



**'All of Us'  
Equality Scheme 2012-17**

**Bracknell Forest – the borough of  
opportunity**



**Making a difference: assessing the scheme's  
impact 2016-17 - final monitoring report.**

# 1. Introduction

This is the final annual monitoring report on the 'All of Us' Equality Scheme 2012-17 and summarises the progress made during its final year in 2016-17, as well as success across the five years of implementing the scheme.

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.

## Our vision, our commitment

Bracknell Forest is a thriving, welcoming and inclusive community. As our community grows and changes, Bracknell Forest Council is committed to ensuring no one is left behind, isolated or disadvantaged. We take great pride in our support for vulnerable groups and individuals: we want to make sure Bracknell Forest is a borough of opportunity for everyone.

At Bracknell Forest Council, we believe:

- reducing inequalities benefits everyone in the borough
- strengthening communities make for a better borough
- understanding and promoting diversity improves people's lives

Bracknell Forest is home to people and communities with varied and distinct needs, wants and aspirations. At Bracknell Forest Council, we are determined to make sure our work - the services and support we offer - is fair, appropriate, accessible and tailored to all our residents and communities.

## Equality Peer Review

Bracknell Forest Council is working at the achieving level of the Equality Framework. This was recognised by the Local Government Association (LGA) in March 2014, when the council was successfully reaccredited by a peer review. The framework helps local authorities improve their performance on equality and diversity.

The reviewers agreed the council showed evidence of how it has built on its experience and expertise in tackling inequality since the previous assessment in 2010, and showed how it had adapted its methods and structures to address the new challenges it faces. The LGA also commented that the council has a good understanding of its communities and also how the diversity of residents has changed in recent years and is still changing and has prioritised its activities accordingly. For further information go to <https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/equality-and-diversity/monitoring-equality>

## 2. 'All of Us' Equality Scheme – Our Successes

We have made good progress in working towards achieving the equality objectives in 2016-17 and throughout the lifetime of the scheme. The following is a selection of case studies over the duration of the strategy which highlights some of the work of the council on its equality objectives.

### Safe Place Scheme

*Equality Objective 1: Support our older and vulnerable residents by further developing our approach to ensure people are safeguarded against abuse. Including through maintaining low levels of hate crime (racist, homophobic, transphobic, faith and disablist).*

- *Further develop and promote the 'Safe Place' scheme working with key agencies to broaden availability to other vulnerable people*

Bracknell Forest's Safe Place Scheme was extended in 2015-16. The scheme, originally launched in 2010, provides support to vulnerable people in the community when they are out and about. Extending the scheme means it now covers people with learning disabilities, autism, dementia, physical disabilities, mental health issues, people who are hard of hearing or partially sighted, older adults and young people who go missing, are at risk of child sexual exploitation and children with additional needs/disabilities.

Officers from the local Thames Valley Police team and Bracknell Forest Council staff went out and visited local shops, businesses and amenities to encourage new shops and amenities to sign up to the scheme. By signing up a network of local shops, businesses and amenities within Bracknell Forest, the Scheme provides places where people can go to for support when they are feeling anxious, intimidated, unsafe, disorientated, confused or vulnerable in the community. Scheme members can be easily identified by the Safe Place sticker they display on their premises.



Vulnerable people who use the scheme can also carry a Safe Place Card which has their name on it, as well as the name and contact numbers of up to two people. These could be their support worker, family member, carer or parent. Staff working in the shop, business or amenity can take the details from the card and telephone one of the contacts to ask them to assist. Alternatively the staff in the Safe Place premises can simply allow the person to stay on the premises until they feel less anxious. The person does not need to produce the card in order for them to use the venue as a safe place.

Ongoing work is being actioned with a large number of external and internal partners and all new companies moving in to the Lexicon will be contacted about the Safe Place Scheme.

### Hate Crime

- *Maintain low levels of hate crime through engaging community representatives in regular hate crime monitoring and action to address it.*

Bracknell Forest Council, in partnership with the police, has been able to report that Hate Crime incidents are amongst the lowest in the Thames Valley region. Only Wokingham have lower figures per 1000 head of population.

The low level of incidents is a good reflection of the work undertaken to increase awareness of Hate Crime and how to report it. Social Care professionals and other agencies, including the police, have produced information and advice about reporting Hate Crime and the opportunities for identifying Safe Places to get help.

The number of recorded hate crimes in Bracknell Forest rose in 2016-17 although the overall numbers remain low and these figures should be seen in the context of a rise throughout the Thames Valley Police (TVP) area and nationally. There is a suggestion that the numbers of recorded hate crimes and faith based crimes have risen, in part, due to the result of the Brexit vote and the number of recent domestic terrorist incidents. The greatest increases have been seen in non-crime offences rather than recorded crime which may be an indication of a greater willingness to report which should be seen as positive.

Work continues to be done to reduce Hate Crime. Throughout the year the council, TVP and Voluntary Sector have supported the 'One Community: Stop Hate Crime Now', campaign. The Community Cohesion & Engagement Partnership which is made up of representatives from partnership statutory organisations has regularly monitored Hate Crime incidents and has been consulted and involved in the delivery of the One Community: Stop Hate Crime Now campaign

<b>Reported Hate Crime Incidents - 2012 to 2017</b>					
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
1 <sup>st</sup> April – 31 <sup>st</sup> March	33	54	31	41	58
<i>Source: Thames Valley Police Crime Recording System – Niche RMS</i>					

## **The council's success in helping families**

*Equality Objective 2: Work with partners to improve the life chances of children, young people and their families who are living in poverty. Including through:*

- *Provide accessible, safe and practical early intervention and support services for vulnerable children and young people in the borough*

The council continues to implement the 'Troubled Families' initiative (known as 'Family Focus' in Bracknell Forest) with 148 families signed up for intervention in 2016-17. Since the Early Start for phase 2, a total of 83 families have been successfully turned round. Bracknell Forest has had the total number of families to be identified increased from 380 to 400. A member of staff from the Department of Work and Pensions works directly with families around worklessness by offering support with benefit claims, retraining programmes, Job Centre Plus appointments and job applications. She also supports colleagues from other teams including Children's Social Care and holds surgeries in children's centres where visitors can drop in for advice and support on a weekly basis. The team has a referral system to access

Relate and Youthline support which allows keyworkers to monitor progress and outcomes. Keyworkers will soon be able to access support for clients who present as hoarders from a specialist Hoarder Disorder service.

Children in need of help and protection, looked after children and care leavers services in Bracknell Forest were inspected by Ofsted in April/May 2017. Ofsted also reviewed the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and the report concluded that children and families in Bracknell Forest receive Good and sometimes Outstanding services. Regarding early intervention Ofsted found:

*“Children and their families in Bracknell Forest receive help when their needs and concerns are first identified, with effective escalation to statutory services if required. Families have access to an array of well-structured and timely early help, provided by a range of committed professionals that includes access to children’s centres and targeted youth services. Examples of children’s centres services include groups for parents and children who have experienced domestic abuse. The pathway into targeted early help provision is clear. Fortnightly early intervention meetings coordinate packages of support and ensure that children are receiving timely and appropriate support which meets their assessed need”.* [Bracknell Forest – Inspection of service for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers – Ofsted Report July 2017](#)

Bracknell Forest Council’s approach to early intervention is being reviewed as a part of the Children’s Transformation Programme to further improve the approach and taking a ‘Whole Council’ approach to working with vulnerable families.

#### **Key facts**

- 86% of eligible 2 year old (221) identified as disadvantaged have been placed in early years education settings, i.e. child-minders and full day care settings in 2016-17.
- The free school meal achievement gap was 22% in 2016-17 and increasing the attainment of Pupil Premium/Free School Meal children is a priority and the council is targeting some schools where they have underachieved to improve outcomes.
- ‘Good Level of Development’ (GLD - expected or exceeded areas in key learning areas like maths and literacy) rose by 10% to 73.2% in 2015-16 and to 74% in 2016-17 (compared to 29% nationally).

## **Increasing the participation of young people in employment, education and training**

*Equality Objective 3: Reduce the number of young people (16-18 year old) who are not in education, training or employment.*

In 2013-14 a pioneering work pairing scheme supported by the council and national crime reduction charity Nacro helped to change young people’s lives in Bracknell Forest.

The post-16 team worked with Nacro and Adviza to help young people across Bracknell Forest get work experience and learn new skills. The scheme was aimed at teenagers between 16 and 19 who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) and was very successful. The scheme worked by offering young people weekly sessions with a trained advisor to identify a sector and role that they were keen to enter based on interests, skills and desires. They then had an opportunity to

work at the company or business twice a week. The scheme allowed young people to get relevant experience and also spend one day a week in class improving their maths and English skills, while adding the experience to their CVs and improving interview techniques. The team also worked with local secondary schools, colleges, training providers and council services to proactively support those at risk of becoming or are NEET, ensuring there are opportunities to gain the training and skills necessary to gain employment.



In 2016-17 the council continues to work in partnership with a number of internal and external partners to ensure an effective and efficient service to meet the needs of our most vulnerable young people. This partnership approach has enabled the service to implement intensive support programmes for this group that will support them after they have left school to secure an Education Employment or Training (EET) outcome.

<b>% of NEET in Bracknell Forest 2012-2017 *</b>				
2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
5.4%	4.3%	3.8%	3.3%	3.9%

\* NB description was revised during 2016 and participation rates are now tracked for 16 - 17 year olds rather than 16 - 18 year olds.

### **Statistics**

- Bracknell Forest continues to perform above the national average for its proportion of 16 and 17 year olds who are NEET. This trend remains even though a revised description of this category during 2016 where participation rates are now tracked for 16 - 17 year olds rather than 16 - 18 year olds.
- In autumn 2016 - there was a reduction of 1.8% of 16 - 17 year olds who were NEET in Bracknell Forest compared with 0.9% nationally.

## Community integration

*Equality Objective 4: Maintain high levels of community cohesion in Bracknell Forest. Including through:*

- *Supporting the integration of our diverse communities*
- *Continued provision of ESOL classes. Funding secured with partners.*

In partnership with the Bracknell and Ascot Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Thames Valley Police, Bracknell Forest Council submitted a bid to the European Integration Fund (EIF) for 'Stronger Voices'. The project aimed to support newly arrived Nepali and other non EU migrants in Bracknell Forest and followed on from 'Healthy Voices' a previous EIF project which ran from 2010 to 2013.

'Stronger Voices' started in July 2014 and ran until June 2015 and continued the provision of English as Second or Other Language (ESOL) classes; integrating them with employment skills such as ICT, CV writing and interview techniques. The project also used the skills of the health trainers developed in 'Healthy Voices' to provide one to one advice sessions for migrants, who need support to improve their health and adopt healthy lifestyles. Project participants have also participated in Skilled for Health classes and have attended the Jealott's Hill Community Landshare project to learn about growing their own healthy food. Students also visited Kew Gardens, London, Winchester and Bournemouth, to learn more about the UK's culture and heritage,



Beginner ESOL classes in Bracknell



At Jealott's Hill Community Landshare

'Stronger Voices' also developed volunteer led ESOL classes in order to continue first steps conversational ESOL classes once the EIF funding ended. These volunteer led classes are organised and led by community or faith groups who provide free venues and train and support volunteers to deliver the English lessons. Participants have benefitted by improving their level of English, gaining confidence, improving understanding of aspects of day-to-day living in the UK which in turn enhances integration. It will also improve the job prospects of those looking to gain employment.

### Key facts

- 113 learners attended ESOL classes against a target of 90
- 3 volunteer led ESOL sessions were run over the lifetime of the project assisting 30 eligible recipients
- Over 80 people were enrolled in Skilled for Health Classes during the lifetime of the project – this is twice as many as the target of 40
- Health trainers signposted 25 people to health and wellbeing services and activities and increased their understanding of primary care prevention programmes available

## Jealott's Hill Community Landshare

The European Integration Fund (EIF) 'Healthy Voices project (2010-2013) included ESOL provision along with a health literacy programme. This was then followed by the EIF 'Stronger Voices' project which delivered free first steps ESOL lessons and was completed in July 2015.

In 2016-17 funding was acquired from Bracknell Forest Council, Berkshire Community Foundation and Bracknell Forest Homes to enable Nepalese and their families to continue visiting the Jealott's Hill Community Landshare (JHCL). As well as enjoying horticulture activities and benefiting from social integration this also gave participants the opportunity to use and strengthen their English language skills. They could also learn about British crops and gardening methods while working outdoors. Exercise from gardening can also help with mental health, wellbeing and social isolation.



A selection of the produce grown by the groups at JHCL.

Over 50 participants aged 65+ directly benefitted from the project, however it is not only older people who have been helped. A 28yr old man with learning disabilities visits JHCL with his family on a weekly basis. The family have found it difficult to support and help him achieve in the UK as those with learning disabilities are not always accepted within the Nepalese community. Since visiting JHCL he has become more relaxed, confident and comfortable in himself, which is helped by visiting a familiar environment on a regular basis. His father reported that he is now



able to work alongside others more productively, taking on tasks of responsibility at JHCL and the family have more confidence in his development for the future. This improvement in his working style has then increased communication and respect from others in this community.

Other volunteers at JHCL have been eager to learn about plants grown by the group and the food and culture of Nepal, so this integration has benefitted both parties. This project has increased awareness to JHCL volunteers of other cultures in the direct community, and how we can learn and share skills from each other.



A Barbecue was held which brought two Nepalese community groups together from different local areas. (Report and photos courtesy of David Putt, JHCL)

## **Supporting our Armed Forces Community**

*Equality Objective 4: Maintain high levels of community cohesion in Bracknell Forest. Including through:*

- *Supporting the integration of our diverse communities*

The Bracknell Forest Community Covenant is an agreement between the council, its partner organisations and the local Armed Forces Community based at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst. The aim of the Covenant is to support the service community living in the borough whilst also remembering and recognising the sacrifices they have made. The Covenant was originally signed in December 2011 by the council and its partners include, Armed Forces Charities, Thames Valley Police, Sandhurst Town Council, Involve, Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service, Bracknell & Ascot Clinical Commissioning Group, Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust and Bracknell & Wokingham College.

The [Armed Forces Covenant](#) aims to raise public understanding and awareness of issues affecting the Armed Forces Community and to support the integration of service leavers within the borough. Through the Covenant local communities are encouraged to get involved in activities which help to integrate the service community

into local life. Funding is available through the [MOD Covenant Fund](#) to support the wider community through participation in events and joint projects.

There have been several successful bids for Community Covenant funding during the lifetime of the Equality Scheme including:

- The Sandhurst Freedom March organised by Sandhurst Town Council in June 2012 to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Foundation of the RMAS.
- Three ESOL language courses took place during 2012 and 2013 run specifically for non-English speakers from the RMAS and Sandhurst community.
- Family ESOL sessions were developed and delivered at the catchment primary school for RMAS.
  - A three strand project that engaged hundreds of people of all ages, cultures and backgrounds in the local community and supported integration through an intergenerational storytelling sessions, a community celebration day sharing cultural experiences and learning and the production and promotion of health and safety messages.
- The provision of continued ESOL conversational classes, translators and the setting up of a Nepali café to improve English language skills of service families and the local Nepali population.
- The creation of learning materials and provision of a development worker to deliver the first ESOL pre-entry course suitable for adults.
- A project to help the military and local community to learn together about setting up and running a successful business.

The lead partners in the Covenant - Bracknell Forest Council and the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst set up the Bracknell Forest Civilian Military Partnership in 2015 to replace the Service Leavers Resettlement Group. It is a voluntary partnership between the council, its partners and the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst which meets twice a year. It follows the principles set out in the Community Covenant to ensure that members of the Armed Forces Community experience no disadvantage as a result of their service in the Armed Forces. It will also help to support the smooth transition from military to civilian life and work with partners to deliver the greatest possible outcomes for members of the armed forces community and their families.

## **Tackling domestic abuse**

*Equality Objective 5: Reduce overall repeat incidents of domestic abuse (DA) and increase the detection rate for domestic abuse assaults with injury. Including through:*

- *Raise awareness of Domestic Abuse (DA) among professionals*
- *Working with partners to reduce overall repeat incidents of DA*

The programme of awareness raising and training for frontline staff within Bracknell Forest has continued to be delivered in 2016-17. Training on Introduction to DA and Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and DA, Stalking, Harassment and Honour Based Violence (DASH) has been delivered quarterly. The online training course continues to be promoted by [Bracknell Forest Local Safeguarding Children Board](#).

The Domestic Abuse Service Co-ordination (DASC) project continues to develop and they are constantly looking at new ways to identify additional cases using the Thames Valley Police Domestic Abuse Toolkit. DASC meets monthly and includes attendees from a range of partner agencies who work together to review cases and provide support using a multi agency approach.

No. of children removed from Child Protection Plans				
2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
29	20	25	37	20

In 2016-17 20 children have been removed from Child Protection Plans in cases where the father has worked with DAPS. This has gone down from 37 last year due to there being fewer children on Child Protection Plans at the point of referral due to earlier intervention.

## Traveller History Month 2016

*Equality Objective 6: Empower communities and partners to address identity specific bullying of children and young people*

- o *Promotion of positive understanding of the Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT) community*

Awareness of the specific needs of the GRT community was raised at a Conference during Traveller History Month in June 2016, hosted by renowned storyteller Richard O'Neill. The Conference was attended by the staff from the Virtual School, Children's Social Care, Youth Offending Service, Bracknell Homes and the Library Service. Richard's presentations highlighted both the cultural expectations of the communities and how, as a local authority, we can work to improve relationships and outcomes in response to our families' specific needs. In addition to this, Richard has visited many schools and settings in Bracknell Forest over the last few years and entertained several year groups in some of our local primary and secondary schools. He visited College Town Children's Centre and Kennel Lane with activities and slides highlighting the importance of literacy through his books and stories from his travelling culture. Going forward, a Multiagency Forum is being created which will meet termly and include representatives from across many council Departments and include members from the traveller community so that their views and opinions can be expressed and responded to.



Richard O'Neill at the GRT conference in October 2016

## Improving Energy Efficiency

*Equality Objective 7: Reduce fuel poverty through helping people improve the energy efficiency of their homes.*



The number of homes below SAP 50 has been reduced by 61% since 2012 figures; we now have 1298 homes with low SAP ratings. This figure has been made possible due to Green Deal Funding on harder to treat homes with external wall insulation, including park homes, combined with improved data.

## Learning Disability Partnership Board Newsletter

*Equality Objective 8: Enable older people, people with a disability, mental health issue, autistic spectrum disorder or long term condition to have a choice of support to meet their needs.*

- o *Ensure that people have a wide range of information available to enable them to choose the support that is right for them.*

The Bracknell Forest Learning Disability Partnership Board makes sure people with learning disabilities have their voices heard. Members of the board include senior staff at the council along with representatives from Be Heard, Just Advocacy and Mencap. The board provides support to people with learning difficulties, their families and carers and helps to ensure they have the same rights and responsibilities as everyone else.



**Bracknell Forest  
Learning Disability  
Partnership Board**

The board produced its first newsletter in August 2016 and reported on a successful Learning Disability week that took place in June where a number of groups came together in Bracknell to provide a week of events and activities. The aim of the week was to raise awareness of Learning Disability and the theme for 2016 was 'Friendships and Relationships'. On Monday, Just Advocacy and Be Heard were at Bracknell Leisure Centre telling people about what was happening during the week and raising awareness. In addition people came together at Waymead to watch England play football and there was an arts workshop at The Ark. On Tuesday

Bracknell Mencap's Social Group held a barbecue at College Town Junior School. Over 40 people turned up to enjoy an evening with friends and take part in some willow weaving activities. On Wednesday, the Health group of the Learning Disability Partnership Board ran a workshop talking about relationships and friendships.

On Friday Breakthrough and Waymead helped to sell goods at a market stall in the town. Finally on Saturday evening The Ark held a Celebration Party with a disco and Awards Ceremony and the week was considered to be a great success.

## Support people with learning disabilities to take up employment

*Equality Objective 9: Improve recruitment, development and progression, employment and settled housing opportunities for members of the community with disabilities.*

- Support people with learning disabilities to take up or remain in employment.

Breakthrough worked with Elevate, Job Centre Plus and Learning to Work to ensure that people with a learning disability were supported to attend the 'Lexicon for All' focus workshops. These workshops introduced the various roles that will become available through the Lexicon's new shops/businesses later this year. Interested people will also be supported to apply for these roles and retain them. Information about the key roles has been made available in easy-read so that they are fully accessible to individuals. Due to being unsubscribed, a second 'Lexicon for All' workshop is to be arranged. In addition, 15 spaces have been made available to people with a learning disability and/or autism for the Lexicon Retail Pathway Course. It is a 1 week retail employability course to train and prepare candidates for retail vacancies in The Lexicon. Breakthrough and the Development Team also submitted a bid on 27 March 2017 to the Department for Work and Pensions for funding to support people with a learning disability, autism or mental health need into employment.

### Key facts

- The council achieved a 2016-17 target of 90% of people with disabilities living in settled accommodation.
- 4 Downshire Homes properties were designated for people with a learning disability during 2016/17.
- All staff working in Benefits Services have now completed training on Personal Independence Payments (PIP).

<b>Support people with learning disabilities to take up or remain in employment – target 15%</b>				
2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
16.9%	17.4%	19.5%	17.1%	14.5% *

\* The lower figure is due to the changes in the reporting process.

Increase the number of people with disabilities in settled housing				
2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
86.8%	87.4%	89%	89.6%	90.5%

## Second Annual Cultural Festival

*Equality Objective 10: Support groups and organisations run by and that work with people from our diverse communities. Including through:*

- *Work with Involve to support the development and activities of the Bracknell Forest Faith and Belief Forum,*



On March 11th 2017 Involve and the Bracknell Forest Faith and Belief Forum held the second annual Bracknell Forest Cultural Festival at Bracknell and Wokingham College. It was a colourful, active and diverse event that aimed to bring together people from all walks of life throughout our community.

The Newbold College Choir greeted visitors as they entered, with their unique musical talents filling the room. The Thai Community shared their interesting food and also the Thames Valley Police and World of Languages spread their messages of safety and diversity within society. Also in attendance were the Indian Community Association of Bracknell, representatives from the Chinese community and the Bracknell Islamic Cultural Society. All of these stalls had great messages to spread, and some particularly good food for people to try. There was also the opportunity to have a beautiful Henna tattoo.



The Stroke Association were offering free Blood Pressure Checks and Funky Faces had face painting for children to enjoy. There was a Thai Chi demonstration as well as dancing and singing from various groups. At the Chinese stalls, there were intricate folded paper designs and people were also learning to write calligraphy. Royal Berkshire Fire and

Rescue Service arrived with their Fire Engine to teach children about fire safety.



Cllr Paul Bettison and Bracknell Forest Mayor, Tony Virgo both spoke about their support for the event and how much they enjoyed seeing so many different cultures coming together within the Bracknell Forest Community.

Due to the success of the events in 2016 and 2017 it is hoped that this will now become an annual event. (Report courtesy of involve Community Services. Photography credits: Dilip R Ladwa)

## Children in Care Council – “Say it Loud Say it Proud”

- o *Work with the Children in Care Council, (SiLSiP) to identify children or young people who experience the greatest barriers to participation and prioritise work to promote their engagement*

[SiLSiP](#) is the name of Bracknell Forest Council’s Children in Care Council. They meet every couple of months to give young people in care an opportunity to meet others in a similar situation and discuss issues which may be affecting them. Members of SiLSiP also meet with senior managers to give their feedback on services and make recommendations that can make a positive difference for looked after young people and care leavers.

In August 2016, a Participation Officer for Care Leavers was recruited. This post is part of the creation of work/training opportunities within the council for Care Experienced young people and was funded until March 2017 (now extended until December 2017). During the year there has been three successful participation events engaging 17 young people including those who have proved hard to reach in the past. A Facebook page has been developed for Care Leavers in Bracknell Forest along with a WhatsApp group.



During 2016-17, 18 young people have attended a SiLSiP meeting, with 9 regular attenders. 24 young people took part in a summer activity; thirteen of those also attended a residential trip. This included one care leaver who volunteered as a helper. The summer residential was delivered by a multi-professional team consisting of the Participation Officer, Youth Worker, Education Support Officer and Family Placement Family Worker who planned and staffed a three day residential trip for two groups of looked after young people in August 2016 with the aim of offering an opportunity to those young people who do not normally participate.

Young people from across Bracknell Forest got an insight in to the world of the council when they took part in a national 'Takeover Day' in November 2016 supported by the Bracknell Forest youth service team. Among the participants were 5 young people from SiLSiP along with 11 youth council members and 4 students from the borough's secondary schools. Young people were partnered with executive members, directors or chief officers and had the opportunity to understand how public figures make decisions and to catch a glimpse of their day-to-day work. The participants were able to attend meetings and visit the many sites and offices the council is involved with and were encouraged to share their perspective and opinions on council matters.

## **Easy Read Taxi Advice**

*Equality Objective 11: Influence the provision of public transport to ensure it is physically accessible for people with disabilities*

In December 2016 the Learning Disability team put together an easy read leaflet giving advice about using taxis in Bracknell Forest. It was put together in conjunction with the council's Environment and Public Protection team and also people with learning disabilities through Be Heard.

The guidance gives useful information about the difference between Hackney Carriages and private hire taxis, checking for driver ID and who to contact if there are any comments or complaints about any aspect of the journey.



All of the Borough's hackney carriages are now wheelchair accessible. Any new or replacement hackney carriages in future must be wheelchair accessible to maintain a 100% accessible hackney carriage fleet.

## **Bracknell Forest Council: employer of choice**

*Equality Objective 12: Ensuring Bracknell Forest Council is an Employer of Choice where diversity is respected and valued. Including through:*

- *Ensuring all council employees and potential employees have fair and equal access to available opportunities and enjoy fair treatment.*
- *Continuing to take steps to make the council's workforce more representative of the community it serves*
- *Conduct annual workforce monitoring broken down by protected characteristics; schools and non-schools and by department*



It is important to work towards a situation where the council's workforce broadly reflects the make up of its local community to ensure that appropriate services are provided to all citizens. The demographic make up of Bracknell Forest is changing, the 2011 Census showed that 15.1% of the Borough's population belonging to minority ethnic groups, (including White Irish and White Other). The previous Census in 2001 showed 9.5% of residents belonged to minority ethnic groups.

Workforce monitoring ensures that we know the composition of our existing workforce to see how closely it reflects the makeup of the borough. This information is analysed by protected characteristics such as race, disability, age and sex. The report also analyses recruitment statistics by protected characteristics as well as those who have left and those attending training courses. There are new national guidelines on reporting the gender pay gap which will be incorporated into the next annual workforce monitoring report which is due to published on the council's website in January 2018. The new regulations mean that in the future we will be able to benchmark against other local authorities.

All staff now have access to the new Employee Self Service module of iWorks. This means staff can update their information whenever they wish without having to go through HR. It is hoped this will increase staff confidence in disclosing their personal information and improve the accuracy of workforce monitoring.

<b>Percentage of black and ethnic minority employees</b>				
2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
4.25%	5.08%	4.19%	5.76%	6.12%

<b>Percentage of employees with a disability (self-declared)</b>				
2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
1.42%	2.07%	1.96%	1.87%	2.2%

<b>Gender pay gap</b>				
2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
18.38%	17.61%	19.70%	18.10%	16.26%*

\*This figure has been produced using the new definitions within the new gender pay gap regulations that came into force on 1st April 2017. It is therefore not a direct comparison to last year.

### **Key facts 2016-17**

- 126 people attended an Equality & Diversity workshop
- 518 staff successfully completed the Equality & Diversity e-learning package
- 12 people attended Deaf and Disability workshop.

### **3. Conclusions**

The council has been successful in implementing the strategy since 2012. This can be seen from the key performance measures against which the success of the strategy has been judged. The Action Plan at Annex 1 shows 43 of the 104 key actions are already completed within the allocated timescale and 54 are in progress and ongoing as of April 2017. Only one has been identified as red (behind schedule) and six are recorded as unachievable in light of changing circumstances, the details of which are set out below.

#### **Red**

##### **5.2 (b) Ensure members of Domestic Abuse 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 this target is red as membership of the Domestic Abuse Forum changes regularly 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**

##### **5.2 Increase the detection rate for DA assaults with injury.**

This year Thames Valley Police have changed their classification categories and DA 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.

## **The Residents' Survey 2017**

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

- The percentage of people who feel that people from different backgrounds get on well together in the borough has increased to 96% in the 2017 Residents Survey from 82% in 2008, 87% in 2012 and 94% in 2014
- The majority of residents, 88% percent, 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.

The findings continue to confirm that residents generally view Bracknell Forest as a good place to live and this view has strengthened slightly over time.

Although these figures are encouraging we appreciate families in Bracknell Forest are still experiencing financial hardship and we recognise national changes to the benefits system have placed additional pressure on some households; we will do our best to continue to provide advice and support to mitigate the impact of these changes.

A new [Council Plan](#) was developed in November 2015 that outlines how the council will address the financial challenges ahead whilst continuing to provide effective services for Bracknell Forest's residents, businesses and communities. The 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, it states *'In targeting our services, we will prioritise people and areas with the greatest need, early help and prevention so struggling or vulnerable people can maximise their opportunities to become independent'*.

The Transformation Programme is ensuring that the needs of vulnerable people and families are prioritised when reviewing our services. Analysis work has been completed as a part of the Citizen and Customer Contact review to explore how to improve support to vulnerable families and the Children's Transformation Programme is proposing a new approach to working across the council to support these families.

## **Bracknell Forest Council Equality Scheme 2017-20**

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.