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| Report To: | Policy and Resources Committee | Date: 20 May 2014 |
| Report By: | Wilma Bain (Head of Education) | Report No: PR/113/14/PC/WB |
| Contact Officer: | George Simmonds (Equalities Officer) | Contact No: 01475 712824 |
| Subject: | Progress in Mainstreaming Equality | |

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report is designed to inform the Policy and Resources Committee of the progress that the Council has made with regards to meeting our duties under the *Equality Act 2010* and the *Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012*.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Inverclyde Council has a legal obligation, under the Specific Duties Regulations, to report on the progress that it has made to ensuring that the general equality duty is integral to the delivery of its services and employment practices. This obligation must be exercised before the 30 April 2015 but provision is contained within the legislation to allow for any reports to be published prior to this date.
- 2.2 The Corporate Equality Group has a specific remit to ensure that Inverclyde Council meets the objectives of the published equality outcomes and other statutory requirements.
- 2.3 Inverclyde Council is making good progress towards achieving the objectives contained within our published equality outcomes. Significant progress has been made in respect of engaging groups who represent the relevant protected characteristics and also with regard to making Council services more accessible for everyone.
- 2.4 Considerable work has also been undertaken to compile datasets of statistics relating to the demographic composition of Inverclyde. This information can ensure that equality impact assessments are based on robust evidence to make appropriate strategic and policy decisions.
- 2.5 There are still some areas where important work still needs to be progressed, most notably in the areas of staff training and data collection from service users. Actions to ensure progress in this area are being discussed with the Corporate Equalities Group and with the CHCP Equalities Group.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Policy and Resources Committee is asked to note the information provided that outlines the progress that the Council has made towards meeting its legal obligations under equalities legislation and to provide any feedback on any points of this paper.

Wilma Bain
Head of Education

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Councils in Scotland are required by the Equality Act 2010 to mainstream equality and diversity into the delivery of services and employment practices. This is what is known as the general equality duty. This duty requires all public authorities to have due regard to:
- The elimination of discrimination, harassment, and victimisation;
 - Advancing the equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristics and those who do not; and
 - Fostering good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 4.2 In addition, public authorities in Scotland have further legal responsibilities outlined within the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012. To summarise, these regulations are designed to further assist public authorities to meet the requirements of the general equality duty and include requirements to:
- Produce a set of equality outcomes;
 - Publish a mainstreaming report by 30 April 2013 and then at intervals of no less than two years subsequently;
 - Publish an equal pay statement and action plan no later than 30 April 2013 and then at intervals of no less than two years subsequently;
 - Conduct and publish equality impact assessments; and
 - Consider where equality provisions should be used in procurement contracts.
- 4.3 Both the general equality duty and the specific duties relate to the following eight protected characteristics:
- Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation
- 4.4 Inverclyde Council has met the previous legal deadlines for publishing equality outcomes, mainstreaming reports and information regarding equal pay. However, equalities will remain an on-going concern and the Council should be diligent in ensuring that equality and diversity becomes embedded in all of our services and activities.

4.5 Cross-Directorate Activities

- 4.5.1 In order to understand how service delivery and employment practice affects equality issues it is important to understand what the demographics are within Inverclyde in order to be able to efficiently focus our service delivery to the relevant groups. In order to ensure that we are delivering services which are fair and that respect the diverse needs of our communities a database of evidence has been compiled from various sources to produce an equalities map of Inverclyde. Information from this resource can be used for equality impact assessments, community engagement, and can also be used to plan service delivery when required. The majority of this information comes from official statistics published by the Scottish Government, including (but not limited to) the Census but other information which has been collected by the Council and partner organisations (such as NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde) have also been included. It is planned that this information will be made available on ICON in the near future but if anyone needs access to data prior to this then they should contact the Council's Equality Officer.
- 4.5.2 Hate crime is an issue which adversely affects Inverclyde as it does throughout Scotland. In order to reduce levels of hate crime within our communities and make them safer places for everyone the Council is encouraging staff who deliver frontline services to the public to become third party reporting centres. The use of third party reporting centres allows for hate crimes or hate incidences to be reported to Police Scotland (anonymously if necessary). To date over 60 members of staff, including employees from CHCP, Customer Services, Adult Protection, and Libraries and Museums have completed a training course on third party reporting provided by Police Scotland. Further training will be provided in the near future for more staff to attend from other service areas.
- 4.5.3 All services within Inverclyde Council have the opportunity to provide alternative communications where needed. All publications should clearly state that the document can be made available in large format and alternative languages. The Council can also offer translation and interpretation services through third party providers. Although this service is not widely used it is a necessary requirement to ensure that people who do not use English as a first language are not discriminated against when accessing services. This also includes people who require British Sign Language (BSL) translation as this is a minority language that is distinct from spoken and written English. In addition, the Council has access to BT's Text Relay service which allows people with hearing difficulties to link over the telephone to Council services. For people with visual impairments who require documents in large print, the Council provides guidance on the appropriate use of text size and fonts.
- 4.5.4 Significant levels of work have been done within the last six months to establish better and engagement with local groups regarding equalities issues. An informal engagement forum has been developed that allows representative groups and individuals an opportunity to raise awareness and promote their aspirations and needs as well as to raise concerns. Other activities including focus groups have taken place with partner organisations such as CVS Inverclyde, West of Scotland Regional Equality Council, and LGBT Youth Scotland on specific matters concerning these groups.

- 4.5.5 The Council have also established a year-long celebration of Inverclyde's Women which was launched to coincide with International Women's Day on the 7th March 2014. This was an open event for people to attend to discuss with the Council what activities that they would like to see happen during this year of celebrating women in Inverclyde. The feedback from consultation at this event has been collated and an action plan has been drawn up including educational work with schools, art and craft events throughout the year, a photography competition, and a focus on female authors through the libraries.
- 4.5.6 An action plan to enable the Council to better communicate and promote the work which it does regarding equalities has also been drafted. A successful communications strategy will allow greater awareness and understanding of equalities issues amongst staff and will also provide the potential for greater access to hard-to-reach groups who may benefit from the equalities work that we are doing.

4.6 Activities within Inverclyde Community Health and Care Partnership

- 4.6.1 The provision of equalities is fundamental to health and social care services. Inverclyde Community Health and Care Partnership (CHCP). To ensure that
- 4.6.2 CHCP are implementing their existing Equalities Delivery Plan to ensure that all staff will have a greater awareness of the needs of groups with protected characteristics.
- 4.6.3 Ensuring that staff have an awareness and appreciation of the diverse needs of groups with protected characteristics is not an easy outcome to achieve. The main initiatives which will successfully deliver this outcome will be through learning and development activities for both individuals and teams. This will range from awareness sessions that considers the needs of groups in general through to specific training interventions.
- 4.6.4 Staff from CHCP also have access to training service delivery from NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde which will allow the opportunity to increase their awareness of specific health and care related aspects of equality and diversity. This includes training in Equalities and Inequalities Sensitive Practice.
- 4.6.5 Specific ongoing actions relating to equalities within the CHCP Directorate Improvement Plan include undertaking health needs assessments of adults with learning disabilities, accessing adequate mental health services (especially for children and young people), and the delivery of a shared Gender Based Violence approach with GPs.
- 4.6.6 Communication may be seen as a major barrier to improving health and social care and to enable the CHCP to better understand the needs of the diverse communities that access their services they are monitoring the use of translation, interpretation and alternative formats. This will help them to understand where further interventions may benefit the planning process.

4.7 Activities within Education, Communities and Organisational Development

- 4.7.1 Human Resources will soon be asking staff to update their equality information in order to compile as accurate an employee profile as we can. It was hoped that this could be made available on the Chris 21 system but this is not yet possible so a pro-forma document will be used. Information obtained in this exercise will be treated in strict confidence and in accordance with data protection principles. This statistical information will be used to ensure that employment decisions and policies are both fair and will meet the needs of our diverse workforce.
- 4.7.2 The Council has purchased an online Equality and Diversity Awareness course which is available for staff to complete when it is convenient for them to do so with 116 people having finished this learning activity. Separate mini-courses covering each of the protected characteristics are also available for staff to complete online. In addition, equality awareness is covered in the staff induction and customer care courses which all new members of staff should complete.
- 4.7.3 Bespoke training on equalities can be made available when requested and examples of this include an overview of equalities legislation for members of Inverclyde Children's Panel.
- 4.7.4 Hate crime training also provides an overview of protected characteristics and some other equality-related aspects such as identifying prejudice and discrimination.
- 4.7.5 Whilst training provision on equality and diversity has been made available there is a concern that uptake on these courses is not as much as anticipated and therefore an action plan to promote and encourage staff to complete these courses is being pursued between the Equalities Officer and the Learning and Development Officer.
- 4.7.6 In addition to specific training on equality and diversity, the Council has also enabled personal development opportunities for aspiring managers through courses approved by the Chartered Management Institute and facilitated by West College Scotland and the University of the West of Scotland. Whilst applications to attend these courses can be made by anyone it is hoped that it will provide an opportunity to enable more women to be promoted into management positions within the Council.
- 4.7.7 Significant work has also been made by staff within Libraries and Museums to ensure that, as much as possible, their services are as accessible and inclusive as possible for all users. Many people with disabilities use the services of libraries and require adaptive technologies to assist them. Examples of adaptive technologies can range from the provision of e-books (which can be useful for increasing font size and contrast to help people with visual impairments) to audiobooks and specialised computer software. Libraries staff work closely with colleagues from Inverclyde Council on Disabilities to ensure that they can provide an appropriate service for users with specific needs.
- 4.7.8 Additionally, libraries staff are increasingly providing books for readers whose first language is not English. Many of these books are available through intra-library loans with other authorities and therefore there is little or no cost to be able to provide this service.

4.8 Activities within Environment, Regeneration and Resources

- 4.8.1 The information contained within Inverclyde Performs presents a mixed picture of progress for this outcome.
- 4.8.2 The SPI relating to the percentage of footways resurfaced or reconstructed shows poor performance although the next update on performance is due in May 2014.
- 4.8.3 Street lighting is an important facility that allows people to safely access facilities, especially in winter. 98.4% of repairs to street lighting is completed within 7 days of faults being reported.
- 4.8.4 78% of all public areas within Council buildings are suitable for and accessible to disabled people.
- 4.8.5 Each summer there is an annual series of access surveys which are analysed to determine any recommendations for improving access. Where any actions are identified then subsequent work will be weighted according to perceived importance for priority.
- 4.8.6 The continuation of the Council's planned Capital programme has resulted in a further increase in the percentage of buildings that meet the access needs of our communities within Inverclyde.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

Finance

- 5.1 There are no direct financial costs associated with the information provided in this paper with the exception of access to translation and interpretation services that may be required by services from time to time.

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

| Cost Centre | Budget Heading | Budget Years | Proposed Spend this Report £000 | Virement From | Other Comments |
|-------------|----------------|--------------|---------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| N/A | | | | | |

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

| Cost Centre | Budget Heading | With Effect from | Annual Net Impact £000 | Virement From (If Applicable) | Other Comments |
|-------------|----------------|------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| N/A | | | | | |

Legal

- 5.2 This report outlines the progress that has been made so far in meeting our statutory obligations under:

- Equality Act 2010
- Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012

Human Resources

- 5.3 The information provided above does not place any additional responsibilities on staff over and above their normal working duties.

There will be a requirement to ensure that staff attend and complete appropriate equalities training as and when identified.

Equalities

- 5.4 Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

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YES

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NO.

This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Repopulation

- 5.5 n/a

6.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 The following documents are available from the Equality and Diversity section of the Council's internet site:

<http://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/council-and-government/equality-and-diversity/>

- Inverclyde Equality Mainstreaming Report
- Inverclyde Equality Outcomes
- Equal Pay Statement
- Gender Pay Gap Information
- Employee Profiles
- Licensing Board Mainstreaming Report
- Education Mainstreaming Report
- Education Equality Outcomes