

# “All of Us” in Bracknell Forest

## Equalities Monitoring Annual Report 2020-21



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- J. Public Health Equalities Monitoring Report
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Full reports on each of these services are also available using the following link:  
<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/equality-and-diversity/monitoring-equality>

# 1 Introduction

Bracknell Forest is the borough of opportunity and a place where diversity and cultural heritage are recognised as a strength. The council is committed to ensuring that no one is left behind, isolated or disadvantaged and to ensuring that Bracknell Forest is a borough of opportunity for everyone. The council will continue to work with and encourage vibrant local communities. We will work closely with partners to support and engage our different communities and organisations to ensure everyone feels included, connected and able to contribute.

The aim of equalities monitoring is to indicate the extent to which the council provides a fair, accessible and appropriate service to all residents.

The Equality Act 2010's [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) outlines the specific duties that the council is required to meet to demonstrate its compliance with its equality duties. The council must publish equality information annually and publish equality objectives every four years.

The [Equality Act 2010](#) places a legal duty on Bracknell Forest Council to have due regard in all its activities to:

- Eliminating unfair discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advancing equality of opportunity
- Fostering good relationships between people

The duty applies across the nine 'protected characteristics' covered by the Act - with regard to marriage and civil partnerships, the council is only required to ensure it eliminates discrimination, harassment and victimisation on these grounds. The council also considers how its services and policies may impact on other groups including for example people with caring responsibilities, people facing financial hardship and the military community.



## 2 Bracknell Forest Council Equality Scheme 2017-21

The [Bracknell Forest Equality Scheme](#) 2017-21 set out what the council intended to achieve in terms of advancing equality and diversity and includes the council's equality objectives. The equality scheme is 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.

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

At Bracknell Forest Council, we believe:

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

This report and the individual service reports should be read alongside the Equalities Monitoring - Workforce Annual Report 2020-21 which summarises the council's employment information.

To assess whether Bracknell Forest Council's services have met the legal duty to have due regard to the specific duties, information on access, outcomes/ performance and satisfaction has been analysed for these [service areas](#).

### COVID-19 Pandemic

Understandably the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns affected the majority of council services during the reporting period of April 2020 – March 2021.

Many were closed for various periods during this time including leisure services and libraries. The council has to explore different ways of providing services as council offices and some face-to-face services were closed or extremely difficult to deliver. The continued effects of the pandemic and COVID-19 restrictions has meant some ongoing work has had to be delayed due to operational pressures on service areas and the diversion of resources to our Covid community response.

Data has shown COVID-19 has exacerbated health inequalities and the council's Public Health team have worked with partners to ensure their response has considered a targeted approach. To minimise the impact of the pandemic, the focus has been on testing to find positive cases of COVID-19, contact tracing to identify close contacts of positive cases and vaccinating eligible cohorts for COVID-19.

In Education and Learning the focus was on supporting schools with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the periods of partial school closure, remote education provision and full return to school for all pupils. There was a particular focus on provision to support vulnerable children and young people.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic statutory assessments across the primary phase and the summer 2020 GCSE, AS and A Level exam series were cancelled in summer 2020, with the DfE confirming that there would be no publication of any performance data at national, regional, or local level at any phase of education.

During the pandemic, the focus of the Library Service shifted, delivering a digital service in the form of e-books, e-magazines and newspapers and a programme of virtual events via Zoom, in addition to supporting residents over the age of seventy by providing free deliveries of books and audio-visual materials through the Home Library Service, or to anyone who was shielding.

Funding was also received from the Arts Council and the Reading Agency from January to March 2021 as part of a "Reading Friends" campaign which enabled Bracknell Forest Libraries to offer a programme of virtual events via Zoom to combat loneliness and social isolation for all sectors of the community. In total, 70 virtual events were held from January to March as part of this project.

### **3 Equality highlights 2020-21**

The following are examples of work done in 2020-21 to meet the objectives of the scheme and refer to the scheme's key objectives.

#### **3.1 Access to our information, services and facilities is fair and equitable for everyone**

Children's Social Care (CSC) have increased opportunities for learning and development for the whole workforce to both deepen the understanding of different cultures and develop skills in building meaningful relationships with people from various cultural backgrounds and identities. In addition CSC developed and launched its [Equality and Diversity Protocol](#) in November 2020. The protocol recognises CSC's responsibilities and duties set out under the Equality Act 2010 and sets out expectations of employees to strive for inclusiveness.

The development of the CSC Equality and Diversity protocol ensures that there is a commitment from the whole service to protecting people's human rights, and to treat everyone fairly and with respect and dignity. With this, a programme of training to improve awareness and understanding of diverse backgrounds has successfully enabled staff to embed the 'identity first' approach, which will be supported by future developments of our recording tools and templates

Providing the right early help and the right time is far more effective in promoting the welfare of children and keeping them safe than reacting later when problems may have become more entrenched. Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)<sup>1</sup> sets out a clear expectation that local agencies collaborate to identify children and young people with additional needs and work together to ensure support as soon as a problem emerges.

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<sup>1</sup> Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) Department for Education

### **3.2 High levels of community cohesion are maintained**

The council's Community Cohesion and Engagement Partnership continues to meet regularly and monitor Hate Crime and Prevent referrals. The Community Safety report details all the work being done in this area including around Domestic Abuse, Modern Slavery and Exploitation and Anti-Social Behaviour and current issues around equality of access.

The Domestic Abuse Forum has representation from Army Welfare and survivor(s) of domestic abuse as well as all relevant service areas. Membership of both the Domestic Abuse Forum and the DA Executive Group are reviewed annually with gaps in membership identified and addressed as necessary. As part of the safe accommodation needs assessment, some additional members of the Forum have been identified and invited to future meetings, e.g. Support U – an LGBT+ organisation providing help and support across the Thames Valley.

Bracknell Forest Council were part of a two-year Thames Valley BAMER (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee) project 2018-20. The project was funded by the Home Office VAWG (Violence Against Women and Girls) Transformation Fund and supported by the local authorities across the Thames Valley and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). The project set out to identify barriers experienced by women from ethnic minority communities subjected to abuse or violence when needing to access support, and to identify lessons for improving service responses. The evaluation report has been shared with the Bracknell Forest Domestic Abuse Executive Group, Community Safety Partnership, Safeguarding Partnership and Community Cohesion and Engagement Partnership. A Thames Valley-wide BAME Community Partnership Board has been formed to continue the momentum of the BAMER project work and in July 2021 a Berks wide group (including North East Hants and Surrey Heath) was formed to drive forward local delivery of the recommendations from the report.

### **3.3 Gaps in outcomes for citizens are narrowed**

We aim to support the most vulnerable people in the borough through prevention and self-care which is tailored to different segments of the local community and their needs.

The Office for National Statistics (2021) states that in 2020 around half of disabled people aged 16 to 64 years (52.1%) in the UK were in employment compared with around 8 in 10 (81.3%) for non-disabled people (July to September 2020); disabled people with autism were among those disabled people with the lowest employment rate.

To support the employment needs of individuals with a learning disability and autism Bracknell Forest Council run a supported employment service called Breakthrough who provide advice and support to people in all aspects of looking for and sustaining meaningful employment opportunities. Breakthrough services have supported over 80 vulnerable people with various levels of support.

There is a lack of specialist accommodation for individuals with a learning disability and autism. The Learning Disability team have formed strong relationships with local housing providers and also work very closely with the council housing team to source

specialist housing. This includes support with emergency placements and the sourcing of long term adapted accommodation. This secures accommodation for individuals with complex needs and reduces the need to place individuals out of borough. Individuals with complex needs have been placed into adapted accommodation in the last year despite the covid restrictions, this has however impacted waiting times for families. In terms of our current placements in accommodation, compared to our neighbouring councils, BFC has got the lowest number of people with Learning Disabilities and Autism in residential care homes, over 90% of our placements are in supported living accommodation which is a true success of promotion of choice, community integration and independence.

In Early Years during the reporting period the work of the service has focused on support for early years providers, children and families and the impact of COVID-19. Due to suspension of face to face services, some children (and their families) at risk of communication and language delay were supported virtually, this enabled progress to be monitored and tracked. Early Years providers offered support to those families unable to access services including a variety of home learning opportunities were delivered including resources delivered to family homes to enable children and families to engage in learning activities

The Family Information and Early Years teams sourced and secured alternative childcare for critical worker families where their usual arrangements were not able to meet need. There was also partnership working with Children's Social Care (CSC) to encourage vulnerable children to access their entitlement and consideration to other sources of support as required. Support was also sourced for families known to CSC who required support within the home during this time.

### **3.4 A positive, diverse and inclusive workforce is ensured and promoted**

We are committed to having workforce policies and practices that promote an inclusive culture and ensure that we do not discriminate. We provide equal opportunities for employees to progress and develop and are responsive to the needs of the workforce. We also ensure our workforce understands and supports our equality commitments.

The council's Equality Group has recently been strengthened to ensure it is representative of different areas across the council. An Elected Members equality group was also set up with representatives of all political parties.

## **4 Equality Issues**

Although this report relates to April 2020 – March 2021 it is important to note the many issues around equality that have been highlighted as a result of the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic from March 2020. Many existing inequalities have been exacerbated by the effects of the pandemic which has disproportionately affected certain groups including those from ethnic minority backgrounds and more vulnerable residents.

Following two reports published in June by Public Health England; a report on COVID-19 inequalities in relation to the BAME community was submitted to the Corporate Management Team in September. An action plan has now been put into place to respond to the findings of the report.

The council undertook a second [detailed phone survey](#) in April 2021 to determine the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on residents, their family and the local community. The responses highlight the negative impact of the pandemic on more vulnerable residents. Certain population groups including those living in social housing, disabled, older residents, those living in social housing and more deprived areas of the borough have been more adversely impacted and may require more support than others to recover from the experience of the pandemic.

There were also questions regarding future recovery of the borough and the council's priorities to help the borough recover. The results showed residents want the council to support the local economy to recover, while supporting vulnerable people to recover, keeping residents safe and promoting and enforcing public health messages and guidelines. Supporting more vulnerable residents to recover reflects the work being done as part of the council's community response to the pandemic. The confidential responses will continue to be used to help us plan for the borough's renewal from COVID-19 over the next 3 years.

The council as a part of its recovery planning is exploring how it can continue to support residents and the local economy recover from Covid.

## **5 Conclusion**

Bracknell Forest Council is committed to providing excellent customer service and to providing fair and appropriate access to services that are tailored to meet the individual needs of the residents and diverse communities living in Bracknell Forest.

This report and the associated service area reports show that Bracknell Forest Council made good progress in meeting the three Public Sector duties in the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, victimisation and harassment, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people in 2020-21.

During 2021 the council has developed a new equality scheme from 2022-25. Bracknell Forest Council's Equality Scheme 2022-2025 builds on the good progress made over the previous years and further embeds equality, diversity and inclusion in everything we do to make Bracknell Forest the Borough of Opportunity for all.

As a council we aim to provide high quality, appropriate and accessible services that meet the needs of our diverse communities. We want to ensure consistency in the delivery of our equality, inclusion, and diversity work across the council. It is cross directorate and part of everyday business and it is the duty of all of us to understand, respect and value difference.

We will continue to take equalities into account when making decisions to ensure they are made in a fair, transparent and accountable way which considers the needs and rights of different individuals and communities.

In developing the equalities objectives in this scheme, we held workshops and discussions with community and voluntary groups, partner organisations as well as

elected members and staff. This was followed by an online consultation open to all residents, staff and elected members.

The Equality Scheme sets out our five key equality objectives to address inequalities in our role as community leader and an employer. These apply to all the council's functions, the council's role as a service provider and in our work with our communities. The full equality scheme will be published in April 2022.

## 6 Council Performance Indicators Relating to Equalities

Action	31/12/2021			
	Responsible Officer	Stage	Status	Comment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1.02.03 Workforce and Organisational Development Strategy	Paul Young	In Progress	★	HR and OD Strategy developed together with action plan. Activities commenced include a project to improve recruitment and retention in the People Department and to reduce agency spend across the Council, a council wide skill survey and the drafting of a Bracknell Forest Manager framework.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1.02.06 Develop Recruitment and Retention Strategy	Paul Young	In Progress	★	This work is being combined with the work to reduce agency spend. A review of the reward package is underway and a programme for attendance at recruitment fairs are planned to targets areas where recruitment and retention is most challenging.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1.02.15 Review our digital offer to residents	Hannah Doherty	In Progress	★	New system procured. Once the system is in place and running, the digital offer and website contents will be updated in partnership with Communications and Marketing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.05.01 Entry level apprenticeships	Pamela Moffat	In Progress	★	Numbers remain relatively low with managers resorting almost entirely to usual recruitment routes to fill vacancies for low level roles. Under the HR / OD restructure the AD has now established a resourcing function. This function will seek to raise awareness of the apprenticeship scheme and take proactive steps to encourage and support managers to provide apprenticeship opportunities in place of some of our entry level roles. At the moment the main users of the levy are schools, with only 3 internal apprenticeships making up the 20+ placements that the levy is currently funding.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.07.01 Support care leavers to access education, training or employment	Lorraine Petersen	In Progress	●	At the end of December 2021, 23 out of all 70 care leavers were NEET (32.85%). 43 of the 70 care leavers are aged 19, 20 and 21 - 13 of these care leavers in this age bracket are NEET (30.23%). Support to EET is provided through the Virtual School and Elevate in partnership with the Leaving Care Service. PEP meetings are held for CLA and care leavers in Years 12 and 13 with advice and guidance offered in terms of available training/employability courses such as that offered through The Prince's Trust - these have a specific focus on transition to post 18 pathways. Referrals to Elevate can be made for any NEET care leaver up to the age of 21 (25 if they have an EHCP). The main barriers faced by the current cohort of NEET care leavers include the context of the employment market and available apprenticeships/traineeships which have been impacted by COVID culminating in a lack of jobs and work-based training opportunities. Care Leavers have been further impacted by the change to work patterns (working from home) and their lack of transferrable skills. 6 of the care leavers (aged 19-21) are either parents or expecting and 4 have a disability or illness which is impacting on them becoming EET. The lead for the Virtual School regularly meets with and collaborates with the Leaving Care Service leads to continue to maintain the focus on supporting each care leaver to be in a stable position of either education or employment.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.08.01 Establish a culture of high expectations for all children	Sharon Jones	In Progress	★	Inclusion has been identified as a focus on the work that is undertaken by the Standards and Effectiveness team this year. Standard and Effectiveness Partners continue to collaborate both locally and nationally to ensure that schools develop inclusive SEND cultures, as well as have high expectations. The Standards and Effectiveness Partner with strategic leadership for SEND has provided training for SENDCOs and Governors this term including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An oversubscribed Engagement Model session for SENDCOs to attend, to support schools in understanding the assessment tool and how it can be used to support pupils who are working below the level of the national curriculum and who are not engaged in subject-specific study.</li> <li>A new CPD opportunity focusing on the development of an effective and strategic relationship between the SEN Governor and SENDCO. 44 delegates and associated Governors booked to attend the session of which 36 attended from across 20 schools.</li> </ul> Standards and Effectiveness Partners in their termly visits in the autumn term have continued to work with school leaders to ensure that schools hold high expectations for all pupils, especially those with SEND and that this is reflected in their ambitious and inclusive curriculum offer. This has included class visits, book looks, discussions relating to the curriculum and assessment, target setting, as well as tracking and monitoring structures used, to ensure that schools have a clear understanding of pupils starting points, as well as the steps of progress that pupils are making.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.08.02 Support transition to next stage of learning	Sharon Jones	In Progress	★	The Standards and Effectiveness Team continue to work with colleagues from Children's Support Services to provide support for the transition of children and young people with SEND. This has included collaborating with individual schools to identify support needed and work with schools to ensure children transition and continue to engage effectively in their destinations.  Standards and Effectiveness Partners continue to work directly with individual schools to support them in ensuring that the curriculum is well matched to the needs of pupils with SEND. 31 delegates attended the SENDCO forum in the autumn term. The focus of the Inclusion presentation was on ensuring a detailed understanding of the skills, needs and barriers to learning for young people, ensuring that effective transition of information is in place 'in year' as well as across phases, and ensuring a progressive and sequenced approach to the curriculum, that considers the starting points of pupils with SEND at the heart of its development, so that the curriculum is an enabler not a barrier to learning.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.01.01 Participation in sports, leisure and cultural activities	Kevin KMG Gibbs	In Progress	★	Leisure and culture participation has returned to near normal numbers. Covid is still impacting on income figures but q2 always has some impact from the holiday period but indications are that everything is back to normal
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.01.02 Tailored support for healthy lifestyles	Joanne Pittard	In Progress	★	As an ongoing consequence of the COVID-19 intervention to socially distance, many of the lifestyle services continue to make progress in moving online. We are continuing to strengthen the generic Public Health online support with the website pages being constantly reviewed and updated to provide more information to the public during this time. The new smoking cessation service contract continues to be in working to ensure provision is in line with national guidance and meets our population's needs during this time, we are now awaiting confirmation of the first quarter's performance data in terms of quitters, which will be reported in the next quarterly update.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.01.03 Covid Recovery Financial Stimulus Package	Melanie O'Rourke	In Progress	★	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.02.04 Establish Mental Health Support Team	Sarah Gee	In Progress	★	MHST in place and training underway. On target.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.04.02 Implement Housing Assistance Policy	Sarah Gee	In Progress	★	Policy due to be presented to the Executive in December.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.08.03 Multi-Disciplinary Team for Adolescents	Peter Hodges	In Progress	★	

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4.10.01 Promotion of volunteering for grounds maintenance at the Cemetery & Crematorium	Gareth Jones	In Progress	★	Whilst no further volunteers have been added during quarter 3 the cem and crem have applied for public health funding to support the recruitment of 'green/outdoor' volunteers in the future. Notification of the bid outcome is expected in Q4.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4.10.03 Social prescribing and primary prevention programmes	Joanne Pittard	In Progress	★	The social prescribing service continues to support individuals during the pandemic through remote contact. It is being publicised in covid communications to the general public. The service is currently reviewing need against current provision and the evidence base and best practice to develop a plan to grow the service reach.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4.13.01 Civilian Military Partnership	Samantha Wood	In Progress	★	The partnership continue to liaise regarding the Civilian Military Partnership action plan and any issues arising from the plan. The CMP met virtually in May 2021 and have a further meeting planned for October 2021
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4.13.03 Development of a Berkshire Civilian Military Partnership	Samantha Wood	In Progress	★	A preliminary meeting of Berkshire Armed Forces Champions and officers was held in June to discuss terms of reference, work programme and launch meeting of Royal County of Berkshire Civilian Military Partnership.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.02.02 Cultural offer available through libraries	Fiona Atkinson	In Progress	★	Children and adults can immerse themselves in every form of art, film, music and dance through performances and attending classes in the Libraries as the full programme of Library events have resumed. They can also learn about art and culture, local and family history through reading. The cultural offer includes arts and crafts' demonstrations, author talks, shadowing book awards and prizes, and music streaming.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.02.03 Develop the offer in Libraries to support the Adults and Children's agendas	Fiona Atkinson	In Progress	★	The Library Service delivers books to the housebound and clinically vulnerable through the Home Library Service in order to combat social isolation. 25 tablets have been loaned to people with dementia and their carers, working closely with the BFC Dementia Services Coordinator. The Library Service works closely with the Public Health Team and, in particular, with the Social Prescribing team, who signpost their clients to Library events, and promoting the Libraries' collections of "Reading Well" self-help books. We are working with Children's Services to form a Library offer as part of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, to support looked after children and children from low income families and to improve literacy and encourage a love of reading. All Library staff have undertaken the "Making Every Contact Count" e-learning courses. We provide job support, careers' advice and courses on how to write CVs in order to support the unemployed and we also provide one to one training and support to people who are applying for Universal Credit.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.03.02 Addressing Hate Crime	Alison O'Meara	In Progress	●	A BF hate crime action plan has been developed and is in place. It is overseen by the Community Cohesion and Engagement Partnership and reports progress to the Community Safety Partnership. A Bracknell and Wokingham hate crime working group has been initiated to work cohesively across the Local Police Area. This working group is linked into Thames Valley Police's Independent Advisory Group and its Ethnic Community Advisory Group. BF continues monitoring and review of weekly reported crime that has a hate crime flag. BFC Community Engagement continue their extensive work to strength community networks.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.03.05 Child Friendly Partnership Group	Andrew Ellery	In Progress	★	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6.10.02 Cultural Festival	Harjit Hunjan	Completed	★	A virtual cultural event was organised and held via teams with Berkshire Against Racism Saturday, 14 August with many community groups coming together to celebrate their culture. Planning is underway to hold next years event live subject to restriction at the time
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.014 Consultation on major changes to services	Abby Thomas	In Progress	★	Consultation on all major changes to services and policy which affect staff or residents/communities are being regularly undertaken including assessing the impact of changes on people.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.017 All of Us Equality Scheme Monitoring	Harjit Hunjan	In Progress	★	The 2019/20 Equality Scheme annual service monitoring reports have been completed and reviewed by relevant DMTs and the Equalities Group. A summary report for the Lead Member for this area of work has been drafted and once approved reports will be published on the council's website
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.019 Community Cohesions and Engagement Partnership	Harjit Hunjan	In Progress	★	The partnership has continued to meet to consider a range of community issues
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.021 Celebrate the diversity of the workforce	Pamela Moffat	In Progress	★	Over the last 6 months the OD team have formed much closer working relationships with the equalities team. This has led to OD playing a key role in the recruitment and development of over 20 equality allies across the council, in situ to provide low level support to individuals who feel they may have experienced some form of discrimination in the workplace. In addition they will play a leading role in educating teams on service areas on the equalities agenda. In addition to this the HR team have developed an Equal Opportunities policy which is currently in draft and being consulted on through the usual HR governance channels.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.022 Training and development on equality and diversity	Pamela Moffat	In Progress	★	This is currently 9.6% of all staff since April 2021. That equates to 144 staff have completed elearning equality and diversity training, with a further 150 due to attend Unconscious Bias training over the next 3 months.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.025 Prevent Action Plan and Equality Scheme	Harjit Hunjan	In Progress	★	The Bracknell Forest Prevent Action Plan has successfully completed the councils full approval process and was signed off by the Exec on the 22/09/20. An equalities impact assessment was also part of that process.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.101 Equalities Group's Action Plan	Harjit Hunjan	In Progress	★	the Equalities Group has monitored the delivery of the action plan with progress reported to CMT. the majority of actions have been completed or are in the process of being completed
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.102 - Member's Equalities Working Group	Harjit Hunjan	In Progress	★	The Members Equality group has been established making significant progress over the past 6 months including facilitated workshop run by an external EDI provider and has met to consider a number of recommendations and actions to take forward