



**East Ayrshire Council**  
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir an Ear

# **Shared Equality Outcomes 2021 – 2025**

## **Mid –Term Progress 2023**

# Accessibility

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## 1. Introduction

All public authorities in Scotland must comply with the public sector equality duty, also known as the general equality duty, set out in the Equality Act 2010. This means that all public authorities, as part of their day to day business, must show how they will:

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

The protected characteristics referred to, as listed in the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation. We are all likely to have more than one protected characteristic which make up our individual identities.

This is our third set of equality outcomes building on the equality outcomes set previously. As we reviewed the progress and relevance of previous outcomes, we have developed, updated and added to provide this fresh set of outcomes.

By reviewing, revising and publishing equality outcomes on a regular basis, we aim to make better, fairer decisions and show that they are bringing tangible benefits for our communities and our employees.

## 2. What are Equality Outcomes?

National guidance on setting equality outcomes notes that these should be proportionate and relevant to the functions and strategic priorities of the organisations setting them, and that they may include both short term and long term benefits for people with protected characteristics.

From the outset of the development process, the following definition was applied to ensure consistency and rigour.

Outcomes are not what we do, but the beneficial change or effect which results from what we do. These changes may be for individuals, groups, families, organisations or communities.

Specifically, an Equality Outcome should achieve one or more of the following:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

Equality Outcomes have been developed on the basis that they are short to medium term (1 to 4 years) and link with longer term national outcomes.

It should be noted that a number of the equality outcomes link with already existing policies and strategies, in order that the Outcomes become integral to the work of the various partners to drive a more focused effort on areas for improvement specifically to improve equality and reduce inequalities.

### **3. Rationale for Shared Equality Outcomes**

A number of organisations across Ayrshire deliver public services to local communities. In delivering services, these organisations must ensure that no person or group are discriminated against on the basis of any protected characteristics they may possess.

Public sector organisations, require to develop and publish a set of equality outcomes. In 2017, considering the close working links between many of the public sector organisations in Ayrshire, a decision was taken to work jointly around the development and setting of equality outcomes. Therefore, a shared set of high level equality outcomes were developed whilst partners maintained individual accountability for their part or specific shorter term outputs.

For the period 2021-2025, the partners agreed to seek to continue to work towards the high level, aspirational outcomes but to set individual targeted equality outcomes for the four year period underpinning those.

The following tables outline the progress made to date and what further work we seek to do over the next two years.

<b>Overarching Shared Equality Outcome</b>	<b>In Ayrshire, people experience safe and inclusive communities</b>
<b>Links to National Outcomes</b>	<b>We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish Society</b> <b>We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk</b> <b>We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger</b> <b>We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility of their own actions and how they affect others</b>
<b>Equality Outcome1A</b>	<b>Victims, witnesses and partner agencies feel more confident in reporting hate incidents through a variety of methods.</b>
<b>Inequality</b>	<b>People suffer hatred and violence because of their protected characteristics</b>

<b>Outputs</b>		<b>Actions</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>RAG Status</b>
1A.1	Increase people's awareness of hate crime	Raise Council, education, employees and Licensing Board Members awareness to better understand hate crime	Develop a Hate Crime e-learning course  Number of staff/Board Members undertake training	This course was developed in house and covers all aspects of Hate Crime, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is a Hate Crime</li> <li>• Legislation</li> <li>• How to report</li> <li>• Case studies</li> <li>• No Bystanders Campaign</li> <li>• Useful links</li> </ul> There is also information available in BSL  This is a newly developed course and will have been rolled out from the end of February 2023. This course will be widely advertised through our Equality Champions, and promoted during events such as Black History Month, LGBT History Month, Trans Day of Awareness etc. Numbers who have undertaken the course will be reported in our update in 2025.	
		Work with partners, including staff in education and Licensing Board Members to raise awareness of hate crime with	Number of people attending the conference  Evaluation of the conference	In October 2022, the Council led in partnership with the Ayrshire Equality Partnership in organising a conference to Empower communities in Ayrshire to End Hate Crime  With hate crime figures on the rise, the ever present need existed to support understanding of diversity and foster community cohesion, and thus in early 2022, the Councils' Corporate Officer	

Outputs		Actions	Measurement	Progress	RAG Status
		community members through the development of a conference		<p>(Equality and Diversity) brought a sub group of the Ayrshire Equality Partnership partners together and began organising the conference which was subsequently held on 5 October 2022.</p> <p>The conference offered opportunities to support learning in relation to hate crime through the lived experiences of its speakers and the good practice demonstrated across Ayrshire and beyond to tackle the issues related to hate crime and promote positive solutions.</p> <p>Dave Scott, Campaign Director from Nil by Mouth hosted the conference with keynote addresses from Dr Christian Harrison, Reader in Leadership and Khadjia Mohammed, Senior Lecturer both from the University of the West of Scotland. The conference also offered workshops for participants to choose from including I am me charity (Keep Safe initiative); Scottish Refugee Council; Police Scotland, Criminal Justice Authority and others.</p> <p>Over 100 people attended the conference which was deemed to be a huge success in meeting its aim of raising awareness but moreover giving people the chance to consider what they can do in their role and workplace.</p>	
	Improved use of third party reporting	Increase the awareness of third party reporting	Increased reporting via third party reporting using a variety of media tools and promotion materials	<p>Information has been disseminated through the conference and community groups, including the two Islamic Centres in Kilmarnock, an event held in October 2022 with the African/Caribbean community and through our Resettlement Team who support our local refugee community.</p> <p>Information is also available through our Hate Crime e-learning module.</p>	

<b>Overarching Shared Equality Outcome</b>	<b>In Ayrshire, people experience safe and inclusive communities</b>
<b>Links to National Outcomes</b>	<b>We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish Society</b> <b>We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk</b> <b>We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger</b> <b>We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility of their own actions and how they affect others</b>
<b>Equality Outcome1B</b>	<b>Accommodation provision for Gypsy/Travellers in East Ayrshire improved</b>
<b>Inequality</b>	<b>Gypsy/Travellers have lack of access to suitable accommodation that supports their lifestyle</b>

<b>Outputs</b>		<b>Actions</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>RAG Status</b>
1B.2	Gypsy Travellers access negotiated stopping places	<p>Undertake a Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment</p> <p>Identify negotiated stopping places within East Ayrshire Council</p> <p>Develop a voluntary agreement that can be sued as and when required with Gypsy/Travellers</p> <p>Work with Gypsy/Traveller community to access negotiated stopping places</p>	Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment completed	<p>A questionnaire was developed in order to give an indication of local need and interviews were carried out by East Ayrshire Council staff. Due to the Covid 19 pandemic, telephone interviews were also conducted and other forms of online communication including emails and social media platforms were made available. For a number of reasons, during the consultation period staff experienced a reluctance from some local Gypsy/Traveller families to participate. However, 50 responses to the consultation were received in total (including both partial and complete responses.)The consultation asked questions in relation to current accommodation, preferred site and service provision, and potential future demand for site provision. The full findings of the consultation are reported <a href="#">here</a> The information within the Accommodation Needs Assessment and accompanying consultation will be used alongside other evidence bases such as the Housing Need Assessment.</p> <p>Negotiated Stopping is an alternative to the traditional enforcement based approach to Unauthorised Encampments. It involves open dialogue and negotiation between the local authority and Gypsy/Travellers who pass through the area. The purpose is to enable Gypsy/Travellers to stay for an agreed period of time, whilst adhering to a code of conduct specified by the local authority. East Ayrshire Council with COSLA and the Scottish Government agreed to participate in a Negotiated Stopping Pilot approach to manage unauthorised encampments. This</p>	

Outputs		Actions	Measurement	Progress	RAG Status
			Number Gypsy/Traveller access negotiated stopping places	<p>pilot took place over a 12 month period and an assessment of this approach would be produced at the end of the pilot.</p> <p>A number of factors including the Covid 19 outbreak and periods of lockdown delayed the ability to roll out the pilot The evaluation found that there are elements of the Negotiated Stopping approach that has resulted in better service provision to Gypsy/Traveller families at encampments. However there were also elements that were less compatible with the nature and geographical location of encampments in East Ayrshire and will not be adopted when managing future encampments.</p> <p>Encampment analysis showed that there were 14 encampments in 2021/22 and the majority of these were not been on Council owned land, creating barriers to the negotiated stopping approach. With encampments stopping mainly on privately owned ground, the opportunities to roll out negotiated stopping in its entirety have been limited. Private land removes the Council's ability to provide toilet facilities and make a decision regarding eviction proceedings. This removes the opportunity for meaningful negotiation between the encampment and the Council.</p> <p>On the few occasions where a full negotiated stopping agreement between the encampment and the Council could be offered, the encampment either refused to participate or did not stay in East Ayrshire long enough for this to be implemented. The element of negotiated stopping where the Council offers an alternative stopping site also remains untested due to a lack of conditions where this approach would meet the criteria within the negotiated stopping procedure.</p> <p>However, low numbers of encampments particularly on Council owned ground undoubtedly created barriers to rolling out Negotiated Stopping as an approach to encampments Opportunities to provide portable toilets were restricted, due to the number of encampments stopping on private land. There were also limited instances where the Council could properly negotiate</p>	



Outputs		Actions	Measurement	Progress	RAG Status
				<p>with encampments in relation to removing the threat of eviction in return for adherence to a code of conduct.</p> <p>This also led to the low use of the voluntary agreement which was developed as part of the Negated Stopping Places However, adopting an engagement based approach to encampments has improved service provision to families and allowed more meaningful dialogue between Gypsy/Traveller families and the Council.</p> <p>There were however positive outcomes as a result of the pilot. The Negotiated Stopping approach to encampments has resulted in more refined partnership working between Council departments and the smooth delivery of basic amenities such as provision of water and waste uplift at encampments. Feedback from families at encampments was very positive in relation to provision of these amenities. Timely involvement of partner agencies such as health professionals was also a benefit of the approach.</p> <p>Elements such as provision of water and waste uplift has proved successful and reduced the amount of waste left on sites when an encampment moved on. By continuing to embrace an engagement focussed approach to encampments, providing water and waste uplift, and further develop relationships with the Gypsy/Traveller community East Ayrshire Council can support families choosing to live a transient lifestyle. Continued joint working with COSLA, the Scottish Government and other local authorities will also further improve service provision to Gypsy/Travellers. The full report can be accessed <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	

<b>Overarching Shared Equality Outcome</b>	<b>In Ayrshire, people experience safe and inclusive communities</b>
<b>Links to National Outcomes</b>	<b>We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish Society</b> <b>We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk</b> <b>We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger</b> <b>We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility of their own actions and how they affect others</b>
<b>Equality Outcome1C</b>	<b>To embed a human rights ethos across schools in East Ayrshire to eliminate discrimination advance equality of opportunity and foster good relation in schools and the wider community</b>
<b>Inequality</b>	<b>There is a lack of a shared understanding of everyone's rights and a commitment to respect one's own and other people's rights</b>

<b>Context</b>		<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Rag Status</b>
1C.1	Rights Respecting Schools The UNICEF UK Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA) supports schools across the UK to embed children's human rights in their ethos and culture	All schools in East Ayrshire are registered with UNICEF	Support the embedding of children's rights across the curriculum.	An increase in Schools achieving Bronze status  An increase in schools achieving Silver status  Increase in schools achieving Gold	Of the 33 school and early childhood centres registered all 33 achieved bronze status  Of the 14 schools and early childhood centres registered 7 have achieved silver status  Of the 7 schools and early childhood centres registered, 5 have achieved gold status  It should be noted that those schools who are registered but not yet achieved their status are on track to do so.	

<b>Overarching Shared Equality Outcome</b>	<b>In Ayrshire, people have equal opportunity to access and shape our public services</b>
<b>National Outcomes</b>	<b>We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs</b>
<b>Equality Outcome 2</b>	<b>More disabled people, older people and women access public transport safely and in comfort with an integrated service that provides accessible information, appropriate assistance and support from transport staff.</b>
<b>Inequality</b>	<b>Disabled people, older people and women experience difficulties accessing public transport because of safety, comfort, availability, connectivity, information and assistance, staff training and customer service</b>
<b>Equality Outcome 2A</b>	<b>More People whose first language is British Sign Language are able to access Council services and actively take part in decision making.</b>
<b>Inequality</b>	<b>People whose first language is BSL experience difficulties in accessing council services</b>

<b>Outputs</b>		<b>Actions</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>RAG Status</b>
2.1	<p>The barriers facing disabled people, women and older people and their needs are identified</p> <p>The changes, support and resources required are understood and agreed</p> <p>Delivery of a programme of travel improvements and passenger assistance</p>	<p>Engagement with disabled people, women, and older people, relevant organisations and third sector orgs</p> <p>Meetings with transport providers</p> <p>Consultation about changes</p> <p>Programme of support and improvements agreed</p> <p>Test and pilot new and modified service methods, technology, vehicles and practices</p>	<p>Develop system for evaluating impact and measuring progress •</p> <p>Collect and analyse data on disabled people, women and older people to evaluate impact and measure progress</p>	<p>This action is due for completion in March 2025. The council in partnership with North and South Ayrshire Councils will host a pan Ayrshire event with transport providers in Ayrshire to bring together equality groups to discuss the issues in relation to accessing transport.</p> <p>This will allow people to raise issues and concerns directly with providers, and for providers to gather information directly from service users.</p> <p>This event will allow for data to be collated and analysed to track progress and inform future provision.</p>	

Outputs		Actions	Measurement	Progress	RAG Status
		Gather feedback and revise programme where necessary			
	The experiences BSL user groups continue to inform decision-making	Explore joint approach for the commissioning of BSL Interpretation	Number of BSL users accessing council services increased.	<p>The joint approach for the commissioning of BSL Interpretation has been explored and a joint tender has been drafted supported by East Ayrshire Council and NHS Ayrshire &amp; Arran. This tender will be presented to colleagues in North and South Ayrshire Councils, and the three Health and Social Care Partners to ascertain the best way forward. Progress will be reported in the next progress report.</p> <p>Good connections have been established with both the Ayrshire Society for the Deaf which is based in Kilmarnock and the Ayrshire Deaf Club which is based in Crosshouse. There is a two way communication established and both groups are engaging with council services which included accessing free sanitary products, engaging with Ayrshire Roads Alliance, and council employees attending quarterly meetings so that issues can be highlighted with the appropriate council service.</p> <p>The Corporate Officer (Equality and Diversity) also spoke at the Scottish British Deaf Association conference in 2022, highlighting the Ayrshire partnership approach in relation to the BSL Plan, and at the national British Deaf Association conference in March 2023.</p>	

<b>Overarching Shared Equality Outcome</b>	<b>In Ayrshire, people have opportunities to fulfil their potential throughout life</b>
<b>National Outcomes</b>	<b>We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people</b> <b>We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation</b> <b>Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens</b> <b>Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed</b> <b>We live longer, healthier lives</b>
<b>Equality Outcome 3</b>	<b>Young people , disabled people and women have access to training and employment</b>
<b>Inequality</b>	<b>Young people, disabled people and women have barriers to accessing training and employment opportunities</b>

<b>Outputs</b>		<b>Actions</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>RAG Status</b>
3.1	To provide support to access employment to reduce health as a constraint to build an inclusive economy	<p>Provide support for unemployed, in particularly people with disabilities and women, residents to overcome health barriers to economic activity</p> <p>To support residents to retain employment by addressing health barriers</p> <p>Support local business to access health related supports to improve retention and productivity of their workforce</p>	<p>Number of people who declare a disability accessing assessment</p> <p>Number of women accessing assessment</p> <p>Number of people who declare a disability accessing full case management</p> <p>Number of women accessing full case management</p>	<p>The Ayrshire Growth Deal sees approximately £251 million of funding from the Scottish and UK Governments being invested across East, North and Ayrshire.</p> <p>The Ayrshire Growth Deal programme has a strong focus on inequality and inclusivity and through our award winning 'Ayrshire Inclusive Growth Diagnostic' tool has identified a number of key target groups for our employability programmes. These groups include, females, young people and those with disabilities and long-term health conditions. The implementation of the various projects within the Growth Deal programme should bring lasting and long-term benefits to people in these equality groups and many others across East, North and South Ayrshire. We have embedded actions for the Ayrshire Growth Deal within our Equality Outcomes and although these will take some time to realise, they help to ensure a continued focus on equality groups within the Ayrshire Growth Deal programmes.</p> <p>Working for a Healthy Economy is a large-scale investment, totalling £5 million, to deliver occupational health to ensure that Ayrshire has the requisite workforce to drive economic growth in the future. This project, implemented in May 2021, will serve to widen the labour pool and provide the basis for the maximisation of benefits arising from Ayrshire Growth Deal capital investments and will support:</p>	

Outputs		Actions	Measurement	Progress	RAG Status
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>unemployed residents overcome health barriers to economic activity</li> <li>employed residents to retain employment by addressing health barriers</li> <li>local businesses to access health related supports to improve retention and productivity of their workforce</li> </ul> <p>To date across Ayrshire the Building a Healthy Economy Programme has supported</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>514 unemployed individuals engaged with Working for a Healthy Economy service</li> <li>34.6% anxiety levels reduced</li> <li>43.3% depression reduced</li> <li>26.5% health and wellbeing improved</li> <li>51 gained employment</li> </ul> <p>The Equality Outcomes report in 2025 will contain a full breakdown for those supported across each of the council areas</p>	
3.2	<p>Disadvantaged and identified PC groups have increased access to relevant employment/training opportunities.</p> <p>Increased availability of suitable employment opportunities</p>	<p>To establish a Young Person Guarantee (YPG) Board</p> <p>To develop and provide support packages</p> <p>To plan effectively for interventions across East Ayrshire to support identified PC groups to gain access to and sustain training/employment</p>	<p>Establishment of a Young Person Guarantee Board</p> <p>Number of people supported from PC groupings</p> <p>Number of people gaining training/employment from PC groupings</p>	<p>The YPG Project Board was established in April 2021 and met monthly in 2021-22. The board consists of representatives from East Ayrshire Council (Economic Growth, Education and People &amp; Culture); Ayrshire College; Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce &amp; Industry; 3rd Sector (CVOEA); Skills Development Scotland; Department of Work and Pensions; and a number of private employers.</p> <p>Of the 479 clients aged 16-26 supported through No-One Left behind All Age Employability delivery in 2021-22, 327 were unemployed or economically inactive; the remainder on low incomes. 255 clients identified as male, 222 identified as female, while 2 preferred not to say.</p>	

Outputs		Actions	Measurement	Progress	RAG Status
	Disadvantaged and identified PC groups have improved functional skills. to access training/employment	To develop pathways to open and encourage non-traditional training/employment opportunities	Number of people accessing non - traditional roles tackling occupational segregation	Of these clients, 374 identified as White/Scottish or White/ other British, 8 identified as other ethnic group; and 97 as not recorded.	
	Disadvantaged and identified PC groups have improved interpersonal skills.			<p>38 clients identified as disabled:16 identifying as female 21 identifying as male and 1 preferring not to say;</p> <p>156 clients were care experienced: 84 identifying as female, 70 identifying as male and 2 preferring not to say.</p> <p>52 clients had caring responsibilities and included 20 single parents. Of these clients, 11 identified as male and 41 identified as female.</p>	

<b>Overarching Shared Equality Outcome</b>	<b>In Ayrshire, public bodies will be inclusive and diverse employers</b>
<b>National Outcomes</b>	<b>We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation</b>
<b>Equality Outcome 4</b>	<b>Our BAME, disabled and LGBT+ staff have safe and supportive work environments to thrive, and the Council is seen as an employer of choice.</b>
<b>Inequality</b>	<b>BAME, disabled and LGBT+ staff lack access to peer support which can lead to isolation and low morale at work</b>

<b>Outputs</b>		<b>Actions</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>RAG Status</b>
4.1	Establishment of a People and Culture Equality Forum	To identify colleagues within the Council, Education and Licensing Board	Forum established	<p>The People and Culture Forum was established in March 2021.</p> <p>This forum ensures that the principles of the Equality Act 2010 are embedded in all activities, practices and interactions with our services, wider communities and partners. The group meets quarterly and call on services within the council as and when required. At present, the membership consists of members from the People and Culture Team, Health and Social Care Partnership, Corporate Support and a Trade Union Representative.</p> <p>The Forum has developed an action plan which is being progressed and covers a number of areas including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy and Procedures</li> <li>• Learning and Development</li> <li>• Support Services and Practices</li> <li>• Partnership Working</li> </ul>	
4.2	Establishment of a safe and supportive environment for staff from the Council, education service and Licensing Board who identify with a	Explore with the workforce the desire to establish a BAME staff network either locally or with employees from North and South Ayrshire Council	BAME staff network established	<p>Following recommendations from the Scottish Government's report on Race Equality, Employment and Skills: Making Progress Report, the Council adopted some of these recommendations and actions into its Equality Outcomes. The concept of a Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Forum had been considered before, however the relatively low numbers of employees from a BAME background (1.7% of the total workforce) working within the Council raised doubt around the viability of trying to create a group. Following the</p>	



Outputs		Actions	Measurement	Progress	RAG Status
	particular protected characteristic			<p>Scottish Government recommendations, the three Ayrshire local authorities decided to create a Pan Ayrshire Group. The group first met in June 2022, with 12 participants signing up and is supported by Human Resources and the Unions. Still in its forming stage, the group will continue to meet moving into 2023 to explore issues and support mechanisms for employees from a BAME background.</p> <p>The group is currently focused on developing a diverse workforce across Ayrshire through strengthened recruitment and retention, and are analysing statistics and recruiting methods to identify gaps and highlight good practice.</p>	
		Explore with the workforce the desire to establish a disability staff network	Disability staff network established	<p>The aim of the Disabled Employee Network (DEN) is to encourage contact, support and friendship among all staff who self-identify as neurodivergent and/or disabled, visible or invisible. The network will seek to foster an environment where issues of disability can be discussed in confidence and where advice and information can be sought.</p> <p>The purpose of a DEN will be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to raise awareness about disability</li> <li>• to create a more inclusive workplace for employees with disability</li> <li>• to create a more accessible workplace for employees with disability</li> <li>• to attract new employees with disability to the workplace</li> <li>• to promote and support career development for employees with disability</li> <li>• to ensure accessibility and inclusion are key focuses for employees and customers with disability</li> <li>• to provide a safe environment for employees to discuss issues related to disability.</li> </ul> <p>A bulletin will be developed and sent to approximately 90% of council employees with information in relation to the development of a Disability Employee Forum and asking employees to register their interest. Once this information is</p>	

Outputs		Actions	Measurement	Progress	RAG Status
				gathered a date will be set for an initial meeting to discuss the structure, develop a terms of reference and set dates for future meetings.	
		Explore with the workforce the desire to establish a LGBT+ staff network	LGBT+ staff network established	<p>For lesbian, gay, bi and trans (LGBT) people, work can be a safe haven, perhaps even the place where they first come out. However, it can also be a place of fear, where they feel unable to be themselves without experiencing discrimination or harassment.</p> <p>LGBT people who feel able to bring their whole selves to work have increased energy, better performance and stronger relationships with their peers. The more you're forced to be somebody else or hide who you are, the more your happiness and performance at work will be affected. When you spend more time thinking about how to describe your weekend without outing yourself than on that looming deadline, you and your work suffers. Simply put, people perform better when they can be themselves.</p> <p>The aim is to establish an LGBT+ employee forum no later than March 2024.</p>	
4.3	All Council vacancies which are advertised through specialised partnership organisations who target and support PC groups	Contact various specialist organisations to seek opportunities to advertise Council vacancies to gain diverse workforce	Number of partner organisations advertising Council vacancies	Specialist organisations were contacted to seek opportunities to promote council vacancies, including organisations such as the Council for Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisation, however despite our best efforts, they would not support the advertisement of council vacancies. The three Ayrshire councils are now engaging with other organisations to encourage them to promote council vacancies, this will include organisations such as Amina Muslim Women's Resource Centre, the British Deaf Association, and other organisations who support protected characteristics.	
4.4	Staff are aware of their own unconscious bias in relation to recruitment practice	To review current practice	Increased diversity of staff	<p>Unconscious Bias training was reviewed and updated as required. It does form part of the recruitment and selection training.</p> <p>The BAME employee Forum is also aiming to review unconscious bias training in relation to recruitment and retention.</p>	

