

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 11 NOVEMBER 2003

DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT (1995) POST 16'S ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN FOR COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Report by Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform members of progress made in complying with the requirements set out in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 for Post 16 Education services.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) as amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001) which became effective from September 2002, requires local authorities to make reasonable adjustments in relation to the provision of auxiliary aids and adaptations for Post 16 services including Community Learning and Development, by September 2003.

The Act applies to people who are disabled according to the definition of disability in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, namely: "a disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment, which has an effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities. That effect must be substantial, long term (12 months) and adverse.

- 2.2** Members agreed the contents of an Accessibility Strategy for School Pupils 2003/4 at the meeting of the Education Committee on 1 April 2003.

3. PROGRESS

- 3.1** The provision of community based learning is based on an individual's learning needs. Additional support which might be required for a learner is assessed at the initial stage of the negotiated learning programme.

Specific examples of this include the auxiliary aids purchased to assist learners with a disability access literacy programmes. Young people with additional support needs are currently being supported in youth programmes and in particular to fulfil their role as Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament.

The Community Learning and Development Service actively supports the two disability forms and other community based organisations which either have members with a disability or are representing disabled communities of interest.

There has however been no systematic audit of need or analysis carried out based on the views of disabled learners. The Action Plan set out in Appendix 1 therefore seeks to put in place a more systematic approach to the issue which will culminate in an Accessibility Strategy for the service which will complement the school's strategy.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Consultation will be a central element in the preparation of the Strategy. Existing mechanisms will be used to progress consultation with appropriate groups and individuals.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 It is not possible at this stage to cost the likely implications of the proposed strategy. The costs to the Council arising from physical access issues is being addressed through the Corporate Working Group led by Development Services

6. LEGAL & POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Although there is no specific statutory obligation to produce an Accessibility Strategy for Community Learning and Development, the service is developing one as an integral part of it's approach to continuous improvement.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 (i) approve the Action Plan set out in Appendix 1
- (ii) invite the Director of Education and Social Services to report further progress to Committee; and
- (iii) otherwise note the contents of this report.

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational and social Services
24 October 2003

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- i) Disability Discrimination Act (1995)
- ii) Standards in Scotland's Schools etc 2000
- iii) Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
- iv) Education (Disabilities Strategies and Access Pupils Records (Scotland) Act 2002

Members wishing further information should contact Kay Gilmour, Head of Community Support 01563 576104.

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: KAY GILMOUR

East Ayrshire Council

Department of Education and Social Services

Disability Discrimination Act (1995)

Post 16's Accessibility Strategy and Action Plan 2003/2006 for Community Learning and Development

TASK	ACTION	PERFORMANCE MEASURE	LEAD	TIMESCALE
Compile an Accessibility Strategy for Community Learning & Development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish a working group to take forward the task of compiling an Accessibility Strategy. <p>The Strategy will seek to further improve practice in relation to disabled people accessing Community Learning and Development services in the following areas –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physical environment including access to buildings.• Curriculum including auxiliary aids such as computer software.• Communication including the delivery of information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessibility Strategy developed.	Assistant Principal Officer.	2004

<p>Ensure that the Accessibility Strategy is adopted and implemented as a clear policy document.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •By adoption of the Accessibility Strategy by the Education Committee. •Ownership of the process by staff through a clear communication strategy. •By participation in the Corporate Working Group on buildings. •By regularly reviewing practice and seeking improvements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Accessibility Strategy approved by Education Committee. •Record the number of employees involved in the process. •Improved communication practices are evident resulting in improved service to the community. •Evidence of the service being receptive to changes to policy and practice. •A comprehensive system of regular reporting and annual review. 	<p>Head of Service</p> <p>Assistant Principal Officer.</p> <p>Principal Officer</p> <p>Head of Service</p> <p>Assistant Principal Officer</p>	<p>2004</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>2004 and Ongoing</p>
<p>Ensure appropriate consultation by users of the service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •By consulting with a broad range of users. •By consulting with specific groups including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Kilmarnock Forum on Disability. The South Forum on Disability. The Carers Forum Enable. Looking Forward Group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Evidence of contributions taken on board to inform the Accessibility Strategy. • Evidence of contributions taken on board to inform the Accessibility Strategy and subsequent practice. 	<p>Assistant Principal Officer</p> <p>Assistant Principal Officer</p>	<p>2003 and Ongoing</p> <p>2004</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •By facilitating the process of producing a themed Community Learning Plan for people with a disability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •A Community Learning Plan published which focuses attention on improved services, involving our Community Planning partners. 	Team Leader	2005
Ensure employee development needs are met in relation to disability issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •By reviewing disability awareness training needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •An up to date informed record of training and training needs established. 	Assistant Principal Officer	2003
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •By extending disability awareness training opportunities to employees on a phased basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Evidence of employees having participated in appropriate training, resulting in increased awareness, empathy and commitment to implementation of the Accessibility Strategy. 	Principal Officer	2006
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •By ensuring that induction procedures incorporate disability awareness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Evidence that all new employees are aware of the needs of disabled people as they interface with the policies of the council. 	Principal Officer	2004