

## **WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **Report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services**

**Community Participation Committee: 27<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

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**Subject: Equality Mainstreaming Report and Equality Outcomes 2013-2017**

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1** This report summarises the proposed West Dunbartonshire Council Equality Outcomes and Equality Mainstreaming Report for 2013-2017, which went to the Corporate Services Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

#### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1** Committee is asked to note the contents of the Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming report.

#### **3. Background**

- 3.1** The Equality Outcomes and Equality Mainstreaming report build on the Council's previous work on advancing equalities, and are based on a robust analysis of national and local data, as well as extensive local consultation. In line with guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the work has been aligned as much as possible with the current West Dunbartonshire Single Outcome Agreement and West Dunbartonshire Council Strategic Plan.
- 3.2** Under the general public sector general equality duty, created by the Equality Act 2010, the Council must have due regard to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations in exercise of its functions. An overall statement on Equality is included in the report.
- 3.3** In May 2012 the Scottish Government published specific duties to assist listed public authorities such as the Council meet the general duty :-
- report on mainstreaming the equality duty
  - publish equality outcomes and report progress
  - assess and review policies and practices
  - gather and use employee information
  - publish gender pay gap information
  - publish statements on equal pay
  - consider award criteria and conditions in relation to public procurement
- 3.4** The Council has made considerable progress in the last two years in improving its approach to equality impact assessment, and more recently making equalities monitoring of service provision systems more robust. This Mainstreaming Report provides the opportunity to present an overview of the Council's work on equality, focused on compliance and accountability.

- 3.5 The Council is required to report on progress no later than April 2015.

#### 4. Main Issues

##### Progressing Equality

- 4.1 Equality Outcomes provide a clear focus for the most important improvements for the Council to address inequality issues, measured in terms of scale, severity, concern and impact. These Outcomes are aimed at producing concrete improvements in people's lives that contribute to a fairer, more inclusive and more prosperous West Dunbartonshire.

##### Issues of Concern

- 4.2 A survey to Citizen's Panel members, West Dunbartonshire Council staff and equality groups was used in conjunction with national and local evidence to identify areas of most concern and impact.

##### Hate Crime and discrimination based Harassment

- 4.3 Recorded racial incidents and religiously aggravated incidents rose between 2010/11 and 2011/12 in West Dunbartonshire. The surveys confirmed these as areas of concern. Survey respondents saw work in schools and with young people to challenge discriminatory attitudes and behaviour, and also build understanding as key. Work with adults was also seen as important.

##### Care and Support

- 4.4 A key priority for the Citizens' Panel was better support for older and disabled people in terms of care. A specific outcome aimed at making sure that carers are better supported has been identified, in relation to age and gender.

##### Education

- 4.5 In terms of education and employment the needs of young people and disabled people were highlighted. Available data shows a gap in attainment between males and females, and between those with and without Additional Support Needs. Closing these gaps, and better meeting the educational needs of Gypsy Travellers, were identified as priorities.

##### Employment

- 4.8 Data shows a continuing under representation of black and minority ethnic and disabled people in the West Dunbartonshire Council workforce.
- 4.9 Improving the approach to reasonable adjustments for disabled staff, and making more use of flexible working arrangements, were seen as key to improving workplace equality by staff.

- 4.10** There is clear occupational segregation between men and women, and a 3.89% pay gap, and these are linked issues. The Council will be the first to publish this information, so comparison with others is not yet possible.

#### Participation and Involvement

- 4.11** Greater participation and involvement by under-represented groups, including minority ethnic and young people, was seen as important, especially in terms of fostering good relations.

#### Support for Equality Work

- 4.12** Survey results showed that 78% of Citizen's Panel respondents and 90% of staff who responded agreed that West Dunbartonshire Council should do everything it can to eliminate all forms of discrimination. Similar support came from equality groups and from focus groups.

#### Other Equality Work

- 4.13** A wide range of ongoing equality work to ensure legal compliance in arrears such as accessibility of services will continue.

### **5. People Implications**

- 5.1** To ensure that Council effectively mainstreams equality, and meets the legal duties, a rolling programme of staff learning and development at all levels is required.

### **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1** There are no financial implications.

### **7. Risk Analysis**

- 7.1** The Equality and Human Rights Commission will begin a research project in May 2013 on the Equality Outcomes produced by Public Authorities in Scotland. The results of this research will be presented to the Scottish Parliament in the autumn of this year.

- 7.2** Failure to mainstream equality, or comply with the law risks enforcement action, legal challenges, loss of reputation and damage to the legitimacy of the Council.

### **8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)**

- 8.1** The Mainstreaming Report and Equality Outcomes are highly relevant to ensuring that the council meets the general equality duty. An Impact Assessment has been carried out and is appended to this report.

**8.2** The Impact Assessment indicates that the Mainstreaming Report and Equality Outcomes will contribute to all three arms of the general equality duty: to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

## **9. Consultation**

**9.1** Extensive consultation and involvement was carried out with local equality groups, Citizens Panel members, staff and other stakeholders such as Community Planning partners. Fuller details of this are included in the Equality Mainstreaming Report and the Equality Impact Assessment.

## **10. Strategic Assessment**

**10.1** The proposed Equality Outcomes are supportive of all five main Strategic Priorities for 2012 - 2017

- Improve economic growth and employability, Equality Outcomes 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.
- Improve life chances for children and young people, Equality Outcomes 9, 10, 11 and 12.
- Improve care for and promote independence with older people, Equality Outcomes 7, 14.
- Improve local housing and environmentally sustainable infrastructure, Equality Outcomes 13, 14.
- Improve the well-being of communities and protect the welfare of vulnerable people, Equality Outcomes 1, 8.

*Electronic Signature* (see notes)

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Date:

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**Appendices:**

1. Equality Outcomes 2013-2017
2. Mainstreaming Report 2013-2017
3. Equality Impact Assessment

**Background Papers:**

1. Equality Outcome mapping
2. Mapping of local and national evidence
3. Citizens Panel survey/focus group results
4. Staff survey/focus group results
5. Equality Group survey
6. Equality and Human Rights Commission Triennial Review 2007-2010
7. Equality issues in Scotland: a review of research, 2000-08 (EHRC)

**Wards Affected:** All wards