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**Shared Equality Outcomes 2021 – 2025**

**Final Report 2025**

*ACCESSIBILITY CHECKED AND PASSED APRIL 2025*

**1. Introduction**

All public authorities in Scotland must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty, also known as the General Equality Duty, set out in the Equality Act 2010. This means that all public authorities, as part of their day-to-day business, must show how they will:

* Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act;
* Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it; and
* Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The protected characteristics referred to, as listed in the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation. We are all likely to have more than one protected characteristic, (intersectionality) which make up our individual identities.

For the period 2021-2025, South Ayrshire Council worked with our neighbouring authorities and the Ayrshire Equality Partnership to develop Pan-Ayrshire Equality Outcomes. Working together, we have reviewed the progress and produced a finalised report. Going forward from 2025-2029 South Ayrshire Council will have their own set of Equality Outcomes.

By reviewing, revising and publishing Equality Outcomes on a regular basis, we aim to make better, more positive and fairer decisions, and show that these decisions are bringing tangible benefits for our communities and our employees.

**2. What are Equality Outcomes?**

National guidance on setting Equality Outcomes notes that these should be proportionate and relevant to the functions and strategic priorities of the organisations setting them, and that they may include both short term and long-term benefits for people with protected characteristics.

From the outset of the development process, the following definition was applied to ensure consistency and rigour.

Outcomes are not what we do, but the beneficial change or effect which results from what we do. These changes may be for individuals, groups, families, organisations or communities.

Specifically, an Equality Outcome should achieve one or more of the following:

* Eliminate discrimination
* Advance equality of opportunity
* Foster good relations

Equality Outcomes were developed on the basis that they were short to medium term (1 to 4 years) and linked with longer term national outcomes.

It should be noted that a number of these Equality Outcomes linked with existing policies and strategies, supporting the mainstreaming of equalities considerations into our day-to-day business. We also wished to ensure a focused effort on areas for improvement, specifically to improve equality and reduce inequalities.

**3. Rationale for Shared Equality Outcomes**

A number of organisations across Ayrshire deliver public services to local communities. In doing so, these organisations must ensure that no person or group is discriminated against on the basis of any protected characteristics they may possess.

Each public sector organisation has a requirement to develop and publish a set of Equality Outcomes. Considering the close links between many public sector organisations in Ayrshire, it was proposed that joint working in the development of Equality Outcomes should be undertaken. More importantly, as all organisations are delivering, or supporting the delivery of services to the same communities, their experience could be improved if approaches to equalities issues were consistent across these bodies. As a result, a decision was taken that public sector organisations across Ayrshire would develop a shared set of Equality Outcomes, whilst still maintaining individual accountability for their part with some separate actions delivered locally.

This approach to setting shared Equality Outcomes built on an already established joint working relationship through the Ayrshire Equality Partnership (AEP). This partnership consists of representatives from the three local authorities from North, East and South Ayrshire Councils; NHS Ayrshire & Arran; HSCP from North, East & South Ayrshire; Ayrshire College; University of the West of Scotland; Ayrshire Joint Valuation Board; Police Scotland; Scottish Fire & Rescue Service; Community Justice Ayrshire and The Terence Higgins Trust.

The following tables outline the progress made to date. The RAG (red, amber, green) status has been used to signify action status: red (not yet started), amber (progress is slow) and green (progress is either complete or on target).

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| **OVERARCHING SHARED EQUALITY OUTCOME 1:** **IN AYRSHIRE, PEOPLE EXPERIENCE SAFE AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES** |
| **Links to National Outcomes:*** We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish Society;
* We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk;
* We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger; and
* We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility of their own actions and how they affect others.
 |
| **Local Equality Outcome 1.1: Victims, witnesses and partner agencies feel more confident in reporting hate incidents through a variety of methods.** |
| ***Inequality being addressed:*** *People suffer hatred and violence because of their protected characteristics* |
| **Outputs: Increase people’s awareness of hate crime** |
| **Actions:*** Raise Council, Education Employees and Licensing Board Members’ awareness to better understand hate crime.

**Measurements:*** Develop a Hate Crime e-learning course.
* Number of staff/Board Members undertake training.

**Progress Update:***To enhance staff awareness and understanding, a series of six Unconscious Bias webinars were organised by the Equalities team and expertly delivered by Police Scotland. Between October 2024 and January 2025, 77 staff members from South Ayrshire Council participated in these sessions, with the majority attending five engaging events. The training received positive feedback from all attendees, and Police Scotland conducted a thorough evaluation to assess its impact.**A Hate Crime Webinar was delivered by Police Scotland in March 2025, this was open to SAC staff as well as the Ayrshire Equality Partnership. We had 47 attendees from various services. A further Hate Crime Webinar will follow in the new financial year of 2025/2026.* |
| **Actions:*** Work with partners to raise awareness of hate crime with community members through the development of a conference.

**Measurements:*** Number of people attending the conference.
* Evaluation of the conference.

**Progress Update:***Work has taken place with partners to raise awareness of hate crime within the community. In October 2022, the East Ayrshire Council led in partnership with the Ayrshire Equality Partnership, a conference to Empower communities in Ayrshire to End Hate Crime. With hate crime figures on the rise, the ever-present need existed to support understanding of diversity and foster community cohesion, and thus in early 2022, East Ayrshire Councils’ Corporate Officer (Equality and Diversity) brought a subgroup of the Ayrshire Equality Partnership partners together and began organising the conference which was subsequently held on 5 October 2022. The conference offered opportunities to support learning in relation to hate crime through the lived experiences of its speakers and the good practice demonstrated across Ayrshire and beyond to tackle the issues related to hate crime and promote positive solutions. Dave Scott, Campaign Director from Nil by Mouth hosted the conference with keynote addresses from Dr Christian Harrison, Reader in Leadership and Khadjia Mohammed, Senior Lecturer both from the University of the West of Scotland. The conference also offered workshops for participants to choose from including I am me charity (Keep Safe initiative); Scottish Refugee Council; Police Scotland, Criminal Justice Authority and others. Over 100 people attended the conference which was deemed to be a huge success in meeting its aim of raising awareness but moreover giving people the chance to consider what they can do in their role and workplace.* |
| **Actions:*** Improved use of third-party reporting.

**Measurements:*** Increased reporting via third party reporting using a variety of media tools and promotional materials.

**Progress Update:***In order to improve the use of third party reporting, awareness has taken place of the Ayrshire third party reporting sites* [*ayrshire-third-party-reporting-centres.docx (live.com)*](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.scotland.police.uk%2Fspa-media%2F513l5rwk%2Fayrshire-third-party-reporting-centres.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) *Work will continue to raise awareness of third-party reporting through our community planning partners.* |
| **Local Equality Outcome 1.2: More young people and care leavers have access to suitable appropriate accommodation to live independently and safely in the community** |
| ***Inequality being addressed:*** *Young people and Care Leavers have lack of access to suitable accommodation and supports* |
| **Outputs: Better understanding of the needs of young people and care leavers to effectively meet their housing needs** |
| **Actions:*** Continue to work in partnership to develop our services for young people through the Improving Housing Outcomes for Young Care Leavers and Youth Housing Support groups.

**Measurements:*** Number of young people and care leavers taking up suitable accommodation.
* Number of young people and care leavers maintaining a suitable tenancy.

**Progress Update:***Partnership working has continued between Housing Services, HSCP and other partners to ensure all young people with housing need, who are care leavers or at risk of becoming homeless are supported.   Housing Services, the HSCP and partners continue to consider alternative housing options for young people and care leavers.  A review of the Youth Housing Support Group has developed robust assessments of support requirements for young people and care leavers at points of transition, co-ordinating person-centered support to reduce duplication and maximise positive outcomes for young people.* |
| **Local Equality Outcome 1.3: To embed a human rights ethos across schools in South Ayrshire to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in schools and the wider community** |
| ***Inequality being addressed:*** *Inconsistency in developing a shared understanding of everyone’s rights and a commitment to respect one’s own and other people’s rights* |
| **Outputs: All schools in South Ayrshire are registered with UNICEF**  |
| **Actions:*** Support the embedding of children’s rights across the curriculum.

**Measurements:*** An increase in Schools achieving Bronze status.
* An increase in schools achieving Silver status.
* Increase in schools achieving Gold status.

**Progress Update:***As highlighted in our Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming progress report 2025, 98% of our schools signed up to Rights Respecting School Awards and 82% are accredited and 14% are working towards their next levels.* |

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| **OVERARCHING SHARED EQUALITY OUTCOME 2: IN AYRSHIRE, PEOPLE EXPERIENCE SAFE AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES** |
| **Links to National Outcomes:*** We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society;
* We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need; and
* Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people’s needs.
 |
| **Local Equality Outcome 2.1: More disabled people, older people and women access public transport safely and in comfort with an integrated service that provides accessible information, appropriate assistance and support from transport staff.** |
| ***Inequality being addressed:*** *Disabled people, older people and women experience difficulties accessing public transport because of safety, comfort, availability, connectivity, information and assistance, staff training and customer service* |
| **Outputs:** * **The barriers facing disabled people, women and older people and their needs are identified .**
* **The changes, support and resources required are understood and agreed.**
* **Delivery of a programme of travel improvements and passenger assistance.**
 |
| **Actions:*** Engagement with disabled people, women, and older people, relevant organisations and third sector organisations.
* Meetings with transport providers.
* Consultation about changes.
* Programme of support and improvements agreed.
* Test and pilot new and modified service methods, technology around vehicles, including electric vehicles and practices.

**Measurements:*** Develop system for evaluating impact and measuring progress.
* Collect and analyse data on disabled people, women and older people to evaluate impact and measure progress.

**Progress Update:***On Thursday, 5 September 2024, the Ayrshire Equality Partnership hosted the Pan Ayrshire Travel Summit at East Ayrshire Council HQ. The event provided a platform for individuals from various groups across Ayrshire to voice their concerns and offer praise regarding travel connectivity in the region. Key representatives from Scotrail, SPT, Stagecoach, Community Transport, and Ayrshire Roads Alliance were present as panel members, taking part in a 'Questions Time'-style discussion to address the audience's queries. The summit was a great success, drawing a strong turnout and fostering vibrant discussions. Following the event, a summary of the questions and responses was shared with all attendees to ensure continued engagement and transparency.* |
| **Local Equality Outcome 2.2: Improve engagement with Council Services and enhance access to information for marginalised and under-represented groups** |
| ***Inequality being addressed:*** *Opportunities to engage with marginalised and under-represented groups by considering any barriers they may be experiencing and to address these issues to improve engagement* |
| **Outputs:** * **The experience of marginalised or under-represented groups continue to inform decision making.**
* **Ensure processes are in place to welcome, support and encourage marginalised or under-represented groups to improve engagement with Council Services.**
 |
| **Actions:*** Continued involvement of tenants in the development and scrutiny of Housing Services through Tenant Participation (TP) Structures

**Measurements:*** Number of Tenant Participation (TP) meetings.
* Number of consultations.
* Number of events, including the TP Fun Day.

**Progress Update:***Housing Services have continued to engage with tenants through Tenant Participation structures and community engagement.  Involved Tenants are actively working towards completing a Tenant Led Assessment on the Council’s Letting Standard and further scrutiny and performance activities are being scheduled.  Tenants have been involved in consultations and reviews in terms of performance, the Housing Revenue Account and new build developments.  Tenants are currently involved in a review of the Tenant Participation Strategy, the current Tenant Participation Strategy (2019-2024) will be refreshed and updated with the new Tenant Participation Strategy (2025-2030) being submitted to Cabinet for approval.* |
| **Actions:*** BSL Action Plan to be further implemented and engage with other services e.g. Sensory Impairment Team

**Measurements:*** Review and implement actions as per pan Ayrshire BSL Action Plan 2018-2024

**Progress Update:***Continued implementation of the British Sign Language (BSL) Local Plan 2018-2024. A* [*mid-term progress report*](https://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/media/5593/BSL-Mid-Term-Report-PROOF-3-1/pdf/BSL_Mid_Term_Report_PROOF_3_1.pdf?m=637944413007370000) *was produced in October 2021 with the final progress report reported to Service and Partnerships Performance Panel in* [*March 2025*](https://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/media/14385/Ayrshire-Shared-British-Sign-Language-BSL-Local-Plan-2024-2030/pdf/item_5_COMBINED_20250311_SPPP_BSL_Action_Plan.docx_1joiqcrbo60ht.pdf?m=1741083748300)*. It was agreed to continue to collaborate on a pan-Ayrshire basis and the new Ayrshire Shared BSL Local Plan 2024-2030 was approved by Cabinet in* [*April 2024*](https://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/media/11768/item-8a-BSL-Local-Plan/pdf/item_8a_20240423_C_BSL_Local_Plan.pdf?m=1713261966077) *where it was agreed that the supporting* [*operational action plan*](https://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/media/14385/Ayrshire-Shared-British-Sign-Language-BSL-Local-Plan-2024-2030/pdf/item_5_COMBINED_20250311_SPPP_BSL_Action_Plan.docx_1joiqcrbo60ht.pdf?m=1741083748300) *was to be submitted to Service and Partnerships Performance Panel for information (March 2025) and future updates. The new BSL Plan 2024-2030 Operational Action Plan has been developed in partnership with Ayrshire College; East, North and South Ayrshire Councils; East, North and South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnerships and NHS Ayrshire & Arran. The Ayrshire Shared BSL Plan and supporting operational plan is reflective of the priorities contained within the Scottish Government’s* [*National BSL Plan 2023-2029*](https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2023/11/bsl-national-plan-2023-2029/documents/british-sign-language-national-plan-2023-2029/british-sign-language-national-plan-2023-2029/govscot%3Adocument/british-sign-language-national-plan-2023-2029.pdf)*, which was published on 6 November 2023.* *BSL Training was held in October 2021, with a further block arranged for March 2022. Each block was a 6-week course and was facilitated by Signs4Life. October 2021 – 16 participants – 15 Thriving Communities Team (Employability), 1 Sensory Impairment Team and March 2022 – 14 participants – 7 Modern Apprentices (SSHC and Childcare), 7 Thriving Communities (CLD/Employability/Health and Wellbeing).**We have had one member of staff from our Communities Team attend a British Sign Language Introductory course at Ayr College and one member of the Communities Team attend Level One. On completion of the introductory course the member of staff has signed up to complete Level One BSL. As we move into 2025, South Ayrshire Council will have 10 members of staff from their Employability and Skills team commence the Level One qualification.* |
| **Actions:*** Scoping review of documents and materials distributed or available from Council be checked for Accessibility by Equality Champions

**Measurements:*** Report of scoping review on Accessibility of documents and materials

**Progress Update:***Information that the Council provides can be made available, on request, in braille, large print or audio formats and can be translated into a range of languages*. To ensure that we comply with The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 all documents which are available online must be accessibility checked. Guidance has been produced for staff on publishing accessible documents. |

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| **OVERARCHING SHARED EQUALITY OUTCOME 3: IN AYRSHIRE, PEOPLE HAVE OPPORTUNITIES TO FULFIL THEIR POTENTIAL THROUGHOUT LIFE** |
| **Links to National Outcomes:*** We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people;
* We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation;
* Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens;
* Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed; and
* We live longer, healthier lives.
 |
| **Local Equality Outcome 3.1 and 3.2: Young people, disabled people and women have access to training and employment** |
| ***Inequality being addressed:*** *Young people, disabled people and women have barriers to accessing training and employment opportunities* |
| **Outputs: To provide support to access employment to reduce health as a constraint to build an inclusive economy (3.1)** |
| **Actions:*** Provide support for unemployed people, in particular people with disabilities, women and residents to overcome health barriers to economic activity.
* To support residents to retain employment by addressing health barriers.
* Support local business to access health related supports to improve retention and productivity of their workforce.

**Measurements:*** Number of unemployed people who declare a disability engaging at support stage to employment.
* Number of unemployed women engaging at support stage to employment.
* Number of people who declare a disability entering the AGD workforce.
* Number of women accessing AGD workplace supports to improve retention in the workforce.

**Progress Update:***The Ayrshire Growth Deal sees approximately £251 million of funding from the Scottish and UK Governments being invested across East, North and Ayrshire. 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 East, North and South Ayrshire. We have embedded actions for the Ayrshire Growth Deal within our Equality Outcomes and although these will take some time to realise, they help to ensure a continued focus on equality groups within the Ayrshire Growth Deal programmes.* *Working for a Healthy Economy is a large-scale investment, totalling £5 million, to deliver occupational health to ensure that Ayrshire has the requisite workforce to drive economic growth in the future. This project, implemented in May 2021, will serve to widen the labour pool and provide the basis for the maximisation of benefits arising from Ayrshire Growth Deal capital investments and will support:* * *unemployed residents overcome health barriers to economic activity;*
* *employed residents to retain employment by addressing health barriers; and*
* *local businesses to access health related supports to improve retention and productivity of their workforce.*

*Up until March 2025 Ayrshire the Building a Healthy Economy Programme has supported the following:**Ayrshire Wide**To date 1,697 unemployed individuals engaged with the Working for a Healthy Economy service of which:**·        32% anxiety levels reduced**·        32.4% depression reduced**·        30.8 % health and wellbeing improved**·        174 gained employment**South Ayrshire**To date 410 unemployed individuals engaged with the Working for a Healthy Economy service of which:**·        31.7% anxiety levels reduced**·        30.2% depression symptoms reduced**·        30% health and wellbeing improved**·        42 gained employment* |
| **Outputs: (3.2)*** **Disadvantaged and identified PC groups have increased access to relevant employment and training opportunities.**
* **Increased availability of suitable employment opportunities.**
* **Disadvantaged and identified PC groups have improved functional skills to access training and employment.**
* **Disadvantaged and identified PC groups have improved interpersonal skills.**
 |
| **Actions:*** To continue to support the Young Person’s Guarantee initiative in South Ayrshire with supported employment and tailored jobs scheme.
* Increase number of young BME people joining Modern Apprenticeship Scheme.
* To develop and provide support packages.
* To plan effectively for interventions across South Ayrshire/pan Ayrshire to support and reduce the attainment gap.

**Measurements:*** Establishment of a pan Ayrshire Young Person’s Guarantee Board Number of people supported from protected characteristic groups.
* Number of people gaining training and employment from PC groups.
* Number of people accessing non -traditional roles tackling occupational segregation.

**Progress Update:***South Ayrshire’s Local Employment Partnership (LEP) is committed to reducing inequality and closing the gap, while ensuring we create a fair, inclusive, suitable economy through employability and volunteering opportunities across South Ayrshire.* *The LEP lead the planning, decision-making and implementation of employability provision across South Ayrshire to ensure individual needs and labour market demands are met.**The LEP is currently focusing on the following priority areas:** *Creating pathways for young people, adults and parents into fair, flexible and sustainable work.*
* *Sector-based work academies that assist unemployed people to move into occupational areas, in line with labour market demands.*
* *Economically Inactive.*
* *Working with local employers to help close the disability employment gap.*

*Thriving Communities employability programmes are designed to support young people and adults, some of whom may be experiencing barriers to employment, to develop the skills and experience to successfully progress to/back into work. The team’s collaborative approach to employability aligns with the UK and Scottish Governments employability priorities.  Programmes include:* * *In-school senior phase support.*
* *Care experience and young carers enhanced tailored support.*
* *Employability pipeline provision.*
* *Town Centre programme.*
* *Pre-apprenticeships.*
* *Community Justice - including promoting recruit with conviction.*
* *SALUS- support for individuals experiencing problems with their health and wellbeing.*

*Employment opportunities under Thriving Communities include:** *A wide range of Modern Apprenticeships opportunities, including our Care Experience and Young Carers Guarantee.*
* *Supported Employment Tailored Job Opportunities for individuals with additional support needs.*
* *Evolve Programme - creation of temporary jobs with SAC or with 3rd Sector, for individuals who have been long-term unemployed.*

***Key achievements 2023/24:**** ***SLDR and Participation Measure*** *- South Ayrshire were in the top four councils across the country for the number of young people progressing to a positive destination on leaving school (SLDR) and in South Ayrshire 93.7% of young people aged 16-19years are in a positive destination (national average* ***90.8%****). (Follow Up Report Published August 23). This has been achieved through continued partnership working with SDS, door-step visits and effective in school provision - including early intervention.*
	+ ***The Annual Participation Measure****, released in August 2023, reports on the number of 16 – 19year olds participating in education, training or employment. The published data notes South Ayrshire’s rate of* ***96.6%*** *surpassing the national average of 94.3%.*
	+ ***Work Out -*** *During 23/24 78 Pupils Graduated from the Work Out Programme achieving their Steps to Work Qualification SCQF .3*
* ***MODERN APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME*** *Thriving Communities supported the recruitment of the first Adult Craft Apprenticeships. From September 23 – March 24* ***25 people*** *gained Modern Apprenticeships, in the following occupational areas:*

*Business and Administration - 10**Social Services and Health Care - 6**Roadbuilding and Maintenance – 2**Active Leisure – 1**Horticulture - 6** ***PARENTAL SUPPORT/CHILD POVERTY –*** *From April 23 – March 24* ***203 families*** *across South Ayrshire have been supported to increase their household income.*
* ***EMPLOYABILITY SUPPORT –*** *From April 23 – March 24**we supported* ***936 people****, this includes the following priority groups:*

*Care Experience – 99**Young Carers – 40* *50+ (not parents) – 84**Economically Inactive – 19****Destinations*** *– from April 23 – March 24 -* ***274*** *destinations were positive.**Progression to Employment including Self Employment - 151**Progression to Modern Apprenticeship – 37**Progression to Further Education – 83**Volunteering – 3** ***ACCREDITED TRAINING*** *– From Sept 23 – March 24*

*Emergency First Aid at Work – 28**REHIS – 20** ***BESPOKE TRAINING*** *– From Sept 23 – March 24*

 *Supported to achieve bespoke accredited training - 9** ***SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT*** *– From April 23 – March 24* ***96 people*** *with additional support needs have been supported through a range of support.*

***Progressions****:**Employment – 11**Further Education – 26**Modern Apprenticeship - 5* *Volunteering – 1**Tailored Jobs to Employment – 2** ***TOWN CENTRE PROGRAMME*** *From April 23 – March 24* ***62 young people*** *have been supported through the Town Centre Programme.*
	+ *19 have progressed into a positive destination including Modern Apprenticeships, employment and further education. 34 continue to engage with Thriving Communities and are progressing along the employability pipeline. 9 have disengaged but are still receiving aftercare support from the team.*
* ***EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT – 16*** *ERI’s were provided to clients/residents of South Ayrshire, ensuring Fair Work, sustainable pay & permanent contracts between Sept 23 – Mar 24.*
* ***EVOLVE*** *targeted programme for long-term unemployed clients. We supported clients furthest removed from the job market due to multiple complex needs including criminal convictions, homelessness, disabilities, ASN and mental health and provided 6 months paid employment with SAC and 3rd sector – acting as a pathway to long term employment for many clients.*
* ***EVOLVE SAC Internal*** *– 8 participants commenced 6 month paid employment in various departments within South Ayrshire Council in Feb/March 24.*
* ***EVOLVE External*** *– 8 participants commenced 6 month paid employment with local employers in South Ayrshire.*
* **EDUCATION SCOTLAND HM INSPECTION (2-4 October 2023)** *Employability data is particularly strong and shows significant sustained improvement. Strategic decisions are informed well by demographic, qualitative and quantitative data, which is complemented and informed by staff knowledge and local intelligence. There is a clear focus on improving outcomes for disadvantaged and marginalised groups including care experienced young people, young carers, those who are economically inactive and people who would benefit from support with their mental health and wellbeing* [Education Scotland CLD Inspection South Ayrshire](https://education.gov.scot/media/hhslobf1/south-ayrshire-council-cld-pv-141123.pdf).
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| **OVERARCHING SHARED EQUALITY OUTCOME 4:**  **IN AYRSHIRE, PUBLIC BODIES WILL BE INCLUSIVE AND DIVERSE EMPLOYERS** |
| **Links to National Outcomes:*** We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people; and
* We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation.
 |
| **Local Equality Outcome 4.1 to 4.3: Our BME, disabled and LGBT+ staff have safe and supportive work environments to thrive, and the Council is seen as an employer of choice** |
| ***Inequality being addressed:*** *BME, disabled and LGBT+ staff lack access to peer support which can lead to isolation and low morale at work* |
| **Outputs: Relaunch of the Equality Champions and the Equality & Diversity Forum (4.1)** |
| **Actions:**To identify colleagues within the Council, Education and Licensing Board, Elected Members**Measurements:*** Relaunch of Equality Champions and the Equality & Diversity Forum – number of meetings held and initiatives.

**Progress Update:*** *The role of the Equality and Diversity Forum is to support the Council to deliver on its equality and diversity responsibilities by providing a consultative and inclusive link to the diverse communities of South Ayrshire, and through the work of the Forum, promote equality and diversity and encourage good relations throughout South Ayrshire. The remit of the Equality and Diversity Forum was refreshed in 2022, with the main areas of focus:*
* *To support the Council to meet its Public Sector Equality Duty responsibilities, including the Specific Duties to progress the Council’s Equality Outcomes and to Mainstream Equalities;*
* *To support the development of the Council’s policies and procedures relating to equality and diversity;*
* *To promote inclusion and participation of the diverse communities and hard to reach and under-represented minority interests in South Ayrshire;*
* *To raise awareness of the needs and priorities of the diverse communities in South Ayrshire;*
* *To provide a link to the voluntary sector and organisations representing the diverse communities within South Ayrshire; and*
* *To support the development of the Council’s policies and procedures relating to Fairer Scotland Duty.*

*Membership of the of the forum comprises Elected Members supported by staff from Policy, Performance and Community Planning. The Equality and Diversity Forum now has in place an Improvement Plan focusing on areas such as training, the development of an integrated equalities impact assessment and increasing the number of equality champions. To ensure that the Equalities Duty is understood and mainstreamed across the Council, all service areas that are impacted upon by the Equality Duty, or that provide a front facing service, have a representative on the Equality and Diversity Forum as a ‘Champion’. Equality Champions now attend all Equality & Diversity Forums.* |
| **Outputs: Establishment of a safe and supported environment for staff from the Council, Education and Licensing Board who identify with a particular protected characteristic (4.2)** |
| **Actions:**Explore with the workforce the desire to establish a BME staff network either locally or with employees from North and East Ayrshire Council.**Measurements:*** BAME staff network established.

**Progress Update:*** *Following recommendations from the Scottish Government’s report on Race Equality, Employment and Skills: Making Progress Report, the Council adopted some of these recommendations and actions into its Equality Outcomes. The concept of a Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Forum had been considered before, however the relatively low numbers of employees from a BAME background (1%) of the total workforce) working within the Council raised doubt around the viability of trying to create a group. Following the Scottish Government recommendations, the three Ayrshire local authorities decided to create a Pan Ayrshire Group. However following the group’s establishment in June 2022, the group is no longer meeting.*
 |
| **Actions:**Explore with the workforce the desire to establish a disability staff network.**Measurements:*** Disability staff network established.

**Progress Update:*** *An ‘Employees with a Disability Forum’ was established with the purpose of consulting on the Future Operating Model. Future engagement with the forum will take place when required.*
 |
| **Actions:*** Explore with the workforce the desire to establish a LGBT+ staff network.

**Measurements:*** LGBT+ staff network established.

**Progress Update:*** *Work took take place with staff to gauge the interest of establishing an LGBT+ employee forum – there was no expression of interest to establish a network.*
 |
| **Outputs: Council vacancies are advertised through specialised partnership organisations who target and support PC groups (4.3)** |
| **Actions:*** Contact various specialist organisations to seek opportunities to advertise Council vacancies to gain a range of more diverse applicants and future employees.

**Measurements:*** Number of partner organisations advertising Council vacancies

**Progress Update:*** *Specialist organisations were contacted on a pan-Ayrshire basis to seek opportunities to promote council vacancies.*
 |