

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Chief Executive

West Dunbartonshire Council: 16 December 2009

Subject: Scottish Government Consultation on Specific Equality Duties

1. Purpose

1.1 The report presents a Council response to the Scottish Government's consultation on the specific duties to be imposed on Scottish public authorities to support their general equality duties under the forthcoming Equality Act.

2. Background

2.1 The UK Government has presented an Equality Bill to Parliament which imposes the following general duties on public authorities:

- Eliminate discrimination against protected groups
- Advance equality of opportunity for protected groups
- Foster good relations between different communities and groups

2.2 The specific duties which support these general duties will give shape to how public authorities address equality issues, and Scottish ministers are empowered to impose specific duties for Scottish authorities.

3. Main Issues

3.1 The consultation involves 39 questions. Most of these invite 'yes', 'no', or 'don't know' responses and invite additional comment. Notes on the considerations on the consultation are available at the WDC intranet link with copies made available in members' rooms.

http://intranet.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/chiefexec/Equal%20Opps/Equality%20briefing%20Newsletters_files/Scottish%20Specific%20Duty%20-%20Areas%20for%20Consideration.pdf

3.2 The attached response is based on consultation with the Council's Equality and Diversity Working Group, the Equality Liaison Group and with individual sections and officers.

3.3 The response reflects a number of key points:

- The value of having specific duties
- The need for clarification on the role of community partnerships
- The need for equality issues to be imbedded in authorities' mainstream business processes
- The need for proportionality of response to equality issues
- The need for a response to local circumstances and priorities
- The need for effective consultation and reporting
- The importance of public authorities' role as employers
- The need for a proportionate and sustainable approach to how equality issues are addressed in procurement.

4. Personnel Issues

4.1 There are no specific personnel issues raised by this report.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no specific financial issues raised by this report.

6. Risk Analysis

6.1 There are no risks associated with this report.

7. Conclusions & Officers' Recommendations

7.1 The Council is asked to consider the draft consultation response, identify any changes or additions it requires, and agree the final response.

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Chief Executive
Date: 27 November 2009

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Appendices: Draft Response to Consultation
Considerations and Consultation Questions: –
Available at intranet link http://intranet.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/chiefexec/Equal%20Opps/Equality%20briefing%20Newsletters_files/Scottish%20Specific%20Duty%20-%20Areas%20for%20Consideration.pdf
Available in members' rooms.

Background Papers: None
Wards Affected: All wards