

NOTICE OF MEETING

The Executive

Tuesday 19 October 2010, 5.00 pm

Council Chamber, Fourth Floor, Easthampstead House, Bracknell

To: The Executive

Councillor Bettison (Chairman), Councillor Ward (Vice-Chairman), Councillors Mrs Ballin, Dr Barnard, Birch, Mrs Hayes, Kendall and McCracken

ALISON SANDERS
Director of Corporate Services

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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: Jemma Durkan
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Published: 11 October 2010



The Executive
Tuesday 19 October 2010, 5.00 pm
Council Chamber, Fourth Floor, Easthampstead House,
Bracknell

AGENDA

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1. Apologies	
2. Declarations of Interest	
Members are asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interests, and the nature of that interest, in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting.	
3. Minutes	
To consider and approve the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 14 September 2010.	1 - 14
4. Urgent Items of Business	
5. Overview & Scrutiny Report on a Review of Preparedness for Public Health Emergencies	
To respond to the recommendations of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel's Working Group on Preparedness for Public Health Emergencies.	15 - 20
6. Overview & Scrutiny Commission Working Group Report - Response to Severe Weather	
To respond to the recommendations of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission Working Group report on the Response to Severe Weather.	21 - 30
7. 2010-11 Revenue and Capital In Year Reduction to Government Grant Funding	
To agree the savings arising from the in year revenue grant reductions and recommend to Council the virements identified and to agree changes to the 2010-11 Capital Programme.	31 - 52
8. Bracknell Forest Borough Local Development Framework Site Allocations Development Plan Document	
To approve to consult on a Preferred Option to identify sites to meeting the Borough's development needs.	53 - 64

The Appendices referred to in the report are available on Bracknell Forest Council website.

9. **Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel Terms of Reference**
To approve the amended Terms of Reference for the Corporation Parenting Advisory Panel. 65 - 72

10. **Council Responses to NHS Consultations**
To agree responses to the White Paper, Equality and Excellence Liberating the NHS, and to delegate authority to approve final responses, to the Director of Adult Social Care and Health and the Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing. 73 - 94

11. **Annual Report**
To endorse the Annual Report. 95 - 126

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EXECUTIVE
14 SEPTEMBER 2010
5.00 - 6.00 PM

Present:

Councillors Ward (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Ballin, Dr Barnard, Birch, Kendall and McCracken

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Bettison and Mrs Hayes

65. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

66. Minutes - 13 July 2010

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive on 13 July 2010 together with the accompanying decision records be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

67. Provision of Highway Depot

RESOLVED that the Council make provision for £425k from capital funds in the current fiscal year to enable works to the Lorry Park and the Depot to be completed by the end of March 2011.

68. Bracknell Forest Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2010-2011

RESOLVED that the Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2010 - 11 (Annex 1 of the report) for the Bracknell Forest Youth Offending Service is recommended to Council and approved for submission to the England and Wales Youth Justice Board (YJB).

69. School Places Plan

RESOLVED that

- 1 The School Places Plan 2010-2015 be approved for publication.
- 2 The analysis and forecasting of school places to be used by the Executive to inform future funding decisions.

70. Grow Our Own Progress Report

RESOLVED that

- 1 The content of the report is noted and that the continuation of the Grow Our Own project in Bracknell Forest be supported;
- 2 The Grow Our Own project continues to operate in partnership with Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM).

- 3 £209,000.00 of relevant S106 funding be released to finance the estimated operating costs to 31 July 2011.

71. **Proposal for the future of the Family Tree Nursery**

RESOLVED that

- 1 A proposal to consult on the future of The Family Tree Nursery be agreed.
- 2 At the end of the consultation period recommendations be brought back to the Executive for a decision.

72. **Update of Corporate Asset Management Plan**

RESOLVED that

- 1 The Asset Management Plan at Annex A be approved.
- 2 The Plan be used to prioritise the limited funds available.

73. **Strategic Risk Register**

RESOLVED that the new Strategic Risk Register at Annexe A be reviewed and approved.

74. **Complaints against Bracknell Forest Council in 2009/2010**

RESOLVED that

- 1 The approach taken to dealing with and learning from complaints to the Council be endorsed;
- 2 The Annual Review letter of the Local Government Ombudsman to the Council for 2009/10 be noted; and
- 3 The information on other complaints against the Council in 2009/10 be noted.

75. **Corporate Performance Overview Report**

RESOLVED that the performance of the Council over the period from January to March 2010, highlighted in the Overview Report in Annex A be noted.

76. **Disposal of Assets**

RESOLVED that

- 1 15 Rectory Row,
- 2 80 Winscombe,
- 3 150 Holbeck (subject to vacant possession) and
- 4 Adastron House

be approved to be declared surplus to requirement and disposed of on the open market.

LEADER

Bracknell Forest Council Record of Decision

Work Programme Reference	1024269
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1. **TITLE:** Provision of Highway Depot
2. **SERVICE AREA:** Environment, Culture & Communities
3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To agree the process and funding arrangements to create new highway maintenance depot facilities including the provision of a salt barn.

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

That the Council make provision for £425k from capital funds in the current fiscal year to enable works to the Lorry Park and the Depot to be completed by the end of March 2011.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

Highway maintenance is a mandatory function of the Council. Without depot facilities including a salt barn, the Council would fail in its legal duty. The contractor has tried to find alternative local sites but has been unable to do so. Surrey County Council requires the full use of the Bagshot site from April 2011. The salt barn needs to be provided as soon as possible to enable the stocks of salt in time for the winter season starting in October 2011.

Although the possibility that Ringway may not have been asked to tender for the new Surrey contract was known, it was not felt prudent to allocate resources in the 2010-11 capital programme due to the uncertainty of the tender outcome.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The possibility of providing all such facilities on the existing depot site was considered but dismissed on grounds of cost. To do so requires a substantial amount of demolition work and loss of rental income from third party users. The Lorry Park is not big enough. Wokingham DC has leased its depot site to its waste collection contractors and its highways contractor and there is no available space there.

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** Not applicable.
10. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Report of the Director of Environment, Culture & Communities
11. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None.

Date Decision Made	Date decision will be implemented
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14 September 2010	30 September 2010
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**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	I023337
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1. **TITLE:** Bracknell Forest Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2010-2011

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

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

Approval of the plan prior to forwarding to the Youth Justice Board.

4. **IS KEY DECISION** Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

That the Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2010 - 11 (Annex 1 of the report) for the Bracknell Forest Youth Offending Service is recommended to Council and approved for submission to the England and Wales Youth Justice Board (YJB).

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

It is a constitutional requirement of the Council that they consider and approve the Youth Justice Plan for Bracknell Forest completed by the Youth Offending Service.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

None.

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** YOS Performance Management Group
Crime and Disorder Partnership
Department Management Team CYP&L

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

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

Date Decision Made	Date decision will be implemented
14 September 2010	30 September 2010

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	I023316
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1. **TITLE:** School Places Plan
2. **SERVICE AREA:** Children, Young People and Learning
3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To ask the Executive to approve the School Places Plan.

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

6. **DECISION:**

1. That the School Places Plan 2010-2015 be approved for publication.
2. That the analysis and forecasting of school places to be used by the Executive to inform future funding decisions.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

The Council is in a period of expansion in response to rising rolls, to meet its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places. The School Places Plan provides the forecasts on which the decisions to add or remove school capacity are made.

The Plan also forms the basis for obtaining S106 contributions from housing developers towards the cost of creating additional school places where these are required.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

None.

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** CYP&L School Organisation Planning Group
CYP&L DMT
Executive Member for Education
Development Planning Team Manager

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

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

Date Decision Made	Date decision will be implemented
14 September 2010	30 September 2010

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	1023605
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1. **TITLE:** Grow Our Own Progress Report
2. **SERVICE AREA:** Children, Young People and Learning
3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To present a progress report on the Grow Our Own Project.

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

6. **DECISION:**

- 1 That the content of the report is noted and that the continuation of the Grow Our Own project in Bracknell Forest is supported;
- 2 That the Grow Our Own project continues to operate in partnership with Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM).
- 3 That £209,000.00 of relevant S106 funding be released to finance the estimated operating costs to 31 July 2011.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

The reasons are set out in the report.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The project is now established and continues to attract those seeking skills as a route to improved employment prospects. Should the project cease then the provision for the target group would be difficult to replicate.

A limited service could be provided where skills training is delivered as part of the adult learning programme without the support of a Client Adviser providing practical advice and support to job seekers or an Employer Engagement Officer seeking out vacancies and the skill requirements of local employers.

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** n/a
10. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Report of the Director of Children, Young People & Learning.
11. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None.

Date Decision Made	Date decision will be implemented
14 September 2010	30 September 2010

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	1024229
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1. **TITLE:** Proposal for the future of the Family Tree Nursery

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

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To consider a proposal for the future of the Family Tree Nursery.

4. **IS KEY DECISION** Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

That a proposal to consult on the future of The Family Tree Nursery be agreed.

That at the end of the consultation period recommendations be brought back to the Executive for a decision.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

The business review identified that The Family Tree Nursery cannot sustain the operating losses which are being incurred with the current business model. The current premises are unfit for purpose. There is no outside play area and it is not possible to implement free flow play as per the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. The condition of the building is deteriorating, with many items, particularly the kitchen and carpets, requiring refurbishment if the Nursery is to continue operating from its current location.

It is not currently possible to meet the capital cost of making the building fit for purpose or relocating the Nursery to new premises as the government has cut the capital grant which could have been used to finance these options.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

Consideration has been given to an amalgamation with another town centre nursery. A business review of the proposed amalgamation determined that initial occupancy levels in the amalgamated provision would not be high enough to cover operating costs, and that occupancy levels were likely to drop, as the fees for users would increase. If the amalgamation took place and the nursery was found to be unsustainable, the Council would be liable for the redundancy costs of staff in both settings. It was therefore felt that the risks associated with an amalgamation were too high and the option was rejected.

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:**

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

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

Date Decision Made	Date decision will be implemented
14 September 2010	30 September 2010

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	I023671
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1. **TITLE:** Update of Corporate Asset Management Plan

2. **SERVICE AREA:** Corporate Services

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To consider updates to the Council's Corporate Asset Management Plan approved in 2009.

4 **IS KEY DECISION** Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

1 That the Asset Management Plan at Annex A be approved.

2 That the Plan be used to prioritise the limited funds available.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

To ensure the Executive agree the revisions and updates to the Asset Management Plan for 2010.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

None.

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

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

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

Date Decision Made	Date decision will be implemented
14 September 2010	30 September 2010

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	I024726
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1. **TITLE:** Strategic Risk Register
2. **SERVICE AREA:** Corporate Services
3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To agree Strategic Risks.

4. **IS KEY DECISION** No
5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

That the new Strategic Risk Register at Annexe A be reviewed and approved.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

To ensure that the Strategic Risk Register reflects accurately and completely the key risks for the organisation.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The Council could take the decision not to update the Strategic Risk Register but this would then not reflect its current risks. The Council could also choose not to implement suggestions made to improve the procedures for managing strategic and operational risks but this would limit the effectiveness of risk management at the Authority.

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** Not applicable.
10. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Report of the Director of Corporate Services
11. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None.

Date Decision Made	Date decision will be implemented
14 September 2010	30 September 2010

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	1022646
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1. **TITLE:** Complaints against Bracknell Forest Council in 2009/2010

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

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To brief the Executive about complaints made against the Council in 2009/10.

4. **IS KEY DECISION** No

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

1 That the approach taken to dealing with and learning from complaints to the Council be endorsed;

2 That the Annual Review letter of the Local Government Ombudsman to the Council for 2009/10 be noted; and

3 That the information on other complaints against the Council in 2009/10 be noted.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

To give 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 and continually aiming to improve the Council's service and performance.

To continue the implementation of the corporate Customer Contact Strategy, endorsed by the Council's Executive on 20 November 2007. This strategy has six key objectives, one of which is to make the customer feel important to the Council

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

None.

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** Not applicable.

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

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

Date Decision Made	Date decision will be implemented
14 September 2010	30 September 2010

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	I023951
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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 performance of the Council over the first quarter of 2010-11 (April-June 2010).

4. **IS KEY DECISION** No

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

That the performance of the Council over the period from January to March 2010, highlighted in the Overview Report in Annex A 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:** None

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

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

Date Decision Made	Date decision will be implemented
14 September 2010	30 September 2010

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	1023904
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1. **TITLE:** Disposal of Assets
2. **SERVICE AREA:** Corporate Services
3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To see authority for the disposal of -

- 80 Winscombe
- 150 Holbeck
- Adashtron House
- 15 Rectory Row

To provide the Council with a capital receipt.

- 4 **IS KEY DECISION** No
5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

- 1 15 Rectory Row,
- 2 80 Winscombe,
- 3 150 Holbeck (subject to vacant possession) and
- 4 Adastron House

be approved to be declared surplus to requirement and disposed of on the open market.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

The reasons for the decision are set out in the exempt report.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The options are set out in the exempt report.

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** N/A
10. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Report of the Director of Corporate Services
11. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None.

Date Decision Made	Date decision will be implemented
14 September 2010	30 September 2010

TO: THE EXECUTIVE
19 OCTOBER 2010

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REPORT ON A REVIEW OF PREPAREDNESS FOR
PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES
(Director of Adult Social Care and Health &
Director of Environment, Culture and Communities)**

1 PURPOSE OF DECISION

- 1.1 This report sets out the Executive's response to the recommendations in the report by the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel's Working Group on preparedness for Public Health Emergencies.
- 1.2 The report from the Working Group was completed earlier in the financial year, prior to the current information about public sector finances. As a consequence of this, whilst the Executive is supportive of the recommendations, any which require further financial support will out of necessity be considered part of the overall strategic approach of the Council in responding to the current financial climate.
- 1.3 In addition to this, the new coalition has produced a White Paper on the NHS, with changing responsibilities for Local Authorities. This involves Local Authorities being responsible for Health Improvement and Public Health.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:-

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Commission be thanked for its work and for generating constructive recommendations;**
- 2.2 The Executive endorse the responses to the recommendation which are highlighted in the main body of the report; and**
- 2.3 The Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing writes to the South Central Ambulance Service asking it to review its contingency arrangements with other strategic health authorities to ensure that sufficient resources are available on demand when required to respond to public health emergencies.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Having met on two instances to agree the theme and scope of the review, the Working Group met on six further occasions to gather information from representatives of organisations identified as playing a significant role in emergency preparedness and response in Bracknell Forest.
- 3.2 The recommendations above are supported within available resources. There was a further recommendation on the role of the Armed Forces which is covered by national arrangements. This should have been communicated to the Working Group. If support is required from the Military; this is known as MACC (Military Aid to the Civil

Community). This is the provision of unarmed military assistance to the public at large including support to a major incident or natural disaster. The request to mobilise has to be made via the Gold Strategic Coordinating Group. It is likely that in the event of a public health emergency requiring armed forces assistance, this is the way in which a response would happen.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not applicable.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 The Working Group have recognised that existing emergency preparedness arrangements are robust. The recommendations put forward are intended to maintain good practice or secure improvements.
- 5.2 The Working Group made 8 recommendations within its report.. The remainder of this section provides a commentary on the recommendations and sets out the current position.
- 5.3 Good hygiene campaigns and practices be encouraged at all times

Agreed, within available resources

The need for promoting good hygiene is a core function of Environmental Health. Preventing the spread of disease is a duty of the Council arising from a range of statutory provisions. Much is done on a day to day basis as part of the inspection/enforcement process. The ability to run campaigns is directly related to capacity. In recent years as capacity has reduced so has the promotional aspects of the work. There is little prospect of doing more within available resources.

- 5.4 The Thames Valley emergency preparedness advice booklet, 'Are You Ready?', be continued and updated as appropriate and distributed as widely as costs allow

Agreed

A new booklet entitled 'Are You Ready' has been designed, printed and distributed across the Thames Valley by the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum. Our share of this booklet was delivered to us on the 23 July and in order for us to meet our warning and informing duties imposed by the Civil Contingency Act, we are arranging to distribute this via a variety of means across the borough. We will not be delivering door to door but have arranged distribution via schools, libraries and corporate buildings, through Parish Councils and citizen packs. The booklet has been advertised in the summer edition of Town & Country and members of the public are able to request a copy. It is also available electronically at <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/are-you-ready-booklet.pdf>

- 5.5 More engagement with residential care homes be undertaken to mitigate the risks to their vulnerable clients posed by high food poisoning risk rating, possible source of Legionnaire's Disease and threat of the Winter Vomiting virus

Agreed in part

In Environmental Health terms, residential care homes are inspected according to a national risk rating scheme. This scheme means that the highest risk premises are visited twice a year. There is little resource to be more proactive in respect of these or other premises. Site management and property services also have a key role in ensuring the continued safety of residential homes and these have appropriate training and inspection systems in place. These actions are all felt to be adequate and no additional resource is felt to be required, although more could always be done

- 5.6 As the Voluntary Sector's resources fluctuate, its capacity to provide support during public health emergencies be monitored by the Council and its partners at the time of need depending on the situation

Agreed in part

Links with the voluntary sector are maintained by the Council's Emergency Planning function who are in regular contact through a variety of networking groups. Through this networking the capacity within the voluntary sector would be monitored and responded to albeit in an informal way. Any perceived changes or deficiencies would be built into our emergency response as required. In the event of a civil emergency public health or otherwise, the Council would use these existing channels to mobilise support. Availability and capacity of voluntary organisations would depend on whether other agencies had requested their support. This monitoring would be a part of any 'post emergency' review and lessons drawn out for all organisations. It is recognised that the Council cannot commit resources of other organisations to be part of the monitoring, although it is unlikely they would refuse.

- 5.7 Communication systems between the Council and its partners be reinforced to ensure that all agencies are made aware promptly of all public health threats and emergencies to prevent incidents such as the Health Protection Agency being uninformed of situations from re-occurring

Agreed

The general links with the Health Protection Unit (HPU) are established via the Environmental Health function. In addition, the Council appoints a Proper Officer for the control of Communicable Disease who is authorised to act under the Council's authority in respect of a range of powers to ensure the protection of public health. Not all civil emergencies have public health implications but where they do, our Civil Emergency Plan clearly establishes the role of Environmental Health in respect of the protection of public health. They work with the HPU and others in that regard.

- 5.8 The Council communicates its plans for the potential use of its community centres as rest centres in an emergency scenario to the lessees and keyholders of the community centres

Agreed

The Emergency Planning function has contacted potential rest centre venues to request facility details and advise that they may be used in an emergency scenario.

- 5.9 The South Central Ambulance Service ensures that it has adequate contingency arrangements with other strategic health authorities to ensure that sufficient resources are available on demand when required to respond to public health emergencies

Agreed

The Executive Member for Adult Services, Health & Housing, subject to Executive approval, will write to South Central Ambulance Service drawing their attention to the report and this specific recommendation.

- 5.10 As the Army is not integral to any emergency response mechanism, the Council and its partners seek to identify the parameters within which military aid may be available

Already known

This recommendation is covered by national arrangements. This should have been communicated to the Working Group if support is required from the Military; this is known as MACC (Military Aid to the Civil Community). This is the provision of unarmed military assistance to the public at large including support to a major incident or natural disaster. The request to mobilise would need to be made via the Gold Strategic Coordinating Group.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The relevant legal provisions are contained within the main body of the report.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 Should any financial implications arise from this report, they will need to be considered through the Council's normal budget setting process.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 Not applicable

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 Ensuring that the Council meets its statutory obligations in civil emergencies and that it is a part of the Strategic Risk Register. Actions agreed in the report will add to ensuring the Council fulfils these responsibilities.

Other Officers

- 6.5 Not applicable

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

7.1 None

Method of Consultation

7.2 None

Representations Received

7.3 None

Background Papers

A Review of Preparedness for Public Health Emergencies

Contact for further information

Glyn Jones
Director of Adult Social Care and Health
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Vincent Paliczka
Director of Environment, Culture and Communities
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Doc. Ref

Exec Report - O&S Report on a Review of Preparedness for Public Health Emergencies

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TO: EXECUTIVE
19 OCTOBER 2010

**RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMISSION
WORKING GROUP: RESPONSE TO SEVERE WEATHER
Director of Environment, Culture and Communities**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report sets out the Executive's response to the recommendations in the report by the Overview & Scrutiny Commission in respect of the Council's response to the severe weather 2009/10. In view of the cross-council implications the Leader has been asked to attend the Overview & Scrutiny Commission meeting on 28 October 2010.
- 1.2 This report comments on the findings and sets out how the Council intends to take on the learning and recommendations of the Working Group.

2 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 **That the Executive thank the Overview & Scrutiny Commission for the excellent work undertaken by their Working Group and respond to the recommendations as shown in bold in the body of this report.**
- 2.2 **That, subject to the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review and continued analysis of the Council's financial out turn in the current financial year, authority be delegated to the Director of Environment, Culture and Communities in consultation with the Executive Member: Finance and Resources, to determine how, if at all, the equipment described in recommendation 6.2 be funded.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 3.1.1 The procedural process relating to reports from the Overview and Scrutiny Commission require an Executive response;
- 3.1.2 The recommendations contained within the report were derived from a comprehensive review of the Council's response to severe weather and where practical should be considered for action; and
- 3.1.3 While weather as severe as last Winter is relatively rare, it is considered reasonable and appropriate that the Council should make further investment in equipment and plant which makes any future response more efficient, effective and further reaching.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The Council could decide not to acquire the equipment listed on the basis that the Borough experiences severe weather infrequently and therefore against other

priorities such expenditure cannot be justified.

5 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 5.1 The Overview & Scrutiny Commission Working Group looked into the Council's overall response and preparedness following the severe weather incidents in December last year and then shortly after in January this year. The report was produced using information derived from interviews with contractors and officers, reviewing real time accounts of the events, and the report produced by the Director of Environment, Culture and Communities. In addition officers have undertaken a full review of the relevant plans to deal with extreme weather such as was experienced during this period. This response takes due account of the findings of the Working Group and the experience gained by the officers.
- 5.2 The Working group have made 12 recommendations. The response to each of these is as follows:

Recommendation 6.1

The Council's strategy for dealing with emergencies and severe weather should be reviewed. The overall strategy should include an instruction to all Departments to review their individual plans and responsibilities and ensure that their staff are aware of these. This review must include an update of strategy for keeping primary and secondary routes open especially those known to have caused particular problems over this period of severe weather.

Response

AGREED.

Ensuring that the Council has an effective strategy for dealing with exceptional periods of severe weather is acknowledged. That strategy like all others needs to be tested periodically to ensure it is fit for purpose. The relevant plans have all been reviewed and updated to reflect the learning and comments made during the various reviews that have been undertaken since.

The issue of how to keep primary and secondary routes open is addressed in the Highway Winter Service Plan. Unfortunately, that Plan cannot include an open ended commitment to keep all primary and secondary routes open during a period of severe weather. The resources simply do not allow for it.

Resources have to be prioritised having due regard to legislation, national advice and the circumstances at the time. The Plans work on a priority hierarchy and an additional plan has been produced to take account of a similar situation arising as was experienced last year ie low salt supplies nationally. In such a situation the Council would have to reduce its salt use to deal with the key strategic transport network only. With additional salt supplies in stock this potential risk has been substantially reduced.

Because of the frailty of the national salt supply and the ever changing weather patterns the Council has to have plans that allow for flexibility to changing circumstances. The relevant plans have been reviewed to ensure that they are able to meet that need and those plans will be published on the Council's web

site. Taking on feedback and learning is considered a key element of the plans.

Recommendation 6.2

This review has established that for the conditions that prevailed in December 2009 and January 2010 the Council is not well enough equipped with severe snow and ice clearing equipment by way of small gritting machines to service secondary roads or 4x4 vehicles to support vulnerable areas where normal vehicles cannot cope. The Council should consider this deficiency in detail to decide if the investment in more equipment, including snow chains for staff cars, quad bikes and other items is appropriate.

Response

AGREED

The 4x4 capability within the Council has been increased and now equates to 15.5% of the fleet. The need to invest in even more of such equipment which is more expensive is hard to justify. It is however, evident that with a little investment in other forms of equipment we could deploy what we already have in a more effective manner. Accordingly it is proposed to purchase the following additional equipment:

- **Two transit van mounted salt spreading units totalling £40,000. To be used by Highways and Landscape (in periods of severe weather) to support spot salting, difficult to access areas and problematic gradients generally including some estate roads.**
- **Replacement snow plough for the large landscape tractor and an additional plough/bucket attachment for the small landscape tractors totalling £9,000. To be used to support snow clearance from key corporate properties, schools under contract and access routes.**
- **Conversion work to the tractor at Downshire Golf Course to include a snow plough attachment, a salt spreader attachment, conversion so the tractor can run on white diesel and a white diesel storage tank located at the site totalling £10,000. To be utilised to provide the support and snow clearance at leisure centre sites including the access road to Easthampstead Park thereby better protecting income streams.**
- **Two turbo castors which are manually operated pedestrian salt spreaders totalling £3,000. To be used by the street cleansing contractor teams to increase efficiency of salt spreading in neighbourhood shopping areas, footpaths etc.**
- **Two towable turbo salt castors which are attached to the back of vehicles totalling £10,000. To be used by highways and or landscape teams utilising existing 4x4 equipment to support spot salting, problematic gradients, etc as above thereby providing additional capacity to deal with access routes to doctors surgeries for example.**
- **Two 400ltr salt bins for Easthampstead House and Time Square plus 10 snow shovels, £550. Other service areas have already made their own**

provision.

Total proposed one off expenditure £72,550

Having such equipment enables better use of labour at times of severe weather. It would also enable a better response even during a normal winter as some of the above equipment would be used in support of the normal highway winter maintenance programme. The use of all salt spreading equipment is dependent upon the surety of the salt stock. In the current year we have increased our capacity and by next year we hope to have done so again.

Recommendation 6.3

Whilst reserves of grit and salt were adequate to cope with normal winter weather they were insufficient to meet the demands of a sustained period of severe weather without regular restocking. This and the storage of stocks should be given immediate consideration. The fact that the Council's reserves of salt and grit are located at Bagshot should be reviewed. It is an inefficient way of safeguarding reserves and causes further logistical problems of recovery in periods of severe weather. Reserves, or at least a proportion of them, must somehow be located in central Bracknell as a matter of priority.

Response

AGREED

The Executive have approved the funds to enable the relocation of the current highway maintenance depot and salt barn from Bagshot Road the Lorry Park in Downmill Road in Bracknell at its meeting on 14th September 2010. This is a much more central site and subject to planning this new facility will be available next year.

In the interim period a salt stock has been provided by Ringway on a temporary site and will be used to support the Bagshot site over the coming winter in the event of need. Our salt stock for this coming year at the start of this winter season is 1500 tonnes. The recommended level last year was 600 tonnes. The proposed salt barn has a capacity of 2500 tonnes. With an increased stock level we will not only have increased resilience but also the capacity to supply salt for the wider corporate need.

Recommendation 6.4

Since some gritting bins appeared to be misused during the severe weather the Council should review whether to replenish them when resources are scarce. The Council is concerned that contents were misused in some cases. A judgement will have to be made at the time as to which bins can and cannot be maintained, in view of demand and available resources. Officer judgement should be used in this respect. A review of partnership working should be undertaken with Parish and Town Councils to investigate the sharing of resources available to re-fill grit bins during severe weather if salt stocks were sufficient.

Response

AGREED

The usual demand during a normal winter for salt bins is high. During a period of severe weather the resource demand is exceptional. Each year as part of the Highway Winter Service Plan the Council reviews the need/location of such bins. There are no proposals to increase the number of bins in the current year.

With the additional equipment as listed above the officers will have other options available to salt key roads during periods of severe weather. The role of the Town and Parish Councils will be explored particularly in light of opportunities that may arise when the new salt barn is built.

Additionally, the Director will write to local DIY retailers to identify a potential opportunity for them to sell salt / grit to the public since the experience gained suggests there is a demand for this.

Recommendation 6.5

Access to facilities such as sheltered accommodation, doctor's surgeries and schools must be high on the Council's list of priorities. These routes should be considered as part of the officer review.

Response

AGREED

Access to key sites such as these forms is covered in the Highway Winter Service Plan. The Plans have been updated to reflect the learning. They seek to ensure priority is given to providing safe drop-off points are available outside such premises. With the additional equipment the Council will be able to better respond to specific needs and ensure areas previously not treated can be covered. The majority of such sites are on priority routes already and many require only modest extensions to allow access.

Recommendation 6.6

Whilst the closure of a school is ultimately the responsibility of Head Teachers and the Governing Body every effort must be made to keep them open. Closures should be justified and only be undertaken where the safety of pupils and staff is clearly shown to be compromised if such action (as closure) is not taken.

Response

AGREED (as far as is practical)

This is ultimately a matter for the Head Teachers. The Council's plans seek to ensure reasonable access can be given to such sites as a priority. The majority of such sites are on priority routes already. The additional equipment will help ensure that such needs can be addressed. However, access into the school (as opposed to the school gates) will require the Headteacher and Governors to develop better site specific plans to deal with whatever specific problems the weather brings

Recommendation 6.7

Sustaining clear communications in extreme circumstances is essential. The Council

should review its communication procedure and practice to ensure that these are robust enough to cope with all emergencies. The use of local radio, web links and other media is also essential. The Council should remind itself that not all households in Bracknell Forest have computers and that the Council should communicate accordingly.

Response

AGREED

The communication strategy particularly in the event of severe weather needs to be effectively coordinated and maximise all potential means of communication.

The emergency planning arrangements have been reviewed to ensure this suggestion is actioned and to take on wider learning. With the ever increasing use of Facebook, Twitter etc this is an area that the Council needs to keep under review as its potential use in an emergency should not be underestimated.

Recommendation 6.8

In respect of paragraph 6.7 above a dedicated communications officer should control and update the Council's website and be responsible for the input of public information.

Response

AGREED

This need has been addressed in the review of the relevant plans.

Recommendation 6.9

Some concern has been expressed about whether or not property owners are vulnerable to litigation if they clear the front of their premises or accommodation in the instance of accident. The Borough Solicitor should consider this and give appropriate advice in the autumn issue of 'Town and Country'

Response

AGREED

There is a national need to promote community stewardship (see <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/8443745.stm>). In a statement from the Department of Transport (26-7-10) it was recognised that "whilst highway authorities have a duty as far as practicable, to keep their highways clear of snow and ice, it was clear from last winter that many members of the public were keen to show community spirit in clearing the footways outside their property. It was equally clear however that many were uncertain of their rights and liabilities if they were to act in this way".

The Department for Transport stated that they intend to produce a brief guide to help the public understand this area of the law by the end of October. The intention is not to lay down what people should or should not do but in the

spirit of empowering those who wish to act in a neighbourly way. We will respond further when we have this detail.

Recommendation 6.10

It is recommended that in the event of another occurrence of severe weather an Executive Member is given the responsibility of ensuring that the Council's response is co-ordinated at a strategic once the Emergency Plan function has been activated.

Response

AGREED

The Executive Member to be given such responsibility would need to take account of the nature of the event and the impact that it is having on the Borough. The decision will be taken by the Leader in consultation with the Chief Executive and communicated to all members as part of the emergency plan activation process.

Recommendation 6.11

That officers look outside the borough for learning points highlighted from the experiences of other local facilities and organisations and that these are incorporated in to planning for future occurrences of severe weather where appropriate. It is strongly recommended that the results of the Central Government Review of Transport Response to Severe Weather are also taken in to account.

Response

AGREED

Officers have taken into account their own learning points, those around the region and within their professional bodies. This is standard practice after any emergency. The findings from the Working Group and others have helped considerably in this overall review process.

All learning has been used to re-inform the plans that are in place to deal with emergencies.

Recommendation 6.12

In the autumn meeting of the Parish and Town Council Liaison Group, officers should explain how severe weather will be dealt with in their areas next year based on the lessons learned this year.

Response

AGREED

This will be the opportunity to not only discuss how we have taken on the learning but also how we may be able to better work together in the future particularly once we have use of the new barn.

In making these responses the Government have yet to publish their findings and recommendations following a review of the resilience of England's transport system

in winter. An interim report was published in July and the relevant recommendations have been taken into account in the review of our plans. However, our plans for this coming winter may yet have to be subject to further review to take account of any as promised new national advice.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The Borough Solicitor has no comments to add to this report.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 There is no explicit approved budget for the purchase of the £72,550 of equipment identified in the report. However, there is a contingency provision within the revenue budget which could be used for the purchase of this equipment. It is appropriate to use the contingency to purchase this equipment as it has become apparent after approving the budget that these items are required. Currently the budget monitoring suggests that there will not be any major overspend of the budget in the current year therefore the contingency is available. Alternately, a supplementary capital approval could be sought from Council since there is no budget for this scheme within the 2010/11 capital budget.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 Not applicable.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 Addressed in the report.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 None.

Method of Consultation

- 7.2 Not applicable.

Representations Received

- 7.3 Not applicable to this report.

Background Papers

Report - Response to Severe Weather Overview & Scrutiny Commission Working Group

Highways Winter Service Plan 2010/11
Report the Director of Environment, Culture and Communities
Draft Corporate Severe Weather Plan
Operational procedure for the deployment of Environmental Services teams during a period of adverse snow conditions

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TO: THE EXECUTIVE
19 OCTOBER 2010

Government Grant Reductions and In-Year Budget Savings Chief Executive

1 PURPOSE OF DECISION

- 1.1 The report provides details of the impact of the in-year Government grant reductions announced in June 2010 and subsequent amendments to the Revenue and Capital Budget for 2010/11 in light of these reductions.
- 1.2 The report also outlines changes to the 2010-11 Capital Programme required as a result of the latest information on capital funding allocations from Government aside from these in-year reductions.

2 RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive:

- 2.1 **Agree the savings arising from the in-year revenue grant reductions and recommend to Full Council the virements identified in Annex B.**
- 2.2 **Notes the confirmed reductions in capital grants that amount to £2.332m (paragraph 5.6);**
- 2.3 **Agrees that the 2010-11 Environment, Culture and Communities Capital Programme be reduced by £0.283m across the projects summarised at paragraph 5.6.2;**
- 2.4 **Agrees that the 2010-11 Children, Young People and Learning capital programme be reduced by £2.049m, across the projects summarised at Table 1 (paragraph 5.6.8);**
- 2.5 **Agrees that in the absence of an alternative funding source being identified, any reduction in grant funding applied against the Kennel Lane Special School project in 2010-11 be considered for inclusion in the 2011-12 capital programme (paragraph 5.6.7);**
- 2.6 **Agrees that the 2010-11 capital programme be amended to reflect more up to date information on external funding, as summarised in Table 2 (paragraph 5.6.11) and Annex C;**
- 2.7 **Notes the changes to the detailed Action Plans associated with the in-year savings summarised in para 5.9.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 In order to balance the Budget in 2010/11 it is necessary to identify sufficient savings to balance the in-year grant reductions announced by the Government. The material value of the budget savings and associated virements requires Full Council to approve these proposals.

- 3.2 Executive approval is also required to amend the Capital Programme to reflect the latest available information to ensure that budgets are aligned with the level of funds available and latest cost estimates.
- 3.3 In order to give assurances to Kennel Lane Special School regarding the development of the school, the Executive is asked to agree that the level of available funding is maintained at £4m, if necessary through extra resources from the Council in 2011-12.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Not to make the in-year savings. This would result in the Council overspending its budget in 2010/11.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

- 5.1 On 17th May 2010 HM Treasury announced that the Government would seek to achieve £6.2bn public expenditure savings in the current financial year (2010/11), of which local government would make a contribution of £1.166bn through reductions to individual grants.
- 5.2 The local government grants which are affected include
- Area Based Grant (ABG)
 - Specific Revenue Grants
 - Capital Grants

There is no change to the Formula Grant or Dedicated Schools Grant.

- 5.3 This report deals with the impact of both the revenue and capital grant reductions.
- 5.4 The Government also lifted restrictions on how local government spends its money by the removal of the ring-fence on a number of grants totalling over £1.7bn, which it believes will give Councils greater flexibility to deliver the savings needed. However a significant number of these grants are of a capital nature, or are not received by Bracknell Forest, and as such offer few advantages to the Council.

Revenue Grant Reductions

- 5.5 Detailed information on where and how much these cuts in public expenditure would fall on individual authorities was not initially forthcoming. The original announcement on the 17th May 2010 was not followed up with a detailed analysis for local authorities until 10th June 2010. In this intervening period CMT and Departments undertook preparatory work in identifying the likely area for grant reductions and proposals for managing the cuts.
- 5.5.1 Given that these were to be in-year savings it was important that plans and actions were put in place as quickly as possible in order to maximise the possible savings. Following the announcement on 10th June 2010, savings targets were issued to Departments in order to achieve, as a minimum, the amount of grant reductions notified to the Council plus an additional target in order to allow for options to be taken on where to implement the cuts.

- 5.5.2 The revenue grant reductions announced in June are principally reductions to the ABG. From 2008 the ABG became a non-ring-fenced grant replacing previous arrangements under which separate funding streams were paid to local authorities. Local authorities are free to use ABG as they see fit to support the delivery of local, national and regional priorities. The overall reduction in ABG amounts to £785,145.
- 5.5.3 The approach taken was, where possible, to focus savings on the service areas directly related to the grant reductions within the ABG allocation. However it was clear that like-for-like savings, in line with grant reductions, would not always be possible given contractual commitments and partnership arrangements. As such targets over and above the actual grant reductions were set as noted above.
- 5.5.4 In addition to ABG reductions, the Housing and Planning Delivery Grant was abolished. The 2010/11 Budget has assumed grant income of £250,000 in relation to this grant.
- 5.5.5 Taken together the overall reduction in grants included within the General Fund Revenue Budget is £1.035m

Department	Grant Reduction
Corporate Services and Chief Exec	£31,832
Children, Young People and Learning	£618,176
Adult Social Care and Health	£2,901
Environment, Culture and Communities	£382,236
Total	£1,035,145

- 5.5.6 In addition to these grant reductions, the Government also announced that it would scale back the Local Area Agreement (including LPSA) Reward Grant and abolish the Local Authority Businesses Growth Improvement Grant (LABGI) in 2010/11. Whilst not directly supporting services, both these grants had been accounted for in the management of the Council's reserves and balances. In particular, the LPSA Reward Grant is to be shared between the Council and its strategic partners.
- 5.5.7 There is still uncertainty over the actual reduction in the LPSA Reward Grant, and despite numerous conversations and correspondence with the responsible CLG team, the Council is no clearer on how much reward grant it will receive. The abolition of the LABGI grant will be taken into account as part of the Council's on-going management of its reserves and balances as part of the Budget process.
- 5.5.8 Annex A outlines the actual reductions in ABG and other specific revenue grants as notified by CLG to the Council, and the proposed actions and virements that are to be put in place are attached in Annex B and summarised below.

Virement	Amount
Revenue Budget Cuts	£1,230,512
Contingency	£195,367
ABG/ Specific Grant Reductions	£1,035,145

- 5.5.9 These actions will result in total savings of £1.231m in 2010/11 to meet the grant reductions of £1.036m. The additional savings of £0.195m are to be transferred to the Contingency Fund. This will provide the Council with some headroom should any

of the proposed savings not be achievable in the time frame required, and contribute towards the savings required in future years budgets.

- 5.5.10 As previously reported to the Employment Committee in July, the actions taken to achieve the necessary budget reductions will result in 7 redundancies. The cost associated with these, approximately £106,000, will be met from the additional savings noted above and funded from the Contingency Fund.
- 5.5.11 The in-year reductions will also indirectly impact on the Council from cuts in funding to its Partners. The Council is aware that as a result of funding reductions to Thames Valley Police Authority, the £25,000 investment in a Police Point at Jennetts Park is at risk. However discussions are taking place that may secure a contribution of approximately £10,000. It is likely that additional reductions will come to light as the Council's partnering organisations come to terms with the full impact of the public expenditure reductions.

Capital Grant Reductions

- 5.6 Details on the reductions at individual grant and authority level have gradually emerged and this report sets out the relevant amounts and proposed actions to manage expenditure to the reduced level of funding within the Capital Programme. As at the beginning of September £2.332m of funding has been withdrawn from the Council.
- 5.6.1 The report also recommends other changes to the Capital Programme following receipt of more up-to-date information relating to external funding outside the in-year grant reductions and progress against individual schemes following detailed planning and cost updates.

Department for Transport grant reductions

- 5.6.2 The three-year local transport capital settlement (2008/09 – 2010/11) includes an element for integrated transport of which two thirds is paid within the formula grant and one third paid as direct capital grant. The capital element amounts to £0.24m and it is this element that has been withdrawn. In addition to this the Road Safety Grant has also been cut by £0.043m, bringing the total cuts to £0.283m for the Council.
- 5.6.3 It is proposed that these grant reductions can be met by delaying the Maidens Green crossroads traffic scheme and deferring other minor junction safety schemes until funding is available in the future.

Department for Education (DfE) grant reductions

- 5.6.4 On 5th July, the DfE announced £1bn of in-year cuts to reduce the reliance on funding existing spending plans through the "End Year Flexibility" that was itself funded from unconfirmed under-spends within the overall Departmental budget.
- 5.6.5 The direct impact on the Council gradually emerged during July and August as the DfE determined how the reductions would be made. During this period numerous communications were received which led to an uncoordinated approach, that resulted in considerable uncertainty for Councils as announcements on different grants were being made at different times, some of which contradicted previous statements.

5.6.6 The list of known capital grant reductions at the current time is summarised below.

- **Targeted Capital Fund - £0.660m (8.25%).** The reduction was applied against an initial allocation of £8m made available in April 2009 and which must be spent on developing facilities for 14-19 Diplomas and Special Educational Needs. The Council previously approved this funding be split £4m to secondary schools to deliver the new 14-19 Diplomas, and £4m to redevelop and refurbish Kennel Lane Special School.
- **Harnessing Technology Grant - £0.143m (50%).** In accordance with the agreement of the Schools Forum, which is a grant condition, this funding is used to develop ICT infrastructure in schools to deliver broadband and internet services, with any remaining balance to be devolved to schools to spend on local priorities.
- **Youth Capital Fund - £0.032m (50%).** Young people determine where this funding should be allocated for small capital projects that develop new facilities and opportunities.
- **Extended Schools Capital - £0.047m (54%).** This grant is used to fund infrastructure improvements to support the development of extended services.
- **Contact Point - £0.040m (59%).** This grant is intended to help local authorities meet their statutory duty on participating in the national database designed to help protect children.
- **Sure Start, Early Years and Childcare Grant- £1.127m.** This grant must be used to develop facilities required to deliver Children's Centres and Early Years provisions. A three-year funding allocation was announced at the start of the current Spending Review in April 2008, and the DfE have determined that any unspent grant allocated for the first two-years of the period would be removed, irrespective of unpaid commitments or scheme progress. This results in £1.127m of funding removed, with the 2010-11 allocation of £0.789m still remaining. The effect of this is that the following schemes will not proceed.
 - Relocation of Family Tree Nursery to Wick Hill
 - Chestnuts (Crowthorne) Children's Centre
 - Willows (Priestwood) Children's Centre
 - Sycamores (Crown Wood) Children's Centre
 - Maples (Westmorland) Mobile Children's Centre

Of the £0.789m remaining funds, £0.229m has been spent in the current financial year on the schemes that have had to be aborted, with the remaining funds committed to the following schemes which will now be completed by 31st March 2011.

- Owlsmoor Pre-School
 - Holly Spring Early Years
 - Great Hollands Foundation Stage
 - Birch Hill Foundation Stage Development
 - Cherrytown Scheme
 - Uplands Outdoor Area
 - Children's Centre ICT System
- **Aiming High for Disabled Children – No reduction.** The initial allocation of £0.171m has to be used for improvement of services and facilities for disabled children and their families, with the main objective of transforming short-break services. The DfE commenced a review on spending proposals on 14th July and confirmed on 6th September that no reduction would be applied.
 - **Playbuilder Grant - £TBC.** A grant of £0.59m was awarded to develop new and existing play areas. There was particular confusion surround this grant reduction,

as initially the grant was un-ringfenced – effectively allowing the Council to spend the grant on whatever local priorities it wished and to facilitate Councils in managing the savings required on other grants. However, it was not made clear at this time that whilst this useful flexibility had been made available, the level of available Playbuilder funding would still be subject to reduction. Therefore, should the Playbuilder funding as expected be reduced to only cover committed Playbuilder costs, there would be no spare funding left to divert to other capital projects rendering the removal of ringfencing no help in managing the reductions.

Impact on redevelopment of Kennel Lane Special School

5.6.7 A reduction in funding for the Kennel Lane Special School, as set out above, will increase the backlog of urgent condition suitability and access work which will continue to be a burden on the school and the Council in future years. The redevelopment project addresses the capacity issues in the school, but the balance of the budget is earmarked for these high priority “fitness for purpose” issues identified in the Asset Management Plan and by the school. Kennel Lane has significant Priority 1 (Urgent) issues with roofs and mechanical & electrical services which need to be addressed. The suitability and access issues at Kennel Lane are also a high priority due to this being a Special School where all of the pupils have special needs which can only be met by investment in the physical environment. Therefore it is recommended that in the absence of an alternative funding source being identified, any reduction in grant funding applied against the Kennel Lane Special School project in 2010-11 be considered to receive Council funding in the 2011-12 Capital Programme. It should be noted that the pupils who are not able to be placed at Kennel Lane School are likely to incur significant out of Borough placement costs.

Proposals for managing the DfE capital grant reductions

5.6.8 A range of measures have been considered on how these reductions can be achieved that minimise the impact on the outcomes. The proposed recommendations are outlined below.

Table 1: Proposals for managing reductions in DfE capital grants

Scheme	£m	Action required
Targeted Capital Fund – 14-19 Diplomas	0.330	Saving to be achieved from within unspent grant funds.
Targeted Capital Fund – SEN Kennel Lane School	0.330	Maintain works on condition and new build, reduce level of refurbishment.
Harnessing Technology	0.143	Complete upgrades required for new broadband contract, no funds devolved to schools
Youth Capital Fund	0.032	Limit funding for projects to those agreed by June 2010
Extended Schools	0.047	Saving to be achieved from unspent grant funds.
ContactPoint	0.040	Saving to be achieved through staffing reductions of 2 FTE (subject to organisational change protocol including referral to Employment Committee).
Sure Start, Early	1.127	Reduce the number of projects.

Years and Childcare Grant		
Playbuilder Grant	TBC	Awaiting outcome of DfE review
Total	2.049	

Budget re-alignments

5.6.9 In drawing up the original Capital Programme a number of scheme costs were included on an estimated basis, subject to confirmation of external funding, such as developers contributions. In addition certain funding streams have been confirmed by the Government after the setting of the Council's budget.

5.6.10 The following funding streams have now been confirmed and can be used to update the Council's 2010/11 Capital Programme.

Primary Capital Programme - £8.378m made available for the duration of the current spending review cycle as part of the national programme to rebuild or refurbish half of all primary schools over a planned 14 year programme. This funding is generally being re-prioritised nationally to fund additional primary school places to meet increased demand from population growth. Details of changes to Primary Capital Strategy for Change can be found in Annex C.

Modernisation Fund - £0.179m to upgrade and build new school buildings and facilities in line with priorities in the local asset management plan.

Youth Capital Fund - £0.065m. This grant was announced after the Council had set the 2010-11 Capital Programme and is intended to provide funding for young people to develop small capital projects. Note at paragraph 5.6.6 that the initial grant allocation has subsequently been reduced.

ContactPoint - £0.068m. This grant was announced after the Council had set the 2010-11 Capital Programme and is intended to help local authorities meet their statutory duty on participating in the national database designed to help protect children. Note at paragraph 5.6.6 that the initial grant allocation has subsequently been reduced.

School Meals Kitchens - £0.277m to provide kitchens where these are not in place. This funding was made available through a bidding process that requires match funding which is proposed to be provided from the Primary Capital Programme Grant.

5.6.11 Given the above information and to ensure that approved budgets are correctly aligned to the latest available funds, recommendations are now being made to make the changes as set out below.

Table 2: Recommended changes to 2010-11 Capital Programme

Dept	Scheme	Revised Funding £m	Change £m	Comment
CYPL	Targeted Capital Fund 14-19 Diplomas (1)	1.250	-1.000	Corrects error on original budget profile
CYPL	Targeted Capital Fund Kennel Lane	3.750	1.000	Corrects error on original budget profile

CYPL	Schools Devolved Formula Capital	0.949	0.103	Confirmation of grant funding
CYPL	DCSF School Meals Kitchen Grant	0.277	0.101	Confirmation of grant funding
CYPL	Children's Centres	0.789	-0.209	Confirmation of grant funding
CYPL	Contact Point	0.068	0.068	Confirmation of grant funding
CYPL	Youth Capital Fund	0.065	0.065	Confirmation of grant funding
CYPL	Section 106 Contributions	0.288	0.288	Confirmed receipts – Annex C
CYPL	Primary Capital Strategy for Change	13.049	-1.5145	Confirmed funding and realignment of budget to current schemes and forecast costs.
ASCH	Transformation in Adult Social Care	0.044	0.044	Confirmation of grant funding
ASCH	Care Housing	0.020	0.020	Confirmation of grant funding
Total		20.549	- 1.035	

(1) Approval is also sought to allocate £0.100m to Sandhurst school from the 14-19 diplomas unallocated grant to complete the building works required to offer IT and Hospitality. The unallocated grant would then total £0.333m and remain sufficient to achieve the proposed reductions set out in Table 1.

Service Plan Updates

- 5.7 Due to the extensive budget cuts that the Council has to make during the financial year 2010/11, it has been necessary to update the departmental Service Plans so that they accurately reflect the work that the Council is undertaking and monitoring during this financial year.
- 5.8 The Council has thirteen Medium Term Objectives for 2008-11, which underpin the six over-arching priorities. These remain unaffected. However the Medium Term Objectives are supported by a series of Key Objectives, which were agreed during 2007. These are reviewed each year, the last revision being undertaken in the autumn of 2009. These Key Objectives are, in turn, supported by Detailed Actions which departments prepare each year; the last full listing of Detailed Actions was produced in early 2010.
- 5.9 Due to the budget pressures the Council is facing during this financial year, each department has reviewed these detailed actions and Key Objectives. These changes reflect the budget savings agreed with the portfolio holders. This review has resulted in:-
- 13 Medium Term Objectives – no change
 - 80 Key Objectives – no change – however the degree to which some of these will be pursued has been limited due to budget cuts.
 - Of the original 372 Detailed Actions for 2010/11

- 21 (6%) – have been scaled down due to financial constraints
 - 26 (7%) – have been deleted to reflect budget cuts or changes in Government policy
 - Whilst the review has been undertaken the opportunity has been taken to amend the wording of a further 16 (4%) to reflect the current situation.
- 5.10 These changes will be made in the departmental Service Plans for 2010/11 which will be republished in early November.

Conclusion

- 5.11 There has been a significant in-year reduction in both Revenue and Capital funding that falls across a number of important, demand-led and high profile services and schemes. This has led to a wide-ranging action plan resulting in the curtailing of services, redundancies and the cancellation of a number of capital projects. The actions proposed to dealing with these funding cuts will ensure that the Council's revenue budget is balanced and that disruption to services has been minimised.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The relevant legal provisions are contained within the main body of the report

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 The financial implications are set out in the supporting info.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 The Government undertook its own impact assessment before announcing the in-year budget cuts. The speed with which these grant reductions have been implemented and the need to respond quickly with proposals to reduce spending have set a challenging timescale for the Council. In the vast majority of cases, savings proposals reflect reductions in grant that have been announced at a national level and in developing these proposals, officers have endeavoured, where possible, to avoid changes in services which will impact on the most vulnerable service user groups.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 Given the nature of these in-year savings and the haste with which the decisions and actions had to be taken there is a risk that the full amount of savings cannot be achieved. This is particular relevant to areas where savings are being sought in conjunction with partners and where contractual arrangements exist. There is also a risk of further in-year reduction, especially regarding capital grants. Officers will continue to monitor the Councils expenditure and report to Members through the existing Budget Monitoring process and as such will monitor the savings outlined in this report to ensure that the Council budget is balanced in 2010/11.

Other Officers

- 6.5 None

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 None – due to the need to implement savings as expeditiously as possible.

Method of Consultation

- 7.2 None

Representations Received

- 7.3 None

Background Papers

Contact for further information

Calvin Orr – Chief Technical Accountant – Corporate Services 01344 352125

Doc. Ref

G:\Accounting Services\Budget 2011-12\6bn Cuts announcement\September Exec Report\In-Year Savings - Exec Sept 2010 - Latest.doc

ANNEX A

	BFC Allocation	Grant Reduction
	£	£
Adult Social Care & Health		
ABG		
Carers	375,789	-
Learning & Disability Development Fund	58,980	-
Local Involvement Networks	86,233	-
Mental Capacity Act & Independent Mental Capacity	41,531	-
Mental Health	207,844	-
Preserved Rights	264,466	-
Young Peoples Substance Misuse	12,105	2,901
	1,046,948	2,901
Unringfenced		
AIDs Support	47,000	0
Stroke Strategy	80,000	0
	127,000	-
Children, Young People and Learning		
ABG		
School Travel Advisers	15,000	3,595
Sustainable Travel - General Duty	7,924	1,899
School Development Grant	207,574	49,745
Extended Schools Start-Up Grants	213,580	51,184
Primary National Strategy - Central	70,414	16,875
Secondary National Strategy - Central Co-ordination	98,540	23,615
Secondary National Strategy - Behaviour and Attendance	68,300	16,368
School Improvement Partners	41,000	9,826
Education Health Partnerships	32,134	7,701
Choice Advisers	17,951	4,302
School Intervention Grant	26,000	6,231
14 - 19 Flexible Funding Pot	28,878	6,921
Connexions	1,065,998	255,466
Children's Fund	153,200	36,714
Child Trust Fund	798	191
Positive Activities for Young People	62,018	14,863
Teenage Pregnancy	89,000	21,329
Youth Taskforce	-	-
Care Matters White Paper	77,928	18,675
Child Death Review Processes	11,196	2,683
Designated Teacher Funding	5,565	1,334
January Guarantee	11,294	2,707
LSC Staff Transfer: Special Purpose Grant	275,209	65,954
Child & Adolescent Mental Health	149,238	-
	2,728,739	618,176
Unringfenced		
Youth Opportunity Fund	90,000	0
Think Family	345,000	0
	435,000	-

ANNEX A

	BFC Allocation	Grant Reduction
	£	£
Corporate Services & Chief Executive		
ABG		
Extended Rights to Free Transport	45,767	10,968
Children's Social Care Workforce	26,438	6,336
Adult Social Care Workforce	204,104	-
Cohesion	-	-
Economic Assessment Duty	65,000	-
Local Enterprise Growth Initiative	-	-
Stronger Safer Communities Fund	162,794	14,528
Working Neighbourhood Fund	-	-
Prevent	-	-
NI160 STATUS Survey	-	-
	504,103	31,832
Environment, Culture and Communities		
ABG		
Climate Change	22,500	-
Detrunking	-	-
Road Safety Grant	192,299	51,000
Rural Bus Subsidy	72,401	-
Supporting People Administration	81,236	81,236
Supporting People	1,772,926	-
Familiarisation costs of new statutory guidance on social housing allocations	1,380	-
	2,142,742	132,236
Other Revenue Specific Grants		
Housing & Planning Delivery Grant	250,000	250,000
Total	2,392,742	382,236
Total Council Grant Reduction		1,035,145

Corporate Services and Chief Executive

Dept	Service Area Grant	Cash Saving in 2010/11	How will it be achieved
CSCE1	Extended Rights to Free Transport	£15,000	Costs associated with providing free transport will be met from within existing home to school transport budgets.
CSCE2	Economic Assessment Duty	£35,000	Preparation of the economic development strategy will now be undertaken in house, instead of being outsourced.
CSCE3	Stronger Safer Communities Fund	£22,000	By not recruiting a project worker in the Youth Offending Service for the Early Interventions Project.
		£6,000	The Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership Executive will not support any further projects during 2010/11.
CSCE4	Children's Social Care Workforce	£6,000	Reduction in non-priority learning for Children's Social Care workforce.
CSCE5	Adult Social Care Workforce	£21,900	Reduction in training provision for the Private and Voluntary Sector and, to a lesser extent, non priority learning for Adult Social Care workforce. In future, some work will be undertaken using alternative Council resources e.g. Environmental Health. Some work will be outsourced and some will be deferred.
	Total	£105,900	

Children, Young People and Learning

Dept	Service Area Grant	Cash Saving in 2010/11	How will it be achieved
CYPL1	Extended Schools Start-Up Grants (part)	£36,700	Fund Play and Childcare Development Co-ordinator Post from Sure Start grant
		£7,000	Reduce financial support to Play Schemes currently available from this grant to private, voluntary and independent sector providers for after school and holiday childcare programmes.
CYPL2	Secondary national Strategy - Behaviour and Attendance	£24,000	Remove support from this grant to the secondary behaviour improvement programme (CMCD)
CYPL3	Choice Adviser	£7,000	Reduce funding to service by 40%
CYPL4	Positive Activities for Young People	£10,000	Delete Vulnerable Young People's Worker Post
		£5,000	Reduce by 30% the number of one-off projects and activities supported by sessional workers
CYPL5	Care Matters White Paper	£3,000	Remove funding for Children in Care Council
		£9,000	Do not undertake planned work related to improving outcomes for children
CYPL6	Child Death Review Processes	£4,000	Any required review costs to be funded from within overall Council contingency funding
CYPL7	Designated Teacher Funding	£4,000	Cease training and information programmes
CYPL8	January Guarantee	£1,000	Retain balance of funds not yet allocated
CYPL9	Youth Opportunity Fund	£21,000	Reduction of 25% in value of grants awarded to young people
		£1,500	General administrative expenses to be funded from within overall Youth Service budget
CYPL10	Carers - CYPL	£10,000	Fund half of the Holiday Clubs Konnexions SLA from Aiming High specific grant
		£5,000	Reduce the SLA with Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action by 20%
		£2,500	Delete funding for Children's Opportunity Group - subject to contract negotiation
CYPL11	Extended Schools Start-Up Grants (part)	£15,000	Staffing structure to be reduced by 25% following review
		£5,000	Retain balance of funds not yet allocated
		£21,000	Reduce by 50% funding devolved to Area Steering Groups
CYPL12	School Development Grant (Performance Management part)	£11,000	Delete Performance Analyst - CYPL

Children, Young People and Learning

Dept	Service Area Grant	Cash Saving in 2010/11	How will it be achieved
CYPL13	School Development Grant (School Improvement part)	£45,000	Staffing structure to be reduced following a review
CYPL14	Primary National Strategy – Central, Secondary National Strategy - Central Co-ordination, School Intervention Grant	£26,515	Staffing structure to be reduced following review
CYPL15	14 - 19 Flexible Funding Pot	£8,000	Staffing structure to be reduced following review
CYPL16	Children's Fund	£10,000	Removal of funding to support special one-off projects relating to 14-19 education
		£15,000	Delete Early Interventions Co-ordinator Post
		£5,000	Reduce by 50% Safe to Learn peer mentoring support to targeted schools
		£5,000	Reduce by 65% financial support to Play Schemes currently available from this grant to private, voluntary and independent sector providers
		£1,000	Reduce by 30% general support to Youth Service
CYPL17	Think Family	£60,061	Staffing structure to be reduced by 35% following review
		£5,000	Retain balance of funds not yet allocated
CYPL18	Child & Adolescent Mental Health	£22,000	Delete under 11's Social Worker post
		£25,000	Delete over 11's Social Worker post
		£10,000	Reduce by 60% funding available for training and specialist assessments
CYPL19	Connexions	£115,000	In-year reduction to Berkshire wide contract of £100k. Reduce NEET prevention work £15K.
CYPL20	Teenage Pregnancy	£12,000	Reduce Co-ordinator Post from full time to half time
		£900	Delete part time Support Worker Post
		£10,000	Reduce by 25% funds for project materials, group meetings, information sheets and funding to local GPs for running three clinics
CYPL21	LSC Staff Transfer: Special Purpose Grant	£40,000	£33K agreed cut to the former LSC grant and additional £7K from contingency
Total		£618,176	

Environment, Culture and Communities

Dept	Service Area Grant	Cash Saving in 2010/11	How will it be achieved
ECC1	Road Safety Grant (Revenue)	£51,000	Agreement has been reached within the partnership that this reduction in grant can be absorbed by utilising reserves and introducing efficiencies. All road safety work previously carried out will be continued
ECC2	Housing & Planning Delivery Grant (HPDG)	£13,680	Delay work on less critical parts of the LDS. Remaining budget allows all significant plans to proceed.
		£33,670	Habitats Regulations grant money for Green Infrastructure and SANGS research. Savings represent 2 years funding
ECC3	Housing & Planning Delivery Grant (HPDG)	£106,650	<p>Restrict advice on trees surrounding planning application to significant projects or trees only (-1x FTE, £36,510) Restrict landscape advice for planning application to significant schemes only (£13,280)</p> <p>Principal Planner, reduce capacity (£40,000)</p> <p>Reduce capacity in s106 team - Senior Policy Officer (£36,320)</p> <p>Reduce capacity in s106 team - Assistant Planner (£16,680)</p> <p>Reduce admin support in DC - P/T Admin (£11,500)</p> <p>JSPU under-spend for 2010/11 £7,000</p>
ECC5	Supporting People Administration	£36,099	Rationalise and simplify the administration of the £1.7m annual Supporting People programme. 1 x FTE
		£44,750	Temporary reduction in Housing Enabling Support
		£387	One –off budgets where savings have been identified.
Total		£286,236	

Adult Social Care and Health

Dept	Service Area Grant	Cash Saving in 2010/11	How will it be achieved
ASCH1	Carers Grant	£51,200	Utilise in house for Respite Care
ASCH2	Mental Health	£15,000	Contract change – 3 months
ASCH3	LINks	£15,000	Renegotiate contract
ASCH4	Stroke Strategy	£16,000	Remove budget not yet spent
ASCH5	Social Care Reform	£70,000	Link expenditure from DSB to ensure grant conditions are met
ASCH6	HIV/Aids	£27,000	Rearranging staffing and budgets for blood borne virus service to ensure continuation
ASCH7	Preserved Rights	£26,000	Remove from budget
	Total	<u>£220,200</u>	

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Analysis of proposed schemes to be funded by S106 funding

S106 contributions are given to meet the cost of the impact of the development on the Council's infrastructure. In the case of schools this means creation of additional capacity in schools to meet demand for pupil places. They are provided for specific schools within a limited radius of the housing development.

1. **Brakenhale Secondary School** – to contribute to the cost of providing additional teaching spaces in the school to meet rising rolls.

S106 CONTRIBUTION REF	AMOUNT	BALANCE
YN364	£46,488	£0
YN389	£4,600	£0
Total:	£51,088	£0

2. **Garth Hill College** - to contribute to the construction of the new school, which is being built with an additional form of entry to address rising school rolls.

S106 CONTRIBUTION REF	AMOUNT	BALANCE
YN360	£7,555	£0
YN370	£17,000	£0
YN375	£6,180	£0
YN377	£1,780	£0
Total:	£32,515	£0

3. **Crown Wood Primary School** - contribute to the cost of providing additional teaching spaces in the school to meet rising rolls, under the Primary Capital Strategy for Change.

S106 CONTRIBUTION REF	AMOUNT	BALANCE
YN372	£171,490	£0
YN389	£5,200	£0
Total:	£176,690	£0

4. **Holly Spring Schools** - contribute towards the cost of the project to expand the schools by one form of entry under the Primary Capital Strategy for Change.

S106 CONTRIBUTION REF	AMOUNT	BALANCE
YN378	£940	£0
Total:	£940	£0

5. **Meadow Vale Primary School** - contribute towards the cost of the project to expand the school by one form of entry under the Primary Capital Strategy for Change.

S106 CONTRIBUTION REF	AMOUNT	BALANCE
YN370	£14,000	£0
Total:	£14,000	£0

6. **Bracknell Methodist Church – Youth Facilities**. Contribution towards the enhancement of non-denominational youth facilities – youth café, holiday clubs and junior youth clubs for the Priestwood and Garth community being provided at the Bracknell Methodist Church, Shepherd's Lane, Bracknell.

S106 CONTRIBUTION REF	AMOUNT	BALANCE
YN327	£12,400	£0
Total:	£12,400	£0

Re-alignment of the budget for the (PCSfC)

The budgets for schemes in the PCSfC have been realigned to meet current spending plans. The focus of work in the PCSfC has changed from transformation works to capacity works to accommodate the predicted rise in numbers of primary aged pupils in the borough over future years. This has resulted in wide changes to the previously agreed budgets. The realigned budgets have also taken into account changes in funding sources such as contributions from schools which are no longer applicable; deduction of the expected S106 receipts for Jennetts Park School, since the school will be built for BFC by the developer under a Deed of Variation and additional S106 receipts from the Wykery Copse (Jennetts Park School) development. The budgets for Early Years and Children's Centres and Extended Schools schemes have been shown against each scheme in the current programme, reflecting changes required from the reduction in grants.

SCHEME	REVISED FUNDING 2010/11 £ 000	CHANGE £ 000	NOTE
PCP Grant to be Allocated to Projects	£0	-£25	
Ascot Heath Infant & Juniors	£0	-£978	
Holly Spring Phase 1	£2,375	£72	
Meadow Vale Phase 1	£2,618	£896	
Crown Wood Phase 1	£622	-£1,338	
Sandy Lane Phase 2	£2,372	£995	
Great Hollands	£0	-£441	
Jennetts Park Primary School	£415	-£1,278	1
Owlsmoor Phase 1	£1,858	£1,329	
Additional School Places - allocation to projects	£0	-£600	
School Meals Kitchens (Cranbourne)	£245	£73	
Outdoor Classrooms	£2	-£46	2
ICT Upgrades	£1	-£174	2
Extended Services - allocation to projects	£0	-£411	
New Scotland Hill School	£154	£154	
Cranbourne School	£100	£100	
St Margaret Clitherow	£50	£50	
Holly Spring School	£50	£50	
Birch Hill School	£10	£10	
Unallocated	£47	£47	3
Childrens Centres & Early Years - allocation to projects	£1,127	-£1,003	3
Owlsmoor Pre-School	£207	£207	
Birch Hill Primary School	£36	£36	
Holly Spring School	£199	£199	
Great Hollands	£56	£56	
Uplands Outdoor Area	£12	£12	
Cherrytown Day Nursery	£3	£3	
ICT Installation	£52	£52	
In year grant confirmation	£209	£209	4
Aborted Schemes	£229	£229	
TOTAL	13,049	-1,515	

Notes:

1 Jennetts Park School now to be provided by developer rather than through direct cash contribution via S106 agreement

2 These projects no longer to continue so anticipated contribution from schools included in the current budget need to be removed

3 Amount in "Revised funding 2010/11" column set aside to meet savings required from in-year grant reductions.

4 Original budget over stated grant by £0.209m. The amount in "Revised funding 2010/11" column has been set aside to allow for the overall budget to be reduced.

REVISED FUNDING STREAMS	Change
	£ 000
Maintained Schools DFC	-£100
School Development Grant	-£30
Other School Contributions	-£50
Jennetts Park Primary School - remove advance of S106 funding	-£100
Jennetts Park Primary School - remove S106 funding	-£1,600
Wykery Copse (Jennetts Park) S106 Receipts	£366
TOTAL	-1,514

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TO: THE EXECUTIVE
19 OCTOBER 2010

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK - SITE ALLOCATIONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT

Director of Environment, Culture and Communities

1 PURPOSE OF DECISION

- 1.1 The Site Allocations Development Plan Document (SADPD) is intended to identify sites to meet the Borough's development needs to 2026 in accordance with the Council's adopted Core Strategy. This report seeks approval to consult on a Preferred Option of this document.

2 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 **That Executive agrees the Preferred Option at Appendix A (including its associated annexes and supporting technical information) for the purposes of public consultation.**
- 2.2 **That Executive agrees the consultation strategy set out in Section 5 of this report.**
- 2.3 **That authority be delegated to the Executive Member for Planning and Transportation to make any necessary amendments to the Preferred Options and supporting technical and background papers prior to public consultation.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Production of the SADPD supports the Council's policy of having a plan-led approach to development rather than reacting to developers' proposals. The proposed use of the Council's locally derived housing target based on the Borough's adopted Core Strategy rather than the previous figure based on the revoked South East Plan also supports the government's objectives of decentralisation, localism and planning positively for housing delivery to meet local needs. The Housing Minister, Grant Shapps has recently confirmed that increased house building, including affordable housing, was a priority for the government.
- 3.2 The SADPD will be an important element in delivering the vision set out in the Council's adopted Core Strategy and ensuring a robust and flexible supply of land to meet the Borough's future development requirements and support the local economy. At the July meeting Executive agreed that work on the SADPD would continue on the basis of the housing numbers set out in the adopted Core Strategy. These numbers were agreed by the Council at the time of preparing the South East Plan as an appropriate level to meet the community's needs. The number of homes planned is 2,000 fewer than the figure in the final South East Plan which has now been revoked.
- 3.3 The community's needs for housing arise from a number of sources including:
- Natural increase in population
 - People living longer healthier lives and staying longer in their own homes

- Smaller average household size
- 3.4 The most recent CLG household projections show an increase in households in Bracknell Forest of 11,000 over the plan period from 46,000 in 2006 to 57,000 in 2026. This fits very well with the 10,780 being proposed as the target for the SADPD. The 10,780 figure is based on the Core Strategy figure of 11,139 less a carry over of 359 from the previous plan period which GOSE subsequently advised need not be included.
- 3.5 The effect of an ageing population can be seen in that, of the additional new households projected from 2006 to 2031 for Bracknell Forest, 66% will comprise households aged 65 or over and 38% will be households aged 75 or over (source: CLG/Experian household projections, 2009).
- 3.6 The Government has made it clear that the revocation of regional strategies does not mean that work should cease on the preparation of Local Development Documents and that local authorities still need to identify a long term supply of housing land. It is also made clear that whatever housing level is chosen will need to be justified.

The Previous Options Consultation

- 3.7 A summary of the Options consultation and responses on the broad locations were included in the report to Executive in July. Further analysis of comments, along with other technical information and testing of the potential sites, has taken place to arrive at the Preferred Option. A full report of the consultation, including officer responses to the main issues raised, is at Appendix 'B'.

4. THE PREFERRED OPTION

- 4.1 The Preferred Option is set out in full in the draft consultation document at Appendix 'A' and the rationale behind the options selected is set out in the background document at Appendix 'C'. The draft Sustainability Appraisal of the options considered in the previous consultation is attached at Appendix 'E'. The proposals are based around meeting the vision and objectives set out in the Council's adopted Core Strategy.
- 4.2 A key component of the SADPD is the identification of sites to meet the Borough's housing needs. The housing requirement in the Core Strategy is to provide 10,780 homes by 2026. Of this total, 66% are already committed through existing permissions, homes already completed and sites identified in the Core Strategy. As shown below, this leaves us to find additional sites for 3,626 homes to meet the Borough's projected need to 2026:

Homes Already Committed to be Allocated	
Homes completed 2006 – 2010	1,424
Homes with planning permission	2,805
Homes planned at Amen Corner & Warfield	2,925
	(7,154)
Additional Homes to be Allocated	
Small windfall allowance (16 years)	480
Small edge of settlement sites	174
Sites within settlements	901
<i>Extensions to Settlements</i>	
Land at Broadmoor, Crowthorne	278
Land at TRL, Crowthorne	1,000
Amen Corner North, Binfield	400

Land at Blue Mountain, Binfield	400
	(2,078)
TOTAL	10,787

4.3 The Preferred Option sets out policies for the major new extensions, summarised as follows:

4.3.1 Broadmoor

Is proposed for a comprehensive redevelopment scheme to include:

- 278 new homes
- Major public open space provision including on-site bespoke provision of green space to mitigate any impacts on the nearby Special Protection Area
- A replacement hospital
- Re-use of the listed building on the site
- A new access road
- Public transport improvements

This proposal is subject to satisfactory resolution of conservation issues around the need to protect the integrity of the heritage assets on the site through the production of a satisfactory conservation management plan to inform further development of a masterplan.

4.3.2 TRL Site, Crowthorne

This site is proposed for a comprehensive mixed use development to include

- 1,000 new homes
- Major public open space provision including on-site bespoke provision of green space to mitigate any impacts on the nearby Special Protection Area
- A care home
- An enterprise centre
- A new Council Depot
- A new local centre
- A new primary school
- Retention of the existing Transport Research Laboratory Office building
- Improvements to the local highway network
- Improvements to public transport and local cycle network

4.3.3 Amen Corner North

This site is proposed for a residential development to include:

- 400 new homes
- Major public open space provision including bespoke provision of green space to mitigate any impacts on the Special Protection Area in the south of the Borough
- Improvements to public transport and local cycle network
- Contributions towards improvements to the strategic highways network
- Improvements to the local highway network

4.3.4 Land at the Blue Mountain Golf Course site

Part of the golf course site is proposed for a mixed-use development to include:

- 400 new homes
- Major public open space provision including on-site bespoke provision of green space to mitigate any impacts on the Special Protection Area to the south of the Borough
- Relocation of Bracknell Town Football Club

- An Education Village comprising a new secondary school, a new primary school and a new Special Educational Needs facility
- Improvements to public transport and local cycle network
- Contributions towards improvements to the strategic highways network
- Improvements to the local highway network

4.4 The Preferred Option includes policies for the formal allocation of the sites at Amen Corner and Warfield identified in the adopted Core Strategy Policies CS4 and CS5 respectively. It contains details of the smaller sites that will also contribute to meeting the housing target as referred to at paragraph 4.2 above.

Other Allocations

4.5 Changes are proposed to reduce the size of some of the employment areas, in particular the Eastern Industrial Area where a housing allocation for over 200 homes is proposed. It is also proposed to include a policy for the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst to support its nationally important military training function while protecting nature, landscape and heritage interests.

4.6 Changes are proposed to the extent of retail and frontage designations within them. These changes reflect up to date guidance in PPS4 and are mostly quite minor apart from the proposal to designate the Peel Centre as an edge-of-centre location. This would be accompanied by a policy to support its ongoing role as a retail warehouse park.

4.7 It is also proposed to rationalise the extent of the designations of Open Space of Public Value and settlement boundaries, particularly in relation to providing greater flexibility for school sites.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan

4.8 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), accompanies the SADPD and specifies, in as much detail as possible on the available information, the physical, social and green infrastructure needed to enable the planned growth up to 2026. An initial draft of the IDP is attached at Appendix D and includes a delivery schedule that sets out who will provide the infrastructure and when it will be delivered.

4.9 In addition to the large extensions to settlements, the IDP will also cover the infrastructure requirements for the smaller sites proposed. This will be set out by area and will predominantly use the approach set out in the Limiting the Impact of Development SPD. The IDP will assess the cumulative impacts of the small sites on the existing infrastructure provision within the settlements.

Technical and Background Papers

4.10 There are a number of background papers and studies (in addition to those appended to this report) that have informed the preparation of the preferred option. Copies of these will be available for the public consultation.

4.11 These documents include:

- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment (Draft)
- Phase 1 Ecological Surveys of Broad Areas

- Archaeological Site Assessments
- Landscape Capacity Study
- Bracknell Forest LDF Residential Location Accessibility Assessment – Broad Development Areas
- Bracknell Forest – Masterplanning Support – Final Report
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
- Employment Land Review
- Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- Retail Study
- Transport and Accessibility Assessment
- Appropriate Assessment

5. PREFERRED OPTION CONSULTATION STRATEGY

5.1 It is proposed to carry out the consultation from 8th November to 17th December 2010 (ending before the Christmas holidays).

5.2 The following consultation strategy is proposed:

- a) Online consultation using Limehouse consultation portal.
- b) Update front page of Council's web page and Boris to include notification that Preferred Option Consultation has commenced and provide direct link to consultation.
- c) Town and Country Article (publication date 15 November).
- d) Press release to local newspapers at start of Preferred Option Consultation.
- e) Explanatory leaflet to complement the Preferred Option Consultation.
- f) Half page advertisement in local newspapers at start of Preferred Option Consultation (this is not a statutory requirement but would help to raise awareness).
- g) Email/letter to consultees/individuals on our database who responded to the Participation Document to advise that the Preferred Option consultation is taking place (over 1,300 organisations and individuals are on the database).
- h) Additional notification to properties adjacent to proposed new major urban extensions.
- i) Manned exhibitions focussed on Crowthorne and Binfield as the areas most affected by major housing allocations. Times and venues to be included in publicity. Exhibitions to be held in evenings and Saturday mornings as well as during the working day to make them more easily accessible. Provisional times and locations are:
 - Binfield Parish Council - Saturday 20th Nov, 9.00am-1.00pm
 - Binfield Parish Council - Thurs 18th Nov, 2.00-5.00pm
 - Binfield Primary School - Wed 17th Nov, 6.00-9.00pm

 - Crowthorne Baptist Church - Tues 23rd Nov, 10.00am-1.00pm
 - Crowthorne Baptist Church - Sat 27th Nov, 10.00am-1.00pm

6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 The option of ceasing or significantly delaying work on identifying sites for future development was considered. This would leave the Council vulnerable to the pattern of development in the Borough being led by developers and land owners through planning applications and planning appeals.
- 6.2 The option of carrying out a minimal consultation just to meet the statutory requirements was considered but was not thought appropriate in light of the levels of interest generated by the initial options consultation and the long-term Borough-wide implications of the proposals.

7 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The risks associated with the proposed SADPD work are:
- The lack of up to date legislation and guidance on the new planning system; and,
 - The interim arrangements are presently in the form of a draft Ministerial Written Statement.
- 7.2 There is also a risk from potential speculative planning applications and possible appeals. However, the Secretary of State's letter of 27 May will be a material planning consideration in any appeal decisions, as will any formal Ministerial Written Statement on interim arrangements. The risk from such applications will be reduced by carrying on with work on the SADPD in order to identify a robust supply of housing land.

8 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 8.1 Consultation on the Site Allocations DPD is required by the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended in 2008). The provisions relating to the early consultation are covered by Regulation 25 and it is considered that undertaking the consultation as proposed will help fulfill the Council's obligations under this legislation.

Borough Treasurer

- 8.2 The Site Allocations Development Plan Document forms part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) process. The commitment budget includes a projection which represents the estimated work in preparing the LDF as part of a continuous rolling programme.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 8.3 The allocation of land for different uses which is the key function of the SADPD has the potential to advantage some groups at the expense of others. Carrying out full and effective consultation on its proposals is therefore an important part of ensuring that no equalities groups are unfairly disadvantaged. An important part of the SADPD will be to ensure that new development contributes to the achievement of

sustainable communities which have good access to a wide range of facilities including employment, education, health facilities, open space and community facilities (community halls, places of worship etc). In this respect the SADPD should have a positive role in reducing inequalities in the Borough. A full Equalities Impact Assessment is attached at Appendix F.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 8.4 Strategic Risk Register - Number 4 identifies the risks arising from the increased housing allocations and the implied 'jobs allocations' in the final version of the South East Plan. A particular trigger for this risk is identified as houses being built without accompanying improvements in infrastructure.
- 8.5 While the risk of increased housing allocations has now disappeared with the revocation of the SE Plan, the risks associated with not having an identified supply of land for development remain. The government has made it clear that they still expect land supply to be identified and the changes made to PPS3 did not affect the national policy relating to land supply. The Council would therefore be vulnerable to developer-led planning applications being submitted and potentially won on appeal of the SADPD process were abandoned or significantly delayed.

9 CONSULTATION

- 9.1 Details of the proposed Preferred Option consultation are set out at Section 5 above.

Background Papers

Please note that, due to the size of the documents, Appendices A to E have not been printed, copies are available via the website and printed copies will be placed in the party group rooms.

- Appendix A Draft Preferred Option
Appendix B Report of Options Consultation
Appendix C Preferred Options Background Paper
Appendix D Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan
Appendix E Draft Sustainability Appraisal Report (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment)
Appendix F Equalities Impact Assessment

Contact for further information

Max Baker, Environment, Culture and Communities
Tel: 01344 351902 E-mail: max.baker@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Doc. Ref

H:\POLICY\Exec. Decision making\2010\Oct\Exec Mtg\SADPD Consultation Oct 2010_Exec Report_Exec(1).doc

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Equality Impact Assessment Record

EIA Guidance

Please ensure that you have read the Council's EIA Guidance booklet, available on Boris, before starting work on your EIA, it should be read in conjunction with this form. If anything is unclear please contact your departmental equality representative listed below. This form is designed to summarise the findings of your EIA. **Please also keep a record of your other discussions in producing the impact assessment.**

Drafting your EIA

The boxes in this form are designed to expand please ensure that you add data, consultation results and other information to back up any assertions that you make. A draft of this record form must be sent to the Councils Equality Officer Abby Thomas and your departmental equality representative(s) (listed below) who will send you comments on it before it is finalised and signed off by your Chief Officer. This step is important to check the quality and consistency of EIAs across the Council.

Departmental Equality Representatives

ECC	Jane Eaton	SCL	Graham Symonds and Ilona Cowe
CS	Abby Thomas	CXO	Stephanie Boodhna

Publishing

The Council is legally required to publish this EIA record form on the Councils website. Please send a copy of the final version of the EIA record form to the Councils Equality Officer Abby Thomas to publish.

Date of EIA	4 October 2010	EIA Guidance Page Ref.
Directorate	Environment Culture & Communities	
Part One - Initial Screening Record		
1. Activity to be assessed	Site Allocations Development Plan Document (SADPD)	
2. What is the activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change	
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing	
4. Who are the members of the EIA team?	Head of Spatial Policy/Team Managers.	
5. Initial screening assessment. If the answer to either of these questions is 'yes' then it is necessary to go ahead with a full Equality Impact Assessment.	<p>1. Does the activity have the potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the Councils workforce or the community?</p> <p>The SADPD will guide the location of future development and the allocation of land for different uses (part of the requirements for planning set out in PPS1). This has the potential to advantage some groups at the expense of others.</p> <p>2. Does the activity make a positive contribution to equalities?</p> <p>By ensuring that locations and sites are chosen that will contribute to the creation of sustainable communities and good access is provided to services and facilities the production of the document should make a positive contribution. It also provides an opportunity to identify sites for facilities to meet community needs. It is important that widespread and effective consultation is carried out on the document to ensure that positive benefits are achieved for as wide a cross section of the</p>	
		See Pages 9 - 10

	community as possible.
6. Did Part 1: Initial Screening indicate that a full EIA was necessary?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes – full EIA completed and recorded below. <input type="checkbox"/> No – full EIA not completed record ends here, please ensure this record is signed by the Chief Officer in box 19 overleaf and then email to abby.thomas@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Part Two - Full EIA Record																				
<p>7. Why is a full EIA being completed on the activity? Double click on boxes to check all that apply.</p>	<p>The activity has the potential to have an adverse impact/discriminate against different groups in the community. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The activity makes a positive contribution to equalities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>See Pages 9 - 10</p>																		
<p>8. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?</p>	<p>The purpose of the activity is to: identify a robust and flexible supply of land to meet the Borough's future development requirements.</p> <p>The activity is designed for: use by all those having an interest in spatial policy and the sustainable development of land (whether as a Member, landowner, developer, applicant, objector, infrastructure provider, decision-maker etc). The activities are designed to benefit all those living, working and spending time in the Borough and future generations.</p>	<p>See Page 11</p>																		
<p>9. Summarise the information gathered for this EIA including research and consultation to establish what impact the activity has on different equality groups.</p>	<p>Methodology for the preparation of the SADPD is specified in Planning Policy Statement 12, published by Communities and Local Government. PPS12 defines the specific consultation requirements for all Local Development Documents (LDDs) which a local planning authority must prepare according to the Town and County Planning Act 2004. Consultation will also be carried out in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) adopted by the Council on 12th July 2006. Section 5 of the SCI identifies the need to consult on policy ...” to reach a cross-section of the community in relation to social and economic status, ethnic origin, religion/faith, age, gender, physical and mental ability and literacy.”</p> <p>The following consultations on are either planned or have taken place on the SADPD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Stakeholders Workshop on Site Allocations DPD • Public consultation including online questionnaire, local exhibitions, mailings to all interested parties on database • Further engagement on specific sites • Engagement with infrastructure providers on accompanying Infrastructure Delivery Plan • Publication of Document <p>The database for these consultations is administered by the Spatial Policy service, using Limehouse Software. This allows representations to be made online but the Council will also accept representations made in other formats. There is also an opportunity for interested parties to make representations on the SADPD which will be considered by an independent inspector who will issue a binding report following and examination into the soundness of the SADPD.</p>	<p>See Pages 12-13</p>																		
<p>10. A) With regard to the equalities themes, which groups does the activity impact upon?</p> <p>B) Might any of these groups be adversely impacted?</p> <p>If you have not got</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left; padding: 2px;">A) Groups Impacted</th> <th style="text-align: left; padding: 2px;">B) Groups impacted adversely</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race and ethnicity</td> <td style="padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Race and ethnicity</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability</td> <td style="padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Disability</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender</td> <td style="padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Gender</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age</td> <td style="padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Age</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation</td> <td style="padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion or belief</td> <td style="padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Religion or belief</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify</td> <td style="padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify</td> <td style="padding: 2px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	A) Groups Impacted	B) Groups impacted adversely	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race and ethnicity	<input type="checkbox"/> Race and ethnicity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability	<input type="checkbox"/> Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify	<input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify	<input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify	<input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify	<p>See Pages 14 -15</p> <p>Double click on the boxes to check all</p>
A) Groups Impacted	B) Groups impacted adversely																			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race and ethnicity	<input type="checkbox"/> Race and ethnicity																			
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion or belief																			
<input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify	<input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify																			
<input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify	<input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify																			

sufficient information to make a judgement, go to box 17 and list the actions that you will take to collect further information.	<input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify <input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify	<input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify <input type="checkbox"/> Other - please specify	that apply.
11. What evidence is there to suggest an impact/adverse impact?	None at present. To satisfy the needs of all sections of the community, these needs will be continuously monitored. If properly implemented the service provided by the SADPD should not result in adverse impacts other than those which can be justified		
12. On what grounds can impact or adverse impact be justified?	Proportionality.		See Pages 14 -15
13. Have any examples of good practice been identified as part of the EIA?	No.		See Pages 14 -15
14. What actions are you currently undertaking to address issues for any of the groups impacted/adversely impacted?	Iterative preparation of the SADPD according to the Local Development Scheme, the relevant regulations and the SCI. Training workshops will be arranged for all key members of the Spatial Policy Service on how to build equalities issues into the consultation process.		See Pages 14 -15
15. What actions will you take to reduce or remove any differential/adverse impact? Please also list any other actions you will take to maximise positive impacts.	None at present but the situation will be kept under continual review.		See page 16
16. Into which action plan/s will these actions be incorporated?	The relevant action plans will include the Statement of Community Involvement, EC&C Departmental Service Plan and the Spatial Policy Section Work Plan prepared in the light of the Council's Medium Term Objectives and the Local Area Agreement.		
17. Who is responsible for the action plan?	Chief Officer: Planning and Transport/Head of Spatial Policy		
18. Chief Officers signature.	Chief Officer: Planning and Transport, Environment, Culture and Communities Signature.....		
19. Which PMR will this EIA be reported in?	EC&C PMR Q3 2009 /10		

TO: THE EXECUTIVE
19 October 2010

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY PANEL
(Director of Children, Young People and Learning)

1 PURPOSE OF DECISION

- 1.1 To approve amended Terms of Reference for the Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel.

2 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 **That the proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference, attached as annex 1, be approved.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Terms of Reference have been reviewed by members of the Panel and updated to reflect developments in practice and function over the past four years, including new priorities and organisational arrangements which are anticipated

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The original Terms of Reference could be left unaltered, but would no longer provide an accurate reflection of the way in which the Panel functions.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 There is no change to the overall aim of the Panel, however the objectives have been reviewed by members of the Panel and expanded to reflect the Panel's current membership, functions and developments in practice, particularly the involvement of looked after children and young people and care leavers, as an essential part of improving provision.
- 5.2 The Terms of Reference were approved by the Executive in July 2006. Since then the first of the objectives, to commission a Corporate Parenting Strategy for adoption by the council, has been achieved, with the publication in 2009 of Bracknell Forest Council's Pledge to Looked After Children and subsequently the Looked after Children's Commissioning Strategy. The Panel has continued to achieve its objectives of considering performance, celebrating the successes of Looked After Children and briefing members and promoting the role of Corporate parent.
- 5.3 The Panel will monitor the Council's performance as a corporate parent against the Pledge and Commissioning Strategy.
- 5.4 The importance of listening to Looked After Children is acknowledged more explicitly in the objectives and also in the scrutiny mechanisms, which now include inviting regular agenda items from the Children in Care Council. (This is a group of looked after young people who meet regularly with the Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel and representatives of Senior Management to discuss service provision and to make suggestions and recommendations.)

- 5.5 The objective of promoting awareness of the Corporate Parenting role within the Council is emphasised and extended to other bodies including the Children and Young People's Trust.
- 5.6 The monitoring role of the Panel is extended to include receiving minutes and highlight reports from the Children and Young People's Trust, or equivalent partnership bodies, and checking progress against priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan.
- 5.7 The proposed amendments are not expected to affect the operation of the Panel in terms of the support required. Any financial implications arising from any recommendations that the Panel may make will be considered through the Council's normal budget setting process.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

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

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 The Borough Treasurer is satisfied that no significant financial implications arise from this report. Should any proposals be made by the Panel that cannot be contained within the overall Departmental budget, they will need to be subject to the Council's normal budget setting process.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 Positive impact with reference to providing a forum within the council where the voices of looked after children can be heard.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 None

Other Officers

- 6.5 None

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 Children in Care Council, Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel.

Method of Consultation

- 7.2 Meetings.

Representations Received

7.3 These have been incorporated into the amended Terms of Reference.

Contact for further information

Sarah Roberts, Policy and Commissioning Officer, Children's Social Care
sarah.roberts@bracknell-forest.gov.uk 01344 351283

Ch&Fm F/Policy and Commissioning Post Holder/work in progress/corp parenting/termsoref

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BRACKNELL FOREST CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY PANEL TERMS OF REFERENCE

1 AIM

- 1.1** The aim of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel is to ensure that the Council is carrying out its responsibilities towards children and young people in the care of the Council as a good corporate parent.

2 OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel are to:

- Monitor the Council's performance as a corporate parent against the promises in the Pledge.
- Monitor the implementation of the Commissioning Strategy for Looked After Children.
- Listen to looked after children, young people and care leavers and ensure their voice forms part of the panel's scrutiny function
- Celebrate the successes of looked after children.
- Promote awareness of the corporate parenting role within the Council.
- Strengthen relationship and communication between the Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel and other relevant corporate bodies.
- Establish effective links with the work of the Children and Young People's trust.
- Check progress on priorities for improvement in the Children and Young People's Plan.
- Consider arrangements for Member information and training.
- Make recommendations to Executive as and when appropriate about matters to do with children and young people in the care of the Council.
- Identifying priorities and developing a work programme for the Panel
- Work closely with key partners

3 SCRUTINY MECHANISMS

- 3.1** The Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel will make use of the following scrutiny mechanisms to assist with maintaining and improving the standards of services for children who are in the care of Bracknell Forest Borough Council.

- Examination of key statutory performance measures.
- Analysis of key trend data relating to looked after children and making comparisons with other Local Authorities.
- Engagement of young people who are looked after by the Council to advise the Panel in order to ensure they have an opportunity to influence the development of services.
- Invite regular agenda items from Children in Care Council.
- Use of anonymised case studies to highlight key national or local policy and practice issues.

- Keeping under consideration the key inspection criteria against which the Authority will be judged through the Annual Performance Review .
- Receive minutes and highlight reports from the Children and Young Person's Trust meetings and from the relevant working groups within the Children's Trust or equivalent partnership body.
- Receiving the Annual Report of the Independent Reviewing Officer Service.
- Undertake visits to relevant service provision.

4. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

- 4.1** It is proposed that the Panel take a broad approach to monitoring the Council's performance. This will help to build knowledge and understanding of the wide range of issues involved. Monitoring should have reference to any Inspection Framework which provides for key judgements about whether:
- Steps are taken to avoid children and young people having to become looked after.
 - Safeguarding measures are in place to protect Looked After Children
 - Appropriate records are kept by the Local Authority to affect statutory requirement under the Children Act 1989.
 - Looked after children and their parents are provided with opportunities to express their views and these are listened to.
 - Steps are taken to secure a range of care placements which deliver care and support and develop children and young people's cultural, religious and linguistic heritage.
 - Looked after children's holistic health needs are addressed.
 - Looked after children are supported to achieve well and make good progress in their learning.
 - Looked after children are enabled to enjoy a range of cultural and leisure activities.
 - Looked after children are prepared for leaving care and are supported thereafter.

Monitoring should also pick up on the areas of concern identified through consultation with children and young people/carers/staff as part of the research work of the Panel.

5. MEMBERSHIP

- 5.1** The Panel shall comprise the following Members:
- Five Elected Members according to the usual apportionment arrangements.
 - Substitutes for each of the above.
 - Executive Member for Children and Young People as a non-voting member.

The lead officer for the Panel will be the Chief Officer for Children's Social Care supported by the Policy and Commissioning Officer and other officers as necessary.

The Chief Executive will attend when appropriate, to monitor the support for Looked After Children.

Arrangements will be made by the Panel for the direct and indirect involvement of Looked After Children and young people.

Members of the Panel will be required to attend appropriate training and be subject to a check by the Criminal Records Bureau.

6. REPORTING MECHANISMS

- 6.1** The Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel will meet four times a year, in addition hold one panel training session a year and hold an annual event to celebrate looked after children's successes and stimulate further improvements to the service. The normal rules for a quorum for Panel meetings shall apply.
- 6.2** The Panel will have no direct decision-making powers but will make recommendations where appropriate to the Executive.

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TO: THE EXECUTIVE
DATE: 19 OCTOBER 2010

**THE HEALTH WHITE PAPER, EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE: LIBERATING THE NHS -
BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL PROPOSED CONSULTATION RESPONSE
(Director of Adult Social Care and Health)**

1 PURPOSE OF DECISION

- 1.1 The new coalition government has produced a White Paper entitled Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS. It is consulting on how best to implement the changes proposed. The paper contains some major changes for Local Authorities.
- 1.2 The Director of Adult Social Care and Health is leading on this area for the Council and has carried out a series of consultation events across the Council to inform the response to the proposals and seeks agreement that the consultation response represents the views of Bracknell Forest Council.
- 1.3 The consultation deadline is prior to the next full meeting of the Executive and as a consequence, delegated authority from the Executive is also sought.

2 RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Executive is asked to:

- 2.1 **Agree the response to the White Paper Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS (set out in Annexe A to this report).**
- 2.2 **Agree the responses to each of the further consultation documents (set out in Annexes B–D).**
- 2.3 **To delegate to the Director of Adult Social Care and Health and the Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing the authority to approve the final responses for submission to the Department of Health in accordance with the timescale.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Health White Paper was published in July 2010. Given the implications for Local Authorities, it is important that the Council responds formally to the proposals. While the Department of Health seeks responses on the proposals within the White Paper, it makes it clear that while they intend to engage people in understanding the strategy and its implications, the consultation is about how best to implement the changes and not about whether the changes should happen.
- 3.2 The White Paper has been issued with five consultation documents which detail the proposals and set out specific aspects of the White Paper. The supporting documents are entitled:
 - Commissioning for Patients (Annexe B)
 - Local Democratic Legitimacy in Health (Annexe C)

- Transparency in Outcomes: A Framework for the NHS (Annexe D)
- Regulating Healthcare Providers
- The Review of Arm's Length Bodies

The papers on Arm's Length Bodies and Regulating Healthcare Providers were not consulted on as there are few implications for the Local Authority within them.

- 3.3 Each of the associated consultation papers includes specific questions set out for consultation responses. The appendices attached to this paper are the proposed responses from the Council as a consequence of consultation.
- 3.4 The timetable for consultation responses to be returned to the Department of Health does not allow for the full Executive to approve the response. The deadline for responses to the White Paper Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS is 5 October and the deadline for responses to the further consultation documents is 11 October.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Not to respond.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 A series of workshops has been held with invitations to all departments to send appropriate representatives to ensure that respective departmental positions and priorities are reflected within the Council's response.
- 5.2 In addition to this, a workshop was convened with members of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel specifically to look at both the White Paper entitled Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS and the consultation paper entitled Local Democratic Legitimacy in Health consultation. Members of that panel will also be sent the draft responses for further comment
- 5.3 This White Paper is the first of three which will be issued by the coalition government relating to Health and Social Care. A Public Health White Paper will be issued in December and an Adult Social Care White Paper will follow next year after the commission on funding for social care has reported.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 A representative of the legal department attended the meetings and contributed to the consultation response.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 At this stage it is not possible to determine the financial implications arising from this report. Once the final requirements are known, these can be evaluated, and if significant additional costs are anticipated, they will need to be considered as part of the Council's normal budget setting process.

Impact Assessment

- 6.3 The proposed changes are likely to have a major impact on the business of the Council. The proposals will bring about new statutory responsibilities for the Local Authority, employer responsibilities for a new group of staff (public health staff), new contractual arrangements with newly established bodies and new funding streams to manage. Transition planning will need to be undertaken in partnership with NHS Berkshire East over the next year.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 There are many risks associated with these proposals. Again, transition planning will be key to minimising risk. The major risk for the authority is that allocated funding does not match transferred responsibilities. This may be particularly relevant in relation to the public health funding which is likely to be allocated in relation to a health premium to address health inequalities.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 Five consultation workshops have been held. Members of the Adult Social Care and Health Senior Management Team as well as representatives from each of the other departments were invited to four of the workshops. One was held on the White Paper as a whole, and one each on the consultation papers on Commissioning for Patients; Local Democratic Legitimacy and Outcomes Framework.
- 7.2 Additionally, an informal meeting of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel was also consulted in relation to the paper on Local Democratic Legitimacy in Health.

Method of Consultation

- 7.3 Workshop participants were sent copies of the papers to read beforehand. The workshops were presented with slide presentations of the main points of each paper, there was then general discussion and the consultation questions within the papers were addressed.

Representations Received

- 7.4 The responses to the consultation exercise are contained within the responses to each paper attached at the Annexes.

Background Papers

The White Paper: Equity And Excellence: Liberating the NHS

http://www.dh.gov.uk/dr_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/@ps/documents/digitalasset/dh_117794.pdf

Supporting Consultation Papers:-

Liberating the NHS: Commissioning for Patients

http://www.dh.gov.uk/dr_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh_117705.pdf

Liberating the NHS: Local Democratic Legitimacy in Health

http://www.dh.gov.uk/dr_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh_117721.pdf

Liberating the NHS: Transparency in Outcomes: A Framework for the NHS

http://www.dh.gov.uk/dr_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh_117591.pdf

Contact for further information

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Director of Adult Social Care and Health

01344 351458

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Jeanette Longhurst

Interim Head of Joint Commissioning

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Jeanette.longhurst@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Doc. Ref

Executive – NHS Consultation Response

THE HEALTH WHITE PAPER EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE: LIBERATING THE NHS

RESPONSE BY BRACKNELL FOREST BOROUGH COUNCIL

The response to the White Paper 'Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS' is structured around the main chapters within the paper and is as follows:-

1. Bracknell Forest Council Response to the NHS White Paper

Bracknell Forest Council is supportive of the principles behind the White Paper and looks forward to the NHS becoming more locally accountable. The Council offers specific comments on the main themes of the White Paper. Separate comments on the consultation papers will also be prepared by the Council.

2. Liberating the NHS

Bracknell Forest Council welcomes the vision for the NHS as set out in the white Paper.

When considering how such far reaching changes are to be delivered, one of the concerns of the Council are the transitional risks which may come about while change is effected. Each locality will be different in its readiness for change and the associated risks will also differ.

Within Bracknell Forest, some of those risks are associated with the abolition of a PCT which is not coterminous with the Local Authority which commissions health services over three local authority areas and the subsequent allocation of health funding to meet the needs of the population of the three areas.

Bracknell Forest has an active and robust practice based commissioning arrangement of GPs who are ready to form a commissioning consortium for Bracknell. It is important that localities were able to decide on the size and shape of consortia for themselves and this was not prescribed nationally. This is particularly important point to recognise if the government is serious in its role for Local Authorities and recognising that coterminosity with GP consortia will be a positive outcome and reduce bureaucratic burdens.

Even so the transition will be costly in terms of capacity and resource. The Council would seek reassurance that the burden of transition is properly resourced to ensure delivery of effective health service is not compromised during the period of change.

The Council is also concerned that there are two other related White Papers to be issued. These are on public health and social care. As the health and wellbeing of the community is reliant on the integrated working of these three areas, it is important that taking each in turn does not result in undoing or incurring additional costs at later stages.

An appreciation of the implications of the NHS changes can only be made once the proposed changes in the other two areas are known. As the Council

will have responsibility for both health improvement and social care, it seems giving consideration to the whole system would be preferable.

3. Putting Patient and Public First

The Council welcomes the proposals related to Putting Patients and Public First. It is a reflection of the work already embarked upon within Adult Social Care. The extension of choice may be an issue for commissioners of health services. However, social care has already addressed many of these difficulties and the Council believes there is now expertise within the local authorities around commissioning for individual choice and control. This expertise through integrated arrangements could be available to health commissioners locally.

The recent report on the way the NHS views young people and their medical needs puts the context of the White paper into even sharper focus, in terms of who is receiving services and whether those services need to be differentiated to better meet particular needs.

The Council would seek further clarification about the nature and status of Local Health Watch. It is unclear what sort of organisation it is to be. The proposal to expand the role from that delivered by the current LINKs would suggest that it needs to be a properly constituted organisation with clear accountabilities and that members may need to have certain skills or experience to carry out their duties. Given the proposed Local Authority responsibility for commissioning Local Health Watch, these standards and requirements are likely to be built into specifications locally if not prescribed nationally.

4. Improving Health Outcomes

The proposed outcomes framework provides a more coherent measure of health performance and the Council welcomes the focus on the patient experience.

The measures could also address the role of the NHS in enabling individuals to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing and again, the interrelationship with health improvement and social care outcomes is not yet evident.

It is not clear whether local outcomes can be part of the framework. The Council would welcome an ability for the local partnerships (perhaps through the Health and Wellbeing Board) to set local outcome measures for health which would focus on local health inequalities as defined within the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

Health inequalities are linked with poverty. A wider consideration of health could be made with partners, to consider how best to encourage the positive benefits of, for example, an active lifestyle through volunteering, access to education and leisure pursuits alongside medication. Issues of health need to be considered from a broader base than they are currently. This provides an opportunity to think differently and across a wider range of services and partnerships.

There also needs to be a wider consideration of the impact of parental health issues on children and young people, especially if the cycles of deprivation are to be broken. This includes the role that many children and young people play as carers to a parent or parents.

5. Autonomy, Accountability and Democratic Legitimacy

The devolution to health commissioning within GP consortia may improve the direct relationship between patient need and the service delivered but the Council has concerns about a number of structural and process aspects to this proposal.

Firstly, it is unclear what the formal governance arrangements for the consortia will be. There is certainly a potential conflict of interest between the GP practice as part of the consortia and as a potential provider of health services.

The consortia will require advice from procurement and commissioning professionals. This knowledge and experience is within NHS Berkshire East at present but over time staff will move from the NHS Berkshire East to organisations where their futures are more secure. This may well destabilize the system during transition and will make it difficult for the GP consortia to commission effectively.

The Government should formally consider establishing the Local Authority as the commissioning body to support consortia building on the experience that Local Authorities have. This would add further weight to Democratic Legitimacy. This additional responsibility will require to be sufficiently funded.

It is vital for accountability and democratic legitimacy that the existing statutory powers of Overview and Scrutiny are preserved. The Health and Wellbeing Board's responsibilities should specifically include holding NHS service providers to account.

6. Cutting Bureaucracy and Improving Efficiency

There are many statutory health functions which will need to be transferred to the GP consortia from NHS Berkshire East. The Council believes these changes are an opportunity to overhaul the legislation and delete duties which hinder integration.

Integrated services through whole system working can improve efficiency and cut bureaucracy but while there are perverse incentives on partners to work together, such as delayed discharge regulations or continuing health care, then cutting bureaucracy and improving efficiency may not be a whole system response.

The Council also has concerns that the focus on performance outcomes is a commissioning responsibility. While providers can be called to account by commissioning bodies, the changes proposed in the White Paper will mean larger Foundation Trusts commissioned by small local commissioners. The withdrawal of one commissioner because of failure by the provider to meet outcomes may not make sufficient impact on the provider. The Council would want to ensure that providers (namely Foundation Trusts) were statutorily

obliged to meet nationally set outcomes in partnership with their commissioners.

LIBERATING THE NHS: COMMISSIONING FOR PATIENTS – BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL’S RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

Bracknell Forest Council has considered the consultation questions asked in this paper. Not all the questions are relevant for a response from the Local Authority, so these have been left blank.

The Council also wanted to make some general remarks.

The Council is concerned about the commissioning from acute providers where there may be a number of small commissioners contracting with a very large provider.

There would seem to be a need for a mechanism to allow for collective commissioning to get best value for money from the provider.

Equally there will be fragmentation of funding in smaller allocations which may well not be cost effective.

The Council is concerned about the governance arrangements for consortia. This is not made explicit in the consultation paper.

The white paper is very clear that the changes proposed are to deliver greater patient choice and control. Where and how does patient choice fit in with the commissioning process as described in this consultation paper?

Bracknell Forest Council would like to make the following comments on the specific consultation questions:

Consultation Questions
<p>Q1 - In what practical ways can the NHS Commissioning Board most effectively engage GP consortia in influencing the commissioning of national and regional specialised services and the commissioning of maternity services?</p> <p>The Council would want a clearer definition of what specialist commissioning is. It would seem sensible for local consortia to have a mechanism to engage the National Commissioning Board when the weight of commissioning is too low in their area to warrant cost effective local commissioning.</p>
<p>Q2 - How can the NHS Commissioning Board and GP consortia best work together to ensure affective commissioning of low volume services?</p> <p>The analysis and use of the local Joint Strategic Needs Assessments should inform the NHS Commissioning Board of outlying demands.</p>
<p>Q3 - Are there any services currently commissioned as regional specialised services that could potentially be commissioned in the future by GP consortia?</p> <p>The Council would seek the views of the GPs locally on this.</p> <p>Children and young people are not specifically referenced in the consultation and neither are other groups like the elderly. It would be helpful to better understand how commissioning specific services for children and young people (0-19) will be catered for under these proposals. Specialist services for children and young people with disabilities or special needs or particular medical conditions are not addressed in this first consultation. How will approaches to the use of resources be standardised and prioritised if there are numerous consortia of GP commissioners? How will limited resources and particularly funding be used collaboratively when LA could be dealing</p>

with a number of GP consortia and how will difficult decisions be reached or disputes resolved?

Q4 - How can other primary care contractors most effectively be involved in commissioning services to which they refer patients, e.g. the role of primary care dentists in commissioning hospital and specialist dental services and the role of primary ophthalmic providers in commissioning hospital eye services?

There will need to be specialist advice available to the GP consortia for the more specialist commissioning. The Council is concerned about the knowledge and experience a GP led consortia would have in commissioning Learning Disability and Mental Health Services.

Q5 - How can GP consortia most effectively take responsibility for improving the quality of the primary care provided by their constituent practices?

The Council would like to put forward the suggestion that the commissioning of GP practices as providers of service should be a Local Authority function. This would link the quality of health care in the individual practice back to the strategic plans for the wider community. As they produce the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, local authorities are best placed to know what health services are needed locally, furthermore this would reinforce the drive for localism.

Q6 - What arrangements will support the most effective relationship between the NHS Commissioning Board and GP consortia in relation to monitoring and managing primary care performance?

No views

Q7 - What safeguards are likely to be most effective in ensuring transparency and fairness in commissioning services from primary care and in promoting patient choice?

Audit type arrangements through Local HealthWatch or the Health and Wellbeing Board. Assessments of the consortia by CQC.

Is there an opportunity for patients to jointly commission with their GP? This inevitably leads on to considerations of joint funding and links with private medical insurance and those with the means to purchase higher levels of health care. How will the views of young people be represented?

Q8 - How can the NHS Commissioning Board develop effective relationships with GP consortia, so that the national framework of quality standards, model contracts, tariffs, and commissioning networks best support local commissioning?

No views

Q9 - Are there any other activities that could be undertaken by the NHS Commissioning Board to support efficient and effective local commissioning?

No views

Q10 - What features should be considered essential for the governance of GP consortia?

It is the view of the Council that it is important for integrated whole system working that the Local Authority is represented within the governance of the consortia. It would also seem prudent that other primary care professions were also represented.

Q11 - How far should GP consortia have flexibility to include some practices that are not part of a geographically discrete area?

There would be some difficulties if consortia populations straddled different Local Authority boundaries.

Q12 - Should there be a minimum and/or maximum population size for the GP consortia?

Wherever possible there should be co-terminosity with Local Authority boundaries. As one of the smaller unitary Local Authorities, Bracknell Forest Council would envisage a consortium which was co-terminous with its boundary as ideal. The current arrangement where NHS Berkshire East works across three Local Authority areas has not proved easy for joint working and fair allocation of resources.

Q13 - How can GP consortia best be supported in developing their own capacity and capability in commissioning?

The Council would see the consortia using the local knowledge and skills already available through the Local Authority commissioning and contracting experience and in the staff of the existing PCT who know the local needs.

Q14 - What support will GP consortia need to access and evaluate external providers of commissioning support?

Again, local knowledge is paramount.

Q15 - Are these the right criteria for an effective system of financial risk management? What support will GP consortia need to help them manage risk?

Assuming the consortia are to be statutory bodies carrying statutory risks then the arrangements within Local Authorities for carrying risk could provide guidance for the consortia.

<p>Q16 - What safeguards are likely to be most effective in demonstrating transparency and fairness in investment decisions and in promoting choice and competition?</p> <p>The use of Monitor as a regulator and auditor.</p>
<p>Q17 - What are the key elements that you would expect to see reflected in a commissioning outcome framework?</p> <p>No views expressed</p>
<p>Q18 - Should some part of GP practice income be linked to the outcomes that the practice achieves as part of its wider commissioning consortium?</p> <p>Yes, but not additional payments. There should not need to be additional incentives for GP practices to work to improve the quality of outcomes for their patients.</p>
<p>Q19 - What arrangements will be ensure that GP consortia operate in ways that are consistent with promoting equality and reducing avoidable inequalities in health?</p> <p>The GP consortia should be expected to undertake equality impact assessments on their commissioning actions.</p>
<p>Q20 - How can GP consortia and the NHS Commissioning Board best involve patients in making commissioning decisions that are built on patient insight?</p> <p>The use of HealthWatch both locally and nationally to gain patient views.</p>
<p>Q21 - How can GP consortia best work alongside community partners (including seldom heard groups) to ensure that commissioning decisions are equitable, and reflect public voice and local priorities?</p> <p>Identify joint priorities and shared interests through the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board.</p>
<p>Q22 - How can we build on and strengthen existing systems of engagement such as Local Health Watch and GP practices' Patient Participation Groups?</p> <p>Local Authorities can assist in developing community engagement. This Council has a well established process and connections with the Community. Again, this could be delivered jointly through the Health and Wellbeing Board.</p>

Q23 - What action needs to be taken to ensure that no-one is disadvantaged by the proposals, and how do you think they can promote equality of opportunity and outcome for all patients and, where appropriate, staff?

No views

Q24 - How can GP practices begin to make stronger links with local authorities and identify how best to prepare to work together on the issues identified above?

It would be helpful if, like the Local Authorities the GP consortia had a duty to promote joint working, integration and health improvement. The proposed 'duty to cooperate' appears passive.

Establishing a seat for the Local Authority on the consortia Governance Board would also strengthen the relationship.

Q25 - Where can we learn from current best practice in relation to joint working and partnership, for instance in relation to Care Trusts, Children's trusts and pooled budgets? What aspects of current practice will need to be preserved in the transition to the new arrangements?

The Council would suggest looking at the model for cooperation on Children's Trusts. There needs to be strong links between the proposed Health and Well-being Board and the Children's Trust partners and partnership arrangements and sub-groups.

Q26 - How can multi-professional involvement in commissioning most effectively be promoted and sustained?

This could be achieved through the governance arrangements for the consortia. Perhaps the consortia should be viewed as multi professional (or clinically led) rather than just GP led.

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**LIBERATING THE NHS: LOCAL DEMOCRATIC LEGITIMACY IN HEALTH –
BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL’S RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION QUESTIONS**

Consultation Questions

Q1 - Should local HealthWatch have a formal role in seeking patients’ views on whether local providers and commissioners of NHS services are taking account of the NHS Constitution?

The Council are concerned that it must not be assumed that the local LINKs can assume the greater responsibilities of HealthWatch as proposed. The wider role of HealthWatch will require people with skills and experience as advocates and case workers. While the HealthWatch could certainly be in a position to ensure patients views are responded to this should not supersede, the Local Authority’s role of holding the NHS to account through the present Overview and Scrutiny function, which is a vital to local democratic legitimacy.

Q2 - Should local HealthWatch take on the wider role outlined in paragraph 17, with responsibility for complaints advocacy and supporting individuals to exercise choice and control?

The Council considers that the role of HealthWatch needs to be more clearly defined, particularly in regard to conflicts of interest. Is it to be an enabler or a service provider? The provision of advocacy services for individuals who may want to complain about NHS services could be delivered through the Local Authorities’ complaints services which are already well established.

The White Paper does not describe the relationship between local HealthWatch and the Patient Participation Groups, whose role could be supplanted by local HealthWatch.

Q3 - What needs to be done to enable local authorities to be the most effective commissioners of local HealthWatch?

This builds on Councils’ strength of commissioning a wide variety of services. The Council would urge more definition of the role and expectation of the Councils themselves as commissioners of HealthWatch and of HealthWatch itself. HealthWatch cannot be a traditional voluntary organisation, and we believe that its responsibilities demand a more robust appointments process in the same way as non Executives on Health Bodies.

Q4 - What more, if anything, could and should the Department do to free up the use of flexibilities to support integrated working?

Funding arrangements are not flexible enough at present to allow for the whole system to benefit from savings made by one part of it. So, for instance if the Local Authority makes changes which benefit the NHS, then the saving stays within the NHS. Thus there is little incentive for each partner to work together for mutual benefit, indeed both sides seem to care most about their own interests. Overcoming this will also require a cultural shift at the interface of the NHS and Local Authorities.

Q5 - What further freedoms and flexibilities would support and incentivise integrated working?

A duty on the NHS similar to Local Authorities – ‘to promote integration’ - instead of the weaker proposed duty ‘to cooperate’ would be helpful, as would mutual responsibility for delivery of outcomes.

Q6 - Should the responsibility for local authorities to support joint working on health and wellbeing be underpinned by statutory powers?

While it would seem right that the responsibility for supporting joint working be a statutory role, this will be an empty gesture unless any statutory duties are accompanied by appropriate funding by the government. The duty to promote joint working needs to be such for NHS commissioners also. If the Local Authority was part of the governance of the GP consortia, perhaps with a seat on the Board, joint working could be assisted by joint structures.

Q7 - Do you agree with the proposal to create a statutory health and wellbeing board or should it be left to local authorities to decide how to take forward joint working arrangements?

Yes, a statutory footing would be appropriate. The new localism agenda demands that Councils should be a member of their local GP Consortium. Indeed, government could sensibly go further than this, giving Local Authorities the responsibility to commission local GP services rather than have these procured by the national NHS Commissioning Board, as proposed by the government.

Q8 - Do you agree that the proposed health and wellbeing board should have the main functions described in paragraph 30?

With a fundamentally important addition, the main functions as set out in Paragraph 30 are acceptable.

The Council welcomes the Government’s commitments in the White Paper to: “strengthen the collective voice of the patients and the public through arrangements led by local authorities” (page 3); “to strengthen local democratic legitimacy and accountability” (page 4). The Council also welcomes the statements in the consultation document that: “Through elected members, local authorities will bring greater local democratic legitimacy to health” (page 1); “we propose an enhanced role for elected local councillors” (page 3); and “Public scrutiny is an essential part of ensuring that Government and public services remain effective and accountable” (page 13). Incongruously, these statements are swept aside by the statement on page 35 of the White Paper that the current statutory functions of Health Scrutiny would be replaced by the new Health and Wellbeing Boards, yet their stated main duties make no reference to Health Scrutiny. It is vital that Local Authorities can continue to hold NHS organisations to account for their performance publicly, and anything less would run counter to the policy statements in the White Paper and consultation document, and be a fundamentally retrograde step for localism and the accountability of the NHS.

The Council therefore suggests that the main functions in paragraph 30 should be

expanded by adding:

“Recognising the need to separate the Executive and Scrutiny Functions, each Health and Wellbeing Board will establish an Overview and Scrutiny Sub Committee with its members holding no Executive responsibilities. The Sub Committee will exercise the statutory powers in the Health and Social Care Act 2001 to hold NHS organisations to account publicly.”

Q9 - Is there a need for further support to the proposed health and wellbeing boards in carrying out aspects of these functions, for example information on best practice in undertaking joint strategic needs assessments?

The Council is concerned to ensure that any additional duties placed on the Local Authority are adequately funded. The additional duties placed on the Local Authority as a result of the changes proposed in the White Paper are major. The Local Authority will require greater capacity to carry out these duties and thus greater resources to fund them.

Q10 - If a health and wellbeing board was created, how do you see the proposals fitting with the current duty to cooperate through children’s trusts?

There would need to be a link between the Children’s Trust and the Health and Wellbeing Board to reduce the possibilities of parallel working. What needs to be clear is leadership and outcomes framework, this will ensure that matters are appropriately addressed.

The Children’s Trust is a key partnership for services for children and young people. Health Services are currently well represented on that group and play a full and active part. Future representation will need to be strong on the Children’s Trust, the sub groups and the LSCB.

Q11 - How should local health and wellbeing boards operate where there are arrangements in place to work across local authority areas, for example building on the work done in Greater Manchester or in London with the link to the Mayor?

This question is not applicable to Bracknell Forest Council.

Q12 - Do you agree with our proposals for membership requirements set out in paragraph 38 - 41?

Yes, with an addition. Each Health and Wellbeing Board needs to have at least three Non Executive Councillors to exercise the Overview and Scrutiny role. Otherwise, the Health and Wellbeing Board members would effectively have to scrutinise their own performance, which is unsound. This fits with comments in the paper about the Health and Wellbeing Board being scrutinised.

Q13 - What support might commissioners and local authorities need to empower them to resolve disputes locally, when they arise?

Disputes would be less likely if there was a stronger duty on NHS organisations (see response to Q5). When they occur, disputes will need a local appeals system, possibly a public tribunal. It may be that the Parliamentary Ombudsmen could have a role in resolving disputes. Ultimately the Local Authority would see the Secretary of State being the final appeal route.

Q14 - Do you agree that the scrutiny and referral function of the current health OSC should be subsumed within the health and wellbeing board (if boards are created)?

Yes, provided that the scrutiny and referral duties and powers are explicitly recognised, and are exercisable by 'backbench' Councillors without Executive responsibilities. Please also see answer to Q8.

Q15 - How best can we ensure that arrangements for scrutiny and referral maximise local resolution of disputes and minimise escalation to the national level?

Please see answers to Q5 and Q8.

Q16 - What arrangements should the local authority put in place to ensure that there is effective scrutiny of the health and wellbeing board's functions? To what extent should this be prescribed?

Please see answer to Q8. The role of any Scrutiny or Audit Function of the Health and Wellbeing Board should be prescribed to enable the work to be carried out. Whichever model is used, it is vital for democratic accountability that there is effective scrutiny that and this requires the existing statutory powers of Local Authorities are undiminished.

Q17 - What action needs to be taken to ensure that no-one is disadvantaged by the proposals, and how do you think they can promote equality of opportunity and outcome for all patients, the public and, where appropriate, staff?

The Council would expect that equality of opportunity is evaluated at every stage through equality impact assessments. A fair funding formula is needed to ensure no disadvantage, supported by a thorough Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

Q18 - Do you have any other comments on this document?

The Council welcomes the main body of the proposals. However, there are concerns over 'change overload' and the risks inherent in the transition stages of such a far reaching transfer of responsibilities, whilst simultaneously cutting capacity. The Council will want to be assured that the capacity and resource implications on the Local Authorities have been addressed, both for the initial setup and the continuing costs.

TRANSPARENCY IN OUTCOMES - A FRAMEWORK FOR THE NHS – BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

Bracknell Forest Council has considered the consultation questions within the paper on the proposed outcomes framework.

There are some general points the Council would wish to make before considering the questions.

The Outcomes Framework seems to miss the NHS responsibility for promoting good health and preventing ill health in the general population. The outcomes are based on the population of people who are already ill or have suffered trauma or who have a long term condition. This seems to be an oversight.

The impact the NHS can have on the health of the general population is not yet apparent in the outcomes or indicators. Although this is likely to be joint responsibility with other partners it is the view of the Council that it is important the NHS should be called to account in this area.

The Council would also like to see accountability for outcomes on the service providers as well as the commissioners.

In relation to the consultation questions the Council has comments on each of the general questions and then some comments on the five domains.

Consultation Questions
<p>Q1 - Do you agree with the key principles which will underpin the development of the NHS Outcomes Framework?</p> <p>The Council believes it is important that the NHS is asked to strive towards improved outcomes for the general population.</p>
<p>Q2 - Are there any other principles which could be considered?</p> <p>There needs to be a balance between the data collection surrounding the measurement of outcomes and the delivery of services.</p> <p>The principles will need to be revisited as they are used to ensure there are no unintended consequences to service delivery or perverse outcomes.</p> <p>It is unclear how the proposals will link with inspection frameworks for example Ofsted inspection of schools and the work that schools do to promote healthy lifestyles. Education is the foremost prevention action and the NHS has a major contribution to continue to make to this area and it is a key aspect for further future development</p>
<p>Q3 - How can we ensure that the NHS Outcomes framework will deliver more equitable outcomes and contribute to a reduction in health inequalities?</p> <p>Local determinants of outcomes - especially areas of improvement should be encouraged. The Council believes the Health and Wellbeing Board should take a lead in determining local improvement areas.</p>

Q4 - How can we ensure that where outcomes require integrated care across the NHS, public health and/or social care services, this happens?

The Council believes there needs to be a coherent partnership framework. The set outcomes for each partner should not clash. The use of the Local Area Agreement is an example of where partners have come together to agree joint outcomes to work for. The Council would see the Health and Wellbeing Board as being responsible for making this happen.

There is concern that the outcomes being suggested are long term but will the government want to see short term performance improvement.

It is difficult to integrate outcome frameworks given different legislation. There is an opportunity here to overhaul the legislation and repeal conflicting laws as regulations.

Q5 - Do you agree with the five domains that are proposed as making up the NHS Outcomes framework?

The Council would appreciate a domain which connects the NHS to one which enables the individual to stay healthy.

Q6 - Do they appropriately cover the range of health care outcomes that the NHS is responsible for delivering to patients?

See answer above.

Q7 - Does the proposed structure of the NHS outcomes framework under each domain seem sensible.

Yes. As long as the suite of standards is not too long and the measurement of performance does not impinge on operational resources.

Q8-12 - Domain 1 Preventing People from dying prematurely.

The Council would like to see more emphasis here on quality of life rather than length of life only.

Q13-15 - Domain 2 Enhancing the quality of life for people with long term conditions.

This could include enhancing the quality of life for everyone. Here, the NHS could be held to account for its part in health improvement and health and wellbeing.

Q16-19 - Domain 3 Helping people recover from ill health or following injury.

The Council is concerned that prevention does not feature here.

Q20-24 - Domain 4 Ensuring people have a positive experience of care.

Again here, there is an opportunity to look at how the NHS is encouraging people to look after their own health and encouraging people to be independent.

Q25-26 - Domain 5 Treating and caring for people in a safe environment and protecting them from avoidable harm

The Council has nothing to add to this domain.

Other questions considered

Q28. Is there any way in which the proposed approach to the NHS Outcomes framework might impact upon sustainable development?

So much of health is connected to other areas of life, such as housing and employment. The work of the NHS should be connected to the work of the Local Strategic Partnership and be integral to the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Q30. How can the NHS Outcomes framework best support the NHS to deliver best value for money?

There is a clear relationship to the effectiveness of the NHS through the Outcomes Framework but in terms of the efficiency and economy, there would need to be other measures in place.

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**TO: THE EXECUTIVE
19 OCTOBER 2010**

ANNUAL REPORT Assistant Chief Executive

1 PURPOSE OF DECISION

- 1.1 Each year, the Council highlights the work it does for residents through the Annual Report. This has been recognised as good practice, and more importantly, the Report gives residents a valuable picture of the range of quality services delivered by the Council.
- 1.2 The draft Annual report for 2009/10 is attached at Appendix A. Some gaps remain in the document, mostly, these await final performance outturn information.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That the Annual Report (set out at Appendix 1) be endorsed.**
- 2.2 **That the Chief Executive be authorised to finalise the report in consultation with the Leader of the Council.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 To ensure that the most up-to-date information is included in the final document.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 None

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 It is important for the Council to set out its achievements over the past year and to explain its plans for the forthcoming period. This is a key element in engaging with the public and enabling residents to see how the Council delivers excellent value for money.
- 5.2 The report will be published in November and made available in public areas and on the Council's website.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The Borough Solicitor has nothing to add to the report.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 Work undertaken by the Council and highlighted within the Annual Report was completed within budget for the twelfth consecutive year.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 There are no direct equalities impact issues to be considered. A summary will need to be made available on request in an appropriate variety of formats/languages.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 None

Other Officers

- 6.5 None

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 Consultation was carried out with managers in directorates.

Method of Consultation

- 7.2 Managers were asked for their achievements and actions for service delivery to include in the report.

Representations Received

- 7.3 These have been subsumed into the draft of the Annual Report.

Background Papers

Annual Report 2008/9

Departmental service plans and performance monitoring reports

Contact for further information

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Foreword from the Leader and Chief Executive

This report provides a brief summary of your Council's achievements over the last year and its ambitions for the year to come. It reflects the hard work which goes on across the organisation each year to realise our long-term vision for the Borough: to make Bracknell Forest a place where all people can thrive – living, learning and working in a clean, safe and healthy environment.

Budget pressures

Like the rest of the public sector, the Council faces an unprecedented financial challenge in the years to come as the country recovers from a deep recession and the credit crunch. The Coalition Government has made tackling the financial deficit a key priority and has already initiated a range of measures to reduce public expenditure. In his Budget speech on 22 June, the Chancellor indicated that councils should expect real term cuts of 25% or more over the next 4 years. The details, however, will not be available until later this year following the completion of the Comprehensive Spending Review. We are not complacent and have already started to think about how we might respond to these pressures. Our priority will be to protect, as far as possible, those services that our residents value. We are confident that our track record of delivering high quality services within budget places us in the best possible position to succeed.

How your council works

Bracknell Forest Council is made up of 42 councillors elected to represent 18 wards. There are 39 Conservative, and 3 Labour, councillors. Strategic leadership of the Council is provided by a smaller group of councillors, the Executive, responsible for taking the major decisions which determine the council's overall direction. The day-to-day running of council is the responsibility of the Corporate Management Team, led by the Chief Executive.

Bracknell Forest is a unitary authority, which means that we have responsibility for all the services provided by local government in the borough. In order to achieve the best possible services for our residents at the lowest cost, we work closely with other local agencies such as the police, fire service, health providers, voluntary organisations and private businesses.

In 2008, the Council set out 6 priorities:

- A town centre fit for the 21st century
- Protecting and enhancing our environment
- Promoting health and achievement
- Creating a borough where people are safe and feel safe
- Value for money
- Sustaining economic prosperity

Each priority is supported by one or more medium-term objectives. The following pages explain the progress we've made and look at what we hope to achieve in the year ahead.

At the back of this document, we summarise the tremendous progress we have made in delivering on the plans we set out in 2007.

We take immense pride in the services we provide and look forward to continuing to support our residents in the coming year.



Paul Bettise

Leader of the Council



Timothy Wheeler

Chief Executive

Objective 1: Build a vibrant Bracknell town centre that residents are proud of

The design of Bracknell town centre reflects its origins as one of the first post-war “New Towns” around London. Local residents, business and retailers have been clear with us that the town centre needs to be transformed urgently. We are working hard with the major landowners, including the Bracknell Regeneration Partnership, to build a town centre fit for the 21st century, based on what local people have told us they would like to see. The economic downturn has made this a difficult task, in common with major construction projects across the UK and beyond. Nevertheless, Bracknell Forest Council has made real progress in delivering or assisting with the development of key new buildings in and around the town centre. Bracknell Forest Council are doing all we can to deliver new shops and other facilities as soon as economic conditions allow.

Achievements for 2009/10

- A brand new forecourt at Bracknell railway station.
- The construction of the new Garth Hill College (opened in September 2010).

Achievements for 2010/11 and beyond

- 29 affordable homes on the periphery (Q3)
- The coming year will see the next key steps in the regeneration programme, including assembling the remaining land needed for development (through Compulsory Purchase Order processes), and improvements to the town’s physical environment.
- We will continue to develop our strategies for economic development and regeneration.

Objective 2: Keep our parks, open spaces and leisure facilities accessible and attractive

The provision of good-quality parks and leisure facilities is consistently ranked highly by our residents on the list of things that make Bracknell Forest a great place to live. We run a number of major facilities, including Bracknell Leisure Centre, Coral Reef pool and the Look Out Discovery Centre. These are very popular with local residents and are an important source of income to the council, helping us to keep council tax low. We are also responsible for the maintenance and conservation of around 150 parks and countryside sites. .

Achievements in 2009/10

11 new enhanced play spaces have been delivered through the Playbuilder Project. The sites are:

- Ascot Jubilee, North Ascot
- East Lodge, Great Hollands
- Evenlode Way, Sandhurst
- Farley Wood, Binfield
- Goddard Way, Warfield
- Latimer/Lydney, Birch Hill/Hanworth
- Memorial Recreation Ground, Sandhurst
- Morgan Recreation Ground, Crowthorne
- Pollardrow Avenue, Priestwood

- Threshfields, Wildridings
- Winscombe, Great Hollands



- Design work is now complete, and planning, and listed building consent secured to restore the historic parkland at South Hill Park. This has been made possible following an award of £2.3m grant by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery Fund Parks for People Programme.
- Following the award of Heritage Lottery Fund Breathing Places, funding to Bracknell Forest Natural History Society and Sandhurst Town Council, local community groups have worked jointly with Bracknell Forest Council to improve recreation and wildlife value at Berrybank Copse and Scott's Hill.
- We secured Green Flag Awards for Popes Meadow, Lily Hill and Shepherd Meadows (jointly with Sandhurst Council and the Memorial Park).

Case Study

South Hill Park is a Grade II Listed historic park centred around a 19th century mansion house on the edge of Bracknell town centre. The park is set to receive a multi-million pound renovation following a successful Heritage Lottery Fund Grant bid by Bracknell Forest Council. In April 2008 the Parks and Countryside service was awarded £209,000 funding for a year's design and development from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Big Lottery Fund's National Parks for People programme. We have been consulting with residents and park users during the design process. Project partners include South Hill Park Art Centre, Bracknell Town Council and Thames Water.

In March 2009, a stage two bid for a further £2.3m for works to the site was submitted and subsequently approved, bringing the project's total investment to £4.4m and enabling 18 months of restoration works on-site and then 10 years of on-going maintenance. Major planned work includes restoring the terrace garden, including creating new disabled access; clearing silt from the southern lake; and scrub management within the woodland areas. New paths and access points will be created and a more welcoming park entrance from the car park will be developed. Information for visitors around the park is also to be improved. Smaller planned projects include wildlife habitat improvements, better facilities for young people and new landscaped features. A project manager has been appointed who is overseeing the work and a 'Friends Of' group for the park has been established.

Work started on-site in the summer of 2010

Case Study

The Play Ranger service was officially launched in July 2009. 2 play rangers were recruited for 30 hours per week all year round. The service offers children and young people opportunities for free play using minimal equipment while making maximum use of the natural environment.

The play rangers provide the following services:

- Mixed sessions in public parks and green spaces in the school holiday periods

and during term time:

- Under 5 sessions linked to Children's Centres during school time
- Under 10's and Over 10's sessions in public parks and green spaces after school
- Visits to schools during lunch time periods and
- an active presence at events such as National Play Day

The main aims for the play ranger service are to:

- Encourage children and parents to make use of the parks and local green spaces, in all weathers.
- Bring together local communities, children extending their friendship groups and guardians being able to meet others.
- Set a high standard for our sessions, making sure the service is well organised and children enjoyed themselves.
- Promote our service not only for the summer but as a year round venture.
- Provide an inclusive service, accessible for everyone.
- Have 300 children registered via the Ranger Fun Card and 500 children attend actual sessions over the summer holiday period between 27 July and 28 August.

The Play Ranger Fun Card is an innovative scheme which was developed exclusively for by Bracknell Forest Council to assess and monitor the effectiveness of the service and how it meets the needs of the local children. The system also allows the identification of groups of children who are less likely to attend so that those pockets can be targeted with specific activities. An important aspect of this system is that fun cards are entirely optional, and children are welcome at any of the play sessions without taking part in the process. By the end of September a total of 752 cards were issued and 1167 session participants were recorded.

Just some of the activities available during the summer are listed below

Making poi – Using tights and tennis balls, this activity was originally run at National play day, but worked really well for launching tennis balls into the air as high as possible.



Bandages – The Play Rangers took out a box of old bandages; children enjoyed wrapping themselves and others up and pretending they had hurt themselves. At one session, the children used the bandages, tights and some bin bags to make costumes.

Scrap modelling – Children made whatever they wanted using cardboard boxes and other scrap items. Most made robots – one group made a coffin! One session had the under 5's using tennis balls and a large cardboard tube - they spent most of the session running the balls down the tube collecting them at the bottom, then taking them back up the hill to start again.



Man hunt – Children went into the woods with play rangers and played tag type games, these games were much easier to play with older children, but the younger children and parents really enjoyed being involved.

Den building – Children were given tarpaulin, bungees and tent pegs and then were given the opportunity to build dens, after the children had made the dens, games were played inside their dens.

Face painting – The Play Rangers took face paints and mirrors out to the parks and gave children the chance to paint their own faces. They also really enjoyed painting their parents and the play ranger's faces.

Painting pebbles – Children went into the woods and collected natural products and then painted their pebbles anyway they wanted. Children also got excited about putting pebbles that had already been painted back into the woods.

Treasure hunt – The Play Rangers hid bean bags and other items in a wooded area: children were sent on a treasure hunt in the ‘Ranger Jungle’ where they had to cross a ‘shark infested river’ to gain access - such a simple game which children wanted to play over and over again.

Scoobies – A craft activity which involved tying plastic strings together to make pretty patterns, this was particularly enjoyed by the mid age range children and parents!

Nerf rockets – These rockets make a whistling sound when thrown fast enough; children had so much fun throwing these and creating different games.

Achievements for 2010/11 and beyond

- It is hoped that a waterspray area can be developed on Locks Ride and that an inclusive play area can be developed at the Look Out through the playbuilder project.

Objective 3: Promote sustainable housing and infrastructure development

The nationwide housing shortage means that all local areas are under pressure to construct more homes. It is vital that this construction is managed so as to minimise its impact on the environment, as well as to ensure that local public services such as schools and transport facilities keep pace with the growing population. High property values in the south-east of England mean that it can be hard for people on average incomes to find somewhere decent to live, so improving the supply of high-quality affordable housing is also important.

Achievements for 2010

- Despite adverse economic conditions, 325 additional homes were completed in Bracknell Forest during 2009-2010. This figure includes 153 affordable homes.
- HomeBuy, a low cost home ownership initiative has been used at Jennetts Park, The Parks and Wykery Copse.
- We launched “BFC my choice”, a choice based letting scheme. www.bfcmychoice.org.uk
- The cash incentive scheme has been created to help residents buy a home.
- 4 Registered Social Landlords (RSL) have been appointed as the preferred partners for affordable housing development for the next 3 years.
- By the end of March 2010, 324 homes had been completed at The Parks, together with on and off site highway improvements. The developer has also contributed towards improvements made to the forecourt at Bracknell Railway Station and discussions have taken place about the provision of a community centre/pavilion on-site
- By the end of March 2010, 452 homes had been completed at Jennetts Park. On and off site highway improvements and play areas have been completed and work is underway on providing a country park for use by the community. Discussions have also taken place on the delivery of a local centre, with planning permission for the community centre granted and a planning application for the primary school received in May 2010 with a view to it opening in September 2011.

Case Study

Choice Based Lettings and Housing Allocation Policy Review Consultation

The issue:

In 2008 we considered making changes to the way in which Housing Association homes were allocated and wanted to know what applicants' views were on the proposed changes.

What we did:

The target population for consultation was the 4,200 applicants on the Housing Register. In September 2008, two levels of consultation were carried out:

- An invitation to take part in focus group discussions was sent to all applicants
- A questionnaire asking about the types of changes applicants would like made to the way properties are allocated was also circulated.

Consultation was via letters and questionnaires, feedback forms and focus groups. Officers also consulted with the Tenants and Leaseholders Panel from Bracknell Forest Homes (the voluntary transfer RSL). Focus groups included applicants from each of the main applicant types. Attendance at the focus groups varied from 8 to 2 households.

Outcome:

The results of the consultation undertaken in September 2008 were summarised in a newsletter to applicants and the results of the first stage consultation were used to inform the revised Allocations Policy.

As a result of feedback from applicants, the following changes were made:

- Applicants said they found the current points system difficult to understand and that a system based on bands would be preferred. The new Allocations Policy is a banding based policy.
- Applicants said priority should be given to Bracknell Forest residents. The new policy prioritises applicants within the same band based on living in the Borough.
- Applicants said the vacant properties should be advertised on the internet. A new computer system is being implemented which will allow this.
- Applicants said they wanted to be able to bid for properties by phone and on the internet.

Taking forward:

We are just about to embark on the first year review of the allocation policy and will be carrying out further consultation with applicants on proposed changes. We carried out telephone surveys throughout early June 2010.

Achievements for 2010/11 and beyond

- A review of the housing strategy programmes will be undertaken and the establishment of an equity share scheme.
- Implementation of local authority mortgages for low cost home ownership.
- 125 affordable houses are planned to be completed
- Aim to help 5 households buy a home with the help provided by a cash incentive scheme grant.

Launch of a New Partnership to Deliver Affordable Housing

In 2009 expressions of interest were invited from Registered Social Landlords (RSL) wishing to be a Preferred Partner within Bracknell Forest. Submissions were assessed against stringent criteria including quality of the housing product and financial robustness. As a result, 4 organisations were selected to be partners including 2 which are combined development partners.

The partnership will be governed by a protocol which focuses on the delivery of new affordable housing in Bracknell Forest for a 3 year period and to ensure that partners contribute to the strategic aims of the Council.

Objective 4: Keep Bracknell Forest clean and green

In surveys, Bracknell Forest residents have told us that clean, litter-free streets contribute a great deal to the local quality of life, so this has been made a top priority. We are also committed to improving the environmental impact of our services, resulting in the local authority having some of the highest recycling rates in the country. The landscaping teams work hard to keep local green spaces looking good all year round.

Achievements for 2009/10

- We adopted the Bracknell Forest Carbon Management Plan in June 2009 with a target to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from council operations of 25% by 2012 against a 2007 baseline.
- We have undertaken energy surveys at all its buildings and are actively looking at means to improve their energy efficiency e.g. with insulation.
- We carried out a comprehensive survey of one building with a view to alternative energy sourcing e.g. geo-thermal power, photovoltaic cells and rain water harvesting.
- Snaprails Park was part of the High Sheriff of Berkshire's litter campaign week.
- A project has been created to establish the carbon offset value of Sandhurst Memorial Park and Shepherd Meadows.
- Two schools were assisted to apply for interest free funding from the Salix Energy Efficiency Loan Scheme. Edgbarrow School received £8,000 for improved boiler and zone controls and Wildridings School received £12,500 for lighting controls, a pool cover, a new heating controller and improved roof insulation.
- The Climate Change Partnership was presented with a silver award in the Place category of the Bracknell Forest Partnerships Awards 2009 for making home energy monitors available at all libraries for loan to residents – provision year end energy data shows an 8% reduction of energy consumption and a 6% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions from council properties, excluding schools.

Achievements for 2010/11 and beyond

- A refresh of the Council's Climate Change Action plan from April 2010 will be developed.
- We aim to register for the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) Energy Efficiency Scheme by September 2010; this will result in installation of automatic meter readers (AMRs) and it aims to achieve the Carbon Trust Standard by March 2011.
- Working with Climate Berkshire, we will implement project LoCUS (Low carbon understanding for small and medium enterprises) in the borough.
- Develop a Surface Water Management Plan for Bracknell Forest.
- Apply for Invest-to-Save funds to implement Carbon Management Plan projects.

Objective 5: Improve health and wellbeing within the borough

We play a major role in improving health and wellbeing in the area, working closely with partners. This ranges from promoting high standards of hygiene in local catering businesses to supporting young people to minimise the harmful effects of drug and alcohol misuse. We know that access to high-quality health facilities is important to local people. This is why we are working hard to support our partners in delivering a local, "Healthspace", a major new facility for the borough designed to provide a better integrated range of health services, together with a new renal and cancer centre at Brant's Bridge, Bracknell, where construction is well under way.

Achievements for 2009/10

- The Council's Dementia Team won the "Skills for Care" Accolades Award which further determined our approach to modernising in house services.
- The Learning Disability Team was recognised nationally as one of three finalists in the Dignity in Care category of the Department of Health's Annual Health and Social Care Awards
- A range of commissioning strategies for all of the major care groups has been developed. Residents requiring support, their carers and relevant staff groups were central to the commissioning process and the evaluation of the services that are provided.
- Secondary schools in Bracknell Forest took part in the Health Achievement Awards competition. Pupils were asked to give a presentation on a health topic using creative means: such as dance, rap, film, comedy sketch, and we are encouraged to promote their message to schools, families and the wider community. The final was held in July at Eton Dorney Rowing Lake.

Achievements for 2010 and beyond

- The process of modernisation of our services continues. This includes a consultation on the future of Downside Resource Centre, the expansion of dementia-specific day support and the creation of a local care economy, along with plans to redesign Carers Support Services for adults with a learning disability.
- We will implement new commissioning arrangements for people with a learning disability to increase the number of people helped to live in non-residential settings.
- We are actively involved in the development of the Bracknell Healthspace with NHS Berkshire East to ensure that health needs of residents are met more effectively.
- We will work with health partners as they reconfigure services in the light of the expected financial situation.

Objective 6: Improve outcomes for children and families

Our services for children range from those which are aimed at all 30,000 young people in the borough, to those which involve urgent intervention in acute crisis situations. The approach is governed by the national, "Every Child Matters" programme and by the Council's Children's and Young People's Plan.

Achievements for 2009/10

- The national campaign "Change4life," has begun and is already influencing people to eat less and be more active, with the aim of living longer. The materials are also being

offered via the “Healthy Schools Programme”.

- The Family Nurse Partnership Programme has helped to support young first time mothers from early pregnancy up to the age of 2 years. The primary focus is the future health and well-being of the child and mother, but other benefits can include a reduction in smoking during pregnancy, longer intervals between pregnancies with fewer unplanned subsequent births, better language development and greater involvement of fathers.
- We updated our programme of free support for parents and carers. Support is available to all parents and aims to address common parenting needs. 13 sessions were available in 2009-10. Programmes of parenting support to tackle more complex needs were also offered, with a new programme, “Strengthening Families” introduced during the year, aimed at families with children aged 10 to 14.
- 15 adults have achieved Level 1 literacy/numeracy accreditation and 35 have achieved Level 2 accreditation through our programme of family literacy, language and numeracy courses at the Open Learning Centre.
- The Family Intervention Project began offering to 6 families in the borough, aiming to help them with intensive support.
- The Community Activities and Services Strategy were published, which will lead to the further development of area-based work that benefits children, young people and families in all Bracknell Forest communities. Partnership working was refreshed to ensure that we work with other agencies to deliver our plans effectively. Schemes were funded across the borough to meet local needs, including the Summer of Fun in Sandhurst, holiday activities in Crowthorne and a Junior Citizen’s Day in South Bracknell.

Achievements for 2010/11 and beyond

- An Activity Bursary scheme will enable children from economically disadvantaged families to participate in a range of high quality leisure and recreational opportunities usually enjoyed by children from wealthier homes. The aim is to improve their confidence and self-esteem so that they attend, and achieve more at school.
- The Family Intervention Project will increase its capacity to meet the needs of 15 families.
- “Think Family” developments will ensure that services work together better to meet the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged families.
- Schools will be supported to develop sustainable extended services.
- Community cohesion will benefit from a variety of schemes designed to meet local needs including language support.

Case study (Council)

Age to Age – Storytelling and Singing Workshops

Age to Age is a music and reminiscence project conceived by local folk musician Roger Watson. The project is split into three stages.

Stage one involved creating an opportunity for elderly people to tell their stories to each other. This involved building trust and creating an atmosphere where participants felt they could recall their memories and felt happy to have these recorded. In each setting, council officers worked closely with residential home staff and carers to support the sessions and produce the final performances on site.

From January 2009 to March 2010, the Arts Development team at the council involved elderly people from Ladybank, Downside, Birdsgrove and Edmond Court and Crowthorne

Library Reminiscence Group in working with storyteller and reminiscence worker, Janet Dowling. Many of the participants were aged between 70 and their mid 90s. Janet met with individuals and asked them to tell their own stories about their past. More recently these have been retained as reminiscence recordings which will be available through the heritage pages on the Council's website – www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk

The second stage involved turning these memories into stories, told to pupils from 7 schools in Birch Hill, Harmans Water, Crowthorne and Priestwood and Garth. The aim was to enable children to listen to and appreciate the stories, and create lyrics with the support of Roger Watson. Roger worked with the pupils during their lunch breaks and after school to help the children select stories to turn into songs and lyrics over 6-9 sessions. The songs were performed back to the elderly participants and wider audiences. The performances were widely popular and it also gave pupils and the elderly story givers a chance to meet and enjoy the final results.

Each performance was recorded and copies given to all who participated. There are also plans to create a songbook based on the project. This project was organised in partnership with the Council's extended services.

When we asked the pupils what they enjoyed most they said:

- “speaking to the older people
- going out of school to sing to people
- listening to the stories of people
- singing the songs in front of the Reminiscence Group
- working with other people
- writing my own songs”

Feedback from the last project with elderly people showed us that

- Everyone felt that Janet was friendly and easy to talk to. Janet really got the best out of people during their interviews.
- Everyone enjoyed the concert and could recognise which song was about them.
- Winifred and Iris particularly liked meeting the children and everyone felt the project was a good way for children to learn about life as a child, growing up in the 30s, 40s and 50s.
- Everyone was impressed by the quality of the lyrics and the singing itself

Objective 7: Seek to ensure that every resident feels included and able to access the services they need

We believe that communities are strongest when everyone has the opportunity to participate in society as fully as they wish. We aim to make it as simple as possible for all our residents to access services. Engaging with as many different groups of residents is also very important, because it helps us to ensure that the services we provide are really what residents need and want to use.

Achievements for 2009/10

- The first ever Faith & Belief Conference in Bracknell Forest was held, attended by people from many different faiths and beliefs including Hindu, Muslim, Baha'i and Christian, together with representatives from partner agencies.
- Development of the Partnership Equality Group, to support vulnerable groups and reduce inequalities.
- Funding has been secured for the Bracknell Forest Partnership to work with Disabled GO, a national charity, to improve the access to information about buildings and schools in Bracknell for people with disabilities.
- The Sandhurst "Respect, Responsibility and Rights" community project was launched to promote community cohesion and good relations.
- A new Community Association was established in Jennetts Park; the group are organising a number of community activities to bring the community together.
- The Bullbrook Community Centre has been redeveloped.
- The United Reform Church's "One Church: 100 Uses" group was supported to complete an options appraisal on the redevelopment of the Harmans Water Neighbourhood Centre.
- The new community centres at Jennetts Park are under development.
- We have engaged with the Bracknell Forest Minorities Alliance on ethnic monitoring categories, school governors and planning issues in the borough.
- The Corporate Web Team developed a range of social media services for the Council through Facebook, Flickr, Twitter and YouTube. This has improved our communication with local residents and also reaches sections of the community who do not visit the Council's public website.
- A range of activities have been provided in support of Local Democracy Week including a Youth Question Time with a panel of Councillors and 3 secondary schools as well as Bracknell & Wokingham College. An "Ask the Leader" website event also took place.
- The launching of the Community Development Strategy by Bracknell Forest Homes has provided opportunities for all people in the Borough. This has included openings for young people at the Oakwood Youth Challenge and the chance for them to produce and broadcast their own radio show.
- Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action has reported that there has been a 50% increase in the number of people registering interest in volunteering in 2009-10 compared to 2008-09.
- Bracknell Foodbank was started in September 2009 and over the last year has helped over 800 adults, 300 children and served over 10,000 meals and given over 8 tonnes of food donated by schools, churches, charities, companies and individuals.
- We have worked closely with the Kerith Centre in Bracknell on a range of issues to support our residents.

Achievements in 2010/11 and beyond

- The Bracknell Forest Disabled GO webpage is planned to be launched to improve access to information for people with disabilities.
- A European Integration Fund Bid was developed to support the Ghurkha community with ESOL provision and access to health care.
- A 'Life in the UK' course was launched for the Nepali community incorporating ESOL.
- The Council aim to develop a Bracknell Forest Faith and Belief Forum and further increase understanding of these communities' needs and aspirations.
- "All of Us" Community Cohesion Strategy Action Plan is to be implemented.
- Support the use of culture and sport to give people a chance to meet other members of

- their community and shape their sense of belonging and identity in that community.
- Support communities to participate in the Big Lunch initiative to get to know their neighbours better.
- The corporate web team is overseeing a series of social media business pilots to investigate how service teams can interact directly with local residents, improve their access to services and enable two way communications with harder to reach sections of the community.
- Equality Framework Assessment

Case study (Council)

History of Muslim Juma Prayer at Bracknell Leisure Centre

The situation

There is no mosque in Bracknell Forest, with the nearest being over 20 miles away. The Council, in consultation with the Muslim community, has met this need for a place of worship for Friday Juma prayers through renting a room at the Leisure Centre to the Bracknell Islamic Cultural Society.

What was done

Juma Prayer has been held there for nearly 10 years with steadily increasing numbers. This is an invaluable facility for Muslims, living and working in Bracknell Forest. For the first few years it began with 5 – 10 men attending every week to perform the congregational prayer in a small meeting room. This steadily increased to approximately 30. In the early stages, gym mats covered with sheets were used and then these were enhanced by the donation of pre-printed prayer sheets brought each week by the worshippers.

As word of mouth and publications indicated the existence of the prayer facility, the size of the congregation grew in numbers. They then transferred the regular booking to the multipurpose room which could hold up to 70 – 80 people.

Outcome

Awareness has continued to spread and after another couple of years the regular congregation relocated to the large Forest Suite which is now attended by more than 100 people including a facility for women to attend too.

Muslims originating from more than 30 different countries come to pray and 3 bags of prayer sheets are brought each week to be used.

In addition to the weekly prayers, Bracknell Leisure Centre is hired for celebratory prayers associated with significant religious occasions, such as the end of Ramadan and Pilgrimage.

Taking it forward

The local Muslim community is actively striving to secure a permanent place of worship which can be used for all the 5 prayers throughout each day and has had discussions with Councillor Paul Bettison, Leader of the Council about this.

Objective 8: Reduce crime and increase people's sense of safety in the borough

We have made even more progress in tackling crime this year. The level of crime and anti-social behaviour is regularly ranked as the number one influence on the quality of life in an area. We work closely with Thames Valley Police and other local partners to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. Fear of crime can be nearly as harmful to people's quality of life as actual crime itself, so we also work to ensure that residents' perceptions of how safe they are in the borough do match the overall low rate of crime. Our recording system, CADIS, has been recognised nationally as an example of good practice

What the council achieved in 2009/10

- The numbers of serious acquisitive crimes (burglary to homes, theft of, and from cars and robbery offences) fell during the fourth quarter and at the end of the period are showing a reduction of 18.7%. This represents the lowest level of these types of crime for more than 10 years, against a backdrop of more houses, cars and people living in the borough since 1999.
- Within this basket of crime types there has been particularly strong performance in relation to reducing numbers of theft of motor vehicles (-31%) theft from (-12%) and burglary dwelling (-24%).
- Serious incidents of crime are rare in Bracknell Forest; those that have occurred have been thoroughly investigated and dealt with by the most appropriate team of officers, with all cases being worked on in full partnership with the wider community safety team.
- The roll out of the boroughs automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) system has commenced and plays a key roll in investigating criminals that use the road networks to move around and commit crime.
- Operation Ladybird has brought partners together to tackle the most prolific offenders in terms of both enforcement and intervention.
- Internal figures show that reports of anti-social behaviour (of comparable incidents) decreased by 8.9% this year compared to the previous year.
- The survey commissioned by the Neighbourhood Action Groups attracted a high response rate, providing valuable information for us and our partners about community priorities.
- The top 6 CADIS categories all experienced reductions in the numbers of reports as follows:
 - Dangerous driving - 8.1% reduction
 - Fly-tipping and dumped rubbish - 21.2% reduction (excluding new data sources)
 - Harassment - 10.7% reduction
 - Noise including domestic noise - 0.2% Reduction
 - Road hazard - 20.9% reduction
 - Vandalism - 22.5% Reduction

Achievements for 2010/11 and beyond

- Deliver the Youth Intervention programme – Phoenix which helps young people to build on personal qualities, increase self confidence and encourage positive thinking. Evolution for young offenders, looking at consequential thinking and problem solving skills.
- Thames Valley Police are continuing to work with partners to identify locations where neighbourhood offices can be opened, this has already happened in Birch Hill this year,

to add to Sandhurst and Binfield. An office will open in Easthampstead in the near future.

- Operation Ladybird will be repeated throughout the year to continue the focus on the minority of offenders who commit a majority of crime.
- Improve community consultation and engagement through published 'Have Your Say Meetings' across the Borough.
- The levels of support for families and friends will be increased to include a kinship carers group
- The Domestic Abuse Forum partners are continuing to work to encourage reports of domestic abuse to Police and to Women's Aid, and work with harder to reach groups such as Nepali community and vulnerable adults.

Case study- Bracknell Forest Homes

The Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service has trained Bracknell Forest Homes staff to identify the need for and the benefits of a home fire safety check. Bracknell Forest Homes has included fire safety publicity (including a 'Fire Safety in the Home' booklet) in their new tenants pack.

Case study – e-safety

The creation of the e-safety Exemplar Policy and Guidance 2010 was predominantly Council-led and addressed a gap that was identified in the e-safety audit process which took place in 2009.

The policy sets out a step-by-step guide and flowchart for organisation staff and volunteers to use where there has been an e-safety incident in their area so that it can be managed properly. It also includes templates for Acceptable User Policies (AUPs) for 2 different age groups of children and young people. They contain a set of rules and rights for online safety which can be displayed in settings and discussed with children and young people.

The policy contains an Acceptable User Policy for organisation staff and volunteers which sets out guidelines for their online behaviour, such as to not to give out their personal mobile number or be friends" on Facebook with children and young people in their setting. The documents were launched at the Local safeguarding Children Board Conference in June 2010 and laminated versions of the Acceptable User Policy were widely distributed. A number of schools have also requested further copies for use within classrooms.

Objective 9: Promote independence and choice for vulnerable adults and older people

We support older people to be as independent as possible, with services designed to help people remain in their own homes for as long as they can and as long as they want. We are working towards providing more choice for the vulnerable adults we support, by increasing the number of people who have control of their own social care budgets. We also work in partnership with the voluntary sector and others to provide targeted support for carers.

Achievements for 2009/10

- The Domestic Support Service is supporting more than 210 elderly/frail persons with shopping, cleaning, laundry and pension collecting. The service will also accompany people to do their own shopping if this is the preferred option which enables individuals

to remain independent for as long as possible. 90% of users judged the service as excellent in the annual questionnaire.

- As part of the preventative agenda, we employ a Dementia Advisor working with the Memory Clinic to support people recently diagnosed with dementia who may not yet meet the threshold for services. Bracknell Forest Council is a National Demonstrator site for this approach.
- A contract shaped by carers and established with the Royal Trust for Carers for emergency support has had a good take up numerically and is reported by carers that it has been well received.
- A Family and Carer Support Worker has been employed through the Stroke Association and has so far worked with 60 individuals and their carers, with referral to first contact being achieved within one week in 85% of cases.

Achievements for 2010/11 and beyond

- We aim to develop the Befriending Scheme with an increased number of volunteers matched to more clients enjoying regular contact and accessing community activities, enabling more independent living.
- We aim to build on current practice with “Bracknell Way”, a coherent model linking Prevention and Self Care, Rehabilitation and Personalisation including health care needs.
- We will evaluate the pilot and rollout of the personalised support programme in accordance with clear project milestones.
- The rollout of personalisation will be a key priority for the Council. This will ensure that people who need support, providers and the voluntary sector are kept informed of progress and how they can continue to help shape events. This will be a crucial aspect to ensure success.

Case study

We have negotiated a fixed rate framework agreement with providers of Domiciliary Care from April this year.

This groundbreaking arrangement will mean providers will be competing for business on quality alone. The price is fixed for all providers participating in the agreement and applies to care provided to direct payment recipients as well as service commissioned from the Council.

Objective 10: Be accountable and provide excellent value for money

With the third-lowest council tax levels of any mainland unitary council in the country, and with nearly half of our key performance indicators ranked among the best in the country, we believe that our services represent exceptional value for money. However, we know that continued efficiency savings will be vital if we are to continue to improve services during a period of tough budget cuts across the public sector. We also need to ensure that we are making the best possible use of all our resources, including our staff, office accommodation and natural resources.

Achievements for 2009/10

- We delivered a balanced budget for the 11th year in succession
- We have improved our procurement practices through the development of guidance and the provision of advice, training and monitoring.
- The Cold Air Containment Unit in the Council's server room was completed and means a saving of £12,000 per year.
- Significant savings in IT were made from more efficient use of resources.
- The Service Efficiency Strategy action plan was delivered which led to more than £300,000 of efficiency savings in last 2 years.
- We were named 'Fleet of the Year' in the 51 to 250 vehicle category at the Fleet News sponsored awards.
- An action plan was created to implement findings from the Green Fleet Review undertaken by the Energy Saving Trust.
- Management and operation of Social Care and Community Transport was transferred to the Integrated Transport Unit, which is now responsible for all vehicle related services within the Council. This has delivered new improved vehicles and made savings.
- We merged the receptions in our town centre office buildings to provide an improved and comprehensive service to residents.
- We were re-accredited with the South East Employers' Member Development Charter which recognises the work we do to ensure that all Councillors have the appropriate skills and knowledge to carry out their role.
- Our postal arrangements were consolidated on to one site generating efficiency savings.
- The employee absence rate for the Council for 2009/10 was 6.3 days per employee; the average rate for all local government employers for the same period was 10.7 days per employee making the Council being some 41% lower than the national average, we are placed firmly in the top quartile for our performance
- In partnership with our partners, we designed and implemented an innovative approach to scrutiny of the Bracknell Forest Partnership. This included forming a Partnership Overview and Scrutiny Group, which looked at the work of every Theme Partnership. Our work was shortlisted for the Centre for Public Scrutiny's national 'Good Scrutiny' Awards.
- There has been a significant reduction in the number of high level complaints upheld against the Council. A large improvement in the speed of response to high level complaints has also been achieved, and we continued to learn from the complaints we received. *[Detail on Local Government Ombudsman cases - a substantial reduction of complaints, from 25 last year to 18 in 2009-10. There have been no LGO 'local settlements' in 2009-10, compared to 7 last year. A further large improvement in our speed of responding to LGO complaints, from 22.2 days on average last year, to 13.4 days in 2009-10.]*
- We achieved an award for achieving significant improvements to service (and real savings) through changes to our IT services.

Achievements for 2010/11 and beyond

- Finalise an updated Strategic Risk Register and continue to embed risk management across the organisation.
- Increase the number of council tax-payers paying by direct debit; the most efficient method. Currently 78% of tax-payers now pay by direct debit, one of the highest in the country.
- We are working towards achieving the "Charter Plus" standard, which recognises outstanding work in respect of Member Development.

- We will continue to monitor absence rates and drive the figures down still further by concentrating on individual areas where improvements can be made.
- We aim to implement the corporately tendered Wide Area Network contract; saving £72,000 per year.
- A review of desktop hardware is to be carried out to replace PCs with thin client technology to reduce cost.
- We will continue to ensure high level complaints against the Council receive prompt and fair responses in accordance with the council's service standards.
- We will continue to support the work of the Overview and Scrutiny, helping the Council and its partners continue to improve, by providing an effective and added-value "critical friend" challenge.

Case study

The Council's Key Objectives

In response to an invitation from the Executive, a working group of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission reviewed the Council's key objectives for 2010-11. These objectives set the high level direction for our work over the year, and form the basis of departmental service plans. A number of changes to the key objectives were suggested with most of our suggestions have been accepted. The Council's Chief Executive has commented,

Timothy Wheadon, the Council's Chief Executive said '*In summary, the work of the Commission's working group has been a valuable contribution to planning for the services to be delivered to residents and businesses over the coming year.*'

Objective 11: Promote the borough's economic activity and potential

Our local economy depends on the economic success of the wider geographical area, so we work closely with public and private sector partners across Berkshire and South-East England. We are active in supporting the economy locally, promoting and improving the borough as a place to do business and providing advice and assistance to local companies.

Achievements of 2009/10

- We have delivered on our economic action plan, helping local residents and businesses through the economic downturn.
- A successful business event was held in collaboration with Business Link to assist small and medium sized businesses .
- additional financial help to the Citizens Advice Bureau to provide a better service to our residents .
- a Community TV film for 'Career Springboard' an executive job club, to highlight their services around the Borough.

Achievements for 2010/11 and beyond

- We will update our Economic Development strategy to meet the needs of residents and look to the future is planned
- Continue to promote Bracknell Forest as a great place to do business
- We want to work with our public sector and business partners across the six Berkshire councils to promote our economic buoyancy

- Work with businesses and other Berkshire Councils to set up a Local Enterprise Partnership for the area.
- Publish a Local Investment Plan through the Homes and Communities Agency Single Conversation process to secure funding for housing and infrastructure in Bracknell Forest.

Objectives 12 and 13: Promote workforce skills and limit the impact of the recession

To minimise the impact of the economic downturn on residents, we are working closely with local partners in the voluntary and public sectors to ensure that residents facing redundancy or a reduction in their income receive the advice and support that they need. We want to make sure that local people are well placed to take advantage of job opportunities by supporting them to acquire the skills they need for success in the workplace.

Achievements for 2009/10

- On behalf of the 6 Berkshire Councils, we co-ordinated a bid under the Government's Future Jobs Fund. In Bracknell Forest, this provided placements for 30 young people in Bracknell Forest (and 167 across Berkshire) aged 18 – 24 back into work who had been unemployed for more than 6 months.
- We launched the 'Beat the Credit Crunch' website providing information to the borough's residents during the recession.
- Our 'Grow Our Own' service was developed and is located at the Open Learning Centre in Bracknell, working with organisations and individuals to develop skills leading to paid employment.
- A weekly drop-in service is now available for non-employed and people at risk of redundancy to gain or improve ICT skills, access career advice and guidance and, access the internet and general job search activity at Bracknell Open Learning Centre
- A variety of skills programmes has been launched and work placements specific to sectors of the community that face significant employment barriers for example over 50-year olds, speakers of English as a second language and young people not in education, employment or training.
- 15 adults have achieved Level 1 literacy/numeracy accreditation and 35 have achieved Level 2 accreditation through the programme of family literacy, language and numeracy courses at the Open Learning Centre.

Achievements for 2010/11 and beyond

- Through the 'Grow Our Own' service, we will provide an online 'timebank' to match unemployed people with employers looking for a specific work time to be filled. This opens up opportunities to carers, students, older people and work returners. Clients will register their availability each week and registered employers would be able to select individuals to support their teams on a temporary basis related to business need.
- In conjunction with a major local company, Boehringer Ingelheim, 'Grow Our Own' will set up a showcase networking event for people being made redundant and those setting up their own businesses in the local area. Support organisations will be available to offer advice and guidance. Such as accountants, HR specialists, marketing specialists and financial services.

Case study

The Future Jobs Fund was set up by the last Government to support young people into employment. One of the qualifying criteria was that a minimum of 60 jobs would need to be provided within an organisation. Individually, this number would have been too great for each Berkshire unitary authority, but by working together, the proposal was viable. Bracknell Forest's, Grow Our Own service coordinated a successful bid to Government on behalf of the 6 unitary authorities, together with 13 external partner organisations. Whilst the Government has now stopped the fund it has, nevertheless, provided work experience for 167 young people across Berkshire. As well as providing work, the programme was developed successful young people, through a programme of skills and training, provided by each council's adult learning service.

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Appendix A – Council Finances

Introduction

Being a Unitary Council, we are required by legislation to account for our expenditure in two distinct categories:

General Fund Revenue Account – This includes day to day spending on all services. Expenditure is financed mainly from Government Grant (Revenue Support Grant), Business Rate income, charges to users of services, and Council Tax.

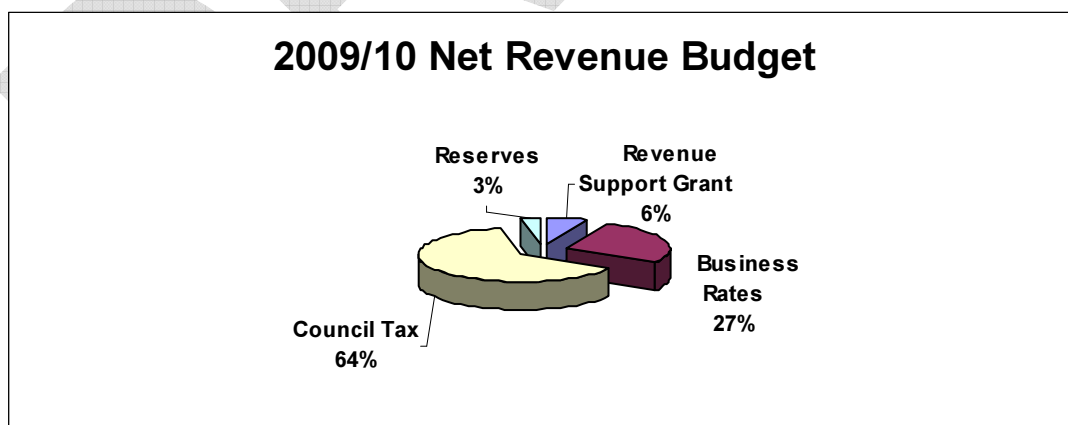
Capital – All improvements and enhancements to our assets are included in this category. This expenditure is financed partly from the sale of capital assets, Government Grant support, contributions from developers and borrowing from internal funds.

Outturn 2009/10

General Fund

The Council, at its meeting on 25 February 2009, set a revenue budget for the 2009/10 financial year of £74.218m. The total authorised General Fund net expenditure for the 2009/10 financial year was £76.818m (including parish precepts of £2.600m). Further increases to service budgets can be approved if they are financed from earmarked reserves. When these further budgets are approved an equivalent sum is transferred from the earmarked reserves to the revenue account. In 2009/10 net transfers totalling £1.586m have been approved from reserves. These include funding from the Cost of Structural Change Reserve, S106 contributions and Carry Forwards. These transfers do not have an impact on the overall budget.

This expenditure was to be met by Government Grant (Revenue Support Grant), Business Rates, Council Tax and the use of reserves, as shown in the chart below.



The following table compares actual outturn expenditure incurred with the amended budgets for the year for the General Fund. This table reflects our departmental structure during 2009/10, which is the basis for the internal management of performance against budgets. We reorganised during 2009/10 with the Social Care and Learning Department being replaced by two new departments for Children, Young People and Learning and Adult Social Care and Health.

GENERAL FUND	Original	Latest	Actual	Variance
	Budget	Budget	£000's	£000's
	£000's	£000's		
Corporate Services (including Chief Executive's)	9,886	8,805	8,644	(161)
Children, Young People and Learning	21,490	36,034	35,779	(255)
Adult Social Care and Health	26,025	26,884	25,233	(1,651)
Environment, Culture & Communities	34,184	36,348	35,977	(371)
Net cost of General Fund services	91,585	108,071	105,633	(2,438)
Exceptional item – VAT refunds (see below)	0	0	(2,583)	(2,583)
Capital Charges	(8,365)	(27,067)	(27,067)	0
Pension Adjustment	(3,027)	298	298	0
Other Miscellaneous Services	(91)	95	389	294
Interest Receipts	(1,302)	(1,265)	(948)	317
Interest Payable	0	345	345	0
Debt Financing Charges	50	362	362	0
Levying Bodies	84	97	97	0
Contribution from Capital Resources	(300)	(300)	0	300
Contingency Provision	390	0	0	0
Area Based Grant	(4,680)	(4,706)	(4,706)	0
Performance Reward Grant	0	0	(336)	(336)
Net Budget Requirement	74,344	75,930	71,484	(4,446)
Parish Precepts	2,600	2,600	2,600	0
Contributions to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	(126)	(1,712)	2,022	3,734
Amount to be met from Government Grants and Local Taxation	76,818	76,818	76,106	(712)
Resources To Finance Above				
Council Tax Payers	(48,665)	(48,665)	(48,665)	0
Collection Fund Surplus	(169)	(169)	(169)	0
Revenue Support Grant	(4,827)	(4,827)	(4,827)	0
National Non Domestic Rates	(20,915)	(20,915)	(20,915)	0
Contribution to/(from) General Reserves	(2,242)	(2,242)	(1,530)	712
Total Resources	(76,818)	(76,818)	(76,106)	712

Changes in VAT legislation resulted in a number of services being reclassified from standard rated to exempt for VAT purposes. Initially, we were only able to reclaim overpaid tax for the previous 3 years but this 3 year cap was successfully challenged in court cases collectively known as Conde Nast/Fleming. As a result a number of claims were submitted to try and claim back overpaid VAT plus interest for earlier years (going back to 1973 when VAT was introduced). The majority of claims have now been settled and as a consequence we received the sum of £2.583m (including interest but after fees) in 2009/10. These VAT repayments have been treated as an exceptional item in the accounts.

Impairments led to an increase of £15.7m in service department budgets since the original budget was approved. These resulted from capital expenditure not adding value to assets (£6.5m) and the downward revaluation of assets (£9.2m). Impairments are reversed out of the accounts and therefore there is no net change to the overall budget.

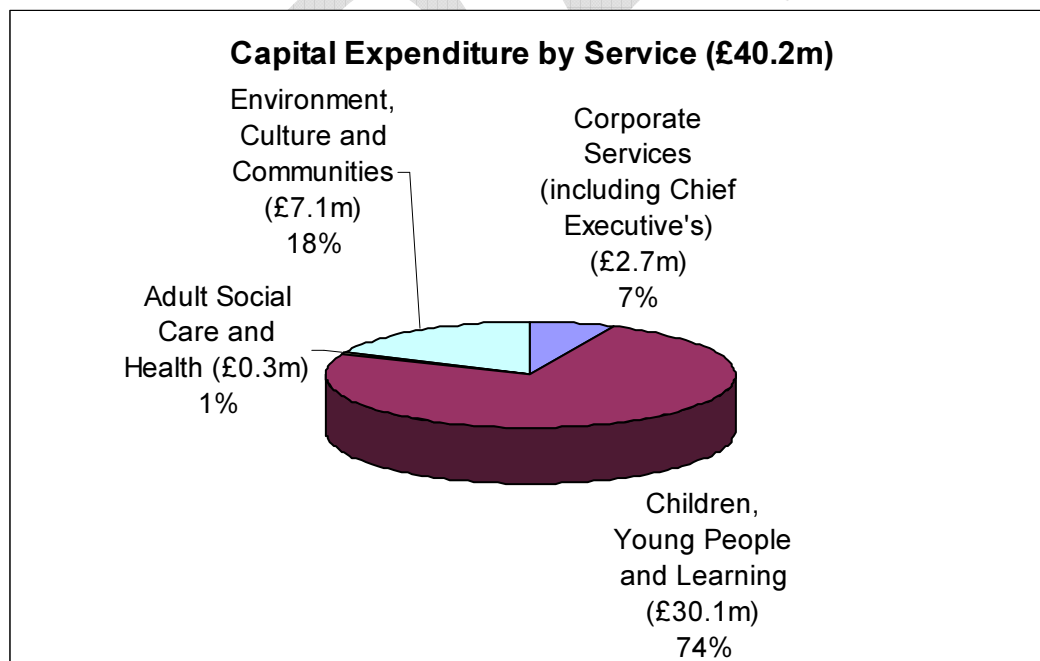
Our approach to budget monitoring is robust and effective, demonstrated by the fact that we have never overspent our revenue budget since becoming a unitary authority in 1998. From the above it can be seen that an under spend occurred on the General Fund, causing the use of general reserves to be £0.712m less than budgeted after allowing for transfers from earmarked reserves. This means that more resources are available to assist us with future year's budgets.

Capital

We approved a capital programme of £51.3m for 2009/10, plus a further £13.5m carried forward from 2008/09

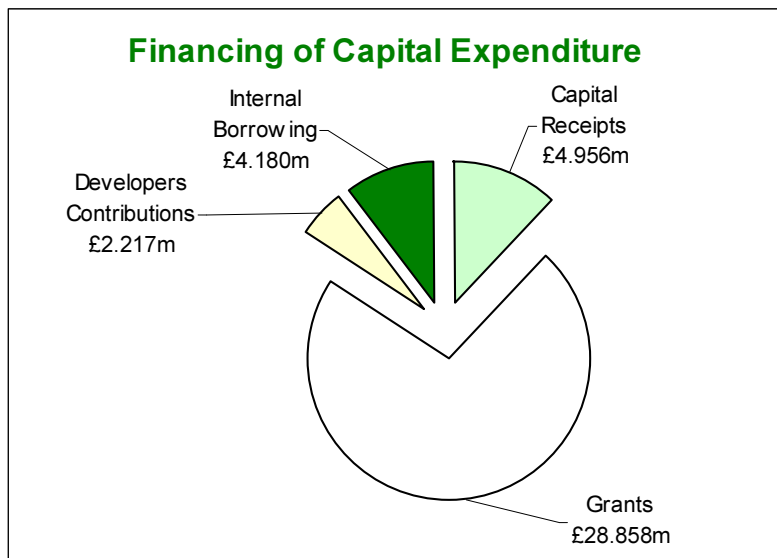
We actually spent £40.2m on capital projects in 2009/10 to maintain and enhance its assets. Many schemes included in the capital programme are both technically and logistically complex to implement. Issues such as planning approvals, land transfers and inclement weather can all lead to unavoidable delays. In addition, their financial scale requires a lengthy tender process to ensure the best price is obtained prior to letting the contract. It is, therefore, extremely difficult to complete such schemes within the financial year for which they are approved. We regularly review progress on the capital programme through its budget monitoring during the year and has established cash budget profiles to assist this.

The following chart illustrates the expenditure by service.



£20.8m of the total was spent on the Garth Hill School rebuild.

The capital programme was funded as follows:



Overall the Council was debt free at 31 March 2010 and did not need to borrow externally to finance capital expenditure during 2009/10 (further details are shown in the body of the Statement of Accounts).

More detailed financial information on the 2009/10 outturn is contained in the Council's Statement of Accounts. For copies of this or more detailed information please contact in the first instance Alan Nash, Chief Officer: Financial Services on 01344 352180 (email alan.nash@bracknell-forest.gov.uk) or Arthur Parker, Chief Accountant on 01344 352158 (email arthur.parker@bracknell-forest.gov.uk).

Budget 2010/11

General Fund

Due to the global recession we were faced with unprecedented pressure on our resources this year. The proposed budget package therefore only addresses pressures arising from the impact of the recession, increases in the number of vulnerable clients or new statutory duties stemming from Lord Laming's inquiry into safeguarding. All other desirable service developments have been deferred. As in previous years, economies have focused as far as possible on central and departmental support rather than on front line services. However after 10 years of back office rationalisations, realising total savings in excess of £20m, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find further savings in these areas, which would not compromise our ability to function effectively. Consequently it has been necessary to look at some reductions in front line services. The medium term financial strategy to bring spending to a level that can be sustained by annually generated revenue remains the priority but this has been affected by the impact of the recession.

Spending on schools and school related functions such as Special Educational Needs placements made outside of the borough are funded by a specific Dedicated Schools Grant (£65.0m).

In 2010/11 we plan to spend £236m on services. A significant part of this expenditure is funded from income that we make from commercial (rather than housing) rents, sales and fees and charges for services. We also receive a number of government grants and contributions from other local authorities and agencies for individual services including funding for schools.

Our formal budget requirement, after allowing for the income sources above, is £74.0m. This remaining amount is financed by:-

	£m
Council Tax	47.9
Business Rates	22.8
Revenue Support Grant	3.3
Total	74.0

General Fund Revenue Budget Summary 2010/11

	Gross Expenditure	Income	2010/11 Budget
Service Department	£'000	£'000	£'000
Corporate Services (incl. Chief Executive's)	15,426	8,503	6,923
Children, Young People and Learning	102,292	82,536	19,756
Adult Social Care and Health	40,800	14,733	26,067
Environment, Culture and Communities	76,993	40,625	36,368
Cost of Services	235,511	146,397	89,114
Capital Financing Charges			(8,061)
Levying Bodies			87
Debt Financing Charges			372
Interest Receipts			(659)
Contingency			1,000
Contribution from Earmarked Reserves			(350)
Reversal of notional pension adjustment			(557)
Area Based Grant			(6,359)
Total Expenditure			74,587
Use of General Fund Balances			(557)
Bracknell Forest's Budget Requirement			74,030

Capital Expenditure

In accordance with its Corporate Capital Strategy we have developed a three year capital programme covering the period 2010/11 to 2012/13. In setting the three-year programme, we have agreed to fund £8.069m of new schemes for 2010/11 from borrowing acknowledging that is unlikely that we would need to borrow externally as it will be able to utilise existing investments that represent our reserves and balances. In addition, we recommended that an additional budget of £1m be approved for "Invest to Save" schemes.

As a result of the transfer of the Council's housing stock to Bracknell Forest Homes there is no Housing Improvement Programme in the Capital Programme. We have committed ourselves to spending 75% of the available capital receipt from the transfer (£17.25m) to fund new affordable housing and the 2010/11 to 2012/13 programme includes an allocation of £9.3m, with £1.28m earmarked for 2010/11.

Details of the approved three-year capital programme for 2010/11 to 2012/13 (including funding from external grants and contributions) are shown below:

	2010/11 (excluding carry forwards)	2011/12	2012/13
Service Department	£'000	£'000	£'000
Corporate Services/Council Wide	3,239	3,526	3,395
Children, Young People and Learning	22,409	5,379	2,920
Adult Social Care and Health	530	0	0
Environment, Culture and Communities	9,920	10,262	9,693
Total	36,098	19,167	16,008

Given the pressure on the revenue budget, the programme for 2011/12-2012/13 needs to be seen as indicative and will need to be reviewed comprehensively along with any potential new schemes.

More detailed financial information is contained in the "Financial Plans and Budgets Supporting Information" booklet which was presented to Council on 3 March 2010. For copies of this or more detailed information please contact in the first instance Alan Nash, Chief Officer: Financial Services on 01344 352180 (email alan.nash@bracknell-forest.gov.uk) or Arthur Parker, Chief Accountant on 01344 352158 (email arthur.parker@bracknell-forest.gov.uk).

Appendix B – Delivery against the Council’s objectives set in 2007 - Status at March 2010

To be added

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