

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 2 MAY 2023**

**EQUALITIES MAINSTREAMING REPORT 2023 AND EQUALITY OUTCOMES (2023-25)**

**REPORT BY SHARON FAULKNER, DIRECTOR OF HR, OD, DIGITAL ENABLEMENT, IT & BUSINESS SUPPORT**

**ABSTRACT**

This report presents an Equalities Mainstreaming Report 2023 and Equality Outcomes (2023-25) as required by legislation.

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) adopts the Equalities Mainstreaming Report 2023-25 as outlined in Appendix 1 of this report.
- (ii) notes the Equality Outcomes (2023-25) and Progress Update of those from 2021 – 2023 as outlined in Appendix 2 of this report.

**2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN/CORPORATE PLAN**

- 2.1 This report contributes to the outcomes contained within the Angus Community Plan and Council Plan, which focus on Economy, People, Place and Our Council. The particular emphasis of this report is focused on the council's priority to maximise inclusion and reduce inequalities for the people of Angus, and the council's employees.

**3. BACKGROUND**

The **Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012** came into force in May 2012. These specific duties are designed to help public authorities in their performance of the general equality duty for public bodies to, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic, and persons who do not share it.
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic, and those who do not share it.

The key legal requirements for the council contained in these specific duties are to:

- Report progress on mainstreaming the equality duty.
- Publish equality outcomes and report progress.
- Assess and review policies and practices.
- Gather and use employee monitoring information.
- Publish gender pay gap information.
- Publish statements on equal pay.
- Consider award criteria and conditions in relation to public procurement.
- Publish equality information in a manner which is accessible.

There is a requirement for public bodies to publish an updated Equality Mainstreaming Report and progress made with their Equality Outcomes in 2023, and renew them every alternate two

years. However, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is currently reviewing this requirement, and a series of consultation events were held in 2022. Consequently, this timeframe, as well as potential future statutory requirements, may change.

As it currently stands, the Mainstreaming Report must include employee equality monitoring information broken down by the protected characteristics, such as age, disability, race etc., and the organisation's current gender pay gap. Although not a statutory requirement, we have also included our race and disability pay gaps as a matter of best practice.

In April 2018, the final part of the Equality Act (2010) (i. e. Part 1) was enacted, and this relates to the Fairer Scotland Duty (socio-economic duty). This Duty means that public bodies have been required from April 2018 to pay due regard to, and assess, any socio-economic impact when making strategic decisions, in a similar way to assessing for any equality impact on one or more protected characteristic groups. Reference to this Duty is also made within the Mainstreaming Report, and a Fairer Scotland Duty assessment has been undertaken in the accompanying Equality Impact Assessment/Fairer Scotland Duty assessment.

#### **4. CURRENT POSITION**

##### **MAINSTREAMING EQUALITY AND EQUALITY OUTCOMES**

Mainstreaming equality means integrating equality into the day-to-day working of the council. This means taking equality into account in the way we exercise our functions i.e. equality must be a component of everything we do as a service provider and as an employer. The Equality Mainstreaming Report details how we will meet the general and specific equality duties, presents an overview of the council's work on equality, and the Equality Outcomes evidence the progress achieved.

Guidance issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission states that the specific duties are intended to operate in conjunction with a public authority's existing corporate systems and frameworks for business planning and public performance reporting. It is intended to improve outcomes for those who experience discrimination and disadvantage. Many of the Equality Outcomes contained in this report are therefore aligned to the Council Plan and Community Plan, but include some additional equality perspectives. Reporting structures are in place for these Plans, and some information from them is used to inform the Mainstreaming Report and provide a progress update on the Equality Outcomes.

The Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated many pre-existing inequalities, such as in respect of low income, health, education, unemployment and life chances, safety and social care and wellbeing, amongst others. This, along with the current cost-of-living crisis, makes it more important than ever to take cognisance of Equality and Fairer Scotland Duty issues.

We welcome this opportunity to highlight our progress with our Equality Outcomes in this report, continuing to build on the equality work we have already undertaken, and reinforcing our aim 'to integrate equality throughout the organisation and the services that we provide' through mainstreaming equalities.

#### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications associated with the terms of this report.

#### **6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

Failure to produce an equality Mainstreaming Report and publish progress made with our Equality Outcomes will result in a breach of the legislation.

#### **7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

An Equality Impact Assessment/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment has been carried out and is attached.

**NOTE:** No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

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List of Appendices:

Equalities Mainstreaming Report (2023-2025)

Equality Outcomes (2023-25)

Employee Equalities Monitoring Information 2023

Equality Impact Assessment/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment