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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy and Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>23 March 2021</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Steven McNab, Head of Organisational Development, Policy and Communications</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>PR/02/21/KB</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Karen Barclay, Corporate Policy Officer</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712065</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Equality Mainstreaming Report 2021, Progress on Equality Outcomes 2017/21, the Equal Pay Statement 2021 and the Proposed Equality Outcomes 2021/25</b>		

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## 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present for approval the Equality Mainstreaming Report 2021, progress on delivery of the Equality Outcomes 2017/21, the Equal Pay Statement 2021 and the proposed Equality Outcomes for the period 2021/25. More information is provided in the Appendices.

Appendices  
1 and 2

## 2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, as a public body, to publish Equality Outcomes every four years and report on their progress via a Mainstreaming Report every two years. Reports require to be published by 30 April in the relevant year.
- 2.2 This report covers progress made with the delivery of the Equality Outcomes 2017/21 since 2019 and details the proposed Equality Outcomes for the period 2021/25. Additionally, information is provided on the Protected Characteristics of the Council's employees, together with Pay Gap details relating to Gender, Disability and Ethnicity and the Council's Equal Pay Statement 2021.

## 3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- notes the contents of this report;
  - approves the proposed Equality Outcomes 2021/25; and
  - agrees to receive a further report outlining the Equality Outcomes Improvement Plan 2021/25.

**Steven McNab**  
**Head of Organisational Development, Policy and Communications**

## 4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Equality Act 2010 includes the Public Sector Equality Duty which covers the Protected Characteristics of Age; Disability; Gender Reassignment; Marriage and Civil Partnership; Pregnancy and Maternity; Race; Religion or Belief; Sex; and Sexual Orientation.
- 4.2 The Equality Duty comprises a General Duty and Specific Duties. The General Duty requires the Council to have *due regard* to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by The Equality Act 2010;
  - advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups; and
  - foster good relations between people from different groups.
- 4.3 *Due regard* means that, during decision making, conscious consideration is given to the three aims of the General Duty.
- 4.4 The Specific Duties require the Council to:
- set specific, measurable Equality Objectives and publish information about our performance on equality;
  - publish sufficient information to show we have considered the three aims of the General Duty across our functions;
  - publish evidence of equality analysis undertaken to establish whether our policies and practices would further, or have furthered, the three aims of the General Duty;
  - gather, use and publish employment information;
  - publish Gender Pay Gap information;
  - publish an Equal Pay Statement; and
  - consider award criteria and conditions in public procurement.
- 4.5 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an international human rights treaty that grants all children and young people (aged 17 and under) a comprehensive set of rights. The UNCRC is the most widely supported human rights agreement in the world. It sets out a series of Articles, in one internationally recognised document, which outline the human rights that children (under the age of 18) should be entitled to. The Council is committed to promoting and upholding the rights of children and young people and aims to translate to a local level the UNCRC and the work of the Scottish Commissioner for Children and Young People.
- 4.6 The Covid-19 pandemic has had a huge impact service delivery at the Council, examples of which include the provision of public health information; the delivery of key health and social care services; the processing of Scottish Government business support interventions including, for example, the business grant scheme and support for the hospitality sector; changes to registration services; waste collection and disposal; and the suspension of some Council Committees and Sub-Committees. More details of the Council's response to the pandemic are available from the reports submitted to the Policy and Resources Executive Sub-Committee during the initial lockdown period: [Policy and Resources Executive Sub-Committee](#) and thereafter to the appropriate Service Committees: [Committees and Meetings](#).

4.7 The Council's Equality Mainstreaming Report 2019, Progress on Equality Outcomes 2017/21 and Equal Pay Statement 2019 was approved by the Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 26 March 2019: [Equality Mainstreaming Report 2019](#) (agenda item 10).

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Para 236

4.8 A decision was taken in 2019 to incorporate the previously separate licensing Outcomes and mainstreaming updates into the overall Council updates. This will be adopted as the reporting format for 2021 and future years.

## 5.0 EQUALITY OUTCOMES 2017/21 – PROGRESS

5.1 The Council adopted a suite of Equality Outcomes in 2017 to cover the period 2017/21 which were last reviewed and updated in 2019. Attached at Appendix 1 are details of final progress made with delivery of the Equality Outcomes 2017/21 during the period 2019/21. Key achievements to note include the following:

Appendix 1

- we set up a Staff Disability Forum, a friendly staff group that provides a platform for disabled staff, staff who care for disabled dependants and staff with an interest in disability. The Forum provides an opportunity to exchange information, ideas and raise awareness about disability in a confidential and safe space.
- we devised a Menopause Policy which aims to ensure managers are aware of and understand how the menopause can affect employees at work, ensure all women in the workplace are given information on how they can request support for any issues that arise as a result of the menopause and assist managers in considering such reasonable support, where necessary.
- we delivered training on the devising of Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) to employees from a number of Council Services.
- our Libraries Service secured £25,570 from the Public Library Improvement Fund for its proposal to turn local libraries into cultural hubs. The Fund plays a key role in helping library services achieve the vision set out by the National Public Library Strategy, with projects addressing a wide range of issues such as literacy, digital training and social isolation.
- we prepared EIAs on the budget saving proposals considered during 2018/19 and 2019/20 and published the documents on our website.
- we offered our employees training on British Sign Language (BSL) with the aim of building learners' confidence when communicating in BSL and giving them strategies to understand and provide straightforward information to customers/service users who use BSL.
- we arranged anti-sectarianism training for our employees which aimed to provide participants with the skills, confidence and resources to identify and effectively challenge sectarianism in the workplace.
- in October 2020, the Council approved in principle the re-commencement of the resettlement of families under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme, subject to confirmation of the financial details.
- In November 2020, the Council devised a range of employability interventions in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, including apprenticeships, a graduate programme, employer wage subsidies, a Council Workforce Refresh Programme, and Kickstart Inverclyde which gives participants support to look for long-term work, including career advice and setting goals; support with CV and interview preparations; support with basic skills, such as attendance, timekeeping and teamwork; this initiative may be particularly valuable to disabled applicants.
- towards the end of last year, the Council agreed that around 3,000 elderly Inverclyde residents should benefit from a £130,000 support package towards festive lunches and heating their homes. It was proposed that meal vouchers would be given to people whose usual festive lunch events were cancelled because of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and associated restrictions, while

grants towards helping to keeping household energy bills down would be doubled from £75 to £150.

- at the beginning of this year, we began work to install equipment at several of our playparks to make them more accessible for children of all abilities.

5.2 The following Case Studies are included in Appendix 1 with the aim of highlighting specific progress made with delivery of the Equality Outcomes 2017/21:

- accessible play parks; and
- migration and resettlement of families.

5.3 Appendix 2 contains a breakdown of the employee profile of Council in relation to the Protected Characteristics of Gender; Age; Disability; Ethnicity; Sexual Orientation; Religion or Belief; and Marriage and Civil Partnership Status.

Appendix 2

5.4 It should be noted that, where data in the tables in Appendix 2 is the equivalent of five or less, the information has been suppressed to protect the identity of the respective employees and potential employees. Additionally, in terms of those data sets, it is not possible to provide any meaningful commentaries on variations in figures.

## 6.0 PROPOSED EQUALITY OUTCOMES 2021/25

6.1 The Council is required to devise a new set of Equality Outcomes for the four year period from 2021.

6.2 A consultation on the Equality Outcomes 2021/25 and the Education Equality Outcomes 2021/25 took place 2-14 February 2021. A total of 104 people provided their views which is very encouraging for a consultation of this type.

6.3 A number of stakeholder groups were invited to participate in the process including Inverclyde residents, Council employees, the teacher trade union, Garvel Deaf Centre, the Council's Citizens' Panel, as well as groups supported by the Community Learning and Development Team.

6.4 In light of the restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, the main method by which people were invited to make their views heard was via an online survey. A digital focus group was also arranged to look at particular topics or other issues raised in response to the consultation.

6.5 We introduced the relevant part of the survey by explaining that the Council needs to develop a new set of Equality Outcomes 2021/25. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed that the proposed topics/themes are the right things the Council should be looking at in 2021/25 and the results were:

		<b>Agree %</b>
Outcome 1:	Increase the participation of seldom-heard/under-represented voices in local decision-making processes	86
Outcome 2:	Improve support for older people in the community	94
Outcome 3:	Take action to prevent violence against women and girls in Inverclyde	93
Outcome 4:	Increase the diversity of the Council workforce	62
Outcome 5:	Improve the economic prospects of people who are furthest from the Labour Market including young people, older people and disabled people	94.

As outlined in the above table, the vast majority of respondents agreed with the proposed equality issues the Council should tackle during the next four years and it is therefore proposed that these Outcomes are adopted. While the result for Outcome 4 was lower than the others, this could perhaps be explained by the fact that respondents may not view this Outcome as potentially having a direct impact on the community of Inverclyde. It is proposed to prepare a further report outlining the Equality Outcomes Improvement Plan 2021/25 for the Committee's consideration and approval.

6.6 So that we can best respond to the needs of different local residents, a set of profile questions was incorporated into the Equality Outcomes 2021/25 consultation, the responses to which will help the Council to ensure it treats everyone fairly and equitably. When reviewing the results of the consultation, it is important to take into consideration the profile details of respondents. Of the people who answered the profile questions, the majority of respondents are in employment and of working age.

6.7 Gender

	%
Female	44
Male	54
Prefer not to answer	2.

6.8 Age

	%
< 18 years	0
18-24 years	1
25-34 years	10.9
35-44 years	18.8
45-54 years	27.7
55-64 years	28.7
65-74 years	8.9
75+ years	3
Prefer not to answer	1.

6.9 Ethnicity; Disability

Ninety-two per cent of respondents told us the ethnic group they come in to is *White* while just under three quarters (72%) said that they do not have a disability.

6.10 Employment status

	%
Full-time employment	52
Part-time employment	16
Government training scheme	0
Looking after home or family	0
No work due to long-term illness	4
Retired	17
Self-employed	1
Student	3
Unemployed	2
Prefer not to answer	2
Other	3.

## 7.0 IMPLICATIONS

### 7.1 Finance

Financial implications:

One-off costs

Cost centre	Budget heading	Budget year	Proposed spend this report	Virement from	Other comments
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Financial implications - annually recurring costs/(savings)

Cost centre	Budget heading	With effect from	Annual net impact	Virement from	Other comments
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

### 7.2 Legal

The devising and publication of this report contributes to the fulfilment of the Council's obligations under The Equality Act 2010.

### 7.3 Human Resources

There are no direct human resources implications arising from this report.

### 7.4 Equalities

(a) Has an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) been carried out?

	Yes.
X	No. However, the report aims to progress our commitment to equalities and, in doing so, comply with the associated legislative requirements for the Council.

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

	Yes.
X	No.

(c) Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Assessment been carried out?

	Yes.
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X	No.
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7.5 Repopulation: Provision of Council Services which are subject to close scrutiny with the aim of delivering continuous improvement for current and potential citizens of Inverclyde support the Council's aim of retaining and enhancing the area's population.

## **8.0 CONSULTATION**

8.1 The Corporate Equalities Group, together with other relevant Council Officers, were consulted on the contents of this report and their input has been included, as appropriate.

## **9.0 CONCLUSION**

9.1 The Committee is asked note the contents of this report, approve the proposed Equality Outcomes 2021/25 and agree to receive a further report outlining the Equality Outcomes Improvement Plan 2021/25.

## **10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

10.1 There are no background papers regarding this report.





## Inverclyde Council Equality Outcomes 2017/21

**Equality Outcome 1: Inverclyde Council's employees and Elected Members are able to respond confidently and appropriately to the needs of service users and colleagues**

	<b>How will we get there?</b>	<b>How will we know?</b>	<b>Commentary – March 2021</b>	<b>Protected Characteristics</b>
a.	Regular face-to-face and online training sessions are available for all employees and Elected Members	Continue to meet the target of participants in training sessions for equality	We delivered training on the devising of EIAs to employees from a number of Council Services.	Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation
b.	Raise awareness of cultural differences to help with community integration	Two cultural awareness seminars to be held	<p>Local events took place in 2019 and in 2020 (before lockdown) to continue to assist with the process of integration; local community organisations - Your Voice and the Inverclyde Community Development Trust - were heavily involved in the events. Plans will be put in place, through the New Scots Steering Group, to continue to help new arrivals settle in the community.</p> <p>The Council has agreed, in principle, to participate in the Government's new Resettlement Scheme which was due to begin in April 2020. This has been put on hold due to the current pandemic, but the Home Office hopes to resume the arrival of refugees in the UK in the New Year. The New Scots Steering Group, a partnership of local statutory and voluntary organisations, and its themed sub-groups, will develop a series of events to focus on cultural awareness and the two-way process of integration.</p>	
c.	Communications Strategy to be implemented	Improved communications across the Council that reflects the diversity of the Council's employees and the	The Council's Communications Strategy has helped to guide the communications of the Council. In the past year, the Civil Contingency Communications Plan has been put in place to provide a foundation of	

	How will we get there?	How will we know?	Commentary – March 2021	Protected Characteristics
		wider community it serves	communication for the Council and the Health and Social Care Partnership during the Covid-19 pandemic. Following the most recent Employee Wellbeing Survey carried out by the Council, the Communications strategy is currently being reviewed to incorporate some additional areas to support Council employees. The updated Strategy will continue to reflect the communications obligations regarding the equalities legislation.	
d.	Increase hate crime awareness for employees and Elected Members	Hate crime awareness will increase, together with an understanding of how/where to report hate crime/incidents	We arranged anti-sectarianism training for our employees which aimed to provide participants with the skills, confidence and resources to identify and effectively challenge sectarianism in the workplace.	
e.	Access to translation services is improved for service users, as required	An Officer in each service area is identified to monitor usage of the telephone interpretation service	<p>The Council has access to a telephone interpreting service on an as-required basis; training has also been provided for key contacts in Council Services.</p> <p>The Covid-19 Shielding and Humanitarian Assistance/Residents call lines and call handling process maps provide contact details for a language translation service and BSL interpreters.</p> <p>All call handlers have access to the above information to assist in dealing with residents who may require a different form of communication to express their requirements. To date, we have not required to make use of BSL services, however the language translation service has been utilised.</p>	
		A plan is in place for incidents that require a face-to-face translation service	The appropriate arrangements will be made if a face-to-face translation service is required.	

	How will we get there?	How will we know?	Commentary – March 2021	Protected Characteristics
f.	Budget savings will be subject to EIAs	EIAs for each budget saving are published on the Council's website	<p>EIAs were prepared between November 2019 and January 2020 for each of the budget saving proposals. The Council's Budget was confirmed on 12 March 2020 and the relevant EIAs were published on our website.</p> <p>Additionally, in Autumn 2020, we devised the EIAs that were required for each of the relevant forthcoming budget saving proposals, with a view to publishing them on the Council's website at the time the Revenue Budget 2021/23 was discussed (i.e. at the meeting of Inverclyde Council on 3 December 2020).</p>	

**Equality Outcome 2: Inverclyde's children, citizens and communities are able to access our services and buildings with ease and confidence**

	How will we get there?	How will we know?	Commentary – March 2021	Protected Characteristics
a.	Establish a Multi-Agency Equality Group	A Multi-Agency Equality Group is established and communication about equalities issues between communities, the Third Sector and the Council is improved	<p>Chaired by the Head of Education, a Multi-Agency Equalities Group was established, comprising Council Officers and representatives from a number of Community Planning Partners.</p> <p>The Inverclyde Alliance is the Community Planning Partnership for the local area; membership of the Alliance includes Police Scotland, West College Scotland and a wide range of other organisations. Inequalities is reflected in the Alliance's Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2017/22 which contains three Strategic Priorities, one of which is <i>Inequalities – there be low levels of poverty and deprivation and the gap in income and health</i></p>	Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation

			<i>between the richest and poorest members of our communities will be reduced.</i>	
b.	Continue to support refugee families and facilitate engagement with appropriate services	Support provided to refugee families is evaluated on an ongoing basis	<p>The current pandemic has allowed local voluntary and statutory organisations to look at different ways in which support is provided to individuals and families; this has included the use of information technology and translated materials and has proved to be successful. One of the challenges has been to ensure all of our families have access to the appropriate technology and are able to use it to their advantage. The situation is regularly monitored and adapted, as required.</p> <p>Services continue to be provided, within the constraints of the new ways of working; this applies across our Community Planning Partners. The New Scots Steering Group, and its themed sub-groups, will continue to operate to ensure appropriate support and services are provided on the resumption of the new Resettlement Scheme. A new communications strategy is being developed to ensure that citizens and communities are fully informed of the support provided to allow full integration into the life of the local community.</p>	
c.	Implement improvements from Inverclyde's self-assessment of the Inverclyde Alliance Pregnancy and Parenthood in Young People Improvement Plan	There will be fewer unplanned pregnancies amongst young women	<p>The Improvement Plan was submitted to the meeting of the Alliance Board on 17 June 2019. It was decided that fewer unplanned pregnancies would be targeted in certain areas of deprivation in Inverclyde, as these areas had high rates of unplanned pregnancies in young women compared to the rest of Inverclyde, where there was a general decrease.</p> <p>The targeted areas would have included an outreach sexual health service that would in part increase provision of contraception. This would have been a part of the Sandyford Sexual Health provision,</p>	

			<p>however, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Sandyford had to strip back services. A roll-out of this service has therefore not occurred and we have not been able to work further on this.</p> <p>It is hoped that we are able to improve our understanding as to why these areas of Inverclyde have increasing unplanned pregnancies in young people despite a general downward trend locally and in the Greater Glasgow area. This will be achieved by working alongside Community Learning and Development colleagues and Health Visitors. Once we are able to establish a firmer understanding, provisional, long-term support can be put in place that goes outside of preventative work.</p>	
		<p>Young people who are becoming parents are provided with ongoing support appropriate to their needs</p>	<p>Young parents are provided with access to Family Nurses as part of the Family Nurse Partnership service. Family Nurses provide emotional and practical support for young parents and encourage engagement with health and social care services. They also encourage co-production and help with the selection process of new Family Nurses. There are third sector services for young parents regarding mental health and financial support. Young mothers are provided with additional support with breastfeeding.</p> <p>Despite this, Health Visitors and third sector mental health colleagues continue to inform us that young father involvement is patchy. This is partly because of the lack of investment in paternal mental health. Additionally, some young fathers suffer from adverse childhood experience that is not being addressed with the same importance as young mothers' and this can impact on a father's engagement with family life. It is something we need to work on further and to continue to engage with our Partners to find</p>	

			solutions.	
d.	Continue to develop services, guidance and support for the transgender community	Where practicable, existing toilet facilities will be re-designated as accessible toilets to meet the needs of the transgender community	<p>Having been awarded the LGBT Bronze Charter Award by LGBT Youth Scotland in 2019, the LGBT Pride Group is now working towards achieving the LGBT Silver Charter Mark. Transgender young people are supported through this Group and members have felt confident to reach out and recruit more transgender young people. A transgender member of staff has also been appointed to support the Group.</p> <p>We are working hard to ensure that all opportunities are safe and inclusive of all young people.</p>	
e.	Continue to improve the condition of roads and pavements in line with the Roads Asset Management Plan	The Council's Environment, Regeneration and Resources Corporate Directorate Improvement Plan (CDIP) Performance Reports will provide evidence of improved roads and pavements (every 2nd Committee cycle in line with the CDIP performance reporting schedule)	<p>The Council approved a comprehensive Roads Asset Management Plan (RAMP) and funding model in August 2012. A total of £29 million was proposed for the period April 2013 to March 2018 to improve our roads infrastructure – carriageways, footways, lighting columns and structures - this included road and pavement resurfacing works, an extensive road patching and pothole repairs programme, street lighting replacement works and improvements to bridges and roads structures.</p> <p>Further to this investment, a second phase of RAMP funding was allocated to the value of £15 million for the period April 2018 to March 2023.</p> <p>Since the implementation of the RAMP in 2013, the Road Condition Indicator (RCI) has continually reduced, by a total of approximately 10 points, which demonstrates that the planned investment is resulting in a significant improvement to the condition of Inverclyde's road network.</p> <p>Over 95% of the Council's streetlights have now</p>	

			<p>been upgraded to low energy LED types which has halved electrical power consumption, reduced energy and maintenance costs and reduced the Council's carbon footprint.</p> <p>Roads structural projects and programmes have delivered, for example, numerous bridge upgrades and improvements including a prioritised programme of inspection and repair.</p> <p>The RAMP Plan has resulted in a reduction in the number of Inverclyde's roads, footways, street lights and road structures which require ongoing maintenance treatment while providing an increased future lifespan.</p>	
f.	Continue to work towards improving access to buildings and Council facilities to ensure they are as inclusive as practicable	An equality access audit process will be rolled out across Council buildings regularly used by the public	Equality access audits have been carried out in a number of Council buildings.	

**Equality Outcome 3: Measures to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls are making Inverclyde a place where all individuals are equally safe and respected and all women and girls can expect to live free from such abuse and the attitudes that perpetrate it**

	<b>How will we get there?</b>	<b>How will we know?</b>	<b>Commentary – March 2021</b>	<b>Protected Characteristics</b>
a.	Develop and deliver the Inverclyde Violence Against Women Multi-Agency Partnership (VAWMAP) Strategy 2017/22 and yearly Action Plan	The Strategy is in place and regular updates on the Action Plan are reported to the Corporate Equalities Group. An annual Outcome Report is provided to the Inverclyde Alliance.	The Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 was implemented on 1 April 2019 following a significant training programme delivered to Police Scotland staff. The Act reflects the fact that domestic abuse consists of a range of behaviours that undermine the victim and restrict their freedom and that such abuse is more than physical or sexual harm. It is recognised that coercive controlling behaviours have	Race, Religion or Belief, Sex

	How will we get there?	How will we know?	Commentary – March 2021	Protected Characteristics
			<p>a long-lasting effect on both the adult victim and children. Previously, this was not reflected in criminal law in Scotland. Local training and awareness sessions have been reviewed to incorporate information relating to the Act. In 2019, plays were performed in all high schools to 5th and 6th year pupils (1,400 pupils) followed by workshop discussions delivered by Police Scotland to raise awareness of coercive controlling behaviour and young people.</p> <p>The VAW MAP offered training to all staff from River Clyde Homes to support the delivery of their Domestic Abuse Policy. This Policy was developed to support staff and customers who are affected by domestic abuse. The training on awareness was delivered over seven sessions to approximately 130 staff.</p> <p>While the Council was unsuccessful in its application to be a pilot Council for the Equally Safe at Work initiative, we were, however, confirmed as a shadow Council until the next stage. In the interim, the VAW Co-ordinator and HR Team Leader have reviewed the staff policies on domestic abuse and funding has been identified to enable the delivery of on-line training to a large number of the Council's staff and Partners in 2021.</p> <p>For survivors of domestic abuse who already experienced a pattern of persistent and controlling behaviour at the hands of a partner or ex-partner, Covid-19 restrictions compounded the risk of harm, and made seeking help even more difficult. It placed victims and their children at increased risk and</p>	



	How will we get there?	How will we know?	Commentary – March 2021	Protected Characteristics
			<p>allowed perpetrators increased power to exercise coercive control. The changing situation as restrictions were eased also increased risk for victims as perpetrators were threatened by a loss of control resulting in an increase in abusive behaviour. Delivery of practical VAW work continued through the full period of the restrictions. Inverclyde Women's Aid delivered responsive services and support to women and children both in the refuge and in the community. Direct contact reduced significantly, with personal protective equipment being utilised where face-to-face contact was required. Outreach services were delivered by telephone and text messaging and, where appropriate and safe to do so, by secure video conferencing.</p> <p>The Police Scotland Domestic Abuse Investigations Unit confirmed that referrals remained static over the lockdown period in Inverclyde but that the types of referrals changed, coming from a narrower range of statutory and other services. The Police reported an increase in Disclosure Scheme Domestic Abuse Scotland (DSDAS) applications, a process that can be utilised by anyone who has concerns about a person who they suspect may be at risk of domestic abuse at the hands of a current partner.</p> <p>The MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) continued to operate effectively and efficiently, assisted by Inverclyde's unique MARAC Database and meetings being delivered on Microsoft Teams.</p> <p>Court cases are significantly behind schedule and</p>	

	How will we get there?	How will we know?	Commentary – March 2021	Protected Characteristics
			this is likely to be an issue for some time, resulting in ongoing stress for victims.	

**Equality Outcome 4: There are no barriers in recruitment, training and promotion opportunities for Inverclyde Council**

	How will we get there?	How will we know?	Commentary – March 2021	Protected Characteristics
a.	All staff to be asked to update their Equal Opportunities status during 2017 to allow the Council to monitor, report on and take action to remove any barriers in recruitment, training or promotion opportunities	The number of staff disclosing information has increased	An equal opportunities update exercise is carried out every three years. As the last exercise took place in 2018, staff will be asked to update their Equal Opportunities status in 2021.	
b.	Seek to address any identified Pay Gap through regular promotions and targeted events	The Gender Pay Gap has reduced	The Council integrated the Living Wage into the pay and grading structure which will evidence a further improvement in the Gender Pay Gap.  Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, events were initially stopped but, as more such events move on-line, we will look at events that we can participate in remotely.	
c.	The Council continues its membership of the DCS	The Council has retained membership of the DCS	The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has advised organisations that they do not need to apply to renew their Level Status at present due to the Covid-19 pandemic and that they will make contact when the Scheme has been re-opened to enable us to apply to retain our current Level.	

d.	An equalities leaflet has been produced to highlight that jobs are not gender-specific	Equalities leaflets/web pages on the Protected Characteristics are available	A leaflet was produced which aims to encourage potential applicants to consider what are traditionally seen as male or female roles at the Council.	
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**Equality Outcome 5: All Inverclyde residents have an opportunity to share in the area's economic growth**

	<b>How will we get there?</b>	<b>How will we know?</b>	<b>Commentary – March 2021</b>	<b>Protected Characteristics</b>
a.	Facilitate the Disability Confident Scheme (DCS) accreditation for Inverclyde employers	An increase in the number of employers with the DCS accreditation	Council Officers attended DWP jobs fairs and events to raise the profile of the DCS and speak to local employers with the aim of encouraging them to join.	
b.	Delivery of actions from the Skills Development Scotland (SDS) Equality and Diversity Action Plan	Monitoring of measures included in the Action Plan	<p>We continue to support SDS to enable them to deliver their Equality and Diversity Action Plan building on the progress that has been made and reported on in the 2019/21 reporting period in Inverclyde.</p> <p>Our specific support locally is for the equality groups to access the appropriate Career Information, Advice and Guidance support from SDS Inverclyde. Our main priority is that no school leavers are <i>not known</i> to SDS and we fully utilise the Inverclyde Offer to work with SDS and partners to ensure that 16-24 year old service users from equality groups receive a timely and personalised service that meets their needs.</p>	
c.	Ensure equalities are embedded within the Council's procurement approach and documentation	All successful tenderers will have certified their compliance with statutory equality requirements	Part of our tendering process includes the obligation that a contractor undertakes that it has and shall comply with all statutory requirements in respect of ensuring equal opportunity in employment and has not and	

	<b>How will we get there?</b>	<b>How will we know?</b>	<b>Commentary – March 2021</b>	<b>Protected Characteristics</b>
			shall not unlawfully discriminate either directly or indirectly on such grounds as Race, Colour, Ethnic or National Origin, Disability, Gender, Sex or Sexual orientation, Religion or Belief, or Age.	

## Case studies

### Case study 1: Accessible play parks

At the beginning of this year, we began work to install equipment at several of our playparks to make them more accessible for children of all abilities. The £200,000 investment will see 13 sites across the area upgraded with either a wheelchair-friendly roundabout, play ramp or a mixture of both.

The works, which are permitted under the current Covid-19 restrictions, began at the park at Birkmyre Avenue, Port Glasgow, early in January 2021, with the other 12 sites to follow between now and March this year.

The Council has spent around £100,000 on equipment while a similar amount will be used for the installations and associated works, such as fence, path and surface alterations.

The parks included in the project are located throughout Inverclyde:

- Greenock – Watt Street, Battery Park, Wellpark, Overton
- Port Glasgow – Birkmyre Avenue, Craigmarloch School, Coronation Park
- Gourrock – Cove Road, Walled Gardens, King Street, Cullen Crescent
- Kilmacolm – West Glen Park
- Wemyss Bay – Community Centre.

### Case study 2: Migration and resettlement of families

In 2020, the Council agreed in principle to re-start the resettlement of families under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme, subject to confirmation of the financial details.

The Council has participated in three refugee schemes run by the UK Government through the Home Office: the Afghan Relocation Scheme, the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme and the Vulnerable Children's Scheme. Additionally, other migrants arriving in the area, including European Economic Area Nationals, are given appropriate advice, guidance and assistance to facilitate their settlement and integration in Inverclyde.

The Inverclyde Health and Social Care Partnership's New Scots Refugee Integration Team co-ordinates support for refugee families in Inverclyde and this involves a number of commissioned services. The Team provides the support required to enable a family to establish its new life in Inverclyde from the point they arrive at Glasgow Airport. This includes airport pick up, securing and furnishing tenancies, materials and food for the home on arrival, support to register with medical services, access to bespoke mental health supports, support to apply for Benefits, introduction and support to make community links, access to courses to learn the language, assistance to commence voluntary work, support to secure employment, managing tenancies, and supporting children into their education.

By October 2020, a total of 55 families had resettled in Inverclyde. While a number of Afghan families have left the area, it was not for any reasons associated with their experience of living in Inverclyde. The main reasons included the lack of a mosque (and therefore no Imam for the religious education of their children), little access to affordable halal meat and a desire to live closer to a larger Afghan community. In contrast, no Syrian families have enquired about leaving Inverclyde and, in fact, Syrians from other parts of Scotland and the United Kingdom, as well as Europe, have come and settled locally, partly because of family connections but also because of the quality of support and services.

It is acknowledged that many of these vulnerable families may require support beyond the five year period funded by the Home Office, assuming they have their leave to remain extended or made indefinite.