



West Lothian  
Council

# Equality and Diversity Framework 2021-2025

Corporate Services  
April 2021

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Appendix 1 – Equality and Mainstreaming Outcomes 2021-2025 (Corporate, Education and Licensing)

## 1. Foreword

This document presents West Lothian Council's Corporate, Education Authority and Licensing Board Equality Mainstreaming Report for the period 2021 - 2025.

West Lothian Council is committed to tackling discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and promoting good relations both in our workforce and community. Mainstreaming equality is the process by which we will work towards achieving this as an organisation.

Our objective in mainstreaming equality is to integrate an equality and human rights perspective into the everyday work of the council, involving managers and policy makers across all council services, as well as equality specialists and community planning partners to ensure that 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is at the heart of everything we do'.

Equality mainstreaming is a long-term approach that aims to make sure that policy making within the Council is fully sensitive to the diverse needs and experiences of everyone affected. The approach will help to provide better information, transparency and openness in the way we make decisions about our services and resources.

West Lothian Council recognises that mainstreaming requires leadership and commitment to the principles and processes of mainstreaming equality, as well as ownership and integration within every service and team across the council.

Our Mainstreaming Reports since 2013 have outlined and evidenced our key commitments to tackling inequality and ensuring that equality mainstreaming was further embedded into the way we do business.

Finally, it is worth noting that the council's 2021-2025 outcomes have been produced under the lens of COVID-19. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed pre-existing inequalities, presented new challenges and provided the council with a rare opportunity to make significant changes in a dynamic way to continue to deliver services and support our employees throughout an unprecedented shared experience. Work to measure the impact of COVID-19 and to respond as required will continue throughout the forthcoming mainstreaming period.

Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick  
**Leader of the Council**  
April 2021

Graham Hope  
**Chief Executive**

## 2 West Lothian Context

- 2.1 West Lothian is a great place to live, work and do business, West Lothian Council aims to improve quality of life and opportunities for all citizens. We are a top performing council with a reputation for innovation, partnership working and customer focus.
- 2.2 The council is central to the provision of services that affect people's everyday lives, for example, housing, education, libraries, leisure and benefits. We therefore recognise that all services provided by the council need to reflect and consider the impact that they may have on equality. We aim to provide improved services that meet the needs and priorities of local community.
- 2.3 West Lothian is the ninth largest local authority in Scotland serving a population of approximately 183,100, accounting for 3.4% of Scotland's population and one of the fastest growing and youngest in the country.
- 2.4 According to the National Records of Scotland in 2019, 19% of the West Lothian population is aged under 15, 64% is aged 16 to 64 and 17% is aged 65 or over.

The gender split in West Lothian is as follows;

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Age 0 to 15	52%	48%
Age 16 to 64	49%	51%
Age 65+	45%	55%
Total*	49%	51%

\* The total represents all age bands that live within the West Lothian

- 2.5 Detailed diversity data for the West Lothian population was provided in the [Equality Mainstreaming Progress Report 2019](#). The Census 2021 was delayed due to the Covid19 pandemic and rescheduled for 2022. This report will be updated with further diversity data for the West Lothian population following publication of the Census 2022 results.

### **3. Our Services**

#### **Chief Executive's Office**

- 3.1 The Chief Executive office provides a number of services including Elections Administration, Complaints and Enquiries, Emergency Planning and West Lothian Lord-lieutenant.

#### **Education Services**

- 3.2 West Lothian Council's 67 primary schools, 11 secondary schools, 15 pre-school establishments (stand alone) and 6 additional support needs schools deliver Education Services to over 30,000 pupils and over 3,000 pre-school children, their parents/carers and the wider community.

#### **Housing, Customer and Building Services**

- 3.3 Housing, Customer and Building Services' vision is to improve lives and properties by designing and maintaining communities, homes and buildings. The service covers the functional areas of Building Services, Customer and Community Services, Customer Service Centre, Housing Need, Housing Operations, Housing Strategy and Development and the Performance and Change Service.

#### **Operational Services**

- 3.4 Operational Services plays a key role in the management and direct delivery of front line services to those who reside, visit and work in West Lothian. This service is grouped in to five functional areas; Facilities Management, NETs, Land and Countryside Services, Passenger Transport, Recycling, Waste and Fleet Services, and Roads & Transportation Services.

#### **Corporate Services**

- 3.5 Corporate Services plays a key role as an enabling service and provides a wide range of services covering all aspects of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Human Resources (HR), Legal Services, Corporate Health and Safety, Corporate Procurement Services, Performance and Information and Corporate Communications.

#### **Finance and Property Services**

- 3.6 Finance and Property Services plays a key role in providing positive leadership so that the council along with our Community Planning Partners continue to modernise and provide high quality services, fulfil the needs of our communities, and secure targeted outcomes. This service is comprised of the Anti-Poverty Service; Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud; Construction Services; Financial Management Unit; Property Management and Development and the Revenues Unit.

## **Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration**

- 3.7 West Lothian Council's Planning, Economic Development & Regeneration Service grouping covers the functional areas of Economic Development, Employability, Environmental Health & Trading Standards, Planning Services which includes the Education Planning, Environment and Climate Change teams, and Regeneration. The service has also taken over the co-ordinating role in the Community Planning Partnership.

## **Social Policy**

- 3.8 Social Policy encompasses a wide range of services planned with and delivered to a large number of people with a spectrum of differing needs: Children and Families, Adults with a Disability, Older People, those with a Learning Disability, those with Mental Health problems, as well as the Criminal and Youth Justice Service. Some social policy functions are part of a partnership arrangement that integrates health and social care. West Lothian Council and NHS Lothian have delegated some functions to the [West Lothian Integrated Joint Board \(IJB\)](#).

## **4. Legal context**

### **Public Sector Equality Duty**

- 4.1 Section 149 of The Equality Act 2010 came into force in April 2011, introducing a new Public Sector Equality duty. The Public Sector Equality Duty (often referred to as the 'general duty') requires public bodies in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:
1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct
  2. Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
  3. Foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

### **What are the Protected Characteristics?**

- 4.2 Everyone is protected by the Act. Every person has one or more of the protected characteristics, so the Act protects all of us against unfair treatment.

The protected characteristics are:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment

4. Pregnancy and maternity
5. Race – this includes ethnic or national origin, nationality and also includes Gypsy/Travellers.
6. Religion or belief – this includes a lack of belief
7. Sex
8. Sexual orientation
9. Marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of the duty to consciously consider the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by The Equality Act 2010).

### **The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012**

- 4.3 The Scottish Government has introduced a set of specific equality duties to support the better performance of the general duty by public bodies. These duties include requirements to:
- Develop and publish a mainstreaming report
  - Publish equality outcomes and report on progress (at least every two years)
  - Assess and review policies and practices
  - Gather and use employee information
  - Publish gender pay gap information
  - Publish statements on equal pay
  - Consider award criteria and conditions in relation of public procurement
  - Publish in a manner that is accessible
- 4.4 The Council's Equality Outcome plan for 2021-2025 are provided in Appendix 1. The council's latest gender and ethnicity pay gap information can be found in the council's Equal Pay Statement as appended to the 2017 -2021 progress report. (A link will be provided here prior to publication)
- 4.5 The Council as an Education Authority must also meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012. The Council also administers the Licensing Board and must meet the requirements of the Act and Regulations when undertaking its duties in this regard. Accordingly, the Education Authority and the Licensing Board outcomes and mainstreaming actions for 2021 - 2025 are included in this framework.

## **5. Equality Outcomes**

- 5.1 An equality outcome is defined by the Equality and Human Rights Commission as a change that provides results for individuals or communities as a consequence of the action the council has taken.
- 5.2 Outcomes include short-term benefits such as changes in awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes, and longer-term benefits such as changes in behaviours, decision-making, or social and environmental conditions.

## **6. Equality Outcomes Consultation**

- 6.1 Under the Equality Act in Scotland, public bodies have a specific duty to produce a set of equality outcomes which are informed by engagement with different equality groups and stakeholders. The outcomes are designed to help the council achieve its vision and meet the general duty to eliminate discrimination and harassment; promote equality of opportunity and promote good relations.
- 6.2 The West Lothian Equality Outcomes for the next four-year period of 2021- 2025 have been developed through evidence gathering and engagement work. Working in partnership with Edinburgh, and Midlothian Councils (including their Education Authority, Licensing Boards and IJBs), and NHS Lothian, the council developed a set of draft equality themes and outcomes for consultation based on evidence from across service areas, research and previous engagement with stakeholders.
- 6.3 Extended social distancing measures due to the Covid19 pandemic meant that consultation and engagement activity was primarily facilitated online. The online consultation was open from 3 November to 22 December 2020. Overall, 257 responses were submitted to the online consultation.
- 6.4 The online consultation was available in various languages and format via the Recite Me function on the West Lothian website. For more information please see the summary paper [Outcomes Consultation](#).

## **7. Equality Outcomes 2021- 2025**

- 7.1 West Lothian Council's Corporate, Education Authority and Licensing Outcomes for 2021-2025 are:

### Corporate Outcomes

- 1. People in West Lothian have improved access to services.
- 2. There will be a better understanding and intolerance of discrimination and violence against people with protected characteristics.
- 3. People experience easier access to the provision of inclusive housing
- 4. West Lothian Council is a positive and inclusive place to work



### Education Authority Outcomes

5. Pupils have a greater sense of belonging and safety in schools
6. Better mental health and wellbeing of pupils

### Licensing Board Outcomes

7. The Licensing Board will seek to promote equal opportunity of access to licensed premises in West Lothian
8. The community of West Lothian is able to engage effectively in the exercise of the Boards licensing functions

## **8. Corporate Plan 2018/19 to 2022/23**

- 8.1 In setting the Equality Outcomes, the council have been mindful of the issues of proportionality, scale, severity and concern. Furthermore, to maintain a consistent approach, our equality outcomes were developed to address the priorities of the [Corporate Plan 2018/19 -2022/23](#) and have been aligned with the priorities set out in our Local Outcome Improvement Plan.

## **9. Mainstreaming Equality**

- 9.1 Mainstreaming equality means integrating equality and diversity into the day-to-day workings of the council. We aim to do this by taking equality into account as we exercise our functions and deliver our services in line with the [Policy on Equality in Employment and Service Provision](#).
- 9.2 Mainstreaming equality has a number of benefits including:
  - It helps ensure that council services are fit for purpose and meet the needs of our community.
  - It helps attract and retain a productive workforce, rich in diverse skills and talents.
  - It helps the council work toward social inclusion and supports the communities we serve to improve the lives of everyone who lives in West Lothian.
  - It helps the Council to continually improve and better perform through growing knowledge and understanding of the benefits of an inclusive organisation.
- 9.3 The Council continues to make good progress in mainstreaming equality since the publication of our first Equality Mainstreaming Report in 2013. A summary of activities undertaken by the Council is set out in this sections 10 - 13 below.

## **10. Assessing impact**

- 10.1 Assessing impact is an important part of the public sector's decision making process. It is important in developing any proposal to understand how the needs of different groups and the potential barriers they face may differ. **Integrated Impact Assessment**

(IIA) is the mechanism that allows us to critically assess whether a 'policy' has wider impacts beyond its intended outcomes and if it impacts differentially on different groups in our communities.

10.2 The council has agreed an Integrated Impact Assessment approach with our local authority partners in Edinburgh, Midlothian, East and NHS Lothian. A joint Steering Group works together to improve the quality and quantity of IIAs carried out. Within this context of shared impact assessments, the council has also considered with partners how best to incorporate the requirements the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and the Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA).

10.3 The council has embedded a human rights based approach into the IIA process to ensure that people's rights are put at the very centre of policies and practices. When completing an IIA the council considers the extent a 'policy' impacts on the key PANEL principles of Human Rights.

These are as follows:-

- Participation – people should be involved in decisions that affect their rights. Participation must be active, free, meaningful and give attention to issues of accessibility, including access to information in a form and a language which can be understood
- Accountability – there should be monitoring of how people's rights are being affected, as well as remedies when things go wrong
- Non Discrimination – All forms of discrimination must be prohibited, prevented and eliminated. People who face the biggest barriers to realising their rights should be prioritise
- Empowerment – Everyone should understand their rights, and be fully supported to take part in developing policy and practices which affect their lives
- Legality – requires the recognition of rights as legally enforceable entitlements and is linked in to national and international human rights law

10.4 The council is committed to best value and promoting fairness and equality in **sustainable procurement**. The [sustainable procurement duty](#) requires that before a contracting authority buys anything, it must think about how it can improve the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of the area in which it operates, with a particular focus on [reducing inequality](#).

## 11. Learning and Development.

11.1 The council is committed to continuous improvement in service delivery and recognises that the continuing ability, skills and commitment of our employees is at the heart of what we do. The council has invested in a variety of ways to train and raise awareness of issues relating to equality and diversity including:

- Delivery of the equality and diversity training as part of the corporate induction
- E-learning and face to face courses for employees and managers regarding mental health
- Roll out to all council employees of the mandatory corporate equality and diversity

- training
- Development and delivery of online Integrated Impact Assessment training
- Delivery of bespoke training for services with specific protected characteristics

## **12. Partnership Working**

12.1 The council continues to work with partners in promoting and mainstreaming equalities in West Lothian and has communicated and engaged with a wide range of services, partners and organisations to raise awareness, share experiences and explore the challenges people face on a day to day basis.

12.2 In particular, the Council works with the following organisations:

- Stonewall Scotland who provide expertise to help the council support its lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender employees. The council submits to the Stonewall Workplace Equality index and work with Stonewall to identify opportunities to increase awareness of LGBT issues in the workplace and to increase engagement and inclusion by members of staff who identify as LGBT.
- LGBT Youth Scotland who provide expertise to help the council support lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender young people in the community of West Lothian who access our services.
- The West Lothian Access Committee, a sub group of Disability West Lothian. Disability West Lothian works across the private, public and third sector to remove physical and attitudinal barriers to equality and to promote all aspects of independent living within the West Lothian community. The council continues to consult with this group regarding disability access issues particularly in relation to new build council housing and refurbishments and the facilitation of the West Lothian Access Fund. This fund is available to charitable and voluntary organisations to improve access to and use of facilities or premises.
- The Disability Forum acts as a consultation forum on disability (including learning disability) based equality issues to inform policy and service development.
- The Race Forum acts as a consultation forum on race equality and issues around culture and religion in the development of policies and services.
- The Faith Group acts as a consultation forum on religion and belief based equality issues to inform policy and service development.
- The Council's Community, Learning and Development services support the LGBT Youth Group Glitter Cannons to work collectively to support other young people in the West Lothian Community, raise awareness of LGBT issues and promote equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Close the Gap provide tailored, confidential support to public sector employers to address gender inequalities in the workforce. They have provided resources and

guidance on a range of topics that include identifying barriers to women's progression in the workplace, analysing data and developing mainstreaming reports.

- The West Lothian Drug and Alcohol Service (WLDAS) is a 3rd sector organisation that was set up in 1985 to provide high quality, evidenced based, accessible services aimed at reducing the harm caused by drugs, alcohol and tobacco to West Lothian residents and communities

### **13. The Council as an Employer**

#### **People Strategy**

- 13.1 The [Council's People Strategy 2018 – 2023](#) acknowledges the critical role that a motivated, skilled and capable workforce plays in every aspect of service delivery and continuous improvement and sets out a plan for the key activities and actions which will support and drive the development and effective leadership of our employees. The council recognises the benefits of a diverse workforce and is committed to the goal of eliminating discrimination and promoting equality and diversity across the organisation. Underpinning the People Strategy is a commitment to promote and celebrate diversity throughout the council by consulting, engaging and acting on the views and concerns of employees and embedding these issues into service delivery, policy development and employment practice. The mainstreaming activities below support the Equality Mainstreaming Outcome 4 – West Lothian is a Positive and Inclusive Place to Work.

#### **Employee Health and Wellbeing Framework**

- 13.2 The Council implemented an Employee Health and Wellbeing Framework that provides for a proactive and structured approach to supporting employee wellbeing. The council has retained a Healthy Working Lives Gold accreditation since 2009. The criterion for retaining this includes a specific focus on health inequalities.

#### **Stonewall Diversity Champion**

- 13.3 The council has been a Stonewall Diversity Champion for a number of years, enjoying a supportive partnership with the organisation. Champion status provides access to training, information and benchmarking opportunities and ensures we offer an inclusive environment for LGBT people. The council continues to work very closely with Stonewall Scotland and submit to the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index to ensure we maintain our status as the top performing Local Authority in Scotland. For example, we have changed a number of our HR policies to ensure they are more of inclusive of gender identity as evidenced in our Equality Outcome Plan 2017-2021 progress report and we will make further improvements moving forward to ensure we have as inclusive a workplace as possible.

### **Disability Symbol Scheme**

- 13.4 The council continues to be accredited as a “Positive about Disabled People” employer and is accredited as a disability level 2 Employer in the Disability Confident Scheme which maintains our commitment to demonstrating that we take positive action to attract, recruit and retain disabled people.

### **Flexible Working**

- 13.5 The council has implemented temporary homeworking arrangements and revised flexible working arrangements in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Work is being done to develop a revised suite of new flexible working policies that will maximise the benefits that have been realised as a result of the forced homeworking arrangements and ensure best practice in flexible working going forward. In developing such policies, the council will ensure that the needs of the council’s diverse workforce are considered while also meeting the needs of our diverse community by delivering services at times and in ways that meet the needs of our customers.



West Lothian  
Council

## Equality Outcome Plan 2021 – 2025

(Corporate, Education and Licensing)

## Equality Outcome 1: People in West Lothian have improved Access to Services

Digital exclusion (including issues with digital literacy) has emerged as a prominent issue across Scotland during the COVID 19 pandemic, with an identified overlap between groups who are more likely to be digitally excluded and the most vulnerable members of our society. Digital access is often seen as the first assumption even though we know it is not everyone's ideal or preferred choice and service areas can sometimes feel unwelcoming or unsuitable to some people. This includes people who have been shielding and wider vulnerable groups, such as people experiencing homelessness, asylum seekers and Gypsy/Traveller communities, older and younger people, ethnic minority people and the disabled.

### General Equality Duty

Will help to advance equality of opportunity to access service that provides accessible information, appropriate assistance and support.

### Outputs

- Improved methods for customers with specific access requirements (BSL interpreters or Text Relay services for deaf customers Language translation services for customers for whom English is not their first or preferred language Recite Me text to speech software on web communications).
- More awareness of mental health and accessibility of information and support for people to access the available services at earlier points in their mental health journey.
- The council explores the use of other emerging technologies and physical devices which may provide support to customers.
- Schools will ensure pupils have digital literacy competency before leaving.
- Improved digital skills across equalities groups, vulnerable adults and families

### Actions

- Provide adapted communication methods for specific access requirements.
- Digital advice outreach sessions delivered in partnership to provide local residents access to appropriate technology required for video call.
- Promote Attend Anywhere/ Near Me service to improve remote access.
- Schools will achieve Digital Schools status and ensure pupils have digital literacy competency before leaving.
- Deliver digital skills training by Adult Learning

Measures of progress (indicative)

- Digital training sessions offered to all equalities groups
- Digital support sessions provided to all equalities groups
- Increase in the percentage of customers accessing the website as a percentage of West Lothian population



**Equality Outcome 2: There will be a better understanding and intolerance of discrimination and violence against people with protected characteristics.**

Gender based violence is a function of gender inequality and results in physical, sexual and psychological harm or suffering to women and children, or affront to their human dignity, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. Violence against women includes: domestic abuse; rape; sexual harassment and intimidation at work and in the public sphere; commercial sexual exploitation, including prostitution and trafficking; child sexual abuse; forced and child marriages; female genital mutilation. During the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic there has been a rise in reported domestic abuse (DA) and concerns have been raised about survivors being able to access support services.

Hate crimes are abhorrent and target marginalised and vulnerable members of our communities with devastating effect on both victims and their families. Hate crimes are any crimes that are targeted at a person because of hostility or prejudice towards that person's: disability, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation or transgender identity. It is important for us all to come together to challenge intolerance and report incidents of hate crime.

**General Equality Duty**

Advancing equality of opportunity for adults (predominantly women), children and young people who experience gender-based violence to access support and help us to eliminate race discrimination and discrimination based on religion, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different racial and religious/belief groups.

**Outputs**

- Victims, witnesses and partner agencies feel more confident in reporting hate incidents through a variety of methods
- Raised awareness on the legacy of slavery in West Lothian.
- Incidents involving harassment of people based on their protected characteristics are recorded.
- Raised awareness on Modern Slavery.

**Actions**

- Promote and raise awareness of the existing 3<sup>rd</sup> party reporting sites that are in West Lothian.
- Increase awareness of Hate Crime amongst our employees and the wider communities of West Lothian.
- Provide advice and support to ethnic minority carers.
- Work with partners to identify actions that raise awareness and understanding on the legacy of slavery in West Lothian.

- Review and implement a violence against women (VAW) training strategy to be integrated into the existing Learning and Development programme.
- Revise gender based violence training to include more specialist training on issues such as Forced Marriage, LGBT experiences of gender based violence, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and honour based abuse.

Measures of progress (indicative)

- Increase in the number of Environmental Visual Audits (EVAs) with partners to highlight any safety risks within the built environment.
- Increase in the number of women supported by the West Lothian Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault Team (DASAT)
- All employees from each relevant service area have received up to date training on Violence Against Women (VAW)
- Delivery of Up2U Domestic Abuse Programme across West Lothian
- Development of Safe and Together – coordinate a whole system approach for tackling domestic abuse

### Equality Outcome 3: People experience easier access to the provision of inclusive housing

As set out in the Scottish Government's Housing to 2040 consultation, it is important that everyone has access to a home that is warm, affordable, accessible and that fits their needs. They also want to ensure that we have a housing system that is dynamic and resilient enough to respond to future changes - helping to address the challenges we are facing, including an ageing population.

#### General Equality Duty

Work to achieve this outcome will help us to provide opportunities for inclusive and sustainable housing.

#### Outputs

- Help households struggling with fuel costs.
- Identified pathways for vulnerable people in transition and at risk of homelessness.
- Support for young people and others who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- Housing for older people and those with a disability to achieve greater independence.

#### Actions

- Support households struggling with fuel costs by providing help to access one off energy grants and hardship funds.
- Refine the Sustainable Housing on Release for Everyone (SHORE) standards and improved joint working with Criminal Justice
- Develop pathways for vulnerable people in transition at risk of homelessness.
- Identify triggers of homelessness and referral process for people accessing health and social care services.
- Work in partnership with The Advice Shop to support vulnerable tenants.
- Deliver services between the councils Access2employment service and third sector partners to provide employability support to young people and others who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- Implement a new model for young people at risk of homelessness aligned to the moving on model for young people.
- Deliver Education Programme to identify and prevent potential homelessness and actions to raise awareness of homelessness within schools.
- Continue to provide an aids and adaptations service to ensure people can live independently.

#### Measures of progress (indicative)

- Increase in the number of adaptations and accommodation requirements supported
- Development of transition pathways for all people presenting as at risk of homelessness
- Number of Access2employment clients supported into Employment, Education or Training per Full-Time Equivalent
- Increase in the number of applications for energy grants and hardship funds
- Increase in the number of residents supported by the employability service

#### **Equality Mainstreaming Outcome 4: West Lothian Council is a positive and inclusive place to work**

The council has made significant progress in relation to implementation of structures, processes and employee engagement on equality and diversity in recent years. Further focus on increasing the diversity of our workforce and raising employee and management awareness and capacity to understand the specific needs of customers within the equality protected characteristics is required to ensure that we have a workforce which is confident and comfortable being authentic in the workplace.

Occupational segregation is a significant cause of women and children's poverty. Poverty is a likely outcome of low-paid employment over a lifetime. Women with children also face constraints in finding work that is commensurate with their skills and aspirations as well as flexible in terms of childcare and other caring responsibilities. A lack of options can force women into part-time, low paid work, thus affecting the lives, health, and opportunities of their children. Resulting from the impact of the economy, there is growing evidence of a disability and ethnicity pay gap which requires to be monitored.

The pandemic outbreak and the national response has affected and continues to affect people's mental health and wellbeing. Bereavement, isolation, loss of income and fear are triggering mental health conditions or exacerbating existing ones. Many people may be facing increased levels of alcohol and drug use, insomnia, and anxiety. National reports indicate worsening mental health, increased anxiety, and rising stressors. These span all ages, the general population and people living with mental health problems.

#### **General Equality Duty**

Employees have equality of opportunity to support services, and to foster good relations in their place of work

#### **Outputs**

- Support for employees to continue in work while managing caring responsibilities.
- Employees have access to appropriate information and advice about mental, physical, financial and workplace wellbeing.
- A diverse workforce that reflects the communities we serve.

#### **Actions**

- Develop a revised suite of flexible working policies to assist employees to care for their own wellbeing by achieving the right work/life balance.
- Develop a carers policy to support employees to continue in work while managing caring responsibilities.
- Promote the Four Pillars of Wellbeing programme to ensure that employees have access to information and advice.

- Revise and implement Equality Monitoring Data questions covering all protected characteristics across all services to ensure consistent approach to analysing the data.
- Complete the roll out of refresher mandatory Equality and Diversity training for all employees
- Continue membership of Stonewall Diversity Champions and submit applications to the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index.
- Relaunch employee network groups to further support employee engagement.
- Develop and implement policies relating to Transgender, Non- binary and Bi Inclusion.
- Review recruitment and selection processes and practices by using the Scottish Government's Minority Ethnic Recruitment Toolkit
- Increase the percentage of employees for which the council holds equality monitoring information and identify the council's disability pay gap

#### Measures of progress

- Placing and award on the Stonewall Workplace Index
- All employees have completed mandatory Equality and Diversity training
- Implementation of Carers Policy
- Better mental health is reported amongst staff who share protected characteristics
- Implementation of a revised monitoring data set
- Increase awareness of the 4 pillars wellbeing toolkit
- Employee network meeting six monthly
- Develop and implement flexible working policy
- Publish the council's disability pay gap

## EDUCATION AUTHORITY OUTCOMES

<b>Equality Outcome 5: Pupils have a greater sense of belonging and safety in schools</b>
National research highlights that bullying in schools as a result of having a protected characteristic remains a persistent and significant equality issue. Bullying has a severe impact on all pupils who are victims. In a similar context to hate crime, a pupil bullied because they are black or from an ethnic minority, have a disability or are perceived to be Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender/Trans (LGBT) are likely to face more severe impacts on their attainment and future life chances.
<b>General Equality Duty</b>
Will help to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and advance equality of opportunity for children in school services.
<b>Outputs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased engagement with ethnic minority children and families.</li><li>• Increased awareness in our schools of gender-based bullying and harassment.</li><li>• United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is reflected in the Children's Services Plan (CSP) 2020-2023.</li><li>• All schools are able to access and analyse inclusion data which enables them to plan interventions at individual, group and at whole school level.</li></ul>
<b>Actions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Modern Apprentices working group liaise with schools to participate in career events and information events.</li><li>• Increase awareness in our schools of gender-based bullying and harassment.</li><li>• Raise awareness of trauma informed service delivery including access to a trusted adult.</li><li>• Continued implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in the Children's Services Plan (CSP) 2020-2023.</li><li>• Development and pilot planning tool</li></ul>

#### Measures of progress

- Increase in the number of Pupils in Primary Seven Rating the Equality & Fairness in Their School as Good or Excellent.
- Increase in the number of Students in Secondary Schools Rating the Equality & Fairness in Their School as Good or Excellent.
- Reduction in school based Bullying and prejudice-based incidents.
- Pupil Wellbeing Survey (secondary) – increase in the number of pupils reporting that they are feeling safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included



<b>Outcome 6: Better mental health and wellbeing of pupils</b>
<p>There is a growing body of evidence which suggests that COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the mental health and wellbeing of Scotland's children and young people. Research by the Scottish Youth Parliament, YouthLink Scotland and Young Scot from early to mid-April also showed that around two fifths (39%) of children and young people aged 11-25 felt moderately or extremely concerned about their own mental wellbeing while 61% were moderately or extremely concerned about the impact of coronavirus on their future. A recent survey from Young Minds<sup>3</sup> showed that 80% of young people with an existing mental health problem felt their mental health had worsened during the first weeks of the coronavirus pandemic.</p>
<b>General Equality Duty</b>
<p>Will help to advance equality opportunity to achieve their full potential, be free from any artificial barriers, such as prejudice or discrimination.</p>
<b>Outputs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic planning is sufficient to enable children and young people to access services and support for their mental health and emotional wellbeing within their community.</li> <li>• Development of Health and Wellbeing curriculum that includes building resilience</li> <li>• Children and young pupils voice within schools helps to promote autonomy and equality</li> <li>• All children and young people have support for their wellbeing through a staged intervention process</li> </ul>
<b>Actions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver Mental health first Aid training to school staff</li> <li>• Promotion of the Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood Resources which incorporates learning around the protected characteristics</li> <li>• Educational Psychological Services (EPS) continue to offer group work sessions such as Give us a Break; Bereavement / Loss and Anxiety groups which support young people.</li> <li>• Construction Services undertake required building alterations in schools - including accessible toilets and lifts.</li> </ul>
<b>Measures of progress</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All school staff have received training on mental health first aid</li> <li>• Pupil Wellbeing Survey (primary) – Increase in the number of pupils who report that they are feeling safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included</li> <li>• Successful HMI inspections of Additional and Special Needs settings</li> </ul>

## LICENCING BOARD OUTCOMES

<b>Outcome 7 The Licensing Board will seek to promote equal opportunity of access to licensed premises in West Lothian</b>
<p>A recent report has concluded that licensed premises, particularly pubs and bars, are some of the poorest venues for accessibility. The research was published by charity <a href="#">Euan's Guide</a> who surveyed 903 disabled people on accessibility at public venues. As many as a quarter of respondents said pubs typically had poor access, with not being able to get into or around a venue and a lack of a suitable accessible toilets cited as the most common issues. Just 2% rated pubs and bars as typically 'excellent' for access according to the research. 38% of respondents said they considered licensed venues to be 'poor'.</p>
<b>General Equality Duty</b>
<p>Work to achieve this outcome will help us to advance equality of opportunity for disabled people, foster good relations and eliminate discrimination.</p>
<b>Outputs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The licensing Board better understands the diversity of needs of West Lothian's equalities groups</li><li>• Accessible information on functions of the Board, and process of making an application</li><li>• The Board continues to work in partnership with agencies including Police Scotland and the local Licensing Forum, who each have a separate statutory role to play under the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005, with equal regard to the interests of persons with protected characteristics.</li><li>• Encourage applicants to undertake detailed Disability Access and Facilities Assessments</li><li>• Reasonable adjustments to assist applicants, objectors and the public to engage in the licensing process are available on request.</li></ul>
<b>Actions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Board will promote accessibility to all licensed premises in West Lothian for people with disabilities through its application of the relevant provisions of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 and its statement of licensing policy.</li><li>• All staff and Licensing Board members will undertake equalities training on a rolling programme</li><li>• Identify actions from the annual meeting between the Board, the Forum and the annual report from Police Scotland regarding the operation of liquor licensing in West Lothian</li></ul>

- The Board will promote accessibility to all gambling premises in West Lothian for people with disabilities through its application of the relevant provisions of the Gambling Act 2005 and its statement of licensing principles.
- Review the Licensing website, application forms and standard documentation regularly to ensure that these are as accessible as possible.
- Review equality monitoring forms
- Disability Access and Facilities Statements (DAFS) are submitted along with all applications for premises licences

#### Measures of progress

- All licensing team staff and Board members have completed equalities training
- All actions from the annual meeting between the Board, Forum and Police Scotland progressed to completion
- The Council website information is updated to reflect changes in the law and procedures relating to liquor licensing, as required

<b>Outcome 8 - The community of West Lothian is able to engage effectively in the exercise of the Boards licensing functions</b>
The Board recognises the need to ensure that the licensing process is accessible to all. They recognise that people who find it difficult to get involved (for example, because of language barriers, disability, poverty or discrimination) can help to influence the decisions that affect their lives.
<b>General Equality Duty</b>
Work to achieve this outcome will help us to advance equality of opportunity, and eliminate discrimination.
<b>Outputs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board will seek to ensure that the service it provides offers equal opportunity for engagement by persons with protected characteristics</li> <li>• WLC licensing policy signposts licence holders to their duties under the Equality Act 2010.</li> <li>• Work in partnership with Police Scotland and the Licensing Forum to identify any issues arising in connection with persons with protected characteristics and address such concerns.</li> <li>• Identify, monitor and address any service concerns specific to persons with protected characteristics</li> </ul>
<b>Actions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the customer feedback form (sent to all customers) to identify any service concerns specific to persons with protected characteristics in order to monitor and address such concerns, as appropriate.</li> <li>• The Board will review its website, application forms and standard documentation regularly to ensure that these are as accessible as possible.</li> </ul>
<b>Measurements</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of Disability Access and Facilities Statements (DAFS)</li> <li>• Actions from Customer feedback forms completed</li> </ul>

هذه المعلومات متوفرة بلغة بريل وعلى شريط وبخط كبير وبلغات الجالية.  
الرجاء الإتصال بخدمة الترجمة على الهاتف 01506 280000

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Information is available in braille, tape, large print and community languages. Contact the interpretation and translation service on **01506 280000**.

Text phones offer the opportunity for people with a hearing impairment to access the council. The text phone number is **18001 01506 464427**. A loop system is also available in all offices.

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