

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

30 JANUARY 2020

**EQUALITY SCHEME 2017-20 MONITORING 2018-19
EQUALITY INFORMATION PUBLICATION 2018-19
Chief Executive**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To approve for publication the Bracknell Forest “All of Us” Equality Scheme 2017-20 monitoring report for 2018-19 attached at Annex A. To brief the Executive Member for Council Strategy and Community Cohesion on the council’s equality monitoring service reports for 2018-19 and the council wide report attached at Annex B for publication on the council’s website.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That progress in implementing the Council’s “All of Us” Equality Scheme 2017-20 is noted.**
- 2.2 **That the Equality Scheme Monitoring Report 2018-19 at Annex A and the council’s Equality Monitoring reports for 2018-19 attached at Annex B are approved for publication on the council’s website.**
- 2.3 **That the ‘All of Us’ Equality Scheme 2017-2020 containing our equalities objectives is refreshed and extended until March 2021, as outlined in paragraph 3.2.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Council is committed to reviewing its performance in implementing its Equality Scheme annually. This report highlights and reviews the progress made in implementing the scheme during 2018-19 and includes the council’s equality monitoring information reports for 2018-19.

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 outline the specific duties that the council are required to meet to demonstrate its compliance with its equality duties to have due regard to:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- Fostering good relations between those with a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

These duties include publishing equality information annually by the end of January each year.

- 3.2 The ‘All of Us’ Equality Scheme developed in 2017 which contains the Council’s equality objectives was due to be replaced for April 2020. Following the May 2019 local elections, the Council’s new administration have been developing a new Council Plan which is due to come into effect in February 2020. Therefore, the new strategic framework was not in place in 2019-20 to enable the development of the new equality scheme and objectives. A new equality scheme will be developed during 2020-21 for

2021-25 and commence in April 2021. In the meantime, the existing 2017-2020 equality scheme will be refreshed with updated actions and extended to cover 2020-21.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

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

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Equality Scheme 2017-20

- 5.1 Bracknell Forest Council is required in the Equality Act 2010 public sector equality duty regulations to publish equality objectives. The Bracknell Forest Equality Scheme 2017-20 sets out what the council intends to achieve in terms of advancing equality and diversity and includes the council’s equality objectives. The equality scheme has been linked to the service planning process to ensure that the implementation of the equality objectives will be integrated, wherever possible into the mainstream delivery and monitoring of services across the council.
- 5.2 The Monitoring Report of the Action Plan, Equality report and service reports are attached at Annex A and B respectively. They summarise the actions we have taken to address our equality objectives and the impact we have made in 2018-19 and the work service areas are doing. Much of this work has been carried out in partnership and we acknowledge how important working with our partners has been in addressing the objectives in the equality scheme.
- 5.3 The Council has been successful in implementing the strategy during its second year, working with our partners and achieved its aims. This is clear from the key performance measures against which the success of the strategy is being judged, namely:
- 7 of the 34 actions have been completed within the allocated timescale while 27 are in progress and ongoing as of April 2019.
 - At the time of the report there were only seven actions which were Amber (possibility of the action falling behind schedule) but as of September 2019 these are now on schedule for completion.
- 5.5 The Council’s performance is also measured through testing residents’ perceptions and the findings of the 2017 Residents Survey should be noted:
- 96% of Bracknell Forest residents surveyed believe that people from different backgrounds get on well together in the borough, a significant improvement on the findings of the 2014 Residents’ Survey which was 94%.
 - The majority of residents (88%) felt there was little problem with people not treating each other with respect within their local area; a minority of residents (12%) considered this to be a problem.

Workforce Equality Information Report 2018-19

- 5.6 The workforce equality information report for 2018-19 was approved by the council's Employment Committee on 18th December for publication. The report summarises all the council's workforce equality information for 2018-19.

Conclusion

- 5.7 The Council has been very successful implementing the second year of 'All of Us 2017-20' as can be seen from the attached report highlighting successes. The Transformation Programme is ensuring that the needs of vulnerable people and families are prioritised when reviewing our services. We will seek to minimise the effect of the decisions we make about future service provision and consider all protected characteristics taking into account the Equality Act 2010. The council will publish an annual review on our progress in meeting these objectives. The equality objectives may be revised as a part of this annual review to take account of issues raised by the annual publication of our equality monitoring information. The council's Equality Group will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of this equality scheme, reporting to the council's executive and the Community Cohesion and Engagement Partnership annually.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

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

Director: Finance

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

Equalities Impact Assessment

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

Strategic Risk Management Issues

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

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 The Council's Equalities Group

Method of Consultation

- 7.2 By email and in meetings

Representations Received

- 7.3 Included in this report

Background Papers

Annex A – 'All of Us' Equality Scheme 2017–2020 Action Plan Monitoring 2018-19

Unrestricted

Annex B - 'All of Us' Equalities Reports – Service Reports and Workforce Monitoring Reports
2018-19

Contact for further information

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