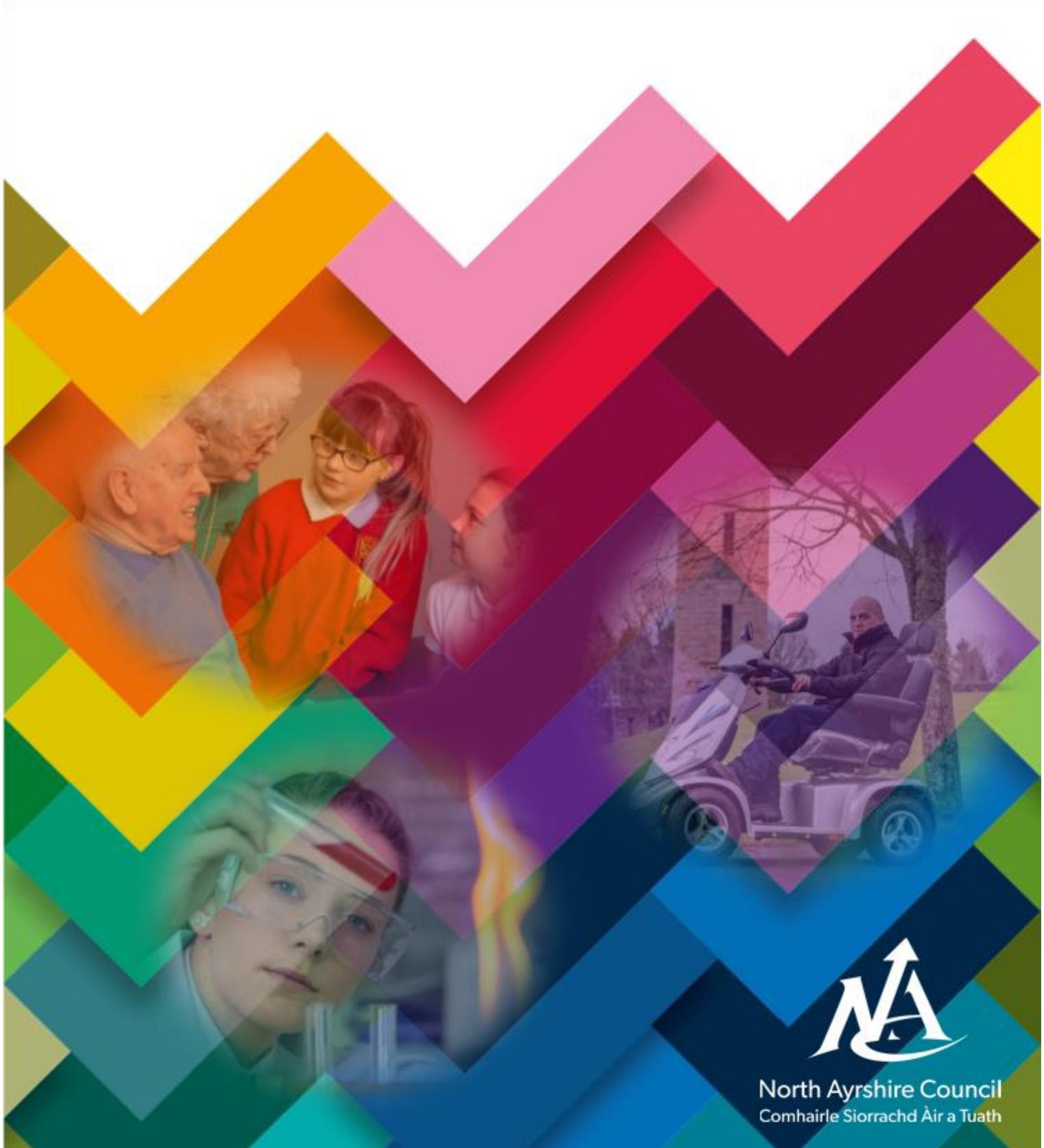


# Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report

2019-20



North Ayrshire Council  
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

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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 is our fourth official report which covers the period from January 2019 to December 2020 and 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.

The public sector ‘specific duties’ stipulate the requirements of reporting and can be found [here](#). 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 south west coast of Scotland is 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 under 135,000 people. Demographically, North Ayrshire continues to be faced with a number of tough challenges, the most recent Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) report published in January 2020 highlighted that as an area North Ayrshire is the 5th most multiple deprived area in Scotland and of the 186 data zone areas in North Ayrshire used by the SIMD to classify the overall population into sections, 28% (52) of these zones fall into the 15% most deprived areas in Scotland. It is also recognised that people with certain protected characteristics as identified within the Equality Act are more likely to experience inequality than others. These can include people with a disability, single parent families, especially where the parent is female, and certain ethnic groups.

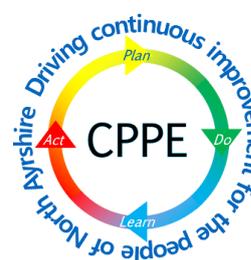
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## Accessibility and Further Information

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.

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**  
Tel: 01294 324648  
Email: [NorthAyrshirePerforms@north-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:NorthAyrshirePerforms@north-ayrshire.gov.uk)



*This section provides a summary of the key highlights within this report.*

## Mainstreaming Equality Key Highlights from 2019-20

- Fairness and inclusion are embedded across our key strategies including the Council Plan (which all other plans must align to) and the Community Wealth Building Strategy.
- Working in partnership enabled us to respond quickly and effectively to the support our residents during the first year of the Covid-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic.
- The Ayrshire Growth Deal was finalised. Its Inclusive Diagnostic Growth Tool identified protected groups such as young people and those with disabilities as key target groups for employability programmes.
- We implemented the Child Poverty Action Plan to support our most vulnerable families.
- Housing Services were awarded the 'Tenants Participatory Advisory Service (TPAS) Gold reaccreditation', part of recognises an inclusive approach to engaging tenants.
- Our Communities team continue to engage with protected groups within our communities, setting up a New Scots Forum, for people within the ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) programme.
- We developed a new online Equality Impact Assessment process, incorporating Island Proofing into the tool.
- We established a cross-service Employee Disability Forum.
- We maintained Level Two of the Disability Confident Scheme and are working towards submission for Level 3.
- We launched a Disability Guide in the Workplace Guide.
- We introduced safe leave for employees who may be experiencing domestic abuse as part of our refreshed Domestic Abuse Policy.
- Mental Health First Aid training was made available to employees to become Wellbeing Warriors and offer additional support to colleagues.
- 90% of our schools have Rights Respecting School status, with three schools achieving Gold or Ambassador status.
- We refreshed and relaunched our online Equality and Diversity training
- Our Gender Pay Gap reduced from 1.54% in 2019 to 1.2%

## Equality Outcomes Highlights

- The Ayrshire Equality Partnership facilitated successful Hate Crime Awareness webinars during Hate Crime Week in October and promoted Black History Month during the same month.
- The number of 'I am me' Keep Safe sites increased over four years, from one location to 14 in North Ayrshire and from 46 to 70 sites across North, South and East Ayrshire.
- The Violence Against Women Partnership facilitated a successful '16 Days of Action' campaign to encourage men to support an end to violence against women.
- Our Housing services continued to support our Gypsy/Traveller Community.
- The Connected Communities team continue to support the LGBT+ Network and support LGBT youth groups across North Ayrshire.
- Through the 'Equal' programme the Supported Employment Team provided support for young people in the Modern Apprenticeship programme. This includes our 'See Me CV' video CV programme which has proved very successful.
- Educational Services continue to engage in a range of programmes to support young people including the STEM programme and by challenging gender stereotyping in career roles.
- We have continued to provide a range of Equality and Diversity awareness programmes and sharing of resources across the Ayrshire public sector partners.

## 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.

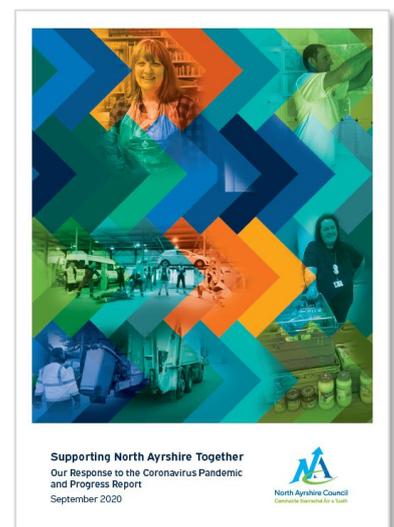
These elements of the Act are also referred to as the three key needs of the Act. Additional information in relation to equalities issues in North Ayrshire is available on our [website](#): This includes Equality Impact Assessments and the Equality Outcomes for 2021 – 2025.

## Impact and Response to the Covid-19 (Coronavirus) Pandemic

Our response to the Covid-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic was immediate. Through working alongside our communities, volunteers, local businesses, the third sector, our Community Planning Partners and cross team working throughout our Council, we mobilised an immediate response. The first six months is detailed in our Supporting North Ayrshire Together” report. This is available by clicking on the image to the right.

Key elements of our response included:

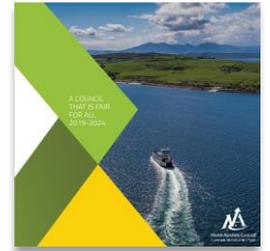
- A network of community hubs established across North Ayrshire’s six locality areas. The main aim of the hubs was to act as a local point of contact for community need arising from COVID-19, responding with advice, signposting, referrals and the co-ordination of local volunteers. The Hubs co-ordinated the delivery of prescriptions, hot food and food parcels to those in need, and provided support in relation to mental health and social isolation.
- Weekly food packs were delivered to 4600 families, including for families with children eligible for free school meals as well as other vulnerable residents.
- The equivalent of over 1.26 million meals delivered to residents.
- 5,700 shielding residents supported
- 12,407 prescriptions delivered
- Childcare Hubs were also set up for 690 families who needed additional support and to help essential workers with childcare arrangements. Over 13,000 hot meals were provided to children attending these hubs.



## Key Strategies

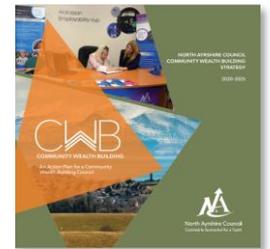
### Our Council Plan

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.

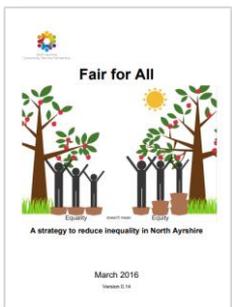


### The Community Wealth Building Strategy

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.



The Community Wealth Building Strategy’s [Economic Recovery and Renewal Approach](#) outlines how we will approach our recovery following the impact of the Covid-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic. This will see North Ayrshire “building back better, fairer and greener”.



### Fair for All Strategy

The Fair for All Strategy is North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership approach to tackling inequality. This strategy has five key themes around Children; Health; Economy; Environment and Food Availability and Quantity. Within the strategy it is recognised that many protected groups under the Equality Act are often more likely to experience inequality than others. The strategy is available by clicking the image to the left.

### 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.

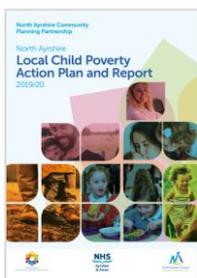


Our Children’s Services Plan 2020-23, outlines our aims and priorities to safeguard, support and promote the wellbeing of children and to make North Ayrshire the best place in Scotland to grow up.

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



Our Child Poverty Action Plan 2019-20 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’.



Our Child Poverty Action Plan 2019-20 for North Ayrshire takes account of the initial analysis of the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Key priorities include the establishment of a cross party working group to develop a co-ordinated approach to reduce the cost of the school day and further develop our North Ayrshire Food System.

## 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. (Click image on the right for more details.)



The Ayrshire Growth Deal programme has a strong focus on inequality and inclusivity and through our 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 are working with Ayrshire Growth Deal project leads to embed an equality approach within our Equality Outcomes and Action Planning process.

## British Sign Language Plan

The Ayrshire Shared British Sign Language (BSL) plan was adopted in 2018, since that time the partners have been engaging with the local BSL and deaf community to support the implementation of the plan. This has included meeting with the Local Deaf Club and providing training and awareness raising sessions to employees.

We have held several introductory sessions on BSL awareness with over 60 employees taking part. We also promoted NHS BSL online Training during 2020, with 64 employees completing this training. We are exploring the introduction of a longer 10-week BSL training programme following a successful implementation in East Ayrshire Council.

During the early stages of lockdown in spring 2020, we worked with a local BSL interpreter and member of the BSL community to develop short information videos on topics such as customer services and our waste collection service and linked to national support available. Following this we produced [BSL videos on our Council Plan](#) and our budget consultation process.

## Case Study - Smart Phones, Smart Approach

During 2020 our Sensory Impairment Team began using smart phones to allow the team to engage more effectively with the BSL community in North Ayrshire.

The phones have been key to maintaining a service especially during the Covid-19 pandemic when communication and accessing services has been particularly challenging for the profoundly Deaf community. The following examples illustrate the vital role the new phones have had.



1. Mr McKenzie was unable to travel free on public transport as his SPT card had expired. He could not communicate with the travel card unit to resolve the matter. By texting the Sensory smart phone, the duty worker was able to liaise with SPT and a new card was posted to the client the next day.
2. Mrs Lynn texted to complain about her neighbour who had gathered a significant amount of rubbish in their back garden which was unsightly and a health concern. The duty worker phoned our Housing team and a referral was made for the allocated Housing Officer to resolve the issue.
3. Mr Yard required assistance to complete his Blue Badge renewal form. Using the video phone, the duty worker was able to sign with Mr Yard and complete the form.
4. Mrs Warren had concerns about Covid-19 and wanted some information. The duty worker was able to provide this information by BSL over a video call. Following this we sent links to the Covid-19 information on our website and NHS BSL health information to all our profoundly Deaf clients.

*(All names changed)*

*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.

We worked with our Ayrshire local authority partners to develop an Ayrshire Growth Deal Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit that will be used by the three Councils to undertake EQIAs for projects. This approach amalgamated information from North, East and South Ayrshire Councils to provide a tool that could be used by the Deal's project leads.

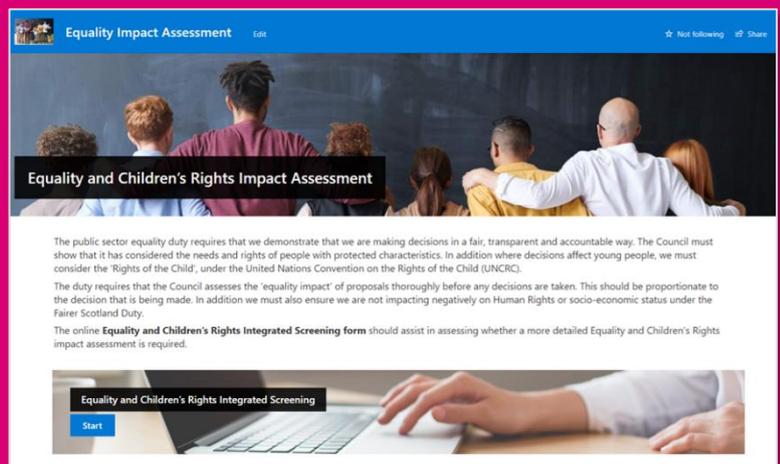
## Case Study – Online Equality Impact Assessment Tool

During the early part of 2020, our IT department commissioned a software expert to develop an online Equality Impact Assessment tool based on SharePoint. The aim of developing this app was to streamline the hard copy /paper approach and make it easier for employees to complete this process.

Throughout 2020 both tools were used side by side following a soft launch of the online tool. This helped to identify and rectify any further glitches to the system following initial testing. Additional guidance has been produced to support the use of the tool.

The Head of Service for People and ICT stated:

*“I really loved the new SharePoint on-line process - this was so easy to use and simple to follow. Really great to see this digital method in place. I was pleasantly surprised by how easy it was to complete”.*



## Equality Groups

There are two main corporate equality groups within the Council; these are the Corporate Equality Group and the Employee Disability Forum.

### 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. The 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

Following a suggestion from an employee, this forum was established in 2019 to consider disability related issues in the workplace. The forum includes employees who have a particular interest in disability issues, have a disability or whose role relates to this area. From an initial group of eight employees, the group has more than doubled in size and now has 20 participants including representatives from human resources, unions, the Supported Employment Team and the Sensory Impairment Team. Some of the groups' key successes include: Supporting HR in the launch of the [Human Resources Disability In The Workplace Guide](#); ensuring appropriate checks for visually impaired employees when launching new software; and establishing a review of emergency evacuation chairs. This group continues to grow from strength to strength and will continue to develop its role.

## Human Resources

### Disability Confident Employer

We successfully re-achieved accreditation at Level Two of the Disability Confident Scheme. Under the scheme we are committed to actively attracting, recruiting and retaining disabled people by providing a fully inclusive and accessible recruitment process, which guarantees disabled applicants an interview if they meet the minimum criteria for the role.

We are currently working towards achieving accreditation at Level Three of the Disability Confident Scheme and stepping up to become a Disability Confident Leader. As part of this, we are [exploring the use of the See Me CV's within our recruitment process](#) to support disabled applicants in achieving employment. The Supported Employment Team within North Ayrshire currently run this programme to support and assist disabled candidates in the progression towards sustained employment.

### Mental Health Support

We have recently launched the Wellbeing Warrior programme which is a voluntary role that employees can undertake to support colleagues' health and wellbeing during challenging times. The role is to support, listen and signpost colleagues to internal or external guidance/resources. Each Wellbeing Warrior must complete accredited programme on mental health first aid provided by Glasgow City College.

### Domestic Abuse

We recently launched our reviewed Domestic Abuse Policy with the inclusion of Safe Leave to support employees who may be experiencing domestic abuse. To support the introduction of Safe Leave, we created the role of the Gender Based Violence (GBV) Advisor to signpost employees to relevant support and authorise the use of Safe Leave.

In addition, we worked in partnership with Women's Aid to provide Domestic Abuse Awareness Training to employees and line managers. Considering the coronavirus pandemic and increased home working, we also provided managers with specific advice on Domestic Abuse during the pandemic.

### Carer Positive Award

We are committed to providing a working environment where carers are supported and valued. We have recently been awarded the second level (Established) of the Carer Positive Scheme.

Our Carer's Leave Scheme is available to all our employees and complements other provisions currently provided. As a Carer Positive Employer, we acknowledge employees may need to balance work and caring responsibilities. The Scheme aims to provide employees with support by giving the option, if required to request a period of Carer's Leave of up to twelve weeks off.

### Learning Events

The HR Team arranged and facilitated several virtual learning events including:

- Our Time to Talk (Personal Professional Development process)
- Employee Journey
- Personal Resilience/Emotional Intelligence and Positive Psychology
- Managing Stress

### Disability in the Workplace Guide

We recently launched our Disability in the Workplace Guide, the aim of the guide is to firstly, ensure all disabled employees are fully supported within the workplace and can easily access any reasonable adjustments required. Secondly it raises awareness of disability to all employees to ensure engagement in developing and maintaining an inclusive environment within our Council.



North Ayrshire Council Chief Executive Craig Hatton  
in Age Simulation Suit

## 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 enhanced usage during the Covid-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic. During 2020 we refreshed and relaunched the online Equality and Diversity training module, which saw more than three times the number of colleagues taking part in the training compared to 2019.

During 2020, we also promoted the NHS Health Scotland online British Sign Language Awareness Course. This was placed in our internal online training platform, which allows us to promote and track engagement more easily.

The highest percentage of completions was from the Communities Directorate at 64%, followed by Place Directorate at 16%. Some services have easier access to online training than others like Place who tend to have a higher ratio of manual employees. We will continue to promote inclusive access to these courses to make them as accessible as possible to all our employees.

2019		2020	
	Number of Participants		Number of Participants
Equalities E-Learning	224	Equalities E-Learning	721
Sensory Impairment	8	Sensory Impairment	0*
Deaf Awareness E-Learning	52	Deaf Awareness E-Learning	179
Sight Loss Awareness E-learning	54	Sight Loss Awareness E-learning	217
		British Sign Language Awareness E-Learning*	64

\* Introduced in 2020.

## Accessibility Audit.

Each year our Property Management and Investment Team undertake 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.

During 2020 we had an overall increase of 6.6% of buildings meeting the criteria at A and B level. This was due largely to an increase in grade B buildings, with a slight decline in grade A (2.18%) and large increase in Grade B (8.75%).

### The 2020 figures were:

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

### The 2018 figures were:

- Grade A properties = 5.32%
- Grade B properties = 61.70%
- Grade C properties = 32.98%
- The Council has no buildings classed as Grade D properties (or non-compliant properties).

## 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.

**Grade D** - Non-compliant with a high level of work required to be carried out to make them partially compliant.

## Connected Communities

Our Communities Team within our Connected Communities Directorate 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. The team also provide support for the [Violence Against Women strategy](#), supporting the 16 days of Action campaign each November to encourage men to denounce all forms of violence against women.

In addition to supporting both older and younger age groups, we also significantly support members of our minority ethnic communities. The Syrian Refugee Support Worker welcomes and supports Syrian refugees into the local area, with the Community link workers providing support to families around issues with engagement in community life. The Youth Participation Strategy has involved young Syrian people, helping them to integrate into daily and community life across North Ayrshire.

The ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) Community Development Worker plays a key role in engaging with people from Black Minority Ethnic (BME) communities. In addition to the support provided for functional language, literacy and numeracy skills (including real world applications such as understanding household bills), the ESOL Employability programme gives learners a better understanding of job and training applications and engages them with the employability pipeline provision.

The Communities team also created the 'New Scots Forum', the purpose of which is to ensure the learning and resettlement support for ESOL learners in North Ayrshire meets their needs and focuses on integration and building capacity in the ESOL community. It ultimately informing services on how they can better support the ESOL community.

## Housing Services

Housing Services play a key role in supporting and engaging tenants across North Ayrshire including direct support for [Gypsy/travellers](#) and also support the [Violence Against Women Strategy](#). The Service has in place a Housing Services Accessibility Policy and works to the specific outcomes specified in the [Scottish Social Housing Charter](#) implemented in 2012 by the Scottish Government. This charter has a specific equalities outcome and highlights that Social landlords should perform all aspects of their housing services so that every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect and receives fair access to housing. 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 and delivering services that recognise and meet these.

Housing Services have recently been awarded the Tenants Participatory Advisory Service (TPAS) Gold reaccreditation award. Part of the accreditation process for the Gold award acknowledges that the service has an inclusive approach to engaging tenants and overcomes barriers by offering a range of opportunities for everyone to get involved.

The Service is working to increase representation from Tenant and Resident Associations from across all communities in North Ayrshire and continues to apply innovative ways to maximize customer involvement opportunities. Additional work has been put in to engage with the Deaf community, through the purchase of additional portable hearing loops, improved links with British Sign Language (BSL) Interpreters and training for teams. The Tenants newsletter is also available in formats suitable for visually or hearing-impaired customers.

The Tenant Participation Strategy 2017-2022, highlights engagement with younger people as a key target group by utilising new and innovative methods of communication and information. To do this, the Tenant Participation Team links with our other services and already engaging with young people including our Youth Ambassadors within in Youth Services.

## Procurement

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

Through our Procurement Team we include a 'Modern Day Slavery Code of Conduct'. This code 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](#).

## 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 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 18,094 pupils across the authority's primary, secondary and additional support needs schools. A further 2,251 children attend early learning and childcare settings.

Education in North Ayrshire is delivered through:

- 48 primary schools
- 8 secondary schools
- 1 through school
- 4 schools for children and young people with additional support needs
- 6 council-managed early learning and childcare centres
- 17 centres where early learning and childcare is provided in partnership

We are focussed on the Council Plan outcome that North Ayrshire's children and young people have the best start in life. Our Directorate priorities clearly 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.

These priorities are

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.

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

## National Improvement Framework (NIF)

The National Improvement Framework for Education is designed to help us deliver the twin aims of excellence and equity; galvanising efforts and aligning our collective improvement activities across all partners in the education system to address our key priorities.

These priorities remain as:

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

## 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 75% of our children and young people with additional support needs plans are making good progress.

## 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.



*Sports for All with Our Active Schools Team*

Following lockdown it was found that children who had experienced nurture approaches coped well with the return to school. Nurture had significantly improved their resilience to adversity.

Our innovative approaches to professional learning in Nurture have been recognised through an Excellence Award from the General Teaching Council for Scotland. In addition, we are the first council in Scotland to provide access to counselling services for pupils in support of their mental health.

## 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**

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

**23 Silver award schools** who are fully rights aware

**26 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 be 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 building up their rights-respecting school 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 now on this journey to RRS status with three schools reaching gold or Ambassador Status. In session 2019-20 a further six schools moved into Silver Status.

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 now 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 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. A safer schools app has been piloted in our schools providing similar online support.

## LGBTI Education

LGBTI education forms part of the learning (primarily in the secondary schools) focussing not only on sexual health aspects for children and young people, but also on social and emotional resilience, including supporting 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.

Several programmes are used in schools including:

**SHARE (Sexual health and relationships education) - NHS resource**

**Fit (Stonewall resource)**

**See Me!**

**LGBT Scotland**

**Bespoke programmes of study which include discussions on sexuality and sexual behaviour**

**Risky behaviours**

**Expect Respect**

**Mentors in Violence Project (MVP)**

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.

Increasingly, there are groups for Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) children where they can meet up for mutual support. They are supported to represent themselves at national events and marches.

In primary schools, our redesigned Health and Wellbeing pathway ensures relationships, the importance of recognizing and celebrating differences and a nurturing approach to support positive mental health and emotional wellbeing are all essential features.

In Education we strive to support and encourage independence in our children and young people. We source a range of information that children and young people can access for support on a range of issues which may be relevant to them. These include organizations which help to support children's mental health and LGBTI (and intersex) pupils, for example stonewall and LGBT Scotland.

## 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). Recent 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.



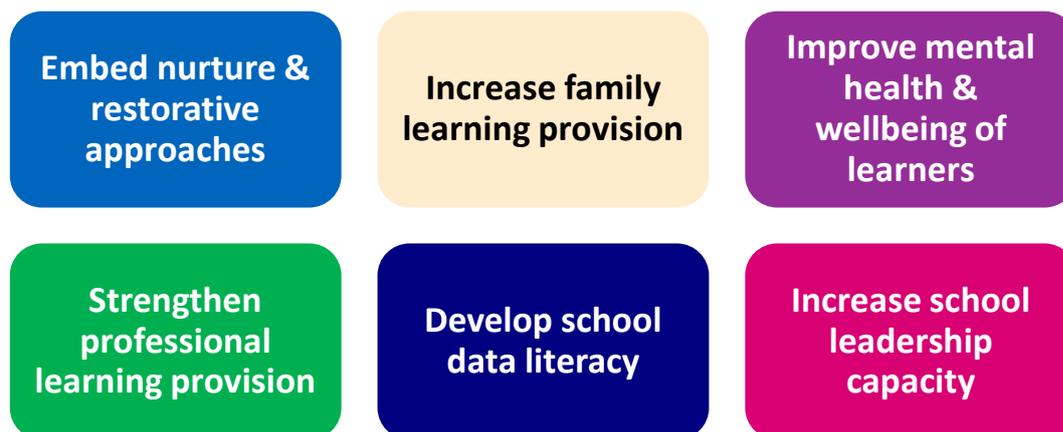
The latter part of the school year, from February - August 2020 saw these services greatly affected by the pandemic. However, our locality Childcare Hubs for children of keyworkers were also used to support children in vulnerable circumstances and we created highly effective processes to identify, support and feed our most vulnerable children and their families. We supported 690 families during the initial lockdown period and provided over 13,000 hot meals in addition to snacks for our young people.

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.

## Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC)

The aim of the SAC is to close the attainment gap which currently exists between those living in Scotland's least and most deprived areas. North Ayrshire currently has the second highest proportion of children in poverty in Scotland, at 28.3%, with Glasgow having higher levels.

As an identified Challenge Authority, we are allocated a significant proportion of Attainment Challenge funding. The money is directed to support the excellence and equity agenda. Scottish Attainment Challenge funded initiatives in North Ayrshire include activity to:



Our own quality assurance measures in relation to our SAC ensures that we continue to make **very good** progress with improving learning, raising attainment and narrowing the poverty-related attainment gap. The pandemic has shown that our SAC supports are more important than ever in providing support in the wake of the traumas experienced by our families.

## 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 highest areas of 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 is making 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.

## 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 can be found in appendix one.

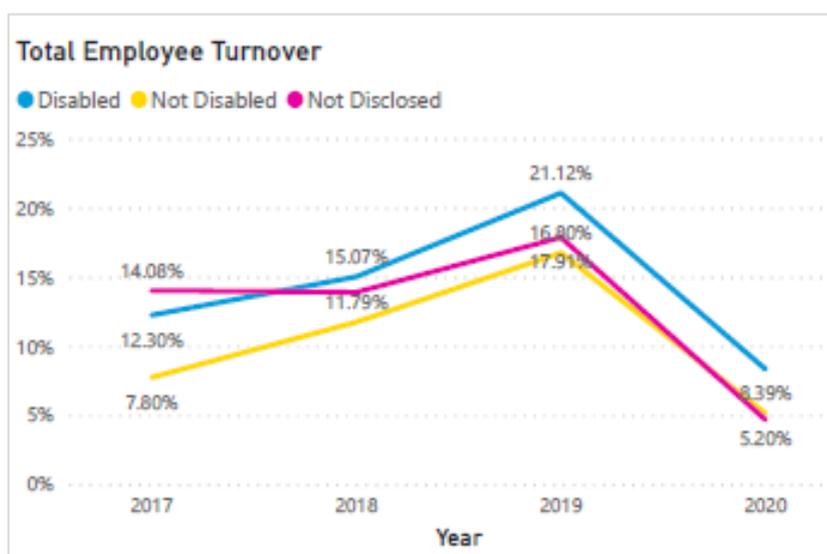
It is recommended we publish information in some key areas including:

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

## Disability

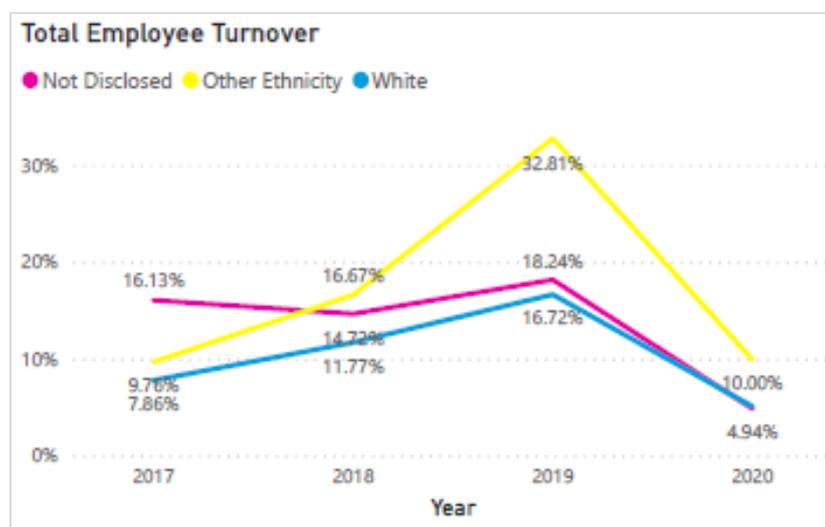
In 2020, 2.1% (162) of our employees had a declared disability and 21% (1579) did not disclose this information. This figure has remained relatively similar over the last four years. 64.8% of those with a disability work in Grades 4 – 10 and 16% are in teaching posts. Turnover was higher in 2019 across all categories due to restructuring, though 21.1% of disabled employees left the council compared to 16.8% not disabled and 17.9% not disclosed. A slightly higher percentage of people with a disability received or attended training compared with those who were non-disabled.

Within Education, 1.7% of employees declared a disability 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. This is reflected in our employee statistics. In 2020, 0.83% of employees had declared an ethnicity other than White (with 18.4% not disclosed). This figure has remained stable over the last four years with 2018 seeing the lowest percentage of 0.78% and 2019 the highest at 0.87%. Considering the percentage of working age population, these figures suggest our workforce is reflective of the population.



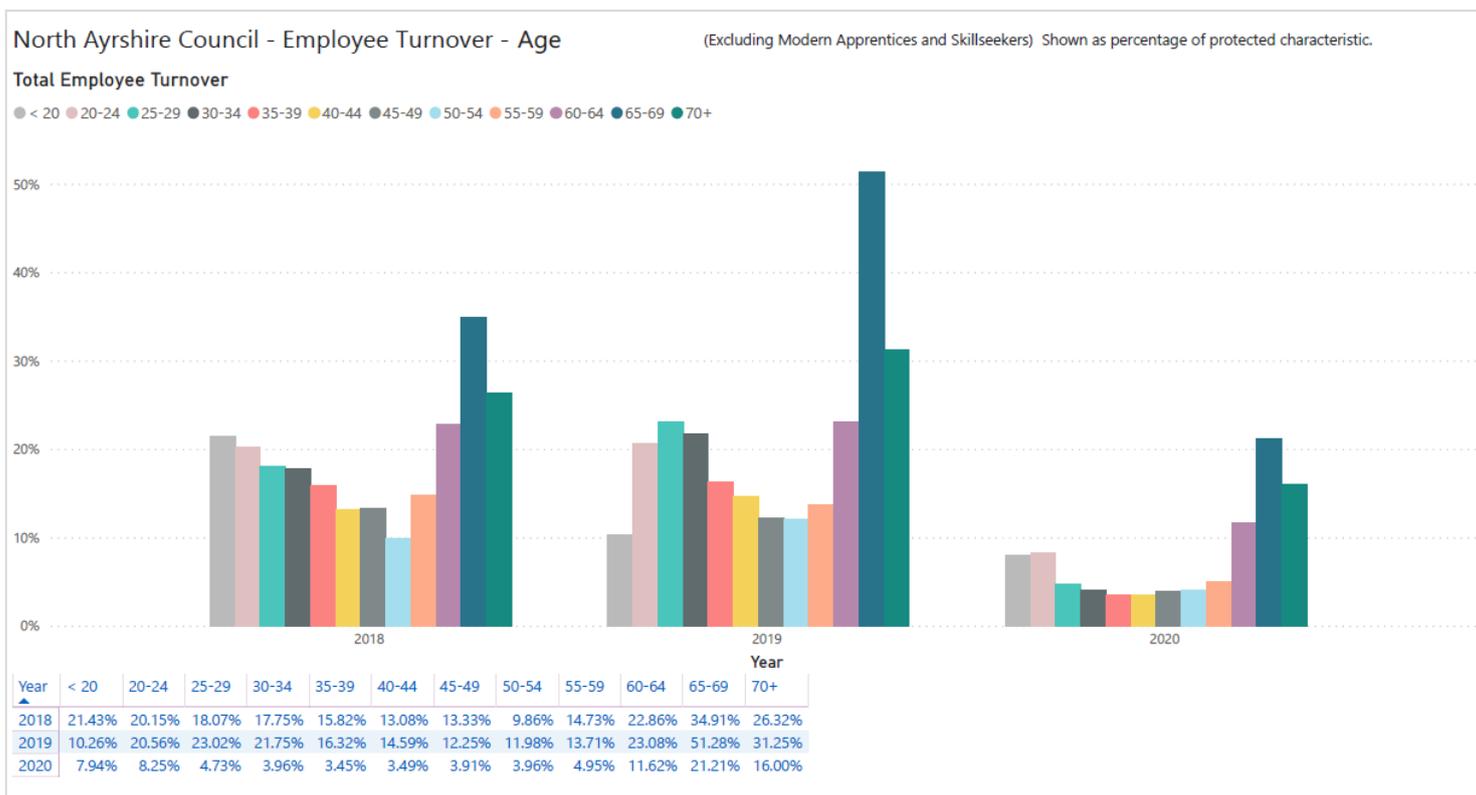
In 2019, when some restructuring took place, almost double the percentage of employees from the 'Other Ethnicity' category (32.8% compared to 16.7% white employees) left our Council. In 2020 this figure was comparable to other ethnicities at less than 5%. Employee training figures indicate that in 2020

# Mainstreaming the Equality Duty

approximately 10% more Black or minority ethnic employees received training than either white or not disclosed employees.

Within Education, 19 employees (0.6%) were from the 'Other Ethnicity' category. In 2019 Education has also saw a similar pattern of a much higher percentage turnover of minority ethnic employees.

## Age

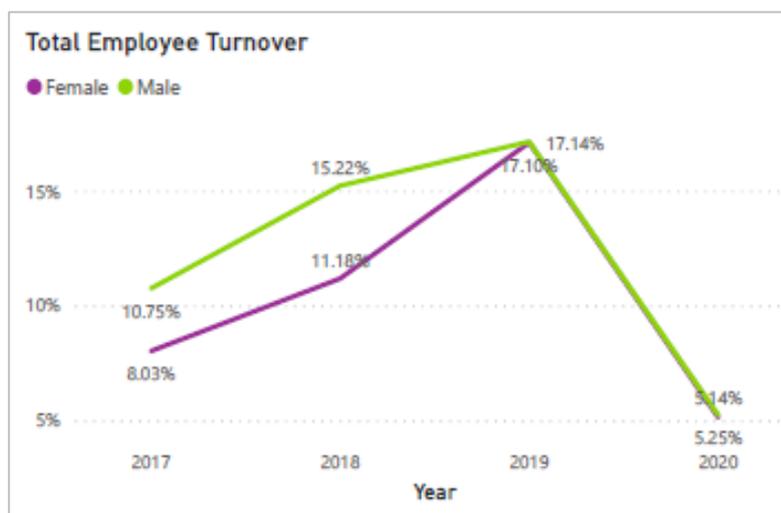


Similar to many other organisations, our Council has an ageing workforce, with 39% of employees aged 50 or over. Employee turnover is highest in the 65-69 age category. Education headcount for age is much lower than the Council as a whole, with only 23% of employees over the age of 50 years.

## Sex

As at 2020, 24.7% of our Council employees are male, 75.3% female. 9.1% of our female employees are in posts of Grade 11 or above compared to 12.2% of our male employees. However, this equates to 517 females and 226 males. In addition, 10 of our 18 Chief Officers are female.

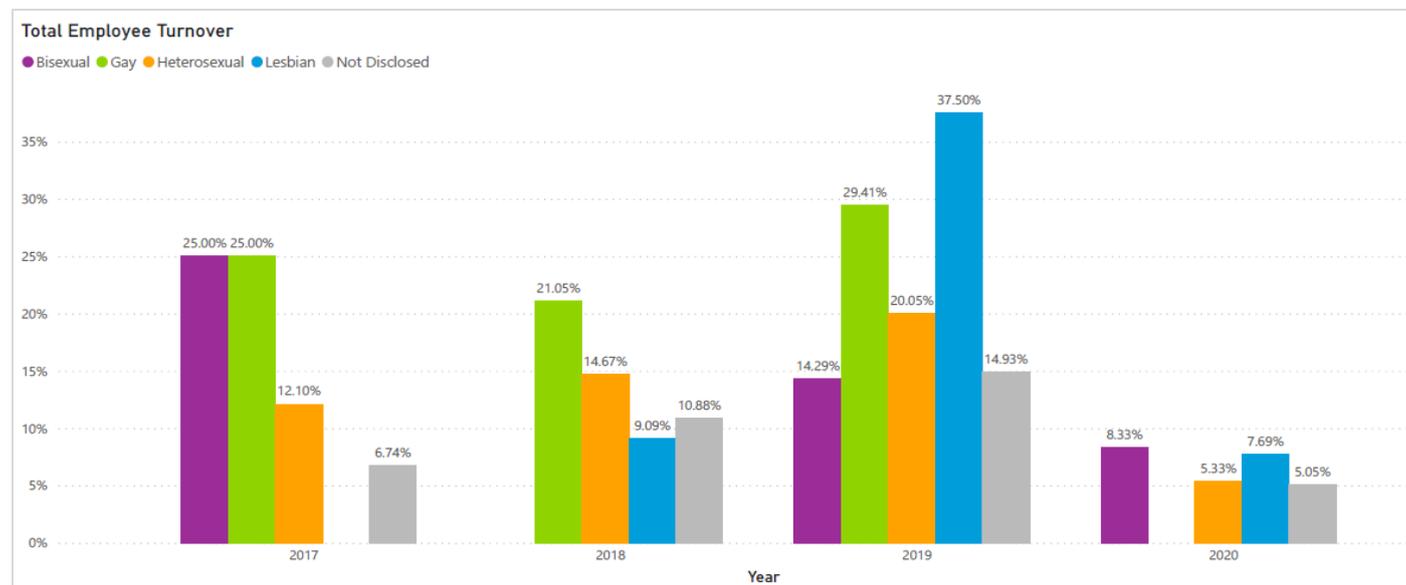
The majority of employees are Grades 4 – 7, with 35% (2659) female and 11% (828) of male employees working at this level. There is a slightly higher percentage of females receiving training compared to males. Staff turnover for both male and females is 5%.



Within Education 80% of teaching staff are female. 21% of female teaching staff are in a promoted role, compared with 39% of males. This equates to 283 promoted female teaching staff compared to 88 males.

During 2020, 10% more female staff than males participated in training. 1.52% more male employees left the Education Service than female employees.

## Sexual Orientation



In 2020, 44 employees identified as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual (LGB) or 0.6% of the workforce. 57% of employees did not disclose their sexual orientation. With very low numbers it is difficult to identify specific issues or trends. During 2020, one employee identifying as LGB left the Council. In 2019, 12 employees (including four temporary employees) identifying as LGB left our employment or 30% of all our LGB employees. For those employees identifying as Heterosexual, this figure was 20% that year. There are no specific issues around training or recruitment.

During 2020, 19 (0.64%) of education employees identified as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual. During 2019, and similar to the Council statistics a higher percentage of employees identifying as LGB left the Council, 37.5% gay, 28.6% lesbian, compared with 20% heterosexual.

## Religion or Belief (including no belief)

As with our employee statistics for Sexual Orientation, the 'Not disclosed' percentage is very high at 58% of employees. 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 20% of employees, followed by Church of Scotland (11.6%), Roman Catholic (6.2%), and Other Christian (2.5%).

Within Education, 70% of employees did not disclose their religion or belief, followed by employees with no religion or belief (12%), Church of Scotland (11.6%), and Roman Catholic (8%).

## Further Considerations

We recognise that there is a high percentage of 'not disclosed'. We are exploring reasons why employees may not wish to disclose this information.

Some of the information highlighted above suggests a higher turnover for some of our protected characteristic groups, including other ethnicity. As well as trying to identify any issues prior to employees leaving our employment, we have recently introduced a Leavers Form that employees can fill in anonymously to detect any issues. We will be monitoring this to try and detect any trends.

## 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 2020 is 1.21%; this has remained below 2% for at least four years, dipping to its lowest point of 1% in 2017, before steadily climbing to 1.54% in 2019 and dipping back down in 2020.

Mean Pay Difference (basic hourly rate)				
	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Female</b>	14.83	15.04	16.02	16.58
<b>Male</b>	14.98	15.27	16.27	16.78
<b>Difference (%)</b>	1.00	1.50	1.54	1.21

Our Disability Pay Gap for 2020 is 8.8%, which is an increase from 2019 or 2.6%. This figure has fluctuated over the last few years and could be due to the relatively small numbers of employees with a declared disability. This will be reviewed through our Corporate Equality Group.

Mean Pay Difference (basic hourly rate)				
	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Disabled</b>	14.10	14.39	15.77	15.67
<b>Not disabled</b>	14.64	15.85	16.81	17.19
<b>Difference (%)</b>	3.7	9.2	6.2	8.8

Our Ethnicity Pay Gap figure is - 0.00%, which means in 2020 there was no difference in average hourly pay for employees with an ethnicity other than white. For the past three years, the 'other ethnicity' category has had on average a slightly higher hourly rate, however this has narrowed from -10.00% in 2017 to 0.00% in 2020.

Mean Pay Difference (basic hourly rate)				
	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Other Ethnicity</b>	15.68	16.19	16.15	16.48
<b>White</b>	14.25	14.90	15.89	16.48
<b>Difference (%)</b>	-10.00	-8.70%	-1.60	0.00

## 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 approximately 75 – 25% female to male. The highest percentage of 'female to male' staff work in grades 1 – 3 (although the overall numbers are low), and in teaching (82%) and promoted teaching staff (77.6%), however the highest number of females work in grades 4 -7 or 35% of the total workforce and 47% of the total female workforce.

Within the management and senior management grades (11 – 14), as a % of the total female workforce, 4.0% are in this category, with 7.0% of males as a total of male employees. The percentage split for our Chief Officers is 55% female to male. In relation to 'vertical segregation', these trends of increasing male participation in senior management roles in comparison to females are generally common across most workforces.

The table below provides an average hourly rate by sex for 2020 and 2018 for comparison. The grades with the biggest pay gap percentage are 4 – 7, 11 – 14 (management) and chief officers. Grades 4 - 7 are where the highest number of female employees are and from a 'horizontal segregation' perspective will be where some 'traditionally' female oriented roles such as caring and catering roles are based, which historically haven't always been paid as well as traditional male manual and craft roles. It should be noted though that the gap closed by almost 1% over 2019 to 2020.

**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.

	Average Hourly Rate 2020		Variance	
	Female (£)	Male (£)	% variance (2020)	% variance (2018)
Grades 1 - 3	9.51	9.53	0.27	0.31
Grades 4 - 7	11.93	12.41	3.94	4.86
Grades 8 - 10	19.20	19.20	0.00	-0.38
Grades 11 - 14	25.48	26.45	3.66	4.08
Other	10.43	10.15	-2.76	-17.47
Chief Officer	52.68	55.73	5.48	3.03
Teacher	24.08	23.76	-1.35	-2.18
Promoted Teacher	32.49	33.55	3.16	3.42
Total Workforce	16.58	16.78	1.22	1.50

## **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 48% white. For grades 8–10 the comparison is 16% Other ethnicity compared to 15% white and for grades 11 – 17, 6.4% of employees are other ethnicity compared to 5% white. There are no minority ethnic employees at Chief Officer level.

## **Disability**

Similarly, to our employee information for other ethnicity, in relation to employees with a declared disability we have 162 employees or 2.2% of the total workforce with a known disability and 21% 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, 46.3% are disabled employees compared to 47.6% not-disabled. For grades 8–10, 18.5% of employees are disabled compared to 15.4% not-disabled and for grade 11 – 14, 3% of employees are disabled and 5.4% are not disabled.



*All public sector organisations are required to set Equality Outcomes every four years. This report covers the end of the four-yearly Equality Outcome reporting period and is the third review of progress since the outcomes were established in 2016/17.*

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.

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. (Click on each box to link directly to that outcome):

### 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

## Report Layout

To ensure consistency of reporting across the Ayrshire Equality Group Partners, information on the actions supporting each of the four equality outcomes is outlined below. Outcomes contain our pan-Ayrshire progress update with outcomes one and three containing specific updates on our own activities.

## Equality Outcomes

### Equality Outcome 1 – In Ayrshire people experience safe and inclusive communities - Pan-Ayrshire Actions

#### Equality Outcome 1.1a: Hate Crime

To ensure people across Ayrshire experience safe and inclusive communities. We aimed to increase awareness of hate crime and avenues for reporting including third party reporting centres.

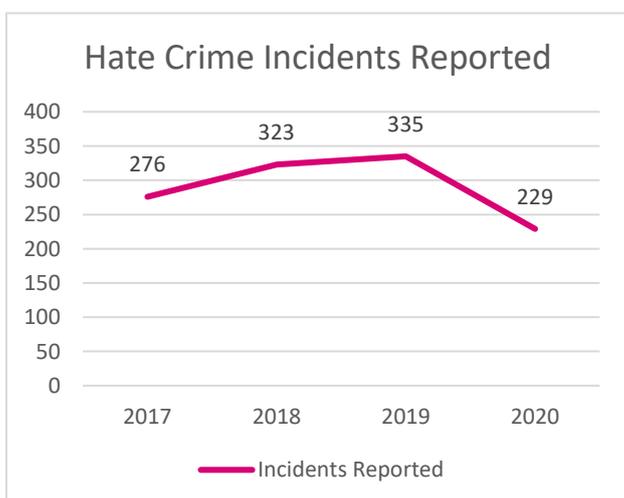
The partners recognised that hate crime continues to rise for particular groups within our community, however, under-reporting of such crimes remains an area which requires more focus. Awareness of what constitutes a hate crime required to be made clearly for people as well as alternative ways of doing so.

Building on the awareness raising work undertaken in 2017 and 2018 of what a hate crime is and ways to report, the partners held awareness raising sessions across various sites to further raise awareness and prompt conversation on this issue. Five events were held from 21 to 25 October 2019. These were facilitated by Police Scotland officers involved in addressing hate crime. The events were promoted across all partner organisations using internal communication channels and social media. The events were well attended and feedback was extremely positive.

Given the positive feedback on these events, the partners planned on hosting a conference for employees in October 2020. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this had to be postponed. In place of the conference a week of webinars was scheduled from 19 to 23 October 2020 with guest speakers including an introductory welcome from Police Scotland's Chief Superintendent Farouque Hussain. The Hate Crime webinars proved very successful with over 200 people registering to attend over the week.

As outlined in our 2019 report, we have devised a quarterly report to help us understand the levels of hate crime across Ayrshire. The report outlines where there is an increase in hate crimes for particular groups as well as offering opportunities to identify any target areas. The group continues to scrutinise this report to ensure appropriate work can be taken forward.

#### What difference did we make?



It was anticipated that the increase in awareness raising around Hate Crime would result in a rise in the reporting of hate crimes before seeing a reduction. This appears to be the case, with an increase in 2018 and 2019, followed by a decrease during 2020.

The evidence shows the following statistics of hate crime incidents being reported.

In 2017, race was the highest reason for reporting a hate crime and this continues. To support the reduction in racist hate crime, the partners have supported and promoted diversity days. More recently the partners celebrated Black History Month via a social media campaign exploring the A to Z of black history in relation to language, key figures and events.

## Going forward

Whilst the online webinars were successful, the partners have agreed to host a face to face Conference to allow further learning and networking. We will also:

- Engage with our communities, particularly where third-party reporting centres are located
- Promote third party reporting centres
- Monitor quarterly hate crime reports and respond to incidents
- Support and promote diversity days including through social media
- Promote key figures and events

## Case Study – Hate Crime

Mr Edmonds was out for a walk on Christmas day. Both Mr and Mrs Edmonds have a learning disability and are well known in their village. Mr Edmonds stopped when he heard someone shouting and as there was no one else around he realised the shouts were directed at him. The person shouting had targeted him before using derogatory and hurtful words. Mr Edmonds began to walk a bit quicker to get away.

Suddenly Mr Edmonds was thrown to the ground and badly beaten. Various neighbours came to his aid and he was taken to hospital with multiple injuries. The incident was reported as a hate crime to the police.

To aid his recovery, Mr Edmonds had the help of a group which his Local Area Co-ordinator facilitated. Mr Edmonds spoke about his story. As a lot of people within the group had experienced Hate Crime they decided to produce a drama to prompt conversation on the issue. This helped Mr Edmonds to begin to feel safe again within his community.

*(All names changed)*



## Equality Outcome 1.1b: Keep Safe

To ensure people across Ayrshire experience safe and inclusive communities, we aimed to implement the 'Keep Safe' initiative across partner agencies through training and briefing sessions to raise awareness. We conducted an audit of existing places with a view to increasing the number of establishments registered for the initiative.

### What is Keep Safe?

The [Keep Safe initiative](#) works with a network of businesses such as shops, libraries and cafes who have agreed to make their premises a 'Keep Safe' place for people to go if they feel frightened, distressed or are the victim of crime when out in the community. These premises have been approved by Police Scotland and employees within these establishments receive training as well as those who use the service.

Disabled and elderly people who wish to take part in the initiative are issued with a contact card which contains details of the person's name, any health concerns, any communication needs and helpful contact details for friends or family.

When this outcome was agreed, there was only one establishment in North Ayrshire (see case study below).

## *What difference did we make?*

The partners worked to increase the number of Keep Safe establishments across Ayrshire with 70 premises now available, though some are temporarily closed due to the pandemic. These sites have been approved and are registered on the 'I Am Me' website which keeps a register of all approved Keep Safe establishments.

At the time of writing the breakdown of establishments across the three local authority areas is 35 in East Ayrshire, 14 in North Ayrshire (up from only one four years ago) and 21 in South Ayrshire.

As part of increasing the number of establishments registered for this initiative, a large number of employees have been trained to ensure they can offer appropriate support.

Even when Keep Safe places are not physically used, their key benefit is the reassurance and confidence it gives our residents to lead an independent and fulfilling life.

## *Going forward*

- The partners will also continue identify other potential Keep Safe places through engagement with Learning Disability service users and other relevant groups. Ideally, Keep Safe places will be established in local business or leisure venues where people will normally visit.
- The partners will continue to collect and monitor data on usage for the Keep Safe establishments and measure the impact of these initiatives on service users.
- Explore the registration of a local ferry terminal as a Keep Safe location.

## Case Study – Keep Safe

Throughout 2019, the local Police Scotland Preventions and Interventions Officer, supported by staff from the Health and Social Care Partnership (who took on this role in North Ayrshire during 2017) continued to add Keepsafe sites across North Ayrshire.

Six new additional sites added in North Ayrshire during 2019/20:

- Co-op Food Shop Brodick, Arran
- Kilwinning and Irvine Libraries
- Largs Library
- Barrhead Travel Shops, Irvine and Kilwinning

This brings the total in North Ayrshire to 14 including:

- Largs Police Station
- Irvine Police Station
- Kilbirnie Police Station
- Saltcoats Police Station
- Irvine, Centre Stage Bus (Thursdays)
- Kilwinning, Centre Stage Bus (Fridays)
- Arran, Caledonian MacBrayne, Brodick
- Kilbirnie, Salvation Army, George Steven Centre



## **Equality Outcome 1.2: Prevent (Counter Terrorism)**

Prevent is one of the four elements of CONTEST, the UK Government's counter terrorism strategy. The Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015) places a duty on specified authorities to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". The partners agreed to implement certain actions to support this work including raising staff awareness to better identify radicalisation and increase awareness of the reporting procedures.

The e-learning package continues to be promoted to employees 4,502 completing training so far.

The all staff Prevent briefing was revised and circulated in October 2018. This allows a clear and consistent message around Prevent to be disseminated across the whole of Ayrshire. Each partner organisation distributes these briefings using their own internal processes.

### *What difference did we make?*

We have raised awareness of Prevent and our responsibility to safeguard vulnerable individuals from being radicalised; in doing so employees have started asking more questions and discussing their concerns.

We are complying with the duties placed upon us as a named specified authority within the Counter Terrorism and Security Act, 2015. Staff are more aware of Prevent and the need to safeguard against radicalisation and the routes for reporting any concerns.

### *Going forward*

We will continue to provide on-line training, publish briefings and keep employees informed of any changes in line with the Prevent strategy. We will continue to meet as a multiagency partnership and share intelligence.

## **Equality Outcome 1 - Ayrshire people experience safe and inclusive communities - North Ayrshire Council Services Actions**

This section provides a brief overview of actions carried out by our Council specifically that contribute to the Equality Action Plan

### **Violence Against Women**

The Violence Against Women Strategy came to an end in December 2018. The Community Planning Partnership Board then approved the development of a new overarching Community Safety Strategy. This incorporates national and local priorities of the Violence Against Women and Anti-Social Behaviour agendas.

During the pandemic a full and robust 16 Days of Action Calendar was promoted on social media. This resulted in 37 Facebook posts, with a total of 90,724 impressions and 1,289 total engagements. Six videos shown on YouTube with 730 impressions and 230 views and 47 Twitter tweets, with 128,250 impressions and 1,784 total engagements. This followed a successful '16 Days of Action' campaign during 2019 when 1,400 pledges were signed.

We introduced Safe Leave and managers attended Domestic Abuse Training. A Gender Based Violence Advisor was appointed to deal with enquires around Safe Leave where an employee may not be comfortable speaking to their line manager.

The Violence Against Women (VAW) Partnership supported primary and secondary schools to deliver age-appropriate, evidence-based interventions to raise the awareness and understanding of gender-based violence to children and

teachers. As part of a whole school approach to tackling Domestic abuse, positive healthy relationships and consent were promoted under the Women's Aid ['Expect Respect'](#) initiative. This initiative is now widely and successfully embedded throughout North Ayrshire schools.

Zero Tolerance Under Pressure training was rolled out to Community Planning Partners. The training is aimed at Youth Workers and professionals working with young people. It helps to support young people in navigating some of the pressures they face around sex and relationships, such as: pornography, social media, grooming and gendered expectations.

A Domestic Abuse Policy for North Ayrshire Tenants and Residents was drafted in collaboration with Women's Aid and other Social Landlords and will go to Cabinet in 2021.

The Violence Against Women Partnership liaised with the Gypsy Traveller site and a site visit will be carried out when Covid-19 restrictions are lifted to raise awareness of support available.

We endorsed and implemented East Ayrshire Council's Prostitution Statement

We are applying to take part in the next Close the Gap Equally Safe at Work accreditation programme commencing in 2021.

A 'Safe Contact' Programme was introduced within all North Ayrshire Specsavers stores to encourage households experiencing domestic abuse to speak out and access services.

The Caledonian Programme continues to be delivered to men in North Ayrshire, engagement levels of services users remain positive. This programme is aimed at men who have been convicted of domestic abuse offences and provides one to one assessments, engagement and motivation sessions and group work. This service also provides support for domestic abuse survivors and their children.

## ***Gypsy/Travellers***

This section provides a brief overview of the continued work taking place at Redburn Grove to support the residents of the site.

### ***Pre-Covid-19 (Coronavirus) Lockdown***

A range of tutors continued to attend the site to deliver sessions. At the start of 2020 three pupils were receiving tuition, which reduced to two with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. The pupils are making progress. Tutor led sessions were also held at local libraries to cater for travelling families that did not want to attend the Redburn site. During lockdown, the tutor kept in touch via email and provided 10 face to face online sessions.

Eglinton Medical Practice in Irvine continued to attend the site on Monday mornings to hold a surgery for the residents.

Community Link Workers attended the site on at last a scheduled monthly basis to help residents with health and benefit related issues. Prior to the pandemic, the service worked with tenants to form a group to help tackle mental health issues within the Gypsy/Traveller Community. In addition we ensure there are free sanitary products available on site.

### ***Post-Covid-19 (Coronavirus) Lockdown***

The residents at the site were provided with free electricity as well as food and health packs. Welfare checks were carried out to ensure there were no Covid-19 related issues.

## *Encouraging under-represented groups to inform decision making*

The North Ayrshire Tenant Participation Team have been engaging with site residents to help them to push forward the agendas that are important to them. This work was temporarily halted due to the pandemic and at time of writing the team are exploring the use of digital sessions to maintain the contact with site residents.

## **Equality Outcome 1 - Ayrshire people experience safe and inclusive communities - Education Service**

This section provides a brief overview of the actions provided by Education and Youth Employment that support Equality Outcome 1

95% of all schools in North Ayrshire are involved with the UN Rights Respecting schools programme. Thirty-five schools have a bronze award, nine silver and one has a gold award. The Rights Respecting Schools programme is based on the principles of equality, dignity, respect, non-discrimination and participation. The award is focussed on having the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of a school's approach to improving wellbeing.

Robust children's plans to guide additional support for young people to support their health and disability needs have been revised through HMI guidance and discussions with staff. Revised staged intervention assessment and planning procedures have been aligned to the corresponding stages within the Getting It Right For Every Child Ayrshire model.

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

### ***Equality Outcome 2 - Database of Marginalised Groups***

The Ayrshire Equality Partnership (AEP) created a database of all marginalised and under-represented groups in Ayrshire. This is available to AEP members through the AEP Knowledge-Hub (K-Hub) group. The aim is for effective consultation with all our communities in Ayrshire to ensure that the needs and views of our service users are taken into account in relation to the design and delivery of services.

The pandemic has affected how we engage with our communities. Lockdown restrictions have dramatically changed the way we deliver services and resulted in no face to face consultation. We have had to be dynamic and creative in how we engage with our communities.

Robust communications and community engagement have been central to the Covid-19 emergency response. Our Community Hubs have been the focus for community-led activity and volunteering, to support the most vulnerable in our communities. We have recognised that people, families and communities of place, interest and identity are the experts in their own lives and in what will best support them to be healthy and well.

We have adopted alternative communication tools to engage with marginalised groups including videocalls, phone calls and NHS Near Me/Attend Anywhere system to ensure that we can connect with our communities with what matters to them through these challenging times.

The long-term impact of the pandemic on our communities is of primary concern, particularly the impact on employment, household incomes, poverty, and physical and mental health, all of which could exacerbate already existing inequalities. Where new and better ways of doing things have been developed, we will want to make sure that these can continue and that all those who have been affected including individuals, families, communities and local businesses, are fully engaged.

A core aspect of our Engagement is to hear from equality groups and from those who have experienced a disproportionate impact as a result of coronavirus including shielding people, people experiencing social isolation and loneliness, people in recovery, care experienced young people and carers.

This process ensures that we are involving our marginalised groups in relation to how we deliver our services through this pandemic and beyond.

## *What difference did we make?*

The database will give AEP members the opportunity to involve and engage marginalised groups. However, the pandemic has seen a rise in the levels of engagement with communities, groups and individuals who previously have not engaged directly with partners. We have been able to provide support, information or just be there to listen as people and communities have adjusted to a new way of living.

This has allowed us to tailor specific support to the needs of people and to link them to other services that can provide the support they need. We have supported communities in very different ways to ensure that people are aware of the lockdown restrictions, how to keep safe, and how to access services during the pandemic.

For BSL users we have translated information into BSL and placed videos on our websites so that people understand how to access services, and information in relation to keeping safe.

## *Going forward*

The pandemic has forced us to work in different ways. However, this has allowed AEP members to be creative in the way that we engage with marginalised groups.

We will continue to keep these connections, and work with our marginalised groups to support them to have a voice in our organisations

## ***Equality Outcome 2.1b: Translation, Interpretation and Communication Service***

The partners set out to explore joint approach for the commissioning of translation, interpretation and communication support (TICS) services. It was agreed from the onset that this process would also include British Sign Language.

Jointly commissioning a single and effective Translation, Interpretation and Communication Service has proved to be much more complex than originally anticipated. Through regular meetings and discussions, the Ayrshire Equality Partnership have discovered the various layers and regulations that need to be understood in order to effectively undertake this action. In addition to individual organisation policies and protocols, we also had to consider the various national frameworks and guidance established by National bodies.

### **Service for Community Languages**

Over the past 18 months, we have engaged with procurement officers in each organisation for advice and guidance on pursuing joint commissioning of services. This has involved a review of existing Commissioning Frameworks to assess value and the possibility of joint bids.

One promising prospect was a commissioning framework put forward by the Scottish Government for Translation and Commissioning Services to be used by the NHS. This option was pursued by NHS Ayrshire and Arran as was unavailable to local authorities.

Following additional research, we have determined Best Value will be demonstrated through procuring services for each partner, while sharing learning in areas such as specifications for tenders.

### **British Sign Language**

A joint procurement exercise will take place for the translation of British Sign Language (BSL). Partners have almost finalised a joint BSL Interpreting Services specification.

## *What difference did we make?*

Work is still progressing to finalise agreement and implement new commissioning frameworks. However, it is anticipated that this service will ensure that there is consistency of approach across Ayrshire for all translation and interpretation requests even though some contracts will be at an individual authority level.

Provision of clear and comprehensive communication will have a positive impact on the outcomes for all of our service users. Work towards achieving this outcome is ongoing.

## *Going Forward*

- Work continues to find an optimal solution to ensure access to translation services is equitable across all organisations of the Ayrshire Equality Partnership.
- NHS Ayrshire and Arran will pursue their procurement of Translation Services through the established Government Framework for Community Languages.
- On behalf of the other partners, representatives from local authorities are currently pursuing a bespoke commissioning agreement with service providers. This has involved looking at existing contracts, forecasting potential use and entering negotiations with service providers.
- We will also aim to ensure there is more accurate and up to date information in key language formats within our external facing website.

## **Equality Outcome 2.2: Trans people**

In 2016, the Ayrshire LGBT+ Development Group held three locality-based Trans events across Ayrshire. Local community engagement identified there is a lack of gender identity support within Ayrshire. In addition, it was highlighted that there were issues related to gender specific services which have adversely impacted the experience of accessing our services by those identifying as transgender. Welcoming and accessible services would encourage greater engagement with services.

E-learning modules in relation to Trans specific training is in the process of being shared across the partners. Training employees allows staff to understand the issues Trans people face on a daily basis and to ensure that when they do access our services and buildings, our staff have the knowledge and understanding to treat Trans people with dignity and respect.

A few of the partners have developed or are in the process of developing policies to support Trans employees in the workplace, and again this practice is again being shared across the partners.

Hate Crime Awareness Week seminars hosted by Police Scotland were organised by the Ayrshire Equality Partnership across Ayrshire in 2019 to raise awareness and highlight the issues faced by people who are victims of Hate Crime including Trans people.

The webinars that replaced the planned Hate Crime Awareness Conference cancelled due to Covid-19, included a presentation by Dr Stephanie McKendry, Head of Access, Equality and Inclusion, University of Strathclyde. Dr McKendry shared the experiences of trans and gender diverse learners and employees in colleges and universities: moving from evidence to action. The webinar explored the issues facing Trans people in education and communities, and how we, as organisations, can make Trans people feel welcome when accessing our buildings and services.

## Education Network

The Ayrshire LGBT+ Education Network which is led by Ayrshire College and East Ayrshire Council aims to engage with education practitioners across Ayrshire in sharing innovative ways to engage in LGBT education and share best practice. The Ayrshire LGBT+ Education Network has members across the partners including health, LGBT Youth Scotland, The Terrance Higgins Trust and young people.

In the academic year Sept 2019 - June 2020, the Ayrshire LGBT+ Network offered 10, one-hour themed Network Meets, including a dedicated trans-focused session. As always, the Meets are open to anyone seeking to improve their professional practice especially those who have a direct working link to the experiences of LGBT+ children, young people and adults learning in Ayrshire. However, as a result of Covid-19, all planned Meets from March 2020 onwards were suspended.

Trans and gender diverse experiences in any education setting remains a core element of the Network. All Network Meets prior to Covid-19 sought to ensure these experiences and voices were included and highlighted. The most attended Meet was on LGBT+ and domestic abuse (and wider examples of Gender Based Violence) and this included discussions on potential trans vulnerabilities and experiences in this context. For the first time, also, a Meet was held in a Primary school, Kilmaurs Primary, in East Ayrshire, in which the school lead the session by sharing excellent practice in how they are embedding LGBT+ inclusion.

The Network returned online, in September 2020 and delivered two, one hour plus sessions on the following themes:

- Mental health and wellbeing and LGBT+ experiences
- Domestic abuse and LGBT+ experiences

This education and learning is invaluable for our employees, giving them the knowledge and skills to engage with Trans people with confidence.

## North Ayrshire

The Connected Communities team continues to support the LGBT+ Network and support LGBT youth groups across North Ayrshire. In February 2020, LGBT History Month was promoted, with a focus on the Garnock Valley Locality.

There has been work going on in Arran and this is highlighted in the Case study section below. Much of this work has been impacted by the Pandemic.

## What difference did we make?

We continue to explore different avenues to ensure that Trans people are not discriminated against when accessing our buildings and services.

A few of the partners have developed or are in the process of developing policies to support Trans employees in the workplace. This practice is being shared across the partners.



## *Going forward*

The LGBT+ Network continues to grow and meet its objectives. Within North Ayrshire although much of this work has been impacted by the response to the Covid-19 pandemic, plans are already under way in the Garnock Valley locality to set up a face to face group in the early part of 2021 or as soon as is possible following any easing of restrictions.

## Case Study – Arran Youth Forum Weekly LGBT Club

In the last year, the Arran Youth Forum continued to run the weekly LGBT+ Club. This has run since 2016 and has been a pillar of support for our LGBT young people on Arran. This has always had a peer-led element - it started following a request from our MSYP and has always had seniors who help lead the group. In the weekly "Chance to Share", our young people have the opportunity to discuss anything they wish to. As well as receiving support from their youth workers, they get advice and support from their peers which can often be really helpful - especially from someone with similar experiences.

In March, due to the pandemic restrictions meant weekly face to face meetings had to be suspended. Community teams continued to meet online with the young people from the group regularly, holding a "Chance to Share" via Zoom. The aim is to start the group back up when limitations on numbers will make it possible for the LGBT+ club to be a weekly feature. In the interim the Youth Work Team has provided young people the platform and opportunity to talk about the issues that are important to them.



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

### Equality Outcome 3: Modern Apprenticeship Uptake by Black and Minority Ethnic Young People



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Cmhairne Siomhaid Air a Tuath

National and regional data evidenced a need to improve the uptake of Modern Apprenticeships by those from a Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) background; those with a declared disability; and a fairer gender split in non-traditional career choices. These specific groups matched those identified by Skills Development Scotland (SDS).

Care-experienced young people remain a national and regional priority for many of the partners involved in delivering on the shared, regional Equality Outcomes 2017-2021. Though not included in these outcomes, consideration was given to our care-experienced young people.

Individual partners continue to work in partnership with Skills Development Scotland, employers and others in targeting under-represented groups. Much of the focus has been on people with disabilities or care experienced young people, which is reflected in local demographics. However, although the population group is small (1.1% for North Ayrshire), recognition is growing regarding the need to focus on those from the Black and Minority Ethnic Community.

During 2019/20, North Ayrshire introduced a pilot work experience programme. Though the main focus was on care experienced and disabled candidates, the scheme takes a flexible approach and welcomed a young Syrian Refugee onto the programme.

The work experience programme ran for four weeks and successful candidates then move onto a full Modern Apprenticeship, this included the young person from Syria. Please see the case study below for more information.

North Ayrshire Council's Supported Employment programme, which supports people with both physical and learning difficulties into employment, realised that they had no applications or notes of interest from people with a BME background. Following this the team revised their marketing material.

#### *What difference did we make?*

Although it is too early to tell if this will have an impact on encouraging anyone with a disability from the BME community to apply, it is an initial attempt to raise awareness that the service is there for everyone.

## Going forward

We will continue to ensure our Modern Apprenticeships are as inclusive as possible.

### Case Study – Alaa loving her new life at North Ayrshire Council

Alaa is the first Syrian refugee to work for North Ayrshire Council. At 19 years of age she had lived in North Ayrshire for two years after fleeing to Lebanon five years before.

*“I was only 10 years old and suddenly overnight things changed in Syria. It was terrible, we lost family members and were always scared of losing more.”*

Though she couldn't speak English when she arrived in North Ayrshire as part of the resettlement programme, she worked hard at Greenwood Academy and Kilwinning College to learn.

*“I feel my English is much better now. I couldn't even book an appointment at the GP before but now I've made my own appointment.”*

*“I will always miss home, but I love everything about Scotland. It is my second home now. I have so much to be thankful for. I think we will always miss Syria, but we all have dreams and hopefully we can fulfil them now. When I was asked about working and studying with the Council I didn't really understand. But it has been great. I really enjoy the work and am doing an SQV level 2 in business administration.”*

*“I must thank all our neighbours. They have all been very helpful and respectful to me and my family. I love everything about Irvine. I am very happy here now.”*

## Equality Outcome 3: Non-Traditional Roles Modern Apprenticeships

Individual partners, in partnership with for example Skills Development Scotland, employers and others, have been enhancing their action plans to support the targeting of under-represented groups.

According to the 2019 national survey by the ONS of UK employers, the average pay gap was 8.9%. Within North Ayrshire this figure was 1.54% in 2019 and has reduced to 1.22% in 2020. The Scottish Government highlight factors that will influence the gender pay gap including:

- Challenging the segregation of men and women into different job sectors and industries (this is based on research that shows that roles that are traditionally considered as male dominated occupations, like engineering, tend to get paid better than traditional female roles, such as within the care sector).

Having a focus on promoting non-traditional roles will help to shift the balance. The North Ayrshire Employability and Skills Team revised their marketing materials during 2019 to modernise the Modern Apprentice campaign and to challenge gender stereotypes. This included encouraging males into Early Years apprenticeships and marketing around females in manual roles.

During 2019/20, one male began an Early Years Apprenticeship and two males who joined the scheme in 2018/19 moved into full time occupations in the Health and Social Care Partnership.

### What difference did we make?

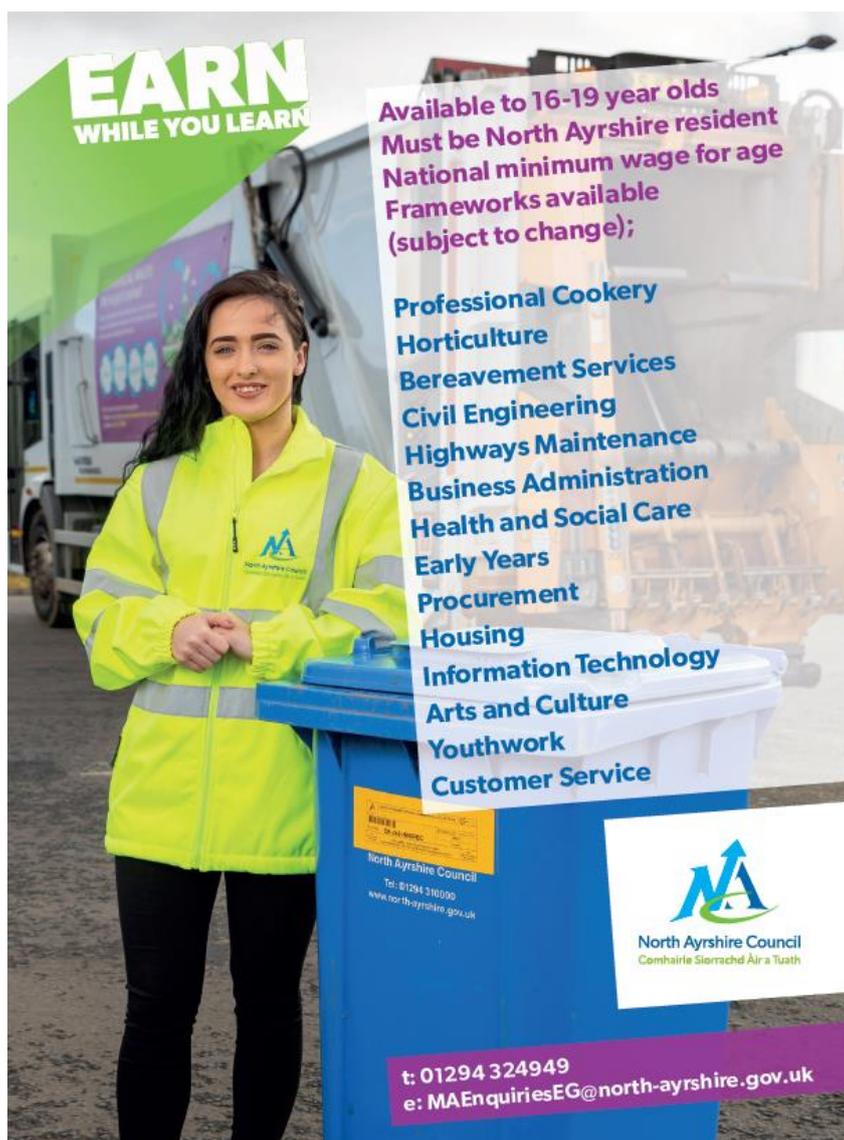
Placements by occupation still show a lack of females moving into traditional male occupations\*, however there has been some progress with males moving into traditional female occupations\*\*. Between 2017 and 2020, 10 males moved into either Early Years, Health and Social Care or Professional Cookery. No females moved into any of the other occupational areas.

\*Vehicle maintenance, horticulture / bereavement, building /craft.

\*\*Early Years, health and social care, professional cookery

### Going forward

The team supporting the Modern Apprentice programme will continue to advertise all positions to all potential applicants, through events with employability partners, mainstream and social media advertising and attendance at school events. Applications for posts will also be considered in more detail, scrutinising applications against placements to identify any trends.



## **Equality Outcome 3: Modern Apprenticeship Uptake by Young People with a Declared Disability**

The Supported Employment Team in North Ayrshire run the [Equal programme](#). This is a service designed to help individuals with a physical disability, a long-term health condition, Asperger's, Autism or a learning disability to progress towards finding and keeping a job that will provide career prospects. During 2019/20 the team have been supporting four Modern Apprentices. Two male (both autistic) and one female with a learning disability had placements in Business Administration and one female with a physical disability worked in Catering.



During 2020/21, 10 Modern Apprenticeship places were ringfenced for the Supported Employment Programme out of a total of 50 (or 20% of total places being set aside for young people with a disability or long-term health condition). Due to the situation with the Covid-19 pandemic, two modern apprentices have been appointed with support provided online. One client was placed within Business Administration supported by the Equal Team and one within Horticulture working at a School Garden supported by the Education Team.

We continue to work with the remaining eight future Modern Apprentices, involving them in various online activities with a view to taking up their Apprenticeships as soon as COVID regulations allow.

### *What difference did we make?*

The two apprentices currently in place are benefitting from support from a variety of sources and both are coping well and on track with all educational materials. Both have seen a huge increase in confidence and more independent living. Importantly, whilst support is continuing for both apprentices, they are now looking to develop careers within their chosen area and we are ensuring that they are on track to achieving their ambitions.

## **Case Study – Modern Apprenticeships**

Craig who is autistic and has Global peripheral vision disorder has been employed as Modern Apprentice within the Equal team and has been supported through the programme to create a 'Table-top Wargaming' website called 'Top Table Games'. The idea behind the games are to provide the opportunity for people to enhance a range of skills through participating in this role-playing game. This ensures participants:

- Gain Confidence
- Learn How to communicate effectively
- Understand how to handle confrontation
- Gain a knowledge of negotiating skills
- Enjoy working as part of a team

The development of these skills is key to individuals finding sustainable and fulfilling employment.

Group meetings are normally held face to face, however due to the pandemic we have been conducting online visual meetings allowing participants to 'meet' and carry out tutorials with group discussions.

***Initially there were concerns that working online may be difficult for participants on a social level however this has proven to be extremely successful in breaking down social barriers, encouraging conversation around a shared interest and has shown a visible increase in confidence as the programme has progressed.***

Group members are meeting weekly and sharing knowledge and experience and are actively generating more ideas on future options to continue the programme development should lock down be extended.

## Equality Outcome 3 - In Ayrshire people have opportunities to fulfil their potential throughout life – Education Service

### **Gender Stereotyping**

We challenge gender stereotyping through World of Work week promoted in schools. This pathway has been supported through the promotion of early years career pathways for all secondary school pupils and 'I can statements' in Developing the Young Workforce. Focus is given to encourage pupils to think about careers that have traditionally been seen as predominantly male or female occupations. For example, we encourage boys to consider early years career pathways and encourage girls into STEM opportunities. Our vocational education and life skills-based approaches within our secondary and outreach services actively promote engagement with activities which are non-gender specific.

Examples of this work include

- Balfour Beatty recruitment of girls into traditional trades.
- Mock interview of S5 pupils for specific job types where employers interview candidates.
- Design and Technology female teaching staff which challenges traditional roles.
- Utilising the Plan IT Plus website career odometer which helps identify diversity of career options based on interest and acquired skills.
- Skills Development Scotland (SDS) visits to classes throughout Secondary. Pupils' skills and qualities are matched to jobs in order that the young people can make informed decisions about their future.
- SDS Risk Matrix is used at S3/4 to identify those young people at risk of missing out on a positive destination, for example through disengagement or being Care Experienced. This process results in our Outreach Service offering support in terms of alternative educational provision and accreditation of learning

Education and Youth Employment lead on breaking down gender stereotypes within schools. In addition, the Economic Growth Team use positive [case studies of Modern Apprentices](#) to promote gender equality.

Our approach has been revised through HMI guidance and discussions with teams. Gender and equality is explored regularly through Personal and Social Education and Interdisciplinary learning opportunities. Themes of equity and equality are threaded through the programmes of study within the 3-18 year curriculum.

### **Additional Support Needs**

Additional Support Needs (ASN) schools support pupils with a range of opportunities to secure appropriate positive destinations such as education, employment, training or independent community living. There is a need to look closely at the outcomes for pupils with ASN. Transition pathways are in place for almost all young people with ASN. Strong links are maintained with Ayrshire College to support this.

Skills Development Scotland run college applications sessions for pupils. This includes pupils with specific ASN. The majority of pupils take up these opportunities. Almost all (90% plus) in our Outreach Service achieve positive destinations

Education Service has continued to promote work experience placements and vocational educational experiences for disabled young people in schools. The service has also worked with the Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce, who coordinate North Ayrshire's work experience programme, to encourage employers to offer young people with disabilities work placements.

Our schools offer alternative and flexible curricula including vocational skills-based training e.g. Mechanics, construction, care, beauty, barista. Increasingly schools are seeking further accreditation of these applied skills via attachment to SQA accredited courses. Rural skills and leadership awards are also used to development skills e.g. through SQA Personal Development Award.

## Equality Outcome 4 – In Ayrshire public bodies will be inclusive and diverse employers - Ayrshire Shared Actions

### ***Equality Outcome 4.1a: A Diverse Workforce Reflective of the Population***

Employment is one of the most strongly evidenced determinants of health. The World Health Organisation (WHO) notes that 'unemployment puts health at risk' and 'unemployment has a direct bearing on the physical and mental health and even life expectancy for unemployed people and their families'.

There is also recognition that some recruitment practices can be a barrier to employment for particular groups.

Each of the Ayrshire Equality Partners have continued to promote their respective organisations as an employer of choice by providing employability programmes, especially for unemployed young people, whilst continuing to guarantee an interview to candidates who have a disability and who meet the minimum criteria for the post.

Partners have been exploring different methods of engaging prospective employees and supporting them into employment, both within their respective organisations and to external employers.

The Supported Employment Team within North Ayrshire run the 'Equal' programme that is designed to support people with physical disability, long-term health conditions, Autism, Asperger's or a Learning Disability to progress towards and sustain employment.

One of the innovative programmes the team are working on is the See Me CV. To complement the paper/electronic traditional CV, the team have been working with the Ayrshire Film Company to help train individuals to produce their own video CV that can be shared with employers as part of their application process. This will show them engaged in hobbies, volunteering or work scenarios and can also include recorded references and testimonials from managers, teachers, supervisors or lecturers. This approach provides an opportunity to get a more rounded picture of a potential employee, more so than they may be able to express on paper.

#### ***North Ayrshire See Me CV***

Initially the programme was set up in order for clients with disabilities to show online their capabilities and skills and give a flavour of the personality behind the CV and we saw an increase in the numbers of interviews and job offers being received. As a by-product of the programme, we have seen a huge increase in client interest in the media and technology involved. There has been a steady attendance at group meetings which has helped enormously in breaking down many of the social barriers previously experienced. The clients themselves have increased confidence and there has been independent social interaction amongst the clients involved in the programme.

#### ***Going Forward***

The Supported Employment Team are currently working with North Ayrshire Council Human Resources team to initiate a wider pilot of the See Me CV video process. This would allow any applicants with a learning disability the option to upload a video in support of their application. Longer-term aspirations are for this to be adopted at a national level. Within the Supported Employment Team caseload the long-term aim is to have every client take part in See Me CV production. The team have recently embarked on a separate project with Skills Development Scotland to offer the training programme to Additional Support Needs schools within North Ayrshire which will be beginning as soon as lockdown restrictions allow.

## Case Study – Supported Employment Equal Programme

Steven is autistic and lives with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). He was extremely interested in gaining a position within administration. Though high functioning, very capable using IT equipment and able to carry out all the basic administrative functions that would be required, his personality could be perceived by some as a barrier to achieving the dream job.

Steven's behaviour could range from being extremely introverted to extremely extroverted and the team had been coaching and supporting him in understanding his own behaviours. This was very beneficial, particularly being able to see himself on video for example where he saw his own reactions to any questions that the trainer would ask. Steven found this was a great learning curve.

The Team determined that Steven would need the support of an employer who could take time to train and coach him and that a possible mentor within the workplace would be a huge benefit. Initial conversations with employers indicated that they perceived this as taking too much time. The Team realised very quickly that the use of the See Me CV would be a major benefit to all concerned by enabling the employers to "meet" Steven, without preconceptions about his personality.

The video clips showed Steven as he really is - a vibrant young person, committed and passionate about what he wants to do with his career. The video acknowledged the issues and the need for coaching and tuition – but mainly showed someone who could be a huge asset to any administrative team.

Steven's See Me CV was shown to our Council's internal Directors and this in turn encouraged the HR Director to review our own recruitment procedures.

By using a different approach through the See Me CV, Steven has gained a part-time position within a local lawyer's office and has also been accepted for a Modern Apprenticeship within our Council. He will begin training as soon as lockdown restrictions are lifted and training can progress.

*Name has been changed.*



## **Equality Outcome 4.1b: Our Recruitment Practices and the Disability Confident Scheme**

There is recognition that some recruitment practices can be a barrier to employment for particular groups.

Each of the Ayrshire Equality Partners have continued to promote themselves as an employer of choice by providing employability programmes, especially for unemployed young people, whilst continuing to guarantee an interview to candidates who have a disability and who meet the minimum criteria for the post. We also continue to support staff who become disabled to remain in employment.

Our baseline data of all Partners' activities with respect to the Disability Confident Scheme has revealed that all Partners have reached Level Two. In the interim period some of the partners have been working towards achieving Level Three of the scheme.

Following North Ayrshire Council's achievement in re-accreditation at Level Two of the Disability Confident Scheme, we started preparing our submission for Level 3 and aimed to submit this by September 2020. Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic this has been delayed and we are exploring options of completing a digital submission to obtain Level Three.

In order to achieve Level Three the Supported Employment Team have been liaising with the HR Team and COSLA in the potential introduction of the [See Me CV](#) to more applicants in the recruitment process.

### *What difference did we make?*

Managers and Human Resources colleagues are committed to supporting employees to remain at work following a change to their health and we have provided opportunities for our colleagues to do so. In addition, we ensure employees are trained appropriately which has given them a greater understanding of the issues faced and potential solutions available to support our colleagues.

### *Going forward*

- We will support all Partners in their attempts to progress to Level 3 of the Disability Confident Scheme.
- We will continue to look at alternative methods of attracting a wide range and diverse pool of applicants for available post within all Partner organisations.

## **The Disability Confident Scheme**

**North Ayrshire re-achieved Level Two of the Disability Confident scheme and are exploring the feasibility of advancing to Level Three.**

Level Two of the Disability Confident Scheme currently supports applicants in their journey in securing employment within North Ayrshire Council. We are committed to actively looking to attract and recruit disabled individuals, providing a full inclusive and accessible recruitment process and continuing to support and develop our employees within their employment through our Employee Journey, Time to Talk (personal development reviews) and the Disability Forum.

In 2019, we received 6,639 applications of which 5.26% were disabled applicants. The Disability Confident Scheme ensures employers guarantee an interview to disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria. In achieving Level Three of the scheme we hope to see an increase in the number of applications and successful new starts.

## **Equality Outcome 4.2: A Better Educated Workforce to Support Equality Inclusiveness**

We recognise that a better educated and more skilful workforce could lead to an increase in employment opportunities and provide conditions for everyone to realise their full potential.

We carried out a refresh and relaunch of our Equality and Diversity training programme during the early part of 2020; this led to a completion rate of 721 employees during 2020 compared to 224 completions during 2019. British Sign Language awareness was introduced during 2020 and a refresh of training for online Equality Impact Assessments is underway.

### *What difference did we make?*

The audit of available training and training already delivered is ongoing. The following training courses have been delivered across partners so far:

#### **Face to Face Training**

- Equality & Diversity New Employee Induction: 1,480
- Equality Impact Assessment: 110
- Unconscious Bias: 60
- Delivering an accessible venue: 30
- Gender based violence: 165
- Sensory Impairment: 8

#### **e-learning**

- Equality and Diversity (Mandatory): 3,583
- LGBT Awareness: 194
- Deaf Awareness: 162
- Sight Loss Awareness: 236
- British Sign Language: 53 (North Ayrshire Council figure)

Employees are receiving high quality training and as a result are more knowledgeable in equality and diversity issues. This allows us to provide a better service to all stakeholders. Our audit of 'available', and in 'development', training resources has allowed Partners to share their approaches and learn from each other.

### *What we will do now/future work?*

We will continue to review training resources held by all Partners explore where joint delivery would be most effective.

For further information please contact:

**The Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team**

Tel: 01294 324648 Email: [NorthAyrshirePerforms@north-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:NorthAyrshirePerforms@north-ayrshire.gov.uk)

