
Equality Mainstreaming Report and Equality Outcomes 2017 -2021

Report by the Chief Executive

Scottish Borders Council

30 March 2017

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks approval of the Equality Mainstreaming Report 2017 -2021 in order that it may be published to meet the legal deadline of 30th April 2017.**
- 1.2 The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 set out specific duties for public bodies (including Local Authorities). These duties include reporting on the mainstreaming of the equality duty, publishing Equality Outcomes, reporting progress on these Outcomes and gathering and using employee information. This means that we have a duty to gather and use workforce data across the nine protected characteristics. We are also required to publish pay gap information and statements on equal pay.
- 1.3 The Equality Mainstreaming Report is required every four years, with an update in the two year period in between. Scottish Borders Council's first Equality Mainstreaming Report was published in 2013 and covered the period 2013 – 2017. An Equality Mainstreaming Update Report was published in 2015 covering the period 2013-2015. We are therefore required to publish an updated Equality Mainstreaming report (Appendix 1) for the period 2017-2021. This must be published no later than 30th April 2017.
- 1.4 The development of the Equality Mainstreaming Report has taken account of the work that the Council has undertaken on equalities over the past four years and the legislative, economic and social changes, both locally and nationally, that have impacted on equality matters. This has involved looking at progress in taking forward the eight equality outcomes contained within the initial Equality Mainstreaming Report; and embedding equalities in the Council's policies, processes and work practices. (Appendix 2)
- 1.5 The Equality Mainstreaming Report concludes that these equality outcomes are still relevant and should be maintained. A set of high level actions are produced to facilitate further progress in embedding equalities within the Council for the period 2017 -2021.

- 1.6 The Equality Mainstreaming Report provides details on SBC's Employee Data analysed by the protected characteristics and operational aspects. It also includes information on Equal Pay and the Gender Pay Gap. Appendix 3 provides full details.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **I recommend that the Council approves the Equality Mainstreaming Report as set out in Appendix 1 and the supplementary Appendices 2 and 3.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Equality Act 2010 prescribed a general equality duty, for public bodies, including Scottish Borders Council. The duty requires the Council to have due regard for the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between groups.
- 3.2 This is considered against the nine protected characteristics covered by the Act:
- Age
 - Disability
 - Gender Reassignment
 - Marriage and Civil Partnership
 - Pregnancy and Maternity
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual Orientation
- 3.3 The Scottish Government has prescribed more specific duties which Scottish public authorities must comply with in implementing the general equality duty.
- 3.4 As part of this duty Scottish Borders Council is required to produce an Equality Mainstreaming Report every four years. This must set out Equality Outcomes results that the Council aims to achieve. There is also a requirement to set out employee information in relation to equalities and to have a section on Education and Equalities.
- 3.5 The Council's first Equality Mainstreaming Report was published in 2013 covering the period 2013-2017 and presented its approach to equalities. This included a set of Equality Outcomes which the Council aimed to achieve which were as follows:

Outcome 1

- We are seen as an inclusive equal opportunities employer where all staff feel valued and respected and our workforce reflects our community.

Outcome 2

- Our services meet the needs of, and are accessible to all members of our community and our staff treat all services users, clients and colleagues with dignity and respect.

Outcome 3

- Everyone has the opportunity to participate in public life and the democratic process.

Outcome 4

- We work in partnership with other agencies and stakeholders to ensure that our communities are cohesive and there are fewer people living in poverty.

Outcome 5

- Our citizens have the freedom to make their own choices and are able to lead independent, healthy lives as responsible citizens

Outcome 6

- The difference in rates of employment between the general

population and those from under-represented groups is improved.

Outcome 7

- The difference in educational attainment between those who are from an equality group and those who are not is improved.

Outcome 8

- We have appropriate accommodation which meets the needs of our diverse community.

3.6 The Council produced a progress update on the Equality Mainstreaming Report in April 2015. This Report showed that the Council was working towards achieving full compliance with the duty across all service areas. A self-evaluation had been undertaken which found that most service areas felt they were fully or partially compliant. The Report set out a series of improvement actions including to:

- Continue the work in establishing effective performance indicators for Council services.
- Ensure that the business plans for service areas fully embed equalities and equality outcomes.
- Develop a continuing training programme on Equalities and Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) for Council staff.
- Improve Data gathering for Recruitment, Grievance, Discipline and Training.

3.7 There is a statutory requirement to produce and publish a refreshed Equality Mainstreaming Report for the period 2017-2021 no later than 30 April 2017.

4. SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL'S EQUALITY MAINSTREAMING REPORT 2017 -2021

4.1 The draft Equality Mainstreaming Report and Equality Outcomes 2017-2021 (Appendix 1) provides an update and sets out the next steps on the Council's equality journey.

4.2 The Equality Mainstreaming Report highlights how equality is mainstreamed into Council working practices. Appendix 2 sets out progress based on the 8 Equality Outcomes contained within the Council's Equality Mainstreaming Report 2013-2017. This has been assessed on the basis of service activities and performance data. It shows that a large amount of work on equalities has been carried out.

4.3 The key areas of improvement in 2017 -2021 that need to be addressed are :

- Better equality performance indicators in relation to performance data.
- More effective training of Council Employees and Elected Members in relation to equalities.
- Ensuring service business plans and commissioned services are fully embedding equalities in their development and implementation.
- Greater effort to be made to engage with equality groups in the development of plans and policies.

4.4 The draft Equality Mainstreaming Report has taken account of the

legislative, economic and social changes both locally and nationally which are impacting on equalities. There have been consultations with staff groups and an opportunity was also given to the public to provide input.

4.5 The draft Equality Mainstreaming Report proposes that the eight current outcomes remain as the basis of the Council's approach to equalities. It also sets out a set of high level actions as a basis for moving equalities forward within the Council in the period 2017-21.

4..6 The draft Equality Mainstreaming Report also includes an analysis of employee data by:

- Gender
- Age
- Ethnic Origin
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Sexual Orientation
- Religion and/or belief
- Marital Status
- Carer Status

Further analysis is provided of:

- Training Courses
- Grievances
- Disciplinary Action
- Applications for Recruitment
- Gender Pay Gap/Equal Pay

Appendix 3 provides full details.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

(a) There are no direct financial implications to the Council in respect of the matters highlighted in this report.

5.2 Risk and Mitigations

a) There are risks of legal challenge and to the Council's reputation if an Equality Mainstreaming Report for the period 2017-2021 is not produced, approved and published by 30 April 2017.

5.3 Equalities

(a) Through the successful implementation of the Equality Outcomes contained within the Equality Mainstreaming Report there will be a strong and sustained positive impact on equality of opportunity, fostering good relations and eliminating discrimination, victimisation and harassment.

5.4 Acting Sustainably

a) The development and implementation of the Equality Mainstreaming Report contributes strongly to acting sustainably through its promotion of equality and diversity.

5.5 Carbon Management

There are no direct effects on carbon emissions arising from the proposals contained in this report.

5.6 Rural Proofing

The Equality Mainstreaming Report, through its emphasis on equalities, helps to address many of the issues the Council encounters due to the rural nature of the area it serves.

5.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes required to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals contained in this report.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Council's Corporate Management Team, Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Service Director Strategy and Policy, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Chief Officer HR, and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted on the report.

Approved by

**Name
Title**

Signature

Author(s)

| Name | Designation and Contact Number |
|---------------|---|
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Background Papers:

[Equality Mainstreaming Report and Equality Outcomes 2013 – 2017](#)

[Equality Mainstreaming Report and Equality Outcomes 2013 – 2015 Update Report](#)

Previous Minute Reference: N/A

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Douglas Scott can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at [Equality and Diversity](#), Chief Executive's Department, Scottish Borders Council, tel. 01835 01835 824000 equalitydiversity@scotborders.gov.uk