

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FORUM

Minutes of meeting held in Committee Room 5, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 20 September 2017

Chair:

Councillor Bert Thomson

Councillors Present:

Maureen Chalmers (*substitute for Councillor Calikes*), Mary Donnelly, Eric Holford, Ann Le Blond, Katy Loudon, Joe Lowe, Graham Scott (*substitute for Councillor Devlin*)

Councillors' Apologies:

Janine Calikes, Maureen Devlin, George Greenshields, Jim McGuigan

Attending:

Finance and Corporate Resources

A Bell, Personnel Officer; G Bhatti, Employee Development and Diversity Manager; J Muirhead, Administration Adviser; K McVeigh, Head of Personnel Services

Health and Social Care Partnership/Social Work Resources

B Perrie, Planning and Performance Manager; C Pearson, Planning and Development Officer

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Annual Report on Mainstreaming Equalities and Diversity - Social Work Resources 2017

A report dated 18 August 2017 by the Executive Director (Social Work Resources) was submitted on work being undertaken by Social Work Resources to meet the commitments of the "South Lanarkshire Working for You" Mainstreaming Equalities Report 2013 to 2017.

Details were provided on the strategic and operational work being undertaken, or planned, by the Resource in terms of the following Council equality outcomes:-

- ◆ improve services for older people
- ◆ protect vulnerable children, young people and adults
- ◆ tackle disadvantage and deprivation
- ◆ strengthen partnership working, community leadership and engagement
- ◆ provide vision and strategic direction

The Forum decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 5 April 2016 (Paragraph 3)]

3 See Hear - a National Strategic Framework for Meeting the Needs of People with a Sensory Impairment

The Planning and Development Officer, Health and Social Care Partnership gave a presentation on "See Hear"- a National Strategic Framework for meeting the Needs of People with a Sensory Impairment.

Details were provided on the 7 recommendations contained within the National Framework and explanations were given on how those had shaped the Lanarkshire response. In addition, the results of a recent survey undertaken across North and South Lanarkshire were used to identify the undernoted 5 key themes:-

- ♦ awareness
- ♦ communication
- ♦ adapting to living with a sensory impairment
- ♦ physical access
- ♦ social isolation

Those 5 themes would become the focus of local multi-agency partnerships which would be tasked with undertaking basic sensory checks for people of a certain age and establishing a robust system for storing and sharing this information.

Having responded to members' questions, the Planning and Development Officer was thanked for her informative presentation.

The Forum decided: that the presentation be noted.

4 Equality Impact Assessment and Making Fair Financial Decisions

A report dated 28 August 2017 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted providing an overview on the requirement to conduct Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA) when making decisions.

In May 2012, the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 came into effect. The specific duties of the Act placed a duty on all public authorities to assess and review policies and practices in relation to equalities. Assessments, which would be informed by evidence, were required to cover all protected groups. To assist Resources, an online tool had been developed and was used for all assessments to ensure that officers were collecting and using appropriate evidence.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission recognised that public authorities were required to make difficult financial decisions and had issued guidance detailing what was expected of public bodies. The guidance reinforced the use of the Equality Impact Assessment process and emphasised that, while it was a legal requirement, it also presented a positive opportunity to demonstrate that decisions were based on robust evidence.

The Forum decided: that the report be noted.

5 Seniors Together Good Health Project Update

A report dated 29 August 2017 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted providing an update on the Seniors Together Good Health Project and advising on funding that had been received from the Big Lottery Fund to develop a Mobile Men's Shed project.

The Good Health Project was delivered by the Seniors Together forward@fifty group and was funded by South Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Partnership. The aim of the project was to encourage older people to improve their health and wellbeing by living well in later life and reducing loneliness and isolation. The project was an extension of the Active Days' Programme and had been expanded to include arts and culture activities.

Since the project's introduction in August 2016, 107 older adults had participated and there were now 6 Active Days' sites across South Lanarkshire.

Screening tools had been introduced at the Active Days' sessions to assess improvements on the physical and mental health and wellbeing of participants and a sample of those who had participated showed they had all improved their physical health.

Funding had been received from the Big Lottery Fund to set up and deliver a Mobile Men's Shed. The project, which was expected to begin in December 2017 and continue for 3 years, would include the location of a men's shed for approximately 8 weeks at a time in the grounds of leisure and community facilities within South Lanarkshire. Part of the funding received would be used to refurbish a former mobile library into a mobile men's shed and the remaining funding would be used to employ a part-time Development Worker to support the project.

Following completion of the project, it was anticipated that there would be at least 2 new sheds under development in South Lanarkshire localities.

The Forum decided: that the report be noted.

6 Urgent Business

There are no items of urgent business.