

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE – 25 JANUARY 2007**

#### **DISABILITY EQUALITY ACTION PLAN**

##### **Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the approval of Social Work Committee for the Social Work Disability Equality Action Plan.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and the Disability Discrimination (Public Authorities Statutory Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2005 place new duties on public bodies in relation to people with a disability and the services they receive.
- 2.2 Under the legislation the Council has placed upon it a general duty and specific duties. The purpose of these duties is to put in place a framework for the Council to carry out its functions more effectively and to tackle discrimination and its causes in a proactive way. The general duty requires the Council not only to have due regard to disability equality when making decisions about the future but also to address the issues which may arise from decisions which it has taken in the past which may not have given due regard to disability equality. These specific duties require the Council to detail how it would meet the general duty.
- 2.3 It should be recognised that the Council and specifically Social Work Services already have in place a range of policies and procedures underpinning the delivery of services for people with a disability and, where appropriate, their carers. It is important that these current arrangements are built upon and enhanced to meet the new requirements set out by the legislation.
- 2.4 The key actions set out in the Action Plan will cover the three year span of the Council's Disability Equality Scheme which was approved by Policy & Resources Committee on 14 November 2006. The Council's Disability Equality Scheme was prepared with the involvement of a number of stakeholders including two stakeholder events held in October 2006 at which people with a disability had the opportunity to contribute to the development of the overall Council's Action Plan.

### **3. GENERAL DUTY**

- 3.1 The general duty placed on the Council by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 requires the Council, when carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need to:
- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons;
  - Eliminate discrimination as it is unlawful under the Act;

- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disability;
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons;
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life;
- Take steps to take account of disabled person's disabilities, even where that involved treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

3.2 The general duty builds upon the duties of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 including the duty to make reasonable adjustments to make sure disabled people can access employment, goods, services, facilities, functions and premises.

#### **4. SOCIAL WORK SERVICES DISABILITY EQUALITY ACTION PLAN**

4.1 Specific issues raised at the Council's stakeholder events included the undernoted issues which will be addressed in the Action Plan, set out as an appendix to this report.

- Arrangements for involving disabled people on an ongoing basis;
- Examination of specific actions which would enable disabled employees to participate in public life;
- Accessibility to Council premises;
- Information about services.

4.2 There are a range of issues which are common across services in the department and others which are service specific. These are reflected in the Action Plan.

4.3 Once the gender equality duty is implemented, the opportunity will be taken to review the best way to take forward all three equalities duties.

#### **5. POLICY AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The approval of the Disability Equality Action Plan will enable the Department of Educational and Social Services to meet its statutory obligations and its policy objectives in relation to services for people with a disability.

#### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Nil.

#### **7. COMMUNITY PLAN**

7.1 The Disability Equality Action Plan will contribute to the achievement of all key themes of the Community Plan.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 Social Work Committee is asked to:

- (i) approve the Disability Equality Action Plan 2007-2010;
- (ii) to note that a similar report is being presented to the Education Committee regarding Educational Services;
- (iii) to note that the Social Work Services Action Plan and Educational Services Action Plan together will form the Disability Action Plan for the Department of Educational and Social Services; and
- (iv) otherwise note the content of the report.

**Graham Short**  
**Executive Director of Educational and Social Services**  
**GRS/SR**  
**Encl (1)**  
**12 December 2006**

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1. Policy and Resources Committee 14 November 2006; Disability Equalities Scheme.

Members seeking further information should contact Eddie Fraser, Service Manager  
Community Care, Tel: (01563) 554825.

**IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: JACKIE DONNELLY**

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**  
**EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**  
**DISABILITY EQUALITY ACTION PLAN 2007-2010**

**SERVICE UNIT – SOCIAL WORK**

<b>A. ACCESSIBLE SERVICES</b>				
	<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMESCALE</b>	<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>
	Ensuring information about services is widely available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify public information and communication needs. In accordance with Communication strategy for Social services develop a suite of appropriate information materials in accessible formats</li> </ul>	April 2008	Andy Macdonald
	Ensuring that complaints regarding discrimination are recognised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure mechanisms are in place for recording complaints that relate to discrimination through the Social Work complaints process</li> </ul>	April 2007	Andy Macdonald/ Amanda McInnes
	Promote services that are flexible and responsive to need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure models of service delivery continue to be developed including Direct Payments that meet the needs of individuals</li> </ul>	Continuous	Service Managers
	Working with partner providers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure through contract monitoring arrangements that service providers implement their responsibilities towards people with disability.</li> </ul>	Continuous	Andy Macdonald/ Service Managers

	Track progress of East Ayrshire children and young people with a disability who are educated and cared for in establishments outwith East Ayrshire with regard to all aspects of their educational and care experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review target setting policy in outwith establishments</li> </ul>	June 2007	Prioritisation Group
	Provision of meals within Education and Care settings that meet the needs of specific ethnic, dietary or disability requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop clear policy guidance for catering managers in developing menus for individuals with special needs</li> <li>Implement new 'speaking' menu boards in Social Work establishments, where appropriate</li> </ul>	June 2007	Robin Gourlay
	Accessibility to Council Premises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review current targets and establish action plan for improvements. This reflects the Corporate Action Plan.</li> </ul>	April 2007	Executive Head of Finance in lead co-ordinating role
<b>B. STAFFING</b>				
	<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMESCALE</b>	<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>
	Ensure staff are aware of and appropriately trained in relation to disability issues. This action reflects the Corporate Action Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure training and development needs are identified and actioned through the EAGER process.</li> <li>Enhance basis awareness training by identifying additional training requirements for specific groups of staff</li> </ul>	Continuous	Training Team/Service Managers
	Monitor recruitment and staffing complement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual monitoring and analysis</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Personnel Officers

<b>C. LEARNING AND TEACHING (Only applicable to educational services and community learning and development)</b>				
	<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMESCALE</b>	<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>
<b>D. COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING</b>				
	<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMESCALE</b>	<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>
	Promote the development within the community of organisations that can support people with disabilities and represent their views to statutory organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to support the development of and work in partnership with information, advice and support providers in relation to service users, carers and advocacy services</li> </ul>	Continuous	Service Managers
<b>E. SELF EVALUATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT</b>				
	<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMESCALE</b>	<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>
	Data Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure information on disability is consistently recorded onto SWIFT (client database) at point of referral to inform service delivery and development via statistical analysis</li> </ul>	Work ongoing completion scheduled December 2007	Service Managers
	Best Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure, through implementation of "Securing Continuous Improvement" corporate guidance on service reviews that all reviews take account of the needs of people with disabilities</li> <li>Identify service improvement activity through service planning strategic self assessment and EFQM processes</li> </ul>	<p>Continuous</p> <p>Annual</p>	<p>Service Managers</p> <p>Service Managers</p>

	Impact Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement Impact Assessment across policies</li> </ul>		
<b>F. CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT WITH SERVICE USERS/GROUPS</b>				
	<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMESCALE</b>	<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>
	Strategic Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure involvement of individuals and representative organisations in strategic planning activity. This includes young people through structures such as Dialogue Youth</li> </ul>	Continuous	Service Managers
	Sample the views of people with disabilities to inform strategic planning and service review activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey the views of people with disabilities via a programme of targeted service user surveys</li> </ul>	April 2007 (pilot – further survey activity to follow evaluation of pilot).	Andy Macdonald
	Seek views of parents and young people on issues of disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through Departmental Equalities Group models should be established to further involve parents and young people in continuous development and monitoring this Action Plan</li> </ul>	Continuous	Departmental Equalities Group and Service Managers