
**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL EQUALITY UPDATE REPORT
2013–2015**

Report by Service Director Strategy and Policy

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

2 April 2015

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **The report seeks approval of the Equality Mainstreaming Update Report 2013–2015 in order that it may be published to meet the legal deadline.**
- 1.2 The Council has a statutory requirement under the Equality Act 2010, Scottish Specific Duties to mainstream meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty throughout its functions. As part of this duty the Council is required to publish a report on the progress it has made every two years. The Council must publish its Update Report by 23 April 2015.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **I recommend that the Council approves the Equality Mainstreaming Update Report 2013–2015, as set out in Annex 1 for publication.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Under the public sector general equality duty, created by the Equality Act 2010, the Council must have due regard to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations in the exercise of its functions.
- 3.2 In May 2012 the Scottish Government published specific duties to assist listed public authorities such as the Council to meet the general duty. These are statutory requirements to:
 - (a) report on mainstreaming the equality duty;
 - (b) publish equality outcomes and report progress;
 - (c) assess and review policies and practices;
 - (d) gather and use employee information;
 - (e) publish gender pay gap information;
 - (f) publish statements on equal pay;
 - (g) consider award criteria and conditions in relation to public procurement.
- 3.3 To meet the Scottish Specific Duty, Scottish Borders Council published its first Equality Mainstreaming report in April 2013. This report set out the approach the Council would take to mainstreaming the Equality Duty and also contained its Equality Outcomes (details of which can be found in Appendix 1 of Annex 1).
- 3.4 Mainstreaming equality is about integrating an equality perspective into the everyday work of the Council, involving managers and policy makers across all Council services, as well as equality specialists and community planning partners.
- 3.5 Equality mainstreaming is a long term approach that aims to make sure that policy making within the Council is fully sensitive to the diverse needs and experiences of everyone affected. The approach helps to provide better information, transparency and openness in the way we make decisions about our services and resources.

4 CURRENT SITUATION

- 4.1 Scottish Borders Council is now required to publish an Equality Mainstreaming Update Report (Annex 1) which details the work and progress the Council has undertaken to mainstream the Equality Duty. This report must also contain updated information on the Council's Equality Outcomes (Appendix 1 of Annex 1) and Workforce Data (Appendix 2 of Annex 1).
- 4.2 In order to gain an understanding of how effective work has been across the Council, the Corporate Equality Officer Forum carried out a self-evaluation exercise in which all service areas across the Council were asked to evaluate their performance of the Equality Duty. This evaluation forms the mainstay of the Equality Mainstreaming Update Report 2013–2015 and has provided the information required to assist in making further progress with mainstreaming the equality duty.
- 4.3 The Council has a statutory requirement to produce and publish its Equality Mainstreaming Report and Equality Employee information no later than 23 April 2015.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

The successful publication of the Equality Mainstreaming Report and Equality Outcomes will assist in reducing the corporate risk of successful litigation against the Council as we meet our legal obligation.

5.2 Risk and Mitigations

The risks of not publishing the report include:

- (a) Risk of Legal challenge;
- (b) Risk to Organisational Reputation.

5.3 Equalities

Through the successful implementation of the Equality Mainstreaming Report and Equality Outcomes 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

This report provides information on the Council's approach to mainstreaming the Equality Duty. By its nature, this approach helps ensure sustainability.

5.5 Carbon Management

There are no effects on carbon emissions.

5.6 Rural Proofing

This report provides information on the Council's approach to mainstreaming the Equality Duty. By its nature, this approach 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 to be made.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 The 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 and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

6.2 The Procurement Officer and the Corporate Communications and Marketing Manager have also been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

Name: David Cressey

Signature

Title: Service Director Strategy & Policy

Author(s)

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Background Papers: Scottish Borders Council's Equality Mainstreaming Report and Equality Outcomes 2013 - 2017

Previous Minute Reference: 25 April 2013

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

Contact us at Rosie Kennedy, rosie.kennedy@scotborders.gov.uk 01835 828145