

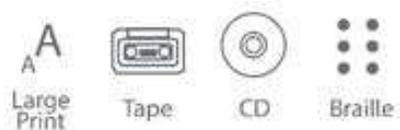
# Annual Equality Report

## Equal People, Different Needs

### 2014-15

Other formats are available.  
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<b>Responsible Section/Team</b>	People & Policy	<b>Version/Status</b>	V1.4 FINAL
<b>Responsible Author</b>	Corporate Officer	<b>Date Agreed / Agreed At</b>	MT – 08.09.14 O&S – 22/9/14
<b>Date last Amended</b>	18.08.15	<b>Due for Review</b>	2016

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## Introduction

We can only provide an effective service to our community if we recognise the diversity within our communities and enable our workforce to meet the needs and concerns of that diversity.

Equality and fairness underpin the work and ethos of the Council at all levels. We have and continue to strive to achieve fairness in all of our services.

The Council's Annual Report on Equality and Diversity is one of the ways in which the Council makes visible the extent to which it is meeting its obligations to recognise diversity and promote equality. It reflects our work with and within our diverse internal and external communities as well as reporting key equality data/information.

The Council has made significant progress in embracing and progressing equality but recognise there is also more work to be done and we will continue to strive towards excellence.

As an employer our aim is to develop a diverse workforce and ensure that our workforce can work with dignity and respect, free from any type of discrimination or prejudice.

As a service provider our aim is to provide the best possible services to meet the needs of our different customers and ensure that our customers are treated with dignity and respect, free from any type of discrimination or prejudice, in the delivery of our services and decision making.

## Summary

As a public body we are required to publish equality information which demonstrates compliance with the Equality Duty. This report contains information<sup>1</sup> about:

- The protected characteristics of our workforce (where disclose/available)
- The protected characteristics of our communities / customers (where disclosed/available)
- An overview of our equality-related activities

We recognise that a proportion of the data we actively collect relates to small numbers of people, particularly when disaggregated by protected characteristic. Where the number people with a particular protected characteristics is fewer than 10, in line with best practice and guidance sought, we have either replaced this number with an asterisk (\*), have obtained permission or have determined that no individuals can be easily identified.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on information that has been disclosed and or that is publically available.

## Equality Framework for Local Government

The Council continues to undertake a robust and proportionate approach to equality and diversity, adopting the ethos and principles of the Equality Framework for Local Government.

As part of the Council's on-going commitment to meeting the needs of our different customers and delivering quality services we have been designated as '**an achieving authority**' under the Equality Framework for Local Government through an independent assessment.

This means that we are seen by the community and partners as making a real difference and providing positive outcomes for local people. This is based on our understanding and knowledge of our communities by working with them and engaging – which has helped the Council to provide responsive services that tries to acknowledge and meet the different needs our communities, and ensure that our decision making is informed.

## The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 states that everyone has the right to be treated fairly and equally. The Act has two main purposes. It brings together and simplifies all of the existing discrimination law, and strengthens the law to further support progress on equality.

In the exercise of its functions (including any functions carried out by an external supplier/organisation), the 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.**

These are often called the three main aims of the 'general duty' and are detailed in the [Equality Act 2010 Section 149](#) .

The Equality Duty is supported by two **specific duties** which require public bodies to:

- **Publish equality information** at least annually.
- **Set and publish equality objectives** at least every four years.

## Equality Objectives

In 2012 the Council set three underpinning equality objectives, this annual equality report reflects the commitment to these.

- Ensure community engagement and consultation is effective
- Embed equalities throughout the Council
- Improve data and analysis in relation to equality and customer information.

Further information on the context behind our equality objectives can be found on the Council's website:

[http://www.rossendale.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents\\_info.php?documentID=714&pageNumber=5](http://www.rossendale.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?documentID=714&pageNumber=5)

There are also a series of business plan level actions and performance indicators that are equality related. These are set out in our Business Plan and will be reported on via our Quarterly Performance Reports which are published on our website.

### Equality related performance indicators (from 2014-15 Q4)

It should be noted that with a shrinking workforce and low turnover, increasing these performance indicator figures will continue to be challenging, therefore targets may need to be reviewed.

PI Code	Short Name	Responsible Officers	Quarter 4 2013-14			Quarter 4 2014-15			Gauge Aim	Trend	Latest Note	Expected Outcome
			Q4 2013/14			Q4 2014/15						
			Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status				
LI 16a	Percentage of Employees with a Disability	HR	Not measured for Quarters			Not measured for Quarters			Aim to Maximise		<p>As Of 31 March 2015 there were 170 employees. The percentage of employees with a disability is 0.02%</p> <p>There is no target for this PI it is monitored for equality reporting.</p> <p>Please note that employees do not always have to disclose a disability.</p>	Exceeding Target

PI Code	Short Name	Responsible Officers	Quarter 4 2013-14			Quarter 4 2014-15			Gauge Aim	Trend	Latest Note	Expected Outcome
			Q4 2013/14			Q4 2014/15						
			Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status				
LI 17a	Ethnic Minority representation in the workforce - employees	HR	Not measured for Quarters			Not measured for Quarters			Aim to Maximise	↓	As of 31 March 2015 we had 170 employees. Ethnic minority disclosed representation in the workforce : 0.006% There is no target for this PI it is monitored for equality reporting purposes. Please note that employees do not always have to disclose their ethnicity.	Exceeding Target

STAN 1	Number of people accessing STAN	Service Assurance Team	331	120	✓	344	150	✓	Aim to Maximise	↑	<p>Footfall for Rossendale for quarter 4 was 344.</p> <p>STAN has only been going out in Rossendale since October as Ribble valley ceased being involved with the project at the end of September 2014.</p> <p>STAN is a well utilised service, in Rossendale and regularly receives positive feedback.</p> <p>This supports some of our most vulnerable residents and is highly regarded by residents and partner agencies.</p>	Exceeding Target
STAN 2	% of customers satisfied with the service received from STAN	Service Assurance Team	100%	85%	✓	100%	90%	✓	Aim to Maximise	↑	<p>Overall customer satisfaction with the STAN service continues to be high and stands at 100% for quarter 4.</p> <p>This equates to 96.77% of customers who returned feedback forms being 'very satisfied', with 3.23% 'satisfied'.</p>	Exceeding Target



- The majority of the Council's workforce is heterosexual. Based on the information disclosed, gay, lesbian and bisexual people are underrepresented in our workforce.
- The majority of our workforce is Christian (42%). Identification of 'no religion or belief' accounted for 18% of people choosing to disclose this information.
- 64% of staff who chose to disclose their gender identity information, identified as 'living in the gender that they were given at birth'.
- No data in relation to Marriage or Civil Partnership was disclosed/collected in 2014-15.

## **Councillor Profile<sup>4</sup>**

Equality monitoring is undertaken when new Councillors are elected / re-elected as part of their induction process. Appendix 1 sets out the latest data available. It should be noted that a number of Councillors have chosen not to disclose equality information. Of those that did disclose information, some highlights are:

- In terms of gender diversity, 50% of our elected Councillors are female and 38.9% are male. 11.1% did not wish to disclose their gender. A majority of female Councillors remains.
- 63.9% of our Councillors identify as 'White British'. Black and other ethnic minorities remain underrepresented within the profile of the Borough's elected Councillors. 11.1% preferred not to disclose their ethnicity.
- The majority of our Councillors are aged 60-69 years (41.7%).
- Only one of Councillor is aged 20-29 years (2.8%), and one is under 20.
- The majority of our Councillors are heterosexual(72.2%). Based on the information disclosed, gay, lesbian and bisexual people are underrepresented amongst Councillors. Nonetheless it is positive that two Councillors feel comfortable and confident to identify as gay/ lesbian.

NB: Please note that since writing this report there has been a local election. Any equality profile changes arising from that will not be reflected in this report, but will be reported in 2015-16.

## **Employment Monitoring Information**

We embed monitoring at the various stages of employment as appropriate including:

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<sup>4</sup> Please note that data is based on those that have chosen to disclose information. Not all respondents have chosen to disclose information in relation to all equality monitoring questions.

- Application
- Selection and Recruitment
- Sickness absence
- Grievance
- Disciplinary
- Training and Development
- Exit

In terms of recruitment and selection during April 2014- March 2015, the majority of applicants were White British. This is broadly representative of the local population profile. This trend is also the case for successful applicants.

Shortlisted application data shows that more males were shortlisted than females during this period. Successful selection data during this period shows that the majority of successful appointments were male, White British. 1 successful appointed applicant identified themselves as being disabled during the 2014-15 recruitment period.

All employees recorded as disabled were able to access training and development opportunities during 2014-15. The levels of equality data that is available / disclosed is too small to publish for some of this data.

In terms of sickness related absence warning monitoring, the levels of equality data that is available / disclosed is too small to publish.

During this period there were no instances of:

- return to work of disabled employees following sick leave due to a disability
- Disciplinary and Related Warning Monitoring
- Record of Reasonable Adjustments Made for Employees
- return to work after maternity leave during this period

In terms of termination<sup>5</sup> of employment there were 27 employees during 2014-15, more males (16) than females (11). Although there was a broad split across age bands, there was a slight majority of those aged 40-59 years. The majority were White British and heterosexual. The levels of equality data that is available / disclosed is too small to publish for some data.

There have been no employee grievances or complaints in relation to discrimination during this period.

See Appendix B for further details where available/disclosed.

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<sup>5</sup> Termination here covers all aspects on an employee leaving the council's employment, resignation, compulsory redundancy, voluntary redundancy, dismissal etc.

## **Flexible Working**

The Council's commitment to enabling and supporting flexible working is set out in its Flexible Working Policy for all staff which is currently being refreshed in light of recently legislative changes. The Council already considers requests for flexible working from all staff and we recognise that the ability to achieve a work-life balance is an important factor in helping us retain staff while continuing to meet the business need.

The Council also has a flexible working system for the majority of staff which enable them to manage their family life and external commitments within core business hours (7.30am-7pm) in addition to formal requests for flexible working arrangements.

During 2014-15 there have been no requests for flexible working in addition to working conditions already available.

## **Reasonable Adjustments Made for Employees**

There have been no (formal or informal) requests for adjustments to employees working environment in relation to disability during this period.

## **Employment and Equal Pay**

Key messages:

- Of the staff that live within the borough 44% are in BB4 postcode and 19% are in OL13 postcode areas.
- Average basic pay for females is £23,537pa
- Average basic pay for males is £23,075 pa
- Overall average is £23,249 pa

See Appendix B for breakdown of pay related data.

## **Awareness Raising / Training & Development**

As an employer, the Council has a proactive approach to training and development in order to meet the needs of different learners, and we recognise that it is critical for our staff to have the skills and knowledge to help eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equal opportunities and value diversity. The Council's Organisational Development Plan is one element of the organisation's delivery mechanisms to fulfil its equality commitments. Training and development that has been undertaken during 2014-15 includes:

- Common Assessment Framework (CAF) training
- Safeguarding training
- Child Sexual Exploitation Training
- Equality and Diversity training for elected members

As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 all of our Councillors had undertaken training on Equality and Diversity, with 25 had undertaking refresher training.

## **Equality and Diversity – promoting understanding and respect**

On an ongoing basis the Council continues to promote and raise awareness internally and externally of key equality and diversity and health and wellbeing related events, celebrations and campaigns. general briefings and information sheets, hints and tips for promoting and encouraging equality and diversity which have been received positively. These include, but are not limited to:-

- Bowel Cancer Awareness Month
- Active Spaces Walks
- Credit Union Awareness / Promotion
- World AIDS Day
- International Women's Day
- International Day of Disabled People
- Human Rights Day
- Love Your Liver' Month
- Cancer Talk Week
- National Bug Busting Day
- Promoting cycling
- Tinnitus Awareness Week
- World Cancer Day
- Safeguarding awareness
- Downs Syndrome Awareness
- Awareness of religious / cultural festivals/celebrations

Also, the equality pages of our website provide signposting for the public.

## **Equality Impact Assessments**

[Equality Impact Assessments](#) (EIAs) are a structured and transparent way for the Council to fully understand the implications of our decisions and whether they are detrimental or discriminatory by considering the impact on protected equality groups within our community, fostering good relations and protection of human rights. This process is integrated into the Council's policy development and decision making framework.

During 2014-15 there have been no equality challenges or judicial review action related to the EIA processes that have informed the Council's decision making.

EIAs are published with the relevant reports which are published on our website on the [meetings pages](#).

## Engagement and Consultation

The Equality Duty requires the Council to have an adequate evidence base for its decision-making. A key reason for the Council to engage is to help us understand how our policies affect (or will affect) people who use our services, which can be used to inform and improve decision making.

The Council takes a proportionate<sup>6</sup> and relevant approach to engagement and consultation activity. The Council's approach is to identify what information it already has available and will seek to determine where the gaps in evidence and understanding are, what it is seeking to find out and from whom, in order that the engagement activity is focused and relevant.

Rosendale Citizen's Panel is an active database of people within the community that the Council can consult with via surveys on key issues throughout the year giving people in the community that are interested in being consulted on specific issues the opportunity to submit their views via the internet or by post. This is open for anyone to join at any time. We also publish consultations on our website (digital by default with alternative formats available on request) and where appropriate in some cases undertake consultation events/drop in sessions in the borough.

We also have four active Neighbourhood Forums through which people can get involved in their local areas.

## Rosendale Borough Council Compliments and Complaints

We aim to learn from both complaints and compliments that are made about issues related to equality or discrimination, or from particular groups within the community. However, we recognise that there are certain difficulties in collection of equality data in situations of complaint for robust analysis. The Council's complaints and compliments, including reports of discrimination complaints by staff or customers are recoded formally via the Council's feedback and complaints system. This data is reported quarterly as part of the Council's Performance Report, published on the Council's website.

The Council received **170 Compliments** during the financial year 2014/15.

The Council received **115 Complaints** during the financial year 2014/15, with only 5 remaining open.

The Council received **3** Ombudsman complaints during the financial year 2013/14; 1 remained open at the end of the period.

None of the complaints received related to equality/access or discrimination.

No equality information was disclosed or collected in relation to these figures during 2014-15.

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<sup>6</sup> Ensuring compliance with the Council's Best Value Duty and Duty to Inform, Consult and Involve.

## **Providing Accessible Information**

Online - [www.rossendale.gov.uk](http://www.rossendale.gov.uk)

The Council's website makes it easier for communities to access timely and useful information that is relevant to them and are able to undertake many council services online it also has improved compatibility with new web browsers and compliance with the latest web standards and accessibility guidelines.

The Council's website has been designed to comply with W3C [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#) (WCAG) as well as [government standards](#). All pages on this site reach level 'A' conformance from the WCAG, with most pages reaching level 'AA' conformance

The accessibility function pages allow the user to adapt the website to meet their needs; settings can be saved for their next visit. The website also utilises a responsive design that automatically shapes itself to fit to the screen of the device it is being viewed on.

The Council is committed to increasing the number of its services that are available online for those that are able to access them.

All public Council meeting documents are published on our website and can be requested in hard copy and alternative formats as required in line with our Equality Policy.

### Social Media – Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

The Council has increased its use of social media as a means of informing and engaging with our communities in a proportionate and appropriate manner, as well as a tool for promoting and awareness raising of local events and activities. The number of people our posts and tweets reach is increasing. Residents also use social media as a means of asking questions and positive feedback has been received in relation to dealing with these in the format.

### Face-to-face

Our One Stop Shop (OSS) walk in centre for the public is located at Futures Park, Bacup, which is also where the Council's main office and the Council Chamber are based.

It is accessible on a main public transport route with onsite parking. The OSS is Council's main face to face contact centre for the community. Face to face meetings with a council officer from specific team/departments are also available by appointment / request if needed.

Translation / interpretation for face to face meetings (or via telephone) are available on request as needed.

## **Hate crime / incidents and domestic abuse reporting**

Rossendale Council knows that hate crimes and incidents can have a serious impact on victims and their quality of life. It also has a negative impact on the community which is why we are committed to working in partnership to tackle incidents and crimes motivated by prejudice and hate.

There are various systems in place to record this information:-

Internally during 2014-15 there were no reported cases of discrimination.

Externally, within the community:-

According to the Safer Lancashire database MADE between April 2014 to March 2015 in Rossendale the total *crimes* reported by the Police for 'Racially or Religiously Aggravated Crime' or was 10. The majority of these reports were from Worsley (3) and Whitewell (2) Wards.

In relation to domestic abuse, the Council has invested in domestic abuse service provision via a pan Lancashire commissioned service, delivered locally, and will continue to look at ways it can best support domestic abuse support services in future.

According to the Safer Lancashire database MADE between April 2014 to March 2015 in Rossendale, the total number *incidents* in relation to domestic violence reported to the Police was 722, this is a reduction of over 500 incidents on 2013/14. The highest numbers of recorded domestic abuse crimes were from Irwell Ward (210), Stacksteads Ward (130), and Greensclough (114).

## **Service Delivery Monitoring**

Customer satisfaction and equality monitoring is also undertaken within service areas. This varies across services as and where considered appropriate or necessary to do so.

Appendix B (3) set out customer satisfaction and associated equality data where it is available.

## **Summary of our work during 2014-15**

We could not possibly fit everything we do with our communities here in this report, but the following pages provide a good example of the breadth of work we have been involved in.

### **Up & Active**

The Up & Active project is a pilot project that was being run in Rossendale and Pendle with the aim to get inactive people active. The project focused on specific groups who were inactive in 2 of our wards with the highest areas of multiple deprivation. We targeted the work on hard to reach groups and these included BME communities as well as older people.

The following is a brief synopsis of some of the session that we set up as part of this project;

### **Haslingden Community Link Yoga and Fitness Sessions (inactive females in Worsley Ward)**

Twice weekly fitness and Yoga sessions at Haslingden Community Link (HCL) in Haslingden. HCL is a social enterprise in Worsley ward, providing children's centre and other health and community services. It is located in an area of social and economic deprivation with a significant BME community. HCL has very good links into the local community.

- A 9 month programme began in October 2014, building on their existing Holistic Inspirations project. The aims of the project include improving mental, emotional and physical health for people in the area, from a variety of backgrounds and cultures. The Up and Active element of the project supported physical activity, in a safe and known environment, that is culturally sensitive.
- Community engagement was integral to the project and focussed on targeting hard to reach individuals, particularly those living in poverty and who are economically and social deprived. The project was established following extensive consultation with the local community in 2014.
- A crèche was provided at one of the weekly sessions to remove barriers for single parents and parents / carers of young children and to encourage parents to exercise with their children.
- Up to 35 ladies have attended each session, from a mixture of backgrounds and cultures and of varying ages.
- The instructor, from Rossendale Leisure Trust, is well liked and some of the ladies have attended her classes at Haslingden Sports Centre as a result of attending the sessions at HCL.
- The classes are provided free of charge as a charge would be a barrier for many of the ladies

Feedback from the participants said that:

- Overall 82 individuals attended the sessions, of whom 56% were completely inactive before they came.
- 52 of the ladies are from the BME community

- Feedback forms completed in June show that 100% of participants at the yoga sessions reported an improvement in their overall activity levels, with 46% saying it had improved a lot. Over 90% said that their social activities had improved and 100% said that their overall health had improved, with nearly 46% saying it had improved a lot.
- Feedback comments were very positive e.g. “I can’t tell you what a difference the classes have made to me. They have improved my energy, my self-esteem, my fitness, my social life. Thank you so much.” “Thank you so much for this workshop. It’s been like having my own personal trainer! I love the yoga particularly and feel stronger in arms and legs as a result. Have also lost weight. It has been inspirational and will continue to motivate me to work at my fitness as I get older.”

### **Lacey Court Seated exercise sessions**

- Weekly ‘armchair’ exercise sessions for older people in the lounge at Lacey Court, an Anchor Housing sheltered housing complex in Worsley ward in Haslingden.
- The sessions were set up in response to consultation with staff and residents of Lacey Court and delivered in conjunction with their Social Club.
- The sessions began in February 2015 initially for a 12 week period, later extended to the end of July due to demand. Similar sessions were subsequently requested and provided in 2 other Anchor Housing complexes following the success of this one.
- The sessions are led by an instructor from Rossendale Leisure Trust and are charged at £2 per person. This enables the sessions to be self-financing and sustainable if at least 10 people attend. The £2 charge was not a barrier to attending and refreshments were provided at the sessions by the Lacey Court Social Club, providing an important social element for the participants.
- The sessions are open to residents of Lacey Court and also those living in the local area. Some of the residents are quite active, but many aren’t and the provision of the sessions within the building made it easy for them to attend and gave people confidence to do so, particularly as some will not go out in bad weather.
- Promotion was by word of mouth and posters / flyers. The support of the site warden / manager was crucial in getting the word out to residents initially.
- All participants were registered on the Up and Active scheme by RLT staff and their barcodes scanned in each week to provide monitoring information for the project.
- 11 individuals have attended the sessions with an average attendance of 8 people.

Feedback from the participants said that:

- COOP forms completed in February at the first session and again in June, showed that all participants showed an improvement in all their scores including overall health, physical fitness and quality of life.
- The participants said that they enjoyed the sessions and reported positive outcomes e.g. from the hand and finger exercises and the neck massages offered by the instructor after the sessions.
- The participants have agreed to have a break in the sessions over the Summer, whilst they are more able to get out and participate in other activities. They will commence again in the Autumn when they are more inclined to stay indoors.

### **Targeted Youth Fitness Sessions**

- Targeted fitness sessions for inactive young people in Bacup, in conjunction with LCC Young People's Service, free of charge for the young people.
- The sessions ran for 12 weeks from November 2014 – February 2015 and consisted of a one hour street dance / fitness / circuit session tailored to the young people on Tuesday evenings from 7pm – 8pm.
- 22 young people aged between 12 and 15 registered for the sessions in total with an average of 8-10 people attending each week. 6 said that they don't do any physical activity on a regular basis.
- Initially the sessions mainly attracted females, then it became more mixed with a core group of 4 regular males.
- There were some behavioural issues which, given the young people targeted for the sessions, was to be expected.
- The fitness sessions enabled Young People's Service staff to raise other health issues with the young people including drugs and smoking and provided a useful introduction for more formal exercise sessions for young people with limited or no access to such activities.

Feedback from the participants said that:

- They liked the instructor from Rossendale Leisure Trust and enjoyed the sessions.
- By the end of the 12 weeks the young people were ready to move onto a different activity – they tend to get bored with a specific activity after a while.
- They are interested in football coaching as a follow on activity
- They did not want to register on line for the Up and Active project – 'can't be bothered' but happy to complete registration forms as a requirement of participation in the activity

### **Keep Fit / Exercise to Music at Bacup Central Methodist Church Hall**

- Weekly 1 hour exercise session aimed at inactive people held in local church hall in Bacup (Irwell ward)
- Thursday mornings started 18 June and promoted by leaflet and notice in local paper
- The numbers are growing steadily each week and attracts mainly ladies aged 60+
- Instructor from RLT

### **Pram Walk in Victoria Park**

- Free weekly walk for parents with babies set up in conjunction with local Health Visitors and led by instructor from RLT
- Started in September 2014, beginning at Haslingden Sports Centre, moved to Haslingden Community Link in April 2015. Day changed in June 2015 to follow on from Breast Feeding Support Group.
- The walks encourage new mums to be active with their babies and provide social benefits to help reduce isolation amongst new mothers.
- The numbers attending have varied (often quite low) but it is hoped that the walks will continue on a voluntary basis from July.

### **Cosy Homes in Lancashire Scheme**

We've been working with Lancashire County Council and partner authorities to develop the 'Cosy Homes in Lancashire' Scheme. The scheme has been set up to help households get the most out of the Government's Green Deal and ECO schemes. These have been designed to help insulate homes and make them more energy efficient, saving money on bills and helping to keep you warm and well. (Adrian Smith will have more info.)

### **DASH Houses**

Development of Domestic Abuse Safe Houses within the Valley to provide support to those fleeing domestic violence without the need for refuges.

With funding secured from the Community Safety Partnership and LCC, the Council has led a multi-agency group to organise the provision, and support, of up to three safe houses across the Borough which will temporarily accommodate families fleeing DV either in an emergency, or as part of a longer term planned move. The major advantages are the ability for families to stay local and for those who may not be able to access refuge provision.

### **Sanctuary Project**

Funding of £4,000 from the Police and Crime Commissioner to facilitate a Sanctuary project in Rossendale allowing people to stay safe in their homes.

### **Illegal Evictions and Landlord Harassment**

Support through a dedicated officer alongside training for front line staff (both Local Authority and third sector) to aid tenants suffering from illegal eviction and harassment by Landlords.

### **Supported Housing Services**

Re-commissioning with Lancashire County Council for supported housing services to provide specialist care for young people in Rossendale.

### **Financial Literacy for Young People**

Programme of work with secondary schools to improve financial literacy among young people working alongside third sector organisations.

### **Supporting young people to get into work**

The 2014-15 figure show that Rossendale had 108 NEET young people, those not in employment, education or training. The NEET figure for Rossendale has reduced over the past few years. The majority of NEET young people are aged 18 and White. There is a 50/50 split between Males and Females.

Local activity and support has also been delivered throughout the year by our partners at Lancashire's Young People's Service (YPS). Further information on the wider work and services of the YPS can be found on the YPS website: [www.lancashire.gov.uk/yps](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/yps).

The Council does support an Apprenticeship scheme which is very successful.

### **Supporting people out of homelessness / financial inclusion**

Queen Street: The Council continues to support No.1 Queen Street in Rawtenstall. It provides supported accommodation for young people aged 16 to 25 who have been made homeless, which was fully refurbished at the end of 2011/12.

It is services such as this that play a significant role in transforming young people's lives by offering welcoming accommodation that creates opportunities for people to build confidence and develop new skills.

Homeless 16/17 year olds: Work continues to develop better working practices to help homeless 16/17 year olds, and to commission local preventative services from Government funding.

### **Promoting Democracy with Young People**

In 2014/15 the Council carried out two successful events around promoting democracy to young people;

2<sup>nd</sup> May 2014 – school visit to the Council Chamber by St James the Less School – to learn about the Civic Regalia, the Council Chamber and to meet the Mayor

16<sup>th</sup> September 2014 - Town Twinning visit to the Council Chamber by Cadets from Bocholt to learn about the Civic Regalia and the Council

### **Grants Scheme – Making a Difference**

During 2014 – 2015 the Council targeted its grants scheme on supporting the VCFS to deliver local services focussing on financial inclusion in Rossendale. The Council awarded £48,000 to Rossendale Citizens Advice Bureau and £12,000 to Rossendale Credit Unions.

### **Neighbourhood Forum Grants – Making a difference to local priorities**

The Borough's four Neighbourhood Forums are also a key means for the Council to support local priorities. We have a Neighbourhood Forum grants scheme to help address issues identified by the local communities. The Council provided £20,000 during 2014-15 to the Neighbourhood Forum Grants.

- Bacup - £4320.00
- Whitworth – £ 2200.00
- Haslingden - £ 6220.00
- Rawtenstall - £ 7260.00

Following a review of the Neighbourhood Forums in March 2014, the Council has continued to support the four Neighbourhood Forums and to work with local communities to tackle issues and priorities locally. Through availability of small neighbourhood forum grants the Council has been able to continue to support community groups to deliver a range of projects that will improve the quality of life for people in the local area and make a difference locally.



## Summer Fun 2014

The Council successfully coordinated and produced another Summer Fun brochure in partnership with the Rossendale Children and Young People's Trust, to promote and raise awareness of local activities and schemes for children and young people during the summer holidays of 2014. These were distributed to schools, libraries and children's centres, GP surgeries, children's social care and health lead professionals, as well as advertised via the Council's website, the local press and posters displayed in community facilities.

## Affordable Warmth 2014/15

Although reduced in funding again, the Council in partnership were still able to run this scheme during 2014-15 on a smaller scale. Most of the warm packs this year were delivered by St Vincent's but we only did 60 this year.

Help included

- Boiler Servicing And Repairs
- Temporary heaters and gas fire repairs
- Draughtproofing and Radiator Reflectors
- Emergency Top Up Cards (provided by Rossendale Citizen's Advice Bureau)
- Warm Packs - Provision of 60 Warm Packs used as outreach tool
- Electric Blanket testing & replacement

St Vincent's provided boiler repairs and replacements and the Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) provided help with fuel poverty and emergency top up cards.

In total we were able to help approximately 110 people this year in receipt of housing benefits or pension credit guarantee. Not all these people received a warm pack as before but did have the option of help with draught proofing and/or electric blanket replacement. Other referrals came from home visits and referrals from elected members who came across problems in their constituency.

## MASH

Rossendale Borough Council continues to support / be part of the MASH, a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, one project within the overarching Lancashire Improving Futures programme. Further information can be found on the website:

<http://www.lancashirechildrenstrust.org.uk/resources/?siteid=6274&pageid=4017>

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## **Other Equality Data**

For other equality data/information please see separate document – Appendix B (1-3).