of cases coming to the attention of Children's Social Care. In addition to the Probation Service's 'Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme' (IDAP), the specialist Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Service (DAPS) have continued to support the work co-ordinated by the Local Authority in respect of families where children were the subject of Child Protection Plans. The DAPS worked with 32 men during 2013/14 and work also commenced during this period to establish a brief early intervention service 'Plain Talking'. It is intended that this new service will provide a confidential and anonymous helpline for anyone concerned about their violence and/or abuse towards a partner or ex partner.

The impact of DA on children/young people is well documented and the longer term impact of the work being co-ordinated across the Borough will continue to be the subject of further evaluation.

As a result Domestic Abuse remains a targeted priority for the LSCB in the new 2014 – 2017 business Plan.

TP 2: Reduce the impact of substance and alcohol abuse on children, young people and families.

Work undertaken to address substance and alcohol misuse issues is coordinated by the Drug and Alcohol Strategy Group which covers both adult and young people within its remit.

Examples of progress during 2013/14:

- In Bracknell Forest, 65 parents accessed services in connection with their drug use and 75 sought treatment from alcohol services. The number of parents accessing services for alcohol dependency has reduced by 37 (112 in 2012/13).
- The number of young people presenting to treatment was 76 in 2013/14 which is slightly lower than the previous year. Of these the number using amphetamines (which includes mephedrone) is 53% which is higher than the national figure of 10%.
- Young People's Needs Assessment completed and informing the Substance Misuse Strategy 2014 -2017.

National, regional and local analysis of children/young people's experiences demonstrates the harmful impact substance misuse has on their parents/cares capacity and in turn on their children's development.

The LSCB has also identified substance or alcohol misuse as a significant component associated with children/young people in need of protection and note that this along with parental mental ill-health and domestic abuse are the top three issues that impact on the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

While detailed data is gathered locally in respect of adult substance misuse, it has been acknowledged that further efforts could be made to provide analysis of the impact this has on parents'/carer's capacity to ensure the wellbeing of children/young people.

Analysis of children/young people's cases coming to the attention of Children's Social Care services demonstrates a very clear causal link between parents/carers substance misuse and child abuse and neglect. Children/Young People

The combination of substance misuse by parents/cares and that associated with young people's own use has resulted in this area remaining a priority for the LSCB.

TP 3: Develop an understanding of neglect and the impact this has on children, young people and families.

During 2013/14 the LSCB set up a task and finish group to undertake some initial research about neglect and its impact locally. The initial work was completed and a report presented to the LSCB to conclude the task and finish group. The continuation of a focus on neglect was then passed over to the Early Intervention Group; this included the completion of the "Really Useful Guide to Neglect".

Examples of progress during 2013/14:

- The annual LSCB Conference was also a significant achievement with a focus on neglect the key note speaker was The Right Honourable Frank Field (MP) who spoke passionately about the impact of poverty on neglect. Professor Brigid Daniel (Professor of Social Work at the University of Stirling) presented her research and a range of workshops enabled 200 practitioners to learn more about neglect and work underway on a local and national level to identify, understand and address issues of neglect within families.
- Monitoring of the categories of children subject to a Child Protection Plan shows that at the end of March 2014 of the 108 children subject to a child protection plan 61 (56.5%) were under the category of neglect. In 2012/13 this was 50% so there has been a slight rise in this category.
- During 2013/14 two pieces of research were undertaken in Bracknell Forest, one undertaken internally as an analysis of Children in Need looking at national research, national and local data and an audit of 25 cases. The outcome of this research was presented to the LSCB Forum and key messages shared.
- The second piece of research was linked to the Nfer (National Foundation for Educational Research) as part the Local Authority Research Consortium (LARC) work. LARC 5 had a specific focus on neglect and the final report was published and shared during 2013/14. http://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/LRCF01/LRCF01_home.cfm

Neglect remains an area of concern for the LSCB, this concern informed by ongoing national issues, and through local research. It will therefore remain a targeted priority for the LSCB Business Plan 2014 -2017.

TP 4: Develop and implement the framework for Early Help and monitor the impact this has on children, young people and families

The LSCB contributed to the development of *“Creating Opportunities – Positive Futures a prevention and early intervention strategy for children, young people and families in Bracknell Forest 2012 – 2014”* and has continued to monitor early help as a targeted priority area.

Examples of progress during 2013/14:

- There were 345 Common Assessment Framework (CAF) early help assessments completed; this is a 26% increase on the previous year where 273 assessments were completed.
- A new Family CAF form has been developed to support more holistic family assessment and of the 345 assessments completed 80 of these were on a Family CAF.
- During the year 2013/14 only 16 CAF’s were referred to Children’s Social Care, less than the previous year where 19 CAF’s were referred.
- There were 364 cases referred to the Early Intervention Hub in 2013/14 (no comparative data available as this is the first full year of operation).
- Of the cases referred to the Hub 60 of these have been as a “step down” from Children’s Social Care.
- 8 cases were “stepped up” to Children’s Social Care from the Hub.
- An evaluation of the Hub based on the first partial year showed that 75% of the cases that stepped down from Children’s Social Care remained closed.
- The number of first time entrants into the Youth Justice System continue to fall and was 26 in 2013/14, a reduction on the previous year (34).
- The Early Help Sub Group oversaw the completion of the Pathways Project which informed a review of the thresholds for levels of need, this helped to clarify the threshold for the CAF (Level 2) and the threshold for the Hub (Level 2a) for more complex cases.

The Early Intervention Hub is an important part of the early help strategy providing the vehicle to support children, young people and families at a lower level of need and providing a forum to “step down” cases and support families to prevent further referrals to Tier 3 services.

Early Help remains a high profile and important element of work and will continue to be targeted priority in the LSCB Business Plan 2014 – 2017.

TP 5: To work with partner agencies to develop a strategy for the coordination and Provision of support to young people at risk of child sexual exploitation

This targeted priority was added to the LSCB Business Plan for the year 2013/14 and a CSE Strategy Sub Group was agreed to develop a strategy and action plan to address the issues emerging.

Examples of progress during 2013/13:

- CSE Strategy Group has continued to develop and implement its CSE Strategy.

- Agreement to use a consistent risk assessment tool across Berkshire and the Operations Group has used the tool and more accurate estimates of young people at possible risk of such abuse has been revised from 27 to 17.
- Members of the inter-agency CSE Operations Group monitored plans that were in place to safeguard them.
- CSE training delivered and e-learning module developed and rolled out.
- Awareness raising for young people in schools through drama productions.
- Focus on issues that contribute to CSE, including e-safety.

The LSCB plans to coordinate further 'problem profiling' of CSE within Bracknell Forest in the hope that this will better inform our local strategy which aims to, *Prevent CSE, Identify victims/perpetrators* and ensure successful *Prosecution* of those who commit/facilitate such crimes.

The LSCB is aware of the risk of children/young people being trafficked and it is hoped that the ongoing development of the CSE Operation Group will enable better information sharing to inform a more accurate understanding of this. The recent amalgamation of the CSE Operation Group and the Missing Children's Panel will provide further improvements in the pooling of intelligence and inter-agency planning. CSE will therefore remain a targeted priority in the business Plan 2014-2017.

3.1 Priority areas for future development

There are many areas of data and information that are kept under review by the LSCB through performance monitoring, case reviews and audit activity. In light of the information we have gathered during this year, it is recommended that the following issues are added to the 5 Targeted Priorities and are also routinely monitored by the LSCB:

The impact of Parental Mental Ill-health

It is proposed that the experience of children/young people living with a parent/carer with a mental health problem is monitored through a performance management approach. Consideration will be given to data collection that might assist the LSCB evaluate the robustness of partner agencies actions to safeguarding such children/young people and further auditing activity.

Misuse of technologies

Young people in the Borough have identified Bullying as significant issue and this will therefore be given greater prioritisation by the LSCB and its partner agencies.

During 2013/14 a number of partner agencies also raised concerns in regard to the misuse of technologies and the harmful impact this can have on children and young people. Its links to bullying and CSE are well established and access by children/young people to harmful materials has grown as an area of concern for parents/carers and professionals alike. As a result the LSCB will explore how it can more closely monitor this aspect of safeguarding and what data could inform oversight of the effectiveness of partners work in this area. The Board wishes to acknowledge the work that is undertaken by the Safeguarding and Inclusion Team and the Community Safety Partnership to support this.

3.2 Additional Areas of LSCB activity and challenge

During 2013/14 there have been a number of local issues brought to the attention of the LSCB where the LSCB has applied additional scrutiny and requested reports/information to provide further assurance; examples include:

Poverty

The LSCB has remained appraised of the impact of poverty and of the changes in welfare benefits. It continues to be of concern that children/young people face adversity linked to poverty and the apparent increase in extreme experiences such as homelessness. The links between poverty and the increased risks of abuse and neglect are well documented within the academic literature and more recently their vulnerability to CSE has been well documented within SCRs. The LSCB notes this is an outcome priority in the Children and Young People's Plan and will seek reports on progress against this priority throughout the year.

Jimmy Saville

The LSCB has received regular progress reports on Broadmoor Special Hospital's involvement in the review commissioned by the Government following the investigation into the alleged abuse of children by Jimmy Saville. The Board continues to monitor arrangements for children's visits to Broadmoor and general safeguarding progress through its S.11 process of audit and representation of the Hospital at its Partnership Forum.

Effectiveness of the IRO role

The LSCB received and discussed the Annual IRO Report which provides an account of the IRO role and the effectiveness of arrangements for Bracknell's looked after children. The report identifies key challenges and good practice. The LSCB notes this report is also presented to the Corporate Parenting Panel and to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The effectiveness of the statutory Complaints Procedure

The LSCB has received and commented on the Annual Statutory Complaints report for Children's Services. This report includes complaints, compliments and concerns and identifies examples of good practice and areas for development when dealing with complaints.

Culturally Harmful Behaviours

The LSCB is mindful that within communities some individuals/families may participate in practices that are harmful to children / young people. It continues to require partners to remain vigilant as to these apparently infrequent but significantly harmful incidences. The issues of Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation are not commonly reported within Bracknell Forest and as a result staff may not develop experience of managing such complex cases. In an attempt to support partners in maintaining awareness of these issues, the inter-agency guidance issued by the Board contains specific reference to local procedures, and links to both national guidance and fact sheets. In addition to the Government's guidance distributed in the previous year the LSCB circulated copies of 'Tackling FGM in the UK, Intercollegiate recommendations for identifying, recording and reporting', published by a number of the Royal colleges. As a result proposals have been recently received in respect of a Pan Berkshire FGM Steering Group that will be led by health colleagues and will ensure improved analysis of the situation locally and share learning from colleagues from other parts of the UK where incidents of FGM have been higher.

3.3 Financial Information

The budget is monitored by the Business Manager and reports are provided to the LSCB. The majority of the budget is spent on staffing to support the work of the Board.

The LSCB budget 2013-2014 is made up of contributions from the Local Authority, the CCG, Police, Probation, Broadmoor, CAFCASS and Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

Supplies and services include expenditure for the cost of an Independent Chair, updates to the Child Protection Procedures and the costs associated with administering the LSCB training programme and the annual conference. This also covers any printing costs for publicity materials and leaflets.

In addition a small amount is spent under premises to cover the hire of meeting rooms, refreshments and venues for LSCB activities and meetings.

LSCB Partner	Contributions 2013/14
Bracknell Forest Council	£51,840 (+ £17,000 for QA Officer)*
Thames Valley Police	£2,050
Clinical Commissioning Group (on behalf of the health economy)	£20,500
National Probation Service	£1,025
Broadmoor	£550
Heatherwood and Wexham Park Trust	£1,025
Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust	£1,025
CAFCASS	£500.00
Grant	£7,300
Total	£85,800 (+ £17,000 for QA Officer)*

LSCB Expenditure	Amount
Salary Costs	£68,840 (inclusive of QA Officer post)
Supplies and Services	£34,764
*Includes costs of Independent Chair and undertaking a SCR in year.	
Total	£103,604

*The overspend in this year has been in part due to the recruitment of a post of a QA Officer which was funded by the local authority during 2013/14, further discussions will be held with the LSCB regarding future funding of the LSCB to ensure there is adequate resource to enable the LSCB to fulfil its statutory responsibilities.

4. SUMMARY

The work of the LSCB is very broad and there are many challenges to ensuring that it is able to maintain an overview of safeguarding practice in Bracknell Forest.

The strength of partnership working throughout this report is evident and much of the progress made in the last year could not have been made without the continued support and hard work of the LSCB and Forum members.

This report has highlighted areas of improvement and development over the year which will make a difference to the experiences of children and young people.

Whilst it is an aspiration that children will always remain safe we know that there will always be a number of children and young people who need to be safeguarded and protected from harm and our role is to ensure that this remains “everybody’s business” and that all those who come into contact with children and young people have the relevant knowledge, experience and support to enable them to fulfil their roles and responsibilities.

In order to achieve our role we will ensure that we continually review, and evaluate the work that is done by or on behalf of the LSCB and ensure a balance of appropriate support and challenge to partner agencies so that we can continue to make a difference to outcomes for children and young people living in Bracknell Forest.

Securing sufficient support and resources to ensure the LSCB’s oversight of these important areas of work will be essential and will require additional resources from partners if progress is to be sustained and its 2014-2017 Business Plan is to be realised.

Key Messages for all partner agencies and strategic partners:

- To ensure that efforts are made by all partners (including those working with adults) to secure **Early Help** for families and those children in need of protection are identified quickly and receive appropriate support.
- To ensure staff **Exchange Information** at the earliest opportunity and proactively challenge decisions that fail to adequately address the needs of children/young people and/or their parents/carers.
- To ensure that work continues to address **Domestic Abuse** and that the evaluation of the local strategy and interventions being made inform future planning of initiative and interventions
- To ensure **Substance Misuse** services continue to develop their role in respect of safeguarding children/young people and that greater evaluation is undertaken in regard to the links between parents/carers substance misuse and the high number of children/young people at risk of significant harm.
- To ensure that partner agencies delivering service to **Adults with Mental Health Problems** develop mechanisms to enable monitoring and reporting of their performance in respect of safeguarding children/young people
- To ensure work being undertaken to tackle **Neglect** is evaluated and evidence of its impact on children/young people informs both strategic planning and service delivery.
- To ensure that strategic planning in regard to the **Misuse of Technologies** is informed by the work currently being undertaken locally in relation to e-safety and

bullying, and that this informs the key messages that all partners share with staff and our local community.

- To ensure that the priority given to **Child Sexual Exploitation** by the LSCB is reflected within strategic planning and in partner agencies support for the ongoing work of the Board's sub-groups.
- To ensure that the role of **Voluntary Organisations and Faith Groups** is recognised and increased support is made available to ensure they play their part in safeguarding children and young people

Key Messages for Chief Executives and Directors:

- To ensure that the **protection of children and young people** is considered in developing and implementing key plans and strategies.
- Ensure **the workforce is aware of their safeguarding responsibilities** and can access LSCB safeguarding training and learning events.
- The **contribution of your agency to the work of the LSCB is categorised as a high priority**. Every agency must ensure that it takes into account the priorities within the LSCB Business Plan and the agency's own contribution to the shared delivery of the LSCB's work.
- The **role of each agency in meeting the duties of Section 11 of the Children Act 2004** is clearly understood.
- Each **agency is able to contribute** to the work of the LSCB with **appropriate resources and personnel**.
- Ensure the **LSCB remains informed about any organisational restructures** in order to understand the impact of restructure on capacity to safeguard children and young people in Bracknell.

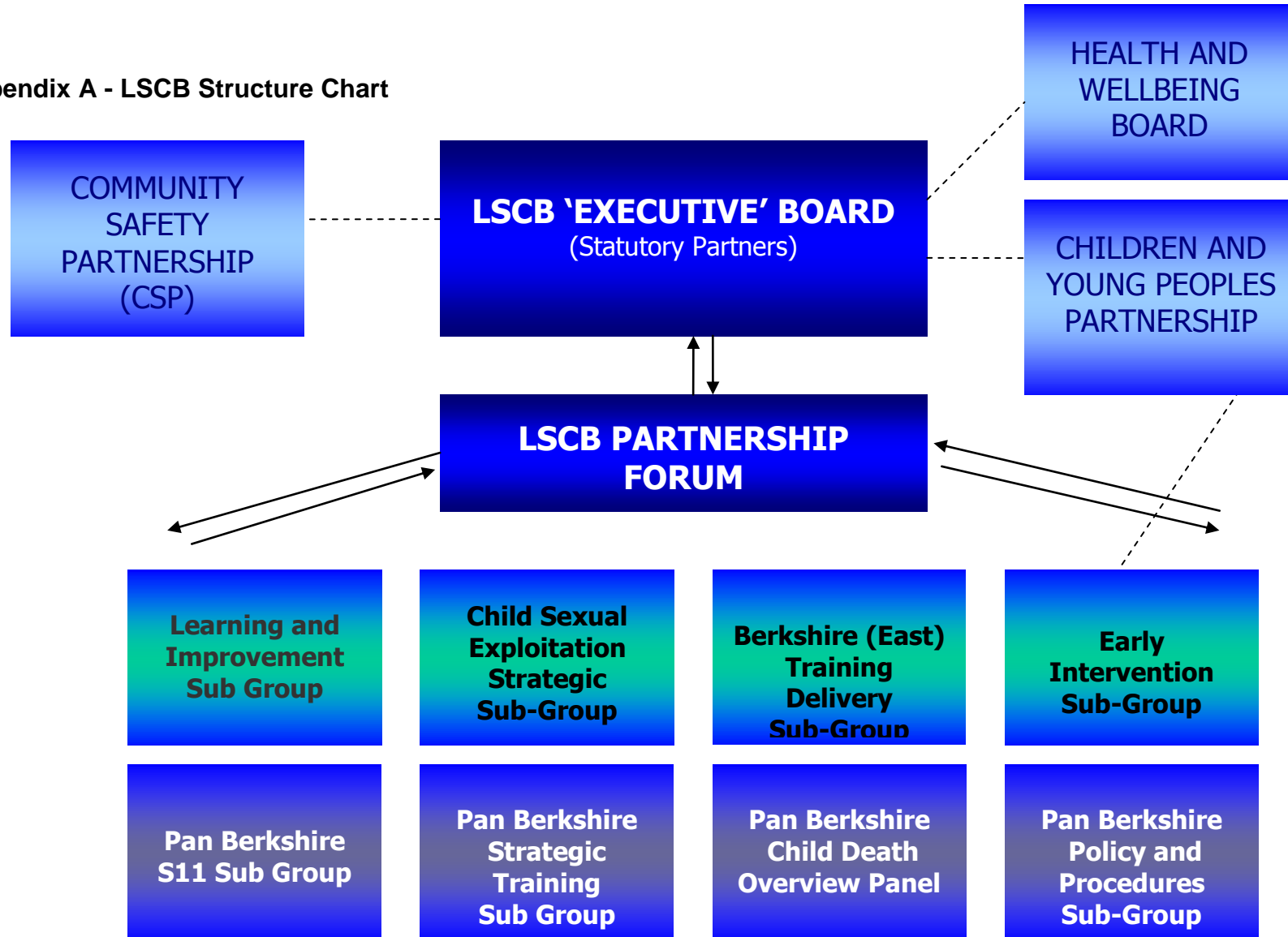
Key Messages for the children and adult's workforce

- Ensure you are **booked onto, and attend, all safeguarding courses** and learning events required for your role.
- Be **familiar** with, and **use** when necessary, the **LSCB Threshold and Safeguarding procedures** to ensure an appropriate response to safeguarding children and young people.
- Be **clear about who is your representative on the LSCB** and use them to make sure the voices of children and young people and front line practitioners are heard.

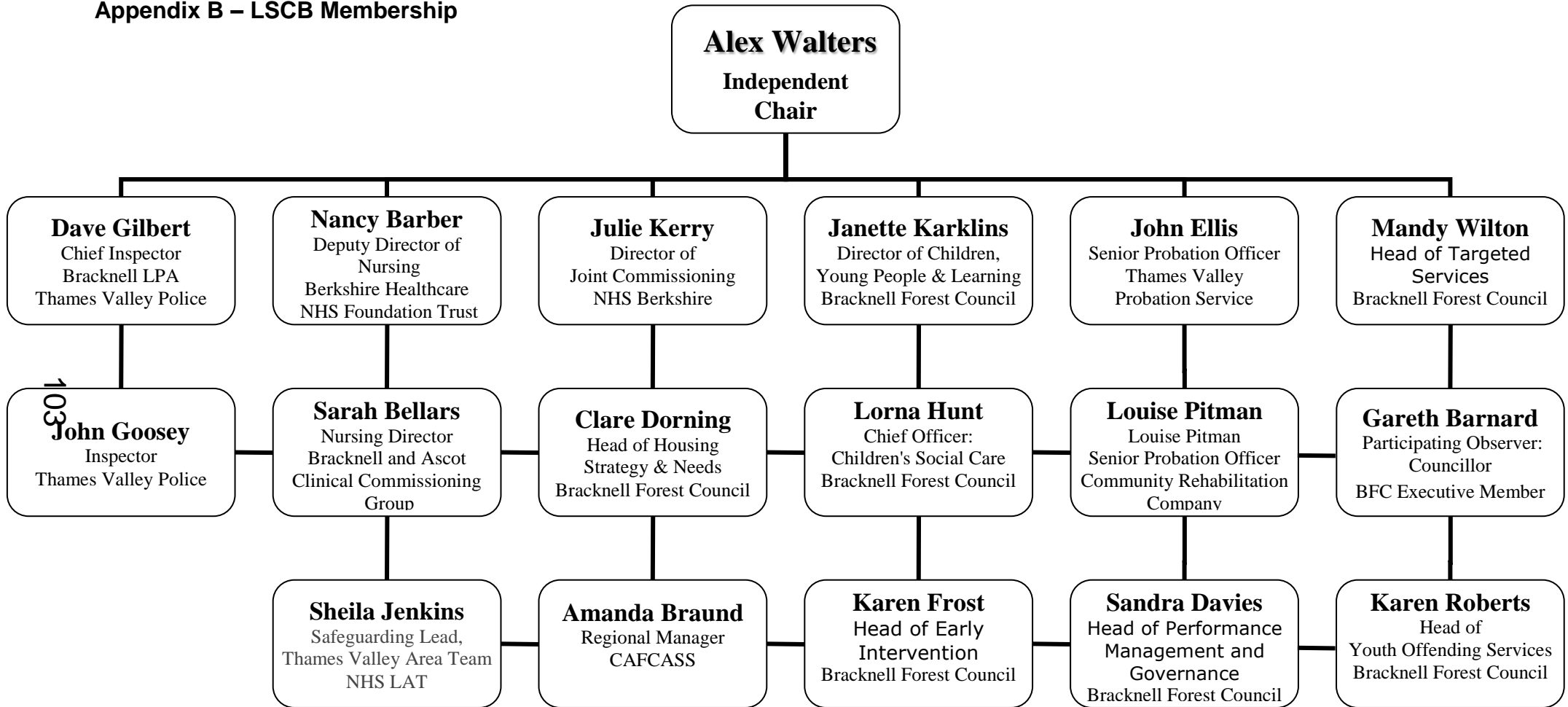
All Partners are asked to note the targeted priorities in the new Business Plan 2014 – 2017

TP 1	To support further implementation of the framework for early help, and evaluate its impact on families
TP 2	Reduce the impact of domestic abuse on children, young people and families
TP 3	Reduce the impact of substance and alcohol misuse on children, young people and families
TP 4	To further develop the co-ordination of protection and support to young people at risk of child sexual exploitation
TP 5	Develop a greater understanding of neglect and reduce the impact this has on children, young people and families
TP 6	Reduce the impact of parental mental illness on children and young people
TP 7	To increase the understanding of the harm associated with the misuse of technologies, its links with bullying and the further development of proactive strategies to support children / young people and their families

Appendix A - LSCB Structure Chart



Appendix B – LSCB Membership



Appendix C List of Performance Data Routinely Collected and Reported to the LSCB

Children and young people are physically healthy
Number of under 18 deaths in Local Authority area
Hospital admissions caused by unintentional or deliberate injuries to children and young people
Children and young people choose not to take illegal drugs
Number of under-18s in drug/alcohol treatment year-to-date
Number of children and young people on the CAMHS waiting list
Number of referrals to the CAMHS service per 10,000 population aged under 18
Percentage of referrals to CAMHS leading to assessment
Number of under-18 admissions to hospital for emotional health needs
Number of children and young people diagnosed with ADHD / ASD
Children and young people are sexually healthy
Under 18 conception rate
Number of young offenders who are sex offenders
Children and young people are safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation
Number of enquiries made to children's services per 10,000 population aged under 18
Number of children and young people with Child Protection Plans per 10,000 population aged under 18
The percentage of children becoming the subject of a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time
The percentage of children ceasing to be the subject of a child protection plan whose plan was in place for 2 years or more
The percentage of Child Protection Cases which were reviewed within the required timescales
Percentage of referrals to children's social care that led to a single assessment (NI 68)
The percentage of initial assessments for social care carried out within 10 (not 7) days
The percentage of referrals to social care that were repeat referrals
The percentage of core assessments for social care carried out within 35 working days

Number of parents/carers in drug/alcohol treatment year to date
Number of allegations against the children's workforce
Percentage of allegations leading to disciplinary action
Percentage of allegations leading to criminal conviction
Percentage of statutory workforce with appropriate and up-to-date CRB checks and vetting
Children and young people are safe from bullying and discrimination
Number of children and young people that have been victims of racist incidents in schools in the last 12 months
Number of children and young people that have been victims of homophobic incidents in schools in the last 12 months
Children and young people have security and stability and are cared for
Number of looked after children per 10,000 population aged under 18
The percentage of LAC who participated in all their reviews during the period
The percentage of LAC for whom all reviews during the year were carried out within the required timescales
Stability of placements of LAC: number of placements
Stability of placements of LAC: length of placements
Number of children and young people in private fostering arrangements
Emotional and behavioural health of children in care
Percentage of CAFs referred to Social Care / CAMHS
Number of homeless children and young people per 10,000 population aged under 18
Number of evictions of families with dependent children and young people
Children and young people are safe from crime and anti-social behaviour in and out of school
Victims of crime under 18 years of age: (1) Violence against children with injury
Victims of crime under 18 years of age: (2) Violence against children without injury
Victims of crime under 18 years of age: (4) Sexual offences
Victims of crime under 18 years of age: (3) Robberies
Children and young people attend and enjoy school

Number of children and young people that are electively home educated
Rate of permanent exclusions from school (NI 114)
Children and young people engage in law-abiding and positive behaviour in and out of school
First time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10-17 (NI 111)

**TO: THE EXECUTIVE
21 OCTOBER 2014**

**SECOND ANNUAL REPORT ON THE STATUTORY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND THE LEAD MEMBER FOR
CHILDREN'S SERVICES 2013/14**

Director of Children, Young People & Learning

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This second annual report provides an account of the role of the Director Children, Young People and Learning and the Lead Member for Children, Young People and Learning as identified in the Department for Education Statutory Guidance on the Roles and Responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services (DCS) and the Lead Member for Children's Services (LMCS) (DfE, 2012). A copy of the guidance is attached as annex 1.
- 1.2 The report covers a range of activity undertaken by the DCS and LMCS in fulfilling the Statutory Guidance, but does not cover all of the work they undertake.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Executive endorse the report and note the range of activity undertaken by the DCS and LMCS in fulfilling the Statutory Guidance.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Children Act 2004 requires every upper tier local authority to appoint a Director of Children's Services and designate a Lead Member for Children's Services.
- 3.2 The DCS and LMCS are appointed for the purpose of discharging the education and children's social services functions of the local authority. The aim is that between them the DCS and LMCS provide a clear and unambiguous line of local accountability.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 None

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 This report provides information on a range of activity undertaken within the Department for Children, Young People and Learning during the last year. Whilst it does not cover every area of activity, it does provide an overview of the role of the DCS and the LMCS in terms of some of their key statutory functions. The report shows there is a clear link in terms of accountability between the DCS, LMCS and the Chief Executive and Leader, it shows the response and activity around safeguarding which remains a high priority for all concerned; and it shows the ongoing and effective partnership links that exist between the local authority and key partners. There is a clear recognition that our work in the Department cannot be achieved in isolation and the way in which we engage with, support and encourage

partners is crucial to the ongoing successful delivery of improved outcomes for our children and young people.

- 5.2 The priority outcomes for the Children, Young People and Learning Department are identified in the attached action plan which supports the delivery of key actions within the Council linked to the delivery of key actions across the Council and with partners. They are the Children and Young People's Plan priorities, the Children and Young People's Plan can be found at:
<http://www.bracknellforest.gov.uk/bracknellforestchildrenandyoungpeoplespartnership>

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The legal issues are contained within the body of the report and the Statutory Guidance referred to therein.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 The Borough Treasurer is satisfied that no significant financial implications arise from this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 Not applicable.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 Not applicable.

Background papers

Appendix 1 – Department for Education: Statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services (April 2013).

Contact for further information

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**SECOND ANNUAL REPORT ON THE
STATUTORY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND THE
LEAD MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES
2013/14**

This second annual report provides an account of the role of the Director Children, Young People and Learning and the Lead Member for Children, Young People and Learning as identified in the Department for Education Statutory Guidance on the Roles and Responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services (DfE, 2012). A copy of the guidance is attached as annex 1.

The report covers a range of activity undertaken by the Director Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services in fulfilling the Statutory Guidance, but does not cover all of the work they undertake.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Statutory Guidance was originally published in 2005, reviewed in 2009 and again in 2012. This report reflects the most recent guidance of 2012.
- 1.2 The Statutory Guidance was published under sections 18(7) (Director Children's Services) and 19(2) (Lead Member for Children's Services) of the Children Act 2004. This means that local authorities must have regard to it and, if they decide to depart from it, they will need to have clear reasons for doing so.
- 1.3 The Children Act 2004 requires every upper tier local authority to appoint a Director of Children's Services (DCS) and designate a Lead Member for Children's Services (LMCS).
- 1.4 The DCS and LMCS are appointed for the purpose of discharging the education and children's social services functions of the local authority. The aim is that between them the DCS and LMCS provide a clear and unambiguous line of local accountability.
- 1.5 The DCS has professional responsibility for children's services, including operational matters; the LMCS has political responsibility for children's services. Together with the Chief Executive and the Leader the DCS and LMCS have a key leadership role both within the local authority and working with other local agencies to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- 1.6 The DCS is Dr Janette Karklins; the LMCS is Councillor Dr Gareth Barnard.

2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF DCS AND LMCS

Clear lines of accountability

- 2.1 It is important to note that the DCS and the LMCS work closely with the Chief Executive in playing a key leadership role both within the local authority and in working with partner agencies to improve outcomes for children and young people. The DCS meets regularly for one to one discussions with the Chief Executive and receives an annual appraisal which sets out the key objectives for the DCS to achieve in support of the Council's Medium Term Objectives. Many of these objectives are reflected in the CYP&L Annual Service Plan for the Department.
- 2.2 The LMCS and the DCS attend quarterly safeguarding meetings with the Chief Executive, and Chief Officer Children's Social Care. The Independent Chair of the LSCB joins these meetings every six months in order to provide an update on the effectiveness of the LSCB. The Leader of the Council attends this meeting at least once annually. These meetings ensure that there is effective communication and exchange of information which identifies progress made and any areas for action or further development, with a particular focus on child protection and safeguarding.
- 2.3 The Department for Children, Young People and Learning provides education and children's social care under a single officer and a single member providing a strategic and professional framework within which the safety and the educational, social and emotional needs of children and young people are considered together. The roles provide a clear and unambiguous line of political and professional accountability for children's well being.
- 2.4 Within Bracknell Forest the local authority has recognised and supported the breadth and importance of children's services functions, with the discrete roles and responsibilities of the DCS and the LMCS remaining protected.

Leadership and Partnership

- 2.5 The LMCS is an experienced Councillor with a detailed knowledge and understanding of the issues for children's services. The LMCS has good knowledge about adoption and fostering through his work on panels, and his work as a regular member of Peer Review teams and through national events which gives a broad perspective on many current and emerging issues. The LMCS regularly brings back learning from these events to feed into local discussion and ongoing developments.
- 2.6 The LMCS is a member of the Children and Young People's Partnership Board, and is a participant / observer of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. He is also involved in a range of other areas of activity in the Department, including being a member of the School Pupil Places Planning Group, which has the responsibility for steering accurate pupil forecasting and school places planning. He also sits on the Children's Centre Management Board, and Chairs the Adult Learning Board providing appropriate support challenge and accountability.
- 2.7 The LMCS also meets with the DCS on a monthly basis, attends the Departmental Management Team on a regular basis, and is in frequent contact with the DCS and Senior Officers via a range of meetings across the Council. Executive Member decisions are made each month.
- 2.8 The DCS leads a team of Chief Officers in the delivery of a wide range of key functions across the Department and with partners. The DCS is the Chair of the South East Children's Improvement Board and leads by example in undertaking Peer Review and Peer Challenge in other authorities and enabling professional

development of Bracknell Forest staff to participate in these Peer Reviews and Challenges. A key achievement of the DCS during the year has been to secure the continuation of a mechanism to focus on improvement in Children's Services as funding from the Government was cut. The DCS worked with others in the South East Region to develop a subscription process for local authorities wishing to continue to progress the improvement programme. As a result a number of key strands of improvement work continue which include regional benchmarking, peer review and peer challenge, management and leadership development programmes and a range of small discreet projects.

- 2.9 During 2013 Bracknell Forest hosted a Peer Challenge on Children's Centres which focused on early intervention and the interface between Children's Centres and partner agencies. In September 2013 the DCS invited the Local Government Association to come into the Department and undertake a Safeguarding Practice Diagnostic which enabled us to look at our strengths and areas for development in relation to children and young people who receive support from Children's Social Care and partners. As a result of these two pieces of work we have been able to gain a good insight into some of our strengths and areas for development and an action plan on both sets of activity ensures the recommendations are being monitored and implemented in practice.
- 2.10 The DCS has continued to chair the Children and Young People's Partnership and has overseen the ongoing review of progress against the plan, and the development of the new Children and Young People's Plan for 2014 – 2017. This plan sets a number of key outcome priorities for the Department and partners to achieve and will continue to be monitored through the CYP Partnership in the coming year. The priorities for improvement are important because they focus on those things which are felt can be achieved by working in partnership with others.
- 2.11 The Statutory Health and Wellbeing Board came into force in April 2013. The DCS and LMCS are both members and regularly raise issues relating to children's health and wellbeing needs. Examples of issues raised include; ensuring links to the Children and Young People's Plan, the Children and Families Bill in relation to changes in SEN, Annual Safeguarding Children Board report, Section 11 safeguarding roles and responsibilities. More recently there has been significant discussion about CAMHS and emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people which has led to some joint work between partners to focus on improved integration of health and emotional wellbeing services across all four tiers of need. It is expected that this will lead to improved services for children and young people in relation to mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- 2.12 The LMCS has contributed to a process of review of Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action during the year following the departure of the Chief Executive from the organisation. New management arrangements have been established and the work of the Voluntary and Community and Faith Sector remains a very important part of the infrastructure for supporting children and young people in their communities. The Department continues to commission a range of support and services from the Sector including Homestart Bracknell Forest and Margaret Wells Furby Children's Resource Centre (run by NCH Action for Children).
- 2.13 The Department contributed to a recent review of the Council's Equality Scheme and the outcome was that the peer team were unanimous in concluding that Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) could be re-accredited at the 'achieving' level of the Equality Framework for Local Government.

Safeguarding

- 2.14 Clear and effective arrangements are in place to protect children and young people from harm (including those attending independent schools). The LSCB arrangements are strong and effective with full engagement of all partners. The LMCS is also a participant observer on the LSCB. The DCS is a Board member and contributes actively to the ongoing work of the Board.
- 2.15 The DCS meets on a regular basis with the Independent Chair of the LSCB ensuring there is accountability for the role of the Chair and that the DCS maintains a clear oversight of the work of the LSCB.
- 2.16 The LSCB Annual Report provides an account of the work of the LSCB during 2013 / 14. The Annual Report has been presented to a wide audience including the Corporate Management Team, Council's Executive, Council Overview and Scrutiny and the Health and Wellbeing Board. The impact of sharing the report is that it secures a good understanding across the Council and partners of safeguarding roles and responsibilities and ensures any key messages are clearly and widely disseminated.
- 2.17 During 2013 the DCS commissioned the LGA to come into the Department to undertake a Safeguarding Practice Diagnostic. This process enabled the Department to look at areas of strength and areas for further development and to identify an action plan for further development and improvement. This continues to be monitored by the Department Management Team.
- 2.18 The SLAC Inspection in 2011 identified audit as an area for development, we have secured funding for a QA Officer role to further develop and improve our work on audit. The recent Safeguarding Practice Diagnostic from the LGA included an audit validation component which commented positively on the role and on the Quality Assurance Strategy that has been developed.
- 2.19 The DCS undertakes regular random audits of case files in order to maintain an overview of cases, and provides feedback to the Chief Officer Children's Social Care. The Chief Officer and DCS hold regular case file discussions with social workers which enables the workers to share their cases, discuss any issues with the DCS, and receive feedback. The DCS also attends Duty and Assessment Team Meetings 5 to 6 times each year.
- 2.20 In order to respond to the Eileen Munro Review of Child Protection and consequent recommendations Bracknell Forest introduced the Single Assessment in May 2013. A review of implementation has enabled changes to be made, tools have been utilised in the completion of the assessment such as the Three Houses Tool and monitoring of the quality of assessments through supervision provides management oversight of the quality of assessments. Training was provided for all Social Workers on the implementation of the Single Assessment. In addition to the Single Assessment, the role of Principal Social Worker was also developed as a way of effecting change and improvement in Social Work practice.
- 2.21 As identified in paragraph 5.2 above there is regular liaison between the DCS, LMCS and the Chief Executive, Independent Chair and the Leader with regards to ongoing safeguarding monitoring and management.
- 2.22 The new on line system for the checking of DBS (Disclosure and Barring Scheme) which replaced the old CRB checks is working well and the majority of checks are being returned quickly which helps in the recruitment process. All relevant staff working in the CYP&L Department have a new DBS undertaken every three years.

- 2.23 There has been a considerable amount of work undertaken in the year to ensure readiness for the new legislation contained within the Family Justice Review and the Children and Families Bill. The timeliness of care proceedings has reduced and there has been a significant focus on adoption, in Bracknell Forest the adoption figure has increased by over 100% in the last year.
- 2.24 The DCS facilitated a review of the Section 11 Self Assessments undertaken by each Department in the Council and good progress has been made in achieving the identified action plans. Future activity on self assessment will be further built into the LSCB processes to ensure improved governance and accountability of safeguarding. A range of additional activity has strengthened the understanding of safeguarding for senior leaders which includes a briefing paper on safeguarding roles and responsibilities for senior leaders, including the Chief Executive, Director and Chief Officers, a safeguarding awareness session delivered to senior managers and to relevant staff across the Council, a wider distribution of the safeguarding cue card for all staff and volunteers.
- 2.25 The LSCB Conference in 2013 provided a focus on neglect and its impact on children and young people. Frank Fields MP, opened the conference talking about poverty and early intervention, and the remainder of the day focused on neglect looking at national research, and a variety of local work and projects. This enabled a significant number of professionals from a range of agencies to develop a greater understanding of neglect and consider ways in which to address it in practice.
- 2.26 At the LSCB Conference a theatre group delivered a powerful drama presentation titled Chelsea's Choice, providing a powerful insight into the issues of Child Sexual Exploitation. This has been rolled out to schools across the borough as part of the work to identify, and address CSE awareness for young people as part of the overall CSE strategy. The impact of this has been to raise awareness of practitioners on the way in which young people can be vulnerable to exploitation; and for those young people who have seen the drama it has helped their own awareness and understanding of the issues and impact of exploitation.
- 2.27 The LADO role is made clear in the Safer Workforce Training, and a safeguarding cue card details the role as part of the Section 11 toolkit. The LADO role is well embedded, and sits with the Conference and Review Team Manager. This role is managed outside of Children's Social Care and reports to the Head of Performance Management and Governance allowing independence from decision making within Children's Social Care. Some additional capacity has now been built into the LADO role, with the development of a Deputy LADO function attached to the Independent Child Protection Chair role.
- 2.28 The LADO provides an annual report to the LSCB, and also attends regional LADO meetings in order to build improved networks and liaison and develop more consistent approaches across areas of working.
- 2.29 The DCS meets on a six monthly basis with the Manager of the Conference and Review Team and the Head of Performance Management and Governance to ensure an overview of the IRO role and function within the Department. The IRO Annual Report is considered by the Department Management Team, and was fully discussed and signed off by the LMCS. The IRO report is then presented to the Corporate Parenting Panel, Local Safeguarding Children Board and Overview and Scrutiny for Children, Young People and Learning. This provides accountability for the IRO role and ensures that relevant partners and stakeholders are informed regarding ongoing practice and developments for monitoring outcomes for looked after children.
- 2.30 The Annual Complaints, Concerns and Compliments Report is presented to the Department Management Team which provides an overview of the role of the

Complaints Manager and the type of complaints, concerns and compliments that are raised. The report provides an insight into the quality and practice of Children's Social Care in working with children, young people and families and informs learning and ongoing development and improvement activity. The report is also signed off by the LMCS and it is presented to the Local Safeguarding Children Board and to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Children, Young People and Learning. This ensures relevant partners and stakeholders are informed regarding ongoing practice and action taken to address complaints or concerns.

Vulnerable Children and Young People

- 2.31 The number of children and young people who met the statutory threshold for support from Children's Social Care has remained high in the year 2013/14. The numbers can vary from month to month as children move in and out of the system; however the figures at the end of March are those which are returned to the DfE in the statutory returns period.
- On 31 March 2014 the number of children who were looked after was 113, this is higher than the number at the end of March 2012 / 13 which was 103.
 - On 31 March 2014 the number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan was 108, which is slightly lower than the number at the end of March 2012/13 which was 112.
 - On 31 March 2014 the number of children who were identified as a Child in Need (CiN) under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 was 554, which is marginally less than the number at the end of March 2012/13 which was 555.
- 2.32 Staff turnover for the Department for the whole year April 2013 to March 2014 was 12.72%, although the final quarter represented only 1.99% of the total turnover. There has been ongoing work to address recruitment and retention issues within Children's Social Care for qualified Social Workers and experienced Managers. This is not an issue just for Bracknell Forest; it is also a regional and national issue. The Safeguarding Practice Diagnostic was very positive in making comments about the support, training and development opportunities that social work staff have access to and this was seen as a real strength. The DCS and LMCS have actively supported ongoing initiatives to support recruitment and retention and closely monitor progress.
- 2.33 There is a strong commitment to ensuring the delivery of prevention and early intervention services in the Council, with additional resources being allocated to Children's Services. There are many elements of Early Intervention in place across the borough and we feel there has been a strong commitment to this approach which is in all layers of the organisation. The Lead Member is a strong advocate for early intervention, it is a priority in the key plans and strategies and a commitment to retain and further develop early intervention services where they are proven to be beneficial in reducing poor outcomes for children and young people.
- 2.34 The Council has developed an overarching approach to early intervention which states the commitment to ensuring that prevention and early intervention remain a high priority across the Council Departments. A Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy within the Children, Young People and Learning Department provides a framework to support and enhance the focus of all services to prevention and early intervention. This framework is in the process of being updated to align it with the new Children and Young People's Plan.
- 2.35 The Children, Young People and Learning O&S Committee meets on a quarterly basis and undertakes scrutiny of the Quarterly Services Report for the Department, in addition to receiving and discussing reports on a wide range of issues across the

Department, examples include School Places Planning, Family Focus (Troubled Families), CAF and Early Intervention, Youth Service developments. The DCS and LMCS attend and provide information, presentations and responses to questions raised.

- 2.36 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertook a working group looking at the Common Assessment Framework linked to early intervention. As a result of the recommendations some changes were made to introduce an Early Intervention Hub, a multi-agency meeting to coordinate early help support around children and young people who are vulnerable. The Early Intervention Hub has received 364 referrals during the year 2013/14 and prevented at least 90 referrals to Children's Social Care by providing early help.
- 2.37 The Department applied for some additional funding from the Corporate Transformation Board to support work with vulnerable families, this allowed a project called Symbol to be developed. Symbol provides an intensive intervention service to parents with low cognitive functioning delivering measurable improvements for the children and families involved. Symbol works with a small number of families whose children have child protection plans and who are at risk of coming into care or children with child in need plans who are at risk of child protection plans. The service is providing good outcomes for children and families and is evaluated every 6 months.
- 2.38 The YOS Prevention Service provides a preventative service to those young people and their parents/carers where the young person is aged 8 – 15 years and is identified as being at risk of entering the Criminal Justice System. The children and young people referred to this service have been identified as at risk of offending behaviour by virtue of their involvement in anti-social behaviour and /or the prevalence of significant risk factors in their lives including issues within school that often result in exclusion from school.
- 2.39 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 opportunities from foundation level learning through to apprenticeships. Our NEET unknown levels are very low, and we carefully track the EET status of young people. The Thames Valley Berkshire City Deal is commissioned by the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). Key priorities include reducing youth unemployment, generating new employment opportunities and delivering new work experience placements and apprenticeships.
- 2.40 The Corporate Parenting role is taken seriously by Elected Members. The Panel takes an active role in listening to the views of young people through the work of SiLSiP (Say it Loud Say it Proud) our Children in Care Council, who will attend the Corporate Parenting Panel to present information on their activity throughout the year. The Panel meets quarterly and receives a range of reports on activity for looked after children; this includes for example contributing to developing the Pledge for LAC, the LAC Commissioning Strategy, and receiving regular performance reports. Members of the Corporate Parenting Panel also participate in Regulation 33 Visits to the Short Term Respite Care Unit as part of their role.
- 2.41 The DCS and LMCS supported by Senior Officers meet with young people from SiLSiP on a quarterly basis to hear about their activities, and to listen to any concerns or issues they may have. This enables the DCS and LMCS to maintain an overview of the views and issues that are faced by young people who are looked after on a day to day basis.

Fair Access to Services

- 2.42 The Fair Access Panel meets on a regular basis to discuss children who may be at risk of exclusion. The Panel identifies strategies to support and address the issues, and there has been a significant reduction in permanent exclusions during 2013/14.
- 2.43 The Life Chances Team (LCT) formally brings together a number of professionals from a range of agencies working with looked after children. The LCT meets once a month to discuss progress of LAC and identify areas where additional support may be needed. The LCT has had a number of successes in supporting carers to maintain placements for challenging young people and provide prompt, practical support.
- 2.44 There is an Edge of Care Panel, chaired by the Head of Service for LAC which reviews all those cases of children on the edge of care and identifies ways to prevent them coming into the care system.
- 2.45 Effective and appropriate use of the pupil premium for LAC is an integral part of our work with LAC. Schools are supported in developing their practices and building capacity in meeting the educational needs of LAC through termly Designated Teacher forums and training events delivered by the Virtual School. Designated Teachers in schools are supported in their role to attend training sessions organised by the LA and then to cascade this to school staff. Working with looked after children is also part of the formal induction process for newly qualified and appointed members of staff where they are provided with practical strategies aimed at raising an awareness of the common challenges faced.
- 2.46 The Virtual School for Looked After children has continued to meet its core function through working collaboratively with designated teachers in schools and monitoring each child's personal education plan (PEP).
- 2.47 The provision of sufficient school places is a statutory responsibility and also a key role for the local authority. Considerable time and energy has been put into planning the expansion of school places in the Wards where they are most needed. This is to ensure that there are sufficient places and also that they are in the schools that parents want their children to attend. This has been a successful approach for example at primary 97% of children were allocated one of their preferred choices and in secondary 93% of young people got one of their preferred choices.
- 2.48 Work has continued on the implementation of the SEN reforms as a result of the Children and Families Act, and the changes will be implemented from September 2014. A Steering group has been working on key areas of the reforms during the year. One of the key changes will be the introduction of a single Education, Health and Care Plan which will be piloted in the authority during the summer of 2014.

Educational Excellence

- 2.49 The local authority has developed a document "Our Vision for Education" which identifies how the local authority works with community, parents and wider stakeholders to embed the vision and ambition for young people to reach their potential. This vision identifies ambition, values, aims for education, quality, and governance in particular highlighting the role of school governors.
- 2.50 During 2013/14 the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertook a working group on Governor Services looking at a review of School Governance. This recognised the good work undertaken by the Governor Services Team and made a

range of recommendations which will spread best practice more widely and enhance overall quality of governance in our schools.

- 2.51 Results from **Early Years Foundation Stage** (EYFS) data from schools and settings show above national average attainment at age 5. The percentage of pupils at the end of the EYFS (age 5) achieving a good level of development (expected or exceeding levels in the prime areas of learning plus literacy and mathematics) was 58% (52% nationally).

Key Stage 1 (age 7) level 2 shows that results improved in reading 92% (89% in 2012) and writing 89% (86% in 2012) but fell back slightly in mathematics 91% (93% in 2012).

Key Stage 1 level 2B+ shows that results improved in reading 82% (78% in 2012), and remained the same in writing 69% and mathematics 80%.

Key Stage 1 level 3 shows that results improved in reading 33% (29% in 2012) and mathematics 25% (23% in 2012) and fell slightly in writing 14% (15% in 2012).

Key Stage 2 (age 11) level 4+ shows that attainment for all pupils in reading for 2013 is 88% which is the same as 2012. Writing is 87% in 2013 which is an improvement from the 2012 figure of 83%; mathematics is 85% in 2013 which is an improvement from 84% in 2012. A combined score for reading, writing and mathematics is 78% in 2013, which is an improvement from 74% in 2012. Grammar, punctuation and spelling is a new indicator in 2013 and the score is 74% which is in line with the regional and national average.

Key Stage 2 level 5+ also shows an improvement in attainment from 2012 in writing (29% in 2013, 27% in 2012) and mathematics (41% in 2013 and 39% in 2012). Reading remains in line with last year (48%) and is above the national averages for 2013. Results in writing are slightly below the regional and national average.

Key Stage 4 results show that the proportion of young people obtaining 5 or more GCSE grades A* - C including English and mathematics increased to 63.4 % (61.4% in 2012). The proportion of young people achieving the other main measure of attainment at Key Stage 4 (5 or more GCSE grades A* - C) has remained at over 90%.

- 2.52 Inspections of schools by Ofsted remain ongoing. During the period of 2013/14 there were 17 Inspections of Schools 13 primary, 3 secondary and 1 Special School. In the primary section 4 schools were graded as good, 1 was outstanding, 7 were graded as requires improvement and 1 was inadequate. In the secondary section 2 schools were graded as good and 1 as requires improvement. 1 special school was graded as inadequate.
- 2.53 The DCS holds termly meetings for all Headteachers to ensure that there is effective communication and liaison between the LA and schools on key policy and practice issues.

3 SUMMARY

- 3.1 This report has provided information on a range of activity undertaken within the Department for Children, Young People and Learning during the last year. Whilst it does not cover every area of activity, it does provide an overview of the role of the DCS and the LMCS in terms of some of their key statutory functions. The report shows there is a clear link in terms of accountability between the DCS, LMCS and

the Chief Executive and Leader, it shows the response and activity around safeguarding which remains a high priority for all concerned; and it shows the ongoing and effective partnership links that exist between the local authority and key partners. There is a clear recognition that our work in the Department cannot be achieved in isolation and the way in which we engage with, support and encourage partners is crucial to the ongoing successful delivery of improved outcomes for our children and young people.

3.2 The priority outcomes for the Children, Young People and Learning Department are identified in the attached action plan which supports the delivery of key actions within the Council linked to the delivery of key actions across the Council and with partners. They are the Children and Young People's Plan priorities and we look forward to reporting our progress against these outcomes in a year's time.

3.3 The Children and Young People's Plan can be found at:
<http://www.bracknellforest.gov.uk/bracknellforestchildrenandyoungpeoplespartnership>

Dr Janette Karklins – Director Children, Young People and Learning
Councillor Dr Gareth Barnard – Lead Member Children, Young People and Learning

June 2014

DELIVERING THE PRIORITY OUTCOMES 2014 – 2017

Outcome Priority 1		
Raise levels of attainment and pupil progress across all phases of learning for all pupils		
	Action	Lead Agency
1.1	Education Vision and Values known across all schools and partners who work with and support schools.	Bracknell Forest Council –Children, Young People and Learning – Learning and Achievement
1.2	Continue to work with early years providers to close the attainment gap.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention
1.3	Provide sufficient school places to meet the changing patterns and demand.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention
1.4 a	Increase the number of schools in the borough rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted.	Bracknell Forest Council - Children, Young People and Learning - Learning and Achievement Headteachers School Governors
1.4 b	Continued focus on improving attainment for all pupils.	
1.4 c	Strengthen leadership across all schools and partnerships.	
1.4d	Focus on assessment and tracking of pupils and use data to target support more effectively for vulnerable groups.	
1.5	Support children and young people with special educational needs and implement SEN reforms arising from the Children and Families Bill.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning - Learning and Achievement

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1.6 a	Effective use pupil premium to support disadvantaged pupils in schools.	Headteachers
1.6 b	Monitor attainment of pupils in receipt of pupil premium.	Bracknell Forest Council - Children, Young People and Learning - Learning and Achievement
1.7	Continued focus on behaviour support and positive reduction in exclusions in secondary schools.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning - Learning and Achievement
1.8	Continue to ensure access to life long learning opportunities for residents in the borough.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning - Learning and Achievement Bracknell and Wokingham College
1.9	Ensure workforce is equipped with skills to support this outcome.	All agencies working with children, young people and families.
Outcome Priority 2 Improve physical and emotional health and wellbeing from conception to birth and throughout life		
	Action	Lead Agency
2.1	Complete a review of children’s services health commissioning arrangements.	Bracknell Forest Council – Adult Social Care, Health and Housing - Public Health
2.2	Review commissioning of sexual health services.	Bracknell Forest Council – Adult Social Care, Health and Housing - Public Health
2.3 a	Continue to commission services for young people in relation to alcohol and substance misuse.	Bracknell Forest Council – Adult Social Care, Health and Housing - Drug and Alcohol Action Team
2.3 b	Continue to provide targeted information and support to young people in schools and	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young

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	other settings in relation to alcohol and substance misuse.	People and Learning – Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention Headteachers
2.4 a	Continued focus on child weight management and increasing the number of children who are a healthy weight.	Bracknell Forest Council – Adult Social Care, Health and Housing - Public Health
2.4 b	Provide opportunities for children and young people to take regular exercise, in and out of school hours.	Bracknell Forest Council – Environment, Culture and Communities - Leisure Services Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning - Learning and Achievement, in partnership with schools.
2.5 a	Sustain low levels of teenage pregnancies, and increase awareness by young people of the risks involved.	Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust – Sexual Health Services
2.5 b	Continue to provide targeted information and support to young people in schools and other settings in relation to teenage pregnancy and sexual health issues.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning - Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention Bracknell Forest Council - Adult Social Care, Health and Housing - Public Health.
2.6 a	Recommission tier 3 CAMHS services	Bracknell Forest - Clinical Commissioning Group / NHS England
2.6 b	Further development of services for children and young people with emotional health and wellbeing issues including CAMHS Tiers 1 – 4.	Central Southern Commissioning Support Unit Bracknell Forest Health and Wellbeing Board

2.6 c	Continue to provide targeted information and support to young people in schools and other settings in relation to emotional health and wellbeing issues.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning - Learning and Achievement/Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention Bracknell Forest Council – Adult Social Care, Health and Housing - Public Health Headteachers
2.7	Develop and implement a specialist nurse role to provide targeted outreach support to vulnerable women.	Bracknell Forest Council – Adult Social Care, Health and Housing - Public Health Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Children’s Social Care
2.8	Raise awareness of the importance of vaccinations and make it easier for parents and children to access them.	Bracknell Forest Council – Adult Social Care, Health and Housing - Public Health Bracknell Forest Council – Strategy Resources and Early Intervention – School Admissions Team
2.9	Ensure workforce is equipped with skills to support this outcome	All agencies working with children, young people and families.
Outcome Priority 3 Safeguard and Protect Children and Young People		
	Activity	Lead Agency
3.1	Continued focus on reducing the number of children and young people who are supported by Children’s Social Care.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Children’s Social Care

3.2 a	To launch the Guide to Neglect and promote through CAF and Safeguarding Training.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention
3.2 b	To continue to deliver the Symbol programme supporting parents where neglect may be an issue.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Children’s Social Care
3.3	Work with partners to reduce the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people.	Bracknell Forest Community Safety Partnership: Thames Valley Police Domestic Abuse Forum Multi-agency DASC Project
3.4 a	Address the ongoing issues and concerns identified by young people in relation to bullying in all forms, including cyber-bullying and identity based bullying.	Bracknell Forest Council –Children, Young People and Learning – Learning and Achievement
3.4 b	Review Anti-bullying Strategy	Headteachers Community Safety Partnership - E-Safety Group
3.5	Further development of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and early intervention hub as a key strand of the Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention
3.6	Implement the Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy, and monitor outcomes for those affected.	Local Safeguarding Board – CSE Group.

3.7	Continue to ensure the effectiveness of safeguarding for all partners working with children, young people and families.	Local Safeguarding Children Board
3.8	Ensure workforce is equipped with skills to support this outcome.	Local Safeguarding Children Board and all agencies working with children, young people and families.
Outcome Priority 4		
Improve outcomes for all children and young people, especially the more vulnerable		
	Action	Lead agency
4.1	Ensure children and young people who have behavioural difficulties are supported to remain in an appropriate educational setting	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Learning and Achievement.
4.2 a	Provide additional / targeted support to children and young people who have English as a second language.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Learning and Achievement.
4.2 b	Provide additional / targeted support to children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds (e.g. on free school meals)	
4.3 a	Monitor health and education outcomes for children looked after and provide additional support where necessary.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Learning and Achievement
4.3 b	Monitor outcomes for care leavers and provide additional support where necessary	Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust – LAC Nurse.
4.4	Continue to support young people who are NEET into appropriate education, training or employment and support those at risk of becoming NEET.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Learning and Achievement. Adviza (formerly Connexions)

4.5	Work with partners to identify and support young carers through improved assessment and joint working arrangements and Recommission support services.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention
4.6	Provide targeted support to young people at risk of offending.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Children’s Social Care
4.7	Continue to deliver support to children and young people with learning difficulties through the Aiming High programme.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Children’s Social Care
4.8	Provide targeted support to young people through youth service settings.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention
4.9	Ensure workforce is equipped with skills to support children and young people from vulnerable groups	All agencies working with children, young people and families
Outcome Priority 5		
Strengthen families through effective multi-agency coordination and support.		
	Action	Lead Agency
5.1	Provide targeted outreach support for families where there is a child under five through the Children’s Centres.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention
5.2	Continued delivery of the Family Focus Programme and the extension of funding from the DfE to undertake more preventative work with families.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention

5.3	Review family and parenting support services in the borough and implement any findings / recommendations from the review	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Learning and Achievement/Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention
5.4	Continue to deliver a range of Parenting Support Programmes from universal through to specialist support.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention
5.5	Increase the number of families accessing Family Group Conference.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Children’s Social Care
5.6	Continue to support and develop the Family support Adviser role within schools.	Headteachers
5.7	Continued delivery of the Family Nurse Partnership service.	Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust
5.8	Ensure workforce is equipped with skills to support children and young people from vulnerable groups	All agencies working with children, young people and families
Outcome Priority 6 Reduce the impact of poverty on children and young people.		
	Action	Lead Agency
6.1	Fully implement the Credit Union and monitor impact.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention Bracknell Forest Homes
6.2	Roll out of the two year old funding for disadvantaged pupils. Monitor impact of additional funding on outcomes.	Bracknell Forest Council Children, Young People and Learning – Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention

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6.3	Continued focus on uptake of free school meals for those eligible.	Schools Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention
6.4	Implementation of free school meals for Key Stage One pupils.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention Schools
6.5	Monitor the impact of the Pupil Premium on outcomes for pupils.	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Learning and Achievement
6.6	Provision of learning opportunities for adults	Bracknell Forest Council – Children, Young People and Learning – Learning and Achievement
6.7	Ensure workforce is equipped with skills to support children and young people from vulnerable groups	All agencies working with children, young people and families

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OUTCOME MEASURES

The activity of all those working with children, young people and families is measured using a range of indicators and reported nationally. A **selection** of these indicators is listed below, and will be monitored by the Children and Young People's Partnership. Progress against these will be reported in the first annual review of the Plan in 2015.

1	Number of children on protection plans on 31 March
2	Number of looked after children on 31 March
3	Number of children receiving Section 17 Support on 31 March
4	Stability of placements of looked after children: number of placement
5	Stability of placements of looked after children: length of placement
6	Care leavers in suitable accommodation
6	Care leavers in employment, education or training
7	Number of families turned around through Family Focus Project
9	Number of CAF/ Family CAFs undertaken
10	Number of referrals to Early Intervention Hub
11	Schools judged good or better by Ofsted
12	Narrowing the gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the rest
13	Percentage of children who achieve or exceed levels of attainment at the

	end of Foundation Stage as measured by the EYFSP in all of the Early Learning Goals for communication and language, physical development, personal social and emotional development, literacy and mathematics.
14	Achievement of pupils at all Key stages
15	Percentage of children looked after achieving 5 A(star) – C GCSEs at Key Stage 4 (including English and maths)
16	Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving the expected level at Key Stages 2.
17	Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving the expected level at Key Stages 4.
18	Rate of permanent exclusions from school
19	The Special Educational Needs (SEN)/non-SEN gap - achieving Key Stage 2 English and Maths threshold
20	The Special Educational Needs (SEN)/non-SEN gap - achieving 5 A*-C GCSE inc English and Maths
21	Key Stage 2 attainment for Black and minority ethnic groups
22	Key Stage 4 attainment for Black and minority ethnic groups
23	Key Stage 2 attainment for black and minority ethnic groups containing more than 30 pupils who achieve level 4 in writing
24	Key Stage 2 attainment for black and minority ethnic groups containing more

	than 30 pupils who achieve level 4 in maths
25	Rate of proven re-offending by young offenders
26	16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, training or employment (NEET)
27	Participation of 17 year-olds in education or training
28	Under 18 Conception per 1,000 females aged 15 – 17
29	% Children classified as overweight 4 – 5 year olds % Children classified as overweight 10 – 11 year olds
30	% Children classified as obese 4 – 5 year olds % Children classified as obese 10 – 11 year olds

N.B: Indicators may be subject to change during the year

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Department
for Education

Statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services

For local authorities

April 2013

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Summary

About this guidance

This is statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Education. Local authorities in England¹ must have regard to it in relation to the appointment of the Director of Children's Services (DCS) and the designation of the Lead Member for Children's Services (LMCS). This guidance covers the legislative basis for the two appointments, roles and responsibilities of the post holders, and how this relates to Government expectations about local authorities' role in education and children and young people's services.

Review date

This guidance replaces the previous versions issued in 2005, 2009 and 2012. This guidance will next be reviewed on an annual basis to check whether it is still fit for purpose: but it will only be revised if it is no longer considered fit for purpose. Annex A lists other sources of information and guidance and will be updated regularly.

What legislation does this guidance refer to?

- Sections 18(7) (Director of Children's Services) and 19(2) (Lead Member for Children's Services) of the Children Act 2004. This means that local authorities must have regard to it and, if they decide to depart from it, they will need to have clear reasons for doing so.

Who is this guidance for?

This guidance is for:

- Local authorities in England with responsibility for education and children's social services functions.

Key points

- The *Children Act 2004* requires every upper tier local authority to appoint a Director of Children's Services and designate a Lead Member for Children's Services.

¹ References in this guidance to local authority 'education' functions do not include further and higher education functions listed at section 18(3) of the Children Act 2004

- The DCS and LMCS are appointed for the purposes of discharging the education and children's social services functions of the local authority. The functions for which they are responsible are set out in section 18(2) of the Children Act 2004. This includes (but is not limited to) responsibility for children and young people receiving education or children's social care services in their area and all children looked after by the local authority or in custody (regardless of where they are placed).
- Within this legal framework, it is for individual local authorities to determine their own organisational structures in the light of their local circumstances. However, local authorities must ensure that there is both a single officer and a single elected member each responsible for both education and children's social care. The DCS and LMCS should each have an integrated children's services brief, ensuring that the safety and the educational, social and emotional needs of children and young people are central to the local vision. Between them, the DCS and LMCS provide a clear and unambiguous line of local accountability.
- The DCS has professional responsibility for children's services, including operational matters; the LMCS has political responsibility for children's services. Together with the Chief Executive and Leader or Mayor² the DCS and LMCS have a key leadership role both within the local authority and working with other local agencies to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- The DCS is a politically restricted statutory chief officer post; they should be a first tier officer and report directly to the Chief Executive.
- Local authorities should, as a matter of course, assure themselves that their arrangements enable them to discharge their education and children's social care functions effectively.
- Given the breadth and importance of children's services functions that the DCS and LMCS cover, local authorities should give due consideration to protecting the discrete roles and responsibilities of the DCS and LMCS before allocating to them any additional functions other than children's services.

² Local authorities that are considering adopting the committee system should take into account and implications for the DCS and LMCS roles

The Director of Children's Services and Lead Member for Children's Services

The Director of Children's Services (DCS)

- 1) Section 18 of the Children Act 2004 requires every top tier local authority to appoint a Director of Children's Services. The DCS has professional responsibility for the leadership, strategy and effectiveness of local authority children's services and, as such, this post should be at first tier officer level. The DCS is responsible for securing the provision of services which address the needs of all children and young people, including the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, and their families and carers. In discharging these responsibilities, the DCS will work closely with other local partners to improve the outcomes and well-being of children and young people. The DCS is responsible for the performance of local authority functions relating to the education and social care of children and young people. The DCS is responsible for ensuring that effective systems are in place for discharging these functions, including where a local authority has commissioned any services from another provider rather than delivering them itself. The DCS should have regard to the General Principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and ensure that children and young people are involved in the development and delivery of local services.
- 2) The DCS is a politically restricted statutory chief officer post.³ This means the post holder is prevented from taking part in certain political activities. In particular, the DCS is disqualified from being an elected member of the local authority. The DCS should report directly to the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service), who in turn is accountable to the Council for the performance of its chief officers⁴ Local authorities are strongly encouraged to involve children and young people in the appointment of the DCS.

The Lead Member for Children's Services (LMCS)

- 3) Section 19 of the Children Act 2004 requires every top tier local authority to designate one of its members as Lead Member for Children's Services. The LMCS will be a local Councillor with delegated responsibility from the Council, through the Leader or Mayor⁵, for children's services. The LMCS, as a member of the Council Executive, has political responsibility for the leadership, strategy and effectiveness of local authority children's services. The LMCS is also democratically accountable to local

³ Under section 2 of the Local Government and Housing Act (as amended)

⁴ See Schedule 1 to the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 SI 3384

⁵ In Local authorities with governance models

communities and has a key role in defining the local vision and setting political priorities for children's services within the broader political context of the Council.

- 4) The LMCS is responsible for ensuring that the needs of all children and young people, including the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, and their families and carers, are addressed. In doing so, the LMCS will work closely with other local partners to improve the outcomes and well-being of children and young people. The LMCS should have regard to the UNCRC and ensure that children and young people are involved in the development and delivery of local services. As politicians, LMCSs should not get drawn into the detailed day-to-day operational management of education and children's services. They should, however, provide strong, strategic leadership and support and challenge to the DCS and relevant members of their senior team as appropriate.

Ensuring a clear line of accountability

- 5) Integrating education and children's social care services under a single officer and a single member provides both a strategic and professional framework within which the safety and the educational, social and emotional needs of children and young people are considered together. The DCS and LMCS roles provide a clear and unambiguous line of political and professional accountability for children's well-being. The DCS and LMCS should report to the Chief Executive and to the Council Leader or Mayor respectively as the post holders with ultimate responsibility for the political and corporate leadership of the Council and accountability for ensuring that the effectiveness of steps taken and capacity to improve outcomes for all children and young people is reflected across the full range of the Council's business. The DCS and LMCS (in their respective roles) will also need to work closely with the Director of Public Health as the principal adviser on health to officials and members.

Additional functions not related to local authority children's services

- 6) It is legally permissible for the DCS and LMCS roles to be combined with other operational and political functions of the local authority. However, given the breadth and importance of children's services functions that the DCS and LMCS cover, local authorities should give due consideration to protecting the discrete roles and responsibilities of the DCS and LMCS before allocating any additional functions to individuals performing these roles. In particular, local authorities should undertake a local test of assurance so that the focus on outcomes for children and young people will not be weakened or diluted as a result of adding such other responsibilities (see paras 13-16 below). Given the demanding nature of the DCS and LMCS roles, local authorities should consider *all* aspects of any combined posts (e.g. the impact on both

children and adult services where there is a joint DCS and Director of Adult Social Services post).

- 7) The DCS should report directly to the Chief Executive, so it is not appropriate for the Chief Executive also to hold the statutory role of DCS (except possibly as a temporary measure whilst the Council actively takes steps to fill a vacant DCS post and an alternative interim DCS appointment is not considered appropriate).

Joint DCS appointments

- 8) It is legally permissible for two or more local authorities to appoint a single joint DCS to cover children's services responsibilities across all the local authority areas concerned.

Local assurance

- 9) Local authorities will, as a matter of course, want to ensure their structures and organisational arrangements enable them to:
 - fulfil their statutory duties effectively (including ensuring that children, young people and families receive effective help and benefit from high educational standards locally);
 - be transparent about responsibilities and accountabilities,
 - support effective interagency and partnership working.
- 10) A local authority should carry out effective assurance checks, integrated as part of their usual decision-making and scrutiny work, of their structures and organisational arrangements. Once any new arrangements are in place, local authorities should review their arrangements regularly to satisfy themselves that they continue to be effective.
- 11) These assurances should be agreed within the Council. They should be subject to self-assessment within the local authority, and to peer challenge and review, as part of the process of securing continuous sector-led improvement in the quality of services. Where, as part of Ofsted's assessment of the quality and effectiveness of local authority leadership and management, inspectors identify an issue arising from the local authority's arrangements for discharging the DCS and LMCS functions, they may decide to look at the quality and effectiveness of the authority's assurance process.
- 12) It is for each local authority to determine the precise nature of its own assurance process and how to provide transparency for local communities about which individuals are fulfilling the statutory roles of DCS and LMCS, taking account of local

circumstances. However, in doing so, the following elements are likely to be essential in assuring that effective arrangements are in place:

- clarity about how senior management arrangements ensure that the safety and the educational, social and emotional needs of children and young people are given due priority and how they enable staff to help the local authority discharge its statutory duties in an integrated and coherent way;
- clarity about how the local authority intends to discharge its children's services functions and be held accountable for them from political, professional, legal and corporate perspectives (including where, for example, services are commissioned from external providers or mutualised in an arm's length body);
- the seniority of and breadth of responsibilities allocated to individual post holders and how this impacts on their ability to undertake those responsibilities (especially where a local authority is considering allocating any additional functions to the DCS and LMCS posts);
- the involvement and experiences of children and young people in relation to local services;
- clarity about child protection systems, ensuring that professional leadership and practice is robust and can be challenged on a regular basis, including an appropriate focus on offering early help and working with other agencies in doing so; and
- the adequacy and effectiveness of local partnership arrangements (e.g. the local authority's relationship with schools, the courts, children's trust co-operation arrangements, Community Safety Partnerships, health and wellbeing boards, Youth Offending Team partnerships, police, probation, Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) and their respective accountabilities.

Roles and Responsibilities of the DCS and LMCS

13) Local authorities are bound by some 200 statutory duties covering education and children's social care. The way in which the roles and responsibilities of the DCS and LMCS are fulfilled will vary between different places and change over time. This guidance does not attempt to cover all these duties in detail but the key aspects of those roles are outlined below.

Leadership and partnership

14) The DCS and LMCS work together to provide strong, strategic local leadership and development of an increasingly autonomous and diverse education and children's services sector. Working with headteachers, school governors and academy sponsors and principals, the DCS and LMCS should support the drive for high educational standards for all children and young people, paying particular attention to the most disadvantaged groups. They should also ensure that children's services are integrated across the council, for example to support a smooth transition from children's to adults' services. The DCS and LMCS should involve and listen to parents, carers, children and young people. The DCS and LMCS have a key role in ensuring that the local voluntary and community sector, charities, social enterprises, the private sector and children and young people themselves are included in the scope of local authority planning, commissioning and delivery of children's services where appropriate.

15) Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on local authorities and certain named partners (including health) to co-operate to improve children's well-being. The DCS and LMCS must lead, promote and create opportunities for co-operation with local partners (for example, health, police, schools, housing services, early years, youth justice, probation, higher and further education, and employers) to improve the well-being of children and young people. Local authorities must also (by virtue of the Child Poverty Act 2010 ⁶) establish local co-operation arrangements to reduce child poverty, prepare and publish a local child poverty needs assessment, and prepare a local child poverty strategy.

16) As a statutory member of local health and wellbeing boards, the DCS will have a clear role in driving the development of the local Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and joint health and wellbeing strategy. The DCS will promote the interests of children, young people and their families. The DCS will also help join up local commissioning plans for clinical and public health services with children's social care and education, where appropriate, to address the identified local needs through the

⁶ Although the local authority duties under the Child Poverty Act 2010 are not included in the Section 18(2) definition of functions for which the DCS / LMCS are automatically responsible, local authorities may nonetheless consider it appropriate to assign them to the DCS LMCS

JSNA and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The DCS will make a key contribution to ensuring effective working relationships between the health and wellbeing board and the LSCB. The DCS is responsible for any agreements made under section 75 of the National Health Service (NHS) Act 2006 between the local authority and NHS relating to children and young people – for example, pooled budgets for commissioning and/or delivering integrated services covering children’s health, social care and education.

- 17) Local authorities must comply with the duties set out in the Equality Act 2010, which means that, as well as ensuring that they do not discriminate unlawfully, DCSs LMCSs must take into account the likely impact of their policies and decisions on specified groups. In doing so, particular consideration should be given to Article 2 of the UNCRC. Local authorities should also maintain an audit trail to demonstrate how equalities matters were considered as part of the decision-making process.

Safeguarding

- 18) Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 requires local authorities and other named statutory partners to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are discharged with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. There is a similar requirement imposed on schools⁷. This should ensure that safeguarding is integral to all that local authorities, schools and other named partners do. The DCS and LMCS should ensure that there are clear and effective arrangements to protect children and young people from harm (including those attending independent schools). Local authorities are also required to set up a LSCB to coordinate the effectiveness of arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in that area.
- 19) The DCS has the responsibility within the local authority for improving outcomes for children and young people, children's social care functions and local cooperation arrangements for children's services.⁸ The DCS should always be a member of the LSCB. However, it is the responsibility of the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) to appoint or remove the LSCB chair, with an appointment panel involving Board members and lay members. The Chief Executive, drawing on other Board partners and, where appropriate, the Lead Member will hold the Chair to account for the effective working of the LSCB and will be held to account for the effective working of the LSCB⁹.
- 20) The LMCS should be a "participating observer" of the LSCB; they may engage in discussions but not be part of the decision making process in order to provide the LMCS with the independence to challenge the DCS (and others) when necessary. The DCS also has a crucial role in ensuring collaboration and dialogue with the family courts so that high quality local authority assessments and other evidence contribute to effective and timely court processes for children.

Vetting and barring scheme

- 21) DCSs and LMCSs will not be in regulated activity in relation to children just by virtue of undertaking those posts. The Government will publish detailed information about workplace safeguarding in good time for commencement of the new Vetting and Barring Scheme arrangements.

⁷ In accordance with section 175 of the Education Act 2002 if they are maintained or the Independent School Standards set out pursuant to section 157 of that Act if they are independent schools, including Academies and Free Schools

⁸ Section 18 of the Children Act 2004. [DfE guidance](#) expands on this role

⁹ Working Together to Safeguard Children 3.12 - 3.13

Vulnerable children and young people

22) Local authorities should work with partners to promote prevention and early intervention and offer early help so that emerging problems are dealt with before they become more serious. This will help to improve educational attainment, narrow the gaps for the most disadvantaged and promote the wider well-being of children and young people, including at key transition points.

23) More specifically, the DCS and LMCS in their respective roles:

- have a shared responsibility with all officers and members of the local authority to act as effective and caring corporate parents for looked after children, with key roles in improving their educational attainment, providing stable and high quality placements and proper planning for when they leave care;
- must ensure that disabled children and those with special educational needs (SEN) can access high quality provision that meets their needs and fund provision for children with statements of SEN;
- must ensure arrangements are in place for alternative provision for children outside mainstream education or missing education (e.g. due to permanent exclusion or illness) to receive suitable full-time education;
- should ensure there is coherent planning between all agencies providing services for children involved in the youth justice system (including those leaving custody), secure the provision of education for young people in custody and ensure that safeguarding responsibilities are effectively carried out; and
- should understand local need and secure provision of services taking account of the benefits of prevention and early intervention and the importance of co-operating with other agencies to offer early help to children, young people and families.

Fair access to services

24) Local authorities should promote the interests of children, young people, parents and families and work with local communities to stimulate and support a diversity of school, early years and 16-19 provision that meets local needs. More specifically, the DCS and LMCS in their respective roles:

- must ensure fair access to all schools for every child in accordance with the statutory School Admissions and School Admissions Appeal Codes and ensure appropriate information is provided to parents;
- must ensure provision for suitable home to school transport arrangements;
- should actively promote a diverse supply of strong schools, including by encouraging good schools to expand and, where there is a need for a new school, seeking proposals for an Academy or Free School;
- should promote high quality early years provision, including helping to develop the market, securing free early education for all three and four year olds and for all disadvantaged two year olds¹⁰, providing information, advice and assistance to parents and prospective parents, and ensuring there are sufficient Sure Start children's centre services to meet local need and sufficient childcare for working parents;
- must secure access for young people to sufficient educational and recreational leisure-time activities and facilities for the improvement of their well-being and personal and social development;
- should promote children's and young people's participation in public decision-making so they can influence local commissioners; and
- should promote participation in education or training of young people, including by securing provision for young people aged 16-19 (or 25 for those with learning difficulties/disabilities).

¹⁰ The free entitlement to early education for disadvantaged two year olds became statutory in 2013

Educational excellence

25) Working with headteachers, school governors and academy sponsors and principals, local authorities should promote educational excellence for all children and young people and be ambitious in tackling underperformance. More specifically, the DCS and LMCS should in their respective roles:

- take rapid and decisive action in relation to poorly performing schools, including using their intervention powers with regard to maintained schools and considering alternative structural and operational solutions;
- develop robust school improvement strategies, including choosing whether to offer such services in a competitive and open school improvement market, working beyond local authority boundaries;
- promote high standards in education by supporting effective school to school collaboration and providing local leadership for tackling issues needing attention which cut across more than one school, such as poor performance in a particular subject area across a cluster of schools;
- support maintained schools in delivering an appropriate National Curriculum, and early years providers in meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (as outlined in the EYFS Statutory Framework);
- establish a schools forum for their area, maintain a scheme for financing maintained schools and provide financial information; and
- undertake specified responsibilities in relation to staffing and governance of maintained schools.

Further sources of information

Associated resources (external links)

- [Association of Directors of Children's Services](#)
- [Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children and Young People's Services](#)
- [Child Health Profiles](#)
- [Local Government Group](#)
- [National College for School Leadership](#)
[Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills](#)
- [Society of Local Authority Chief Executives](#)
- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- [Virtual Staff College](#)

Other departmental advice and guidance you may be interested in

- [Code of Practice for Local Authorities on Delivery of Free Early Years Provision for 3 & 4 year olds](#)
- [Early identification, assessment of needs and intervention – The Common Assessment Framework \(CAF\) for children and young people: A guide for managers](#)
- [Equality Act 2010: Public sector equality duty what do I need to know? A quick start guide for public sector organisations](#)
- [Legal framework for working with looked after children: regulations and guidance](#)
- [School Admissions Code](#)
- [School Admission Appeals Code](#)
- [Special Educational Needs Code of Practice](#)
- [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children](#)



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TO: THE EXECUTIVE
21 OCTOBER 2014

COMPLAINTS AGAINST BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL IN 2013/14
Assistant Chief Executive

1 PURPOSE OF DECISION

- 1.1 To brief the Executive about complaints made against the Council in 2013/4 as part of the ongoing work to be responsive to residents' concerns, in pursuit of Medium Term Objective 11, a key action for which is, 'publish information about the Council to promote openness and cost-effectiveness and accountability'.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive:

- 2.1 **Endorses the approach taken to dealing with and learning from complaints to the Council;**
- 2.2 **Notes the Annual Review letter of the Local Government Ombudsman to the Council for 2013/4;**
- 2.3 **Notes the information on other complaints against the Council in 2013/14; and**
- 2.3 **Notes the developments in complaints handling.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Council's staff guidelines on complaints stipulate that, '*The Chief Executive's Office shall write an annual report about complaints, which shall include reference to the annual letter issued by the Local Government Ombudsman*'. This report gives the Executive information on an important aspect of the Council's services to residents, in keeping with the Council's Charter for Customers, which includes always putting the customer first, learning from feedback, and continually aiming to improve the Council's service and performance.
- 3.2 To support the implementation of the corporate Customer Contact Strategy, endorsed by the Council's Executive on 5 July 2011. This strategy's overarching aim is to improve the quality of customer service to residents and service users.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 None.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Annual Review Letter From the Local Government Ombudsman

- 5.1 The Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) has statutory powers under the Local Government Act 1974 to investigate complaints of injustice arising from maladministration

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by local authorities. The LGO investigates complaints about most council matters including housing, planning, education, social services, consumer protection, drainage and council tax. The objective of the LGO is to secure, where appropriate, satisfactory redress for complainants and better administration for the authorities. Since 1989, the LGO has had power to issue advice on good administrative practice in local government based on experience derived from their investigations.

- 5.2 The LGO requires complainants to give the council concerned an opportunity to deal with a complaint against it first, using the council's own complaints procedure, and if this has not been done, the LGO deems such complaints to be 'premature'. If the complainant is not satisfied with the action the council takes, he or she can complain to the LGO, or ask a councillor to do so on their behalf. The LGO's Annual Letter is therefore an important, independent 'barometer' of the effectiveness of the Council's complaints resolution process and service to residents generally.
- 5.3 Within the Council, the Chief Executive's Office co-ordinates the responses to any complaints referred from the LGO to the Council (except statutory social services cases which are dealt with by the Adult Social Care, Health & Housing or Children, Young People & Learning department as appropriate), and acts as the main liaison point with the LGO.
- 5.4 The LGO's Annual Review Letter to the Council for 2013/14 is attached at Appendix 1. Drawing on this, also other published and internal information, other notable points are:
- a) The 28 complaints received by the LGO against the Council in 2013/14 is:
 - Higher than the annual average of 19 complaints the LGO received about the Council over the preceding three years.
 - Lower than the average of 51 complaints the LGO received for all councils in 2013/14.
 - Lower than all other Unitary authorities in Berkshire (the next lowest being 37, and the highest being 52 complaints to the LGO).
 - b) The LGO investigated 24 complaints against the Council and decided not to uphold any complaint. This too was lower than all other Unitary authorities in Berkshire (the next lowest being 3, and the highest being 8).
 - c) The Council's average speed in responding to LGO cases has remained well within the 28 days requested by the LGO.
- 5.5 In summary, the number of complaints to the LGO concerning Bracknell Forest Council has increased but is still low when compared to other authorities, and very low in view of the huge number of customer interactions by the Council each year. The extent to which complaints to the LGO are upheld is lower still. This continues the positive trend in recent years. Nevertheless, it must be recognised that, however few complaints are made, they are all important to the people who raise them.

Other Complaints Against the Council

- 5.6 The Council's overall complaint statistics for 2013/14, as reported by departments in their Quarterly Service Reports (QSR), shows a 30% increase on the 2012/13 figures, and are given in Appendix 2. A main reason for the increase was the incidence of complaints regarding waiting times at the council's main reception centre. The background to this and the corrective action taken is explained in paragraph 5.13. Otherwise, the increase occurred across various council areas, with no single pattern.
- 5.7 The figures at Appendix 2 exclude complaints dealt with at the point of service, such as verbal reports to front line staff, where issues are resolved locally. No central records are

kept of such stage 1 complaints. Members should note that there are also separate annual reports produced by the Adult Social Care, Health & Housing, also the Children, Young People and Learning Departments on statutory social care complaints and Public Health complaints. The statistics in Appendix 2 continue to show that the majority of complaints are resolved without recourse to later stages in the process. The figure of 14 LGO complaints cases differs to the 28 in the LGO letter as it excludes cases dealt with by the LGO without reference to the Council, and those where the LGO refers cases to the Council for our resolution (usually because the complainant has not given the Council an opportunity to respond to their complaint beforehand).

Learning From Complaints in 2013/14

- 5.8 The Council's overall approach has continued, to train and empower front line staff to deal effectively with complaints at the earliest opportunity. The Council's publication, 'Comments, Compliments or Complaints about council services' was last revised and reissued in 2011, as were the Council's internal guidelines for staff on handling complaints. QSRs, which are reviewed by Departmental Management Teams, the Corporate Management Team, the Executive and Overview & Scrutiny members, publish information on complaints and how the Council has learnt from them. Examples of this learning process in 2013/14 have included:

Adult Social Care, Health and Housing

- 5.9 On the processes when working with people towards the end of their life:
- For people who require end of life care, consideration will be given to information already held on the system so as not to create any unnecessary delay where social care funding is required.
 - Protocols regarding financial assessment for people requiring palliative care are being revisited to ensure there is not any duplication of information that causes unnecessary delays.
 - A review is being undertaken with the Contracts Team to look at ways that relevant information needed quickly can be gathered so that a decision can be made without delaying the transfer of care for people who urgently need residential provision.
- 5.10 On services provided in Residential Care Homes:
- A temporary Care Plan must be in place before anyone is accepted in to the home, including for a short or respite stay.
 - All relevant staff to receive further training on completing an initial care-plan.
 - All Duty Officers in Charge are to ensure that they pay particular attention to the personal appearance of respite guests.
 - All incidents, including refusal of support with personal care, are to be reported to Duty Officer in Charge and recorded in the Management Notifications Diary in the Duty Office. The family must then be notified as soon as possible.
- 5.11 Where homecare appointments are changed or cancelled, either by staff or by people receiving support, staff will confirm these changes in writing, when time and circumstances permit.
- 5.12 A key learning point on housing complaints has been that it may be better to offer a meeting with complainants if they are prepared to accept them as it should be easier to explain

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different interpretations of the service provided in person rather than via correspondence. Following the meeting, written confirmation of what was agreed during the meeting is sent to the complainant

Corporate Services

- 5.13 Fifteen complaints were regarding waiting times at Time Square reception. This had been as a result of the trial of the new ways of delivering the Housing and Benefits services. The Council continued to review the process for dealing with customers and actively pursued a solution to the queue management issues, to ensure all customers are not waiting an unreasonable length of time, whilst maintaining positive outcomes for all services. The final solution has reduced waiting times to a minimum.
- 5.14 Arising from a complaint that council tax liability had been miscalculated following end of entitlement to single person discount, it was decided to carry out a review of the billing stationery.
- 5.15 Following a complaint about a Land ownership dispute, it was decided that communication with a complainant should be followed up in writing after any visit to ensure clarity and understanding.

Children, Young People and Learning

- 5.16 Where a complaint has been difficult or complex, 'a learning from complaints' meeting is held with Senior Managers in Children's Social Care to ensure the Council is able to reflect and learn from the situation and put in place measures to reduce the risk of issues arising in the future. Some examples of key learning points and subsequent 'services' improvements that have been implemented / agreed were:
- Awareness of cultural diversity issues and whether an interpreter should be used
 - Social Workers have been reminded to be vigilant of their surroundings - younger children may be able to overhear conversations between Council staff and family members within the family home.
 - Avoid 'targeted phrasing' when describing an individual's personality or character, whilst maintaining the importance of being open, honest and transparent.
- 5.17 As a result of a complaint about children's services, it was decided to make two service improvements:
- If officers feel that a client/family are not accessing/engaging with services, they should evidence exactly the nature of the failure to engage.
 - Actions and decisions from meetings, together with any dissent shown, should be clearly recorded and dated. This will include clearly detailing any services to be provided and contact details.

Environment, Culture and Communities

- 5.18 Clarification was issued to the Council's car parking contractors regarding the timing of issuing penalty charge notices and the powers available regarding cancellation of notices.
- 5.19 It was recognised that there is a need to identify, and agree with applicants, a timescale for response to planning pre-application queries that is appropriate to the complexity of the application.
- 5.20 A complaint concerning assessment under the code for sustainable homes resulted in future agreements for services being tightened in two respects, to avoid any risk of misinterpretation:

Unrestricted

- The wording in the agreement was clarified in relation to the responsibilities for production of information.
- When an offer is made to engage an external assessor, an upper cost on that would be set.

5.21 The value was recognised of holding face to face meetings in order to resolve complex issues, to avoid lengthy and resource intensive correspondence.

Developments in Complaints Handling and Records

5.22 The recording of corporate complaints was enhanced from 1 April 2014 to record the outcome of a complaint, in terms of whether each complaint was upheld, partially upheld, or not upheld.

5.23 The Customer Contact Strategy Group has considered simplifying the Corporate Complaints Procedure, by reducing the number of stages from four to three. This would bring the corporate process into line with the statutory processes for Adults' and Children's Services and Public Health. It would also speed up the process for customers whilst retaining the involvement of officers at a senior level, and the Chief Executive for the final stage. This proposal is being taken forward, and a report will be presented to the Corporate Management Team later in 2014, with revised guidance for staff and a revised procedure to be published for customers.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

6.1 Nothing to add to this report.

Borough Treasurer

6.2 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

6.3 There are no direct impact issues to be considered.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

6.4 This report presents no strategic risk management issues for the Council.

Other Officers

6.5 The views of other relevant officers in departments have been sought in the production of this information report.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

7.1 Corporate Management Team

Method of Consultation

7.2 Consultation was carried out on the draft information report.

Representations Received

7.3 None.

Background Papers

Quarterly Corporate and Departmental performance reports 2013/14

Contact for further information

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Tel: 01344 352283

Doc. Ref

Groups\CXO\G\Complaints and Correspondence

Local Government
OMBUDSMAN

7 July 2014

By email

Mr Timothy Wheadon
Chief Executive
Bracknell Forest Borough Council

Dear Mr Timothy Wheadon

Annual Review Letter 2014

I am writing with our annual summary of statistics on the complaints made to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) about your authority for the year ended 31 March 2014. This is the first full year of recording complaints under our new business model so the figures will not be directly comparable to previous years. This year's statistics can be found in the table attached.

A summary of complaint statistics for every local authority in England will also be included in a new yearly report on local government complaint handling. This will be published alongside our annual review letters on 15 July. This approach is in response to feedback from councils who told us that they want to be able to compare their performance on complaints against their peers.

For the first time this year we are also sending a copy of each annual review letter to the leader of the council as well as to the chief executive. We hope this will help to support greater democratic scrutiny of local complaint handling and ensure effective local accountability of public services. In the future we will also send a copy of any published Ombudsman report to the leader of the council as well as the chief executive.

Developments at the Local Government Ombudsman

At the end of March Anne Seex retired as my fellow Local Government Ombudsman. Following an independent review of the governance of the LGO last year the Government has committed to formalising a single ombudsman structure at LGO, and to strengthen our governance, when parliamentary time allows. I welcome these changes and have begun the process of strengthening our governance by inviting the independent Chairs of our Audit and Remuneration Committees to join our board, the Commission for Administration in England. We have also recruited a further independent advisory member.

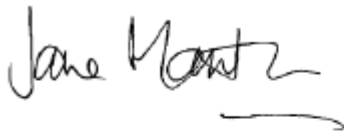
Future for local accountability

There has been much discussion in Parliament and elsewhere about the effectiveness of complaints handling in the public sector and the role of ombudsmen. I have supported the creation of a single ombudsman for all public services in England. I consider this is the best way to deliver a system of redress that is accessible for users; provides an effective and comprehensive service; and ensures that services are accountable locally.

To contribute to that debate we held a roundtable discussion with senior leaders from across the local government landscape including the Local Government Association, Care Quality Commission and SOLACE. The purpose of this forum was to discuss the challenges and opportunities that exist to strengthen local accountability of public services, particularly in an environment where those services are delivered by many different providers.

Over the summer we will be developing our corporate strategy for the next three years and considering how we can best play our part in enhancing the local accountability of public services. We will be listening to the views of a wide range of stakeholders from across local government and social care and would be pleased to hear your comments.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Martin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Dr Jane Martin
Local Government Ombudsman
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

Local authority report – Bracknell Forest Council

For the period ending – 31/03/2014

For further information on interpretation of statistics click on this link to go to <http://www.lgo.org.uk/publications/annual-report/note-interpretation-statistics/>**Complaints and enquiries received**

Local authority	Adult care services	Benefits and tax	Corporate and other services	Education and children's services	Environmental services and public protection and regulation	Highways and transport	Housing	Planning and development	Total
Bracknell Forest C	2	3	3	7	0	4	7	2	28

157

Decisions made

Local authority	<u>Detailed investigations carried out</u>		Advice given	Closed after initial enquiries	Incomplete/Invalid	Referred back for local resolution	Total
	Upheld	Not upheld					
Bracknell Forest C	0	2	2	9	1	10	24

Explanatory Notes by LGO

- **Advice given:** These are cases where we give advice about why LGO would not look at a complaint because the body complained about was not within the LGO's scope or we had previously looked at the same complaint from the complainant, or another complaints handling organisation or advice agency was best placed to help them.
- **Closed after initial enquiries:** These complaints are where we have made an early decision that we could not or should not investigate the complaint, usually because the complaint is outside LGO's jurisdiction and we either cannot lawfully investigate it or we decide that it would not be appropriate in the circumstances of the case to do so. Our early assessment of a complaint may also show there was little injustice to a complainant that would need an LGO investigation of the matter, or that an investigation could not achieve anything, either because the evidence we see shows at an early stage there was no fault, or the outcome a complainant wants is not one we could achieve, for example overturning a court order.
- **Incomplete/invalid:** These are complaints where the complainant has not provided us with enough information to be able to decide what should happen with their complaint, or where the complainant tells us at a very early stage that they no longer wish to pursue their complaint.
- **Referred back for local resolution:** We work on the principle that it is always best for complaints to be resolved by the service provider wherever possible. Furthermore, the Local Government Act 1974 requires LGO to give authorities an opportunity to try and resolve a complaint before we will get involved. In many instances, authorities are successful in doing this and many of the complainants we refer to an authority do not come back to us to continue their complaint further.

COMPLAINTS – 2013/14

Department	Statutory Stage 1	Statutory Stages 2&3	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Ombudsman	Total Complaints	Of Which (excluding 14 on-going):		
								Upheld	Partially Upheld	Not Upheld
Chief Executive's Office	N/A	N/A	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
Corporate Services	N/A	N/A	25	4	0	5	34	18	0	16
Environment, Culture and Communities	N/A	N/A	14	3	4	4	25	5	0	15
Children, Young People & Learning	23	2	1	1	0	2	29	3	6	15
Adult Social Care, Health & Housing	19	N/A	9	7	4	2	41	2	13	22
Total	42	2	49	15	8	14	130	28 (24%)	19 (16%)	69 (59%)

Unrestricted

COMPLAINTS – 2012/13

Department	Statutory Stage 1	Statutory Stages 2&3	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Ombudsman	Total Complaints
Chief Executive's Office	N/A	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Corporate Services	N/A	N/A	19	5	2	1	27
Environment, Culture and Communities	N/A	N/A	5	4	9	6	24
Children, Young People & Learning	19	3	0	0	0	1	23
Adult Social Care, Health & Housing	20	N/A	4	0	0	1	25
Total	39	3	28	9	11	9	99

COMPLAINTS – 2011/12

Statutory Stage 1	Statutory Stages 2&3	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Ombudsman	Total Complaints
41	3	20	8	5	15	92

Source – Quarterly Service Reports

TO: THE EXECUTIVE
DATE: 21 OCTOBER 2014

THE BLUE MOUNTAIN PROGRAMME
DELIVERY STRATEGY FOR THE LEARNING VILLAGE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES
Chief Executive

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek approval of the delivery strategy for the Learning Village (a nursery, two form entry primary and seven form entry secondary with post-16 all through school) and community facilities for the site at Blue Mountain.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive:

- 2.1 Approve the scope and programme for Blue Mountain Learning Village as per paragraphs 5.12 and 5.13 of this report.
- 2.2 Agree the funding model as per Appendix 3 (Restricted) for the delivery of the Learning Village after noting the dependencies and risks (paragraphs 5.14 to 5.39).
- 2.3 Approve the site acquisition in principle with the land owner of the Blue Mountain site as laid out in Appendix 4 (Restricted), subject to the due diligence to be completed by the Council's property and legal team.
- 2.4 That the Leader be requested to arrange that the decision relating to the terms of acquisition (and disposal) of land at Blue Mountain be taken by the Executive Member for Transformation and Finance.
- 2.5 Approve the Procurement Plan in Appendix 2 for the use of the Improvement Efficiency South East (IESE) framework to procure the contractor for pre-construction services and main works for the Learning Village.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Blue Mountain Programme is a priority for Bracknell Forest Council. The programme will deliver statutory school places required in the Borough alongside meeting the need for new housing and the associated community facilities. The strategy for this programme requires Executive approval.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Doing nothing is not an option because the Council has a statutory duty to provide sufficient pupil places. A viable alternative site for a secondary school is not available.

Recommended Option

- 4.2 On the assumption that a commercial deal between the land owner of the Blue Mountain site and the Bracknell Town Football Club will be made, a Learning Village co-located with the football club is the preferred option for the programme. However, the co-location is dependent upon several external factors including a commercial element between the football club and the land owner; the football club will need to provide funding for its re-location and the new facilities; shared provision will need to be operationally viable for both the school and the football club.

Default Option

- 4.3 In the event that the option for the Learning Village and Bracknell Town Football Club co-location is not achievable, the default option will be to deliver the Learning Village by September 2017 without co-location.

5. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

- 5.1 The borough is keeping pace with changing times and is in the process of delivering several regeneration and development schemes. Recent years have already seen developments across the Borough, including the construction of the new Garth Hill College and significant improvements to the railway station. A new Post 16 Centre has been built at Edgbarrow School in Crowthorne, and new neighbourhoods have developed and been established at Jennett's Park and The Parks in Bracknell.
- 5.2 Further plans include regeneration of the town centre, which will attract many new businesses and consumers. The proposed development of new neighbourhoods at Amen Corner, TRL, Warfield and Blue Mountain sites will inject new vibrancy to an already thriving population of Bracknell Forest. These developments form part of the national planning policy for the borough to meet its housing need. This means providing additional homes within the Borough-wide Site Allocations Local Plan (SALP), which was adopted by the Council in July 2013, following extensive consultation and consideration. New dwellings at Blue Mountain as well as at other sites within North Bracknell will create a deficit of secondary and primary school places from September 2016. The challenge for the council is to provide the right number of school places to meet the demand.
- 5.3 Primary needs: This growth in pupil numbers will create a local shortage of primary school places. Pupils from the Blue Mountain development and the immediate community require a school place which is close to where they live. Most primary schools are already operating at full capacity. Travel distances for primary school places need to be minimised.
- 5.4 Secondary needs: There will be a significant shortage of secondary school places in North Bracknell without the creation of a new secondary school at Blue Mountain. Organic population growth and the additional demand from new housing proposed at many sites of the Borough will attract secondary school aged pupils alongside primary aged children. The expansion of North Bracknell primary schools which began in 2009 will add to the secondary demand. If no action is taken then the

Borough will not be able to meet its statutory duty to provide school places and families within the north of the borough will face a commute in order to get young people to school.

- 5.5 The Site Allocations Local Plan (SALP) is part of the Statutory Development Plan, which allocates sites to meet development needs for the plan period to 2026. The Blue Mountain site is allocated within the SALP for 400 residential units and other facilities and infrastructure. The actual development will form only (approximately) 33% of the total site area.
- 5.6 A significant aspect of the development will be the education facilities to meet the growing need for school places. Plans also include integrated community facilities.
- 5.7 The total planned capacity at the Learning Village will be for 1851 pupils. It will consist of an all-through provision consisting of 2FE (420 pupils) primary provision with a 52-place (26FTE) nursery, 7FE (1050 pupils) secondary provision with post-16 provision (315 pupils), integrated SEN provision (40 places) and community facilities from the start of the academic year in September 2017 to support the planned growth in the Borough.
- 5.8 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives statutory force to the presumption that all new schools will be academies. The Council will follow the requirements of the Act and statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State so that a suitable provider is appointed including so far as may be possible consideration of existing schools.
- 5.9 The land owner of the Blue Mountain site is in discussion with the Bracknell Town Football Club with a view to relocate the club from its current Larges Lane site to Blue Mountain. The football club is undertaking its own discussion with the land owner of the Blue Mountain site, to which the Council is not privy.
- 5.10 The main objectives of the Blue Mountain programme for providing a multi-functional facility for the village of Binfield are as follows:
- Deliver a new 2FE primary provision with nursery, 1 Reception class operational from September 2017 with integrated SEN provision by Sep 2017
 - Deliver a new 7FE secondary provision, two Y7 classes operational from September 2017 with integrated SEN provision by Sep 2017
 - Build co-located on-site sports and integrated community facilities with re-use of the existing club facilities if possible, from 2017 onwards
 - Deliver high quality publicly accessible open space.
 - Support the development of 400 new homes
- 5.11 The following table models the total capacity at the proposed Learning Village:
-

Table 1. **Learning Village Capacity**

	Planned Capacity
Nursery (FTE)*	26
Primary Total	420
Primary SEN	15
7FE Secondary school	1,050
Sixth Form	315
Secondary Total	1,365
Secondary SEN	25
Total Pupil Numbers (FTE)	1,851

*26FTE (Full Time Equivalent) is equivalent to 52 PTE (Part Time Equivalent)

Programme Scope

5.12 The scope for the programme is as follows:

Table 2. **Programme Scope**

Item	Summary
Master Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall site options analysis and concept planning along with the movement strategy for Blue Mountain.
Learning Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All through school consisting of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 26 FTE Nursery provision (52 places PTE) - 2FE Primary provision - 7FE Secondary provision with post-16 - Integrated SEN provision (primary & secondary)
Community Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Community Facilities • Re-use of existing club house if possible (detailed scope and funding to be decided, refer to paragraph 5.18)
Sport Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Football Club and co-location options

Timescale

5.13 A detailed programme plan has been developed. Some key milestones have dependencies on external stakeholders, which create a substantial risk to the delivery of the programme by September 2017. The key milestones are summarised as follows:

Table 3. **Programme Plan**

No.	Milestone Title	Date
1	S52 Agreement in Principle	Feb-14
2	Golf Course Closure 12-month Surrender Notice	Apr-14
3	Agree Land Deal Head of Terms	Oct-14
4	Executive Report – funding model, site transaction and procurement	Oct-14
5	Execute Property Agreement (subject to community asset Localism Act 2011)	Jan-15 to Apr-15
6	Issue mini-competition through IESE framework	Jan-15
7	Executive approval contractor for Pre-Construction Services	Apr-15
8	Golf course operator exits site on or before	Apr-15
9	Commence Surveys	Apr-15
10	RIBA Stage 2 Completed	Jun-15
11	Pre-application screening advice	Jul-15
12	RIBA Stage 3 Completed	Aug-15
13	Apply for hybrid planning application (outline for the site and full learning village)	Aug-15
14	Agree S106 Head of Terms	Sep-15
15	Planning Permission(s) Granted	Nov-15
16	School Provider Appointed	Dec-15
17	Contractor for Construction Phase appointed	Dec-15
18	RIBA Stage 4 commences	Jan-16
19	Site Mobilisation	Jan-16
20	Learning village constructed	Jun-17
21	Learning Village opens	Sep-17
22	Phase 1 to 9 – new housing (developer led)	Early 2017 to 2024

Note: *Some of the above milestones are not fully finalised at this stage due to external dependencies. As such several key tasks could move over a period of time.*

Costs and Funding

- 5.14 Historically the Council has been able to fund its short-to-medium term capital investment needs from a combination of internal funds, government grants and external contributions. Since 2003 in excess of 5,000 school places have been created in schools across the Borough which together has cost an estimated £90m. This includes funding of 2,200 primary and 2,800 secondary places from a combination of developer contributions, Department for Education (DfE) and other external grant applications. A very small portion of the expenditure has been paid from the Council's own limited resources. It should be noted that all of this has been accomplished without the Council having to borrow money.
- 5.15 The development of the Blue Mountain Learning Village will represent the largest one-off capital investment by the Council, requiring funding from multiple sources. The Council will make best efforts to seek external funding, especially by bidding for DfE grant funding.
- 5.16 Based on the feasibility study the total cost for all elements of the programme is £39.07m plus £3m for contingency. However only £39.07m will be considered as

needing financing at this stage as the contingency sum is excluded. As the Council currently does not have access to the site and has not been able to undertake surveys, the cost does not allow for abnormal risks. The forecast budget is summarised as follows:

Table 4. **Total Cost Summary**

No.	Cost Item	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Total
		FY13-14	FY14-15	FY15-16	FY16-17	FY17-18	FY18-19	FY19-20	
1.	Total Cost	£0.191m	£0.585m	£3.349m	£23.3m	£10.3m	£1m	£0.345m	£39.07m
2.	Contingency				2m	1m			3m
Total:		£0.191m	£0.585m	£3.349m	£25.3m	£11.3m	£1m	£0.345m	£42.07m

5.17 **Inflation:** The programme milestones thus far have remained uncertain due to several external dependencies. Given that the likely contract-date for the construction could be delayed due to external dependencies, inflation could add as much as 15% (£6.3m) to the overall projected costs.

5.18 **Community facilities:** the total cost listed in Table 4 above includes provision for integrated community facilities which will be provided as part of the Learning Village development during the non-school hours, e.g. school playing fields and a new sports hall for the secondary school. Any integral facilities of the Learning Village that will be available for after school public use will be managed by the school provider. Additional cost may be incurred for a comprehensive stand-alone community provision e.g. major refurbishment of the existing club house. The Council does not intend to operate/manage a standalone community facility at Blue Mountain. It will partner with external provider(s) to deliver such facilities. The type and extent community facilities will be developed through a combination of internal workshops and the on-going community engagement process. Impact on the programme budget arising from further scoping of community facilities will be reported to the Executive in due course.

5.19 At this early stage in the programme the funding approach listed below outlines the financing options available to the Council and where possible indicate the potential amount of funding that will be available. As outlined below there is considerable uncertainty around all of the funding streams and as such a significant level of risk is attached both in terms of scale and timing.

5.20 The following funding streams are likely to be available to the Council and will contribute towards the financing of the programme.

Basic Need Grants

5.21 The Department for Education (DfE) funds the Council through two main capital grant streams – Basic Need Grant and Schools Capital Maintenance Grant. Both grants are non-ring-fenced and as such can be used for any capital purpose by the authority. Historically the Council has chosen to direct these grants to their respective areas, that is to say that the Basic Needs allocation supports the capital requirement for providing new pupil places (primarily by expanding existing maintained schools), whilst the Schools Capital Maintenance grant has been used to reduce the maintenance backlog identified as part of the school condition surveys commissioned

by Construction & Maintenance. Since 2010 the government has prioritised and diverted resources towards works to increase schools capacity. The Council has been a major beneficiary of this initiative. Under Basic Need the Council has been allocated £2.96m for 2014/15, £3.48m for 2015/16 and £3.65m for 2016/17.

- 5.22 Allocations of Basic Need are based on a comparison of forecast pupil numbers with school capacity, with shortfalls in capacity attracting funding. However the actual allocations are distributed as a relative proportion to the total pot available. As such should this total pot be reduced nationally, so will the actual cash funding to the Council.
- 5.23 Funding beyond 2016/17 (and for Schools Capital Maintenance beyond 2014/15) is unknown at this stage, however given the fiscal strategy being followed by central government there is little expectation that the annual funding totals will exceed that set out above. As such it is a reasonable assumption that continued funding levels of £5m per annum may be available towards the education needs across Bracknell Forest.
- 5.24 However aside from the investment needed at Blue Mountain, the Council has identified unfinanced priorities totalling £45m (Amen Corner North Primary, Amen Corner South Primary, TRL Primary, Warfield East Primary & Warfield West Primary, plus further expansions of existing schools) between now and 2020-21, as set out in the latest School Places Programme Cash Flow Statement. Whilst these schemes can be partially funded through developer contributions, these contributions will not be sufficient. There will be competing demands on the Basic Need grant which will need to be resolved. The final funding strategy will take into account the realised Basic Need Grant in the future. For the purposes of this report, an assumption has been made that £1m in 17/18 and £1m in 18/19 from anticipated DfE grants will be directed towards this project, subject to the adequate allocation by the government. This grant will be used to reduce the overall amount that needs to be borrowed in those or previous years.

Targeted Basic Need Grant

- 5.25 In December 2012, the Government announced an additional £982m of investment in schools to fund the provision of new, high quality school places in locations experiencing basic need pressure in order to prepare for further rises in pupil numbers. Funding was prioritised towards new Academies as well as investment to permanently expand good and outstanding schools with high levels of demand. Funding levels were based on Education Funding Agency's contractor framework rates (CF), with local authorities providing land and committing to funding any shortfall over CF rates. Bracknell Forest successfully demonstrated its additional basic need pressure and was awarded £7.6m ring-fenced to specific projects.
- 5.26 On the basis of its past success Bracknell Forest can be considered to be well placed to take advantage of any future opportunities. The Council will apply for targeted grant funding in the future DfE funding rounds with an aim to significantly reduce the impact of prudential borrowing.
- 5.27 In addition, the Council will apply for any other external funding opportunities that may arise during the course of this programme. No assumption has been made about the success, or otherwise, of these applications and no funding is therefore included in the funding model at present.

External Contributions

- 5.28 Currently developer contributions (S106-Contributions) are scheme specific and can be used to create the additional school places required arising from the development.

There are a number of identified schemes that could potentially contribute towards the Blue Mountain project. However, there is considerable uncertainty with respect to both the likely levels of contribution and more importantly, timing. Some developments will lead directly to the provision of additional primary schools and make an additional contribution towards secondary and Post-16 provision, whilst other contributions will cover the full schooling spectrum.

- 5.29 The Council is moving towards implementing the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which will largely replace the S106 regime, resulting in different and more streamlined method of collecting contributions from developers towards the additional infrastructure pressure resulting from development growth. Whilst this adds an increased level of certainty (in terms of calculation of contribution), there remains considerable risk surrounding the timing of these funds as they are payable on the commencement of the development and may be payable in instalments. The Council is not constrained to using this funding in particular areas or for particular projects. The current view is that CIL funds will be allocated through the normal Council budget-setting process. For the purposes of the current funding strategy, an assumption of 20% towards education facilities is proposed based on the historical proportion of S106 contributions that have been earmarked for educational purposes since 1998.
- 5.30 It should be noted, that with respect to CIL, there will be competing needs for whatever element of CIL is hypothecated to Educational Needs in the same way as there are competing needs to draw on the Basic Need Capital grants. The most significant risk relates to timing, with payments due during the life of some developments. As such, out of the estimated £4.5m potentially available from CIL for Blue Mountain, only £3.6m has been included and is back-loaded to year 7 of the scheme. A similar approach has been adopted for CIL/S106 from other sites. However, Members will be aware CIL receipts can be used to meet Council priorities and that other pressures/infrastructure delivery may be delayed. The overriding priority will be to ensure that the Council retains maximum flexibility with regard to financing capital expenditure through S106, CIL, government grant or any other sources.
- 5.31 The potential CIL funding for Blue Mountain is derived after deducting a contribution of 15% to the Parish council. If the Parish Council were to develop a neighbourhood development plan, the contribution could increase to 25%, which will lower the £3.6m CIL funding for Blue Mountain to £3.15m. The Council is endeavouring to establish a dialogue with the Parish Councils as to how the funding could be applied to provide the maximum benefit for the local communities.

Site Transaction

- 5.32 Details of the site transaction are contained in Appendix 4 (Restricted).

Borrowing

- 5.33 The Council has never had requirement to borrow externally and has funded its capital investment needs from receipts and internal borrowing. In light of the scale of Blue Mountain and the fact that the Council is unlikely to be able continue to fund its on-going programme, irrespective of Blue Mountain, through internal borrowing, it is appropriate to assume that the funding gap (after taking account of external contributions identified above) will need to be financed by external borrowing.
- 5.34 It is anticipated that due to the timing of the capital receipts related to the project (capital grants and developers contributions) there will be a staggered cash flow, as

per Appendix 3 (Restricted), with debt peaking in year 5 (£36.3m) before stabilising in year 7 (£19.8m).

- 5.35 As a worst case scenario, if the programme does not receive funding from any other sources except CIL (£3.6m) receipts at Blue Mountain, then the amount to be borrowed will peak to £38.3m in year 6 and remain at £35.1m from year 7 onwards (excluding £3m contingency). More realistically, the external borrowing requirement is likely to be between £20m and £25m. This could be less should the Council be successful in receiving further grant funding.
- 5.36 The financing of this debt over the long-term will depend on many factors including the prevailing interest rate over the life of the asset and the capital cash flows experienced by the Council (i.e. capital receipts and other capital commitments). As such the Council will make its borrowing decisions based on its overall financing need and will not consider this project in isolation. However in order to gauge the costs associated to the un-funded Blue Mountain expenditure an analysis of the debt-financing charges are provided below.
- 5.37 Accounting regulations require the Council to set aside a sum of money each year, directly from its Revenue Account for the repayment of the loan associated with the net capital expenditure incurred. This is known as the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) and only becomes payable once the asset is in full operation and is charged 1 year in arrears. For the purposes of this analysis it has been assumed that MRP will become payable in year 7 on the balance of unfinanced expenditure of £19.841m. With an estimated asset life of 60 years the annual MRP payment that must be built into the Council's forward budget proposals amounts to £0.33m.
- 5.38 The interest payable on the unfinanced expenditure will peak in year 5 before levelling off in year 7. As noted above the actual interest payable over the life of the school will depend on many factors, not least the treasury management decision taken by the Council.
- 5.39 For an investment of this nature (long-term capital investment) the Council will look to the Public Works Loan Board to provide the most cost effective funding vehicle. Borrowing is normally taken out for the period of the life of the asset, however given changes in funding streams and interest rates, the actual financing of a Council's borrowing requirement is managed on an overall basis – looking at all its requirements and not on a scheme by scheme basis.

6. ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Chief Officer: Corporate Property

- 6.1 The Council's interest in the existing land is derived from a "head lease" (with no rent payable or receivable) over the land granted from the freeholder and the Council has in turn granted a lease back to the freeholder for the site. The effect of this interest means the land cannot be developed without the Council surrendering its lease.
- 6.2 The freeholder (who is also the Council's tenant) has granted an occupational lease to Crown Golf for the management of the Golf Course and Conference Centre. Neither the freeholder nor the Council has any access rights to enter the property, to carry out surveys in order to pursue a planning application.
- 6.3 The freeholder having already applied to the Council for a relaxation for the planning condition (S52), the decision of which was taken by the Executive Member for planning and transport on 5 February 2014, has affectively resolved to grant a deed of release of the S52, conditional upon any planning permission being in accordance with the Site Allocations Local Plan (SALP).
- 6.4 The freeholder having established the site for development in the SLAPD and the principle to remove the S52 has unilaterally served notice on Crown Golf to surrender the occupational lease effective 25 April 2015. This will allow access to the site for the freeholder (and the Council with permission) to carry out surveys pursuant to a planning application.
- 6.5 In order for the freeholder to fully release his land for the development of 400 additional homes he also requires the head-lease of Council to be surrendered.
- 6.6 The principle terms have been negotiated to surrender the Council's lease are commercially sensitive and the final terms to be concluded but the principle heads are set out in the Appendix 4 (Restricted).
- 6.7 Binfield Parish Council has successfully applied that part of the site be registered as an Asset of Community Value. The owner could not be entered into a sale until six months expire following a notice of their intention to dispose. After the six months, the owner and the Council would be free to enter into an agreement (i.e. there will be no obligation for the owner to sell to the Parish Council. The six month delay would be unlikely to critically alter the programme.

Chief Officer: Planning & Transport

- 6.8 The learning village and community facilities programme described in this report accord with the Council's adopted planning policy for the site (Policy SA7 in the Site Allocations Local Plan, July 2013). The delivery of the schools at Blue Mountain, especially the secondary school capacity is very important to provide for the needs created by the other sites allocated in the north of the Borough, including Warfield (2,200 homes), Amen Corner South (725 homes) and Amen Corner North (400 homes) as well as providing for the pupils generated by the 400 new homes allocated to the Blue Mountain site itself. The masterplanning and delivery of the site should also secure access to a good range of facilities for existing and new communities including open space, sports facilities and a community hub.

Borough Solicitor

- 6.9 Under sections 13 and 14 of the Education Act 1996, as amended by the Education and Inspections Act 2006, a local education authority has a general statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places available to meet the needs of the population in its area. Local Authorities must promote high educational standards, ensure fair access to educational opportunity and promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential.
- 6.10 This report includes a procurement plan for the Blue Mountain Learning Village scheme for Executive approval.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.11 The financial implications are included in the body of the report. The long-term funding requirement for the project will continue to be reviewed and updated as the scheme progresses and at an appropriate time a formal request for funding will be brought before the Council for approval.
- 6.12 The financial requirement listed in this report is to meet the capital budget for the scheme. Start-up revenue funding in addition to the pupil based funding formula will be required in the year the school commences its operations, which will be funded from the dedicated schools grant.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.13 There are no implications for the immediate purpose of this report. All new construction will be fully accessible to disabled pupils, staff and visitors.

Table 5. **Strategic Risk Management Issues**

	ISSUE	RISK	COMMENT
1	Affordability Risk	High	Prudential borrowing required
2	Cost Risk	Medium	Programme budget for the Learning Village includes a contingency
3	Programme Risk	Medium	The programme has several external dependencies, hence, may slip by a year to 2018.
4	Planning Risk	High	Full planning protocols will be adhered to including pre-screening advice.
5	Contractor/Supplier Capability Risk	Medium	Optimum procurement route will be selected for the programme.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 A community Reference Group has been established to provide a cross section of local community representatives to engage in the master planning of the planned development on the Blue Mountain site at Binfield. The first meeting of the group took place on 18 June 2014. Meetings are being held every two months.
- 7.2 Public consultation will be held in due course with the wider residential, business and school community in Bracknell Forest.

Background Information

- Business Case
- Programme Plan
- Programme Status Reports
- Risk & Issue Register
- Land Deal Options Paper
- Project Initiation Document
- Procurement Plan
- Communications Plan
- Terms of Reference, Community Reference Group
- Draft plans

Contacts for further information

David Watkins 01344 354061	Chief Officer: Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention Children, Young People and Learning david.watkins@bracknell-forest.gov.uk
Rajesh Sinha 01344 354090	Programme Manager: Blue Mountain rajesh.sinha@bracknell-forest.gov.uk
Steven Caplan 01344 352474	Chief Officer: Corporate Property steven.caplan@bracknell-forest.gov.uk
Calvin Orr 01344 352125	Chief Technical Accountant, Corporate Services calvin.orr@bracknell-forest.gov.uk
Alex Jack 01344 355679	Borough Solicitor alex.jack@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Initial Equalities Screening Record Form

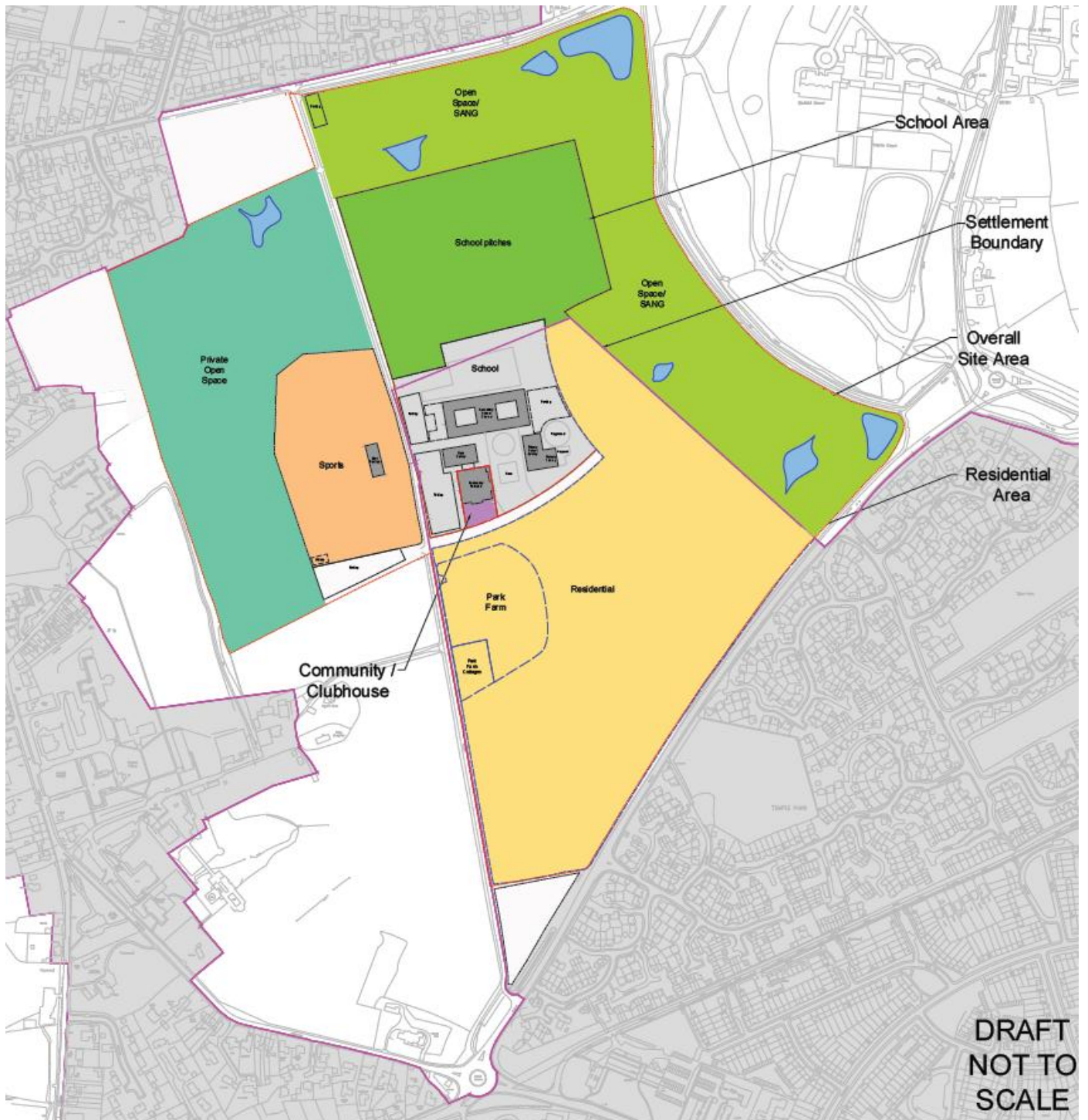
Date of Screening:	Directorate: Office of the Chief Executive	Section: CO: SREI	
1. Activity to be assessed	The Blue Mountain Programme Delivery Strategy for the Learning Village and Community Facilities		
2. What is the activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change		
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Existing		
4. Officer responsible for the screening	David Watkins, CO: SREI		
5. Who are the members of the screening team?	Rajesh Sinha (BM Programme Manager), Chris Taylor (Head of Education Property, CYPL)		
6. What is the purpose of the activity?	<p>The Blue Mountain Programme is a priority for Bracknell Forest Council. The programme will deliver statutory school places required in the Borough alongside meeting the need for new housing and the associated community facilities.</p> <p>The Council is aiming to provide a 7FE secondary school with post-16 provision, a 2FE primary school with a nursery and community provision from September 2017 to support the planned growth in the Borough.</p>		
7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?	Nursery and primary aged children in the Binfield area Secondary aged children in North Bracknell Adults, Residents and Business across Bracknell		
Protected Characteristics	Please tick yes or no	Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.	What evidence do you have to support this? E.g equality monitoring data, consultation results, customer satisfaction information, etc. Please add a narrative to justify your claims around impacts and describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion as this will inform members decision making, include consultation results/satisfaction information/equality monitoring data
8. Disability Equality	Y	Positive	New buildings and facilities will be built according to the regulations complying with the Equalities Act 2010. As the school will accommodate SEN pupils, a review of the appropriate needs will be taken account of in the design.
9. Racial equality	Y	Positive	Community engagement in developing community facilities will be undertaken. The Learning Village will be available to all sections of the

			community.
10. Gender equality	Y	Positive	Community engagement in developing community facilities will be undertaken. The Learning Village will be available to all genders of the community.
11. Sexual orientation equality	Y	Positive	Community engagement in developing community facilities will be undertaken. The Learning Village will be available to all sections of the community.
12. Gender re-assignment	Y	Positive	Community engagement in developing community facilities will be undertaken. The Learning Village will be available to all sections of the community.
13. Age equality	Y	Positive	Community engagement in developing community facilities will be undertaken. The Learning Village will be available to all school-aged children. School facilities will also be open to use by all members of the community during non-school hours.
14. Religion and belief equality	Y	Positive	Community engagement in developing community facilities will be undertaken. The Learning Village will be available to all sections of the community.
15. Pregnancy and maternity equality	Y	Positive	Community engagement in developing community facilities will be undertaken. The Learning Village will be available to all sections of the community.
16. Marriage and civil partnership equality	Y	Positive	Community engagement in developing community facilities will be undertaken. The Learning Village will be available to all sections of the community.
17. Please give details of any other potential impacts on any other group (e.g. those on lower incomes/carers/ex-offenders) and on promoting good community relations.	None		
18. If an adverse/negative impact has been identified can it be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for any other reason?	None		
19. If there is any difference in the impact of the activity when considered for each of the equality groups listed in 8 – 14 above; how significant is the difference in terms of its nature and the number of people likely	<p>The development team has been structured to include architects and designers who are experienced in designing schools to ensure that these particular needs are met.</p> <p>Community facilities will be planned in consultation with the community. A Community Reference Group has been set up.</p>		

to be affected?			
20. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties?		N	None
21. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?	Please contact the Blue Mountain Programme Manager for further information.		
22. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?		N	The latest DfE Design Guide (BB103) along with previous guidance BB98 and BB99 for primary and secondary schools will be adopted as a template for the new accommodation. Statutory consents for Planning and Building Control will ensure that the new accommodation and alternations to existing buildings meet with current statutory requirements for disabled access.
23. If a full impact assessment is not required; what actions will you take to reduce or remove any potential differential/adverse impact, to further promote equality of opportunity through this activity or to obtain further information or data? Please complete the action plan in full, adding more rows as needed.			
Action		<i>Person Responsible</i>	<i>Milestone/Success Criteria</i>
Consultation with the Community on an on-going basis	On-going	CO: SREI	<i>Ability to demonstrate that consultation has fed back into the design</i>
Consultation with internal and external stakeholders	On-going	CO: SREI	
24. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?	The Programme Team will be responsible for ensuring that the accommodation meets the particular needs of pupils, staff and the community.		
25. Please list the current actions undertaken to advance equality or examples of good practice identified as part of the screening?	<i>Community facility scoping to be carried out in partnership with the Community Reference Group.</i>		
26. Chief Officers signature.	<i>Signature:</i> <i>Date:</i>		

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Appendix 1 – High Level Draft Proposed Site Plan (not to scale)



Block layout concept For information only

- Residential
- Learning village
- School pitches
- Community Facilities
- Open Space/SANG (Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space)
- Other open spaces (Private)
- Sport
- Park Farm properties
- Settlement boundary (Bracknell Forest)
- Site Boundary

Note: site acquisition confidential discussions are currently being held between the Council and the representatives of the site owner. The above plan is subject to change.

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Document Status: For approval
Revision: 2.0
Date: September 2014
Prepared By: Rajesh Sinha

Circulation List:

Legal	Simon Heard
Finance	Calvin Orr and Paul Clark
Procurement	Derek Fitz-Gibbon
Service Efficiency Steering Group	All members
CMT	All members
Executive	All members

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BACKGROUND

The Blue Mountain Programme is a priority for Bracknell Forest Council.

The vision of the programme is to provide a combined living and learning environment, which enriches public open space and provides quality facilities to the community.

The programme will deliver statutory school places required in the Borough alongside meeting the need for new housing and the associated community facilities.

The Learning Village will consist of an all-through provision consisting of 2FE primary provision with a 52-place (PTE) nursery, 7FE secondary provision with post-16 provision, integrated SEN provision and community facilities from September 2017 to support the planned growth in the Borough.

This Procurement Plan is in respect of the construction works required to create the new school buildings and facilities, consistent with the School Capacity Strategy approved by the Executive in December 2013.

Reason for Requirement

The Site Allocations Local Plan (SALP) is an essential component to the Council's adopted Core Strategy. The proposed development at the Blue Mountain site is included within the SALP with an aim to create 400 residential units.

New dwellings at Blue Mountain as well as at other sites (particularly in North Bracknell) will create a deficit of secondary and primary school places from September 2016.

Under sections 13 and 14 of the Education Act 1996, as amended by the Education and Inspections Act 2006, a local education authority has a general statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places available to meet the needs of the population in its area. Local Authorities must promote high educational standards, ensure fair access to educational opportunity and promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential.

To meet the growing need for school places, a Learning Village at the Blue Mountain development is being proposed along with integrated community facilities.

Objectives

- The main objectives of the Blue Mountain programme for providing a multi-functional facility as follows:
 - Deliver a new 2FE primary provision, 1 Reception class operational from September 2017 with integrated SEN provision (15 places) by Sep 2017
 - Deliver a new 7FE secondary provision, two Y7 classes operational from September 2017 with integrated SEN provision (25 places) by Sep 2017
 - Build co-located on-site sports and integrated community facilities with re-use of the existing club facilities if possible, from 2017 onwards
 - Support the development of 400 new homes
 - Deliver high quality publicly accessible open space

Project Scope

- The scope for the programme is as follows:

Item	Summary
Master Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall site options analysis and concept planning along with the movement strategy for Blue Mountain.
Learning Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All through school consisting of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 26 FTE Nursery provision (52 places PTE) - 2FE Primary provision - 7FE Secondary provision with post-16 - Integrated SEN provision (primary & secondary)
Community Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Community Facilities • Re-use of existing club house if possible (detailed scope and funding to be decided, refer to paragraph 5.18)
Sport Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Football Club and co-location options

This procurement plan focuses on the delivery of the Learning Village. Procurement of contractors for other deliverables such as the community facilities will be included at a later date once the details of the type of facilities and timetable for delivery have been agreed with various stakeholders. Depending on the status, either this procurement plan will be updated or a new plan will be created to cover additional items.

Project Constraints/Assumptions

- Procurement plan currently covers the delivery of the Learning Village only.
- Surveys have not been carried out, hence, site unknowns could impact cost and delivery
- Planning approval will be required to enable the project to be delivered.
- Accuracy of forecast pupil numbers
- Funding in future years, including DfE grant and developer contributions to be confirmed

Dependencies

- Sufficient interest from suitable contractors at tender
- Property transaction to be completed before appointing a contractor.
- Possession of the site to be available.
- Service connections to the main grid to be made available through the developer's site.

VALUE FOR MONEY

A master plan has been developed for the site and the options identified through a feasibility study.

The construction work will be tendered in accordance with the Council's procurement procedures and value for money will be demonstrated at contract award.

The cost consultant will compare the competitive tender returns and also review against the

projects of similar nature and scale in South East England.

FINANCIAL BREAKDOWN

Capital Costs

Based on the feasibility study the total cost of the programme is £42.07m including £3m for contingency.

It is important to note that. Inflation can be expected to add as much as 15% (£6.3m) to the overall projected costs.

Revenue Costs

Schools are funded for their day to day revenue costs from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), which is a ring-fenced grant, the amount of which is determined by the DfE and is therefore outside the financial responsibility of the Council. DSG is allocated to local authorities based on pupil headcount data, so as pupil numbers increase, so does overall income to the Schools Budget to allocate additional funds to relevant schools.

However, the Council needs to be aware of the impact of its investment decisions and ensure that no undue financial burden is placed on the Schools Forum which has responsibility for allocating funds within the Schools Budget. Any cost impact from these developments will reduce funding available to other areas of the Schools Budget.

The funding formula for schools is used to allocate resources on an objective and consistent basis to schools. This results in the majority of funding being allocated on the basis of the number of pupils on roll. Funding rates for 2014/15 are in the range of £2,820 to £4,000, and cover the vast majority of school costs.

As with most new/expanded schools, start-up costs pose a challenge. As the funding is based on number of pupils, the year on year rise in rolls in new schools places significant pressure on school budgets to meet fixed overheads including, full staff rota, extra heating, lighting and maintenance.

Pupil transport costs are a funding responsibility of the Council, however the school admissions process will be managed so as to minimise any home to school transport costs by placing pupils in local schools wherever possible.

Cashable Savings

None anticipated.

Project Costs

The cost of construction and fit out of the learning village are allowed for within the capital cost. It is inclusive of professional fees, furniture & equipment and ICT.

The costs allow for integrated community facilities which will be provided as part of the Learning Village development e.g. new sports hall for the secondary school could be used by the community during the non-school hours. Additional cost may be incurred for a comprehensive stand-alone provision e.g. major refurbishment of the existing club house. The full definition of the scope of the community facilities will be developed through a combination of internal workshops and the community engagement process.

CONSTRUCTION PROCUREMENT

Procurement process and methods

The construction value falls above the OJEU threshold. The Capital Construction Category Strategy considered all of the options for this type of procurement and that IESE framework is the preferred approach. In order to meet the Council's Contract Standing Orders, it is proposed to use a framework run by Improvement and Efficiency South East (IESE). The IESE framework is the preferred procurement route for major new school build projects in the Capital Construction Category Strategy approved by the Executive in 2012. It was used to appoint the contractor for the Building Schools for the Future project to rebuild Garth Hill College in 2010.

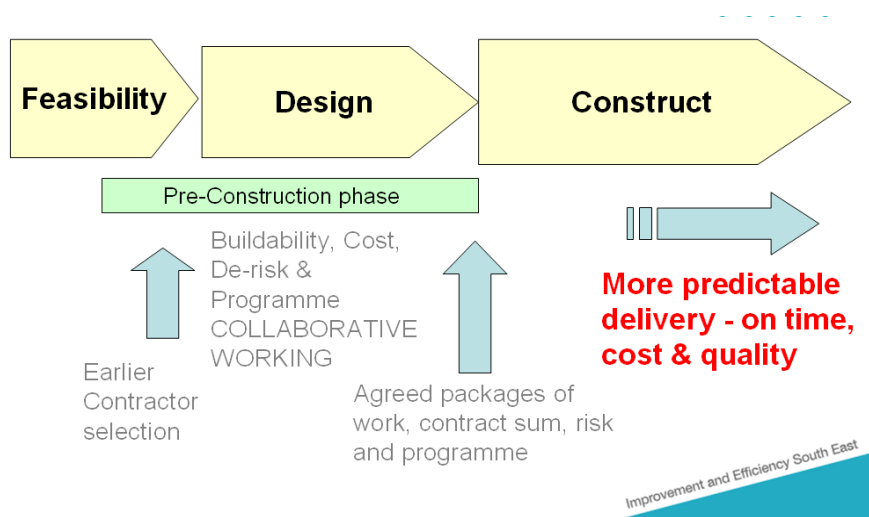
Contractors will be required to complete a mini-competition process. The contractors will be shortlisted to three or four in part 1 of the mini-tender. The Council will then select one contractor from the shortlist and will award a contract for delivering pre-construction services.

Once the pre-construction services have been delivered and planning has been granted, the Council will award the contract for main works to the same contractor for the construction phase.

The IESE Framework for Major Projects went live on 20 July 2011 and can be used for procuring construction projects of more than £1m in value, with no single project upper limit. The framework will expire in July 2015. A new replacement framework is currently being procured by Hampshire County Council. Whilst one can only guess at this stage, it is expected that the new set of contractors may be appointed at a higher framework rate next year. This view is supported by the evidence that the construction market has seen a major improvement in business coming out of the recession and inflation in cost is expected to rise significantly. The current forecasts from Atkins indicate that from Q1 2014 to Q2 2015, price inflation for constructing the schools will be 7.82%. Hence, the Council could benefit from using the existing framework rates under the current 2011 IESE framework.

IESE is expecting to appoint eight contractors on the revised framework from July 2015, which means the total number of contractors will remain unchanged from current 2011 framework. Hence, the volume of competition is expected to remain unchanged.

IESE approach:



The key benefits of IESE framework are:

- Value based tender process
- Early contractor involvement
- Integrated project team
- Cost-Time-Benefit recording
- Quality assurance process
- KPI performance approach
- Compliant with OJEU procurement
- Open book negotiation
- Time cost and quality certainty

The framework is based upon a 2 stage collaborative process. It is designed to complement Contracting Authorities' project processes and gives an increased emphasis to deliver efficiencies.

Timescale

The key milestones proposed are as follows:

Item No.	Description	Timetable
1.	Procurement Plan Approved	Oct 2014
2.	Specification	January 2015
3.	Project Notification	January 2015
4.	First stage selection – The 'mini competition'	
5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Contracting Authority issues its mini competition document to all contractors. 	February 2015
6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The contractors submit mini competition part 1 to Contracting Authority. 	March 2015
7.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Contracting Authority evaluates and invites the top 3 or 4 contractors to submit mini competition part 2. 	March 2015
8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The contractors submit mini competition part 2 to Contracting Authority. 	April 2015

9.	• The Contracting Authority evaluates and identifies the best bid.	April 2015
10.	• The Contracting Authority enters into a Pre-Construction Agreement with the successful contractor.	April 2015
11.	• The Contractor completes the pre-construction service to the Authority's satisfaction.	September 2015
12.	Second stage selection	
13.	• The Contracting Authority enters into the underlying contract for the works.	December 2015
14.	* Construction Phase	January 2016 to June 2017

* Subject to the council having sufficient rights to access the site.

Tender Evaluation

The evaluation criteria for the procurement will be pre-determined and issued with the Invitation to Tender. Tenders will be evaluated on Quality 55%, and Cost 45% as per the IESE Framework, as follows:

Part 1

- Availability Yes/No
- Available Resources and Project Understanding 20%

Part 2

- Technical Criteria 35%
- Finance Criteria 45%

The Part 1 scores for shortlisted bidders carry forward and are combined with their scores for Part 2 of the mini-competition.

The tenders will be evaluated with advice from the Council's technical advisory team Atkins.

Other procurement options considered:

Many procurement options were reviewed, of which the main alternative routes considered were as follows:

a) A full OJEU tender procurement was considered to be unsuitable. Due to the complex property transaction for this programme timetabling a lengthy procurement timeline as sequential activity may lead to abortive cost and/or costly changes at a later stage. The full OJEU option will also carry a higher level of risk that that programme may not be delivered by September 2017.

b) The EFA framework has also been considered as a procurement route. However, its suitability is also compromised because the Blue Mountain programme has a unique set of on-going property issues. The EFA framework is better positioned when an initial feasibility study by the Council is followed by short-listing two contractors to progress the design stage. Surveys should ideally be completed ahead of the short-listing of the two contractors, which will not be possible until May 2015. Applying the framework after gaining site access from April 2015 may mean that that programme may not be delivered by September 2017. As two contractors develop the design in parallel, the cost incurred by the short listed contractors is significant. This risk to the contractor is generally not worthwhile if underlying risks exist e.g. the property deal may not materialise as per the timetable. Hence, it is highly likely that that several contractors may willingly not participate in the bidding process, which could have a significant impact on value for money.

c) Government Procurement Service is now part of the Crown Commercial Service was reviewed. The framework has recently been used by the Council to procure the Garth Hill College expansion for £6.5m but it was considered unsuitable for the large-scale Blue Mountain Programme.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risks and Mitigation Options

Affordability Risk is HIGH as these works are dependent upon external borrowings.

Programme Risk is assessed as MEDIUM. The programme has several external dependencies, hence, may slip by a year to 2018.

Planning Risk is HIGH, because the works involve redevelopment of a golf club which may also contain protected species. Survey will be carried out from April 2015 onwards. There will be issues with highways. Objections to the planning application from the community are expected.

Availability of Site Risk is HIGH. The site transaction is progressing but obtaining vacant possession could be delayed due to various reasons e.g. lack of a commercial deal with the land owner of the Blue Mountain site, delay in the golf club exiting site.

Contingency Plans – Business Continuity

Not applicable. Garth Hill College is currently undergoing an expansion of 350 places from September 2015 as an interim measure until the new secondary school at Blue Mountain is open.

SUSTAINABILITY

With respect to the works being purchased, the following sustainable areas will be considered as part of the procurement process:-

Social

- The facilities will provide bright and flexible accommodation for children, giving the best start and opportunities for the pupils.
- The programme is seeking input from the Council's Business & Enterprise team to ensure that apprentices and trainees are included in the delivery. IESE has partnered with the CITB to establish a flexible, low cost and easy to use construction industry Shared Apprenticeship Scheme (SAS) for London and the South East. The scheme is fully endorsed by the Skills Funding Agency, National Apprenticeship Service. It operates across the IESE region with two not for profit organisations, CoTrain and Evolve, complimenting the contractors existing training schemes. The Council will give due consideration to suppliers and contractors whose employment practices include the use of apprenticeships.

Environment

- The building and facilities will impact on the environment but this will be mitigated through the statutory planning and building control processes to ensure that the construction meets current standards.
- A method statement on how the contractor will manage the construction will be required.
- Proposals for reducing carbon and managing waste during the construction and within the scheme design will be requested.
- The Council's energy manager will be consulted on the design and specification to ensure they are satisfied with the proposals.
- Renewable technology, probably solar panels and solar water heating will be part of the scope.
- A BREEAM rating of 'very good' is being targeted.

Economic

- The school will have new facilities to support teaching and learning to 21st century standards.
- The Council will seek to encourage potential contractors to engage local trades and businesses. As per the IESA published data, 92% of all sub-contractors are SMEs, 62.3% of the money goes to local SMEs and 61% of labour is local.
- The Council will require that the project is registered with the Considerate Constructor Scheme. IESE claims that Considerate Constructor Scheme Projects out performs industry average of (35.3) by 14%.

EQUALITY

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

- Particular attention will be paid to the disability access requirements and any age specific requirements in the design of the accommodation.

DATA PROTECTION

Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA)

- A PIA Screening Record Form is not required as the procurement does not include any system or services where personal data is collected or processed.

Project Steering Group

The Project Director will chair the Programme Steering Group (PSG) which will meet monthly to review the project against cost and programme, to deal with detailed issues raised by the project manager and to manage risk and change control.

Contract Management

Contact management will be provided by Atkins, subject to fee confirmation.

ADVICE RECEIVED FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Procurement Comments

Provided by: Derek Fitz-Gibbon

Programme uncertainties serve to increase the risk of a compromised procurement process and cost escalation both of which will need careful management.

Legal Comments

Provided By: Simon Heard

There are complex legal issues that will need to be resolved in relation to the land deal prior to the commencement of the procurement exercise.

Finance Comments

Provided by: Paul Clark

Included within the body of the procurement plan.

Category Manager Comments

Provided by David Watkins

This procurement is being carried out in accordance with the approved Category Strategy.

CHANGE CONTROL

If any major changes are required to this document it will be re-issued as a revision for approval. Change will be managed through a formal change control procedure and coordinated by the Programme Manager. Additional expenditure will not be incurred without written approval by the Project Director.

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Regulation 4 of the Local Authorities (Executive
Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England)
Regulations 2012.

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