

Bracknell Forest Borough Council

Our priorities and medium term objectives 2009-2011

Six over-arching priorities:

- Priority one: a town centre fit for the 21st Century
- Priority two: protecting and enhancing our environment
- Priority three: promoting health and achievement
- Priority four: create a borough where people are safe and feel safe
- Priority five: value for money
- Priority six: sustain economic prosperity

Priority One: a town centre fit for the 21st century

- 1 To build a vibrant Bracknell town centre that residents are proud of by:
 - starting construction of the new retail, commercial, residential and leisure facilities
 - delivering 200 new homes in and around Bracknell Town centre
 - improving access to the new town centre by providing
 - extensive new parking facilities
 - a major package of junction improvements
 - more bus lanes and a “park and ride” scheme
 - constructing and opening a new Bracknell library, Civic offices and a high quality ‘Jubilee Gardens’
 - ensuring local people gain the skills for employment in the new town centre
 - improving perceptions and vibrancy of Bracknell town centre during redevelopment
 - Assessing options for future accommodation for library, democratic function, customer services and offices
 - adopting transformational business processes to support new ways of working in the new accommodation

Priority Two: protecting and enhancing our environment

- 2 To keep our parks, open spaces and leisure facilities accessible and attractive by:
 - Restoring South Hill Park grounds
 - Improving the quality of the countryside and open space by targeted projects and by engaging the voluntary sector
 - Implement the cultural strategy, to maintain and improve the quality of life in the Borough
 - Review and update the Parks and Open Spaces strategy
- 3 To promote sustainable housing and infrastructure development by:
 - Producing a Local Development Framework that protects the Green Belt and balances the demand for new housing with the need to protect the wider environment

- Using the planning regime to ensure that all new housing developments are matched by appropriate investment in infrastructure
- Implementing a strategy to mitigate the impact of development on the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area
- Implementing the Local Transport Plan
- Providing more choice for social housing applicants through the introduction of Choice Based Lettings
- Increasing the number of affordable houses in the borough, including directly funding 100 new units
- Implement the Housing Strategy to provide the right homes for the diverse housing needs of the community in Bracknell Forest

4 Keep Bracknell Forest clean and green by:

- Raising standards of landscape maintenance
- Raising standards of cleanliness in our byways, pavements and streets
- Keeping satisfaction in the streetscene above 75%
- Increasing recycling rates to 50% through the RE3 initiative
- Establishing a fast response team and increasing environmental enforcement activity to reduce the amount of litter in the Borough
- Developing a local climate change strategy by 2009, in line with the Nottingham Declaration
- Improving energy management in Council and school facilities
- Reducing the level of fly tipping in the borough
- Developing our joint waste strategy

Priority Three: promoting health and achievement

5 To improve health and well being within the Borough by:

- Developing and implementing a comprehensive health strategy for the Borough with partners, which identifies clear priorities and actions to address local health inequalities, and to improve health and well-being
- Working with health partners to secure more outpatient and diagnostic facilities in the borough
- Focusing on prevention, for example by increasing the number of adults participating in at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise per week
- Producing an annual report on public health
- Monitoring the ban on smoking in public spaces
- Working with health partners to improve mental health services for children and young people
- Enabling more people to remain in their own homes through the use of Telecare

6 To improve the outcomes for children and families through the Children and Young Peoples Plan by:

- Ensuring all schools are good schools and continuing to raise standards
- Making sure there are enough good school buildings for an expanding borough, including building a replacement for Garth Hill College
- Commissioning a wide range of 'extended services', including opportunities in music and sport

- Establishing six new childrens centres to give families access to integrated multi-agency services for young children
- Investing in new Youth facilities, and targeted youth support
- Helping schools manage behaviour and supporting young people at risk of exclusion from education, training or employment opportunities
- Setting up effective integrated services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities
- Improving the lives of children in care through better corporate parenting and effective commissioning of placements
- Putting in place new measures to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- Implementing the Primary Capital Strategy and developing facilities in secondary and special schools
- Increasing the range of support available for parents by implementing the actions set out in the Parenting Strategy, 'Strong Foundations'
- Improving adult skills

7 Seek to ensure that every residents feels included and able to access the services they need by:

- Appointing an Executive Member with specific responsibility for Community Cohesion and related strategies
- Using innovative methods of engaging local residents in decisions that affect them, particularly targeting 'hard to reach' groups to listen to their views
- Creating a new customer contact centre in Bracknell that allows people to access all services
- Improving support in schools for minority ethnic communities with English as an additional language needs
- Implementing a Disability Equality Scheme and Gender Equality Scheme and implementing the Council's Race Equality Scheme
- Increasing access to services by electronic means
- Implementing the Community Cohesion strategy and through the LAA focusing on the use of culture and sport to give people a chance to shape their sense of belonging and identity as members of their communities
- Working within the Bracknell Forest Partnership to show continuous improvement in equalities and diversity in the Council and its services, and to achieve level 3 of the Equality Standard.
- supporting the voluntary and community sector to increase levels of volunteering
- implementing the Bracknell Forest Partnership Community Engagement Strategy, to engage with residents to shape service provision
- Developing an action plan to support the implementation of the Community Empowerment legislation

Priority Four: create a borough where people are, and feel, safe:

8 To reduce crime and increase people's sense of safety in the Borough by:

- Working with the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership to reduce crime by 3% each year by 2011
- Reducing the number of people who fear crime by 10% by 2011
- Expanding the CCTV network coverage in the Borough
- Using the 'speedwatch' anti-speeding teams to reduce the incidence of speeding

- Reducing the number of people, particularly young people, abusing drugs and alcohol
 - Publishing an action plan to Prevent Violent Extremism
- 9 To promote independence and choice for vulnerable adults and older people by:
- Modernising services for vulnerable adults and older people by reducing reliance on residential care and improving access to community based services
 - Increasing the number of people having direct control of the budgets for their care
 - Developing a Borough-wide Strategy for Older People
 - Providing advice and support to vulnerable people to help maintain them in their own homes
 - Providing support for carers through working with statutory and voluntary partners
 - Reducing fuel poverty by reducing the number of cold damp homes of people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low efficiency rating.

Priority Five: value for money:

10 To be accountable and provide excellent value for money by:

- Maintaining Council Tax levels in the lowest quarter of all unitary authorities
- Implementing a four year 'efficiency' programme to reduce spending to sustainable levels
- Creating clear accountable governance structures for working in partnership with other organisations in the Borough
- Working effectively with partners to improve the quality of life in the Borough
- Implementing the priority areas of the Service Efficiency Strategy to deliver savings and improve service operation
- Implementing the flexible working strategy to reduce accommodation requirements and improve service delivery
- Ensuring all council services provide value for money and make effective use of resources
- Implementing all appropriate actions to ensure staff are in place with the right skills and capacity to deliver service outcomes and maximise service efficiency
- Ensuring all Members have the appropriate skills and knowledge to carry out their role through implementing the Member Development Strategy

Priority Six: sustain economic prosperity:

11 To promote the Borough's economic activity and potential by:

- Working closely with partners to produce a programme of local action to support the local economy
- Responding to the review of sub-national economic development and regeneration by working with partners to establish new regional Economic arrangements
- Publishing an economic assessment for Bracknell Forest
- Working closely with the Berkshire Economic Strategy Board including the publication of the Berkshire Economic Strategy

12 To promote workforce skills

- Contribute to the development of an appropriately skilled workforce through Adult and Community Learning

13 To limit the impact of the recession

- Maintain invoice payment performance and our policy of paying all undisputed invoice payments within the terms agreed with the supplier
- Promote the take-up of benefits, allowances and concessions provided by the Council