

**TO: EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COUNCIL STRATEGY AND COMMUNITY
COHESION**

30 OCTOBER 2017

**EQUALITY SCHEME 2012-17
IMPACT REPORT 2016-17
Director of Resources**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To approve for publication the Bracknell Forest “All of Us” Equality Scheme 2012-17 Making a difference: assessing the scheme’s impact 2016-17 – final monitoring report.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That the Equality Scheme Impact Report 2016-17 and Monitoring Report 2016-2017 attached at Annex A and Annex B respectively be approved for publication**
- 2.2 **That progress in implementing the Council’s “All of Us” Equality Scheme 2012-17 is noted.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Council is committed to reviewing its performance on implementing its Equality Scheme annually. This impact report highlights and reviews progress made implementing the fifth and final year of the scheme during 2016-17.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The Council has a duty to advance equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations between people. The “All of Us” Equality Scheme has been developed to demonstrate how the Council is advancing equality.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

- 5.1 Bracknell Forest Council is required in the Equality Act 2010 public sector equality duty regulations to publish equality objectives. In order to meet these duties the Council developed a Single Equality Scheme in 2012, which replaced the existing three Disability, Race and Gender Equality Schemes and the Council’s ‘All of Us’ Community Cohesion Strategy; moving from having four action plans to one. The scheme which was published in April 2012 highlighted our equality objectives, including those to promote good community relations. Through the development of an action plan the Council ensured that the objectives are achievable, measurable and outcome focussed; particularly given the current financial climate and there being no additional resources to implement the Equality Scheme.

Equality Scheme 2012-17

- 5.2 The scheme was a result of extensive consultation with our partners and communities and highlights the key inequality issues that Bracknell Forest was likely to face over the original four years of the scheme. The objectives set out how the council tackled these issues. Its action plan describes in detail how we have delivered these objectives in practice – and how we know and show we have done so.
- 5.3 The ‘All of Us’ Equality Scheme developed in 2012 was due to be updated and replaced in April 2016. However following the May 2015 local elections the Council’s new administration developed and approved a new Council Plan which came into effect in November 2016. It was therefore agreed to extend the life of this Scheme until March 2017. The Council Plan includes a commitment to review all council services over the next four years and a new narrative which underlines the Council’s commitment to reducing inequalities
- 5.4 The Impact Report and Monitoring Report of the Action Plan, attached at Annex A and B respectively, summarise the actions we have taken to address our equality objectives and the impact we have made in 2016-17 and during the lifetime of the scheme. Much of this work has been carried out in partnership and we acknowledge how important working with our partners has been in addressing the objectives in the equality scheme.
- 5.5 The Council has been successful in implementing the strategy during its lifespan, working with our partners and achieved its aims. This is clear from the key performance measures against which the success of the strategy is being judged, namely:
- 43 of the 104 key actions in the Equality Scheme action plan have been completed within the allocated timescale;
 - 54 are in progress and ongoing;
 - one action has been identified as red (behind schedule) and
 - six are recorded as no longer applicable or unachievable in light of changing circumstances.
- 5.6 Annex B details the progress to date on each key task in the action plan but a detailed explanation of the background behind the red action and those recorded as unachievable are set out below:

Red – action is behind schedule

5.2 (b) Ensure members of DA Forum have a DA policy in place.

Most of the members of the Bracknell Forest DA Forum do now have a domestic abuse policy in place to protect their own staff. Bracknell Forest Council is one of those organisations which do have such a policy in place. Work continues to secure 100% compliance of the DA Forum however membership of the Domestic Abuse Forum changes as new services become aware of and engaged with the Forum. Work is ongoing to encourage all organisations in the forum to have a DA policy.

Grey – action is no longer applicable

5.2 Increase the detection rate for domestic abuse assaults with injury.

This year Thames Valley Police have changed their classification categories and domestic assault with injury is no longer classified. The figures we can now obtain are for domestic violence with injury. This data has an outcome rate of 28% for 2016-17 and there is no comparative data for previous years. The performance in Bracknell Forest is slightly below the average outcome rate for Berkshire (29%) and the Thames Valley (32%).

8.1 Continue to modernise support and include new ways of enabling the delivery of that support; and

8.1 (a) Continue to improve and develop the Council's approach to personalisation to give each person choice and control over the support they get

This work has now been succeeded by the transformation plan for the department within culture change and the conversation project. It is therefore no longer applicable.

9.2 Support people with mental health issues to take up or remain in employment; and

9.4 Increase the number of people with mental health issues who use community teams living in their own home or family home, with or without support.

The council continues to work with NHS Digital over a significant number of data anomalies that exist in the NHS data. Once we understand the anomalies better, we will be in a position to clarify their impact on the overall mental health data set.

9.3 (b) Ensure that new affordable housing developments increase the supply of accessible accommodation for people with disabilities

This action is no longer applicable as it related to a scheme which the Council promoted and subsequent schemes rely on planning policy.

5.7 The Council's performance is also measured through testing residents' perceptions and the findings of the 2017 Residents Survey should be noted:

- 96% of Bracknell Forest residents surveyed believe that people from different backgrounds get on well together in the borough, a significant improvement on the findings of the 2014 Residents' Survey which was 94%.
- The majority of residents, 88%, felt there was little problem with people not treating each other with respect within their local area; a minority of residents, 12%, considered this to be a problem.

Developing a new Equality Scheme

5.7 A new Bracknell Forest Equality Scheme has been developed for 2017-20 and sets out what the council intends to achieve in terms of advancing equality and diversity and includes the council's equality objectives. The equality scheme has been linked to the service planning process for 2017 to 2018 to ensure that the implementation of the equality objectives will be integrated, wherever possible, into the mainstream delivery and monitoring of services across the council. Annual monitoring reports will

be produced and published on the website so that the community can track our progress in implementing the scheme.

Conclusion

- 5.8 The Council has been very successful implementing 'All of Us 2012-17' as can be seen from the attached impact report highlighting successes. In March 2014 the Council was successfully re-accredited by the Local Government Association (LGA) to confirm that it continues to meet the achieving level of the Equality Framework, which helps local authorities improve their performance on equality and diversity. An action plan was developed to respond to a number of recommendations made within the Peer Report to consolidate the Council's "achieving" status.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

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

Borough Treasurer

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

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 The Equality Scheme outlines how the Council will meet its legal duties to advance equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 Failure to achieve the objectives of the scheme could risk legal challenge and reduce the levels of cohesion in the borough.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 The Council's Equalities Group

Method of Consultation

- 7.2 By email and in meetings

Representations Received

- 7.3 Included in this report

Background Papers

Annex A – 'All of Us' Equality Scheme Making a difference: assessing the scheme's impact 2016-17 – final monitoring report

Annex B - 'All of Us' Equality Scheme 2012–2017 Action Plan Monitoring 2016-17

Contact for further information

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