ANNEX 1

Equality Policy – Action Plan 2014/15 – report on progress

The council is required to set and publish specific, measurable equality objectives. We have to report at least annually on our progress against these, and we have to revise our objectives every four years.

In our Equality Policy 2012-17, we set ourselves the following objectives:

- 1. Understanding the needs of individuals and communities
- 2. Providing accessible, local and personalised services
- 3. Supporting thriving and cohesive communities
- 4. Promoting a culture of fairness in employment and service delivery

For each objective we identified a number of actions which were intended to build on achievements and address areas where improvement was needed in our performance. This is our annual report against those actions.

Council-wide Actions

Action	Objective	Update
Action Ensure the content of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment contains access to ever-richer data on groups with protected characteristics or facing inequalities of outcome or access and make it publicly available on the JSNA website. (Produced by the Chief Executive's Office, commissioned by the Public Health directorate.)	1 1	Update The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) provides data on groups with protected characteristics, and which may face inequalities in health and wellbeing outcomes. The published JSNA annual summary report for 2015 includes data on: • Deprivation • Race and ethnicity • Religion and belief • Language (new this year)
		 Rurality (new this year) Sexual orientation Marriage and civil partnership (new this year) Pregnancy and maternity (new this year) Disability

		Armed forces personnel
		Carers
		Interactive JSNA dashboards on the Oxfordshire Insight website allow a more
		detail exploration of the data, including on:
		Deprivation
		Ethnicity
		Religion
		Mothers' country of birth (updated this year)
		The JSNA data directory and JSNA publications directory provide access to a range
		of additional web-based information, including relevant research reports and
		health profile tools. These resources were refreshed with the launch of the 2015
		JSNA and are kept updated on an on-going basis.
Ensure that Service and Community Impact Assessments (SCIAs) are produced for all new and updated policies and	1	21 Service and Community Impact Assessments were written to sit alongside the budget proposals in December 2014 to address their potential impact on
service delivery decisions. In particular we will assess all		individuals or communities. Additionally, a cross cutting Service and Community
budget proposals to consider the impacts of any potential		Impact Assessment was produced summarising the potential cumulative impact
changes on groups with protected characteristics.		of the proposals, including on groups with protected characteristics.
(A SCIA is a review of the potential impact of policies and is intended to ensure the diverse needs of our individuals and		Service and Community Impact Assessments form an important part of how we
communities in Oxfordshire are met. We assess the impact		develop policies and make decisions. They are produced for every service
of decisions on any relevant community, but with particular		change proposal, ensuring that consideration is given to the impact on groups with protected characteristics. Each directorate has a lead officer who is
emphasis on groups that share the protected		responsible for monitoring Service and Community Impact Assessments and
characteristics in the Equality Act 2010.)		ensuring they are updated as policies are implemented and services delivered
		throughout the year.
Continue to enhance the focus on 'locality working',	2	There are nine localities in the county council. These localities align with the
ensuring officers and members work together to listen to		council's electoral divisions and provide a forum in which members' views on
and understand local needs. This includes a continuation of		local issues, needs and services can be shared with officers and enable them to
the councillor community budget scheme, where		influence services. In the past year these groups have met four times and had a
councillors have a fund for projects that matter most to their		wide variety of agenda items covering highways infrastructure, adult social care
local community.		provision, schools places and performance and broadband roll out. This has informed policy development and established positive ways of working between
		officers and councillors that allow input from a local perspective.
		Through the councillor community budget scheme over 300 grants were
		allocated to a variety of groups, including community associations and voluntary

organisations, schools, town and parish councils, residents associations, social enterprises and museums.
A wide range of projects were awarded funding under the programme, including: repairs and refurbishment work to village halls and community centres; purchasing of equipment for schools, youth clubs, playgrounds and after school clubs; day activities for the most vulnerable members of the community; youth engagement and outreach programmes; festivals and community events; support for carer; and small infrastructure projects.
Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service have and foster very close locality links via their stations but in particular via the Station Managers and the Fire Risk Managers for the District Council areas.

Children, Education and Families

Action	Objective	Update
Review and monitor the access and engagement of fathers in services, including Early Intervention and Children's Social Care, and identify ways to improve access and targets for improvement where necessary.	3	Engagement of fathers is considered as part of the assessment, planning and review process in both Children's Social Care and Early Intervention and proactive steps are taken to engage and take views and wishes into account, where appropriate to the needs of the child. The role of fathers is carefully considered during any Court Proceedings when planning for the child's future. Where a need has been identified, Children's Centres have dedicated sessions for fathers to promote engagement with services and to support their parenting.
Take action to identify and agree plans and measures to address gaps in educational attainment levels between children from different backgrounds and who share protected characteristics (for example, looked after children, some black and minority ethnic groups, and some children with special educational needs, including children and young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorders).	3	The restructuring of the Vulnerable Learners Service has been completed. The four areas of Education and Learning are clearly focused on outcomes for young people and have a better understanding of what each does to achieve this. All posts are filled and the focus is firmly on raising achievement of all vulnerable pupils. Ofsted training has been delivered for a number of colleagues who work in Children's Social Care so that national expectations are shared and understood. A "Closing the Gap" strategy is in development with contributions from colleagues across Children, Education and Families and Children's Social Care.

		The current meeting framework is being reviewed to ensure that both services work together towards improved outcomes for all our vulnerable youngsters. Attendance of pupils at school is key to keeping all children safe. There is a heightened awareness of this across teams but tighter workings are needed across services and ICT systems used by schools mean it is a challenge for the Local Authority to have an overview of attendance. The impact of the development of additional provision for excluded pupils across the county has been mixed. Work is going on in the city to extend provision for primary aged excluded/vulnerable to exclusion pupils.
Review the equality of access to Early Intervention and Children's Social Care for black and minority ethnic groups (including those from gypsy, Romany, and traveller groups), and identify ways to improve access and targets for improvement.	2	Access to Early Intervention Services are monitored for black and minority ethnic groups and a specific review of access to services by gypsy, Romany, and traveller groups was undertaken across Early Intervention Service in 2014/15, including examples of specific interventions and support. Services are targeted at these groups where the need has been identified, and Early Intervention Services are an active member of the PREVENT strategy – this is the strategy to prevent radicalisation, especially in relation to safeguarding vulnerable adults and children. The specific action in relation to Children's Social Care was to monitor level of complaints from people of black and minority ethnic background. The level of complaints remains in-line with historical levels and continues to be monitored

Social and Community Services' Actions

Action	Objective	Update
Increase the use of the Shared Lives service by older people. (Shared Lives is a scheme where adults of any age who need care and support are offered the chance to stay in a Shared Lives carer's home, or, alternatively, to be supported in their own home by a Shared Lives carer.)	3	A number of people who benefit from the Shared Lives service are over 65, mainly people who have enduring mental health issues or a learning disability. The service also supports people in the early stages of dementia. Work continues to enable people use the service in line with demand. The Shared Lives Team held a celebration event on 14 October 2014 at County Hall to say thank you to the Shared Lives carers who make the scheme such a success. The event was part of Shared Lives week which ran in October 2014 to encourage other people to participate.

Ensure all staff in Integrated Mental Health Teams are trained in relation to Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy and Independent Mental Health Advocacy	2	 Oxford Health, who we commission to deliver mental health services in Oxfordshire, run the following mandatory training for staff. They achieve 98- 100% compliance with attendance at this training: Mental Capacity Act Mental Capacity and the Mental Health Act Mental Health Act for new starters and refresher training
Improve information available for service users and carers when choosing new services	2	 We continue to improve and update our website working closely with partners such as Carers Oxfordshire and the Community Information Network provided by Age UK Oxfordshire. Via the Community Information Network we have introduced local advisers across the county to improve the dissemination of information and advice about the range of social care and the support services available and to help people to access them. The networks rolled out across the county in 2014 with clear locality plans supporting the development of local strategies. This includes outreach work to ensure that information on local services and support is available to people who do not use the internet. Over the coming year we will be investing in and improving our online services directory, through the development and launch of an Information and Advice strategy. This will inform our future approach to commissioning these services, ensuring they respond to the needs of service users and carers that will be identified via a public consultation.

Public Health

Action	Objective	Update
Ensure services commissioned by the Public Health Directorate contain specifications that detail the need for services to be locally accessible and personalised.	2	Major contracts that have been procured in 2014-15 include the contract for Drugs and Alcohol Treatment Services, Smoking Cessation and Oral Health Promotion. The services to be delivered though each of these contracts was specified in detail. For example, substance misuse treatment services will now be delivered on a more diverse locality basis across the county. The Oral Health promotion service will pick up the priorities identified in the Oral Health Needs Assessment carried out by Public Health England.

Continue the countywide Thriving Families programme, Oxford's Breaking the Cycle programme, and Banbury's Brighter Futures programme to bring a range of agencies together to improve outcomes in the most deprived communities of Oxfordshire.	3	The programmes to address inequalities are continuing and there have been some good outcomes. For example, the Thriving Families programme was one of the first in the country to complete phase 1 by claiming 100% success with the target number of families. In Oxford and Banbury the Breaking the Cycle / Brighter Futures programmes have, for example, seen reduction in the number of young people NEET and the identification of volunteers to be trained as health champions from local communities. Food poverty work is also being planned in both areas.
Conduct Health Equity Audits to ensure that services are fairly accessible to the whole population and that all ethnic groups are able to access services (A Health Equity Audit (HEA) is a review procedure, which examines how health determinants, access to relevant health services, and related outcomes are distributed across the population, relative to need.)	4	 The procurement of Drugs and Alcohol services included extensive consultation with stakeholders and clients, as well as the family and carers of clients. This highlighted issues of geographical access which were taken into consideration in specifying the locations for delivery of the new service which will include Locality Hubs in Banbury, Witney, Didcot and Oxford, with outreach and mobile services in addition. An updated Equity Audit of the NHS Health Check update showed that the service offered is equitable across age, sex, deprivation and ethnic minority group, but that targeted work needed to be carried out with groups who are less likely to take up the offer such as men in younger age-groups. A number of GP practices were found to be not participating in delivering the service at the time of the audit. A very detailed piece of work to assess the quality of delivery of NHS Health Checks in primary care has resulted in near -universal coverage across the county. The non-participation of some GP practices in previous years has been addressed In addition there has been targeted promotion of the service to enable those who have not been attending to get more information and understand the benefits of taking up the offer of an NHS Health Check.

Environment and Economy

Action	Objective	Update
Ensure equality and diversity are considered throughout the development of proposals for the Supported Transport Programme, specifically by engaging with stakeholders and user groups, so that the potential impact of changes on groups with protected characteristics is fully understood.	1	Changes to supported transport have to date focussed on Home to School Transport and ensuring that our statutory obligation is met as efficiently as possible. Systematic consultation takes place with affected service users and schools when changes to transport are proposed and implemented, and Service and Community Impact Assessments are prepared.

(Supported transport includes home to school transport, subsidised buses, and transport to day centres, along with various other forms of direct or indirect provision.)	4	 Oxfordshire County Council plan to launch an Integrated Transport Hub in Autumn 2015. This Hub will improve our supported transport offer by: serving as a single 'front door' for all supported transport needs ensuring transport is allocated fairly, according to need giving users more control and choice, making it easier and simpler to get transport guaranteeing value for money generating efficiencies by commissioning and allocating supported transport as a 'whole system' rather than in silos Offering innovative new solutions to the traveling public (e.g. access to Community Transport and Wheels-to-Work schemes) A public consultation on the hub will be launched in 2015 and will include targeted events/meetings and feedback opportunities with all stakeholder groups. We will continue to factor in the needs of protected groups as proposals are developed, including by updating the Service and Community Impact Assessment. So far, discussions have been held at a number of meetings including Older People's Partnership Board, Oxfordshire Rural Community Council's Community Transport Advisory Group and Member Locality meetings. These groups will be kept informed as proposals develop. As part of our general assessment of supported transport we are also undertaking a County wide needs analysis and user criteria analysis of our non- statutory supported transport provision. This analysis is on-going and any proposed changes to supported transport services would involve a public consultation.
of the Customer Service Centre by embedding it within the behaviour and attitudes of staff, as well as the routine policies, procedures and practices of the service.	4	All staff complete the Respect for People eLearning course when they start with Oxfordshire County Council and are required to take an annual refresher.

Continue to expand the number of apprenticeship	4	We have continued to recruit apprentices within a climate of budget and staff
opportunities to create entry level posts for young people,	l	recruitment reductions.
including those from disadvantaged backgrounds such as	l	
those leaving care, non-school attendees and Young Carers.		As we increasingly commission and work with partners to deliver services in Oxfordshire, the number of apprentices we employ directly is decreasing - we
Caleis.	l	have therefore developed and shared via Oxfordshire Apprenticeships an
	l	'employer toolkit' to support other employers with best practice in recruiting and
	l	managing apprentices (including supporting apprentices from disadvantaged
		backgrounds).
		Despite the recruitment freeze at the end of 2014/15, we are continuing to
	l	support the creation of appropriate apprenticeship opportunities. Our completion
	1	rates have remained good and apprentices are supported with seeking
		employment when their apprenticeship finishes.
	l	We have continued to provide entry level opportunities to young people from
	1	disadvantaged backgrounds. For example, we employed two care leavers on
	l	apprenticeships last year with one successfully completing and the other leaving
	1	to take on permanent employment. We also employed a young carer, a young
	l	woman with mental health needs who had been a young person not in
	l	education, employment or training (NEET) and a young man with a learning
		difficulty - all have completed and achieved employment.
		The Council is tackling under-representation of young people in our workforce
	l	under section 159 of the Equality Act 2010 and for this reason a number of our
	l	apprenticeship vacancies are only open to individuals aged between 16 and 24
	l	years old.

Fire and Rescue Service

Action	Objective	Update
Encourage applications from members of underrepresented groups by continuing to hold initiatives such as 'have a go' days for potential recruits, mentoring support for candidates close to reaching the required assessment standards, and producing targeted recruitment materials.	4	The Fire and Rescue Service continue to support the recruitment of under- represented groups and continue to ensure that all our recruitment and selection processes do not discriminate. We have not recruited for whole time fire fighter positions for the last 12 months, but work with local communities when recruiting for On-Call Firefighters. We have carried out recruitment specifically in Henley and Wheatley to support our crewing, and recruitment campaigns have been very successful in these areas.

		In 2014/15 we had 10 female applicants. Four of them have since become On Call (Retained) Firefighters and two of the 10 are still in the system undergoing testing. We have 40 female Firefighters in total currently, which is 5.94% of the overall operational workforce. In the first nine months of 2014/15 four applications to become On Call Firefighters were received from males in ethnic groups. There are 17 On Call Firefighters who are from black or ethnic minority groups which is 5.04% of the On Call staff.
Deliver four case studies outlining how FRS is actively delivering against the objectives in its Equality and Inclusion strategy. The strategy incorporates the Equality Framework for Fire and Rescue Services, the County Council Equality Policy and the Equality Act 2010 general and specific duties.	4	This was completed as part of the Operational Assurance process and we provided these as evidence of the FRS commitment to Equality and Diversity. The case studies can be found on the county council website here: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/equality-and-inclusion
The case studies will be scrutinised by our internal Employment and Equality group, chaired by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and they will be published at least annually on the county council's website.		

Community Safety

Action	Objective	Update
Further develop and maintain the Community Safety Information Management System (part of Oxfordshire Insight) so that it provides readily accessible data on a range of different groups and communities in relation to crime.	1	The Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership (OSCP) provides strategic direction for activity to prevent crime and create safer communities across Oxfordshire. A core role for the partnership is to collaborate and pool resources effectively to support victims of crime and anti-social behaviour, support communities so that they feel safe and reduce offending. Our activity over the past year has included supporting: - the training of our county-wide Domestic Abuse champions which is built
		on understanding the needs of victims from a diverse range of backgrounds:

 victims of hate crime through funding the Stop Hate UK support and
referral service; and
- the development and delivery of local activity to increase awareness of
child sexual exploitation.
All of our activity includes the consideration of inclusivity and access to
Oxfordshire services by minority and vulnerable groups. In addition, we have
continued to improve our community safety evidence base through the
development of our annual county-wide strategic intelligence assessment (SIA)
which includes data on victims of crime, such as hate crime, domestic abuse and
human exploitation. The assessment is analysed by geography and by different
equality groups, where available, and is available on the Oxfordshire Insight
website (under Community Safety).
Due to the need to manage resources efficiently the Community Safety
Information Management System is being integrated within Oxfordshire Insight,
the county-wide data website. This restructuring will enable community safety
information to be linked to the relevant sections of the Joint Strategic Needs
Assessment with data on crime and community safety being presented by
equalities groups and communities, where available.

Gypsy and Traveller Service

Action	Objective	Update
Form a Multi-Agency Gypsy & Traveller Networking Group with practitioners from different sectors and professions who work with Gypsies and Travellers in Oxfordshire, to share knowledge and understanding of each-others services, and provide improved services to children, young people and families living on Travellers sites and unauthorised encampments in Oxfordshire.	3	The Multi-Agency Gypsy & Traveller Networking Group continues to meet regularly to share information amongst professionals working with gypsies and travellers to assist in the development of strong support services. This group's meetings are facilitated by the Gypsy and Traveller Service. During 2014/15 the Gypsy and Traveller Service commenced support for the Thames Valley Police Community Placements programme. Through this programme, trainee Police Officers spend time with the Service and visit traveller sites managed by the County Council. The aim of this programme is to build awareness of gypsy and traveller culture and foster stronger relationships between gypsy and traveller families and the Police.

Trading Standards

Action	Objective	Update
Ensure that people living in sheltered accommodation receive and understand consumer education and information services, especially regarding scams and other forms of financial abuse	2	In 2014/15 over 50 consumer education and advice events were delivered mainly relating to scams and financial abuse. In addition the service piloted an intervention programme aimed at victims of financial abuse (predominantly older people). Through this programme over 100 potential postal scams victims were visited. Of these, 20 were found to be actual victims and in need of follow up work and one severe case of financial abuse was uncovered which is being progressed through the courts. Support was also arranged for 34 doorstep crime victims through simple solutions, such as 'call blockers' (technology that screens telephone calls and
Ensure that people living in those localities where evidence suggests the awareness of Trading Standards services is low, but the need of services may be high, have a greater understanding of how to report concerns and access assistance.	2	blocks calls from unwanted or unknown numbers) and door cameras. The localities identified through research were targeted in the preparation and promotion of projects such as the electric blanket testing campaign. Focussed work was also undertaken in communities affected by the sale of 'legal highs', particularly where the open availability of these products would increase use by young people.

Chief Executive's Office

Action	Objective	Update
Analyse and share data from the 2011 Census to build up the most accurate picture of the diversity of the county's residents	1	 The Research and Intelligence Unit has published a range of briefings that explain clearly and in detail what the 2011 Census reveals about the diversity of Oxfordshire's residents. From an equalities perspective, this analysis sits alongside other evidence about the diversity of the local population rather than replacing it, since the Census does not report data relevant to all groups/aspects of the population specified in the Equality Act 2010. Some of the key briefings are: <u>November 2014 newsletter</u>, summarising available data for individual equalities themes. <u>"Focus on Equalities</u>" (November 2013) – summaries the Census data for individual equalities themes, where available

		 The characteristics that the 2011 Census data has covered most robustly are: "age"; "race"; "religion or belief"; "marriage and civil partnership"; and "sex" (although the Census conflated the distinction between an individual's gender and their biological sex). There have been additional bespoke analyses and briefings on these topics. 2011 Census provided some evidence about the "disability" characteristic, through a question about how much a person's physical activity is limited, as well as informal care giving/receiving. Bespoke briefings on this topic have also been produced.
		Characteristics for which the 2011 Census does not provide data are: "sexual orientation"; "pregnancy and maternity"; and "gender reassignment".
Continue to ensure that Oxfordshire Voice Citizens' Panel, our resident's panel, is broadly representative of the makeup of the county to ensure it is balanced to reflect age, gender, ethnicity and disability.	1	The Oxfordshire Voice Citizens' Panel was significantly refreshed at the start of 2014 and its membership was reduced in size to 2,000. Two surveys were carried out with the panel at the end of 2014 that have highlighted areas for further refreshment. During 2015 we will address the ongoing representativeness of the Oxfordshire Voice Citizens' Panel by refreshing the panel on a rolling basis.
Ensure equality of access to the Registration service for people committing to a same-sex marriage.	4	Same Sex Marriage came into force on 13 March 2014, and the first same-sex marriages in Oxfordshire took place on 29 March 2014. Since then, a number couples have celebrated their marriage in Oxfordshire. The Registration Service participated in Oxford Pride 2014 to promote equal
		marriage, and our brochure 'Oxfordshire, the place to marry' has been reissued to include same-sex couples. We have also reviewed our ceremony to ensure it is inclusive and appropriate for same-sex marriages.
Continue to support the military community in the county, including veterans and reservists, and ensure equality of access to services, particularly around issues of health and	3	Support to the military and the communities in which they reside have continued with positive links between the bases and the local councillor military champions.
wellbeing and education.		Signing of the Corporate Covenant in September demonstrated the council's commitment to employing more reservists, encouraging other businesses to also pledge their support. The Civilian Military Partnership continues to meet twice yearly with sub groups for health and wellbeing and education to ensure the aims of the community covenant are met. Health & Wellbeing group ensure that military personnel and families are not disadvantaged and have access to the same services as others including identifying need as part of the JSNA. The

		Education group have focused on encouraging schools to be inclusive of military children and the challenges they face, simplifying the admissions process for in term admissions, and accommodating the re-basing of families from Germany.
In addition to ensuring all staff have completed the mandatory 'Respect for People' eLearning course, to also encourage all employees to access further learning and development opportunities to increase their awareness and understanding of equality and diversity issues.	4	The council regularly promotes the Respect for People eLearning course, not only for new starters but encouraging all staff to do the course as a refresher every year or two. This last year we have also run Equality Act essential training for managers and Mental Health workshops to raise awareness and understanding.
Ensure any organisational or employment changes are handled with a well-mannered approach to diversity by completing service and community impact assessments for all changes to ensure no group is disproportionally affected and monitoring statistics for redundancy.	4	Family friendly and Flexible Working policies have all been reviewed in 2014/2015 and each time diversity is considered as appropriate. Impact assessments are carried out for all major organisational change projects.
Continue to encourage people from diverse backgrounds to apply for roles at the council, and do more to increase awareness of the support available to staff and guidance for managers to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made where appropriate.	4	Due to the recruitment freeze at the end of 2014/15 and the internal first approach which has been adopted there has been less external recruitment this year. Adverts have been placed in specialist disability press and the council successfully passed the annual assessment to continue to sign up to the Disability Two Ticks commitment. Recruitment and selection training continues to cover equality requirements. The HR department monitors the characteristics of staff leaving the organisation and the reasons for their departure, and presents their findings in the annual 'Equality in the Workplace' report. The most recent edition can be downloaded: https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/aboutyo urcouncil/plansperformancepolicy/equality/EqualityReport.pdf