



# Equal Opportunities Statement

East Ayrshire Council is committed to equal opportunities as a community leader, a service provider, an education authority and an employer. Equality, together with Quality, Access and Partnership, has been a Core Value of the Council since its inception in 1996. Our commitment to Equality is as strong today as it was then and covers the nine protected characteristics within the Equality Act 2010, namely age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

As a Council, we place equality at the heart of everything we do and are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and social inclusion for all our service users, visitors and employees. This is founded in the belief that the diverse range of talents, skills, experience and perspective found within society should also be reflected within the composition of the Council's workforce, its employment practices and procedures, and in the manner it delivers services to

the people of East Ayrshire. As the largest employer and a provider of public services in the area, the Council recognises that it has a key role to play in tackling discrimination and disadvantage by ensuring that all communities, individuals and groups are treated fairly and with dignity and respect.

This commitment is integral to the provision of all our services, including the services that we procure from other providers and in the employment conditions of all of staff. We expect all staff to promote equality in the workplace and in the services we deliver or which are delivered on our behalf.

The Council is also committed to making decisions in a fair, transparent and accountable way, considering the needs and the rights of different members of our community. With this in mind, the Council will ensure that where any potential negative impacts are highlighted, we will consider all means of reducing or mitigating the negative effects. In this way, the Council can help redress inequality.

Equal opportunities means access to jobs, services, information and participation for everyone, the Council recognises that,

because some groups of people experience prejudice and discrimination to make opportunities really available, we have to make an extra effort. Consequently, the Council will:

- promote equal opportunities in employment;
- promote equality in service provision;
- eliminate discrimination in service provision and employment practice;
- ensure that supporting employment and service procedures, practices and action plans are developed and implemented;
- ensure appropriate training programmes are provided; and
- ensure that the Equality Act 2010 is applied in the procurement process.

In the context of the changes facing the public sector and the increasing pressure on resources, achieving equality assumes an even greater importance and requires even greater commitment. In line with the Equality Act 2010, we have set out our equality commitments in the Council's *Equalities Mainstreaming Report*, which outlines how equalities are being mainstreamed into the functions and activities of our organisation. It also provides information on our schools and employees, and demonstrates ways in which we are meeting the general and specific duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010. Alongside the Mainstreaming Report sit our *Equality Outcomes*, which have been developed to further focus our efforts to deliver real change in people's lives through promoting equality, tackling discrimination and fostering good relations.

