

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
CABINET – 16 DECEMBER 2009
EQUALITIES FORUM

Report by the Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with an update regarding the Equalities Forum meeting held on 27 August 2009.

2. EQUALITIES FORUM

- 2.1 The Equalities Forum was attended by Community Members, Elected Members, Community Planning Partners and Council Officers.
- 2.2 Overall the feedback from the Forum was very positive in relation to both format and content.

3. WELCOME

- 3.1 Councillor Hugh Ross welcomed everyone to the Equalities Forum and advised that the topics for discussion were two of the priorities set for 2009/2010 namely:
- (i) Communication; and
 - (ii) Council Services (Community Safety).

4. COMMUNICATION

- 4.1 The Equality and Diversity Officer delivered a presentation which highlighted action which had been taken by the Council to improve communications as a result of the Equalities Forum held on 5 February 2009.

5. WORKSHOPS

- 5.1 Following the presentation the participants broke into two workshops:
- (a) to discuss and comment on written communication issued by the Council; and
 - (b) to consider ways the Council could improve communication with the public.

6. FEEDBACK

- 6.1 The facilitators provided feedback from the workshops and the following points were highlighted:-
- all Council correspondence should be in plain English;

- a traffic light system or equivalent on all Council correspondence should be considered to highlight important letters that need to be actioned; and
- the A-Z of Council Services on the back page of the Headlines Magazine was difficult to read due to the contrast in colours and font size.

6.2 The information highlighted above has been given to the Communication and Customer First Manager for consideration as part of the Council's new Communications Strategy.

7. COUNCIL SERVICES – COMMUNITY SAFETY

7.1 Bill Petherick, Assistant Community Safety Co-ordinator delivered a presentation on East Ayrshire Council's Community Safety Service and, in particular, highlighted:-

- the structure of the Community Safety Service;
- the aims and aspirations of the Service;
- how the Community Safety Section tackles anti-social behaviour by prevention, intervention, enforcement and rehabilitation; and
- the importance of communication and working with the Forum.

8. PRESENTATION ON THE PUBLIC REASSURANCE MODEL

8.1 Sergeant Danny Stuart, Police Liaison Officer delivered a presentation which advised on the Public Reassurance Model for East Ayrshire which had been established to improve public confidence in the way policing services were delivered and to increase communities sense of security and wellbeing.

8.2 Sergeant Stuart advised the Forum of the eight stages of the Public Reassurance Model which are:

- **R**esearch;
- **E**ngagement;
- **A**udit report;
- **S**can;
- **S**elect community priorities;
- **U**ndertake;
- **R**eview; and
- **E**stablish.

9. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

9.1 A question and answer session then took place with the panel members being Bill Stafford, Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services, Bill Petherick, Assistant Community Safety Co-ordinator (East Ayrshire Council), Superintendent Dougie Robertson, Sergeant Danny Stuart, Police Liaison Officer (Strathclyde Police), during

which the Forum had an opportunity to ask questions in relation to community safety and the following points were highlighted:-

- intervention was a key factor for tackling anti-social behaviour and an Anti-Social Behaviour Order, would only be issued as a last resort;
- speeding was a major concern on roads within East Ayrshire and anyone who witnessed such acts should, where possible, note the registration number and report the incident to the Police;
- traffic incidents with young people were on the increase as more young people now have access to cars;
- Community Safety Team and Police were working with children and young people to educate and engage on issues of road safety;
- the community had a role to play in assisting with road management issues and it was suggested that the Elderly Forum meet with young people to discuss issues around road safety;
- education was a key factor in reducing crime levels and fear of crime was worse than the crime itself;
- Strathclyde Police had systems in place which could identify cars which were not insured; and
- concerns were raised about names and addresses being placed in the Kilmarnock Standard with regard to planning and building warrant applications.

10. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

10.1 It was agreed that the two items which would be considered for the next meeting of the Forum to be held in February 2010 will be Housing Allocations Policy and access to Public Amenities.

10.2 A working group of Council Officers has been established to progress these issues.

11. EQUALITIES STRATEGY GROUP

11.1 The Equalities Strategy Group at its meeting on 5 November 2009 considered and approved the content of this report.

12. POLICY AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The Equalities Forum enables the Council to meet its statutory obligations and its policy objectives in relation to the promotion of equality for all its citizens.

13. COMMUNITY PLAN

- 13.1 The Equalities Forum contributes to the achievement of all of the Community Plan Themes.

14. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 There are no financial implications arising at this time.

15. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 15.1 The proposals contained within this report will contribute to the Council continuing to meet its statutory obligations as a provider of services.

16. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 16.1 Cabinet is recommended to note the contents of the report.

Elizabeth Morton
**Depute Chief Executive/
Executive Director of Corporate Support**
1 December 2009

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 1. Cabinet 6 December 2007 – Report by Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support on Developing Community Engagement

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