

Shared Equality Outcomes 2021 – 2025

Mid –Term Progress Update 2023

1. Introduction

All public authorities in Scotland must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty, also known as the General Equality Duty, set out in the Equality Act 2010. This means that all public authorities, as part of their day-to-day business, must show how they will:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The protected characteristics referred to, as listed in the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation. We are all likely to have more than one protected characteristic, (intersectionality) which make up our individual identities.

North Ayrshire Council and East Ayrshire Council, along with the members of the Ayrshire Equality Partnership, adopted shared Equality Outcomes for the previous term 2017-2021, while South Ayrshire Council set our own independent outcomes from 2013 onwards. For the period going forward – 2021-2025 – South Ayrshire Council have worked with our neighbouring authorities and the Ayrshire Equality Partnership to develop these Pan-Ayrshire Equalities Outcomes. Working together, we have reviewed the progress and relevance of previous outcomes, and developed, updated and appended these to provide this fresh set of outcomes.

By reviewing, revising and publishing Equality Outcomes on a regular basis, we aim to make better, more positive and fairer decisions, and show that these decisions are bringing tangible benefits for our communities and our employees.

2. What are Equality Outcomes?

National guidance on setting Equality Outcomes notes that these should be proportionate and relevant to the functions and strategic priorities of the organisations setting them, and that they may include both short term and long-term benefits for people with protected characteristics.

From the outset of the development process, the following definition was applied to ensure consistency and rigour.

Outcomes are not what we do, but the beneficial change or effect which results from what we do. These changes may be for individuals, groups, families, organisations or communities.

Specifically, an Equality Outcome should achieve one or more of the following:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

Equality Outcomes have been developed on the basis that they are short to medium term (1 to 4 years) and link with longer term national outcomes.

It should be noted that a number of these Equality Outcomes link with existing policies and strategies, supporting the mainstreaming of equalities considerations into our day-to-day business. We also wish to ensure a focused effort on areas for improvement, specifically to improve equality and reduce inequalities.

3. Rationale for Shared Equality Outcomes

A number of organisations across Ayrshire deliver public services to local communities. In doing so, these organisations must ensure that no person or group is discriminated against on the basis of any protected characteristics they may possess.

Each public sector organisation has a requirement to develop and publish a set of Equality Outcomes. Considering the close links between many public sector organisations in Ayrshire, it was proposed that joint working in the development of Equality Outcomes should be undertaken. More importantly, as all organisations are delivering, or supporting the delivery of services to the same communities, their experience could be improved if approaches to equalities issues were consistent across these bodies. As a result, a decision was taken that public sector organisations across Ayrshire could develop a shared set of Equality Outcomes, whilst still maintaining individual accountability for their part with some separate actions delivered locally.

This approach to setting shared Equality Outcomes builds on an already established joint working relationship through the Ayrshire Equality Partnership (AEP). This partnership consists of representatives from the three local authorities from North, East and South Ayrshire Councils; NHS Ayrshire & Arran; HSCP from North, East & South Ayrshire; Ayrshire College; University of the West of Scotland; Ayrshire Joint Valuation Board; Police Scotland; Scottish Fire & Rescue Service; Community Justice Ayrshire and The Terence Higgins Trust.

The following tables outline the progress made to date and what further work we seek to do over the next two years. The RAG (red, amber, green) status has been used to signify action status: red (not yet started), amber (progress is slow) and green (progress is either complete or on target).

OVERARCHING SHARED EQUALITY OUTCOME 1: IN AYRSHIRE, PEOPLE EXPERIENCE SAFE AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

Links to National Outcomes:

- We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish Society
- We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk
- We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger
- We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility of their own actions and how they affect others

Local Equality Outcome 1.1: Victims, witnesses and partner agencies feel more confident in reporting hate incidents through a variety of methods.

Inequality being addressed: People suffer hatred and violence because of their protected characteristics

Outputs: Increase people's awareness of hate crime

Actions:

- Raise Council, Education Employees and Licensing Board Members' awareness to better understand hate crime

Measurements:

- Develop a Hate Crime e-learning course
- Number of staff/Board Members undertake training

Progress Update:

Work has yet to start on the development of a Hate Crime e-learning course – this will be considered during 2023 with a potential launch of late 2023. The Equality and Diversity Forum are in the process developing a suite of training webinars for all staff and it is proposed to arrange a Hate Crime Webinar for staff which will complement the online course when developed.

RAG Status:



Actions:

- Work with partners to raise awareness of hate crime with community members through the development of a conference

Measurements:

- Number of people attending the conference
- Evaluation of the conference

Progress Update:

Work has taken place with partners to raise awareness of hate crime within the community. In October 2022, the East Ayrshire Council led in partnership with the Ayrshire Equality Partnership, a conference to Empower communities in Ayrshire to End Hate Crime. With hate crime figures on the rise, the ever present need existed to support understanding of diversity and foster community cohesion, and thus in early 2022, East Ayrshire Councils' Corporate Officer (Equality and Diversity) brought a sub group of the Ayrshire Equality Partnership partners together and began organising the conference which was subsequently held on 5 October 2022. The conference offered opportunities to support learning in relation to hate crime through the lived experiences of its speakers and the good practice

demonstrated across Ayrshire and beyond to tackle the issues related to hate crime and promote positive solutions. Dave Scott, Campaign Director from Nil by Mouth hosted the conference with keynote addresses from Dr Christian Harrison, Reader in Leadership and Khadjia Mohammed, Senior Lecturer both from the University of the West of Scotland. The conference also offered workshops for participants to choose from including I am me charity (Keep Safe initiative); Scottish Refugee Council; Police Scotland, Criminal Justice Authority and others. Over 100 people attended the conference which was deemed to be a huge success in meeting its aim of raising awareness but moreover giving people the chance to consider what they can do in their role and workplace.

RAG Status:



Actions:

- Improved use of third-party reporting
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Measurements:

- Increased reporting via third party reporting using a variety of media tools and promotional materials
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Progress Update:

In order to improve the use of third party reporting, awareness has taken place of the Ayrshire third party reporting sites [ayrshire-third-party-reporting-centres.docx](#) ([live.com](#)) Work will continue to raise awareness of third-party reporting through our community planning partners.

RAG Status:



Local Equality Outcome 1.2: More young people and care leavers have access to suitable appropriate accommodation to live independently and safely in the community

Inequality being addressed: Young people and Care Leavers have lack of access to suitable accommodation and supports

Outputs: Better understanding of the needs of young people and care leavers to effectively meet their housing needs

Actions:

- Continue to work in partnership to develop our services for young people through the Improving Housing Outcomes for Young Care Leavers and Youth Housing Support groups

Measurements:

- Number of young people and care leavers taking up suitable accommodation
- Number of young people and care leavers maintaining a suitable tenancy

Progress Update:

- Housing Services has continued to work in partnership with the HSCP and other partners to support the needs of those with housing need and to prevent young care leavers becoming homeless. There is an ongoing review of the Youth Housing Support Group to improve the internal processes for young care leavers transitioning into their own tenancies.

RAG Status:**Local Equality Outcome 1.3: To embed a human rights ethos across schools in South Ayrshire to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in schools and the wider community**

Inequality being addressed: Inconsistency in developing a shared understanding of everyone's rights and a commitment to respect one's own and other people's rights

Outputs: All schools in South Ayrshire are registered with UNICEF**Actions:**

- Support the embedding of children's rights across the curriculum

Measurements:

- An increase in Schools achieving Bronze status
- An increase in schools achieving Silver status
- Increase in schools achieving Gold

Progress Update:

Rights Respecting Schools Award in South Ayrshire (RRSA) supports schools across the UK to embed children's human rights in their ethos and culture. All schools in SAC are registered with UNICEF. **Rights Respecting Schools Awards:**

- Re-accredit Gold: 13 schools
- Gold: 4 schools
- Silver: 27 schools
- Bronze: 9 schools
- Registration: 4 schools

- Children's rights development officer 0.4 secured for a year.
- Professional Learning sessions delivered to EYC establishments across the authority to support knowledge and understanding of implementing rights in the early years setting.
- CRD Officer has delivered bespoke inputs for schools in relation to children's rights.
- Incorporation Bill updates have been shared at Head Teacher meeting.
- Education Central Services Team has had input on CRIWA from Scottish Government.

- Children's Rights Steering Group established with a focus on looking at Gender 10 Equalities Programme of Study
- Education and Community Learning and Development (CLD),(supported by Scottish Government) led an authority event with pupils on the National Discussion. Results uploaded to the national site.
- Partnership working with CLD and across the RIC has been established to look at a consistency of approach to pupil participation.
- SAC is building a team of assessors to support UNICEF's accreditations. CRD Officer is trained and 2 other staff members are currently moving through UNICEF's Programme.
- 1 School is ready to re-accredit at Gold and 2 schools at Silver. 1 Early Years Centre is also ready to accredit at Silver. These assessments should be completed by June 2023.

RAG Status:



OVERARCHING SHARED EQUALITY OUTCOME 2: IN AYRSHIRE, PEOPLE EXPERIENCE SAFE AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

Links to National Outcomes:

- We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society
- We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need
- Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs

Local Equality Outcome 2.1: More disabled people, older people and women access public transport safely and in comfort with an integrated service that provides accessible information, appropriate assistance and support from transport staff.

Inequality being addressed: *Disabled people, older people and women experience difficulties accessing public transport because of safety, comfort, availability, connectivity, information and assistance, staff training and customer service*

Outputs:

- **The barriers facing disabled people, women and older people and their needs are identified**
- **The changes, support and resources required are understood and agreed**
- **Delivery of a programme of travel improvements and passenger assistance**

Actions:

- Engagement with disabled people, women, and older people, relevant organisations and third sector orgs
- Meetings with transport providers
- Consultation about changes
- Programme of support and improvements agreed
- Test and pilot new and modified service methods, technology around vehicles, including electric vehicles and practices

Measurements:

- Develop system for evaluating impact and measuring progress
- Collect and analyse data on disabled people, women and older people to evaluate impact and measure progress

Progress Update:

This action is due for completion in March 2025. The council in partnership with North and South Ayrshire Councils will host a pan Ayrshire event with transport providers in Ayrshire to bring together equality groups to discuss the issues in relation to accessing transport. This will allow people to raise issues and concerns directly with providers, and for providers to gather information directly from service users. This event will allow for data to be collated and analysed to track progress and inform future provision.

RAG Status:



Local Equality Outcome 2.2: Improve engagement with Council Services and enhance access to information for marginalised and under-represented groups

Inequality being addressed: Opportunities to engage with marginalised and under-represented groups by considering any barriers they may be experiencing and to address these issues to improve engagement

Outputs:

- The experience of marginalised or under-represented groups continue to inform decision making
- Ensure processes are in place to welcome, support and encourage marginalised or under-represented groups to improve engagement with Council Services

Actions:

- Continued involvement of tenants in the development and scrutiny of Housing Services through Tenant Participation (TP) Structures

Measurements:

- Number of Tenant Participation (TP) meetings
- Number of consultations
- Number of events, including the TP Fun Day

Progress Update:

Housing Services have continued to engage with tenants through various methods to ensure full involvement in the performance and review of the housing service. Involvement has progressed to hybrid meetings becoming the most favoured style of meetings. Various consultations have taken place such as; new housing developments, rent consultation, Housing Need and Demand Assessment and the Local Housing Strategy. To support community engagement within our local communities, South Ayrshire Council has an approved [Community Engagement Strategy](#)

RAG Status:



Actions:

- BSL Action Plan to be further implemented and engage with other services e.g. Sensory Impairment Team

Measurements:

- Review and implement actions as per pan Ayrshire BSL Action Plan 2018-2024

Progress Update:

Continued implementation of the British Sign Language (BSL) Local Plan 2018-2024. A [mid-term progress report](#) was produced in October 2021 with the final progress report due for publication in 2024. [BSL \(British Sign Language\) - South Ayrshire Council \(south-ayrshire.gov.uk\)](#). BSL Training was held in October 2021, with a further block arranged for March 2022. Each block was a 6 week course and was facilitated by Signs4Life. October 2021 – 16 participants – 15 Thriving

Communities Team (Employability), 1 Sensory Impairment Team and March 2022 – 14 participants – 7 Modern Apprentices (SSHC and Childcare), 7 Thriving Communities (CLD/Employability/Health and Wellbeing)

RAG Status:



Actions:

- Scoping review of documents and materials distributed or available from Council be checked for Accessibility by Equality Champions

Measurements:

- Report of scoping review on Accessibility of documents and materials

Progress Update:

Information that the Council provides can be made available, on request, in braille, large print or audio formats and can be translated into a range of languages. To ensure that we comply with *The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018* all documents which are available online must be accessibility checked. Guidance has been produced for staff on publishing accessible documents.

RAG Status:



OVERARCHING SHARED EQUALITY OUTCOME 3: IN AYRSHIRE, PEOPLE HAVE OPPORTUNITIES TO FULFIL THEIR POTENTIAL THROUGHOUT LIFE

Links to National Outcomes:

- We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people
- We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation
- Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens
- Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed
- We live longer, healthier lives

Local Equality Outcome 3.1 and 3.2: Young people, disabled people and women have access to training and employment

Inequality being addressed: Young people, disabled people and women have barriers to accessing training and employment opportunities

Outputs: To provide support to access employment to reduce health as a constraint to build an inclusive economy (3.1)

Actions:

- Provide support for unemployed people, in particular people with disabilities, women and residents to overcome health barriers to economic activity
- To support residents to retain employment by addressing health barriers
- Support local business to access health related supports to improve retention and productivity of their workforce

Measurements:

- Number of unemployed people who declare a disability engaging at support stage to employment
- Number of unemployed women engaging at support stage to employment
- Number of people who declare a disability entering the AGD workforce
- Number of women accessing AGD workplace supports to improve retention in the workforce

Progress Update:

The Ayrshire Growth Deal sees approximately £251 million of funding from the Scottish and UK Governments being invested across East, North and Ayrshire.

The Ayrshire Growth Deal programme has a strong focus on inequality and inclusivity and through our award winning 'Ayrshire Inclusive Growth Diagnostic' tool has identified a number of key target groups for our employability programmes. These groups include, females, young people and those with disabilities and long-term health conditions. The implementation of the various projects within the Growth Deal programme should bring lasting and long-term benefits to people in these equality groups and many others across East, North and South Ayrshire. We have embedded actions for the Ayrshire Growth Deal within our Equality Outcomes and although these will take some time to realise, they help to ensure a continued focus on equality groups within the Ayrshire Growth Deal programmes.

Working for a Healthy Economy is a large-scale investment, totalling £5 million, to deliver occupational health to ensure that Ayrshire has the requisite workforce to drive economic growth in the future. This project, implemented in May 2021, will serve to widen the labour pool and provide the basis for the maximisation of benefits arising from Ayrshire Growth Deal capital investments and will support:

- unemployed residents overcome health barriers to economic activity
- employed residents to retain employment by addressing health barriers
- local businesses to access health related supports to improve retention and productivity of their workforce

To date across Ayrshire the Building a Healthy Economy Programme has supported

- 514 unemployed individuals engaged with Working for a Healthy Economy service
- 34.6% anxiety levels reduced
- 43.3% depression reduced
- 26.5% health and wellbeing improved
- 51 gained employment

The Equality Outcomes report in 2025 will contain a full breakdown for those supported across each of the council areas

RAG Status:



Outputs: (3.2)

- **Disadvantaged and identified PC groups have increased access to relevant employment and training opportunities.**
- **Increased availability of suitable employment opportunities**
- **Disadvantaged and identified PC groups have improved functional skills to access training and employment**
- **Disadvantaged and identified PC groups have improved interpersonal skills.**

Actions:

- To continue to support the Young Person's Guarantee initiative in South Ayrshire with supported employment and tailored jobs scheme
- Increase number of young BME people joining Modern Apprenticeship Scheme
- To develop and provide support packages
- To plan effectively for interventions across South Ayrshire/pan Ayrshire to support and reduce the attainment gap

Measurements:

- Establishment of a pan Ayrshire Young Person's Guarantee Board Number of people supported from protected characteristic groups
- Number of people gaining training and employment from PC groups
- Number of people accessing non -traditional roles tackling occupational segregation

Progress Update:

The South Ayrshire Local Employment Partnership (LEP) is committed to reducing inequality and closing the gap is core to the LEPs vision, while ensuring we create a fair, inclusive, suitable economy through employability and volunteering by creating opportunities across South Ayrshire. South Ayrshire's LEP is now well-established partnership which is made up of representative from South Ayrshire Council, Skills Development Scotland (SDS), Ayrshire College, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Developing Scotland's Young Workforce (DYW) and Voluntary Action South Ayrshire (VASA), as the 3rd sector interface. The LEP lead the planning, decision-making and implementation of employability provision across South Ayrshire to ensure individual needs and labour market demands are

met. The LEP has supported a range of initiatives to support COVID recovery resulting in the South Ayrshire claimant account reducing from a peak of 7.5% in August 2020 to 3.6% in December 2022. The most recent school leaver destination (SLDR) report shows that 98.6% of South Ayrshire school leavers were in a positive destination three months after leaving school. This is the highest on record. The LEP is currently focusing on the following priority areas

- Creating pathways for young people and adults into the Aerospace industry
- Supporting Ukrainian and other refugees settling in South Ayrshire to progress into employment/training.
- Developing and funding sector-based work academies that assist unemployed people to move into occupational areas that currently have labour market gaps.
- Working with local employers to help close the disability employment gap.
- Supporting parents into fair, flexible and sustainable work.

Thriving Communities Employability Programmes are designed to support young people and adults, some of whom may be experiencing barriers to employment, to develop the skills and experience to successfully progress into/back into work. The team's collaborative approach to employability aligns with the UK and Scottish Governments approach to No One Left Behind and the European Social Fund. Programmes include:

- In-school senior phase support
- Care experience and young carers enhanced tailored support
- Employability pipeline provision
- Town Centre programme
- Pre-apprenticeships
- Family Engagement- including helping to tackle child poverty and promoting flexible working
- Community Justice- including promoting recruit with conviction
- Employability support for Ukraine guests
- SALUS- support for individuals experiencing problems with their health and wellbeing

Employment opportunities under Thriving Communities include:

- A wide range of Modern Apprenticeships opportunities, including our Care Experience and Young Carers Guarantee
- Supported Employment Tailored Job Opportunities for individuals with additional support needs
- Evolve Programme - creation of temporary jobs with SAC for individuals who have been long-term unemployed

Key achievements 2022/2023:

Care Experience Support

The Council ensures every care experienced young person in South Ayrshire is given support to access a wide range of vocational learning opportunities, including apprenticeships. Our Thriving Communities service supports employability outcomes for young people who are care experienced, aged 16-25.

- During 2022/23 the team supported 168 young people (103 school pupils and 65 post school).

- 60 have progressed to a positive destination and are continuing to receive aftercare support from the team to help sustain their destination (46 progressed to college and 14 into employment)

Enhanced School Support

The team are providing enhanced employability support to 18 Ukraine pupils and 52 young carers in the Senior Phase

Supported Employment

The Supported Employment Programme supports individuals, aged 16 and over, who have additional support needs. The programme includes flexible, personalised, one-to-one support.

- In 2022/23 the team supported 51 individuals, with 10 progressing to employment or further education.
- COVID has had a significant impact on young people struggling to get back into a routine and having the confidence to meet with staff and peers out with their home environment. The team continue to offer enhanced employability support to 41 individuals to try and overcome these barriers and support them in to employment or further education.
- To enhance the supported employment programme South Ayrshire Council created new, tailored, part-time jobs. 12 individuals secured part-time employment with the council, with 5 then progressing to permanent employment.

Modern Apprenticeships

South Ayrshire Council are committed to equality of opportunity in supporting young people to access apprenticeship opportunities, one example of which is supporting individuals from under-represented equality groups onto our programme. Data on equality categories is as follows:

- *Care Experienced:* South Ayrshire Council 4.5%, National Average 1.8%
- *Disability:* South Ayrshire Council 23.8%, National Average 14.7%
- *Ethnicity:* South Ayrshire Council 5%, National Average 3.2%

Adult Employability Support

The Evolve programme is a job creation scheme launched in April 2022 for participants over 25 living in South Ayrshire who are long term unemployed.

- 48 jobs have been created with South Ayrshire Council and 3rd Sector organisations (31 LA and 17 Third Sector)
- Participants are offered employment between 16 and 30 hours per week for a period of 6 months and are paid the Real Living Wage £10.18/hr Local Authority Rate or £10.90/hr for 3rd Sector.
- A Better Off Calculation was completed in every case to ensure the number of hours was appropriate for the individual to start work without it having a detrimental impact on household finances to ensure that they would be able to sustain the employment opportunity.

Parental Employability Support

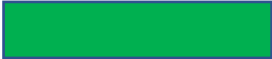
Our Thriving Communities Family Engagement team take a whole family approach for parents and carers who require support returning to work or for those on low incomes upskill or retrain in order to secure and sustain fair work ensuring households are better off when parents are in work.

- The team provided intensive support to targeted family groups further disadvantaged in the current labour market
- An additional key worker was recruited to provide support for families where there is a disability (parent or child).
- The team supported 110 families to access financial support

Community Justice

Having a job is considered to be one of the main positive influences on an individual's ability to not re-offend. Thriving Communities provided tailored employability support for 65 people who identified that their criminal conviction was the main barrier to them accessing employment opportunities.

RAG Status:



OVERARCHING SHARED EQUALITY OUTCOME 4: IN AYRSHIRE, PUBLIC BODIES WILL BE INCLUSIVE AND DIVERSE EMPLOYERS

Links to National Outcomes:

- We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people
- We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation

Local Equality Outcome 4.1 to 4.3: Our BME, disabled and LGBT+ staff have safe and supportive work environments to thrive, and the Council is seen as an employer of choice

***Inequality being addressed:* BME, disabled and LGBT+ staff lack access to peer support which can lead to isolation and low morale at work**

Outputs: Relaunch of the Equality Champions and the Equality & Diversity Forum (4.1)

Actions:

To identify colleagues within the Council, Education and Licensing Board, Elected Members

Measurements:

- Relaunch of Equality Champions and the Equality & Diversity Forum – number of meetings held and initiatives

Progress Update:

- The role of the Equality and Diversity Forum is to support the Council to deliver on its equality and diversity responsibilities by providing a consultative and inclusive link to the diverse communities of South Ayrshire, and through the work of the Forum, promote equality and diversity and encourage good relations throughout South Ayrshire. The remit of the Equality and Diversity Forum was refreshed in 2022, with the main areas of focus:
 - To support the Council to meet its Public Sector Equality Duty responsibilities, including the Specific Duties to progress the Council's Equality Outcomes and to Mainstream Equalities;
 - To support the development of the Council's policies and procedures relating to equality and diversity;
 - To promote inclusion and participation of the diverse communities and hard to reach and under-represented minority interests in South Ayrshire;
 - To raise awareness of the needs and priorities of the diverse communities in South Ayrshire;
 - To provide a link to the voluntary sector and organisations representing the diverse communities within South Ayrshire; and
 - To support the development of the Council's policies and procedures relating to Fairer Scotland Duty.

Membership of the of the forum comprises Elected Members supported by staff from Policy, Performance and Community Planning. The Equality and Diversity Forum now has in place an Improvement Plan focusing on areas such as training, the development of an integrated equalities impact assessment and increasing the number of equality champions.

RAG Status:



- To ensure that the Equalities Duty is understood and mainstreamed across the Council, all service areas that are impacted upon by the Equality Duty, or that provide a front facing service, have a representative on the Equality and Diversity Forum as a 'Champion'. Due to several factors including staff absence, staff changes and a recent organisational restructure, work will now take place during 2023 to appeal for new Equality Champions to come forward, however current Equality Champions have attended the first meeting of the Equality and Diversity Forum in 2023.

RAG Status:



Outputs: Establishment of a safe and supported environment for staff from the Council, Education and Licensing Board who identify with a particular protected characteristic (4.2)

Actions:

Explore with the workforce the desire to establish a BME staff network either locally or with employees from North and East Ayrshire Council.

Measurements:

- BAME staff network established

Progress Update:

- Following recommendations from the Scottish Government's report on Race Equality, Employment and Skills: Making Progress Report, the Council adopted some of these recommendations and actions into its Equality Outcomes. The concept of a Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Forum had been considered before, however the relatively low numbers of employees from a BAME background (1% of the total workforce) working within the Council raised doubt around the viability of trying to create a group. Following the Scottish Government recommendations, the three Ayrshire local authorities decided to create a Pan Ayrshire Group. The group first met in June 2022, with 12 participants signing up and is supported by Human Resources and the Unions. Still in its forming stage, the group will continue to meet moving into 2023 to explore issues and support mechanisms for employees from a BAME background. The group is currently focused on developing a diverse workforce across Ayrshire through strengthened recruitment and retention and are analyzing statistics and recruiting methods to identify gaps and highlight good practice.

RAG Status:



Actions:

Explore with the workforce the desire to establish a disability staff network.

Measurements:

- Disability staff network established

Progress Update:

- An 'Employees with a Disability Forum' has been established. Engagement has taken place with the forum on the Future Operating Model. Work will continue to develop the forum with further engagement to take place following implementation of the operating model.

RAG Status:



Actions:

- Explore with the workforce the desire to establish a LGBT+ staff network

Measurements:

- LGBT+ staff network established

Progress Update:

- Work will take place with staff to gauge the interest of establishing an LGBT+ employee forum. If there is interest it would be hoped to establish one no later than March 2024.

RAG Status:



Outputs: Council vacancies are advertised through specialised partnership organisations who target and support PC groups (4.3)

Actions:

- Contact various specialist organisations to seek opportunities to advertise Council vacancies to gain a range of more diverse applicants and future employees

Measurements:

- Number of partner organisations advertising Council vacancies

Progress Update:

- Specialist organisations were contacted to seek opportunities to promote council vacancies, including organisations such as the Council for Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisation, however despite our best efforts, they would not support the advertisement of council vacancies. The three Ayrshire councils are now engaging with other organisations to encourage them to promote council vacancies, this will include organisations such as Amina Muslim Women's Resource Centre, the British Deaf Association, and other organisations who support protected characteristics.

RAG Status:

