

TO: EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & LEARNING
DATE: 31 JULY 2017

**CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION ANNUAL REPORT:
APRIL 2016 - MARCH 2017
Director of Children Young People and Learning**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the annual report of the Children's Participation Service to the Executive Member of Children and Young People.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 For the Executive Member, Children and Young People to receive the annual report of from the Children's Participation Service and to note the key messages and recommendations made.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 To ensure ongoing accountability of the department towards the development of continually improved outcomes overall for children and young people in care and those leaving care in accordance with statutory expectations.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 None considered as production of such a report is in line with legislation and policy guidance which is requiring, or strongly encouraging agencies to become more participative.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 One of the key aims stated in "Bracknell Forest's Vision and Ambition for Children and Young People" is "*that the voice of the child will remain at the centre of all our work and that their views will be taken into account in all that we do.*" The Participation Service develops strategies, structures and systems to ensure that these values are communicated across the Council through promotion, training and the recruitment process. The Service also ensures children and young people have involvement in individual decisions about their own lives, as well as collective involvement in matters that affect them.
- 5.2 The participation cycle has provided an effective structure for the work of the Children in Care Council and empowered them to chair their meetings with senior management and members. New structures have been developed; BOOM (Because Our Opinions Matter) to facilitate the participation of children with additional needs and the Participation Operational Group to drive participation work across the department and monitor progress.
- 5.4 Consultations have been held with children on a child protection plan and regarding new Health passports for young people and their views incorporated into action. The

level of participation by young people in recruitment has increased in 2016/17. Skills and knowledge of both staff and children and young people have been developed through training, qualifications, new experiences and shadowing. Senior managers and elected members have acted as champions for young people's participation.

- 5.3 The Children's Participation Annual Report March 2016 – April 2017 at Annex 1 sets out the activity undertaken in 2016 to support these aims and commitments and the impact of this activity measured in line with the Hear By Right standards.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The relevant legal issues are addressed within the report.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 The Borough Treasurer is satisfied that no significant financial implications arise from presenting the 2016-17 annual report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 No change of policy proposed – further EIA is not required at this stage

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 None

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 The Participation Operational Group and the Children's Social Care Management Team have considered and endorsed this Annual report.

Method of Consultation

- 7.2 Written report.

Representations Received

- 7.3 Included in this report.

Background Papers

Participation Strategy Children's Social care updated 2016

<http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/participation-strategy-2015.pdf>

A Positive Approach to Youth Engagement 2014

<http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/a-positive-approach-to-youth-engagement-2014.pdf>

Contact for further information

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Approved by Cllr Dr Gareth Barnard
Executive Member, Children, Young People
& Learning

Signature.....

Date: 31 July 2017

Approved by Nikki Edwards
Director, Children, Young People
& Learning

Signature.....

Date: 31 July 2017