

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FORUM

Minutes of meeting held in Committee Room 5, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 30 October 2019

Chair:

Councillor Maureen Devlin

Councillors Present:

Councillor Janine Calikes, Councillor Mary Donnelly, Councillor Eric Holford, Councillor Katy Loudon

Councillors' Apologies:

Councillor Ann Le Blond, Councillor Martin Lennon, Councillor Joe Lowe, Councillor Jim McGuigan, Councillor Bert Thomson (Chair)

Attending:

Finance and Corporate Resources

A Bell, Personnel Officer; G Bow, Administration Manager; K McVeigh, Head of Personnel Services

Housing and Technical Resources

J Read, Strategy Co-ordinator; A Sinclair, Refugee Resettlement Programme Advisor

Appointment of Chair

In terms of Standing Order No 32(b), Councillor Devlin was appointed Chair for this meeting.

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Equal Opportunities Forum held on 21 August 2019 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

The Forum decided: that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

3 Annual Report on Mainstreaming Equalities and Diversity – Housing and Technical Resources

A report dated 16 October 2019 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on work being undertaken by Housing and Technical Resources to meet the commitments of the "South Lanarkshire Working for You" Mainstreaming Equalities Report 2017 to 2021.

During 2018/2019, the Resource completed a total of 8 Equality Impact Assessments covering the following areas:-

- ◆ Housing Allocation Policy
- ◆ South Lanarkshire Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan
- ◆ Local Letting Initiatives

Details were provided on the strategic and operational work being undertaken or planned by the Resource under the following headings:-

- ◆ Fairer Scotland Duty
- ◆ Home+ New Build Housing Programme
- ◆ adaptations programme
- ◆ wheelchair accessible housing targets
- ◆ South Lanarkshire Strategic Commissioning Plan 2019 to 2022
- ◆ South Lanarkshire Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan
- ◆ Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme
- ◆ gypsy/travellers
- ◆ translation and interpretation services
- ◆ consultation, engagement and customer feedback
- ◆ employee training and development

The Forum decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 3 October 2018 (Paragraph 3)]

4 Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Employees and Recruitment

A report dated 26 September 2019 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the number of job applications, interviews and selection for employment from candidates who identified as Black and Minority Ethnic (BME).

The Council had a duty under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 No 162 to gather and use this employee information.

To comply with the duty, everyone who applied for employment with the Council were asked to provide information relating to sex (gender), gender identity, marital status, religion or belief, national identity, ethnic group, disability and sexual orientation. Although the legislation required that the monitoring questions were asked, there was no obligation for the applicant to answer them. To take account of this, there was a 'prefer not to say' option available for all equality questions.

The questions asked in relation to Ethnicity and National Background reflected the classifications used by the Scottish Government in the 2011 Census. There was an ongoing review of the questions that would be asked in the 2021 Census and, therefore, the monitoring questions asked would need to be updated to reflect any change introduced by the Scottish Government.

The Forum decided: that the report be noted.

5 Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme - Presentation

A Sinclair, Refugee Resettlement Programme Advisor, Housing and Technical Resources gave a presentation on the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme.

The main topics covered were:-

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| ◆ terminology | ◆ the Resettlement Team |
| ◆ international context – worldwide | ◆ pre-arrival |
| ◆ international context – Syria | ◆ post-arrival |
| ◆ national context – United Kingdom | ◆ achievements |

Having responded to members' questions, the officer was thanked for her informative presentation.

The Forum decided: that the presentation be noted.

6 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.