

## **Equalities Objectives and Activities 2012 – 13**

### **Introduction**

Following the introduction to the Equality Act 2010, public authorities are required to comply with the general equality duty and specific equality duties as set out below:

### **General Duty**

In the exercise of our functions, West Berkshire Council must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

### **Specific Duties**

In summary, the Council are required to:

1. Publish information to demonstrate our compliance with the general equality duty. This needs to be done annually in January each year. This information must include information relating to people who share a protected characteristic who are employees or others affected by our policies and practices. (Employee information is published in the Annual Employee Report. Details of where this can be found are included below.)
2. We must prepare and publish one or more objectives that act to further any of the aims of the general equality duty. This must be done at least every four years, beginning in 2012. The objectives must be specific and measurable.

The Council's equality objectives were drawn directly from the West Berkshire Council Strategy 2012-16 where equality is core to the way in which we plan and deliver our services.

The following table sets out the Council's equality objectives and supporting activities, and provides a summary of our progress over the year to date.

	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Progress at November 2012</b>
<b>1</b>	Extend the range of community-based support services for disabled children, and introduce personal budgets to ensure that services are tailored to individual need	To maintain the number of children accessing Short Breaks	626 children and young people have been in receipt of short break care, across a range of activities, between July and September 2012, compared with 579 the previous quarter.
		To maintain the number of overnight care provided to disabled young people	167 nights of overnight care were provided to disabled young people between July and September 2012, compared to 16 the previous quarter.
		To increase the number of children engaged in West Berks Personalised Budgets Pilot	This scheme has yet to be fully implemented and as yet no families have been engaged, however a target has been set to engage 5 children by March 2013.
<b>2</b>	Focus care and support services on more targeted interventions, in particular addressing the needs of those most vulnerable in our communities	Maintain the percentage of vulnerable people maintaining independent living through the provision of a housing related support service	Provisional data to October 2012 shows that 99% of vulnerable people are maintaining independent living. The Supporting People Provider Survey is due to be completed by the end of 2012 and will provide firm information.
		Re-commissioned floating support service for Older People to be in place by 31/12/12	Complete
		Increase capacity to provide support to victims of domestic abuse to 36 by 31/12/12 through the new floating support service	Completed.
		Increase the number of referrals into Safeguarding Adults regarding individuals not already known to the Council through publicity	Work is underway to develop new ways of raising public awareness about the need to keep people safe, however there has been considerable operational activity over the last quarter which has slowed some of this work down.

The following is a case study of a vulnerable adult who was referred to Safeguarding Adults who had previously been unknown to the Council:

A call is received from a care home reporting an incident that occurred. The Coordinator is informed that a resident in her 90's lost consciousness whilst being transferred in a hoist. The home Manager said that they were investigating the incident but the coordinator understand that it is likely that the resident/ customer had been hoisted inappropriately thus putting the resident at risk. It is evident to the manager that a member of staff has acted inappropriately and put the resident at unnecessary risk. The staff member is suspended pending investigation.

It is established that the resident funds her own placement and is unknown to local Adult services. A Safeguarding alert is raised and a discussion takes place with the AFA (Access For All) Team regarding the alert and a need to investigate the incident.

A planning discussion is held. The ambulance service and GP are called for more information and reports are requested. A Worker attends the care home to see how the resident is and to assess her needs and how these are being met. It is evident during the assessment and investigative process that the information in the care plans is incorrect and guidelines have not been followed and this had been the cause of the accident. Further discussion with the ambulance service and the manager establishes that the ambulance crew had not been fully notified of the incident. A strategy meeting is arranged and protection plan is put in place. The plan is monitored and a further review is arranged four weeks later to ensure that the customer is safe. It was evident that the care had been negligent, the incident had been more serious than first reported and the negligence extended beyond the original referral. The staff member is disciplined and loses position.

<b>3</b>	Assist people to understand for themselves - and make decisions about - the cost of their care and support.	Maintain percentage of financial assessments completed within 3 weeks of referral to the Welfare Benefits Team	Of 496 referrals, 493 were assessed within three weeks. This equates to 99%.
		Maintain 80% of benefits assessments completed within 3 weeks of referral from Children's Services	Of 68 referrals, 67 were assessed within three weeks. This equates to 99%.

<b>4</b>	Support carers in the looking after of relatives or friends through our carers' strategy: strengthening and improving our awareness of carers' needs to commission appropriate support.	Increase the number of carers receiving a service	<p>At October 2012, 102 carers were receiving a service.</p> <p>For carers to receive a service their needs as a carer must be reviewed. Reviews are currently being undertaken by Crossroads and this is likely to result in the number of carers who are in receipt of a service increasing over future months.</p>
		Baseline the overall satisfaction of Carers with Social Services	Information is not currently available for this measure, as a satisfaction survey is not due to be undertaken until the end of 2012 with the results becoming available in early 2013.
<b>5</b>	Reduce the emphasis on traditional day centres and develop alternatives for vulnerable people	Maintain number of providers offering community based day opportunities in West Berkshire.	<p>At October 2012 there were 51 providers offering community based day opportunities in West Berkshire.</p> <p>Since 2011, WBC has offered tenancies to a number of 3rd Sector providers within the 3 Resource Centres. These tenancies have continued and new providers have also taken on facilities within the centres, maintaining and offering a greater variety of services to those in receipt of Personal Budgets or self funders with social care needs.</p> <p>The Contracts and Commissioning Team have continued to work with providers to ensure that quality of provision is maintained and to identify future opportunities.</p>

WBC has allocated Personal Budgets to all Adult Social Care Services recipients; enabling an imaginative and varied choice of services/activities to purchase rather than relying on traditional Day Services.

WBC has closed 6 of its traditional day services and has re-developed 3 existing Day Centres into new pan disability Resource Centres offering tailored day opportunities for adults with Learning Disabilities, Physical Disabilities, Frailty and Dementia who require higher levels of support, as well as offering facilities for non council providers to share these premises and deliver their own services.

In 2011, WBC launched a Market Development Project to “kick start” and support the setting up and expansion of new social care providers in the West Berkshire area, enabling Personal Budget holders and those in need of social care services with their own funds to choose from a range of different services rather than opting for a traditional day service.

<b>6</b>	Deliver effective transport solutions for all by increasing choice and minimising congestion	Improve access to two further rail stations by 31 March 2013	It is likely that we will exceed this target as we hope to make small access improvements to more than two rail stations by 31 March 2013. Designs are currently being finalised ready for implementation by the end of March 2013. Examples of improvements being delivered are new hand rails and tactile paving, an accessible toilet, ramps, etc. This work is being carried out in partnership with First Great Western.
		Develop a Planning Policy Parking Strategy for the District by 31 March 2016.	The development of this strategy is on track to be delivered by 2016. Currently consideration is being given to parking standards for new developments and this includes the provision of adequate disabled spaces.

The Council undertook a Rail Access Audit of rail stations in West Berkshire during 2011. This has resulted in the Council having information for each station to highlight the issues and the measures / schemes that could be put in place to address them. These audits are being used to guide the Train Operating Company, Network Rail and the Department for Transport in relation to how funding could be put to good use in West Berkshire. The Council will continue to lobby for improvements using this information as evidence. In the meantime, the audit is helping to guide First Great Western's minor works improvement programme.

The focus for the work is to try and provide equal access to train services and the facilities at the rail stations. The Council has been working in partnership with FGW and Network Rail in order to highlight the work that is needed.

7	Improve the health and well being of the adult population of West Berkshire through tackling inequalities in health (Health and Well-Being Board)	Preventative Public Health outcomes to be developed through the Health and Well-Being Board	The Health & Wellbeing Strategy is in draft form and currently being consulted on across a wide range of stakeholders. The consultation closed at the end of 2012, with responses now being reviewed.
8	Develop school buildings to meet demand and create the best possible learning environments within available resources.	Undertake 10 capital projects across West Berkshire schools.	4 capital projects had been completed at October 2012. Planning applications are assessed by an Access Panel who provide comment related to the accessibility of the development. Membership of the Panel consists of West Berkshire residents with a range of disabilities who are able to provide a broad view of access issues.
9	Being open and transparent in the way we do business (as part of FAGG programme)	Complete full Equality Impact Assessments on all relevant budget proposals for the 2013-14 revenue budget	This action is underway but is yet to be completed.
10	Ensuring that we eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and advance equality of opportunity for all members of our communities	Establish a Corporate Equalities Group	A corporate group, the Including Everyone Group, was established in April 2012 to oversee the progress of equalities work within the Council.
		Develop a set of council-wide equality activities to support the furtherance of the council's equality objectives	This report sets out the objectives and activities that the Council is working to.

		<p>Ensure that all employees have taken part in mandatory equalities training at least every 3 years</p>	<p>At the end of October 2012, 55% of West Berkshire Council employees were up to date with equalities training.</p>
		<p>Proportion of members trained / refreshed in equality training</p>	<p>At the end of October 2012, 31% of Members had received equalities training within the last three years.</p>
		<p>Ensure all new and revised policies entered into the executive cycle have been subject to a impact assessment establishing any potential adverse impact on people with protected characteristics</p>	<p>Reports are not accepted into the formal decision making process without an impact assessment having been carried out when appropriate.</p>
		<p>Ensure that the Council's procurement processes require any third parties which exercise functions on its behalf comply with the Equalities Duty</p>	<p>The Council has prepared an Equality Policy setting out the behaviours expected of all those working on behalf of the Council. A process for monitoring this is to be developed.</p>
		<p>Publish equality data on the equalities web pages covering the impact of the Council's policies and services on an annual basis.</p>	<p>The Council provides information relating to employees in its Annual Employee Report. Information relating to 2011/12 can be found at:  <a href="http://www.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=31283">http://www.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=31283</a>  The Council maintains a range of research, information and data relating to the residents of West Berkshire. This can be located at:  <a href="http://www.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=31283">http://www.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=31283</a>  Equality Impact Assessments, where applicable, are published alongside the relevant report on the Council's Committee web pages at:  <a href="http://www.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=20398">http://www.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=20398</a></p>

11	Explore the different ways in which we can work more closely with our partners in the voluntary and community sector, parish councils and other community groups;	Closer working outcomes to be developed through Community Involvement Board	Membership and terms of reference for the group have been established with a first meeting held on 12 November 2012.
12	Ensure that our workforce is reflective of our communities	Any approved recommended actions from the annual employment report be actioned within 12 months.	The first approved recommendation, 'to review the proportions of male/female staff at senior management level' is expected to be undertaken during 2013.