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East Dunbartonshire Council

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**POLICY AND RESOURCES
COMMITTEE**

THURSDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 2025

REFERENCE:

PR/025/25/EB

LEAD OFFICER:

**EXECUTIVE OFFICER - COMMUNITY
SERVICES**

CONTACT OFFICER:

**ROSEANN MCCABE, EQUALITIES OFFICER,
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND
PARTNERSHIPS TEAM
PAM CAMPBELL, MANAGER, COMMUNITY
PLANNING AND PARTNERSHIPS TEAM**

SUBJECT TITLE:

EQUALITIES OUTCOMES 2025-2029

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to present to Elected Members the proposed Equality Outcomes for 2025-29, to outline the findings of the recent public consultation, and to seek Committee approval for their adoption.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Policy and Resources Committee

- 2.1** notes the findings from the public consultation undertaken between July and September 2025 in relation to the draft Equality Outcomes 2025-29;
- 2.2** approves the proposed Equality Outcomes for 2025-29 as set out within **Appendix 1**;
- 2.3** agrees that the approved Equality Outcomes be published on the Council's website in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012; and
- 2.4** instructs officers to develop a comprehensive Equality Action Plan 2025-29 incorporating clear milestones, responsibilities and timescales.

EVONNE BAUER

EXECUTIVE OFFICER – COMMUNITY SERVICES

3.0 BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

3.1 This Report follows on from the previous report to Council **EDC/033/25/EB**, which sought approval to progress consultation on the draft Equality Outcomes 2025-29.

3.2 The Council must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010, which requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups, and
- Foster good relations between different groups

3.3 The Council is also bound by the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012, which require the Council to:

- Report progress on mainstreaming the equality duty every two years.
- Publish equality outcomes and report progress;
- Assess and review policies and practices;
- Include an annual breakdown of employee information; and
- Publish the report in an accessible manner.

3.4 The Council also recognises its distinct responsibilities as an Education Authority and Licensing Board, which are classed as separate public bodies under the Equality Act 2010.

4.0 Consultation Overview

4.1 A comprehensive public consultation on the draft Equality Outcomes 2025-29 was carried out between 7 July and 5 September 2025.

4.2 Targeted engagement was carried out with young people, including sessions at Woodlands View School and a local Girl Guide group, in response to previously low engagement from this age group.

4.3 In total 657 responses were received:

- 340 via the online survey, and
- 317 through facilitated focus groups

4.4 Engagement reached over 20,000 views across social media and local press coverage (Glasgow Times, Kirkintilloch Herald, Milngavie & Bearsden Herald).

4.5 Additionally, 32 local drop-in sessions were held across East Dunbartonshire, involving direct engagement with community organisations, businesses and Council staff, reaching a further 119 participants.

4.6 Engagement covered all 9 protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. There was broad participation across all age ranges. A full analysis of the consultation is held by Community Planning and Partnerships.

4.7 Of the respondents, 368 identified as female, 236 as male, 3 as non-binary, and 50 preferred not to say or did not comment. The majority were White Scottish/Scottish

(552 combined), with smaller numbers from Pakistani, Indian, Irish, Chinese, African, and mixed heritage participants.

4.8 There was participation from across East Dunbartonshire, with strongest responses from:

- Kirkintilloch 132
- Bearsden 87
- Bishopbriggs 73
- Hillhead/Harestanes 57
- Milngavie 50

5.0 Consultation Key Findings - Corporate Outcomes

5.1 Outcome 1: All people can access information, services, and participate in decisions.

- Views: Most respondents rated equal access as very important. Some praised Council staff and recognised equal access as fundamental to fairness and democracy.
- Challenges: Council website is hard to navigate; barriers exist for older adults, disabled residents, and those without digital access. Requests for Easy Read, BSL videos, audio formats, and paper updates.
- Suggested improvements: Enhance digital accessibility, provide alternative formats, and increase offline engagement (letters, community noticeboards, in-person consultation).

5.2 Outcome 2: Communities are safe and welcoming.

- Views: 46% feel communities are safe; 44% report safety or inclusion concerns.
- Challenges: Racism, Islamophobia, and gender-based safety concerns reported.
- Suggested improvements: Promote respect for all protected characteristics through education, awareness campaigns, and anti-racism training. Support safe spaces, youth clubs, and inclusive community events.

5.3 Outcome 3: East Dunbartonshire is welcoming for New Scots.

- Views: 59% see the area as welcoming; 27% expressed negative views. Awareness of “New Scots” term is inconsistent, with some misconceptions and minority xenophobic attitudes (9%).
- Suggested improvements: Provide welcome packs, ESOL support, volunteering opportunities, and community events. Emphasise fairness and inclusion for all residents and tackle misinformation.

5.4 Outcome 4: Strengthen leadership through EQIAs.

- Views: 57% support publishing stronger EQIAs; 26% neutral, 15% disagree.
- Challenges: Frustration over lack of representation and perceived power imbalance.
- Suggested improvements: Embed lived experience in decision-making (citizens’ panels/community review boards), ensure EQIAs visibly influence policy, and improve transparency and accountability.

6.0 Employer-Focused Outcomes

6.1 Outcome 1: Staff are trained and supported for inclusive engagement.

- Views: Only 43% feel training/support is sufficient; 42.9% disagree.
- Suggested improvements: Implement mandatory, practical, experiential, and role-specific equality training; ensure accessibility and consistency across all staff.

6.2 Outcome 2: Workforce reflects local diversity.

- Views: 25.7% feel workforce is diverse; 46.8% disagree.
- Suggested improvements: Improve representation of sex, disability, and race; make workplaces and recruitment processes accessible; encourage leadership to champion inclusion.

6.3 Outcome 3: Staff with protected characteristics feel heard.

- Views: Only 30% feel heard; 28% feel excluded; 36% neutral.
- Suggested improvements: Increase engagement and feedback opportunities, establish inclusion networks, provide diversity and inclusion training for managers, and ensure tangible action from feedback.

7.0 Education Authority Outcomes

7.1 Outcome 1: Pupils with disabilities shape support services.

- Views: 38% agree pupils are involved; 42% strongly disagree.
- Suggested improvements: Consult pupils and families using accessible methods, create pupil forums, train staff in inclusion, and improve physical accessibility.

7.2 Outcome 2: Young people & families access mental wellbeing support.

- Views: Only 37% feel support is adequate; 43% strongly disagree.
- Suggested improvements: Expand services, ensure equitable access, engage families in service design, integrate support into schools and community settings, train staff, and communicate clearly.

7.3 Outcome 3: Children & young people understand and promote equality.

- Views: Many respondents neutral/negative, highlighting gaps between policy and practice.
- Suggested improvements: Embed equality across curriculum and school culture, provide teacher training, facilitate experiential learning, ensure inclusive facilities, and monitor impact.

8.0 Licensing Board Outcome: People in East Dunbartonshire can take part confidently in Licensing Board decisions.

- ### **8.1**
- Views: Majority unaware of the process; very low confidence in participation.
 - Suggested improvements: Provide translations and accessible formats as appropriate, publicise meetings widely in communities.

9.0 Key themes emerging from the consultation included:

- ### **9.1**
- **Accessibility and inclusion:** Strong support for ensuring Council services and communication are accessible to people with disabilities and sensory impairments.

- **Fair employment and Progression:** Calls for continued action on gender pay equality, disability employment, and fair recruitment practices.
- **Community Voice:** Respondents valued opportunities to be heard and encouraged the Council to sustain ongoing dialogue with community groups and young people.
- **Health & Wellbeing:** Mental health, loneliness, and digital exclusion were highlighted as ongoing equality concerns.
- **Representation and Visibility:** There was interest in celebrating diversity through local events, community education and inclusive spaces.

9.2 The new Equality Outcomes build on the Council's previous work and aim to make a tangible difference in the lives of local people. They focus on:

- Creating stronger, fairer communities.
- Improving opportunities for those who face disadvantage.
- Ensuring local voices shape decision-making; and
- Embedding equality and inclusion across all Council services and workforce practices.

9.3 These outcomes are designed to deliver positive change for both communities and employees, while aligning with the Council's broader strategic objectives and statutory duties.

9.4 The consultation has confirmed strong support for the Council's proposed direction and priorities.

10.0 IMPLICATIONS

The implications for the Council are as undernoted.

10.1 Frontline Service to Customers – Front line staff members may be asked additional questions in relation to delivery of Equality Outcomes 2025-29.

10.2 Workforce (including any significant resource implications) – Service areas will have to deliver commitments outlined associated with the outcomes and action plans.

10.3 Legal Implications – Approving the Equality Outcomes 2025-29 complies with the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

10.4 Financial Implications – Services require to deliver the commitments of the plan within current budgets.

10.5 Procurement – There are no additional procurement implications arising directly because of this Report.

10.6 ICT – The web team will be required to update information on the corporate website.

10.7 Corporate Assets – There are no additional corporate assets implications arising directly because of the Report.

10.8 Equalities Implications – An EQIA has been completed.

10.9 Sustainability – There are no steps required to be considered in relation directly to this Report.

10.1 Corporate Parenting - The Equality Outcomes 2025-29 strengthens the corporate parenting role but ensuring that services and support of care experienced children and young people are inclusive, equitable and sensitive to their unique needs, helping to create positive outcomes and opportunities for all.

10.1 Other – The Equality Outcomes 2025-29 emphasises reducing socio-economic disparities by promoting fair access to services, enhancing employment opportunities and targeting resources to support the most disadvantaged ensuring that everyone can participate in community.

11.0 MANAGEMENT OF RISK

The risks and control measures relating to this Report are as follows:-

11.1 Any risks associated will be mitigated by the monitoring and reporting procedures which are in place for the work concerned, and a cross-council commitment to equalities.

12.0 IMPACT

12.1 ECONOMIC GROWTH & RECOVERY - The Equality Outcomes 2025-29 support increased awareness of accessible support to residents and communities, including businesses.

12.2 EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS - The Equality Outcomes 2025-29 support increased awareness of accessible supports targeting residents facing greatest inequalities.

12.3 CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE - The Equality Outcomes 2025-29 support increased awareness of supports, to children and young people.

12.4 SAFER & STRONGER COMMUNITIES - The Equality Outcomes 2025-29 support increased awareness and community cohesion.

12.5 ADULT HEALTH & WELLBEING - The Equality Outcomes 2025-29 support enhanced health and wellbeing, due to increased awareness and accessible services supporting adult health and wellbeing.

12.6 OLDER ADULTS, VULNERABLE PEOPLE & CARERS - The Equality Outcomes 2025-29 support older adults, vulnerable people and carers as information and services will be accessible.

12.7 CLIMATE CHANGE – no direct impact.

12.8 STATUTORY DUTY - The Council is obliged under the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 to publish Equality Outcomes and embedding these into service delivery commits to delivering the identified Equality Outcomes.

13.0 POLICY CHECKLIST

13.1 Completed versions of the following are appended to the Report:-

Appendix 2: Impact Assessment Checklist.

Appendix 3: Equality Impact Assessment completed.

14.0 APPENDICES

14.1 Appendix 1: Equality Outcomes 2025-2029.