

Report

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Report to:	Equal Opportunities Forum
Date of Meeting:	29 June 2010
Report by:	Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)

Subject:	Annual Report on Mainstreaming Equalities and Diversity – Enterprise Resources
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ advise the Forum of the work being undertaken by Enterprise Resources to meet the commitments in the Council's Single Equality Scheme, Equal Opportunities Policy and Equality and Diversity Strategy

2. Recommendation(s)

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

- (1) that the work being undertaken by Enterprise Resources be noted.

3. Background

3.1. Enterprise Resources has an in house Equal Opportunities Officer Working Group which includes officers from every Service in Enterprise. The group promotes equal opportunities throughout the Resource and the Chair attends the Corporate Officer Working Group on Equal Opportunities. 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. Mainstreaming Equal Opportunities

4.1. Key objectives in terms of service delivery in Enterprise Resources are identified via the Resource and Service planning process. Equal Opportunities is mainstreamed into the activities of the various services within Enterprise Resources which enable these key objectives to be met. A selection of these activities in each of the Services is outlined in the following paragraphs.

4.2. Planning and Building Standards

4.2.1. The Disability Liaison Group within Enterprise Resources, comprising of representatives from all Services, gives disability groups the opportunity to comment on a whole range of issues and, where practical, these are taken on board and acted upon. For example, plans submitted as part of Building Warrant applications are submitted to the meeting for the Group's comments which are then incorporated in building standards' response and site meetings can be arranged. The Group is chaired by a planning officer, who also sits on the in-house equal opportunities group, and meets quarterly.

- 4.2.2. The weekly list of planning and building standards applications continues to be distributed to local disability groups who can request consultation on any applications.
- 4.2.3. Building Standards is represented on the South Lanarkshire Access Panel. The booklet “Inclusive Design” is to be reviewed and updated as an exercise with the Access Panel. A further improvement to ensure that developers access the booklet is currently being designed. This will mean that developers accessing a building warrant application form on the web will be directed automatically to the “Inclusive Design” booklet. It is intended that this will take place as part of the application form review. Building Standards facilitate discussions on access issues between the access panel and developers and promote dialogue regarding technical specifications which may be referenced during future revisions to building regulations instigated by the Scottish Government.

The Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 and the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2008 which came into force in August 2009, introduced a requirement for design and access statements to accompany planning applications for certain types of development. National and major developments, for example, large retail developments, new public buildings and large residential developments, will require an access statement to be submitted which indicates how issues relating to access to the development for disabled people have been addressed. The Council has produced a guidance note which is available in council offices and on the website which sets out the requirements for developers when submitting Access Statements. The Council shall undertake consultation with the South Lanarkshire Access panel on relevant applications.

- 4.2.4. Following the adoption of the Local Plan, a series of supplementary planning guidance notes (SPG) are to be prepared to simplify various local plan policies. The Residential Development Guide SPG will contain a section on safe and inclusive design, and will be subject to consultation with the Access Panel and other relevant equality groups.
- 4.2.5. The Planning and Building Standards Service has developed an on line system for consulting the public on local plans and other policy documents. It is hoped that this could incorporate an option to collect data on consultees across all the equalities strands; however, there are issues regarding confidentiality that require further development. In the meantime, the Planning Service has issued hard copy equality monitoring forms with its most recent consultation document, the Minerals Local Development Plan Main Issues Report. Consultation on this document concludes at the end of May.

4.3. Regeneration

- 4.3.1. The Regeneration and Inclusion Team within Regeneration Services makes a significant contribution to the delivery of the key objectives and targets within the Single Outcome Agreement. A core function is the design and delivery of employability services that address inequalities. This is undertaken through both support for employability and through area based initiatives.
- 4.3.2. During 2009/10, these services supported over 4000 local people and a range of new initiatives were put in place aligned to the Council Connect vision to “work together to improve the quality of life of everyone in South Lanarkshire”. Major achievements across a range of activity areas include:-

4.3.3. Employability Initiatives

4.3.4. A successful bid and first phase of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Future Jobs Fund delivery that creates new opportunities for young people to get into work through a variety of job placements with employers such as South Lanarkshire Council, Lanarkshire NHS and Third Sector organisations. The target group for funding is primarily 18-24 year olds who have been unemployed for over 26 weeks and those who face a range of barriers to work together with older people of working age living in “hotspot areas” including Blantyre, Cambuslang, Rutherglen and Larkhall.

4.3.5. Securing European funding for employability programmes beyond March 2010 through collaborative working with local partners on a further successful Community Planning Partnership (CPP) bid. The funding package of £3.5 million in 2010/11 targets a range of local residents who face significant barriers to progressing towards employment and vocational training. Many are individuals who have overcome mental illness, have disabilities or are homeless. This new funding will mean over 800 unemployed residents will gain an opportunity to progress into vocational training in 2010 with around 400 people expected to achieve a job outcome by 2011.

4.3.6. During 2009/10 the Regeneration and Inclusion Team has continued to lead the partnership response with the expansion of “More Choices, More Chances” activity to assist young people not in education, employment or training to overcome a range of issues and gain the skills and opportunities to move towards employment. New initiatives introduced include:-

- ◆ 16+ Learning Choices which supports S4 School leavers making the transition into the world of work through access to an appropriate learning opportunity via Further Education
- ◆ National Training Programmes and Volunteering
- ◆ Youth Jobs Fund that provides subsidies for up to 50 weeks to support local young people aged 16-17 enter and sustain jobs

4.3.7. An award winning Child Minding programme that released the entrepreneurial aspirations of disadvantaged people, creating new high quality child minding businesses in areas of high deprivation. The initiative was recognised by a Scottish Urban Regeneration Forum Award in 2009 as an example of best practice under their “Partnership Category” and provides a double benefit from an Equalities perspective - supporting the entrepreneurs and creation of additional child minding places, assisting parents in other workless households where lack of support has been a barrier to progress in training and the labour market.

4.3.8. Area based Initiatives

4.3.9. Partnership Programmes where Health and Employability Organisations have collaborated to support those in greatest need - for example the COSLA Award winning First Steps Programme (FSP) that brings together NHS and the South Lanarkshire Council Regeneration Partnership agencies focusing on first time mothers living in areas of high deprivation. FSP parenting interventions are delivered through one to one support to young mums in their own home and covers health, life style and nutritional advice designed to ensure children get off to the best possible start in life, regardless of family circumstances.

4.3.10. The Tact Healthy Park development in Blantyre, which grows a range of organic vegetables and plants for use by the local community. The facility provides a health awareness and training venue for a range of agencies including NHS, Local Schools and Council Social Work staff. Groups supporting people with Learning Disabilities and overcoming Mental Health issues are regular users of the facility which was

recognised by a Scottish Urban Regeneration Forum Award under the Urban Regeneration category.

- 4.3.11. Larkhall Community Growers who, with support from South Lanarkshire Council and local churches, have created a training facility that offers 20 planting beds for use in training, employability and education. This Resource supports a range of organisations; delivering training that provides a range of horticulture skills to people with learning disabilities and young unemployed people.
- 4.3.12. Community led forums giving local people a sense of ownership and control on the use of resources in their area. Through these forums a range of agencies work with vulnerable people, provide vocational training opportunities created through capital projects to a wider cross section of participants and ensure the community benefits. An example is the roll-out of the Pride of Place model which links landscaping and environmental improvement works with workless people helping them gain skills and training to progress towards employment.
- 4.3.13. The Company Development Team within Regeneration Services continues to lead for South Lanarkshire on the Supplier Development Programme (SDP) which now covers 16 local authority areas. The functionality of the SDP website is being changed to collect equal opportunities information from clients.
- 4.3.14. As well as grant funding, the Business Support and Property Information team also manage the West of Scotland Loan Fund for the Council. This programme offers loan funding of up to £50,000 to new and existing businesses. A recent client to this programme was an East Kilbride ethnic food company. The Council grant funded the business plan and later participated in the funding package with a loan thereby helping to secure employment for 19 people from the black and ethnic minority community. This company continues to be supported – most recently with its current plan to expand into new premises.
- 4.3.15. Enterprise Resources, through Community Regeneration and Rural Development, is responsible for the South Lanarkshire LEADER Programme. This is a £1.47 million discretionary grant fund that supports the development of projects that provide an economic, environmental or social benefit to the rural area, and is funded through the Scottish Rural Development Programme for the period up to 2013. South Lanarkshire Council is the Lead Authority to the Scottish Government with overall responsibility for the funding.
- 4.3.16. The Programme is managed locally by the South Lanarkshire Rural Partnership (SLRP), which acts as the LEADER Local Action Group (LAG) and has responsibility for overseeing the effective delivery of the programme.
- 4.3.17. The SLRP is one of the themed CPPs and to ensure compliance with equalities legislation, SLRP has taken a 'mainstreaming' approach to tackling equal opportunities. Equal opportunities is a horizontal theme within our rural strategy *Working towards sustainable rural communities* and underpins all actions within the strategy. The Council has taken responsibility for this by ensuring that:-
- ◆ the priorities and associated strategies of the Partnership reflect the relevant statutory requirements with regard to equal opportunities
 - ◆ all initiatives, strategies and plans introduced by the partnership are subjected to an equalities impact assessment to identify any possible adverse impact, barriers to participation or discriminatory practices

- ◆ arrangements for consultation and community engagement on all strategies, plans and initiatives are inclusive of all communities of interest
- ◆ arrangements are introduced to monitor and report on performance in relation to equal opportunities
- ◆ equal opportunities issues are built into performance indicators/measures
- ◆ opportunities are identified to develop the capacity of community/voluntary groups to enable them to participate effectively in consultation/engagement processes
- ◆ information and best practice are shared among the partners

4.3.18 The LEADER programme manager is responsible for ensuring that equal opportunities are adhered to in all LEADER applications and the programme engages with organisations that can promote the equal opportunities agenda in the rural area.

4.3.19 The LEADER programme manager will undertake a technical assessment to ensure all groups are inclusive and have an equal opportunities policy in place (copy required for application). Equal opportunities also forms part of the scoring system for approvals and asks to what extent the project actively promotes the full and equal participation of individuals and social groups in the local economy.

4.3.20 The effect of the above actions enables the SLRP to provide tangible evidence of performance and demonstrate commitment and leadership to tackling equality and inequality across rural South Lanarkshire.

Examples of projects assisted to date are as follows:-

Developing Local Communities

- ◆ Lanark Learning Community, Schools of Ambition learning project – Vocational Arts / Training Centre. The project aim is to establish a new vocational training centre for early school leavers, working in partnership with local high schools
- ◆ The Canzona Absolvent project managed by the Biggar Little Festival (BLF) is a community project to establish closer international links with the BLF and to extend the involvement of young people and community groups
- ◆ Carstairs Junction Toddlers Group, Parenting skills project will link with other toddler/playgroups within the Fairshare area. The project aims to help alleviate anti-social behaviour in the community
- ◆ The VIVA project run by Cooking Up Healthy is a healthy eating cookery course aimed at engaging with older inhabitants in the Clyde Valley

4.4. Roads and Transportation

4.4.1. Engineers from Roads and Transportation Services respond to the needs of people with disabilities on an ad-hoc-basis, for example:-

- ◆ A member of the public from Hamilton who recently became the user of an electric scooter was experiencing difficulty with some routes from her home to the town centre. The area office visited the routes to ascertain where there might be an issue with dropped kerb access at junctions. Several were already in place, however, there was a requirement for the installation of dropped kerbs at 8 additional junctions along with one at a crossing point. An instruction was subsequently issued for alterations to be carried out.

- ◆ An engineer from Roads and Transportation Services attended a meeting of the Disability Forum Group to explain the types of pedestrian crossings that we use and how requests for new crossings are assessed. Following on from the meeting, the engineer met one of the members, who is visually impaired, to assist with issues she has in crossing the road at various locations.

- 4.4.2. The Parking Unit are currently on target to meet the requirements of the Disabled Persons' Parking Places (Scotland) Act 2009. A survey of on-street disabled persons parking bays in residential areas is almost complete and all Council controlled car parks have been identified and a survey is currently underway.
- 4.4.3. At the new Carluke Park and Ride facility, 6 parking bays for disabled users have been installed with provision for additional spaces if required. An additional access ramp was also constructed.
- 4.4.4. One of the road safety initiatives promoted to our schools is "a2bsafely". This initiative is designed for young people with additional support needs and assists pedestrian training. It comprises a website that can be accessed on-line 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 on-line.
- 4.4.5. Road Safety for older people continues to be promoted using both theatre performances and publicity campaigns. The road safety play entitled "Urban Rodeo" funded by Road Safety Scotland and enacted by the Baldy Bane Theatre Company, was performed at 2 venues in November 2009. The play is aimed at the 55+ age group and stresses the need to be vigilant in terms of road safety as road layouts, technology and circumstances are constantly changing. The play, which was very well received, provides crucial messages on pedestrian safety, drinking and driving, the Highway Code, driver distraction and prescription drugs and driving.
- 4.4.6. Three new sets of traffic signals and two new pedestrian crossings were installed during 2009/10 with all of them having full 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 to assist visually impaired pedestrians. To let visually impaired pedestrians know when it is safe to cross the road an audible tone is activated during the time that the "green man" signal is on and a tactile cone, located on the base of the push button box, rotates.

A further 2 sets of signals and 2 pedestrian crossings were upgraded with facilities for disabled pedestrians being incorporated into the improvements.

5. Impact Assessments

- 5.1. During 2009/10, 21 policies/programmes were impact assessed, all of which related to efficiency savings for 2010/11. Of the impact assessments carried out, 13 were published and are available on the Council website, 5 related to efficiency savings which were not approved at Committee and, as a consequence are unpublished, and the remaining 3 are retrospective impact assessments for efficiency savings relating to previous financial years.

6. DDA Audits

- 6.1. As part of a programme of works and in conjunction with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) audit, the Estates Lease Management team undertook modifications to Strathclyde Business Centre, Hamilton Road, Cambuslang to improve accessibility.

These included the installation of new disabled toilets and improved car park delineation for disabled drivers. The modifications were completed in April 2010.

- 6.2 The Estates team are continuing with a programme of reviewing and updating DDA audits of business centres within the Estates leased portfolio on an annual basis.

7. Performance Monitoring

- 7.1. In order to determine whether there were any issues in terms of race in relation to planning applications approvals, monitoring by ethnic group was carried out over a 2 year period. Although the return rate was disappointing, no issues of concern were identified and the exercise has been discontinued.
- 7.2. In June 2009, the third car park survey capturing equalities data was undertaken. Previous surveys in 2003 and 2006 enabled Roads and Transportation Services to revise the provision of disabled parking spaces in all our car parks. Initial analysis from the 2009 survey has not identified any new issues and a refreshed list of actions will be prepared reflecting this.
- 7.3. Regeneration Services collect equalities data on their various employment initiatives which are used to inform future developments in this area.

8. Employment and Training

- 8.1. Routine monitoring of applications received from disabled and black and ethnic minority candidates has not identified any instances of discrimination to date.
- 8.2. Enterprise Resources participates in the Council's Delivering a Fairer Future Programme and encourages applications from women for non traditional roles in Roads and Transportation Services and Building Standards.
- 8.3. Enterprise Resources continues to support family friendly policies and 40 employees are currently either job sharing or working a shorter working week; 2 employees are working term time; 6 employees are working beyond age 65 and 3 employees have flexibly retired.
- 8.4. Support has been given to employees to enable them to continue working. This has been done via redeployment both on a permanent and temporary basis as well as securing specialist equipment and training where necessary. For example, a parking attendant who has been registered blind has been redeployed to a clerical position, given specialist training via the RNIB and appropriate IT equipment has been purchased. In addition, ergonomic chairs are purchased to assist employees with back problems as well as pregnant employees.
- 8.5. Training in equal opportunities is identified during the PDR process and, in 2009/10, 5 employees have attended disability awareness training, 1 has attended race and equality awareness training, 1 has attended a session on the Single Equality Scheme and 2 employees have attended an external event on the Disability Discrimination Act and Inclusive Design. In addition, 1 employee is undertaking British Sign Language level one.

9. Communication

- 9.1. If requested, Enterprise Resources continues to provide information and forms in alternative formats eg large print, Braille, audio and other languages. Arrangements can also be made for officers in Enterprise to make home visits to anyone unable to call at an office, if required.

10. Future Action

- 10.1. Enterprise Resources will continue to mainstream equal opportunities in all its activities.
- 10.2. Enterprise Resources will continue to consider any appropriate positive action which could address under representation in traditionally male occupations e.g. civil engineering, roadworker.

11. Employee Implications

- 11.1. There are no employee implications.

12. Financial Implications

- 12.1. There are no financial implications.

13. Other Implications

- 13.1. The risk to the Council is that if the Resource does not have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty it may lead to non-compliance with equalities legislation.

14. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 14.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.
- 14.2. Enterprise Resources continues to consult with the community at large via meetings with local area committees, community groups, disability groups, LEMAG (Lanarkshire Ethnic Minority Action Group) and other community and local interest groups as appropriate.

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18 June 2010

Link(s) to Council Objectives/Improvement Themes/Values

- ◆ Improve the quality of the physical environment (Council priority)
- ◆ Improve community safety
- ◆ Support local economy by providing the right conditions for growth, improving skills and employability
- ◆ Working with and respecting others (value)
- ◆ Excellent employer (value)
- ◆ Tackling disadvantage and deprivation (value)
- ◆ Sustainable Development (Council priority)

Previous References

- ◆ Equal Opportunities Annual Report – 17 March 2009

List of Background Papers

Single Equality Scheme

Equality and Diversity Strategy

Contact for Further Information

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

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