



AGENDA ITEM NO:

Report To:	Policy and Resources Committee	Date: 25 March 2025
Report By:	Morna Rae, Head of OD, Policy and Communications	Report No:
Contact Officer:	Morna Rae	Contact No:
Subject:	Equality Mainstreaming Report 2025, Progress on Equality Outcomes 2021/25, the Equal Pay Statement 2025 and the Proposed Equality Outcomes 2025/29	

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 ☒ For Decision ☐ For Information/Noting
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to present for approval the Equality Mainstreaming Report 2025, progress on delivery of the Equality Outcomes 2024/25, the Equal Pay Statement 2025, and the proposed Equality Outcomes for the period 2025/29. More information is provided in the Appendices.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- Notes the contents of this report, and
 - Approves the proposed Equality Outcomes 2025/29.

Morna Rae
Head of OD, Policy and Communications

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Equality Act 2010 includes the Public Sector Equality Duty which covers the Protected Characteristics of Age; Disability; Gender Reassignment; Marriage and Civil Partnership; Pregnancy and Maternity; Race; Religion or Belief; Sex; and Sexual Orientation.
- 3.2 The Equality Duty comprises a General Duty and Specific Duties. The General Duty requires the Council to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by The Equality Act 2010;
 - advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups; and
 - foster good relations between people from different groups.
- 3.3 Due regard means that, during decision making, conscious consideration is given to the three aims of the General Duty.
- 3.4 The Specific Duties require the Council to:
- set specific, measurable Equality Objectives and publish information about our performance on equality;
 - publish sufficient information to show we have considered the three aims of the General Duty across our functions;
 - publish evidence of equality analysis undertaken to establish whether our policies and practices would further, or have furthered, the three aims of the General Duty;
 - gather, use and publish employment information;
 - publish Gender Pay Gap information;
 - publish an Equal Pay Statement; and
 - consider award criteria and conditions in public procurement.
- 3.5 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an international human rights treaty that grants all children and young people (aged 17 and under) a comprehensive set of rights. The UNCRC is the most widely supported human rights agreement in the world. It sets out a series of Articles, in one internationally recognised document, which outline the human rights that children (under the age of 18) should be entitled to. The Council is committed to promoting and upholding the rights of children and young people and aims to translate to a local level the UNCRC and the work of the Scottish Commissioner for Children and Young People.
- 3.6 The Equality Act 2021 requires the Council to publish Equality Outcomes every 4 years. The last set were agreed in 2021, and there is therefore a requirement to agree outcomes for delivery in 2025 onwards. Legislation also requires a Mainstreaming Report to be published every 2 years. This was last undertaken in 2023 and so an updated report is now provided for 2025. The statutory requirements are listed against Inverclyde Council, Inverclyde Education Authority and Inverclyde Licensing Board. For reporting purposes, the licensing information is incorporated within the Council report. The Education Authority related reports are provided to the Education and Communities Committee.

EQUALITY OUTCOMES 2021/25 – PROGRESS

- 3.7 The Council adopted a suite of Equality Outcomes in 2021 to cover the period 2021/25. Attached at Appendix 1 are details of progress made with delivery of the Equality Outcomes 2021/25. It should be noted that some of the actions remain in progress and will continue into the 2025 Action Plan. A number of these were negatively impacted by the legacy of the pandemic.

Key achievements from the action plan and wider relevant initiatives to note include the following:

- Delivery of the new model of combining all relevant funding streams into one Community Grant Fund and ensure that applications are furthering the aims of the Council, advancing equality, and ensuring that funding reaches as many organisations as possible
- We continue to support a Staff Disability Forum, a group that provides a platform for disabled staff, employees who care for disabled dependants and staff with an interest in disability. The Forum provides an opportunity to exchange information, ideas and raise awareness about disability in a confidential and safe space.
- The Community Learning and Development (CLD) Team has continued to expand English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) services
- We have updated a number of Human Resources and Health and Safety policies over the period. These help us to ensure we have modern, supportive and inclusive practices in place for our workforce. Of particular relevance are the Code of Conduct, Grievance, Dignity and Respect at Work Policy and Discipline Policy.
- The HSCP have implemented the Frailty Assessment Tool across all older adult services to improve support for older people in the community
- The Council has focused on anti-poverty initiatives, supported by a £1.05 million fund established in 2021. This has included the Warm Hand of Friendship with 58 community organisations delivering meals, warm spaces and clothing in the winter months. Over 9000 individuals have benefitted with a focus on lone parent families, families with multiple children and older adults.
- The Duke of Edinburgh scheme has a strong presence in Inverclyde and amongst other outcomes, provides valuable experience to young people that can, in turn, positively impact future job prospects. Funding at £120k was agreed in June 2024 to support this provision.
- Access to Community Connectors, GP Community Link Workers and Welfare Rights Officers provides support to enable residents to access services that support their well-being
- The Council has continued to encourage a diversity in its workforce. With a high proportion of employees living locally, there is a strong correlation between Inverclyde demographic and out workforce demographic. Since 2015 through various resettlement schemes, 874 individuals have come to Inverclyde, with 637 settling in the area. They are supported by a range of partner agencies. In conjunction with the Scottish Government a new role of Community Settlement Officer has been established.
- Our updated Recruitment Policy has strengthened our approach to having diversity in recruitment panels and continuing to support the Disability Confident Scheme.

EQUALITY MAINSTREAMING REPORT AND EQUAL PAY STATEMENT

- 3.8 Appendix 2 contains a breakdown of the employee profile of Council in relation to the Protected Characteristics of Gender; Age; Disability; Ethnicity; Sexual Orientation; Religion or Belief; and Marriage and Civil Partnership Status. It should be noted that, where data in the tables in the Appendix 2 is the equivalent of five or less, the information has been suppressed to protect the identity of the respective employees and potential employees. Additionally, in terms of those data sets, it is not possible to provide any meaningful commentaries on variations in figures.
- 3.9 The employee profile includes a significant amount of information. This is based on self reported personal information. Some key themes from the profile include:
- Our workforce comprised around 23% male employees, with females making up 76% of our staff. This is similar to the national rates within local authorities.
 - In terms of employee age, the highest percentage is within the 50-59 age bracket. This reinforces the importance of succession planning, and all council services have recently updated their succession plans.
 - Most of our employees report that they are White Scottish (81%). This correlates with the Census 2022 figures of 91% of Inverclyde's population (91%) stating that their ethnicity

was 'White Scottish'. In relation to applications across the reporting years there was a slight reduction in the percentage of White Scottish candidates. There were increases across other ethnic groups.

- In recruitment processes a consistent percentage of females/males apply, progress to interview and are then appointed. Across the reporting years most applications came from the 20-29 age group. This followed through to the interview and appointment stages. This is encouraging in terms of succession planning.
- We receive a low number of applications from people with disabilities, around 3%. In line with our Disability Confident accreditation there is an increase at the interview stage. Appointment levels then sit at approximately 3%.
- The Pay Gap information is the percentage difference between the hourly pay for people within one group and people in another group, e.g. male/female.
- The Disability Pay Gap levels are 2.02% for 2022/23 and 3.28% for 2023/24. This sits against a UK figure of 12.7%.
- The Ethnicity Pay Gap levels are -8.45% for 2022/23 and -8.22% for 2023/24.
- The Gender Pay Gap figures are 4.38% for 2022/23 and 4.16% for 2023/24. The trend has been reducing year on year – from 10.9% in 2015-16.

PROPOSED EQUALITY OUTCOMES 2025/29

3.10 The Council is required to devise a set of Equality Outcomes for the four year period from 2025. A consultation on the Equality Outcomes 2025/29 and the Education Equality Outcomes 2025/29 took place 29 January- 12 February 2025. A number of stakeholder groups were invited to participate in the process including Inverclyde residents, Council employees, trade union members, Health and Social Care Partnership service users as well as groups linked to the Community Learning and Development Team.

3.11 A total of 74 individuals responded to the consultation. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent of their support for the following proposed outcomes.

Answer Choices	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither / nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Outcome 1: Increase the participation of seldom-heard/under-represented voices in local decision-making processes	36.49%	29.73%	16.22%	13.51%	4.05%
Outcome 2: Improve support for older people in the community	51.35%	33.78%	12.16%	0.00%	2.70%
Outcome 3: Take action to prevent violence against women and girls in Inverclyde	66.22%	21.62%	8.11%	4.05%	0.00%
Outcome 4: Increase the diversity of the Council workforce	16.22%	27.03%	28.38%	16.22%	12.16%
Outcome 5: Improve the economic prospects of people who are furthest from the Labour Market including young people, older people and disabled people	41.89%	40.54%	10.81%	1.35%	5.41%

They were then asked to indicate any other equality issues which should be considered. There were 27 responses. These were across a wide range of themes such as deprivation and

economic inequality, accessibility, violence in communities, young people's voices and transport. No clear additional outcomes were identified from this feedback.

Based on this the following are proposed as Equality Outcomes 2025/29:

- Outcome 1 Increase the participation of seldom-heard/under-represented voices in local decision-making processes.
- Outcome 2 Improve support for older people in the community
- Outcome 3 Take action to prevent violence against woman and girls in Inverclyde
- Outcome 4 Increase the diversity of the Council workforce
- Outcome 5 Improve the economic prospects of people who are furthest from the Labour Market including young people, older people and disabled people

3.12 A related action plan will be developed, with oversight from the Corporate Equalities Group.

4.0 PROPOSALS

4.1 is recommended that the Committee:

- Notes the contents of this report, and
- Approves the proposed Equality Outcomes 2025/29.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal/Risk	X	
Human Resources	X	
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)	X	
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

5.2 Finance

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments

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5.3 **Legal/Risk**

The devising and publication of this report contributes to the fulfilment of the Council's obligations under The Equality Act 2010.

5.4 **Human Resources**

There are no direct human resources implications arising from this report.

5.5 **Strategic**

This report supports delivery of the Council Plan outcome *High quality and innovative services are provided, giving value for money.*

6.0 **CONSULTATION**

6.1 The consultation approach is detailed in the report.

7.0 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 None