

TO: OLDER PEOPLE'S PARTNERSHIP
19 OCTOBER 2011

BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL EQUALITY SCHEME 2012-16
Director of Corporate Services

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Bracknell Forest Council is developing an Equality Scheme which will highlight its objectives for reducing inequalities in the Borough for the period 2012-16. The Equality Scheme will replace the Council's three Disability, Race and Gender Equality Schemes and the 'All of Us' Community Cohesion Strategy. The scheme which will be published by April 2012 will highlight our equality objectives, including those to promote good community relations, and the action we will take to achieve these objectives with our partners where relevant. The objectives will need to be achievable, measurable and outcome focussed; given the current financial climate and there being no extra resources to implement the Equality Scheme. An Equality Scheme Summary document is attached at Appendix One.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **The Older People's Partnership is asked to prioritise the equality objectives numbered 25-30 in Appendix Two which are focussed on age equality for older people.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 3.1 To involve partners in the selection of the Council's equality objectives.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 None. The approach the Council is taking to develop its equality scheme is in line with the Equality and Human Right Commission's recommended approach to developing equality objectives. To formalise and promote the Council's support for the service community and enable us to access funding streams.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 A long list of possible equality objectives has been produced in Appendix Two. The list is based on a review of evidence and existing Council strategies which highlight the key equality issues facing the borough, as well as consideration of the objectives that the Council has already set through the development of the Council's Medium Term Objectives for 2011-15. The strategies considered in forming the long list of equality objectives, such as the Older People's Strategy, Children and Young People's Plan and the Institute for Community Cohesion's Faith and Belief Community Research, have been developed with extensive and recent consultation with equality groups, so the long list of objectives has been informed by the communities' priorities already identified.

5.2 In developing the equality scheme we will be consulting the Council's managers, staff, members; as well as partners, voluntary and community groups, particularly equality groups and those representing people protected by the Equality Act 2010, as well as our residents.

This community engagement will take place in two stages:

- involvement in selecting the objectives
- consultation on the draft equality scheme.

5.3 The Council is involving people in selecting the objectives from the long list through a series of targeted scoping workshops and meetings in late October and early November and then consulting on the draft equality scheme which builds on the selected objectives using a questionnaire which will be sent to groups and made available on the Council's website with the draft equality scheme from 5 December 2011 for 8 weeks. Please see the Equality Scheme consultation plan attached at Appendix Three. Equality and diversity issues raised in workshops at the upcoming Bracknell Forest Homes conference are also going to be fed into the consultation process.

5.4 Many of the objectives within the Council's previous Equality Schemes and the Community Cohesion Strategy have now become a part of mainstream business, for example delivering equality and diversity training to staff and members is integrated into the Member Development Strategy and Workforce Development Plan, and this will be highlighted in a section of the Equality Scheme.

5.5 Work is underway to join up the Partnership's priorities and the Council's equality objectives. A number of the Council's chosen equality objectives are likely to be Partnership priorities and objectives that will be delivered in partnership.

5.6 The Council will need to achieve a balance in its choice of equality objectives; we can not focus all our objectives on age equality. Just because an objective is not chosen from the list in Appendix Two though it does not mean that the Council will do be working on that objective, many of these objectives will be addressed through the service plans of the Council's departments.

5.7 The Older People's Partnership is asked to prioritise the equality objectives focussed on age equality for older people in Appendix Two. Please see objectives 25-30.

Background Papers

Appendix One - Equality Scheme Summary Paper
Appendix Two - Equality Objectives Survey Form
Appendix Three - Equality Scheme 2012-16 Consultation Plan

Contact for further information

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