

Report

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

Subject:	Mainstreaming Equalities and Diversity – Enterprise Services
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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. Planning and Building Standards

- 6.1.1 The Disability Liaison Group within Community and Enterprise Resources, comprising of representatives from all Services, continues to meet quarterly. This group gives disability groups the opportunity to comment on a whole range of issues and, where practical, these are taken on board and acted upon.
- 6.1.2 The weekly list of Planning and Building Standards applications continues to be distributed to local disability groups who can request consultation on any applications. This is issued electronically and if an application requires further investigation, a meeting will be arranged. The Service is working on establishing additional cross checks that would make applicants more aware of building standards issues for certain types of planning applications, e.g. cottage flats and town houses.
- 6.1.3 Building Standards is also represented on the South Lanarkshire Access Panel.

6.2. Regeneration

- 6.2.1 South Lanarkshire Council and Partners continue to commit significant resources and efforts to tackle poverty and inequality in South Lanarkshire with a Council and Partner commitment of over £6m. This includes supporting those in poverty, through the provision of quality money, debt and welfare advice and supporting residents to get back into work. It also includes early intervention approaches with a strong focus on supporting vulnerable children and families at the earliest point to prevent issues arising at a later stage.
- 6.2.2 The Appeals Representation service, delivered by the Citizens Advice Bureaux (CAB) has had considerable success with 63% of the 116 cases supported at tribunals winning their appeals. The demand for this service continues to grow and the CAB plan to bid for external funding to expand this tested service.
- 6.2.3 A relatively modest investment from the Tackling Poverty programme of £18k has enabled Education to develop a range of learning and teaching resources with the aim of improving children and young people's financial capability. "Finance Matters" will now be delivered by all education establishments from nurseries and beyond and the impacts of this could be significant. To complement this, a new school based credit union has been launched with a further 13 expected in 2013/14, evidencing strong and effective partnerships between the Credit Unions and schools.
- 6.2.4 Credit Union membership has risen by 4.6% in the year against a target of 3%. The Credit Unions continue to develop innovative and new services for residents including a payment model for Social Housing providers to enable direct payment of rent, to minimise the negative impacts the Universal Credit payments process may bring to some tenants and housing providers.
- 6.2.5 A recent analysis has suggested that the Tackling Poverty programme has levered in at least £3.94m additional external funding to the area over the last year from the Lottery and other sources.
- 6.2.6 Through South Lanarkshire Employability Pipeline, South Lanarkshire Works 4U, 4260 clients were engaged and supported with 1753 progressing into employment, 652 into further training and 113 into higher education. Of these totals, 1150 clients came from the worst 15% data zones.

6.2.7 Through South Lanarkshire More Choices, More Chances Partnership a joined up approach has delivered an improvement in the School Leaver Destination Follow-Up Report. This tracks the progress of school leavers and identifies if they progress into a positive destination whether this is employment, further or higher education or training. A range of services work closely together to share information and provide support relevant to the needs of young people, particularly those who are likely to be furthest from the labour market. This information is used to inform the wider policy initiatives and to measure the performance of partnerships linked to Single Outcome Agreement targets.

6.3. Roads and Transportation

- 6.3.1 Engineers from Roads and Transportation Services respond to the needs of people with disabilities on an ad hoc basis, for example, during 2013 the following works were undertaken, 2 new Toucan Crossings were installed; 2 upgrades from Pelicans to Puffins took place and 1 new set of traffic signals including pedestrian facilities were installed. All of the crossings have facilities to assist disabled pedestrians to cross the road safely. Dropped kerbs were provided at all crossing points and tactile slabs were used to delineate the edge of the footway and the crossing position to assist visually impaired pedestrians. To assist visually impaired pedestrians, when the traffic has been signalled to stop and the “green man” is illuminated an audible tone is activated during the time that the “green man” is on and a tactile cone, located at the base of the push button box rotates.
- 6.3.2 One of the road safety initiatives promoted to our schools is the a2bsafely. This initiative is designed for young people with additional support needs and assists pedestrian training, which can be accessed online at a2bsafely.com or via a CD. It offers young people the opportunity to encounter the road environment safely in an interactive real world setting. Additional material for parents and teachers is also available online.
- 6.3.3 South Lanarkshire Council worked in partnership with Strathclyde Police, Argos and Norbert Dentressangle in 2011 to develop an educational DVD programme to alert road users to the road safety issues surrounding Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs). The DVD demonstrates the issue of visibility and includes views from the inside of the HGV cab. It contains information on stopping distances, manoeuvrability, blind spots and tail lifts. This initiative is still ongoing and the DVD is available on the Council’s website. The DVD has been viewed in 70 different countries. Copies are available on request.
- 6.3.4 Roads and Transportation Services commenced an exercise to assess the facilities provided for disabled people within The Village, East Kilbride following agreement by the Road Safety Forum for a pilot project. This was undertaken in collaboration with the organisation Deafblind Scotland and Visibility.
- 6.3.5. For blind, deaf and blind and partially sighted people a safe and accessible pedestrian environment is fundamental to independent mobility. Five journeys linking key points of interest were created which included a bus stop, train station, car park and local services such as a restaurant, church and post office. Representatives from Deafblind Scotland and Visibility assessed each journey and made comments regarding existing facilities and difficulties that may be faced by those with sensory impairments. Roads and Transportation Officers investigated and implemented a range of remedial measures as a result of these assessments. Actions included a review of tactile paving provision, the relocation of obstacles such as refuse bins and cycle stands, footway surface repairs and general maintenance, raising awareness

of illegal street advertising amongst shop keepers and a review of the timings of signalised pedestrian crossings. This project highlighted the difficulties that may be faced by blind, deaf and blind or partially sighted road users and where appropriate action, particularly in relation to maintenance, can be taken to facilitate the safe passage of sensory impaired pedestrians.

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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