

Report

8

Report to:	Community Services Committee
Date of Meeting:	5 May 2015
Report by:	Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

Subject:	Annual Report on Mainstreaming Equalities and Diversity – Community Services
----------	---

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ♦ advise the Committee of the strategic and operational work being undertaken and planned by Community and Enterprise Resources to meet the commitments in the Council's Single Equality Scheme and Equality and Diversity Strategy

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation:-

- (1) that the work being undertaken by Community and Enterprise Resources in terms of the Council's Single Equality Scheme and Equality and Diversity Strategy be noted.

3. Background

3.1. Equalities Impact Assessment

2 Equality Impact Assessments have been completed for all identified relevant policies and functions in Community and Enterprise Resources.

3.2 In addition to existing and new/proposed policies and functions, the Resource has also carried out impact assessments on 16 of its savings proposals identified for 2014/2015.

3.3 Community and Enterprise Resources has an in-house Equal Opportunities Working Group which includes officers from every Service in Community and Enterprise Resources. The group promotes equal opportunities throughout the Resource and the Chair attends the Corporate Equality and Diversity Working Group. It is the responsibility of Support Services to promote and co-ordinate equality and diversity activities within the Resource in line with the Council's Single Equality Scheme.

4. Employment

4.1. Recruitment

4.1.1 During the period December 2013 to December 2014, Community and Enterprise Resources received a total of 2260 applications. From these applications, 346 posts were filled following the Council's standards on recruitment and selection.

- 4.1.2 Of the 117 candidates who declared a disability, 9 were appointed and of the 36 candidates from an ethnic background, 0 were appointed. There were 196 posts advertised during this period which were covered by Delivering a Fairer Future (DFF) with 75 successful DFF applicants securing a position.

4.2 Training and Development

- 4.2.1 The Resource has a commitment to all employees to undertake a Performance and Development Review (PDR) and aims to achieve 100% coverage of all employees. In 2013/2014, 96.5% coverage of employees was achieved. There are logistical difficulties in delivering individual PDRs so group PDRs were implemented with the option of an individual PDR.

- 4.2.2 The Resource will continue to ensure employees understand that equal opportunities is a core competence against which they are measured. New employees in Community and Enterprise Resources attend the Corporate Welcome day which includes equalities training.

4.3 Supporting Front Line Staff

- 4.3.1 Community and Enterprise Resources continues its commitment to ensuring employees have the necessary support to allow them to undertake their duties and is proactive in promoting the health and wellbeing of employees.

- 4.3.2 The Resource supports employees who are unable to undertake their full range of duties by making adjustments to their role and thereby allowing a return to work. Permanent reasonable adjustments are now logged by the Resource Personnel Team and 5 employees have been recorded as having a permanent reasonable adjustment within the Resource. The types of adjustments which have been made within the Resource range from amended duties to the provision of adaptive equipment e.g. an adapted keyboard, mouse or chair.

5.1 Service Monitoring

- 5.1.1 Service specific customer satisfaction questionnaires are in use throughout the Resource and processes are in place for responses to be monitored and any equality issues identified and investigated.

5.2 Performance Management

- 5.2.1 The Resource has specific actions and measures relating to equalities and these are outlined in the published Resource plan and reported regularly to the senior management team.

5.3 Access to Information

- 5.3.1 The Resource actively seeks to publish information on its services onto the website and currently has 144 downloads, 263 content pages, 13 online forms and 17 on the planning portal, 3 online survey forms and 49 PDF forms (portable document format). These range from policy documents, special uplift forms and searches for grit bins, to information on cultural activities.

- 5.3.2 The Resource monitors all complaints regarding discrimination and ensures measures are taken to resolve any issues. These are reported through the Council's complaints procedure and any equality issues are reported to the Resource Personnel Manager for investigation. No equalities complaints in relation to service provision have been received in the period since the last report.

6. Delivering Services

6.1 Facilities, Waste and Grounds Services

- 6.1.1 Facilities Services mentored 74 Future Job Fund (FJF) trainees from February 2012 to March 2014 in catering, cleaning, council officer and janitorial roles. All 74 received nationally recognised training with 11 gaining permanent employment within the Council.
- 6.1.2 A graffiti removal service is provided by Grounds Service with 93% of reported graffiti being removed within the required timescale. Where viable, a 24 hour service is provided to remove racist or offensive graffiti.
- 6.1.3 A Care of Gardens maintenance service is provided to over 3036 households on behalf of Housing and Technical Resources. Grounds Services also provide a chargeable service to 524 private homeowners.
- 6.1.4 Grounds Service have worked to ensure parks and open spaces are maintained to allow disabled access and have achieved a score for 2013/2014 of 71 against a target of 70, measured by an internally audited Land Audit Management System.
- 6.1.5 The Service has also effectively de-littered hard and soft landscape areas, achieving a score for 2013/2014 of 75 against a target of 72. The Land Environment Audit Management score was achieved through 7 audits of which 4 were internal, 2 external and the final audit was carried out by Keep Scotland Beautiful.
- 6.1.6 A 5 year play investment programme has been ongoing raising the play value of facilities remaining after the fixed play review. Where practical, Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) issues were addressed with inclusive equipment being purchased and installed to increase opportunities for all children to play together irrespective of ability. For example, in 2014 this included various upgrades in the East Kilbride area such as an inclusive springy and Kompan seesaw at Cromarty Place, an inclusive springy both at Dunedin and Vancouver, dish roundabouts at Mount Cameron Drive and Kendall Road as well as a dish roundabout at Westburn in Cambuslang. Photographs below show the types of inclusive equipment being utilised in all new designs.





6.1.7 To fulfil the various requirements of different faith groups Bereavement Services offers a comprehensive burial and cremation service and during the 7.5 years since it opened, the crematorium has provided over 9827 services to all faiths.

6.1.8 The Countryside and Greenspace Service has formed the Lanarkshire Greenspace Health and Wellbeing Partnership along with National Health Service Lanarkshire (NHS), North Lanarkshire Council (NLC), South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture (SLLC), North Lanarkshire Leisure (NLL) and Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire (VASLAN). This partnership supports a growing range of activities aimed at using the land asset and local path networks as a means of improving mental and physical health and community wellbeing. Ongoing work includes:

- ◆ The Countryside and Greenspace Service works with LAMH (Lanarkshire Association for Mental Health) on a one day per week therapeutic environmental volunteering programme called “World of Work.” A similar programme, called “Recovery Through Nature,” geared towards helping with recovery from drug and alcohol addiction, is run weekly with Phoenix Futures. Both programmes help vulnerable young people and adults to develop the skills and confidence to help them progress to further training or work.
- ◆ “Branching Out” is an innovative programme run with the Forestry Commission and NHS and is targeted at people using Mental Health Services. Programmes include physical activity, conservation tasks, bushcraft and environmental art. On completion, participants receive certification for skills such as tool handling and the John Muir Conservation Award. The Countryside and Greenspace service run two 13 week programmes each year for about 20 clients.
- ◆ South Lanarkshire Council and North Lanarkshire Council recruited a Healthy Walking Co-ordinator in November 2013 to further develop therapeutic walking programmes in both Council areas. The post is funded by NHS and Paths for All. In South Lanarkshire this is co-ordinated by the Countryside and Greenspace Service. In the first year, 72 healthy walking groups have been developed and supported across Lanarkshire, with over 600 individual walks having been delivered.

6.1.9 Grounds Services mentored 31 FJF trainees from March to August 2014 who carried out a range of grounds services functions across South Lanarkshire.

6.1.10 Waste Services provides help to elderly and infirm members of the community who require assistance presenting their bin for collection. They also have special arrangements in place for families disposing of medical waste and during the past year have helped 1088 families with medical refuse collection pullouts and a further 4290 assisted special uplifts.

6.2 Environmental and Fleet Services

6.2.1 The 'Older and Wiser' Essential Facts for Smarter Seniors continues to be distributed. This publication is a handbook of advice and information on money governance for the over 50's It provides financial education and information in an age appropriate format. This handbook is distributed through the Senior Together Group and through some events and talks.

6.2.2 More than 3242 children took part in the annual Crucial Crew event, now in its 19th year. In 2014, the event also included a specific day for children with learning disabilities and physical disabilities. 90 children attended this event.

6.2.3 'Be smart Be safe' is an event which is held to raise consumer awareness and identify opportunities to engage with disabled persons and disability organisations. This event took place on 11 February 2014. 120 people attended. An evaluation of the event showed that 77% of the attendees found the event informative and 95% found the information available valuable. Another event took place on 24 February 2015.

6.2.4 Environmental Services has been promoting and developing doorstep crime initiatives through partnership working within the Lanarkshire Doorstep Crime Group. Many victims of doorstep crime are elderly or vulnerable and this multi agency group addresses incidents through the effective use of prevention, intelligence and enforcement. To date, the Lanarkshire based full-time Police team dedicated to this issue, report that 246 people have been arrested with a total of 401 charges involving over £500,000 of frauds/thefts. Environmental Services have played a key role in supporting the activities of the team by sharing expertise and intelligence.

6.2.5 The National Scams Hub of the National Training Standards Board have circulated to local authorities lists of individuals within their local authority area who have been identified as victims of postal, telecoms and online frauds. The Service is working with Police Scotland and the Council's Social Work Resources to assist these individuals and prevent them from having further losses. The vast majority of those identified are elderly or vulnerable.

6.2.6 There is an ongoing programme of work designed to prevent the sale of tobacco to children. To date, Environmental Services have carried out 68 visits; with nine sales, 6 of which were integrity visits and require re-visits. The other 3 were issued Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs). The work done in this area helps to prevent under 18s buying tobacco and assists in the prevention of children taking up smoking.

6.2.7 The Environmental Health Service works with community groups providing information, talks and training, primarily on food hygiene. In March 2014, a number of sessions were delivered to children with disabilities. The food hygiene training results in the children receiving a recognised qualification and a certificate that can be used by them to gain employment. It enhances their basic life skills and allows them to work and put into practice the skills they have learned within their school refectories.

6.2.8 In the last Passenger Services survey it was highlighted that children with additional needs find it difficult to cope with change and that long term contracts with taxi companies would be beneficial as this would allow for continuity in the service provided. As a consequence, a review of Passenger Services contractual arrangements in relation to taxi provision has taken place resulting in the implementation of long term contracts. Fleet Services and Education Resources have procedures in place to ensure that children that benefit from the continuity of transport provision are catered for.

6.3 Support Services

6.3.1 As part of the wider East Kilbride town centre development, the Council is working in partnership with the town centre owners to refurbish East Kilbride Ice Rink. In addition to replacing the ageing plant, ice pad, air handling units and some redecoration, the project will introduce a new ramp for access to the ice rink, an accessible toilet and changing area, level with the Ice Rink and improved signage. Timescales for completion are yet to be determined as the project is currently at feasibility stage and initial drawings and costs are being developed. The project will be funded by South Lanarkshire Council, with a contribution from the town centre developer. We are currently also actively sourcing external funding e.g. from Sportscotland.

6.3.2 The new Library in Forth opened its doors to the public in April 2014; the facility is part of the larger school development and replaces the old library. The new library is brighter, more welcoming and more versatile so users will be able to enjoy an improved programme of events and family activities. There is also a new dedicated children's area, an expanded ActiveIT Centre, with free Internet access and an innovative 'gadget bar' where staff are on hand to answer IT questions. The new library has ramped access, parking spaces, automatic door and accessible toilet.

7. Areas for Improvement

7.1 In 2015, the Resource will:-

- ◆ continue to promote and facilitate equality in all areas of service delivery
- ◆ continue to work on improving coverage of PDR for employees
- ◆ continue the project management and delivery of capital projects assisting in providing improved facilities for disabled people and ensuring compliance with DDA legislation.

8. Employee Implications

8.1. There are no employee implications arising from this report.

9. Financial Implications

9.1. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

10. Other Implications

10.1. There is a risk to the Council if the Resource does not have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty as this may lead to non-compliance with equalities legislation. The consequence of this could be an unlimited financial penalty.

10.2. There are no implications for sustainability in terms of the information contained within this report.

11. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 11.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy and, therefore, there is no requirement for an impact assessment to be carried out.
- 11.2. There was no requirement to undertake consultation in terms of the content of this report.

Colin McDowall

Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

10 April 2015

Link(s) to Council Objectives and Values

- ◆ Provide vision and strategic direction
- ◆ Strengthen partnership working, community leadership and engagement
- ◆ Improve the quality of the physical environment
- ◆ Improve community safety

Previous References

Equal Opportunities Forum – December 2013

Equal Opportunities Forum – March 2015

Community Services Committee – 4 February 2014

List of Background Papers

None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-Karen Bain, Personnel Manager

Ext: 4670 (Tel: 01698 454670)

E-mail: karen.bain@southlanarkshire.gov.uk