
ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S UNIT

COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

23 AUGUST 2006

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY SCHEME – CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

SUMMARY

The Council, along with other public authorities, has a statutory duty to produce a Race Equality Scheme and a Disability Equality Scheme, and from April 2007, to produce a Gender Equality Scheme. This report sets out the Council's plans and action to date to produce an Equality and Diversity Scheme to incorporate all equality strands. There is a recommendation for Community Planning partners to join up future consultation and a proposal for working together to engage with disabled people's groups in September/October.

ACTION TO DATE

The Council published its revised Race Equality Scheme 2005-2008 on 30 November 2005. Three priorities were identified: consultation, monitoring and training and these formed the framework for the action plan.

The Council's Equality and Diversity Scheme is being developed this year and will be published in December 2006. The Scheme will incorporate the three Duties (Race, Disability and Gender) plus other equality strands (age, belief, sexual orientation). Consultation is a key part of this and in particular we need to involve people with disabilities in drawing up the Scheme to comply with the Disability Equality Duty.

An assessment has been made of consultation and research that is already available within the Council. The Equalities Challenge pilot project in South Kintyre has provided a starting point for further consultation and engagement. The next stage is to engage with disabled people's groups around Argyll and Bute to set the priorities for action plans and discussions have begun with colleagues in NHS Highland - Argyll and Bute.

There is an opportunity for the Council to share its experience and to develop a shared approach between community planning partners. All organisations that are required to produce an equality scheme will want to engage with the same people in Argyll and Bute and therefore it will be more effective to co-ordinate resources.

It is therefore **RECOMMENDED** that the officers in each organisation who are responsible for producing equality schemes co-ordinate activities to engage with people in the development of these schemes.

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