



QUARTERLY SERVICE REPORT

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE

Q4 2014 -15
January – March 2015

Portfolio holders:
Councillor Paul Bettison, Leader of the Council

Assistant Chief Executive:
Victor Nicholls

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Section 1: Director's Commentary

Following considerable work by the **Regeneration Team**, the Development Agreement with Bracknell Regeneration Partnership for Northern Retail Quarter West was exchanged and went unconditional on 30 January. Unconditionality was achieved for Charles Square on 27 February. There was a "ground breaking" ceremony in the town centre involving all the key players where Mace was announced as the principal contractor. Work on site started on 23rd March.

The tenants in Charles Square have been given 'Notice to Quit' letters. The demolition of Winchester House has continued throughout this quarter and is nearing completion. The team has been reduced to two members following the departure of the regeneration officer.

The **Business and Enterprise Service (BES)** continues to work through the comprehensive work plan to address the priority areas of retention and engagement with the local business community, promotion and investment, generating enterprise, employment and skills and improvements to infrastructure. Work is progressing on key projects such as the Business Contact Programme (BCP), a survey of infrastructure needs for business followed by another one related to skills requirements, an inward investment strategy and a refreshed purpose-designed web site aimed at business.

The other key piece of work for the BES is developing an ambitious ten year economic strategy for the borough, to replace the existing one. It is planned that the new strategy will be presented to members for adoption in July 2015.

Elevate Bracknell Forest is progressing well and brings together local providers and businesses in a new way to assist young people, specifically in the age group 16 to 24, to find rewarding and fulfilling jobs and careers. The website, Elevate Me was launched at the end of 2014 and the interim Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) Hub is operational within the town centre.

Community Safety: The overall level of crime recorded by Thames Valley Police in Bracknell Forest has continued to fall but the rate of reduction has reduced and Quarter 4 has ended with a slight rise. This is in no small part due to an increase in recorded violent crime brought about by a review of recording practice following an HMIC report on Thames Valley Police in 2014. Levels of acquisitive crimes such as burglary, robbery and vehicle crime have continued to fall considerably.

The 2014/15 Strategic Assessment has been approved by the Community Safety Partnership with new priorities identified of Child Sexual Exploitation, Preventing Violent Extremism and shoplifting. These priorities will be added to the 2015 refresh of the Community Safety Partnership plan which has delivered reductions in priorities crime in the past. The strategic assessment as the third best performing Community Safety Partnerships out of a most similar group of 15 Local Authorities.

Cambridge University has published its evaluation of the Domestic Abuse Service Co-ordination project which aims to reduce the harm to victims from Domestic Abuse. The findings are that although the number of reports from a treatment cohort did not reduce significantly, there was a significant reduction in the severity of the reports leading to a reduction in harm to victims. This evaluation is on-going.

The domestic homicide review into the death of Aleksandrs Vasiljevs in 2013 has been accepted by the Home Office.

Acquisitive crime levels continue to fall but the regeneration of Bracknell town centre, and other building work within the Borough, together with the associated additional equipment and work force that this will bring may make further reductions challenging.

The **Performance and Partnerships Team** has been working hard co-ordinating the production of service plans for April to September 2015. Following the election these will be updated for the remainder of 2015/16 and 2016/17, once the new Council has set out its four-year vision for the borough. The Executive decision on awarding core grant funding to the voluntary sector has been made and organisations have been notified.

The delivery of the 2014/15 work programme for **Overview and Scrutiny** has been broadly completed. Reports relating to the reviews of Business Rates and Discretionary Relief and of Substance Misuse Involving Children and Young People have been agreed by the respective Overview and Scrutiny Commission/Panel for sending formally to the Executive for responses, which are awaited. The 2014/15 Annual Report of Overview and Scrutiny has been prepared.

In **Communications and Marketing Team**, the last quarter has seen a very high demand for both reactive and pro-active press service from across the council, in particular Coral Reef roadworks, the regeneration of the town centre, public health campaigns, the Care Act and safeguarding children.

Proactive good news stories, particularly from Environment Culture and Communities and Public Health have helped secure an above target number of press releases for the fourth quarter in a row, securing an impressive 82% over target in this final quarter of the year.

Since the last staff survey was carried out to benchmark how well staff feel informed, the percentage of those who feel well informed has dropped slightly from 65% to 61%. In response, there have been several changes to engage staff more regularly. The council's internal corporate messaging system has been incorporated in to the staff magazine Forest Views, which has also been refreshed and had its frequency increased from quarterly to 10 editions a year. Additionally, the internal communications strategy is being revisited and will investigate other opportunities to inform staff.

The regeneration of the town centre has helped secure high volume and positive media coverage for the council over the last few months and this in particular has helped achieve the highest rate of growth in our social media for the year - up 28% over the year.

Section 2: Department Indicator Performance

Note: The 'Current status' column compares the data for quarter 4 against the target set for quarter 4. The final column in the table compares the quarter 4 performance for 2014/15 against the quarter 4 performance for 2013/14. See key below the table.

Ind Ref	Short Description	Previous Figure Q3 2014/15	Current Figure Q4 2014/15	Current Target	Current Status	Comparison with same period in previous year
Communications and Marketing - Quarterly						
L167	Number of media enquiries received (Quarterly)	87	87	N/A	N/A	
L168	Number of news releases issued in the quarter (Quarterly)	99	88	50		
L169	Increase in number of Facebook and Twitter followers (Quarterly)	729	829	250		
Community Safety - Quarterly						
CSP1.01	Prevent a rise in the number of incidents of Burglary Dwelling (Quarterly)	122	134	156		
CSP11.01	Reduce the number of reported incidents of Nuisance ASB as per CADIS (Quarterly)	2,568	Awaiting Q4 data	3,676	N/A	N/A
CSP2.01	Reduce the number of reported criminal offences committed by the Domestic Abuse Service Co-ordination (DASC) cohorts (Quarterly)	47.0	59.0	55.8		
CSP2.02	Reduce the number of Children on Child Protection Plans where DA is a factor and the perpetrator has participated in the DAPS programme (Quarterly)	18	33	15		
CSP7.01	Reduce the number of reported incidents of theft from motor vehicle (Quarterly)	74	61	95		
CSP7.02	Reduce the number of reported incidents of theft of motor vehicle (Quarterly)	18	19	27		
L185	Reduce all crime (Quarterly)	3,589	4,921	4,713		
Overview and Scrutiny - Quarterly						
L116	Percentage of high level complaints dealt with in accordance with corporate standards (Quarterly)	87%	89%	93%		
L132	Cumulative number of local government ombudsman complaints requiring a local settlement (Quarterly)	0	0	4		
Performance and Partnerships - Quarterly						
L115	Performance reports produced to corporate timetable (Quarterly)	100%	100%	100%		

Ind Ref	Short Description	Previous figure 2012/13	Current figure 2014/15	Current Target	Current status	Comparison with previous figure
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Communications and Marketing - Annual						
L170	% of staff who feel; generally, the council keeps them well informed (Biennial)	65.0%	61.0%	70.0%		

Traffic Lights		Comparison with same period in previous year	
Compares current performance to target		Identifies direction of travel compared to same point in previous quarter	
	Achieved target or within 5% of target		Performance has improved
	Between 5% and 10% away from target		Performance sustained
	More than 10% away from target		Performance has declined

The following are annual indicators that are not being reported this quarter:

Ind Ref	Short Description
L171	Percentage of respondents who give an overall rating of good or excellent to Town & Country (Annually)
L165	Percentage of O&S Members satisfied with Overview & Scrutiny officer support (Biennial)

Section 3: Complaints

Corporate Complaints received

The number of complaints received in this quarter – 0.

The number of complaints received from quarter 1 to quarter 4 (*year to date*) – 0

Note: As of 1st January 2015 the corporate complaints process changed to a three stage process.

Stage 1: Informal complaint to member of staff

Stage 2: Formal complaint to Director of relevant service area

Stage 3: Formal complaint to Chief Executive

The following table excludes Stage 1 complaints and those complaints which are dealt with through separate appeals processes. It should also be noted that complaints which move through the different stages are recorded separately at each stage.

Stage	New complaints activity in quarter 4	Complaints activity year to date	Outcome of total complaints activity year to date
Previous Stages 2 & 3 = New stage 2	0	0	N/A
Previous Stage 4 = New stage 3	0	0	N/A
Local Government Ombudsman	0	0	N/A

Nature of complaints/ Actions taken/ Lessons learnt:

The Chief Executive's Office received no stages 2-3 or Ombudsman complaints in quarter 4.

For other council departments, the office investigated five previous stage 4/new stage 3 complaints and co-ordinated the action on one complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO).

Section 4: People

Staffing Levels

	Establishment Posts	Staffing Full Time	Staffing Part Time	Total Posts FTE	Vacant Posts	Vacancy Rate
Chief Executive	3	3	0	3	0	0
Chief Executive's Office	26	22	4	24.61	3	10.34
Department Totals	29	25	4	27.61	3	9.38

Staff Turnover

For the quarter ending	31 March 2015	3.57%
For the last four quarters	1 April 2014 – 31 March 2015	22.22%

Total voluntary turnover for BFC, 2013/14:	12.64%
Average UK voluntary turnover 2013:	12.5%
Average Local Government England voluntary turnover 2013:	12.0%

(Source: XPerHR Staff Turnover Rates and Cost Survey 2014 and LGA Workforce Survey 2012/13)

Comments:

Vacancies are within Regeneration and Business & Enterprise sections

Staff Sickness

Section	Total staff	Number of days sickness	Quarter 4 average per employee	2014/15 annual average per employee
Chief Executive	3	16	5.33	5.33
Chief Executive's Office	26	77	2.96	8.81
Department Totals (Q4)	29	93	3.21	
Totals (14/15)				8.45

Comparator data	All employees, average days sickness absence per employee
Bracknell Forest Council 13/14	5.50 days
All local government employers 2013	8.0 days
All South East Employers 2013	6.9 days

(Source: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development Absence Management survey 2014)

N.B. 20 working days or more is classed as Long Term Sick.

Comments:

There was 35 days sickness due to Long Term Sickness. The full annual average per employee for the Department stands at 8.45 days per employee. The annual average per employee for the department excluding Long Term Sickness stands at 2.24 days per employee.

Section 5: Progress against Medium Term Objectives and Key Actions

Progress has been monitored against the sub-actions, supporting the Key Actions contained in the Chief Executive's Office Service Plan for 2014 – 2015. This contains 32 actions to be completed in support of 4 Medium Term Objectives. Annex A provides detailed information on progress against each of these key actions.

Overall 5 actions were completed at the end of Quarter 4 () , while 26 actions are on schedule () and 1 was causing concern ( and ) .

The 1 action that was causing concern is:

Ref	Action		Progress
11.2.9	Develop and implement the Good to Great programme theme of Communications and Cross-Department working		This work will continue into 2015/16 and will now be taken forward as part of the follow up to the 2014 Staff Survey results. A meeting will be arranged with staff volunteers in Q1 2015/16.

Section 6: Money

Quarterly financial information relating to the Chief Executive's Office is presented in the Corporate Services Quarterly Service Reports

Section 7: Forward Look

Regeneration

- Pilings for the foundations for Northern Retail Quarter West are scheduled to arrive in April.
- Construction will commence in June following the arrival of the steel.
- Tenants will vacate Charles Square by beginning of June allowing for that development to commence.
- Total demolition of Winchester House is imminent.

Business and Enterprise Service

- Undertake meetings with key businesses as part of the Business Contact Programme.
- Develop the ten year economic strategy.
- Produce the infrastructure survey report.
- Complete the skills survey.
- Continue development work on the website for business.
- Develop essential “back-room” systems and market intelligence, including a business database, available property register, and Customer relationship management (CRM).
- Continue work on Elevate Bracknell Forest to assist young people find suitable jobs.

Community Safety

- Work is now beginning with Bracknell Regeneration Partnership to identify what will be required to ensure public safety and low crime & disorder within the regenerated Bracknell town centre.
- Further training and awareness-raising among staff and partners following the introduction of the statutory Prevent obligations for local authorities.
- Further programme of work planned to deliver e-safety training to schools and the carers throughout 2015/16.
- Work with media at close of year to maximise publicity for the launch of the refreshed 2014-17 Community Safety Plan (CSP) plan.
- Further work with Royal Military Academy to ensure that CSP takes full account of the needs of the military community. This results from a need identified through the Civilian Military Partnership
- The Domestic Abuse Service Co-ordination (DASC) project evaluation to be extended on the request of Cambridge University to add value to the original evaluation.
- Work continues with Thames Valley Police (TVP) and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) to extend the scope of the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) capability between the two boroughs.

Performance & Partnerships

- Finalising and publishing service plans.
- Preparation for the new financial year performance reporting.
- Finalising Conditions of Grant monitoring for voluntary sector organisations ready for the new financial year.

Overview and Scrutiny

- Submitting the 2014/15 Annual Report of Overview and Scrutiny to Council.

- Commencing the delivery of the 2015/16 work programme for Overview and Scrutiny, principally through supporting the programme of Commission and Panel meetings, and establishing Overview and Scrutiny working groups to commence reviews.
- Continuing to ensure that complaints against the Council at stage 4 and through the Local Government Ombudsman are responded to fairly and promptly.

Communications and Marketing

- Continuing integration with other marketing and commercially focussed colleagues around the council.
- Pulling together a 'single picture' of the investment being made into Bracknell and exploring ways to continue to grow internal communications.
- The service will also be actively involved in the website and intranet refresh projects.

Annex A: Progress on Key Actions

Sub-Action	Due Date	Owner	Status	Comments
MTO 1: Re-generate Bracknell Town Centre				
1.2 Regenerate Charles Square				
1.2.1 Implement the Compulsory Purchase Order	31/03/2015	CXO		CPO expired. No further notices.
1.3 Deliver the framework which enables regeneration of Bracknell Town Centre.				
1.3.1 Produce and implement a strategy for Market Square and the existing market	31/03/2015	CXO		New Market launched
1.3.3 Work with BRP to monitor and implement demolition and construction programme for town centre regeneration	31/03/2015	CXO		On track
1.4 Attract new retailers and leisure operators to underpin the regeneration of the Broadway based northern retail quarter and the creation of an '18 hour' economy.				
1.4.1 Co-ordinate the work of the Town Centre Partnership	31/03/2015	CXO		On track
1.4.2 Provide support to development partners and other occupiers where required to attract new retailers to the regenerated town centre	31/03/2015	CXO		On track
1.4.3 Work with BRP to agree a strategic brief for the Northern Retail Quarter East	31/03/2015	CXO		Working with BRP to agree a strategic brief for the Southern Gateway
1.6 Maintain pressure on landowners to rebuild or refurbish unattractive buildings in the town centre				
1.6.1 Maintain pressure on landowners to rebuild or refurbish unattractive buildings in the town centre	31/03/2015	CXO		Working with Comer. Winchester House demolition to be completed by May 15
1.7 Promote residential development in the town centre, where viable, to take pressure off of our countryside to deliver housing.				
1.7.1 Coordinate proposals for residential development in Bracknell Town Centre including at Stanley Walk/Jubilee Gardens	31/03/2015	CXO		Currently monitoring Royal British Legion
1.8 Deliver high quality public realm and public spaces.				
1.8.4 Co-ordinate future public realm and town centre management	31/03/2015	CXO		Joint strategy agreed. Work on-going
1.9 Implement an Accommodation Strategy to rationalise the number of buildings used by the Council.				

Sub-Action	Due Date	Owner	Status	Comments
1.9.13 Implement flexible and mobile working principles across all town centre offices	31/03/2015	CXO		
MTO 8: Work with the police and other partners to ensure Bracknell Forest remains a safe place				
Sub-Action	Due Date	Owner	Status	Comments
8.1 Continue to seek to reduce overall crime levels, focusing particularly on burglary, domestic abuse, Internet related crime, non-rape sexual offences, personal robbery, vehicle crime, violent crime and anti-social behaviour.				
8.1.1 Implement the Community Safety Plan priorities, to tackle burglary, domestic abuse, internet related crime, non-rape sexual offences, personal robbery, vehicle crime, violent crime and anti-social behaviour	31/03/2015	CXO		At the year end there has been a slight rise in the overall number of recorded crimes in the Borough. This is mainly due to a rise in sexual offending and a rise in violent crime brought about by more thorough scrutiny of crime recording by TVP, a revised domestic abuse risk assessment tool that asks victims questions about rape and an increased number of historical reports due to high celebrity trials. There has however been a substantial reduction in the number of burglaries, robberies and violent crimes. Bracknell Forest has performed well against its most similar group
8.1.2 Continue to seek to reduce overall levels through targeted action with prolific offenders	31/03/2015	CXO		The BFC Community Safety team includes a member of staff who works with prolific offenders to reduce their offending and subsequent harm to the community. The offender manager also works with perpetrators of domestic abuse and some referrals under the Prevent / Channel Process. All known prolific offenders are being targeted.
8.1.3 Work with partners to ensure crime and disorder is considered as part of the town centre regeneration plans	31/03/2015	CXO		CCTV system in Bracknell town centre now incorporates BFC cameras which are monitored through the Princess Square control room. Bracknell Businesses Against Crime (BBAC) is consulted over changing patterns of crime within the town centre. BFC Community Safety Manager is engaged with police and BRP to plan for the management of the town centre post regeneration.
8.2 Reduce the incidence of anti-social behaviour.				
8.2.1 Implement a co-ordinated programme of action to address anti-social behaviour	31/03/2015	CXO		The CSP Anti-Social Behaviour Working Group meets monthly to consider all ASB issues which merit a partnership approach. Most of these cases are currently neighbour disputes. Repeat cases and cases with vulnerable victims take priority.
8.3 Press for more visible policing.				

Sub-Action	Due Date	Owner	Status	Comments
8.3.1 Work through the Joint Tasking process with the Police to ensure visible policing in the borough	31/03/2015	CXO		Community Safety Manager is a regular attendee at the police Daily Management Meetings and the monthly Joint Tasking meeting to make recommendations where appropriate. The CSM also has regular meetings with the Local Police Area Commander and his deputy. Regular meetings with local policing team by Community Safety Manager to influence local patrol patterns.

8.4 Work with the police and crime commissioner to maximise the benefits to residents of the borough.

8.4.1 Work with a newly elected police and crime commissioner to maximise the benefits to residents of the borough, in particular by ensuring timely communication with the new commissioner	31/03/2015	CXO		Regular contact is maintained with the PCCs office. Performance and finance data is submitted as required. Discussions are on-going between the PCCs office and CSPs over commissioning services across the Thames Valley
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MTO 9: Sustain the economic prosperity of the Borough

Sub-Action	Due Date	Owner	Status	Comments
9.1 Contribute to the work of the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership, including the promotion of inward investment and support for existing firms				
9.1.1 Promote superfast broadband through the implementation of the Berkshire Broadband plan	31/03/2015	CXO		On track
9.2 support the work of the Economic and Skills Partnership to sustain the local economy, in particular by co-ordinating the implementation of the Bracknell Forest Local Economic Development Strategy.				
9.2.1 Sustain the borough's economic prosperity through co-ordination of the Bracknell Forest Economic and Skills Development Partnership	31/03/2015	CXO		Ongoing
9.2.13 Co-ordinate the Bracknell Forest Careers Event	31/03/2015	CXO		Complete
9.2.14 Implement the 'hub and spoke' proposals in the City Deal project plan, working with other Berkshire authorities and the Local Enterprise Partnership	31/03/2015	CXO		On track
9.2.15 Work with the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership, in particular to deliver the Strategic Economic Plan implementation plan	31/03/2015	CXO		Ongoing

Sub-Action	Due Date	Owner	Status	Comments
9.2.2 Promote economic prosperity through the establishment of a dedicated resource to support business and enterprise	31/03/2015	CXO		Complete
9.2.3 Promote inward investment through the implementation of an inward investment strategy	31/03/2015	CXO		Ongoing
9.2.4 Review the Local Economic Strategy	31/03/2015	CXO		On track
9.2.5 Support small and medium sized enterprises through the provision of advice and guidance	31/03/2015	CXO		Ongoing
9.2.6 Develop a programme of engaging with local businesses and eliminating barriers to success	31/03/2015	CXO		On track
9.2.7 Promote commercial links to China, and other emerging economies, in particular through the implementation of a programme of engagement and events	31/03/2015	CXO		Continuing
9.2.8 Promote Bracknell Forest as a premier business location through the development of a new brand identity	31/03/2015	CXO		Ongoing as part of ESDP

MTO 11: Work with our communities and partners to be efficient, open, transparent and easy to access and to deliver value for money

Sub-Action	Due Date	Owner	Status	Comments
11.2 ensure staff and elected members have the opportunities to acquire the skills and knowledge they need.				
11.2.9 Develop and implement the Good to Great programme theme of Communications and Cross-Department working	31/03/2015	CXO		This work will continue into 2015/16 and will now be taken forward as part of the follow up to the 2014 Staff Survey results. A meeting will be arranged with staff volunteers in Q1 2015/16.
11.7 work with partners and engage with local communities in shaping services.				
11.7.7 Continue to support the voluntary sector through the provision of core grants, to develop it's capacity	31/03/2015	CXO		The core grants for 2015/16 have been awarded. Q3 monitoring meetings were completed and monitoring meetings for Q4 2014/15 are being scheduled for end April 2015.

Sub-Action	Due Date	Owner	Status	Comments
11.7.8 Lead the review and work with partners to update the Sustainable Community Strategy	31/03/2015	CXO		Due to the election, it has been agreed to postpone the development of this strategy until the new Council have set out their four-year vision. This will be revisited in September 2015 and a decision made on how to move forward.
11.8 implement a programme of economies to reduce expenditure				
11.8.5 Develop proposals to help the Council produce a balanced budget in 2015/16	31/03/2015	CXO		On track