

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FORUM

Minutes of meeting held via Microsoft Teams on 23 February 2022

Chair:

Councillor Bert Thomson

Councillors Present:

Councillor Maureen Devlin, Councillor Mary Donnelly, Councillor Eric Holford, Councillor Katy Loudon, Councillor Mo Razzaq

Councillors' Apologies:

Councillor Janine Calikes, Councillor Ann Le Blond, Councillor Joe Lowe, Councillor Jim McGuigan

Attending:

Finance and Corporate Resources

A Bell, Team Leader, Consultation, Organisational Development and Equality; T Blake, Team Leader; G Cochran, Administration Assistant; R Leith, Community Engagement Manager; E A McGonigle, Administration Officer; K McVeigh, Head of Personnel Services

Also Attending:

M Kennedy, Chair of the Joint Consultative Forum; K Wallace, Unite the Union

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Equal Opportunities Forum held on 24 November 2021 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

The Forum decided: that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

3 Annual Report on Mainstreaming Equalities and Diversity – Finance and Corporate Resources

A report dated 1 February 2022 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on work being undertaken by Finance and Corporate Resources to meet the commitments within the 'South Lanarkshire Working for You' Mainstreaming Equalities Report 2021 to 2025.

Details were provided on the strategic and operational activities being undertaken or planned by the Resource in relation to the following:-

- ◆ Resource and Service planning
- ◆ COVID-19 impacts
- ◆ mainstreaming equalities
- ◆ Administration and Legal Services
- ◆ Communications and Strategy
- ◆ consultation, involvement and engagement
- ◆ Seniors Together in South Lanarkshire
- ◆ South Lanarkshire Disability Partnership
- ◆ performance measurement
- ◆ employment

- ◆ employee development and vocational training programmes
- ◆ communication/support
- ◆ Finance and Information Technology Services
- ◆ British Sign Language (BSL)
- ◆ Equity Working Group

Officers responded to members' questions on various aspects of the report.

The Chair, on behalf of the Forum members, welcomed the report and expressed appreciation of the work and activities being undertaken by Finance and Corporate Resources to take forward the Council's commitment to mainstreaming equality and diversity in strategic planning and performance.

The Forum decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 11 November 2020 (Paragraph 3)]

Councillor Donnelly joined the meeting during this item of business

4 Parental Employability Support Programme

A report dated 1 February 2021 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted providing an update on the development of the Making it Work project in South Lanarkshire.

The Parental Employability Support (PES), Making it Work project, funded by the Scottish Government, was a targeted programme that supported parents with health conditions or a disability. The programme, which would run until June 2022, was available throughout South Lanarkshire and provided key employability support, contributed to Child Poverty targets and increased access to fair work opportunities. 60 parents would be supported to move into good quality employment over the period of the programme. The programme focused on the fact that quality employment was beneficial for the health and wellbeing of an individual but also had wider societal and economic benefits.

Detailed information was provided on the delivery of the programme, including the following:-

- ◆ key worker support
- ◆ health and wellbeing services
- ◆ personal and social skills development
- ◆ training and upskilling
- ◆ additional support in terms of funding and flexible childcare

A breakdown was provided on the outcome and outputs of the programme. As COVID-19 lockdown restrictions eased, it was anticipated that there would be greater engagement and face-to-face groupwork.

Officers responded to members' questions on various aspects of the report.

The Forum decided: that the report be noted.

5 Community Engagement

R Leith, Community Engagement Manager, Finance and Corporate Resources gave a presentation on Community Engagement.

The presentation provided detailed information on the following key areas:-

- ◆ the main areas of work which included:-
 - ◆ planning
 - ◆ Participatory Budgeting (PB)
 - ◆ lived experience
 - ◆ policy work
- ◆ the engagement methods used, which took account of:-
 - ◆ who already had good links with people
 - ◆ how early in the process to involve people
 - ◆ how to feed back to people about what they had told the Council
 - ◆ how the resulting actions would be reported
- ◆ standards:-
 - ◆ National Standards for Community Engagement
 - ◆ Community Planning Partnership Engagement and Participation Strategy

Having responded to members' questions, the officer was thanked for her informative presentation.

The Forum decided: that the presentation be noted.

6 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.