

REPORT TO: TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD – 15 JUNE 2015

REPORT ON: MAINSTREAMING EQUALITY REPORT

REPORT BY: ASSESSOR

REPORT NO: TVJB 15-2015

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Mainstreaming Equality Report to the Board.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Board approves the Mainstreaming Equality Report attached as an Appendix to this report.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 None.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environment Assessment, Anti-Poverty and Equality Impact Assessment. There are no major issues.

5 BACKGROUND

5.1 The Equality Act 2010, which harmonised and replaced previous equalities legislation came into force on 5 April 2011. The Act placed a general equality duty on public authorities to pay due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination;
- advance equality; and
- foster good relations across the range of protected characteristics.

5.2 The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 places a specific duty on public authorities to:

- Publish a report on the progress it has made to make the equality duty integral to the exercise of its functions so to better perform that duty.
- Assess the impact of proposed new or revised policies and practice against the needs of the general equality duty.
- Publish a set of equality outcomes which it considers will enable it to better perform the Equality Duty. (The Board will publish new equality outcomes every 4 years).
- Publish a report on the composition, recruitment, development and retention of employees with respect to the number and relevant protected characteristics of employees.
- Consider award criteria in relation to public procurement.

- Publish its equality reports in a manner that is accessible to the public.
- Report bi-annually on the progress made to achieve the equality outcomes.

5.3 The Board approved a Mainstreaming Equality Report at the meeting on 17 June 2013.

5.4 An updated Mainstreaming Equality Report is attached as an Appendix, this includes details of the progress made towards equality outcomes and updates the statistical information to reflect the position for the year 2014 – the latest year for which information is available.

5.4 The Assessor will continue to analyse, monitor and publish equalities information as required and will report bi-annually to the Board on the progress made to achieve the equality outcomes.

6 CONSULTATIONS

6.1 The Clerk and Treasurer to the Board, and the Head of Human Resources, Dundee City Council, have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.

ALASTAIR KIRKWOOD
Assessor

June 2015



MAINSTREAMING EQUALITY REPORT 2015 (Draft)

1 INTRODUCTION

Tayside Valuation Joint Board (the Board) and the Assessor for Tayside Valuation Joint Board (the Assessor) are fully committed to embracing and implementing the principle and ethos of the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

By fully adopting the principles and ethos of the Equality Act 2010, the Board will provide to all electors, rate payers, council tax payers and to its own staff a service provision, culture and working environment which is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and where all members of our community have equal opportunities and treat each other with dignity and respect.

This mainstreaming equality report supersedes and builds upon the commitments contained in the Board's Mainstreaming Equality Report as approved by the Board on 17 June 2013.

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) harmonised and replaced previous equalities legislation. The Act placed a general equality duty on public authorities to pay due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination;
- advance equality; and
- foster good relations across the range of protected characteristics.

The general equality duty expanded the range of those protected under equality legislation to include characteristics of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. The equality duty also covers marriage and civil partnerships, with regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination in employment.

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 places a specific duty on public authorities to:

- Publish a report on the progress it has made to make the equality duty integral to the exercise of its functions so to better perform that duty.
- Assess the impact of proposed new or revised policies and practice against the needs of the general equality duty.
- Publish a set of equality outcomes which it considers will enable it to better perform the Equality Duty. (the Board will publish new equality outcomes every 4 years)
- Publish a report on the composition, recruitment, development and retention of employees with respect to the number and relevant protected characteristics of employees
- Publish gender pay gap information (*Tayside Valuation Joint Board has less than 150 employees and is therefore exempt from this duty*).

- Publish a statement on equal pay and occupational segregation between men and women council employees (*Tayside Valuation Joint Board has less than 150 employees and is therefore exempt from this duty*).
- Consider award criteria in relation to public procurement.
- Publish its equality reports in a manner that is accessible to the public.
- Report bi-annually on the progress made to achieve the equality outcomes.

2 MAINSTREAMING THE EQUALITIES DUTY

The Board will continue to work towards achievement of the following aims:

- to analyse the disability, gender and race profile of the current workforce and to implement an action plan to redress any imbalances found
- to ensure that all employees are trained in how to implement this scheme as is relevant and appropriate to their jobs
- to establish a system for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of the Board's policies on the promotion of equality
- to monitor the Board's existing and proposed policies for any adverse impact on the promotion of equality
- to ensure public access to information and services

How the equality priorities and functions have been set

The Board has in place arrangements for monitoring, by reference to disability, gender, race and age the numbers of staff in post, and the number of applicants for employment, training and promotion.

The Board currently fulfils its responsibility to monitor the required areas and the results will continue to be published annually by the Assessor.

The Clerk and the Treasurer to the Board and their respective staffs are employees of Dundee City Council and will be subject to its monitoring processes.

The functions of the Board and Assessor are acknowledged to be of a limited nature as prescribed by legislation.

The core service functions of maintenance of the Valuation Roll and the Council Tax List have outcomes which are related to the inspection and valuation of property and therefore have no direct impact on the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations across the range of protected characteristics.

As Electoral Registration Officer for Angus and Perth & Kinross Councils the Assessor reports annually to the Electoral Commission against the performance standards the Commission has set. These standards include: public awareness strategy, working with partners and accessibility and communication of information. The Electoral Commission have confirmed that the Assessor as Electoral Registration Officer has been assessed as meeting these standards.

The Assessor conducts an annual review of customer satisfaction. The forms that are used ask customers to comment, among other things, on the accessibility of information and the ease of access to the Board's premises. It may be desirable, in terms of the Equality Outcomes (Section 4) to seek information from the customers as to their age, gender, disability, race and ethnic origin in order to identify any equality issues relating to service provision.

Complaints

In its scrutiny role, the Board is required to keep itself informed as to the manner in which the Assessor deals with operational matters and to this end it receives periodic reports from the Assessor on matters relating to policies and operations of the organisation and its performance, including any complaints received.

Appointments

A Recruitment and Selection procedure was introduced in 2010 which includes a section on equality employment legislation.

It should be noted that the Board operates a guaranteed job interview scheme for people with a disability who meet the requirements of the person specification for the particular post applied for.

The Board obtained the disability symbol, awarded by Jobcentre Plus to employers who have made commitments to employ, keep and develop the abilities of disabled staff, in 2010.

The Board's Policies

The Board believes that its policies in relation to standing orders, financial regulations and agreed procedures are applied in a fair and consistent manner and are in no sense inherently unfair. All policies will continue to be screened for adverse impact on equality groups and a full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) will be completed where appropriate.

Screening of existing policies has been undertaken and may be consulted on the Tayside Valuation Joint Board's website.

Equality Impact Assessment of Policies and Practices

Tayside Valuation Joint Board has approved the adoption of an Equality Impact Assessment Tool that has been extensively tested by Dundee City Council Equality Champions. The aim of the 'Rapid Impact Assessment Tool' (RIAT) is to provide those drafting new or reviewing existing policies, procedures, strategies or practice, with a simply designed tool. This will aid them along with training and guidance, in completing equality impact assessments and relating the assessment to their practice. The tool will help authors in establishing whether there is a negative or adverse effect or impact on any particular groups or communities of interest who face discrimination and help identify positive changes that can enhance equality of opportunity.

The Rapid Impact Assessment tool is not designed to replace Full Equality Impact Assessments that may be more appropriate for larger or more complex issues.

Equalities Monitoring

Tayside Valuation Joint Board will continue to monitor its staff and applicants for posts, in relation to selection and recruitment, promotion, grievances, disciplinary action, ceasing employment, applying for and receiving training in respect of ethnic origin, gender, disability and age. The Tayside Valuation Joint Board will continue to work towards improving the level of responses by existing and new staff by engaging with staff representatives and communities of interest to identify barriers and make recommendations for action.

Training

The Board has identified and put in place arrangements for training its employees in relation to its duties to promote positive attitudes to equality issues.

All staff in post in January 2007 attended a training course on equality diversity and in 2008/09 training was given on the use of Evacuation Chairs.

All managers involved in the recruitment and selection procedure attended a two day course in February 2010, delivered by Personnel Department of Dundee City Council. A refresher programme is scheduled for June 2015.

To assist in the promotion of positive attitudes to all equality and diversity strands, "Tip Cards" produced by the Dundee Equality and Diversity Partnership have been purchased for use by those employees who regularly come into contact with members of the public. They will also be included in induction training for all new employees.

In addition, the Board's employees are able to access the Dundee City Council Equality and Diversity Awareness e-learning programme. All staff were asked to undertake this training during 2014 /15 and participation has been recorded. The induction programme has also been updated to include information on the equality issues.

Involving Communities of Interest in Developing the Report

The Board sought the views of people with disabilities in 2006 and 2010 by means of questionnaires issued in person, by email, and by post to individuals and organisations representing people with disabilities.

From the questionnaires returned, no specific actions were identified as being required.

In developing its Mainstreaming Report, the Board acknowledges its small size which makes consultation exercises difficult. Steps have therefore been taken to involve the Tayside Valuation Joint Board with the Equality and Diversity Partnership of the Dundee Partnership, in order that its consultation processes may be integrated with those of other public sector organisations and avoid unnecessary duplication of work for those organisations and individuals asked to participate.

Publicity

The Board is required to identify the arrangements it will make to publish the results of any assessments, consultations and monitoring carried out to establish whether its policies have any impact on equality. The Board is bound by and complies with the requirements of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994, and the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 in respect of access to information. Anything that might reasonably be regarded as a policy will be the subject of a public report to the Board, as will the results of any monitoring of the impact of policies.

The Board is also required to identify the arrangements it will make for ensuring public access to the information and services it provides. The Board has drawn upon the expertise of its constituent authorities in this matter and promotes action to improve public awareness.

This Report will be published and circulated to all members, officers and employees of the Board. Copies will be available from the Assessor at Whitehall House, 35 Yeaman Shore, Dundee, DD1 4BU. The Scheme will also be placed on the Board's web-site at www.taysidevjb.gov.uk. Translations will be made available on request using the services of locally identified translators or through services accessed outwith the area.

The document will also be available in alternative formats, eg Easy to Read, Large Print, Braille, audio tape, on request.

Duration and Review

This report is intended to cover the period from April 2015 to March 2017. The Board may, if considered appropriate, review the Report and Equality Outcomes or any part of them at an earlier date in response to comments made from individuals or organisations or consultations with other bodies.

3 EMPLOYEE EQUALITY MONITORING

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 requires all listed public authorities to take steps to gather information on the composition of the authorities workforce and information on recruitment, development and retention of employees relating to the relevant protected characteristics.

The public sector equality duty covers the following characteristics: age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

The purpose of the legislation is to ensure that public authorities:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Appendices 1-3 to this report detail the employee information collected in respect of job applicants and staff in post during 2014. Appendix 4 details additional information on the protected characteristics obtained from a March 2013 survey of all employees.

Full information on the protected characteristics is not available for job applicants during 2014 as this information has not been retained for longer than was required for the recruitment process. This data will be collected for 2015 and subsequent years.

4 TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD EQUALITY OUTCOMES

Outcome 1

The gender segregation in our staff Clerical/Administration roles is improved.

Basis

The 2013 analysis of our current workforce showed that we had 29 members of staff employed in clerical and administration roles, 26 female and 3 male.

The clerical and administration staff represented 42% of the Board's employees and the gender imbalance within this group is evident when compared with the 54% female / 46% male division across the whole workforce.

Action Plan

The plan is to encourage more applications from male applicants for clerical and administrative roles and identify any barriers preventing males from applying for these roles. Whilst recognising that a female bias towards clerical and administrative roles is reflective of society in general, the action plan is to:-

- 1 Work with staff to remove stereotypical views of gender suitability for these roles.
- 2 Consult with Dundee City Council personnel department to investigate ways of attracting more men to these roles.

Aim

The aim is to employ more men in clerical and administrative roles. In measuring progress to achieving this aim it must be recognised that Tayside Valuation Joint Board is a relatively small organisation with an establishment amounting to 66 staff in total. Turnover of staff is limited and therefore there will be few opportunities to significantly alter the staff profile in the foreseeable future.

Outcome 2

To ensure our services meet the needs of all protected characteristic communities.

Basis

Internal analysis of "Customer Questionnaires" for 2011/12 did not identify any reported problems with access to any of our three divisional offices; however, it was noted that one of our offices is not accessible to wheelchair users.

The Electoral Commission have also reported that, in terms of Electoral Registration, under registration is notably higher than average among 17-24 year olds, private sector tenants, and black and minority ethnic British residents.

Further information from Dundee City Council shows that people in protected characteristic communities need:

Accessible information on services
Staff trained in communication skills
Community confidence

Action Plan

The plan is to continue to undertake our annual customer feedback survey and to request equalities information from those completing the forms in order to identify any areas of inequality.

To closely monitor the situation regarding access to the Angus divisional office.

To continue to undertake and build upon the following activities to encourage people to register to vote:

- Liaison with the local authority Education Departments to obtain the names and addresses of young people eligible to be added to the Electoral Register
- Attendance of staff at local college fresher events to promote registration.
- Work with the local black and minority ethnic community groups to promote registration.
- Contact local landlords and agents to obtain tenants information so that registration forms can be sent out.

To continue to review our communications, including letters, forms and information on our website, to see if we can use plainer and less technical language.

We will use our staff development review process to provide staff with appropriate training in equalities issues and communication skills.

Aim

The accessibility of our services to all our customers is increased.

Increased registration from currently under-represented groups.

5 PROGRESS MADE TO ACHIEVE EQUALITY OUTCOMES

Report on Outcome 1

The gender segregation in our staff Clerical/Administration roles is improved.

The overall number of staff employed by Tayside Valuation Joint Board (TVJB) has fallen from 71 members of staff in 2013 to 66 members of staff. Clerical and Administration staff continue to amount of 42% of the total.

There have been four vacancies for clerical staff over the course of the past year. The vacancies were advertised in the local press and on the Board's website. All advertisements clearly state that applications are welcomed from all people regardless of disability, marital status, race or sex.

The four vacancies were all for clerical assistants and attracted applications in the following ratio: female 50 applicants, male 11 applicants. Of the candidates who were successful, three were female and one was male.

The breakdown by gender in the current clerical and administration staff of TVJB is therefore twenty four female and four male. At the time of the publication of the equality outcomes in 2013 the breakdown was twenty six female and three male.

I am therefore pleased to report that some positive progress has been made towards achieving equality outcome 1.

Report on Outcome 2

To ensure our services meet the needs of all protected characteristic communities.

TVJB sends customer questionnaires to as many of its customers as possible. The results are analysed on an annual basis and reported to the Board in August of each year.

The two reports produced since the equality outcomes were published continue to show a high degree of customer satisfaction with the service provided. There have been no criticisms, complaints or negative feedback identified that are attributable to failure to meet the needs of customers in protected characteristics categories.

The inaccessibility of one of our offices to wheelchair users is still a potential problem. This has been mitigated, at present, by having in place alternative arrangements to provide an accessible meeting place should the need arise. Further consideration will be given to a more suitable means of resolving this issue.

All members of TVJB staff have taken part in an online training course on equalities within the past twelve months.

TVJB provides the Electoral Registration service for Angus and Perth & Kinross Councils. In this role TVJB's performance is monitored on a regular basis by the Electoral Commission (EC). The EC ingather statistical information which is matched against a set of performance standards and reports are published as appropriate.

Our duty is to register all persons in the community who are eligible. Particular initiatives target groups who are traditionally under represented on the electoral register and some of these groups will be people who fall within protected characteristic categories. During the past year we have worked with local education authorities, colleges, care homes and ethnic minority support groups. We have used press releases, bus advertising and website messages. At the time of our annual canvass, statutory forms are sent to all households and individuals. All non-responses are followed up with a personal visit and "calling cards" encouraging registration are left in addition to the statutory forms. We have worked with the EC to provide electoral documentation in Braille format to a registered blind elector.

I am therefore pleased to report that some positive progress has been made towards achieving equality outcome 2.

Alastair Kirkwood
Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer
Tayside Valuation Joint Board

TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD
APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AND SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE BY ETHNIC ORIGIN - 2014

| Division | No of Application Forms rec'd | No of Equal Opportunity Forms rec'd | APPLICANTS | | | | | | | SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | * Ethnic Origin | | | | | | | * Ethnic Origin | | | | | | |
| | | | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | A | B | C | D | E | F | G |
| Post Title | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Clerical Assistant, Perth | 37 | 37 | 35 | | 2 | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| Clerical Asst/Typist (J/S), Perth (1 not stated) | 19 | 18 | 15 | | 2 | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| Clerical Asst, Angus (Apprentice) | 4 | 4 | 4 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| Clerical Asst, Perth (Apprentice) | 3 | 3 | 3 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| IT Asst (Temporary – 6 months) | 8 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
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* Ethnic Origin
A White
B Mixed of Multiple Ethnic Group
C Asian (including Scottish/British)
D African
E Caribbean or Black
F Arab
G Prefer not to answer

Appendix 4

Results from Employee Equality & Diversity Monitoring Survey - March 2013

Tayside Valuation Joint Board Employees broken down by

Age

| Age | 2013 Return | |
|----------|-------------------------------|-------------|
| | Tayside Valuation Joint Board | % |
| < 20 | Less than 5 | Less than 7 |
| 21 - 30 | 8 | 11.4 |
| 31 - 40 | 9 | 12.9 |
| 41 - 50 | 30 | 42.9 |
| 51 - 60 | 13 | 18.6 |
| 61 - 70 | 5 | 7 |
| No Entry | 4 | 6 |

Disability

| Disability | 2013 Return | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----|
| | Tayside Valuation Joint Board | % |
| Yes | 5 | |
| Physical or Motor Impairment | 1 | 1.4 |
| Mental Health Problem | | |
| Learning Difficulties/Disabilities | | |
| Hearing Impairment - Full/Partial | | |
| Visual Impairment - Full/Partial | | |
| Multiple Disabilities | | |
| Other Chronic Condition or Disability | 4 | 5.7 |
| Unspecified | | |
| Yes - No Entry | | |
| No | 63 | 90 |
| No Entry | 2 | 2.9 |

Tayside Valuation Joint Board Employees broken down by

Ethnic Origin

| Ethnic Origin | 2013 Return | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|----|
| | Tayside Valuation Joint Board | % |
| White | 68 | 97 |
| Indian | | |
| Pakistani | | |
| Bangladeshi | | |
| Other Asian | | |
| Chinese | | |
| Black | | |
| Any Mixed Background | | |
| Other Ethnic Group | | |
| No Entry | 2 | 3 |
| Unspecified | | 3 |

Gender

| Gender | 2013 Return | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|------|
| | Tayside Valuation Joint Board | % |
| Male | 32 | 45.7 |
| Female | 37 | 52.9 |
| No Entry | 1 | 1.4 |
| Bisexual | | |
| Gay | | |
| Hetrosexual/Straight | 66 | 94 |
| Lesbian | | |
| No Entry | 4 | 6 |

Results from Employee Equality & Diversity Monitoring Survey - March 2013

Tayside Valuation Joint Board Employees broken down by

Religious Belief

| Religious Belief | 2013 Return | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|------|
| | Tayside Valuation Joint Board | % |
| No Religion | 25 | 35.7 |
| Church of Scotland | 28 | 40 |
| Roman Catholic | 5 | 7 |
| Other Christian | 7 | 10 |
| Buddhist | | |
| Hindu | | |
| Jewish | | |
| Muslim | | |
| Sikh | | |
| Another Religion | | |
| No Entry | | |
| Unspecified | 5 | 7 |

Sexual Orientation

| Sexual Orientation | 2013 Return | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|----|
| | Tayside Valuation Joint Board | % |
| Bisexual | | |
| Gay | | |
| Hetrosexual/Straight | 66 | 94 |
| Lesbian | | |
| No Entry | 4 | 6 |