

# EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FORUM

Minutes of meeting held in Committee Room 5, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 12 December 2018

## **Chair:**

Councillor Bert Thomson

## **Councillors Present:**

Councillor Peter Craig (*substitute for Councillor Loudon*), Councillor Mary Donnelly, Councillor Eric Holford

## **Councillors' Apologies:**

Councillor Janine Calikes, Councillor Maureen Devlin, Councillor Ann Le Blond, Councillor Martin Lennon, Councillor Katy Loudon, Councillor Joe Lowe, Councillor Jim McGuigan

## **Attending:**

### **Finance and Corporate Resources**

A Bell, Personnel Officer; G Bhatti, Employee Development and Diversity Manager; S McLeod, Administration Officer; K McVeigh, Head of Personnel Services

### **Health and Social Care/Social Work Resources**

R Hutchingson, Co-ordinator, Autism Resource Co-ordination Hub (ARCH); B Perrie, Planning and Performance Manager

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## **1 Declaration of Interests**

No interests were declared.

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## **2 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of the Equal Opportunities Forum held on 3 October 2018 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

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

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## **3 Annual Report on Mainstreaming Equalities and Diversity – Social Work Resources – 2017/2018**

A report dated 15 November 2018 by the Director, Health and Social Care was submitted on work being undertaken by Social Work Resources to meet the commitments of the “South Lanarkshire Working for You” Mainstreaming Equalities Report 2017 to 2021.

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 20 September 2017 (Paragraph 2)]*

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#### **4 Presentation on “Positive about Autism”**

R Hutchingson, Co-ordinator, Autism Resource Co-ordination Hub (ARCH), Health and Social Care Partnership gave a presentation on “Positive about Autism” and the work being undertaken by the Partnership to develop the ARCH in the South Lanarkshire Council area.

Having responded to members’ questions, the Co-ordinator was thanked for his informative presentation.

**The Forum decided:** that the presentation be noted.

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#### **5 Shared Lanarkshire British Sign Language Plan**

A report dated 16 November 2018 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the content of the Shared British Sign Language (BSL) Plan which had been developed as a requirement of the British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015.

The shared BSL plan for Lanarkshire, which was attached as an appendix to the report, had been developed in partnership with North and South Lanarkshire Councils and the NHS to reflect the long-term goals of Scotland’s National Plan. The Plan set out a number of actions that the Council would take and how it would:-

- ♦ offer deaf and deafblind children and their families the right information and support at the right time to engage with BSL
- ♦ support children and young people to:-
  - ♦ reach their full potential at every stage of their learning
  - ♦ offer parents who used BSL the same opportunities as other parents to be fully involved in their children’s education
- ♦ enable more pupils to learn BSL at school
- ♦ support BSL users to develop skills for work and progress in their chosen career
- ♦ make the Council’s information and services accessible to BSL users to enable them to lead informed, healthy and active lives
- ♦ contribute to making the Council’s transport safe, fair and inclusive
- ♦ enable BSL users to take part in culture and the arts as participants, audience members and professionals
- ♦ actively encourage BSL users to participate in community and democratic life

Details were provided on the:-

- ♦ Council’s duty under the British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015
- ♦ rationale for developing a Shared British Sign Language Plan
- ♦ methodology and outcomes relating to the consultation process carried out on the Plan

Public sector organisations had published their BSL Plans in October 2018 and the Council’s Plan had been published within this timescale, subject to approval by the Executive Committee which had subsequently been granted at its meeting on 21 November 2018.

**The Forum decided:** that the report be noted.

*[Reference: Minutes of the Executive Committee of 21 November 2018 (Paragraph 13)]*

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**6 Urgent Business**

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There were no items of urgent business.

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**Chair's Closing Remarks**

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The Chair extended the compliments of the season to all members and officials present.