

Report

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Report to: **Community Services Committee**
 Date of Meeting: **4 February 2014**
 Report by: **Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)**

Subject: **Community Services - Mainstreaming Equalities and Diversity**

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 Equality and Diversity Strategy.

2. Recommendation(s)

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

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

3. Background

3.1. 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.

3.2. Equalities Impact Assessment

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

3.3. In addition to existing and new/proposed policies and functions, the Resource has also carried out impact assessments on 12 of its savings proposals identified for 2013/2014.

4. Employment

4.1. Recruitment

4.1.1 During the period January 2012 to June 2013 Community and Enterprise Resources received a total of 2934 applications. From these applications, 506 posts were filled following the Council's standards on recruitment and selection.

4.1.2 Of the 125 candidates who declared a disability, 17 were appointed and of the 125 candidates from an ethnic background, 21 were appointed. There were 196 posts advertised during this period which were covered by Delivering a Fairer Future (DFF) with 27 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 2012/2013 96.8% 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. As well as the Corporate welcome day, new employees in Community and Enterprise Resources undertake a resource based induction training course 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 e.g. by providing a translator for a deaf employee.

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 Council's website and currently has 142 downloads, 244 content pages, 13 online forms, 14 online survey forms and 22 PDF forms. These range from policy documents, core plan maps and special uplift forms 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 March 2012.

6. Delivering Services

6.1 Facilities, Waste and Grounds Services

- 6.1.1 Facilities Services mentored 32 Future Job Fund (FJF) trainees from February to August 2013 in catering, cleaning, council officer and janitorial roles. All 32 received nationally recognised training with 6 gaining permanent employment within the Council.
- 6.1.2 A graffiti removal service is provided by Grounds Service with 85% 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 3000 households on behalf of Housing and Technical Resources. Grounds Services also provide a chargeable service to approximately 650 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 2012/2013 of 71 against a target of 68, measured by an independently audited Land Audit Management System.
- 6.1.5 The Service has also effectively de-littered hard and soft landscape areas, achieving a score for 2012/2013 of 72 against a target of 70, measured by an independently audited Local Environment Audit and Management Survey.
- 6.1.6 Implementation of the fixed play area review has taken into account the decommissioning of play areas that do not comply with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and a 5 year investment programme has been ongoing raising the play value of remaining facilities and where practical address any DDA issues with additional equipment being purchased and installed.
- 6.1.7 To fulfil the various requirements of different faith groups, Bereavement Services offers a comprehensive burial and cremation service and during the six years since it opened the crematorium has provided over 9000 services to all faiths.
- 6.1.8 The Countryside and Greenspace Service runs a Greenspace and Wellbeing programme, in partnership with NHS Lanarkshire: this is part of the Well Connected programme. The service now works with Lanarkshire Association for Mental Health (LAMH) on one day per week and with Phoenix Futures (Addiction Recovery) on two days per week. A Branching Out programme (Mental Health and Environment initiative with the Forestry Commission and NHS Lanarkshire) has been run and two more programmes are scheduled between now and March 2014.
- 6.1.9 Greenspace will be running another Getting Started in the Environment programme this year in partnership with the Princes Trust and The Conservation Volunteers.
- 6.1.10 South Lanarkshire Council and North Lanarkshire Council are recruiting a Healthy Walking Co-ordinator in November 2013 to further develop therapeutic walking programmes in both Council areas. In South Lanarkshire Council this will be run by Countryside and Greenspace in partnership with South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture (SLLC).
- 6.1.11 Grounds Services mentored 31 FJF trainees from February to August 2013 who carried out a range of grounds services functions across South Lanarkshire.

6.1.12 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 539 families with their additional waste disposal requirements

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.

6.2.2 Money governance advice and training has also been provided over the past six months to partners and other agencies e.g. Seniors Together.

6.2.3 More than 3000 children took part in the annual Crucial Crew event, now in its 20th year. In 2013 the event also included a specific day for children with learning disabilities and physical disabilities. 24 children attended this event.

6.2.4 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 is scheduled to take place in February 2014.

6.2.5 Environmental Services has been promoting and developing the doorstep crime initiative on cold calling control zones and addresses ongoing incidents of doorstep crime. 24 referrals have been received this year and all were responded to. The service also participates in multi-agency initiatives to detect and deter bogus callers/door step crime for vulnerable or elderly people. 3 Multi agency initiatives have taken place this year.

6.2.6 There is an ongoing programme of work designed to prevent the sale of tobacco to children.

6.2.7 The third "Sloppy Slipper" exchange will be held in December 2013 in partnership with NHS Lanarkshire and Community Safety. The purpose of this event is to encourage people to trade in their unsafe slippers and reduce accidents in the home.

6.2.8 The Environmental Health Service works with community groups providing information, talks and training, primarily on food hygiene. In November 2013 a number of sessions were delivered to children with disabilities with more scheduled to take place in March 2014.

6.2.9 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.

6.3. Support Services

6.3.1 Support Services is responsible for the project management of the Resource's capital programme. Following a 7 month, £865k refurbishment the Cambuslang Institute re-opened to the public in May 2013. In addition to the installation of new windows and a new roof there were upgrades to the internal layout including the re-orientation of the reception area and main lower level toilet. This increased the size of the accessible bathroom on the ground floor. The lower lesser hall was split into 2

areas, one of which was turned into a soft play area for children of all abilities up to 8 years old. The Institute was redecorated throughout and a state of the art sound system was installed.

6.3.2 New DDA compliant doors were installed at Chatelherault Country Park, a five star visitor attraction under the Visit Scotland grading scheme in summer 2012. The project provided a fit for purpose access at the facility which attracts visitors throughout the year with varying disabilities.

6.3.3 In early 2013 Blantyre Sports Centre underwent a £215k upgrade. The works included the removal of a number of internal walls to provide a more open plan space and the replacement of all floor coverings. In addition to the physical upgrade a further investment of £200k provided state of the art fitness equipment throughout providing accessible fitness for all visitors.

6.3.4 In 2013 work has been undertaken within Lanark Memorial Hall. The building is now fully accessible to disabled users with 2 lifts allowing access on every level. There is an accessible changing room and access to the stage for performers using a wheelchair. There are disabled toilets accessible from all levels, flashing lights have been installed to inform deaf users of an emergency and a hearing loop to help those with hearing difficulties.

7. Areas for Improvement

7.1. In 2014, the Resource will:-

- ◆ continue to promote and facilitate equality in all areas of service delivery
- ◆ continue to work on improving coverage of PDRs 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)

3 December 2013

Link(s) to Council Values/Objectives

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

Previous References

None.

List of Background Papers

- Equal Opportunities Forum – 3 December 2013

Contact for Further Information

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

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