

Report

Report to: **Equal Opportunities Forum**
Date of Meeting: **27 February 2024**
Report by: **Director, Health and Social Care**

Subject: **Annual Report on Mainstreaming Equalities and Diversity – Social Work Resources 2022/2023**

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ advise the Forum of the strategic and operational work being undertaken by Social Work Resources to meet the commitments within ‘South Lanarkshire Working for You’ Mainstreaming Equalities Report 2021 to 2025

2. Recommendation(s)

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

- (1) that the work being undertaken by Social Work Resources in terms of the Council’s Equal Opportunities Policy and related statutory duties be noted and reported to the Equal Opportunities Forum.

3 Background

3.1. The Connect Council Plan 2022 to 2027 sets out our plans to deliver a range of outcomes for the benefit of everyone in South Lanarkshire. There are 6 outcomes, with Social Work Resources focusing mainly on 3:-

- ◆ Health and Wellbeing – People live the healthiest lives possible
- ◆ Children and Young People – Our children and young people thrive
- ◆ Communities and Environment – Caring, connected, sustainable communities

3.2. The statutory framework for social work services is contained in a raft of legislation. Principal among these is the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 which places a duty on all local authorities to “promote social welfare”. Social workers have a distinctive set of knowledge, skills and values when supporting our most vulnerable people and ensuring that their needs are met without discrimination.

3.3. In giving some additional background, many of the services that are delivered to the public are set out in statute and, therefore, the majority of direct service delivery must comply with the respective legislative framework. It is this framework that provides the basis of Social Work service, working alongside the South Lanarkshire University Health and Social Care Partnership (South Lanarkshire University HSCP), to reduce inequality and provide effective care to meet the needs of vulnerable people in South Lanarkshire. Therefore, as a targeted service, much of the work centres on the following areas:-

Child protection	Adult support and protection
Children with additional support needs	Physical and learning disability
Care experienced children and young people	Frail older people
People involved in the justice system	Alcohol and substance misuse
Mental Health	Unpaid Carers

3.4. South Lanarkshire Council and the South Lanarkshire Integration Joint Board (IJB) also recognise the immense pressure faced by households across South Lanarkshire as they currently experience the worst cost-of-living crisis in 40 years. Additional demands continue to be placed upon services as supports are offered to help households manage scarce resources and maintain support in the year ahead.

4. **Mainstreaming Equalities**

4.1. Social Work Resources play a leading role in mainstreaming equalities across a number of partnership agendas including Integration of Health and Social Care, Public Protection arrangements, Getting it Right For Every Child, The Promise Board, Community Planning, Carers Strategy, Lanarkshire Advocacy, and the Community Justice Partnership. Tackling inequality is a central theme within all these partnership agendas.

4.2. Social Work Resources participates in the Council's Equality and Diversity Working Group, and along with other Resources has developed equality outcomes that will meet the general duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010:

- ◆ to eliminate discrimination
- ◆ advance equality of opportunity
- ◆ foster good relations in all the work we do

4.3 During 2022/2023, there were no complaints recorded by the Resource under the equalities category.

5. **Progress in Meeting the Council's Equality Outcomes**

5.1. Social Work Resources reports progress against 4 of the Council's equality outcomes within the Mainstreaming equalities progress report 2019 to 2021 and Mainstreaming equalities report 2021 to 2025 as detailed below:

5.1.1 **Increase the number of people from ethnic backgrounds employed in the South Lanarkshire Council workforce to reflect the diversity of the South Lanarkshire population.**

Equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace is promoted through a robust training programme. The following learn online courses are now deemed mandatory for the wider social work workforce (2859 employees as of March 2023). In recognition of the disparate workforce, staff attendance on these courses continues to be encouraged by local managers and attendance is now monitored by the South Lanarkshire University HSCP Workforce Planning and Development Group.

	Courses completed by November 2023	% Completed by November 2023
Equality & Diversity Awareness	1,225	43%
Marriage & Civil Partnerships	1,005	35%
Unconscious Bias	1,017	36%
Race Discrimination	1,121	40%

A well-informed workforce ensures there is good communication with the diverse community within South Lanarkshire. Translation and interpretation services are accessed by social work staff to support this engagement. During 2022/2023, Language Line provided interpretation services on 196 occasions, providing support to individuals in 17 different languages. Interpretation support has more than doubled in comparison to the previous year with 80 occasions, and an additional seven languages have been translated including Iran (Farsi), Lithuanian, Pashto, Spanish, Turkish, Ukrainian, Sudanese Arabic.

Language	Count	%	Language	Count	%
Arabic	5	2.5%	Romanian	6	3%
Hungarian	8	4%	Russian	5	2.5%
Iran (Farsi)	1	0.5%	Spanish	1	0.5%
Kurdish (Bahdini)	13	6.5%	Sudanese Arabic	17	8.5%
Kurdish (Sorani)	102	52%	Turkish	3	1.5%
Lithuanian	3	1.5%	Ukrainian	5	2.5%
Pashto	2	1%	Urdu	4	2%
Polish	6	3%	Vietnamese	8	4%
Punjabi	7	3.5%			

Meanwhile, during 2022/2023, British Sign Language (BSL) has been used on 68 occasions to support the Deaf community engage effectively with Social Work Resources, an increase from 55 occasions in the previous year.

5.1.2. Older people, those from vulnerable groups and individuals who live alone are protected from scams and nuisance calls and their wellbeing is improved through increased awareness and preventative action.

During the period 2022/2023, South Lanarkshire Adult Support and Protection investigations relating to financial harm remained at 10%. Adult Protection Committees for North and South Lanarkshire recognise the cross-cutting themes in relation to financial harm and work together to continue to raise awareness across our communities and multiagency workforce. The Pan Lanarkshire Financial Harm Task Group is supported by representatives from various agencies including Trading Standards and the Department of Work and Pensions. The group meets regularly and takes various work forward including creating and sharing of resources.

5.1.3. Counselling through schools' service is accessible for all children/young people aged 10 and over

Therapeutic support is offered by The Trauma Recovery Service (TRS) in South Lanarkshire to young people from birth to age 26, who have experienced physical, emotional or sexual abuse, or sustained exposure to traumatic events. The service aims to help them understand their feelings and make changes in their life. Planned intervention from TRS is an integral part of the Social Work care plan, with close links maintained with partner therapeutic agencies such as NHS Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Education Counselling in Schools initiative, and the Voluntary Sector. The TRS service will respond to all referrals and enquiries and the speed of response will be determined by service capacity but is likely to take place within a period of weeks.

5.1.4 Improve health, care and wellbeing for the most vulnerable in our communities

- ◆ **Assessment and care management services** work collaboratively with partners to protect and reduce the risk of harm to adults, children and young

people. They assess the needs of service users and their carers and help plan supports to meet those needs. Support is designed to help people remain as independent as possible within their own community.

Home First initiative now operates throughout South Lanarkshire with teams in each of the council's four locality areas of Clydesdale; East Kilbride; Hamilton; and Rutherglen/Cambuslang. The introduction of Home First supports the strategic vision to maximise the independence of service users leaving hospital or living in the community, improve individual outcomes, and in doing so, reduce the reliance on statutory services. Integrated multi-disciplinary teams comprising of Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Care at Home professionals and frontline Care at Home staff maximise independence through rehabilitation and reablement interventions.

- ◆ **Blantyre Life** opened in March 2023, and has enhanced the range of choice and options available to the wider adult population of South Lanarkshire following a period of ill health or crisis. It combines a 20 bedded intermediate care facility and 20 new technology enabled properties, along with an innovative interactive Technology Enabled Care (TEC) zone. Staff encourage service users to rebuild their strength and confidence allowing them to continue to self-care and learn or re-learn the skills needed to maximise their potential and support their goal to return home.
- ◆ **Technology Enabled Care (TEC)** continues to provide health and care services to people in their own homes, or near to home, to help them live independently, safely, and well at home for longer. The TEC team's key services include telecare, Connect Me remote health monitoring service, and Near Me video consultations. South Lanarkshire's TEC will work with partners in 2024 on an Amazon Healthcare Telecare Project that will include a test to link smart speakers to digital alarm receiving centres enabling service users to voice activate alert alarms.
- ◆ **Carers** continue to receive support from commissioned carer support services to enable them to care in good health and wellbeing. During 2022-2023, 1,113 new adult carers were identified, 5,426 received support, and 803 adult carer support plans progressed. The young carers service supported over 120 children and young people, with 100% agreeing that the service had helped meet their needs and achieve their goals. The Carers Strategy 2023-2026 has now been published with refreshed public information, including a plan on a page, and a revised short breaks statement under review. Two carer consultation events resulted in a co-produced action plan to support the work of the Carers Strategy and a designated Carer's lead worker has been appointed to drive forward this agenda.
- ◆ **Children's services** provide family support and promote the welfare and development of children and young people, ensuring they have a voice and can participate in the decisions about their lives. The Promise sets out an approach for partners to support care experienced children, young people and families as they grow, develop and leave care.
- ◆ **The Autism Resources Co-ordination Hub (ARCH)** has been established since 2016 to support South Lanarkshire's autistic children, young people and adults across the entire lifespan. ARCH works with autism partners in the

community by collaborating to design, deliver and promote autism-informed services which will support the identified needs of those affected by autism. Neurodiversity is at the forefront of ARCH's unique model of delivery, conducted via a range of support groups including a helpline staffed by autism-informed professionals. ARCH is encouraging autistic people, parents and carers to engage in the formal consultation on the new Learning Disability Autism and Neurodiversity (LDAN) bill open from 21 December 2023 until 21 April 2024.

- ◆ **Inclusion as Prevention (IAP)** is a 5-year initiative funded by the National Lottery Community Fund to work with children and young people from South Lanarkshire, practitioners from social work, education, health and other partners who have an impact on the lives of children and young people. Based around three strands of engagement, system design and evaluation, the partners will co-design, implement, and learn from tests of change with children, young people and professionals to help ensure children and young people are less likely to come into conflict with the law. The final evaluation of the project will be published in January 2024.
- ◆ **Justice services** offer support to people in conflict with the law to reduce their offending behaviour and promote community safety. This is done by helping a person resettle following a period in prison, addressing responsibility for offending, providing programs that offer realistic alternatives and raising awareness about how offending affects victims.
- ◆ **The Caledonian programme** is for people convicted of domestic abuse offences and the Moving Forward Making Changes programme is for those convicted of sexually harmful behaviour. A holistic approach is taken to ensure work programmes address inappropriate behaviour but also ensure the safety of persons harmed. The Caledonian programme is a good example of this as it is delivered in partnership with Women's Aid South Lanarkshire East Renfrewshire (WASLER) who support women impacted by domestic abuse. During the period of 2022/2023 WASLER has engaged with local communities to raise awareness of domestic abuse and to support the wider community to have greater knowledge and understanding. The Caledonian team also work with CIRCLE for the provision of services to children who have been impacted by domestic abuse.
- ◆ **Unpaid Work** has been an area of strength of Justice Social Work over 2022-2023 having fully resumed since the COVID-19 pandemic. The service has introduced a community and educational gardening initiative in partnership with local communities. The project directly contributes to South Lanarkshire's Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy, to protect, enhance and respect South Lanarkshire's natural environment and provide health and wellbeing to local communities. This work also supports service users' wellbeing and health by promoting the connection between nature, mental health and physical activity. In recognition of the cost-of-living crisis, the service also delivered a winter jacket appeal; collecting and laundering donations from the community of preloved items and sharing a total of 600 jackets with third sector partners for distribution to those in need across South Lanarkshire.
- ◆ **Independent advocacy** supports people to have their voices heard, their rights protected and the opportunity to have as much control over their own lives as

possible. Individuals are encouraged to have the support of an advocate to help navigate their way through social work processes, better understand their options and express their wishes. In October 2023, Equalsay Advocacy was the successful provider in the recent tender for Advocacy Services within South Lanarkshire.

- ◆ **See Hear** is the national, 10-year, strategic framework for sensory impairment in Scotland. The current strategy is undergoing a refresh, with publication due in February 2025. Locally the See Hear Strategic Working Group (SHSWG) continues to focus on three key areas including information, communication, and mobility. The SHSWG held a public information event in April 2023 in Lanark, with a wide range of sensory impairment specialist agencies participating and sharing information to those with sensory support needs in our local communities. [See Hear - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)
- ◆ **Promote early intervention, prevention, self – care and self-management** through the work we do in partnership with third and independent sector partners. This work supports people with lower-level needs, and these continue to offer beneficial support to people living within the community by encouraging independent living, reducing isolation and improving health and wellbeing.

6. Equality Impact Assessments

- 6.1. Social Work Resources continues to build upon previous work undertaken in relation to equality and diversity impact assessments resulting in the completion of impact assessments. The Resource follows corporate guidance for carrying out Equality Impact Assessments and training is available for new users of the EQIA system.
- 6.2. Over the course of 2022/2023 the Resource completed Equality Impact Assessments, which included:-
 - ◆ Lanarkshire Advocacy Plan 2020 to 2025
 - ◆ Community Alert Alarm Service (CAAS)

7. Employee Implications

- 7.1. Mainstreaming equalities are met from within existing employee resources and that of our partner agencies.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1. There are no additional financial implications associated with this report.

9. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 9.1. There are no new climate change, sustainability and environmental implications associated with this report.

10. Other Implications

- 10.1 There is a risk to the Council if the Resource does not comply with the relevant equality duty and legislation.

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, function or strategy; therefore, there is no requirement for an impact assessment to be carried out.

Professor Soumen Sengupta
Director, Health and Social Care

19 December 2023

Link(s) to Council Values/Priorities/Outcomes

Values

- ◆ Focused on people and their needs
- ◆ Working with and respecting others
- ◆ Accountable, effective, efficient, and transparent
- ◆ Ambitious, self-aware, and improving
- ◆ Fair, open and sustainable
- ◆ Excellent employer

Priorities

- ◆ We will work to put people first and reduce inequality
- ◆ We will work towards a sustainable future in sustainable places
- ◆ We will work to recover, progress, and improve

Outcomes

- ◆ Children and young people - Our children and young people thrive
- ◆ Housing and Lang - Good quality, suitable and sustainable places to live
- ◆ Our Economy - Thriving business, fair jobs and vibrant town centres
- ◆ Communities and Environment - Caring, connected, sustainable communities
- ◆ Health and Wellbeing - People live the healthiest lives possible
- ◆ Education and learning - Inspiring learners, transforming learning, strengthening partnerships

Previous References

- ◆ [Social Work Equal Opportunities Forum Annual Report 2021-2022 – 30 November 2022](#)

List of Background Papers

- ◆ [South Lanarkshire Working For You: Mainstreaming Equalities Progress Report 2019 to 2021 and Mainstreaming Equalities Report 2021 to 2025](#)

Contact for Further Information

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

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Social Work Resources Mainstreaming Equality		2022/2023
Outcome 1 – Increase the number of people from minority ethnic backgrounds employed in the South Lanarkshire Council workforce to reflect the diversity of the South Lanarkshire population.		
	What we have done so far	What difference it has made
1	<u>4368</u> equality and diversity training programmes completed by the social work workforce.	Staff are informed of equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace through a robust training programme.
2	<u>196</u> calls to Language Line for translation and interpreting services for <u>17</u> different languages.	Service users have access to translation and interpreting services to enable them to easily communicate and liaise with social work services.
Outcome 2 – Older people, those from vulnerable groups and individuals who live alone are protected from scams and nuisance calls and their wellbeing is improved through increased awareness and preventative action.		
	What we have done so far	What difference it has made
1	Undertook <u>2,457</u> Inquiries for the 65+ age group in Adult Support and Protection resulting in <u>1102</u> investigations.	Older people are protected from harm defined to include any conduct which harms or exploits an individual including behaviour towards an adult which causes fear, alarm or distress and may include neglect or self-neglect, or physical, psychological, sexual, financial or other abuse.
2	Social work staff have attended <u>693</u> training sessions on a range of adult support and protection themes. Appropriate sessions have been attended by partner agencies to extend the scope of the training to raise awareness of staff (<u>1097</u> multiagency practitioners attended).	Social Work staff and partners are informed and aware of adult support and protection.
3	Guidance for staff across Lanarkshire on financial and property harm has been reviewed and updated. Public information on financial harm is regularly issued.	Vulnerable people are protected from financial harm.
Outcome 5 - Improve Health, Care and Wellbeing for the most vulnerable in our communities		
	What we have done so far	What difference it has made
1	Provided <u>179</u> of our own care home placements and a further <u>2876</u> within the private/voluntary sector care homes.	Older people in need of 24-hour personal care and support are cared for in purpose built homely environments.
2	We undertook <u>986</u> Inquiries for adults under 65 which led to <u>445</u> Adult Support and Protection investigations.	Vulnerable adults are protected from harm.

3	Continue to support <u>1103</u> people with a learning disability to live in their own communities.	Supported living arrangements are available to people with learning disabilities, they continue to participate in their communities.
4	Self-Directed Support (SDS) continues to be implemented, allowing service users choice and control over their care and support arrangements. SDS options: Direct Payments – 790 Individual Service Fund – 482	Service users are exercising choice with SDS options of: 1) Direct Payment 2) Individual Service Fund 3) Council arranged services 4) Mixture of funding options Option 3 remains the preferred option for service- users in South Lanarkshire and reflects the national position.
5	We have provided <u>5,223</u> items of equipment Response to demand as well as an accelerated programme of installation saw an increase in assistive technology throughout 2022 – 2023. 4151 telecare items and 3163 Digital IP Alarms were installed with 24% of hospital discharge referrals supported through the Home First telecare pathway which ensured installation within 24 hours of referral being received.	Vulnerable adults with physical disabilities are able to remain in their own homes, and supported to continue to be as independent as possible
6	The Resource received <u>386</u> referrals to support people with a physical or sensory impairment.	The Resource continues to support individuals with the protected characteristic of disability remain safe in their own home or homely environment.
7	We undertook <u>736</u> Child Protection Investigations.	Children and young people are protected from harm.
8	We placed <u>184</u> children on the Child Protection Register, as of 31 March 2023, <u>95</u> children were on the Child Protection Register.	Children and young people are protected from harm.
9	We undertook <u>1007</u> reports for the children through the Children's Hearing System.	Children and young people's wellbeing is addressed as we work to ensure they are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.
10	We supported <u>186</u> children and young people in full time foster care placements.	Children are cared for in homely environments, and their wellbeing supported by foster parents.
11	As of 31 March 2023, there were <u>736</u> looked after children:- <u>90%</u> were looked after in the community, at home, with friends/relatives or by foster/carers/prospective adopters.	Vulnerable children and young people are supported in a range of settings as their needs are addressed.

	10% were looked after in a residential/ or specialist residential school accommodation.	
12	We have supported <u>683</u> people (<u>845</u> orders) to <u>complete</u> a Community Payback order including the opportunity for personal development and learning opportunities. <u>514</u> orders were successfully completed in 22/23.	Our criminal justice activity seeks to avoid unnecessary short prison sentences of three months or less and continue to support individuals through Community Payback Orders by way of an alternative to custody whilst community projects are improved by those undertaking CPO's.
13	We have prepared <u>1,744</u> reports for the Courts. The Resource continues to perform well in the submission of Criminal Justice Social Work Reports to the courts within timescale. From 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, <u>98%</u> of reports were submitted within timescales, exceeding the <u>95%</u> target.	Reports assist courts in determining the most appropriate disposal to impose on the offender.
14	The Resource has received <u>527</u> referrals to support individuals improve their substance misuse behaviours with the support of specialist services.	We support, signpost and direct service users with substance misuse problems to our alcohol and drug partnership working arrangements.
15	As part of the development of the Lanarkshire Advocacy Plan, we engaged with a range of service users, carers, staff and advocacy providers as part of the plan's development.	Service users commented positively about the support Advocacy provides for them.
16	Continue to support unpaid Carers and young Carers by providing financial support to Lanarkshire Carers, Action for Children, and other partner organisations to assist us deliver on the duties of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016.	Supports and Services to unpaid carers continue to develop and evolve with our third sector organisations. Unpaid Carers will be better supported on a more consistent basis so that they can continue to care if they so wish, in good health and have a life alongside caring.
17	The last Social Work equality profile validation exercise records: <u>1.80%</u> staff declaring they have a disability (SLC 1.65%), <u>86.62%</u> no disability (SLC 89.33%), <u>11.58%</u> not declared (SLC 9.02%).	The Resource offers employment opportunity and continues to monitor the workforce.