
NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

30 May 2023

Cabinet

Title:	Equality Mainstreaming Report 2020-22 and Outcomes 2021-2025 Mid-Term Report
Purpose:	To present the Equality Mainstreaming Report 2020-22 and Outcomes 2021-2025 Mid-Term Report (encompassing the Education Authority) Mid-Term Report.
Recommendation:	Cabinet is asked to: a) Approve the content of Equality Mainstreaming Report 2020-22 and Outcomes 2021-2025 Mid-Term Report; and b) Approve publishing of the report on the Council's website as required under the Equality Act 2010.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Under the Equality Act, from April 2013, public sector organisations are required to publish equality information once every two years and consult on and develop Equality Outcomes once every four years. Our last main report was published in 2021 and included updated Equality Outcomes covering the period 2021 – 2025. The report attached at Appendix 1 is our mid-term report (2023). It includes information covering the calendar years 2021 and 2022.
- 1.2 The report highlights key areas of equality work that have been mainstreamed through Council processes and also an update on the actions supporting specific equality outcomes. Our Education Service is also required to produce a report as per the legislation and this has been embedded within the main report.
- 1.3 The Equality Act also requires the Council to produce statistics on the protected characteristics of our employees. These have been summarised from page 19 in the Equality Mainstreaming report with a link to more detail at the end of the report.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Equality Act 2010 (The Act) sets out a general duty for every public authority, often referred to as the three needs, which requires organisations to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not.
- 2.2 The public sector duty covers a number of 'characteristics', these are known as protected characteristics and are: Age; Sex; Gender Reassignment; Pregnancy and Maternity; Race; Religion or Belief; Sexual Orientation; Marriage and Civil Partnerships (although this last category only applies to eliminating discrimination).
- 2.3 Additional 'Specific Duties' were added in 2012 (in Scotland) to help authorities meet the three needs outlined in the general duty. These include:
- Report on mainstreaming equality duty.
 - Publish equality outcomes and report progress.
 - Assess and review policies and practices.
 - Gather and use employee information.
 - Publish gender pay gap information.
- 2.4 Education bodies are listed as separate authorities within the equality legislation, however, to support simplicity and to reflect our collaborative working approaches, the Education Mainstreaming and Outcomes report is contained within the overall report.
- 2.5 The Licensing Board is also included in the list of organisations required to publish equality reports and we have included a link to their report.

Mainstreaming Equality Key highlights

- 2.6 Listed below are some of the key highlights from our mainstreaming and outcomes report:
- Introduction of a British Sign Language video landing page on the Council's external website
 - The creation of a Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME), pan-Ayrshire employee forum.
 - New guidance on Menopause in the Workplace.
 - Introduction of an online Equality and Children's Rights Impact Assessment training module.
 - Gold re-accreditation of the Social Housing Charter, which includes recognition of our inclusive approach to engaging with North Ayrshire residents.
 - An increase in the number of Gold accreditations from four to 10 schools for the Rights Respecting Schools awards.

- A key partner in the successful implementation of the Pan-Ayrshire Hate Crime Awareness conference delivered in October 2022.
- Improvements in our data collection for our employee statistics.
- Our overall mean Gender Pay gap has reduced to 0.22% (from 1.19% in 2021).
- Successful implementation and delivery of the Equal Supported Employment programme, supporting young people with learning disabilities into work experience in horticultural skills and qualifications.
- Almost 90% of Additional Support Needs and young carers have their voice heard, helping to realise Article 12 of the United Nations Charter on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) – ‘Respect for the views of the child’, in our last report in 2021, this figure was 75%.
- Connected Communities successful achievement of the Silver LGBT Charter Mark.
- Introduction of the See Me CV into the application process for Modern Apprenticeships.
- Our Webteam are actively working to ensure our website and all documents contained within it are accessible. This includes significant support to services such as training and the creation of ‘How To’ guides.

2.7 Though not included in the main report as outside of its timescales, our Council continues to promote equality. Since January 2023 key highlights include:

- Improvement from a Disability Confident Level 2 organisation to a Disability Confident Leader.
- Progression from a Carer Positive Employer – ‘Established’ to Carer Positive ‘Exemplary level’.
- We have introduced our Gambling Related Harm Workplace Charter.

Equality Outcomes Overview

2.8 In 2020, as part of the review of the Equality Outcomes, public sector partners across Ayrshire came together to develop and consult on Equality Outcomes for 2021-2025. These partners included the three Ayrshire Councils, the three Health and Social Care Partnerships, NHS Ayrshire and Arran, Ayrshire College, Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board and the Community Justice Authority. The partners were able to pool resources to support engagement around the development of equality outcomes and actions.

2.9 It was agreed that the four original overarching Equality Outcomes developed in 2016 would be carried forward to the 2021-2025 reporting cycle. In addition, following advice from the Equality and Human Rights Commission, specific sub-outcomes were included to sit beneath the overarching outcomes, the four outcomes are:

- In Ayrshire, people experience safe and inclusive communities.
- In Ayrshire, people have equal opportunity to access and shape our public services.
- In Ayrshire, people have opportunities to fulfil their potential throughout life.
- In Ayrshire, public bodies will be inclusive and diverse employers.

2.10 The Sub-outcomes and supporting actions can be found in the Equality Outcome section of the main report.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 Cabinet is asked to: a) Approve the content of Equality Mainstreaming Report 2020-22 and Outcomes 2021-2025 Mid-Term Report; and b) Approve publishing of the report on the Council's website as required under the Equality Act 2010.

4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty

Financial

- 4.1 None

Human Resources

- 4.2 None

Legal

- 4.3 The Council has a legal obligation to publish an Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes report as part of the Equality Act (2010) and subsequent legislation.

Equality/Socio-economic

- 4.4 The report highlights key areas of work across the Council that support and promote equality and diversity in support of the Equality Act 2010 (The Act) and subsequent legislation.

Climate Change and Carbon

- 4.5 None

Key Priorities

- 4.6 Our aim is to create a North Ayrshire that is 'fair for all'. As such, equalities mainstreaming and outcomes directly contribute to all of our priorities within our Council Plan.

Community Wealth Building

- 4.7 None

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The Corporate Equality Group were consulted on the content of the report.
5.2 Services and partners were engaged in supporting input into the content of the report.

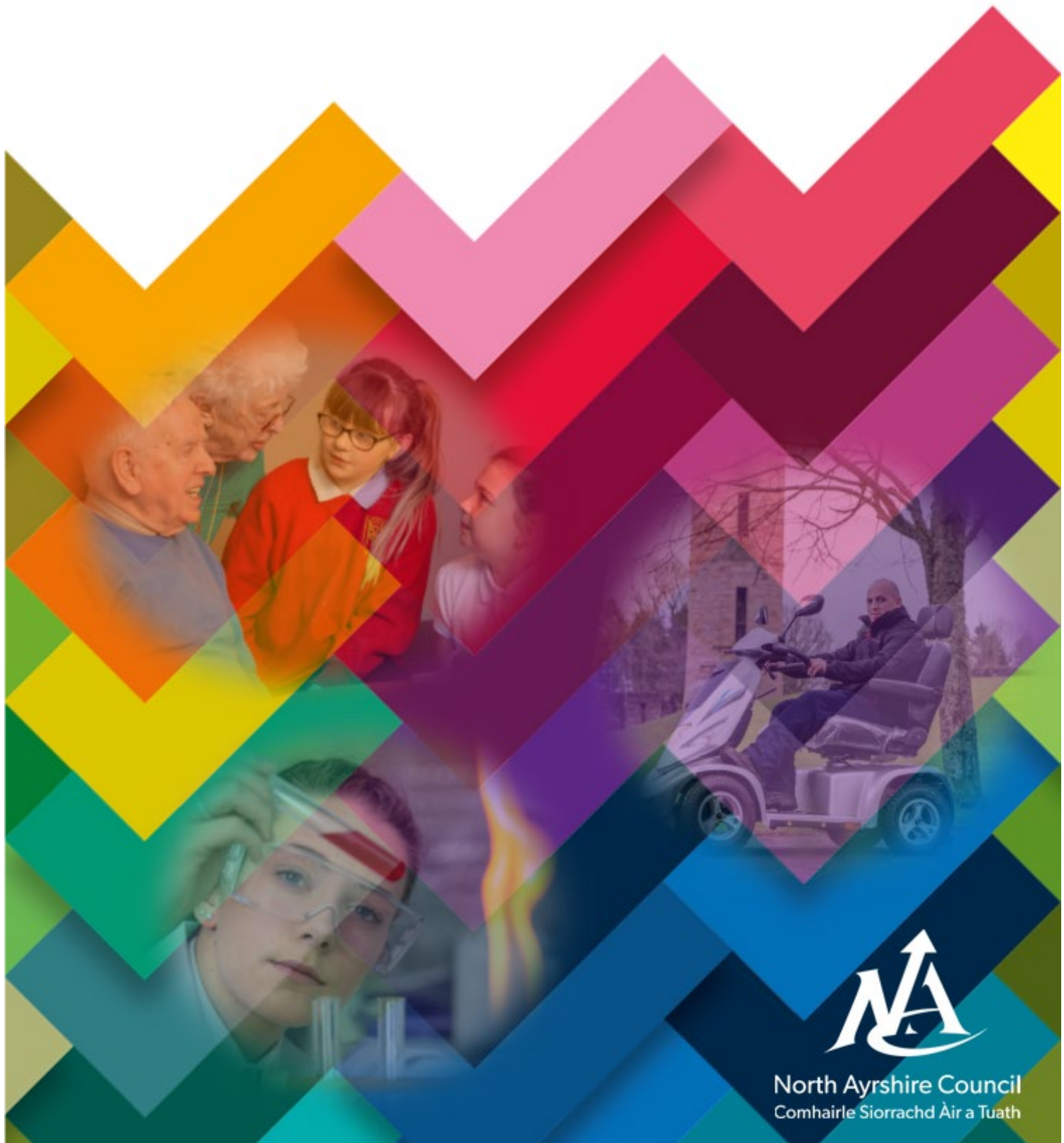
Aileen Craig
Head of Service (Democratic)

For further information please contact **Andrew Hale, Health Improvement and Equalities Officer**, on andrewhale@north-ayrshire.gov.uk.

Background Papers

None

Equality Mainstreaming Report 2021-22 and Outcomes 2021 – 2025 Mid Term Report (2023)



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Fairness and tackling inequality sit at the heart of our Council Plan 2019-24. Our vision is “A North Ayrshire that is ‘Fair for All’”. This is supported by our mission “Working together to improve well-being, prosperity and equity in North Ayrshire”.

This mainstreaming report highlights the key strategies and areas of work that are helping to embed equality and diversity within our services.

It shows how we are meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and subsequent amendments to this legislation. Since 2013, all public bodies have been required to produce a report every two years covering a number of Equality related activities, which are referred to under the Public Sector Equality Duty. This report is our Mid-Term report for Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes for the period 2021-2025 and covers information from January 2021 to December 2022. This includes:

- Employee statistics relating to protected characteristics.
- The Education Mainstreaming Report.
- Link to the Licensing Board Equality Mainstreaming Report.
- A progress report on the implementation of the Ayrshire Shared Equality Outcomes and actions.

This report is the mid-way point through our four-year Equality Outcome reporting cycle.

The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) ‘specific duties’ stipulate the requirements of reporting. The key elements are, mainstreaming the equality duty, publishing and reporting on equality outcomes and gathering and publishing employee statistics.

About North Ayrshire

North Ayrshire is on the southwest coast of Scotland and one of 32 Local Authority areas in Scotland. It covers 885 square kilometres, encompasses the Islands of Arran and the Cumbraes and has a population of just over 134,000 people ([ONS June 2021](#)). Demographically, North Ayrshire continues to be faced with a number of challenges. 33% of our 186 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) zones are in the bottom 15% for income, 30% are in the bottom 15% for employment, 27% for health and 17% in the education domain. The percentage of children living in poverty after housing costs is estimated at 24.7% for 2020/21, however this figure is heavily caveated due to how information was gathered during the Covid-19 pandemic and may be higher (it was 27.9% in 2019/20).

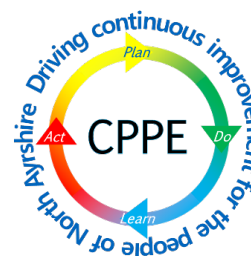
It is recognised that people with certain protected characteristics as identified within the Equality Act are more likely to experience inequality. These can include people with a disability, single parent families - especially where the parent is female, and certain ethnic groups.

Accessibility and Further Information

We are constantly striving to make our Council and our reports as accessible as possible. We welcome opportunities to discuss how this can be achieved. This report has been access checked using the ‘Assist’ accessibility checker.

Corporate Equalities is part of the Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team. For further information or to discuss any aspect of the contents of this report please contact:

The Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team
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Mainstreaming Equality and Outcomes Key Highlights 2021-22

- Introduction of a British Sign Language video landing page on the Council's external website.
- The creation of a Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME), pan-Ayrshire employee forum.
- New guidance on Menopause in the Workplace.
- Introduction of an online Equality and Children's Rights Impact assessment training module.
- Gold re-accreditation of the Social Housing Charter, which includes recognition of our inclusive approach to engaging with North Ayrshire citizens.
- An increase in the number of Gold accreditations from four to 10 schools for the Rights Respecting Schools awards.
- A key partner in the successful implementation of the Pan-Ayrshire Hate Crime Awareness conference delivered in October 2022.
- Improvements in our data collection for our employee statistics.
- Our overall mean Gender Pay gap has reduced to 0.22% (from 1.19% in 2021).
- 514 unemployed individuals supported through the Ayrshire Growth Deal 'Working for Healthier Economy' programme, including supporting 51 people into employment.
- Successful implementation and delivery of the Equal Supported Employment programme, supporting young people with learning disabilities with work experience in horticultural skills and qualifications.
- Almost 90% of Additional Support Needs and young carers have their 'voice' heard, helping to realise Article 12 of the UNCRC – Respect for the views of the child, an increase from 75% since our 2021 report.
- Connected Communities successful achievement of the Silver LGBT Charter Mark.
- Introduction of the See Me CV into the application process for Modern Apprenticeships.
- Our Webteam are actively working to ensure our website and all documents contained within it are accessible. This includes significant support to services such as training and the creation of 'How To' guides.

The Equality Act

Under the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality duty, or 'general equality duty', requires public authorities in the exercise of their functions to have due regard to the need to:

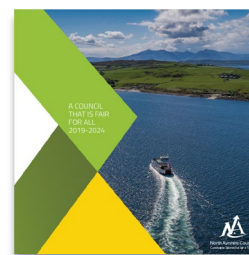
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

These elements of the Act are also referred to as the three key needs of the Act. Additional information in relation to equalities issues in North Ayrshire is available on our [website](#): This includes Equality Impact Assessments and the Equality Outcomes for 2021 – 2025.

Key Strategies

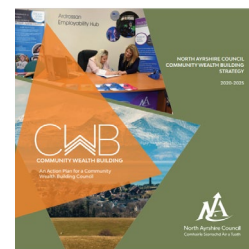
Our Council Plan

Our Council Plan is the main strategic plan for our Council. It is high level and has tackling inequality at its core with our vision being "A North Ayrshire that is 'Fair for All'". All of our plans must align to the Council Plan, meaning tackling the causes of inequality are embedded throughout our services.



The Community Wealth Building Strategy

The Community Wealth Building Strategy, the first of its kind in Scotland, was launched in June 2020 and is already a key driver within our Council Plan. It will ensure we use the economic levers available to us to generate an inclusive greener economy with better jobs for more of our residents. Click the image for more details.



One of the key objectives within the strategy is to build 'Fair Employment' by encouraging the creation of fair and meaningful jobs, with progression opportunities. One of the main projects supporting this is the Equal Supported Employment programme (please see our equality outcome section). For more information please see our [Community Wealth Building page](#).

Children's Services Plans



Our Children's Services Planning includes our Children's Services Plan and Children's Rights Report which cover the next three years. We also include our annual Local Child Poverty Action Plan and Report within our suite of plans.

Our Children's Services Plan 2020-23, outlines our aims and priorities to safeguard, support and promote the wellbeing of children and to make North Ayrshire the best place in Scotland to grow up.

Our Children's Rights Report 2020-23 emphasises our commitment to promote and protect children and young people's rights in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Our Child Poverty Action Plan 2022-23 recognises the life-long impact growing up in poverty can have on the life chances of our children and young people. The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 sets out four income-based targets to



reduce child poverty in Scotland by 2030. The key drivers of child poverty have been identified as – ‘income from employment’, ‘income from social security and benefits in kind’ and the ‘cost of living’.

Ayrshire Growth Deal

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

The Ayrshire Growth Deal programme has a strong focus on inequality and inclusivity and through the 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 North, South and East 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 one of the key programmes within the Ayrshire Growth deal that has a strong focus on inequality and supporting people both into and to sustain employment, with support and input from the SALUS occupational health service. Further information is covered within our Equality Outcome section.

Please click on the image to the left to access the AGD site or click [here](#).

British Sign Language Plan

Our Ayrshire Shared British Sign Language (BSL) plan 2018-2024, along with the mid-term report October 2021 can be found in our [British Sign Language Plan](#) page on the Council’s main website. Since the plan was introduced, the partners have been engaging with the local BSL and deaf community to support the implementation of the plan. Partners recently attended the Ayrshire Deaf Society in Kilmarnock with plans to provide more regular visits during 2023, inviting a range of Council and NHS services to update the society on their work.

Since our last mainstreaming report published in 2021, we have continued to provide training in BSL and resources where appropriate. Two additional smart phones were provided to the Council’s Sensory Impairment team to enhance engagement with the local BSL community. These, along with the two phones provided in 2020, enable the team to provide effective support services through enhanced communication methods.

Two six-week introductory programmes in BSL were provided across our Council with one of the courses specifically focused on staff within educational settings. These sessions focused on the basics of learning BSL and will be followed up in 2023 with more in-depth sessions.

In addition to our BSL landing page, we have also created some short videos in BSL on how to access Council Services, the videos include – Bin Collection Day, School Term Dates, Pay Your Council Tax, Find a Recycling Centre and Contact Us. The videos were produced based on the key searches or ‘hits’ on our Council’s main website and will be used to further engage with the BSL community on future topics of interest. The videos can be found [here](#).

This section focuses on mainstreaming equality within the Council, highlighting information on a range of processes, including equality impact assessments, training, Human Resource policies and procedures as well as our equality groups.

Equality and Children's Rights Impact Assessments

The Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) process continues to be a key tool that helps our services consider equality and diversity related issues within their service planning and activities. This process helps to raise awareness of and eliminate potential discrimination. It also highlights and advances equality of opportunity by making stronger links between equality groups and issues.

Our impact assessment process contains several areas:

Protected Characteristics

The impact on any of the nine protected characteristics of age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion and belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership.

Children's Rights and Human Rights

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (Duties of public authorities in relation to the UNCRC) requires public authorities (including all local authorities and health boards) to report on the steps they have taken to secure or further implement the requirements of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). As a result, Children Rights were added as an integral part of the Equality Impact Assessment process during 2018 and aligned to the eight indicators from the Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) programme.

Fairer Scotland Duty

This Duty, introduced in 2018, places a legal requirement on certain public organisations to consider the socio-economic impact of their policies, procedures and proposals on inequalities of outcome. It is part of the Equality Act. Equality and socio-economic processes are built into our Committee reporting procedure.

Island Proofing

Section 8 of the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 requires relevant public authorities (which includes local authorities) to carry out impact assessments on island communities when creating a strategy, policy or a service.

We engage with our communities around impact assessments as well as accessing information on the [Scottish Government Equality Evidence Finder](#). This tool makes it easier for people to locate and access equalities information and provides a wealth of data and other evidence with accompanying commentary, background papers and links to further information. Summaries of our full Equality and Children's Rights Impact Assessments are published on our [Equality Policy and Performance](#) page. During 2023 we will be carrying out a full review of the Equality and Children's Rights Impact Assessment tool.

Equality Groups

Corporate Equality Group

Our Corporate Equality Group includes Elected Members from each of the main political parties in the Council as well as representatives from all our services. This group meets quarterly to consider a range of equality and diversity related issues, including Equality Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes and actions. Our Council is also well represented on the Ayrshire Equality Partnership, which consists of a range of our public sector partners including the NHS, South and East Ayrshire Councils, North, South and East Health and Social Care Partnerships, Ayrshire College, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board and Community Justice Ayrshire.

Employee Disability Forum

Established in 2019 to consider employee disability related issues in the organisation, the forum includes employees who have a particular interest in disability issues, whether direct experience of a disability or whose role relates to this area. Representatives attend from Human Resources, Trade Unions, the Supported Employment Team and the Sensory Impairment Team. Some of the groups' key successes include: Providing a safe space for employees to raise issues relating to disability at work, supporting and providing input into HR related policies and procedures, including workplace disability guide, the See Me CV initiative (see HR update below), Disability Confident Employer, raising the profile of ICT related issues and seeking enhancements to the fire evacuation procedure following the return to the physical workspace post COVID 19 pandemic.

Black and Minority Ethnic Employee Forum

Following recommendations from the Scottish Government's report on Race Equality, Employment and Skills: Making Progress Report, our Council adopted some of these recommendations and actions into our Equality Outcomes. The three Ayrshire local authorities have created a Pan Ayrshire Black and Minority Ethnic Employee Forum. The group first met in June 2022, with 12 participants. They will explore issues and support mechanisms for employees from a BAME background.

Human Resources

Menopause in the Workplace

Our Council has an in-house HR Guide: 'Menopause in the Workplace' to support employees and raise awareness about the menopause. Menopause sessions for employees were delivered to provide further awareness and an understanding of menopause, how it may impact their work and explore appropriate coping strategies. In addition, further resources from The International Menopause Society were shared during World Menopause Day providing further information on specific menopause symptoms.

Carer's Leave Scheme

Our Carer's Leave Scheme continues to be available to all employees and complements other provisions currently in place. As part of the scheme, our Council aims to provide employees with support by giving a range of options, including a period of Carer's Leave of up to 12 weeks. To continuously review our supports and whether these are effective, every 18 months a Carer's Leave Survey is issued to all employees to evaluate their experience and help identify improvements where possible.

Equality Related Training

Our Council provides a range of Equality and Diversity related training, most of which is delivered via online platforms. Our figures show an increase in completions of our generic equality training following the update and re-release of this module during 2021 (see tables below). This course forms part of the mandatory suite of courses as we continue to promote awareness. As all employees can now access our ilearn learning online learning suite we will carry out further promotion with our manual employees in 2023.

In the latter part of 2022, we introduced a new online learning module called 'Equality and Children's Rights Impact Assessment'. This module is aimed at employees who might have to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment and provides an overview of how to do this, along with a short guide on using the online assessment tool. 18 employees have completed this course so far.

In addition, we continue to provide a range of training modules, including British Sign Language, Deaf Awareness and Deafblind Awareness.

In the early part of 2022, partners from the Ayrshire Equality Partnership, including the Council commissioned the Coalition for Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisations (CEMVO) to deliver a Cultural and Race Awareness training session for the partners. We will continue to explore training opportunities with a view to increasing the range of equality related training available to employees.

Table Number of E-learning Completions 2021

Course	Number of Participants
Equalities E-Learning	902
Deaf Awareness E-Learning	15
Deafblind Awareness E-Learning	13
British Sign Language	51

Table Number of E-Learning Completions 2022

Course	Number of Participants
Equalities E-Learning	625
Deaf Awareness E-Learning	24
Deafblind Awareness E-Learning	16
British Sign Language	38
Equality and Children's Rights Impact Assessment E-Learning	18

Accessibility Audit

Each year our Property Management and Investment Team undertakes an audit of our publicly accessible buildings to assess their level of accessibility. The percentage of buildings that meet the criteria for accessibility can change due to upgrades in existing buildings and size of our overall estate.

The figures for 2021 and 2022 remain the same as 2020. This is largely due to little or no change in publicly accessible buildings during the pandemic years.

- A Grade properties = 3.14%
- B Grade properties = 70.45%
- C Grade properties = 26.14%

Building Accessibility Categories

Grade A - Fully compliant properties.

Grade B - Reasonably compliant properties that currently provide ease of access to all users in terms of the services offered.

Grade C - Non-compliant with a degree of work required to meet the standard, with high priority issues noted and actioned as soon as possible.

Engagement with our Communities

Our Connected Communities and Housing Services teams have a pivotal role in engaging and supporting various Community groups across North Ayrshire. More information can be found in the [Equalities Outcomes](#) section on the work being done to support the LGBT+ community across Ayrshire and within North Ayrshire as well as supporting for our refugee community.

We support and engage with tenants across North Ayrshire including direct support for the Gypsy/Travellers community and Violence Against Women as part of the Community Safety strategy. We support the 16 days of Action campaign each November to encourage men to denounce all forms of violence against women.

We work to the outcomes specified in the [Scottish Social Housing Charter](#). The Charter sets out the standards and outcomes that all social landlords should aim to achieve when performing their housing activities. It has a specific equalities outcome and highlights that social landlords should perform all aspects of their housing services so that every tenant and other customers have their individual needs recognised, are treated fairly with respect and receive fair access to housing/housing services. This outcome describes what all social landlords, by complying with equalities legislation, should achieve for all tenants and other customers regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. It includes landlords' responsibility for finding ways of understanding the rights and needs of different customers whilst delivering services that recognise and meet these needs.

Putting our residents at the heart of our service delivery resulted in our 2022 'Gold Reaccreditation' for embracing the Social Housing Charter commitment. In addition, 'Gold Reaccreditation' was awarded for our approach to resident involvement and scrutiny in early 2022. External accreditations recognise our commitment to placing our

residents at the heart of our organisation, ensuring they are influencing decisions and scrutinising our service areas. Part of the process for both reaccreditations acknowledges that we have an inclusive approach to engaging tenants and overcomes barriers by offering a range of opportunities for everyone to get involved.

We are working to increase representation from Tenant and Resident Associations from across all communities in North Ayrshire. We continue to apply innovative ways to maximise involvement opportunities. An example of this work was engagement with the Deaf community through the purchase of additional portable hearing loops, improved links with British Sign Language (BSL) Interpreters and training for staff teams throughout Housing Services. Our Tenants newsletter is also available in formats suitable for visually or hearing-impaired customers.

The Tenant Participation Strategy 2017-2022, highlighted engagement with a range of underrepresented groups. The Tenant Participation team has developed links with our other services and has already engaged with some or all of these groups.

Since October 2019, all social housing landlords have had a requirement to prepare and deliver an [Annual Assurance Statement](#) in accordance with Scottish Housing Regulator guidance. The statement provides assurance and evidence that we are meeting all legal obligations associated with housing/homelessness services, equality and human rights, tenant and resident safety.

In addition, the statement safeguards and promotes the interests of tenants and other customers. The North Ayrshire Network is our strategic tenant group that considers the content of our statement and approves it prior to publication.

Procurement

Our Procurement Strategy has 'Tackling Inequality and Poverty in North Ayrshire' as one of its key aims and has 10 specific actions to support this including encouraging fair work practices and payment of the real living wage in all relevant contracts. Equality is also included in procurement contract terms and 'Fair Work Practices' are scored or included for all procurements, as is the Modern Slavery Code of Conduct.

Equality considerations are embedded into our [Conditions of Contract](#) documents:

"The Supplier undertakes that it has and shall comply with all statutory requirements in respect of ensuring equal opportunity in employment and has not and shall not unlawfully discriminate either directly or indirectly on such grounds as race, colour, ethnic or national origin, disability, gender, sex or sexual orientation, religion or belief, or age."

The 'Modern Day Slavery Code of Conduct' covers several key themes including forced or involuntary labour, humane treatment, workplace equality, contracts of employment and Freedom of movement. More information can be found [on our website](#).

Case Study – Equality in Procurement - Provision of a Supported Living Service (Supported Accommodation)

North Ayrshire Council's Health and Social Care Partnership were seeking to procure a Supported Accommodation Service for adults aged 18 – 65 years with a Learning Disability, Physical or Sensory Disability, or Mental Health difficulty. The Supported Accommodation Service provides vulnerable people with access to on-site 24/7 personal and social care support, community health and housing support services.

At contract strategy stage it was identified that equality was a key area which the service team wished bidders to cover within their tender submissions. In order to ensure equality considerations were met, the following scored technical question was included:

“Outline your **organisational approach to equality** and delivery of a service which embodies section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Act).

Provide an example which demonstrates how you will approach this to meet the requirements of the NAC specification.”

The contract was split into two lots and evidence around equality was provided:

Lot 1

Service provider detailed their organisational approach to diversity, equality and inclusion. They further confirmed that service designs and support strategies are individually tailored to reflect an individual's requirements to ensure these areas are addressed and managed accordingly.

In addition, they operate a mandatory training course on Equality and Diversity which supports education and highlights best practice.

Lot 2

Service provider referenced a number of organisational policies which address the key aspects requested within the tender:

- Involvement of the people we support policy.
- Connecting People and Communities policy.
- Supporting people with their personal identity and relationships.

Detail was provided on their organisational approach to diversity, equality and inclusion and how this is engrained into all aspects of staff training.

The inclusion of this question ensured that the tenderer's proposed service delivery met the three key needs of the Equality Duty.

Licensing Board Overview

North Ayrshire Council Licensing Board is responsible for making decisions on applications that allow people to sell alcohol from premises or allow gambling. They also deal with complaints regarding licensed premises and those who hold licences. The Board is made up of Elected Members and is supported by a Clerk (solicitor) and other employees of our Council.

Under the Equality Act, Licensing Boards have the same obligations as other public sector organisations to report on Equality Mainstreaming and to develop Equality Outcomes. Please follow the link below to the [North Ayrshire Licensing Board Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes report](#).

Education Authority Report

The Communities and Education Directorate's vision is to create a society where everyone has the same life chances to grow, prosper and have fulfilling and healthy lives.

Education in North Ayrshire recognises and celebrates its role in the delivery of positive outcomes for all children and young people. We undertake positive interventions to support equalities education for the benefit of our children and young people and for our employees across our educational establishments.

Our Education Service is responsible for the education of 18,061 pupils across our authority's primary, secondary and additional support needs schools. A further 2,251 children attend early learning and childcare settings.

- 45% of our Children and young people live in postcodes in the most deprived areas of Scotland according to SIMD.
- 24% of our Children and young people are living in relative poverty, according to UK government statistics.
- 6,000 of our Children and young people are registered for school footwear and clothing grants.

Education in North Ayrshire is delivered through:

- 48 primary schools.
- 8 secondary schools.
- 1 through school (Garnock Campus).
- 1 specialist campus for children and young people with additional support needs.
- 5 Council-managed early learning and childcare centres.
- 16 centres where early learning and childcare is provided in partnership.
- There are 41 Council-managed early learning and childcare settings.

Children Attending Early Years Settings

- In 2021 – 1,567 pupils recorded as attending an Early Year setting.
- In 2022 – 1,545 pupils recorded attending an Early Year setting, of which about 1,106 were in local authority Early Years settings and 411 in private and voluntary Early Year settings.

We are focussed on the Council Plan outcome that North Ayrshire's children and young people have the best start in life. Our Directorate's priorities clearly show how equality and diversity sit at the very heart of our work: embedded in educational provision; in professional learning; and in the promotion of positive relationships.

National Improvement Framework priorities for 2021-22 were:

- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing.
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people.
- Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people.

The National Improvement Framework priorities are embedded within our Education priorities:

1. We will create the conditions for our children and young people to access the highest quality learning experiences from ages 3-18 years.
2. We will support our children and young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.
3. We will offer opportunities to our young people and their families to play a more active role in school life and encourage more participation in learning.
4. We will work with all young people to build their resilience, supporting their mental health and physical wellbeing.

Mainstreaming the Equality Duty

Our schools use the Curriculum for Excellence framework to create, devise and deliver education suited to the local context for all learners in their communities. Effective planning tracking, monitoring and moderation of assessments are essential to ensure the progress of all learners.

The framework provides a coherent, flexible and enriched curriculum for all children and young people from 3-18 years. Children and young people are at the center of learning provision to become:

Successful
learners

Confident
individuals

Responsible
citizens

Effective
contributors

Getting it Right for Every Child

Our understanding of **Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)** continues to be a focus within all aspects for our practice and professional learning. The principles underpin all the processes within our Council in support of children and young people.

Through GIRFEC, we can determine proportionate, timely and appropriate help for young people, improving each child's situation and reducing risk. The approach supports the achievement and attainment of best outcomes for all our young people, demonstrated through the review and impact of personalised targets in Children's Plans. All our young people have the entitlement to support which is appropriately developed through our Staged Intervention Programme (in line with Additional Supports Needs legislation) and monitored and evaluated using the [National GIRFEC Practice Model](#). Information from Quality Improvement visits reveal that almost all our children and young people with additional support needs plans are **making very good progress (over 90%) from their prior levels of achievement**.

Nurture/Health and wellbeing

Nurture/Health and wellbeing contributes to our vision of being a nurturing authority. This has been further developed through our "Nurturing North Ayrshire's Recovery" approach. We aim to build emotional resilience in children and train teachers to foster stronger relationships with children and young people through a nurturing approach, increasing engagement in the learning process. Evidence shows that this is reducing instances of non-engagement with children and young people and is contributing towards raising attainment.

Nurture

Children and young people who have received nurture support are showing gains in social and emotional progress in early years, primary and secondary settings during the course of targeted nurture intervention and are continuing to access mainstream education.

Primary Nurture

North Ayrshire follows a prescribed model for nurture intervention, governed by a Senior Manager and quality assured by two Nurture Principal Teachers. Nurture Practitioners attend a three-day initial training course and weekly professional learning inputs which has been awarded a GTCS excellence award in professional learning.

Learners attend the morning session then their mainstream class in the afternoon. The nurture room follows a wellbeing curriculum. A nurture day is planned and predictable with check in, snack and a mix of play-based learning activities.

The impact of primary nurture interventions is further highlighted through the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQs) which are completed by class teachers and parents of the children when they enter and exit the morning nurture group. Based on 241 responses up to June 2021, Class teacher SDQ's show that for 61% of children an improvement is reported in their prosocial skills following nurture provision. Class teachers have also reported a reduction of total difficulties for 76% of the children that received nurture provision.

Reflective Quotes on Primary Nurture:

"Before nurture David* was not ready to learn. He was five (years old) but developmentally two and a half or maybe even two (years old). He is now achieving so much. He is sent along with his work to me and I phone his mother when he is there and say, 'Do you know what David has done, his work is phenomenal!' (Primary School Head Teacher.) (*Name has been changed.)

"Every single child that comes through has shown a very easily mapped difference, a very easy to spot difference in their approach to school in general..... the difference is just remarkable." (Primary School Head Teacher.)

Secondary School Nurture

Across North Ayrshire there were nine secondary school nurture groups that were funded through the Scottish Attainment Challenge in the 2020-21 academic year. Between August 2020 and June 2021, 326 young people (57% male, 43% female) had completed the secondary nurture intervention. Updated figures will be available from June 2023.

Within the secondary model S1 have daily contact, S2 have three weekly sessions (minimum) and 1:1 sessions are provided on an individual basis. The nurture room follows a wellbeing curriculum. As with the primary model, a nurture day is planned and predictable including check in, snack and a mix of developmental and chronologically appropriate learning activities.

The impact of secondary nurture provision is evidenced through the completion of the Stirling Children's Wellbeing Scale (SCWBS) by young people at their entry and exit points to the intervention. SCWBS highlighted that almost half (48%) of young people reported improvement in their own wellbeing.

The thematic analysis of qualitative data from teachers illustrates that achievement is visible in other areas of school life. Nurture staff have reported observing the sustainable impact of Nurture in our participating young people.

Children's Rights

All schools promote children's rights. The Rights Respecting Schools programme (RRS) has been promoted and introduced into almost all our schools. The Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA) recognises achievement in putting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) at the heart of a school's planning, policies, practice and ethos. Children's rights underpin the Getting it Right for Every Child approach.

Rights Respecting Schools

19 Gold award schools fully Rights Respecting with a Children's Rights ambassador status

25 Silver award schools who are fully rights aware

13 Bronze award schools who are Children's Rights committed

RRS teaches about children's rights, but also models rights and respect in all relationships, whether they are between teachers or other adults and pupils, between adults or between pupils. RRS underpins our Integrated Children's Service Plan, Promoting Positive Relationships and anti-bullying policies. The UNCRC provides a clear link for pupils from rights-respecting schools, to understanding their rights and children's rights being realised everywhere. Children and young people in rights-respecting schools develop a stronger sense of the need to act for global justice. Over 90% of our schools are participating in the RRS status with nineteen schools reaching gold or Ambassador Status and twenty-five schools achieving Silver.

Our anti-bullying policy entitled "Bullying - It's Never Acceptable" is now established. Enhanced and more accurate reporting and recording of prejudiced based bullying has been in place for a year. Our partnership with "Respect Me" Scotland's anti-bullying service for schools continues and this provides a source for professional learning in this area of health and wellbeing.

Recording of bullying incidents has led to improved responses by professionals and better outcomes for our young people due to the support we provide. Requests for assistance indicate that this work requires to continue particularly regarding online bullying behaviour. Anti-bullying work remains a focus for our Child Protection Working party. There are regular updates to training which provides links to online supports for parents, employees and our young people.

LGBTI Education

LGBTI education forms part of the learning (primarily in secondary schools) focussing on social and emotional resilience, including mental health in relationships, sexuality and sexual behaviour. The use of curriculum benchmarks ensures that progress of young people is measured throughout this key area of education.

We have been successful in gaining funding through the Youth Work education fund to deliver targeted sessions through the mobile youth centre. This work will include a focus on our hard-to-reach groups including the LGBT community. They will be offered support with mental health and wellbeing as well as employability. The following resources will be utilised to support this approach:

- SHARE (Sexual Health and Relationships in Education) is evidence informed educational resource for use by teachers. The focus is on interactive learning for pupils aged 13 – 16 years.
- The NHS resource FIT, contains steps towards combatting phobic language in schools.
- 'See Me', is Scotland's programme with the goal to end all stigma and discrimination around mental health.
- LGBT Scotland bespoke programmes of study which include discussions on sexuality and risky sexual behaviours.

Reducing inequality and delivering improved outcomes for all children and young people

A key feature of our work is the delivery of a fully inclusive approach which is suited to the needs of all children and young people and their families. This work has extended nurturing approaches from primary schools into early years establishments and into secondary schools.

Our Quality Assurance processes and visits to schools have captured many examples of the effective use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF), used by schools to reduce the effects of poverty on attainment). HMIE inspections reports have highlighted the delivery of a range of targeted interventions including nurture is supporting the wellbeing and development of children. Increasingly, school teams are alert to barriers to participation. Financial assistance (through PEF) is available to enable all families to fully access the opportunities on offer to children e.g. Breakfast clubs, reducing the cost of the school day and improving access to residential experiences.

Through our Children Services Executive Group and Inclusion Group we continue to review our services to support children and young people with particular vulnerabilities and more specific Additional Support Needs. Our approach to Integrated Children's Service Planning ensures that all services have a GIRFEC approach to meeting the needs of our children and families.

Case Study – Nurture pupil voice in Secondary Schools

A review to establish the effectiveness of nurture group intervention highlighted a need to adopt a more qualitative research approach focussing on pupil views to gather individuals' thoughts and feelings about the learning and experiences of nurture group intervention.

Pupil View Templates (PVTs) were completed in collaboration with Educational Psychologist Dr Kim Whitehead, Educational Psychology Assistants and Nurture Principal Teachers as a method of collecting the pupil voice across North Ayrshire secondary nurture rooms. Professional learning was delivered to Nurture Practitioners on the PVT model, designed and adapted to suit the needs of the group so our young people could think about what they have learnt and what skills they have achieved as well as what they think the benefits are and what they would tell others about the nurture group. Learners interpreted features of the nurture room using construction, drawings, or words. The resulting template then acted as a stimulus for a mediated conversation using a list of prompt questions developed from examples provided by Wall and Higgins (2007).

The data from this pupil voice project will inform and improve outcomes for young people. Pupil View Templates can be used for professional learning to give educators an understanding of how pupils think and learn... "I didn't know you thought this. Now that I know this I can..."

This process fulfils the requirements of Article 12 UNCRC "all children have a right to have their voices heard and taken seriously". Analysis will be completed by Educational Psychology assistants and personalised data will be given to each school. The collective response will be analysed to develop emerging themes for the nurture service and to inform strategic planning.

Strengths in Education

The central Education team's drive, vision and capacity for continuous improvement remains a key strength. This is supported by highly effective governance structures. We continue to provide opportunities for innovation within an appropriate framework of accountability at all levels.

- There are shared values and common purpose where school teams feel valued and very well supported. This was evident from our questionnaire responses in relation to COVID. These responses were used to build a recovery programme for teams, pupils and their families in the form of E-learning modules.

- The very strong leadership team is driving improved outcomes for children and young people.
- Partnership working within the Scottish Attainment Challenge thematic workstreams is leading to improved outcomes for children, young people and their families living in the areas of highest deprivation.
- Very effective self-evaluation is leading to improved learning, raised attainment and a narrowing of the poverty-related attainment gap.
- Very strong approaches to staff development are evident across the whole authority led by the work undertaken by our Professional Leadership Academy. The development of leadership at all levels is building leadership capacity across the authority.

In addition, our Educational Psychology Service continue to make a strong contribution to helping to close the poverty-related attainment gap in North Ayrshire. This is particularly evident in relation to the implementation of nurture and restorative practices.

Supporting our Young Carers

Helping to raising awareness of Young Carers and the supports available to them, our area Inclusion workers took part in a session at the Carers centre. Each school identified a Young Carers lead and workshops were planned for January 2023 to upskill our employees to support them in completing the Young Carers Statement.

Mentors in Violence Project (MVP)

Eight of our nine secondary schools are now taking part in this programme in the 2022/23 session. Over 60 employees have been trained and over 200 young people in North Ayrshire are MVP mentors, delivering learning to hundreds of young people in our schools.

Mentors are developing leadership, exploring violence through a gendered lens, using a bystander approach, exploring the scope of violent behaviour and challenging victim blaming.

Staff and mentors are working together to increase communication and to support them in becoming active bystanders. This means they will gain more knowledge and confidence in challenging negative behaviours and comments around these issues.

Leadership accreditation is being sought in several schools using MVP as evidence of these skills in action. Early indications from schools show that mentors are confidently delivering lessons to junior classes. There is a greater shared understanding of issues related to gender-based violence and bullying. The programme has been welcomed in all participating schools.

Capacity building for staff will continue in 2023 with the National offer and bespoke North Ayrshire training and we have requested training for Arran this session.

Training has been arranged at our Lockhart Campus that will be specific to the needs of this school.

As a local authority we have offered and will offer 30 min training on both MVP and Equally Safe At School (ESAS) to raise awareness. MVP mentors took part in the 'Reclaim the Night Walk' as part of the Prevention of violence against women programme.

Case Study: See Me - See Change

A 'See Me See Change' event took place on the 31st of October and 3rd of November 2022 attended by around 200 young people from Ardrossan Academy, Auchenharvie Academy, Garnock Community Campus, Greenwood Academy, Irvine Royal Academy, Kilwinning Academy, Largs Academy and St Matthews Academy.

Teams from each school took part in twilight online training prior to the event and are now well placed to support them in school. Support was provided at the event by our Community Youth work apprentices who also undertook virtual training.

The 'See Me See Change' training programme offers training for pupils and employees, before bringing the two groups together for an action planning session to agree how they will work together to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination within their school.

It is hoped our next training session for employees will be in May/June 2023 and New S5 Pupils June 2023 that will allow the programme to grow and become embedded in our schools as part of the [Whole School Approach to Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework](#).

Employee Statistics Overview

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires local authorities to gather and publish employee statistics by protected characteristic. This section of the report includes an overview of employee information by age, sex, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion and belief. It also includes the Employee Pay Gap information by sex, ethnicity and disability. Full information on our employee statistics can be found in our supporting report – Employee Statistics 2019 - 2022.

It is recommended we publish information in some key areas including:

- Employee Headcount by protected characteristic.
- Recruitment by protected characteristic.
- Employee Turnover by protected characteristic.
- Employee Training by protected characteristic.

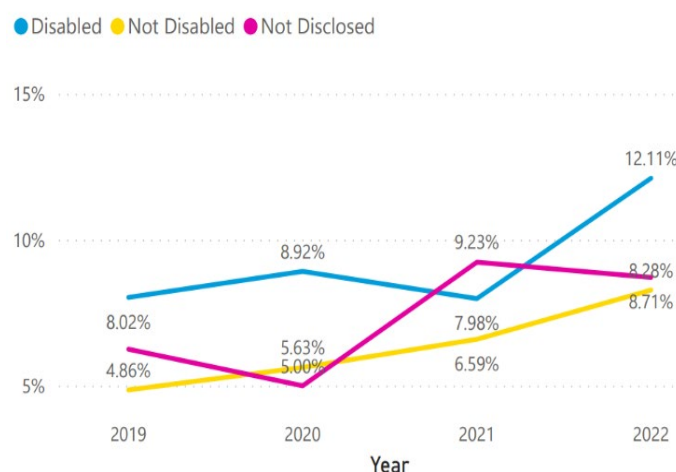
Data prior to 2021 may differ slightly from the statistics produced in our 2019 and 2020 Mainstreaming Report. This is due to minor discrepancies in calculations that have since been corrected.

Disability

In 2022, 3.7% (302) of our employees had a declared disability and 18% (1,487) did not disclose this information. The percentage of employees declaring a disability has increased since our 2020 report and the percentage of those not disclosing this information has decreased. 45% of employees with a disability work in Grades 4 – 10 and 15% are in teaching posts.

The chart to the right shows turnover was higher in 2022 at 12.11% for people with a disability against 8.71% for those without a disability. A slightly higher percentage of people with no disability received or attended training compared with those who were disabled. This figure fluctuates annually.

Total Employee Turnover



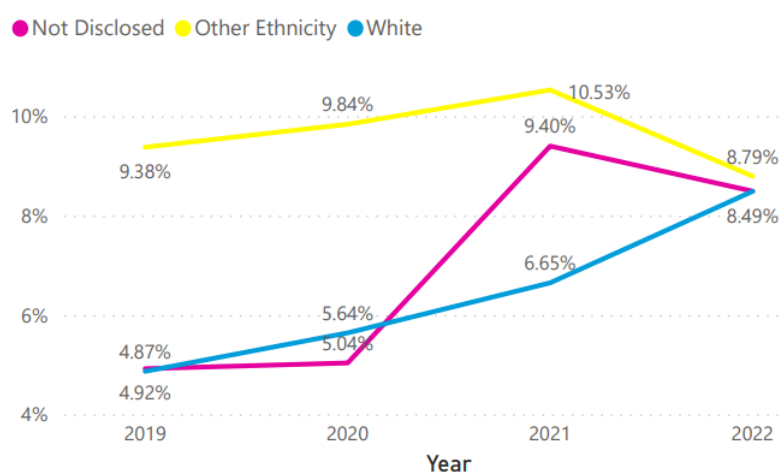
Within Education, 3% of employees declared a disability in 2022, which has increased from 1.8% in 2020.

Ethnicity

The 2011 Census shows North Ayrshire continues to have a small black or minority ethnic population at 1.1% of our population, it is expected the 2022 Census will show an increase. The relatively low percentage of people from a black or minority ethnic background living in North Ayrshire is reflected in our employee statistics. In 2022, 1.1% of employees had declared an ethnicity other than white (with 16% not disclosed). Our 2020 statistics showed 0.83% from another ethnicity and 18.8% not disclosed.

The percentage of people from 'other ethnicity' leaving our Council has remained higher than 'white' in recent years. Although the overall gap narrowed in 2022, this figure was due to fewer temporary employees.

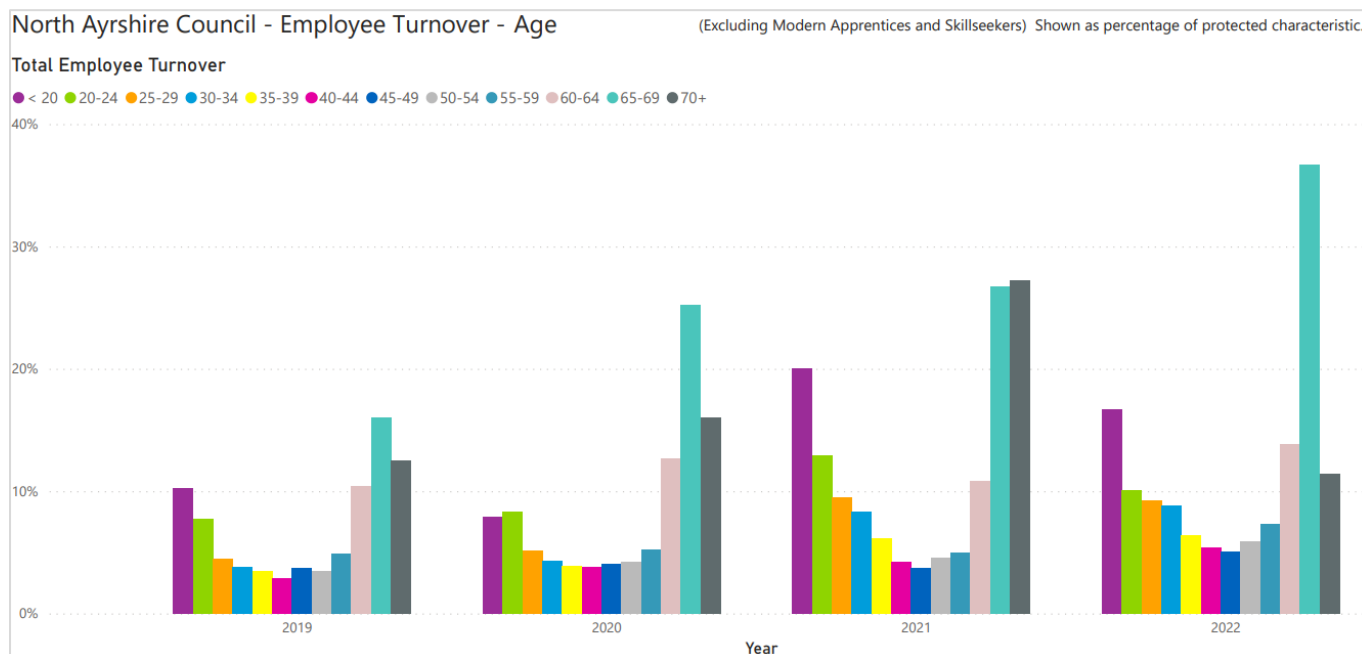
Total Employee Turnover



Mainstreaming the Equality Duty

Within Education, 42 employees (1%) were from the 'Other Ethnicity' category, with 18 teaching staff and one promoted staff. Turnover for Education employees is slightly higher for 'white' employees at 7.61% compared to 7.14% for 'Other Ethnicity'. 'Not disclosed' had the highest turnover at 8.75%

Age

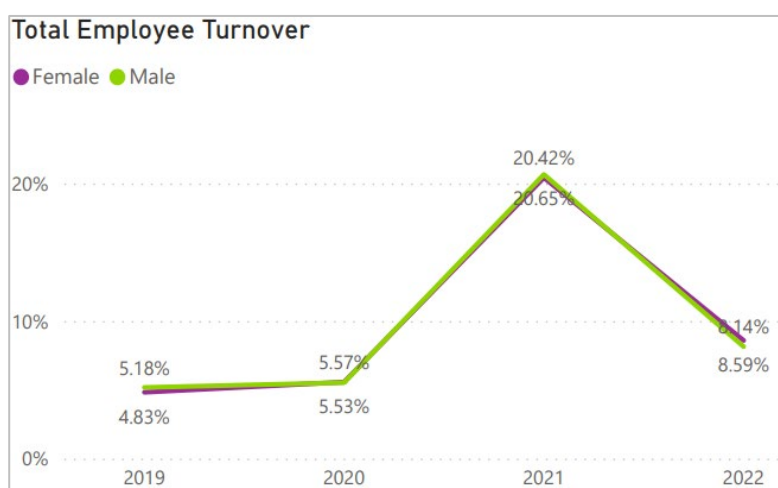


Similar to many other organisations, our Council has an ageing workforce, with just over 40% of employees aged 50 or over, this jumps to 54% for those aged 45 and over. Employee turnover is highest in the 65-69 age category, increasing from around 55 years due to employees choosing to retire.

Education headcount for age is much lower than our Council as a whole, with only 25% of employees over the age of 50 years. Just over 60% of teaching staff are under the age of 45.

Sex

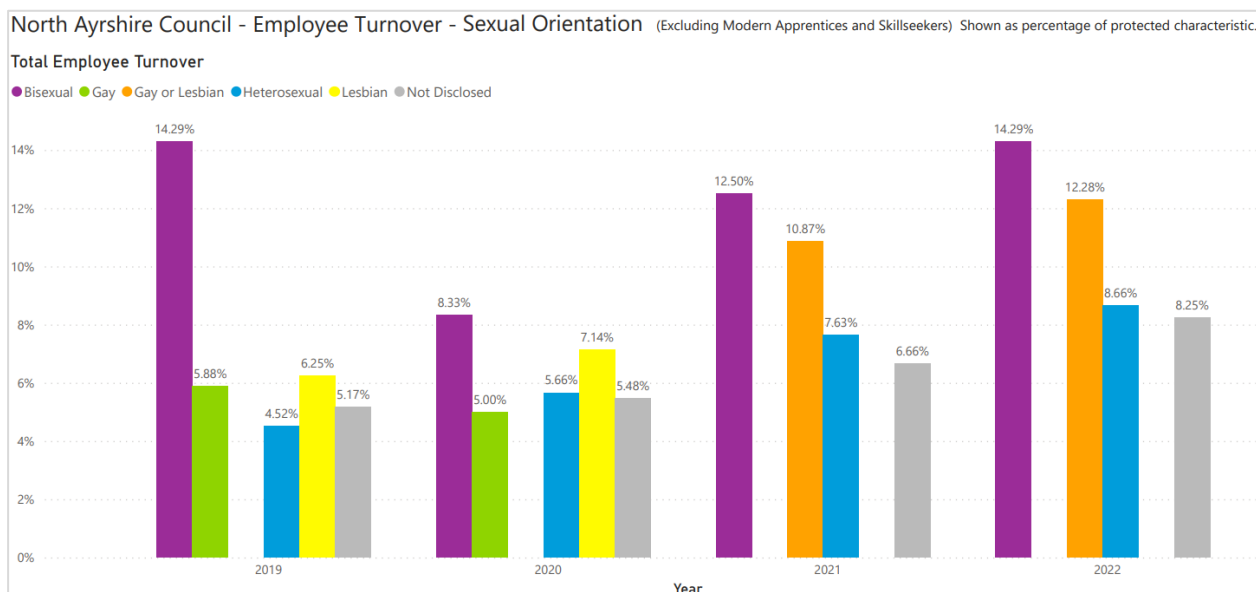
In 2022, 25% of our Council employees were male, 75% female. 3.0% (249) of our female employees are in promoted posts of Grade 11 -17 compared to 1.65% (136) of our male employees. Although 3% of our promoted posts are held by females, the percentage overall in promoted posts as a proportion of total female employees is 4%, whereas for males as a proportion of total male staff is 6.6%. This indicates relative to the overall workforce, there is a slightly higher proportion of males in promoted posts, however in the most senior promoted posts, 11 of our 19 Chief Officers are female.



The majority of employees are Grades 4 – 7, with 36% (2971) female and 11% (916) of male employees working at this level. For the first time in a number of years, 1.3% more males received training than females. There was a higher percentage of staff turnover for females compared to males at 8.59% compared to 8.14%.

Within Education, 81% of teaching employees are female. 20.4% (280) of female teaching employees are in a promoted role, compared with 27.9% (90) of males in a promoted post.

Sexual Orientation



In 2022, 89 employees identified as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual (LGB) or 1.1% of the workforce, compared to 0.6% (46) employees in 2020; 48% of employees identified as Heterosexual and 51% of employees did not disclose their sexual orientation (57% in 2020). With very low numbers it is difficult to identify specific issues or trends. During 2022, 11 employees identifying as LGB left our Council or 12% of all our employees identifying LGB. For those employees identifying as Heterosexual, this figure was 8% that year. There are no specific issues around training or recruitment.

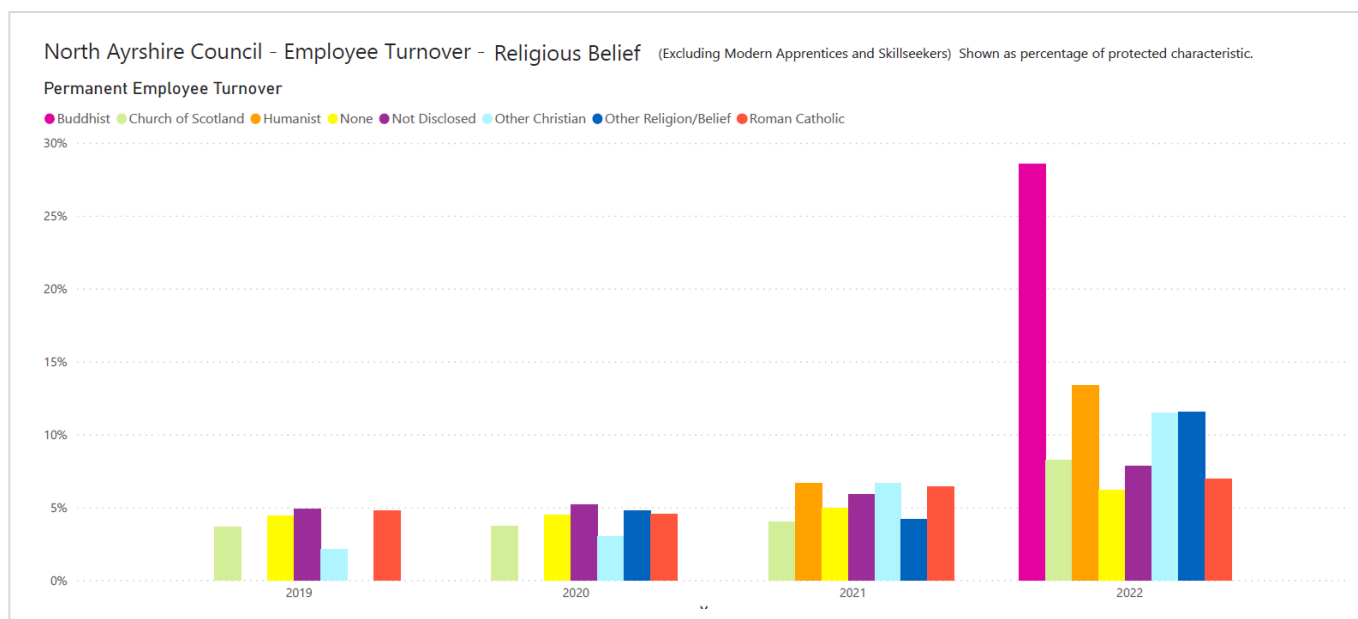
During 2022, 21 (0.72%) of education employees identified as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual (an increase from 0.6% in 2020). During 2022, a slightly lower percentage of employees identifying as Lesbian or Gay left our Education Service compared to Heterosexual employees (6.9% vs 7.52%).

Religion or Belief (including no belief)

As with our employee statistics for Sexual Orientation, the 'Not disclosed' percentage is very high at 52.5% of employees, although this is an improvement from our 2020 report of 58.4% not disclosing. This makes it challenging to identifying real trends. Other than the not disclosed group, the next highest group is employees with no religion or belief at 25.9% of employees which is an increase of 5.4% from 2020, followed by Church of Scotland (11.8%, a 0.2% increase), Roman Catholic (6.4%, a 0.2% increase), and Other Christian (2.4%, a 0.1% decrease).

In relation to employee turnover the highest percentage of leavers was for 'Not Disclosed', Humanist, Other Christian and Other belief/religion. Other categories of religious groups by number include, Humanist (18), Buddhist (10), Muslim (7), Hindu (1) and Jewish (1).

Within Education, 51.7% of employees did not disclose their religion or belief (a decrease of 8.2% since 2020), followed by employees with no religion or belief at 24%, Church of Scotland at 12.8% and Roman Catholic at 7.5%.



Further Considerations

We recognise that there is a high percentage of 'not disclosed' with some of our statistics. Following an exercise to encourage our employees to update their records, we have seen improvements in the number of employees disclosing for disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation and religion and belief. We will periodically continue to encourage our employees to update their records.

Employee Pay Gap Information

Under legislation, we are required to publish our pay gap information for Gender, Disability and Ethnicity.

Our Gender Pay Gap for 2022 is 0.22%; which is our lowest figure since pay gap reporting was introduced, the last four year trend has seen a steady closing of the mean pay gap from 1.48% in 2019 to 0.22% at the end of December 2022.

Mean Pay Difference (basic hourly rate)				
	2019	2020	2021	2022
Female	16.02	16.54	16.54	18.03
Male	16.26	16.76	16.74	18.07
Difference (%)	1.48	1.31	1.19	0.22

Our Disability Pay Gap for 2022 is 7.44%, which is an increase from 2021 of 3.32% and has increased from a low of 0.88% in 2019. There are potentially a number of reasons for this, including the relatively low percentage of employees declaring a disability, meaning small changes to the workforce may have a significant impact on the percentage figures. In part, due to encouraging our employees to update their records, we have seen a slight increase in the percentage of employees declaring a disability, from 2.2% in 2019 to 3.7% in 2022.

Mainstreaming the Equality Duty

Our Council has implemented a number of activities to both support employees with a disability and to support potential candidates into employment; these include an internal employee disability forum, the Equal Supported Employment programme and the See Me CV programme for people with a disability applying for a Modern Apprenticeship.

Mean Pay Difference (basic hourly rate)				
	2019	2020	2021	2022
Disabled	15.77	15.62	15.83	16.66
Not disabled	15.91	16.49	16.51	18.00
Difference (%)	0.88	5.28	4.12	7.44

Our Ethnicity Pay Gap figure in 2022 was 0.89%, this figure has fluctuated over the last four years, with each alternative year since 2019, having a positive pay gap in favour of 'other ethnicity'. Although for 2022 this figure is positive for employees of a white ethnicity, this is less than 1% of a difference. In part, the recent encouragement for employees to update their personal records including their ethnic status saw an increase of employees from 'other ethnicity' from 63 in 2020 to 93 in 2022.

Mean Pay Difference (basic hourly rate)				
	2019	2020	2021	2022
Other Ethnicity	16.15	16.38	16.69	17.81
White	15.89	16.46	16.47	17.97
Difference (%)	-1.64	0.49	-1.34	0.89

Occupational Segregation Information

Occupational Segregation is one of the key factors influencing the gender pay gap. It concerns aspects of employment that see men and women being clustered into different occupations. There are several influences on Occupational Segregation and these include gender norms and stereotyping.

There are two main types of Occupational Segregation, which are considered as 'Horizontal' and 'Vertical'.

Gender (Sex)

The gender split in the Council is 75 – 25% female to male. The highest percentage of 'female to male' employees work in grades 4 - 7 and in teaching (78%). The greatest number of females work in grades 4 - 7 or 35% of the total workforce and 47% of the total female workforce.

Horizontal Segregation: People with certain protected characteristics being clustered into certain job types. For women this could be occupations that are associated with low pay and fewer opportunities for progression, such as care work, cleaning, catering and administration work. In comparison men may be more often found in occupations that pay higher wages, including the trades, engineering, or technical work.

Vertical Segregation: Those with particular protected characteristics may be more likely to be clustered into certain positions and be more absent from senior management and executive positions.

Mainstreaming the Equality Duty

Within the management and senior management grades (11 – 17), as a % of the total female workforce, 4.0% are in this category, with 6.6% of males as a total of male employees. The percentage split for our Chief Officers is 58% female to male.

The table below provides an average hourly rate by sex for 2022 and 2020 for comparison. The grades with the biggest pay gap percentage are 4 – 7 (4.04%), 11 – 17 (3.59%) (management), promoted teacher (3.4%) and Chief Officers (2.82%). Grades 4 - 7 are where the highest number of female employees are employed and from a 'horizontal segregation' perspective will be where some 'traditionally' female oriented roles such as caring and catering roles are based. Grades where the pay gap favours females include Grades 8 – 10 (-0.05%), other (-0.60%) and teaching staff (-1.31%).

	Average Hourly Rate 2022		Variance	
	Female (£)	Male (£)	% variance (2022)	% variance (2020)
Grades 1 - 3	-	-	-	-
Grades 4 - 7	12.83	13.67	6.14	4.04
Grades 8 - 10	20.41	20.47	0.29	-0.05
Grades 11 - 17	27.06	27.89	2.98	3.59
Other	11.00	11.26	2.31	-0.60
Chief Officer	54.84	57.04	3.86	2.82
Teacher	26.44	26.10	-1.30	-1.31
Promoted Teacher	35.47	36.20	2.02	3.40
Total Workforce	18.03	18.07	0.22	1.31

Ethnicity

For Employees with an ethnicity other than white, it is difficult to discern any trends due to the low numbers of employees from the other ethnicity category. The 'Other Ethnicity'/White split for grades 4–7 is 45% for those of an "Other ethnicity" and 47% white. For grades 8-10 the comparison is 14% other ethnicity compared to 16% white and for Grades 11 – 17, 3% of employees are other ethnicity compared to 5% white. There are no minority ethnic employees at Chief Officer level, but the figures don't indicate any particular trends with the spread of minority ethnic employees across grades within our Council.

Disability

Similarly, to our employee information for other ethnicity, in relation to employees with a declared disability we have 302 employees or 3.7% of the total workforce with a known disability and 18% not disclosed.

Within the gradings, when comparing the number of disabled employees within each of the categories against the total disabled figure and the non-disabled against total non-disabled, there are no significant differences.

For Grades 4–7, 45% of those with a disability are employed in this category, compared to 47% non-disabled. For Grades 8–10, 16% of employees with a disability, compared to 16% non-disabled and for Grade 11 – 17, 5% of employees with a disability and 5.4% are non-disabled.

All public sector organisations are required to set Equality Outcomes every four years. This report covers the mid-point of the four-yearly Equality Outcome 2021 - 2025 reporting period and contains information and data covering the calendar years of 2021 and 2022.

National guidance on setting equality outcomes states that they should be proportionate and relevant to the functions and strategic priorities of the organisations setting them, and that they may include both short and long-term benefits for people with protected characteristics. Our Equality Outcomes have been developed as short to medium term (one to four years) and link with both longer term and national outcomes. In addition, we have adopted sub-outcomes and actions to support the main overarching outcomes.

A number of these equality outcomes link with already existing policies and strategies. This is to help embed the outcomes in our activities and drive a more focused effort on areas for improvement specifically to improve equality and reduce inequalities.

Ayrshire Shared Equality Outcomes

The public sector partners of the Ayrshire Equality Partnership agreed to consult on and develop shared outcomes and actions across Ayrshire. Alongside our Council, partners include East and South Ayrshire Councils, North, East and South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnerships, NHS Ayrshire and Arran, Ayrshire College, Ayrshire Joint Evaluation Board and the South West Community Justice Authority.

All the organisations involved support the same communities, therefore this coordinated approach to consulting with our interest groups helps avoid consultation fatigue. Additionally, through sharing resources and expertise during the consultation and development process and into the implementation phase, this ultimately improves the experiences of communities through a more consistent approach across the partner agencies.

The development of the shared equality outcomes and actions allow partner agencies to maintain their own individual organisational accountability for reporting on equality mainstreaming and outcomes, while recognising the shared work of the partner agencies.

The Ayrshire Shared Overarching Outcomes are as follows.

Outcome 1

In Ayrshire people experience safe and inclusive communities

Outcome 2

In Ayrshire people have the opportunity to access and shape our public services

Outcome 3

In Ayrshire people have the opportunity to fulfil their potential throughout life

Outcome 4

In Ayrshire public bodies will be inclusive and diverse employers

The actions supporting each of the four equality outcomes and sub-outcomes are outlined below alongside the pan-Ayrshire updates.

Equality Outcomes

Equality Outcome 1 – In Ayrshire people experience safe and inclusive communities

Sub-Outcome - Through a variety of methods victims, witnesses and partner agencies feel more confident in reporting hate incidents.

1.1 Key Actions Supporting this Outcome

- Raise Awareness to better understand hate crime.
- Work with partners to raise awareness of hate crime with community members through a conference.
- Work with partners to increase awareness of third party reporting.
- Develop a Hate Crime awareness course.

Progress

During 2022, members of the Ayrshire Equality Partnership, including our Council came together to organise a Hate Crime Awareness Conference. The conference took place at Ayrshire College, Kilmarnock on 5 October 2022 with the overall aim of Empowering Communities in Ayrshire to end Hate Crime.

Dave Scott, Campaign Director Nil by Mouth charity 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 the 'I am me' charity (Keep Safe initiative); Scottish Refugee Council; Police Scotland and the Procurator Fiscal Service, Community Justice Authority and LGBT+ experience. The conference offered opportunities to support learning about 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.

Over 100 people from various partner agencies, including students from Ayrshire College attended the event, which evaluated very positively. Following on from the event information on third party reporting was disseminated to local community groups across Ayrshire. Partners are in discussions to create hate crime awareness training.

Third Party Reporting was highlighted as part of the conference approach and disseminated via partners. As most, if not all, third party reporting centres were closed during the pandemic, further work will be required during 2023 and onwards to re-establish centres as third-party reporting venues.

Equality Outcome 2 – In Ayrshire, people have equal opportunity to access and shape our public services - Ayrshire Shared Actions

Sub Outcome - Improve engagement with our services and enhance access to information for marginalised and under-represented groups

2.2 Key Actions supporting this Outcome

- Work with the Council's Web Team and Sensory Impairment Team to create a BSL friendly landing page on our website.
- Work with our Web Team and our Connected Communities Teams to create a community language landing page for North Ayrshire residents
- Explore joint approach for the commissioning of BSL Interpretation.

Progress

In addition to the British Sign Language (BSL) Plan landing page and videos in BSL on Council services during the pandemic, an additional page for BSL was added to our Council's main website during 2022. This page contains [videos in BSL](#) on various topics such as school holidays, bin collections, contact us, council tax and recycling centres. Since going live in late 2022, the site has had 150 views and 125 unique user views. We aim to add more BSL videos through further engagement with the BSL community and Council services.

Due to a number of issues the community language landing page did not progress as planned. However further discussions have been taken place to find a way forward.

Progress has been made with the partners on agreeing a joint approach to commissioning BSL interpretation services, with the aim of keeping costs to partner agencies as low as possible. It is hoped this can be launched during 2023.

Equality Outcome 3 - In Ayrshire, people have opportunities to fulfil their potential throughout life

Sub-Outcome 3A - Our young people, disabled people and women have access to training and employment.

3.1 Key actions supporting this Outcome

Through the Ayrshire Growth Deal:

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

Progress

Working for a Healthy Economy is a large-scale investment, totalling £5million, 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. It 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.

Since its initiation in May 2021, the Working for a Healthier Economy programme has engaged with 514 unemployed individuals. Evaluations have shown that 34.6% of people reduced their anxiety levels, 43.3% reduced levels of depression, 26.5% improved their health and wellbeing and 51 people gained employment. Further work is on-going to review information being gathered in relation to other protected characteristics, including those with a disability.

Case Study – Working for a Healthy Economy

Anne* is 54 years old and was recently made redundant after many years in the same job. This change has had a detrimental effect on her wellbeing as she has high levels of anxiety and feels low most of the time. She has difficulty leaving the house, socialising with friends and placing herself in social environments and three weeks prior to meeting with someone from Working for a Healthy Economy, had attempted to take her own life. Anne participated in anxiety management using Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and started seeing friends again socially. She also took up volunteering as a step towards employment.

(*Name has been changed)

Sub-Outcome 3A: Our young people, disabled people and women have access to training and employment.

Equal Supported Employment Programme

Our Equal Supported Employment Service provide opportunities for those with disabilities where their academic achievement has been prohibitive to their career development.



It is accepted that to progress within a chosen career, academic study is required to progress within a high number of fields. By providing practical experience, it is anticipated that those with neuro diverse disabilities will have the ability to progress towards fulfilling long term employment.

To support this process practical training via the Royal Horticultural Society Awards scheme (RHSA) provides participants with a solid certificate of their achievements and work experience in a horticultural environment.

3.2 Key Actions Supporting this Outcome

- To offer candidates the opportunity of paid work experience in the Horticulture industry whilst working alongside several local organisations creating a Community Garden.
- To provide additional practical training via the Royal Horticultural Society awards scheme which should result in solid knowledge and experience for future permanent employment within the Horticulture industry.

Progress

During 2021, the Equal Supported Employment team were successful in setting up a horticultural programme at Eglinton Park in Irvine. The programme supports small groups of people through paid work experience, to gain the skills and confidence of working in this type of environment and to build their workplace skills in general. This resulted in:

- 26 residents attending over three courses, with 16 completing the course and 10 still ongoing at the time of writing.
- Of the 16 people who have completed the work experience, six have moved into full time employment; four started volunteering; one progressed to university; two progressed to college and two moved to further providers for additional support.
- In relation to the Royal Horticultural Society award scheme, 10 participants achieved a full pass in the RCHS modules and an additional seven achieved SQA units in Horticulture.

Key neurodiverse conditions supported include people with Autism, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), learning disability, mental health issues, Cerebral Palsy and partial sightedness.

Positive feedback was received from every person participating in the scheme, with general comments stating that it was an excellent experience and a positive educational result for everyone involved.

Moving forward, in-work support will continue for all those that are in employment and volunteering, this will provide continued support for all clients to ensure further career progression.

Case Study 1 – Steven’s Story

Steven* joined Equal shortly after leaving school. He quickly progressed as a Trainee Horticulture Assistant at Eglinton Garden. His dyslexia had caused him problems throughout his learning and we adapted learning styles to suit. He worked really hard with his advisor to progress through his training and this ensured that he achieved his Grow and Learn Certification from the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society.

During his six months paid work experience Steven became a valuable team member and specialised in using heavier garden machinery such as a petrol driven strimmer and mower and he began to express an interest in working with heavy machinery.

An opportunity arose through Kickstart within Bridgend Garage for a trainee and Steven applied for and successfully gained the job. He was still concerned that his dyslexia would be an obstacle, however his advisor worked with both him and Bridgend Training staff to ensure a smooth transition into work.

Equal advisors continued to support and ensured that his 6 months went smoothly. Management was trained and staff awareness sessions were held at the employer’s premises.

After his six-month contract had ended, Steven was taken on full time in a permanent position and has progressed from being quiet and reserved to become much more confident. Equal continue to work with Steven behind the scenes and are always on call should the need arise.

(*Name has been changed.)

Case Study 2 – Nadine’s Story

Nadine* came to EQUAL straight from school and was appointed an advisor right away. During her appointments with her Advisor, Nadine advised that she was looking for a Modern Apprenticeship in Business Administration as she had a keen interest in this and possessed strong Microsoft skills she wanted to develop further.

Nadine was confident in applying for a Modern Apprenticeship position with North Ayrshire Council and achieved an interview pretty quickly. She was successful in gaining a post within the Health and Social Care Partnership. Her Advisor contacted her new manager to advise of the role that EQUAL could provide. She also arranged for an Access to Work assessment to be carried out to support Nadine’s disability. During COVID and the restricted return to work period afterwards Nadine’s new department was not fully manned and teams were struggling to support Nadine at work every day. Her Advisor attended office three days per week for an initial period of three months to support with duties and empower Nadine when using systems and scanning of complex files.

Nadine completed her apprenticeship and achieved an SVQ in Office Admin. She became a confident employee and gained new skills. She has since secured an Office Administrator job within another department within North Ayrshire Council. Her Advisor continues to support with new office duties including inventory of property and answering a busy telephone enquiry line and she provides this support one morning per week. Nadine continues to gain new skills including customer service in her new role. One of her new tasks is the responsibility for petty cash, however as Nadine does not have any experience using money, her Advisor requested additional support from North Ayrshire Council’s Community Development Tutor to provide numeracy tutoring. Nadine’s confidence continues to grow from strength to strength and her Advisor has formed an excellent relationship with her manager keeping in touch with both on a regular basis. Nadine’s Advisor also works closely with Nadine’s parents ensuring that they are kept informed of all the support being provided to Nadine.

“We were introduced to 'Equal' through Nadine’s school to offer support in her transition from school to the workplace. This is a big step for any school leaver but particularly for someone with Autism like Nadine. Not forgetting that this had been a very uncertain time and home schooling was now happening.

Equal have been an amazing source of support for not only Nadine but also for us as parents. They built a relationship with Nadine through video chats and were very focused on her as an individual. This was then followed on to provide support within the workplace when Nadine first started her apprenticeship. So valuable for both Nadine and her workplace. A new environment, learning a brand new job and meeting new people can be very overwhelming for most and it was a lifeline for Nadine having someone she knew to offer support.” – Nadine’s Mother.

(*Name has been changed.)

Sub-Outcome 3B - To continue to embed UNCRC across schools in North Ayrshire to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity in our schools and the wider community

Rights Respecting Schools

The UNICEF UK Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA) supports schools across the UK to embed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into their ethos practice and culture. The output from taking this work forward is that all schools across North Ayrshire would be registered as a Rights Respecting School. This approach would lead to the embedding of children's rights across the curriculum and within child protection and additional support needs practices.

3.3 Key actions supporting this Outcome

- Support the embedding of children's rights across the curriculum and within Child Protection and Additional Support Needs practices.

Progress

Over 90% (92%) of schools have embarked on the RRSA journey within North Ayrshire Council. This compares extremely favourably to the national picture of 68% of all Scottish schools involved in the RRS programme.

A very small percentage have not engaged in the program (8%, four schools) but all continue to promote rights through their vision values and aims and Additional Support Needs work. Key results include:

- **An increase in schools achieving Bronze Status** - 25% (13 schools) are at Bronze level.
- **An increase in schools achieving Silver Status** - 48% (25 schools) are at Silver Status, an increase of 2 schools since our 2020 report.*
- **An increase in Schools achieving Gold Status** - 19% (10 schools) are at Gold Status; an increase of 6 schools since our 2020 report.

*This figure is offset with the increase from four to 10 schools achieving the Gold award.

A high number of schools are approaching reaccreditation, UNICEF charge to submit for reaccreditation, which has now been made easier due to funding provided by the Scottish Government until 2024.

Children's Rights and Child Protection and Additional Support Needs

Children and young people's rights are recognised in line with revised child protection and additional support needs legislation. All schools in North Ayrshire would recognise these processes and build in the 'young person's voice' in child protection and additional support needs planning. This is reflected in Article 12 of the UNCRC.

3.4 Key Actions Supporting this Outcome

- Implement the Children and Young People's voice in Child Protection and Additional Support Needs planning
- Respect for the views of the child (Article 12 of the UNCRC: 'Children and Young People have the right to speak up and have their opinions listened to and be taken seriously.')

Through this aim of capturing and reflecting the 'young person's voice' employees have been engaging with young people through additional support needs (ASN), child protection and young carers meetings. All teams are aware of the need to reflect the voice of the child or young person in realisation of Article 12 UNCRC. A variety of voice gathering tools have been developed through our nurture approach including nurture bricks approach for primary and a pupil voice template for secondary. These in addition to those tools found in the national practice model.

Progress

Almost all, 90% plus of children, have their voice recognised in decisions affecting their lives, this is a key measure around ensuring children have had the chance to input into decisions affecting their lives.

All additional support for learning child and young people plans sampled contain the views of our children and young people. This process is also reflected in child protection planning for children and young people.

Education continues to work closely with the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) to strengthen this still further and through revised child protection practice as a result of the Inspection of Children's Services.

The voice of our children and young people is part of educational policy development through a process of realising Children's Rights.

Mentors in Violence Prevention

Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) is a peer mentoring programme that gives young people the chance to explore and challenge the attitudes, beliefs and cultural norms that underpin gender-based violence, bullying and other forms of violence.

3.5 Key Actions Supporting this Outcome

- Establish the Mentors in Violence Programme in two secondaries, followed by further secondaries.

Progress

From an initial target of two schools participating in the Mentors in Violence Programme (MVP) programme, eight out of nine secondary schools are now taking part in MVP during 22/23.

Over 60 employees have been trained and over 200 young people in North Ayrshire are MVP mentors delivering learning to hundreds of young people in our schools. Mentors are developing leadership, exploring violence through a gendered lens, using a bystander approach, exploring the scope of violent behaviour and challenging victim blaming.

Employees and mentors are working together to increase communication and to our young people in becoming active by-standers. Leadership accreditation is being sought in several schools using MVP as evidence of these skills in action.

Early indications from schools show that mentors are confidently delivering lessons to junior classes. There is a greater shared understanding of issues related to gender-based violence and bullying. The programme has been welcomed in all participating schools.

Sub-outcome 3C - Our young LGBT people feel supported and have access to improved digital platforms and sources of support.

3.6 Key actions supporting this Outcome

- Create digital space for our young people who identify as LGBT with support staff to support LGBT and separate space for trans young people.
- Regular digital support and information sessions with information and guest speakers for both our young people and parents and carers

- Connected Communities (Youth) have signed up to achieve the [LGBT Silver Charter Mark](#) – which includes specific LGBT Awareness and Trans Awareness training for all staff.
- Regular Social Media content that shares support and resources for LGBT+ through all our social media channels – linking into local and national support.

Progress

The Connected Communities Team has submitted evidence to LGBT Youth Scotland for the Silver LGBT Chartermark. The Chartermark asks organisations to focus on inclusion in relation to LGBT issues and covers aspect of training and awareness raising and policy and practice within organisations. Planning and facilitation of employee information sharing twilight sessions have taken place which aims to improve inclusive practice across our Council's Connected Communities Team.

As part of the work towards submitting evidence, a group of employees volunteered to provide support to the LGBT Silver Charter Mark Journey. The group have been meeting quarterly to discuss LGBT support within each of the North Ayrshire localities and feed this back into an LGBT Action Plan. The group has representatives from each locality and from the Modern Apprenticeship Programme. They have been instrumental in providing evidence and support for the LGBT Silver Charter Portfolio

North Ayrshire now has four active LGBTQI Youth group provisions that meet weekly in the Garnock Valley, Kilwinning, North Coast and Irvine. Members of the group have been proactive in participating in a range of activities, including,

- In the North Coast, 10 Young people ran an LGBT bake sale to make LGBT issues more openly discussed in the secondary school. Open discussions with campus officers were held to discuss 'dead naming' (calling a transgender person by their birth name after they changed their name due to their gender transition) and putting pronouns on registration forms.
- In Kilwinning, seven young people worked on an LGBT basic 'introduction to (LGBT) terms' leaflet that will be displayed in Kilwinning library.
- The Garnock Valley group started in April 2022, with eight regular attendees, and attended the Arran Pride event in July. Although numbers have reduced since then, work continues to keep the group active.

Our Council continues to support awareness of LGBT History month. A full LGBT campaign was created throughout February that was pushed out through all of our social media channels. This included national signposting, promotion of the LGBTQI Youth Group and promotion of Hate Crime Reporting, mental health support and more. Our Council also supported the first Arran Pride event that took place in July 2022 and will continue to support this event moving forward.

Sub-outcome 3D - Support the integration of our refugee population into life in North Ayrshire.

3.7 Key actions supporting this Outcome

- Create refugee-led groups at a local level.
- Enable collective identification of issues and engagement with services.
- Build knowledge and skills for organisational development such as governance, employing staff, asset transfer and registering as a charity.
- Assess and meet the needs of refugee community members.

- Facilitate the participation of refugees in forums as well as other activities of local authorities and other public bodies.

Progress

A refugee lead community group called the Spike Wheat Scots, has been set up and hosts a community hub from Whitehurst Park community centre in Kilwinning. The group is now a key holder at the premises and the Community Learning and Development (CLD) new Scots team, other Council services, external organisations and volunteers all help to support the delivery of the group.

A Ukrainian guest led community group has been set up and hosts a community hub from Cranberry Moss community centre in Kilwinning and is supported in a similar manner to the Spike Wheat Scots group. The group has engaged with the Department of Work and Pensions to provide a weekly drop in for Ukrainian guests, supporting them with employability issues. A programme of activities has been developed, including input from Police Scotland, information sessions on Halloween and Guy Fawkes night and supporting the group with governance.

The CLD team support refugee youth activities including a girls Duke of Edinburgh group, a boys group, girls football, boys football, SWANS (girls only youth group), and dance group in partnership with Y-Dance and we have one refugee who was voted in as a member of the Scottish Youth Parliament. Through the Spike Wheat Scots group an adults football group is now running as well. We are in discussions with the Scottish Football Association and Street Soccer regarding coaching qualifications and games.

The CLD New Scots team currently has one refugee as a core member of staff. They also have one refugee and three Ukrainian guests on their sessional employee list.

A language café is hosted monthly that brings together all our New Scots to help them improve their spoken English and engage with other New Scot learners. In partnership with East and South Ayrshire as part of the Pan Ayrshire English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) working group we are piloting a language learning platform and generating content and really promoting independent learning including the ESOL and other organisations including the Perth, Yemeni community. We are also in the final stages of being able to offer a community interpreting qualification.

Future work includes a joint bid with 'Think Outside the Box' that has been submitted to the National Lottery to work on a woman's only project specifically targeting Arabic women.

Equality Outcome 4 – In Ayrshire public bodies will be inclusive and diverse employers

Sub-Outcome 4A - Our BAME, disabled and LGBT+ employees have safe and supportive work environments to thrive, and we are seen as an employer of choice

4.1 Key actions supporting this Outcome

- Explore with colleagues the desire to establish a Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) employee network either locally or with employees from South and East Ayrshire Council.
- Following the successful introduction of an Employee Disability Forum, explore with the workforce the desire to establish an employee LGBT+ staff network.

Progress

During 2022, colleagues from North, South and East Ayrshire Council areas collaborated on an approach to establish a Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) employee forum. The partners felt that due to the relatively low number of minority ethnic employees across all organisation, (0.83% of total workforce for North Ayrshire in our last report), creating a combined group across the three Ayrshire Local Authorities would make the group viable.

The main aim of the group was to establish a safe and supportive environment for employees from a BAME background that would also act as a consultative forum to help inform Council processes. The group has had three meetings between June – December 2022 and is still in its forming stage. Of the 18 employees involved, three were Equality Officers from each of the three Council areas, one Human Resource Officer and an EIS Union representative, both from North Ayrshire. Of the remaining number, 10 employees were from North Ayrshire, two from South Ayrshire and one from East Ayrshire. At the second meeting a chairperson was nominated from within the group and draft Terms of Reference were considered. General feedback was that the Terms of Reference required further work to make them more focused on the needs of the group and a group member agreed to do some further research which will be progressed during 2023.

The establishment of an LGBT+ forum has been delayed until 2023/24 to ensure the BAME forum is well established.

4.2 Key Actions Supporting this Outcome

This action is around recognising the benefits of a more diverse and inclusive organisational culture and determining how and where we advertise our vacancies to ensure best coverage and access to everyone within our communities.

The key action is:

- Contact specialist organisations to seek opportunities to advertise our vacancies to a more diverse range of candidates.

Progress

Vacancies for positions within the Council are advertised through the MyJobScotland website, which is the national shared recruitment portal for Scotland's 32 local authorities, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and Further and Higher Education Institutes. Although this is generally an accessible platform, concerns have been raised nationally at groups such as the Scottish Council Equality Network that some individuals across Scotland might not be aware of or necessarily have the required skills to apply for a position using this platform.

To help expand the promotion of Council vacancies to as wide an audience as possible, our North Ayrshire Council vacancy portal is now promoted on the Care and Support North Ayrshire (CARENA) site. The CARENA site provides a range of information on accessing care services, community groups, employability and self-directed support. This is in addition to promotion through social media platforms such as LinkedIn and Facebook.

Our Employability team liaises with specialist partners such as CEIS Ayrshire, who are an organisation that focus on creating a more inclusive economy and support individuals, communities, businesses and prospective candidates throughout North Ayrshire and across Scotland.

Information provided by our Council Resources team show a spread of applicants across various platforms (Table 1 below), however by far the highest number of applications was directly via the MyJobScotland Portal. This is not unexpected, as it is the main platform for the public sector. Further work will be carried out to determine if information can be gathered by protected characteristic by platform to determine if there are any trends in how people are seeking a position within our Council. Although the table below highlights where people are viewing adverts, these will direct the applicant to the MyJobScotland portal, where they will be required to go through the form on the portal; for some applicants, completing the form itself may be challenging and wider support mechanisms on the completion of the form may be a future consideration for public sector organisations.

Table 1 Number of Applicants per platform (snapshot Q3 2022)

Source	July	August	Sept	Total
CARENA Website	0	1	3	4
Facebook	12	44	21	77
LinkedIn	11	9	8	28
MyJobScotland (directly/alerts)	834	1913	1623	4370
Newspaper/journal	0	1	1	2
Poster	0	2	1	3
Radio	0	1	0	1
Twitter	4	1	3	8
Word of Mouth	115	276	208	599
Other	56	132	111	299
Total	1032	2380	1979	5391

Equality Sub-Outcome 4B - Enhanced opportunities for people with communication difficulties to fully express their skills, personality and ability as part of the application process for employment and skills development programmes.

Key Actions Supporting this Outcome

- Pilot the See Me CV initiative with Modern Apprentice roles and review to potentially open across the Council for all disabled individuals.
- Following successful pilot of the See Me CV Scheme we will consider the longer term roll out of the programme.

Progress

The See Me CV process was initially set up through the Equal Supported Employment programme in order for clients with disabilities to show their capabilities, skills and a flavour of their personality behind the CV that would hopefully see employers invite them to interview. This online process would support the written CV, especially for people who are not always confident about expressing themselves on paper.

The See Me CV Programme was introduced to our Council in 2022 and has become a permanent feature of the Modern Apprentice Programme. It also provides recruiting managers a flavour of the applicant's personality. There continues to be steady uptake on the See Me CV where applicants feel this alternative route would be helpful.

In support of this programme, all Recruiting Managers are fully briefed on the programme and how this should be implemented in practice. In addition, guidance is available for all candidates on what is required and where to access supports if needed.

Equality Sub-Outcome 4C - Our understanding of race employment issues is improved to ensure we maintain robust employment practices

Key Actions Supporting this Outcome

- Review of recruitment procedures to adopt an anonymised statement process prior to interview.
- Review the 'My Connections' videos for diversity content.
- Encourage North Ayrshire Council employees to update their personal HR records.
- Carry out an organisational assessment of race and racism.
- Review our Equality training around Race in conjunction with Scottish Government Guidelines.

Progress

Current recruitment procedures through the MyJobScotland portal mean that interview panels do not get to see any personal demographic information of the applicant and only the information directly on the application form, including the applicant's name is visible. COSLA who own the MyJobScotland portal, are aiming to create a feature within the process that would allow the application to remain completely anonymous.

The 'My connections' videos are short videos of our employees explaining their views on working for our Council. These have been reviewed with some updates to try and reflect more of the diversity of our workforce. A video of our Sensory Impairment Manager, who is registered blind, has been loaded onto the Council's MyJobScotland portal. Further work is required to continue to encourage other employees from diverse backgrounds to share their experience of working for our Council. This will continue into 2023/24.

The Human Resources team carried out an exercise to encourage employees who had not updated their personal records to do so on our systems. During Autumn/Winter 2021, 900 employees were asked to complete an Equal Opportunities Survey, encouraging them to update their ethnicity and disability status on the HR records system. The communication explained the importance of holding accurate employee data and ensured employees are fully aware of the requirements as to why the Council holds this data. The survey was positively received, with 350 employees updating their records. This increase in employees updating their records led to a fall in the % not disclosing, in turn this provides more confidence when analysing the data. It was agreed that this exercise would be repeated every two years and other protected characteristics would be considered.

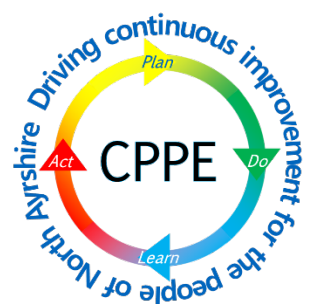
In 2022, the Ayrshire Equality Partnership commissioned the Coalition for Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisations (CEMVO) to deliver Cultural Awareness training for the partners. The training covered national and local statistics for ethnic minority groups, concepts such as unconscious bias, institutional racism and engaging with ethnic minority communities. Following the training the partners are considering an approach to develop in-house awareness training and also reflect shared knowledge and training following a wider scoping exercise carried out by the Scottish Council Equality Network.



For further information please contact:

The Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team

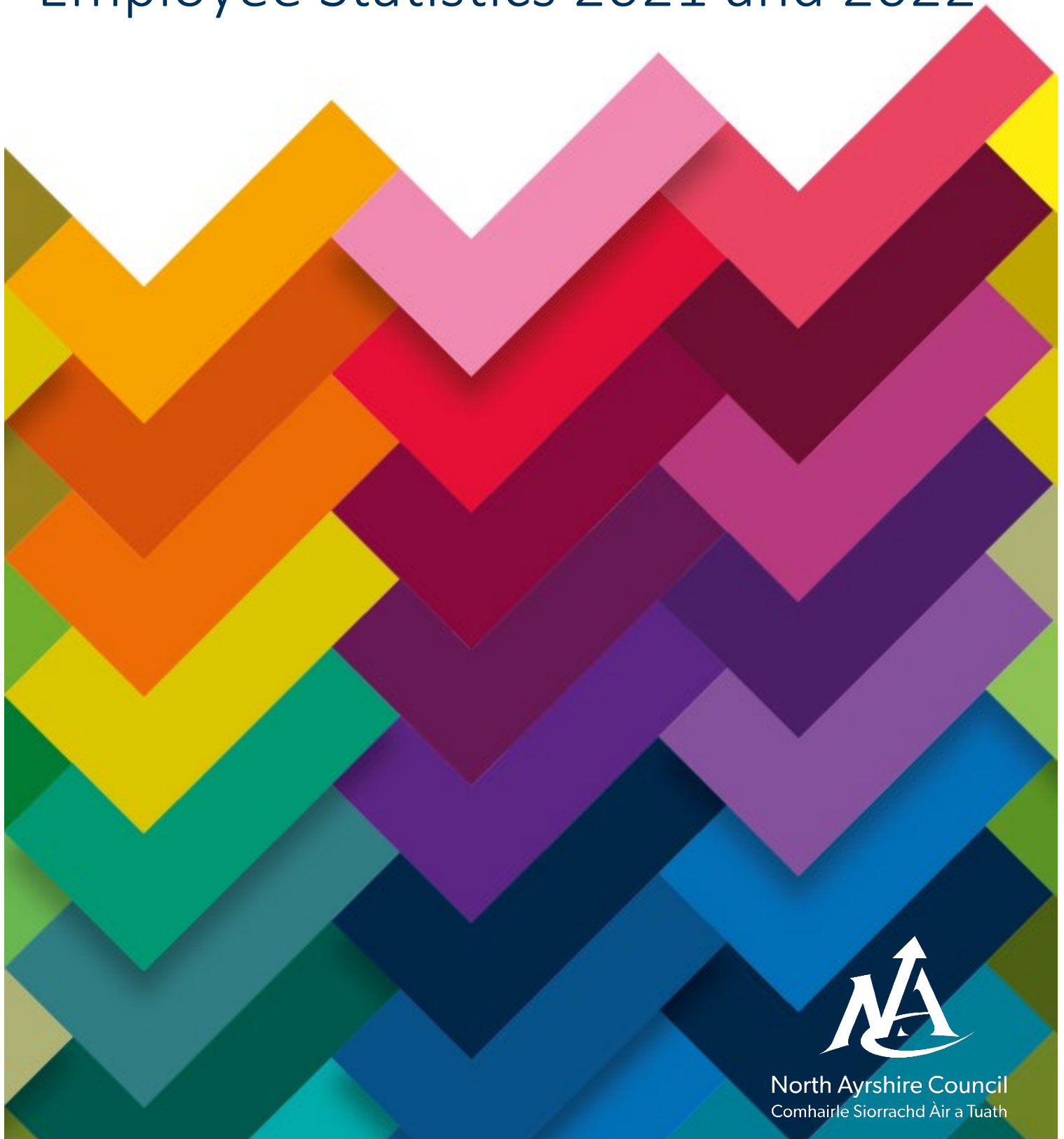
Tel: 01294 310000 Email: NorthAyrshirePerforms@north-ayrshire.gov.uk



Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report

Appendix 2

Employee Statistics 2021 and 2022



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Air a Tuath

To view the Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report Employee Statistics, please [click here](#).



For further information please contact:

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