

**TO: COUNCIL  
17 SEPTEMBER 2014**

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**EXECUTIVE REPORT TO COUNCIL  
The Leader**

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 Since the Council meeting on 16 July 2014, the Executive has met once, on 22 July 2014. This report summarises decisions taken at that meeting by reference to the relevant portfolio within which they fall.
- 1.2 Updated Forward Plans are published every Friday and are available for public inspection at Easthampstead House in the usual way and online at [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk). Full details on the decisions taken by individual portfolio holders can also be accessed online through the Council's website.

**2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 The recommendations at paragraph 5.5.4 of the report are recommended to Council by the Executive.**

**3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 The reasons for recommendation are set out in the supporting information.

**4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 The alternative options considered for each item referred to can be found in the reports presented to the Executive.

**5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**Adult Services, Health & Housing**

**5.1 Safeguarding Adults Annual Report**

- 5.1.1 In line with Department of Health guidance the Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board has produced an annual progress report setting out the work undertaken during the past year to safeguard vulnerable adults in Bracknell Forest. The report details the progress made towards meeting agreed targets, sets new targets for 2014-2015, evidences the engagement of a number of key partner agencies and sets out the work of the Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board as a whole in developing services and support that are both safe and meet individual outcomes.
- 5.1.2 During the period covered by the report, Adult Social Care saw a 32% increase in the number of alerts received about adult safeguarding issues. This increase is attributed to an increased awareness of safeguarding issues towards vulnerable adults amongst all partner agencies. The Board considers this increase to be a positive development because it gives agencies an opportunity to provide

information, advice and, where appropriate, enables them to provide direct support to adults at risk. The Board's work is well supported by key partner agencies and its member organisations have undertaken a range of safeguarding activity during the period covered by the report including:

- The development of a dedicated website to provide local residents and practitioners with up to date and relevant adult safeguarding information. This is the first dedicated adult safeguarding website of its kind in Berkshire and can be accessed at [www.bsapb.org.uk](http://www.bsapb.org.uk)
- The Bracknell and Ascot Clinical Commissioning Group has ensured that safeguarding is embedded across its core business. Key appointments with responsibility for safeguarding have been made
- Berkshire Care Association held a conference in November 2013 where Adult Safeguarding was a key theme
- The Council's Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Department supported 28 people through the Making Safeguarding Personal pilot project
- The work of the Domestic Abuse Service Co-ordination (DASC) service has resulted in a reduction in the number of reports of domestic abuse by those supported by the service
- Thames Valley Police has appointed a local inspector to take the lead on mental health within Bracknell Forest. This has resulted in improved identification of local residents with mental health issues and improved local joint working

The Board has also responded to a number of national developments for example the publication of the Winterbourne View Serious Case Review and the Francis Report and implemented the learning from other Serious Case Reviews.

## **5.2 Local Account for Adult Social Care 2013/14**

- 5.2.1 The Executive has approved the Adult Social Care Local Plan 2013/14. The statutory Plan sets out how the Council will support those residents using adult social care services, their families and carers. The report provides an overview of adult social care activity and performance during 2013/14, an overview of the services provided by Adult Social Care and an overview of legislative changes.
- 5.2.2 The Executive would like to commend officers for the clarity of the report and draw members' attention to the three short videos that have been produced to support the Local Plan. These videos, available online through You Tube, highlight three specific priorities for Adult Social Care in the coming year and help make the report even more accessible to our service users.

## **Transformation and Finance**

### **5.3 Commitment Budget Report 2015/16 – 2017/18**

- 5.3.1 The Executive has approved the budget setting process for the 2015/16 financial year and the Commitment Budget for the period 2015/16 to 2017/18.
- 5.3.2 The Commitment Budget brings together the Council's existing expenditure plans and represents the first formal stage in planning the Revenue Budget for 2015/16. The Commitment Budget has been developed using the 2014/15 budget adjusted to exclude the effects of drawings from balances as its base and to take into account approved existing commitments, including the full year effects of pressures and economies approved for the 2014/15 budget. Savings identified for future years within revenue proposals for 2014/15 have also been included.

## Unrestricted

- 5.3.3 Since its approval a small number of changes have been made to the Commitment Budget including: the revenue impact of ICT schemes implemented in the 2014/15 Capital Programme, the impact of the indicative Capital Programme and the cost of the increase in Employer's Pension Fund contributions.
- 5.3.4 Over the course of the three year period covered by the Commitment Budget, the Council expects to face an underlying funding gap of approximately £16.556million by 2017/18. However, this figure has been calculated before giving consideration to service pressures and developments. The three year timeframe also covers a period of significant uncertainty with a General Election in 2015 and the publication of a new Spending Review covering the years after 2016. Notwithstanding this, the two year Local Government Financial Settlement announced this year ensures that there will at least be a degree of certainty over levels of Government Funding for the first year of the Commitment Budget.
- 5.3.5 Work has already started at officer level to start planning for next year's budget and it is expected that consultation on budget proposals will take place as usual during December and January prior to a full Council decision on the proposed budget being taken in February 2015

### **Council Strategy and Community Cohesion**

#### **5.4 Equality Framework for Local Government – Peer Review Outcome**

- 5.4.1 Following a recent Peer Review, the Council has received re-accreditation under the 'achieving' level of the Equality Framework for Local Government. The Equality Framework enables the Council to demonstrate its compliance with the legal duties set out in the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and promote good relations within the community.
- 5.4.2 The Peer Review, which took place in April 2014, benchmarked the Council's performance in the following five areas:
- Knowing your communities
  - Leadership, partnership and organisational commitment
  - Community engagement and satisfaction
  - Responsive services and customer care
  - A skilled and committed workforce
- 5.4.3 The Review Team concluded that the Council had a good understanding of its communities, including the extent of inequality and disadvantage and understood how the borough's diversity had changed over recent years. Encouragingly, the review concluded that the Council was in a good position to achieve the 'Excellent' accreditation level. A number of suggestions as to how the Council might achieve this were made and these are now being used to help inform an action plan to take forward this piece of work.

### **Children, Young People and Learning**

#### **5.5 Community Learning Development Plan 2014 - 2017**

- 5.5.1 The Executive has approved the Development Plan for Community Learning and Skills 2014 – 2017, attached as Annex 1 to this report, and recommends to Council that it be adopted.
- 5.5.2 The planning, provision, management and quality assurance of Community Learning and Skills in Bracknell Forest is funded by the Skills Funding Agency under an annual contract secured by learner outcomes. The Council saw a 17% reduction in

funding for the 2014/15 academic year, receiving £417,243 and it is expected that this funding will decrease further in coming years. The Skills Funding Agency has also indicated that future funding to provide training for the unemployed is likely to move from a grant based approach to one based on reimbursement on the basis of qualifications achieved; something that will further impact on the service.

5.5.3 The Council has always taken the view that community learning should be self financing and the development plan recommends a range of measures which, if adopted, will help boost income generation and introduce more cost effective ways of working. The Plan reflects the contractual requirements placed on the council by the Skills Funding Agency as the basis for claiming funding and will last for three years in order to facilitate a longer term approach and provide the community learning service with a more strategic direction.

5.5.4 **The Executive recommends to Council that the Development Plan for Community learning for 2014-2017 be adopted.**

## **5.6 Pan Berkshire Adoption Service**

5.6.1 The Berkshire Adoption Advisory Service currently supplies Bracknell Forest with a highly rated and successful adoption service. The Executive has agreed to support the expansion of this pan Berkshire service by entering into an agreement with Wokingham Borough Council, West Berkshire Council and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to transfer the Council's Adoption Service into a Berkshire Shared Service that would be hosted by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014.

5.6.2 Entering into a shared service arrangement will enable the Council to participate in an already successful Pan Berkshire arrangement run by the Berkshire Adoption Advisory Service. A move that will improve both the efficiency and effectiveness of the adoption service through the timely recruitment of adopters and the placement of children, particularly older children and those considered harder to place. The expansion of the adoption service will also help the Council implement additional requirements placed upon it by the Children and Families Act 2014 such as the introduction of a 26 week limit on court proceedings and the 'Foster to Adopt' programme.

5.6.3 To oversee the new expanded a service, it is proposed that a new Management Board, with representation from all four local authorities will be established to provide direction and to monitor the service provision. Bracknell Forest will be represented on this new Management Board by the Chief Officer: Children's Social Care. Final details of the new shared service are still being worked up and because of time constraints the Executive has agreed that authority to make the final decision over whether to enter into the shared service is to be delegated to the Director of Children, Young people and Learning in consultation with the Borough Treasurer and the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning.

## **6 Appointments and Delegations by the Leader of the Council**

6.1 Since the last meeting of Council, the Leader has delegated a decision to withdraw the original version of the Community Infrastructure Levy Draft Charging Schedule and submit the latest version which was approved by the Executive at its meeting on 24 June 2014 to the Director of Environment, Culture & Communities. This decision was subsequently approved as an urgent decision on 8 September 2014.

**7 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS**

Borough Solicitor

- 7.1 The Borough Solicitor's comments on each item referred to can be found in the reports presented to the Executive.

Borough Treasurer

- 7.2 The Borough Treasurer's comments on each item referred to can be found in the reports presented to the Executive.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 7.3 Equalities issues, where appropriate, have been addressed in the reports to the Executive.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 7.4 Any strategic risks have been identified in the reports to the Executive.

Background Papers

Executive Agenda – 22 July 2014

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