

Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council

To: Corporate Policy and Resources Committee
Date: 20 October 2015

Causeway Coast and Glens Council
Draft Interim Equality Action Plan

For decision and
approval

Linkage to Corporate Plan	
Strategic Priority	Leader and Champion
Objective	Civic Leadership
Lead Officer	Elizabeth Beattie
Cost: (If applicable)	

1.0 Background

1.1 Causeway Coast & Glens District Council is subject to the requirements of section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act which places a duty on the Council to comply with two statutory duties, which are:

Section 75 (1)

In carrying out our functions relating to Northern Ireland we are required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between

- persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation
- men and women generally
- persons with a disability and persons without
- persons with dependents and persons without.

Section 75 (2)

In addition, without prejudice to the obligations above, in carrying out our functions in relation to Northern Ireland we are required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

1.2 The Shadow Council was required to produce an Equality Scheme in 2014 outlining how the Council proposed to fulfil these Section 75 duties and this

Equality Scheme was approved for use by the new Council by the Equality Commission in March 2015.

- 1.3 One of the obligations included in this Scheme was the development of an Equality Action Plan by Council to promote equality of opportunity and good relations.

2.0 Draft Interim Equality Action Plan

- 2.1 A draft Equality Action Plan has therefore now been prepared for consideration by the Committee.
- 2.2 This Action Plan covers an interim period of one year (2015/16). Usually the Action Plan would cover a period of four years in line with the Council Strategy but because the Council is currently going through a period of transformation and change it is recommended that an interim, high level Action Plan be developed to take the Council through its the first transformational year.
- 2.3 The intention is to conduct a full, in-depth Audit of Inequalities in 2016 when structures have been established, new ways of working have been developed and new responsibilities assigned.
- 2.4 In this interim period the Action Plan that has been developed focuses on strategic and policy work that will assist in mainstreaming equality of opportunity and good relations within Council during its first year of operation.
- 2.5 The Action Plan outlines a number of objectives and identifies the S75 groups potentially affected. Action measures are included designed to help address any potential inequalities and these will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.
- 2.6 If approved by Committee and Council, the Action Plan will be issued for consultation to a wide range of relevant groups and organisations.

3.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee recommend to Council the approval of the draft Equality Action Plan for Causeway Coast & Glens District Council as set out in **Appendix 1** with the proviso that the document will be reviewed again by the Committee if any major changes arise from the consultation process.

**Causeway Coast and Glens
Borough Council**

**Equality Action
Plan**

2015/16

INTRODUCTION

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council has had its first Equality Scheme approved by the Equality Commission in March 2015. This Equality Scheme included a commitment to consult on and publish an Equality Action Plan for the Council. This Equality Action Plan would outline the ways in which the Council would actively promote equality of opportunity and good relations through its services and functions.

The Council has now developed an Equality Action Plan for an interim period of one year (2015 to 2016). As Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council emerged from the coming together of four legacy Councils, and as the Council has also taken on a number of new roles and responsibilities, it was determined that a one year interim Action Plan would be the most effective way forward given the demanding period of transformation and change the Council is currently experiencing.

This interim Action Plan has been based on a high level Audit of Inequalities which included a review of the audits and action plans of the four legacy Councils and the potential equality impacts of some of our new responsibilities such as the Planning function. The Action Plan focuses on strategic and policy work that the Council must undertake in order to mainstream equality of opportunity and good relations within Council.

It is recognised that the Action Plan does not in the main address specific operational and service issues. This is due to the process of change that the Council is working its way through at present. New structures are being developed, new responsibilities are being assigned and new ways of working are being established.

As the Council changes and develops its role and functions, however, a more robust Audit of Inequalities will need to be undertaken. The evidence gathered from this process can then be used to inform a longer term Equality Action Plan from 2016 to 2019 based on extensive qualitative and quantitative data.

It is intended that this Audit of Inequalities will help the Council identify any inequalities that exist in both existing and new or transferring functions. The Council would welcome any comments you may have on any inequalities you feel exist in our functions and we will use the feedback you give to inform our next Equality Action Plan from 2016 – 2019.

We are now consulting, however, on the interim Action Plan for 2015/16 which is outlined overleaf and the Council would welcome any comments you may have on this Action Plan. Please forward your comments to:

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by _____

DRAFT

ACTION PLAN & ACTION MEASURES

Objective	Mainstream Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations through the strategic planning, business planning and policy development functions of the Council				
S75 Group(s) Affected:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation • Men and women generally • Persons with a disability and persons without • Persons with dependents and persons without. 					
Key Potential Inequalities	Action Measures	Performance Indicators		Time-scale and Monitoring Arrangements	Lead Responsibility
		Outputs	Outcomes (for S75 Groups)		
Equality and Good Relations not reflected in Council Strategy and business plans (ie, the corporate planning process).	<p>Specific references to the promotion and mainstreaming of equality and good relations included in strategies and plans.</p> <p>Inclusion of specific S75 groups in the consultation process for plans and policies.</p> <p>Undertake a stakeholder analysis for all S75 groups in the new Council area.</p>	Ensure equality and good relations underpins the development of the Council Strategy and associated business plans.	Greater awareness among Councillors and staff of the importance of mainstreaming equality of opportunity and good relations in all that Council does	<p>To 2019 (lifespan of current Council Strategy)</p> <p>Monitored via:</p> <p>Comments and complaints.</p>	<p>Chief Executive</p> <p>SMT</p> <p>Heads of Service</p>

Objective	Mainstream Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations through the strategic planning, business planning and policy development functions of the Council				
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Key Potential Inequalities	Action Measures	Performance Indicators		Time-scale and Monitoring Arrangements	Lead Responsibility
		Outputs	Outcomes (for S75 Groups)		
Policy development process within Council is not responsive to equality and good relations issues.	Conduct timely S75 screening exercises in relation to all new and revised Council policies.	All Council policies to be screened in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Equality Scheme. Develop and deliver guidance on the EQIA process for relevant Council staff.	Improved decision making which is responsive to S75 equality and good relations issues.	An on-gong process as policies are developed. Monitored via: Screening and EQIA outcomes	Chief Executive SMT Heads of Service
Impact of the new role and functions on S75 groups.	Put in place a Development Plan which has been developed in conjunction with a wide range of S75 stakeholders.	Range of tools utilised to engage with stakeholders. Number of consultation	A Development Plan which incorporates S75 equality and good relations issues.	Development Plan in place by ???. Community Plan in place by March 2017.	Head of Planning Head of Policy and Community Planning

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Key Potential Inequalities	Action Measures	Performance Indicators		Time-scale and Monitoring Arrangements	Lead Responsibility
		Outputs	Outcomes (for S75 Groups)		
	Put in place a Community Plan which has been developed in conjunction with a wide range of S75 stakeholders.	methods used and outcomes from each consultation method.	A Community Plan which helps promote equality of opportunity and good relations.	Monitored via: SMART Output Actions Regular monitoring and evaluation.	
A need for good relations issues to be addressed.	Develop and deliver a Good Relations Strategy and Action Plan	Strategy in place (2014/17) and Action Plan being implemented.	A strategy and action plan which actively addressed good relations issues in the Borough.	2017 Monitored via: SMART Output Actions Regular monitoring and evaluation.	Director of Leisure and Development Head of Community and Culture

Objective	Ensure the Council meets its obligations under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.				
S75 Group(s) Affected:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persons with a disability and persons without 					
Key Potential Inequalities	Action Measures	Performance Indicators		Time-scale and Monitoring Arrangements	Lead Responsibility
		Outputs	Outcomes (for S75 Groups)		
Lack of positive attitudes towards people with a disability and reduced participation in public life by people with a disability.	<p>Implementation of the Council's Disability Action Plan.</p> <p>Raise awareness of the Action Plan among staff and Councillors.</p>	<p>Implementation of the action measures contained in the Disability Action Plan.</p> <p>Compliance with S49A of the DDA 1995 (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006).</p>	Promotion of positive attitudes towards disabled people and encouraging participation by disabled people in public life.	<p>2016 (On-going)</p> <p>Monitored via:</p> <p>Quarterly monitoring of progress on Disability Action Plan.</p>	<p>Chief Executive</p> <p>SMT</p> <p>Head of Policy and Community Planning</p>

Objective	Increase awareness among Councillors and Council Staff of S75 Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations Issues.				
S75 Group(s) Affected:					
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Key Potential Inequalities	Action Measures	Performance Indicators		Time-scale and Monitoring Arrangements	Lead Responsibility
		Outputs	Outcomes (for S75 Groups)		
Lack of awareness of S75 issues and requirements of S75 groups among Councillors and staff.	<p>Provision of an on-going programme of Equality and Good Relations training for Councillors and staff.</p> <p>Development of an on-going communications programme on equality and good relations issues for Councillors and staff.</p>	<p>A training programme developed for all Councillors and staff.</p> <p>A communications programme developed for Councillors and staff.</p>	<p>Greater awareness among Councillors and staff of the importance of equality and good relations in all that Council does.</p> <p>Improved policy development and decision making within Council.</p>	<p>2016 (on-going)</p> <p>Monitored via:</p> <p>Number of Councillors and staff participating in training programmes.</p> <p>Evaluation of training and communication tools.</p>	<p>Director of Performance</p> <p>Head of OD/HR</p> <p>Head of Policy and Community Planning</p>

Objective	Improve monitoring and data collection of information on equality of opportunity and good relations.				
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Key Potential Inequalities	Action Measures	Performance Indicators		Time-scale and Monitoring Arrangements	Lead Responsibility
		Outputs	Outcomes (for S75 Groups)		
Monitoring and data collection activities that do not capture and highlight potential inequalities.	<p>Review existing monitoring and reporting mechanisms, eg monitoring of staff and Councillors, grant aid applications, consultation responses, etc.</p> <p>Develop additional methods of capturing equality monitoring information, eg community planning data analysis, engagement activities, etc.</p>	Improved decision making based on up-to-date and relevant monitoring information.	Improved decision making which is responsive to S75 equality and good relations issues.	2016 (on-going)	<p>Director of Performance</p> <p>Head of Policy and Community Planning</p>

Objective	Ensure employee issues relating to S75 equality and good relations are addressed by Council.				
S75 Group(s) Affected:					
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Key Potential Inequalities	Action Measures	Performance Indicators		Time-scale and Monitoring Arrangements	Lead Responsibility
		Outputs	Outcomes (for S75 Groups)		
Possible under-representation of S75 groups in the Council workforce.	<p>Review Council recruitment policies to ensure they are open and inclusive.</p> <p>Review channels used to advertise vacancies.</p>	Development of inclusive recruitment policies.	Improved accessibility to Council workforce vacancies.	<p>2016 (On-going)</p> <p>Monitored via:</p> <p>Employee profile data</p> <p>Article 55 return</p>	<p>Director of Performance</p> <p>Head of OD/HR</p>
Employee policies and practices that demonstrate a commitment to the promotion of S75 equality of opportunity and good relations.	<p>Screen all draft employee related policies.</p> <p>Consult where appropriate on draft employee policies with relevant groups and organisations.</p>	Development of inclusive employee policies.	Impacts on S75 groups considered in the development of employee policies.	<p>2016 (On-going)</p> <p>Monitored via:</p> <p>Screening and EQIA outcomes. Comments and complaints.</p>	<p>Director of Performance</p> <p>Head of OD/HR</p>