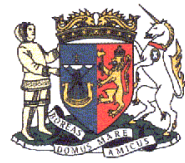




**ORKNEY AND SHETLAND
VALUATION JOINT BOARD**



**EQUALITIES MAINSTREAMING
AND EQUALITIES OUTCOMES**

April 2013

Introduction

The Orkney and Shetland Valuation Joint Board and the Assessor for Orkney and Shetland are committed to adopting the principles and the ethos of the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

As part of their commitment towards equalities, the Board will provide those who are associated with them such as ratepayers, council tax payers, electors, all staff members of the Board and members of the public who resort to the offices of the Board a service and a culture and a working environment commensurate with the three aspects of the general equality duty when carrying out its functions, specifically to pay due regard to the need to:

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

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

The Regulations impose a duty on certain authorities to:

- Publish a report on progress they have made to make the equality duty integral to the exercise of its functions (the 'mainstreaming equality report').
- 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 improve its equality duty. Such outcomes will be published by the Board every 4 years.
- Publish a report on the composition, recruitment, development and retention of employees with respect to the number and characteristics of employees.
- Publish gender pay gap information, a statement on equal pay and occupational segregation between men and women - (The Orkney and Shetland Valuation Joint Board has only 14 members of staff in two separate offices and is therefore exempt from these duties).
- Consider award criteria in relation to public procurement.
- Publish its equality reports in a manner that is accessible to the public.
- Report annually on the progress made to achieve equality outcomes.

MAINSTREAMING EQUALITY

Mainstreaming simply means integrating equality into the day to day work of the Board – taking equality into account in everything that is done as an employer and when planning and providing services. By doing so equality becomes part of structures, behaviours and cultures. The Assessor and Assistant Assessor must provide clear and consistent messages with the equality duties embedded within all strategy. Co-workers should be able to recognise the relevance of the equality duties to their own role and should consider it in carrying out their work. Equality therefore becomes fully integrated within structures, behaviours and culture rather than an adjunct to these aspects of the service.

Gathering information is an important aspect of mainstreaming and includes monitoring service users and service activity as regards all of the protected characteristics and then analysing outcomes.

Mainstreaming the equality duty has a number of benefits including:

- Equality becomes part of the structures, behaviours and culture of an authority
- An authority knows and can demonstrate how, in carrying out its functions, it is promoting equality
- Mainstreaming equality contributes to continuous improvement and better performance.

MAINSTREAMING THE EQUALITIES DUTY

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

1. to ensure that all employees are trained in how to implement this scheme as is relevant and appropriate to their jobs
2. Continuing to monitor any complaints to ensure that any equalities issues line up with equalities legislation.
3. to establish a system for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of the Board's policies on the promotion of equality
4. to monitor the Board's existing and proposed policies for any adverse impact on the promotion of equality
5. To ensure public access to information and services.

PRIORITIES AND FUNCTIONS

The Board currently fulfils its responsibility to monitor the required areas and the results are published annually by the Assessor. These are contained within the "Annual Equalities Progress & Monitoring Report" published on the Board's website each year www.orkney-shetland-vjb.co.uk.

The Clerk and Treasurer to the Orkney and Shetland Valuation Joint Board and those that are seconded to Valuation Joint Board duties are employees of the lead authority which is currently Shetland Islands Council and will be subject to its monitoring processes.

The Board has in place arrangements to monitor equalities by reference to race, gender, disability, and age and the numbers of staff in post and the number of applicants for employment and training. Due to its size few employment opportunities arise so reporting on employment is infrequent. Statistics are prepared and published on the Board's Website under the following headings:

- Staff profile by race/disability/gender
- Employees by age
- Applicants by race/disability/gender
- Recruitment by race/disability/gender
- Promoted staff by race/disability/gender
- Leavers, resignations, retirements, and redundancies by race/disability/gender
- Training by race/disability/gender
- Staff salaries (numbers and percentages) by race/disability/gender

BOARD FUNCTIONS

The core functions of the Board are:

1. Publication and maintenance of the Valuation Roll.
2. Publication and maintenance of the Council Tax List
3. Publication and maintenance of the Electoral Register

The Valuation Roll and Council Tax List have outcomes which relate to the inspection and valuation of property however there is a need to ensure that technicians who visit the subjects are familiar with the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations across the range of protected characteristics.

As Electoral Registration Officer for Orkney and Shetland the Assessor reports annually to the Electoral Commission against the performance standards the Commission has set. These standards include: Making House to House Enquiries, Public Awareness Strategy, working with partners, and accessibility and communication of information. The Electoral Commission has confirmed that the Assessor as Electoral Registration Officer has met the criteria for these standards since the performance standards were introduced in 2008. However the ERO recognises that these are areas where equalities issues must be addressed and that proper training is given to staff who deals with issues through public visitations to the offices of the Board and on door-to-door visits.

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. The Assessor is required to report any incidence of complaints to the Board at its bi-annual meetings. All complaints are logged on its "Comments and Complaints database" and reported to the next available Board meeting if there are any such incidents.

EMPLOYMENT

A Recruitment and Selection procedure mirrors Shetland Island Council's "[Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures](#)". Members of staff who are involved in recruitment and selection have received training through a Train Shetland which provides wide ranging training in Shetland to meet the local workforce needs. The availability of courses are listed here http://www.trainshetland.com/developing_skills/our-courses/all-courses The Assessor and ERO intends to expand its staff training in areas but particularly in areas of equality by requesting funding through the Board's training budget. The Orkney and Shetland Valuation Joint Board seeks to employ the most suitable applicant for each vacancy that arises, regardless of any physical or mental impairment. Applicants with disabilities will be treated fairly and considered on ability only.

THE BOARD'S POLICIES

Shetland Islands Council's policies and procedures have largely been adopted by the Orkney and Shetland Valuation Joint Board as the lead authority to the Board. Where the Board considers that there is a need to compile separate policies and procedures the Assessor publishes separate documents which are scrutinised for equalities issues. All policies continue to be screened for any adverse impact and a full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) will be completed where necessary.

EQUALITIES MONITORING

The Orkney and Shetland 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, and training in respect of ethnic origin, gender, disability and age. The Orkney and Shetland 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 any barriers or perceived barriers and make recommendations for action. This Report will be published and circulated to all members, officers and employees of the Board. The Scheme and this Mainstreaming Equalities Report will be placed on the Board's web-site at www.orkney-shetland-vjb.co.uk. Translations will be made available on request. Versions may also be available in different formats, large font, Braille and audio tape on request.

TRAINING

The Board has identified a need to put in place arrangements for training its employees in all areas of equality in the workplace and to this end it has made available to all staff the Guidance available on line at the Equality and Human Rights Website at <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/> Structured training is not always possible in a small office with job share posts and the Assessor believes that providing time to study equality issues, Freedom of Information and Data Protection Awareness should be dealt with during individual study periods in the form of an "E-Learning Programme". The Assessor intends to improve this through further use of the "Train Shetland Courses" described above under "Employment" although this will depend on there being sufficient funds in the Training Budget.

In developing its Mainstreaming Report, the Board acknowledges its small size which makes any consultation exercises difficult. It therefore believes that it is important to learn from the processes and outcomes of its two constituent local authorities and from other Valuation Joint Boards where it believes that they fit the local scene.

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. It is bound by and complies with the requirements of the Local Government etc Scotland Act 1994 in respect of access to information. Any equality issues arising out of policy documents will become subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment which will be published on the Board's website.

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 draws on its website resource as a means of ensuring public access, however it recognises that further work is required in order to meet this requirement and intends to draw on the resources of its two Councils to seek ways to develop public awareness. This report will be made available to members, officers and employees of the Board and will be available on the website.

DURATION AND REVIEW

This report is intended to cover the period from April 2013 to March 2015. The Board may, if appropriate, review the Report and Equality Outcomes or any part of them at an earlier date in response to comments from stakeholders, organisations or as a result of comments through Board Meetings which are normally held twice a year. Such reviews will be covered in the Annual Equalities Progress & Monitoring Reports published on the website.

EMPLOYEE EQUALITY MONITORING

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 which was enacted after the Board's Single Equality Scheme was published, 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.

The Appendices to this report detail the employee information collected in respect of job applicants in post during 2012. No jobs were advertised during this period. Data will be collected for 2013 and subsequent years should any posts be advertised.

ORKNEY AND SHETLAND VALUATION JOINT BOARD – EQUALITY OUTCOMES

The process of preparing equality outcomes requires an understanding of the most significant equality issues arising in the organisation and sector. Efforts and resources require to be targeted as effectively as possible to meet these equality issues. Setting outcomes will help the Board focus on the areas where the organisation can have the most impact taking a strategic overview of the Board as a whole and its functions.

In advance of considering equalities outcomes, the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer has drawn on the resources of the GIS Census information and on his own electoral registration statistical data to help determine the ethnic make-up of Orkney and Shetland. As the 2011 Census Data will not be available until late 2013, the Assessor has relied mainly on the statistical figures of European and Commonwealth citizens to help gauge the minority groups who live in the two Island areas. This information will be reviewed when the 2011 Census data becomes available.

The figures show similar patterns in each of the two areas with higher numbers of Eastern Europeans than any other minority group. The Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer has taken these demographic indicators into account in how he currently deals with equality issues in all areas of the services the Board provides and in the way he conducts all the Board's office processes.

THE SERVICES

ELECTORAL REGISTRATION

Electoral Registration is currently going through a process of change from household registration to individual registration brought about by the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013. The changeover to Individual Electoral Registration will have a substantial impact on the service and citizens. In addition to this Electoral Registration Officers will have to deal with one-off changes to the system for the Scottish Referendum due to take place on 18th September 2014, which will change the franchise to incorporate 16 and 17 year olds. There are some 16900 Electors in Orkney and 17800 in Shetland.

Electoral registration is a priority area for equalities, particularly in view of the fundamental shift in focus from household to individual, and the drive to ensure all eligible 16 and 17 year olds can participate in the 2014 referendum. The Electoral Registration process is regulated and overseen by the Electoral Commission who is an independent body established by Parliament. One of the Commission's objectives is to increase public participation in the democratic process and in this regard, it has carried out research on access and attitudes across group characteristics including gender, ethnicity and age. The research, that is quite extensive and spans the last ten years, provides a number of consistent themes:

1. Voter registration is lower for Black and Minority Ethnic groups (BME)
2. The level of voter registration is inversely related to age
3. Men are more engaged in the democratic processes than women
4. Whilst UK Commonwealth, non-UK Commonwealth, Irish and EU citizens are entitled to be registered. EU nationals are least likely to be registered to vote.
5. People in rented property tend to be less likely to participate in politics
6. Deprivation has an association with non-participation in the electoral process
7. Mobile populations tend to be under-registered. This is believed to include travellers

There are clear parallels that dictate that active consideration of these themes must be embedded in registration practice and procedure, essentially mainstreaming equalities considerations in the day-to-day operations of the service.

NON-DOMESTIC RATING

The rating revaluation of non-domestic properties that was due to be held in 2015 will now take place in 2017. This means that the bulk of the preparatory work will take place in 2014 – 2016 as the valuations will require to be finalised by the end of the summer in 2016. In Orkney and Shetland, the Assessor is responsible for assessing the values of some 4,000 non-domestic properties that currently have a total rateable value of £70M. Equalities issues may arise through the day-to-day dealing with individuals either:

1. in person at the property;
2. in person at the Board's offices; or
3. through e-mail or other forms of correspondence

COUNCIL TAX BANDING

The Council Tax regime is currently a stable function, with a valuation list of some 22,200 dwellings allocated to council tax bands and around 300 new dwellings being added each year. The Scottish Government has indicated that they are reviewing its future and it is possible that it will be amended or replaced following the next Scottish Government election in 2016. Equalities issues may arise in the same way as described under NON-DOMESTIC RATING above.

STAFFING

The Assessor & ERO service establishment comprises 5 full time posts in Orkney and 3 in Shetland. There are currently 14 full and part-time employees that represent 11.6 full time equivalents. Staff turnover is extremely low which means that there are very few opportunities to address any perceived imbalance in the staffing profile and the acute restraint in public expenditure dictates that recruitment will be minimal. The potential to effect change through workforce recruitment is therefore extremely limited.

Against this background of a stable Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rating system where citizen interaction is relatively limited, the Assessor and ERO believes that focus should be mainly on achieving the following aims:

1. Improving the education of members of staff through in-house training and seeking opportunities to utilise any structured training if available locally through external training establishments such as Train Shetland and Orkney College.

2. To maximise the opportunity for young citizens to register to vote and therefore enabling them to engage more fully in the voting process.
3. To maximise any opportunities to broaden the Board's workforce from its current base of "Scottish/Shetland/Orkney" to reflect ethnic minorities.
4. To increase the proportion of staff who feel they are treated fairly in terms of equalities issues.

OUTCOMES

OUTCOME 1

Improving the education of staff on equality issues in the workplace

This will require the following measures in order to track this outcome:

- Notification of Single Equalities Scheme and Equalities and Human Rights Guidance to all employees of the Board.
- Ensuring that team leaders have the knowledge to deal with equalities issues at their level. Assessor engages with team leaders to discuss issues where equalities issues may arise.
- Engagement with team leaders to ensure that areas of equalities are understood by staff in areas affecting their posts. Having particular regard to the advice and practices contained in the "Good equality practice for employers" covering equality policies, equality training and monitoring.
- Assessor seeks ways of improving training in equalities issues by reviewing local sources of training through Train Shetland and Orkney College.

OUTCOME 2

Maximising opportunities for young citizens to register to vote

The registration of young voters (under 18) for the referendum will mirror the demographic profile of Orkney and Shetland. Registration statistics will demonstrate progress against census outputs and other sources of young person data. In turn, the early engagement with young citizens should prove beneficial in assisting to establish a culture of engagement in mid-late teens that may be maintained into adulthood.

Activities

- Consult with partner authorities and education providers – Whilst it is anticipated that virtually complete lists of young people will be provided by the education authorities covering those who attend school, the ERO believes that it will be necessary to use many other methods to ingather as comprehensive a list as possible.
- Canvass and publicity plan.
- Integration of the equalities element with the Electoral Commission performance standards regime
- Engagement with individual equalities groups to ensure removal of barriers to registration
- Visits to schools to encourage young persons to register

Measurement

- Registration rates compared to census outputs when available.
- Number of registration corrections and complaints

OUTCOME 3

Promote equality and fair treatment of staff within the offices of the Board

- Introduce a staff survey
- Utilise flexi-time working in both offices of the board to help employees maintain a balance between work and personal life and encourage mothers back to the workplace.

- Increase general training in both offices where there is an identified need. This will be carried out mainly by in-house training using workbooks associated with the main software utilised by the Board's offices.
- Review recruitment channels
- Gather more comprehensive data on staff data to include perceived imperfections in the workplaces.

OUTCOME 4

The gender segregation in our staff Professional/Technical roles is improved.

Basis

The analysis of our current workforce shows that we have 8 members of staff employed in professional and technical roles, 7 male and 1 female. (See Appendix 2 for Staff Monitoring).

The professional and technical staff represents 57% of the Board's employees and the gender imbalance within this group is evident when compared with the 42.9% female/57.1% male division across the whole workforce. Professional Staff are members of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors where there is a gender imbalance of 75% Male to 15% female amongst members. This creates a problem in recruitment at the professional end of the scale in helping to address this imbalance this leaves limited opportunities to address this imbalance.

Action Plan

The aim is to encourage more applications from female applicants for professional and technical roles and identify any barriers preventing females from applying for posts within this area of employment.

Work with staff to remove stereotypical views of gender suitability for these roles.

Consult with constituent Islands Councils personnel departments to explore ways of attracting more women to these roles.

Aim

The aim is to employ more women in professional and technical roles. In measuring progress to achieving this aim it must be recognised that the Orkney and Shetland Valuation Joint Board is a very small organisation with an workforce amounting to only 14 staff over the two island areas. Turnover of staff is limited and therefore there will be few opportunities to significantly alter the staff profile in the foreseeable future.

ORKNEY AND SHETLAND VALUATION JOINT BOARD EQUAL PAY STATEMENT - 2013-2017

1. The Orkney and Shetland Valuation Joint Board is committed to the principle of equal pay for all our employees and aims to address any gender pay gap in their pay systems and to reduce occupational segregation.
2. The Board understands that the equal pay between men and women is a legal right under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012. It is important that employees have confidence in the Board's process of eliminating the gender pay gap and occupational segregation. As good practice The Board is committed to working in partnership with trade unions to ensure that we work towards providing equal pay.
3. The Board believes that in addressing the gender pay gap in their pay system and reducing occupational segregation they are sending a positive message to their employees and customers. It makes good sense to have a fair, transparent reward system and it helps to control costs. The Board recognises that avoiding unfair discrimination will improve morale and enhance efficiency and shows that the Board is a good employer.

The Board's Equal Pay Objectives are to:

- Identify any unfair, unjust or unlawful practices that impact on the gender pay gap, and take appropriate remedial action
- Increase the number of female employees in the top 5% of earners
- Reduce the gender pay gap for part-time and full-time employees
- Reduce occupational segregation
- Increase the number of female employees who successfully apply for promotion
- Ensure recruitment and employment practices promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination

To achieve our Equal Pay Objectives, the Board will:

- Apply a pay structure for employees covered by the Scottish Joint Council for Local Government Employees conditions of service that ensures equal pay for work of equal value
- Apply the agreed job sizing arrangements for the grades and pay of Teachers
- Use the Pay Reviewer Software in order to carry out an Equal Pay Review
- Provide training and guidance for those employees involved in carrying out Equal Pay Review
- Carry out an Equal Pay Review every two years
- Plan and implement actions identified from the Equal Pay Review through consultation with employees and with trade unions
- Identify occupational segregation and if necessary take positive action to address it
- Provide training and guidance for those employees involved in carrying out Job Evaluation and Job Sizing
- Inform employees of how Job Evaluation and Job Sizing practices work and how their own pay is determined
- Monitor complaints and grievances on equal pay, recruitment and harassment for identifying equality issues

- Carry out Equality Impact Assessments on all employment policies
- In conjunction with trade unions monitor pay statistics annually through Statutory Performance Indicators
- Review progress every two years through the Mainstreaming Report
- Provide training and guidance to all managers involved in the design of new jobs

Shetland Islands Council is the Orkney and Shetland Valuation Joint Board's lead authority and the Board adopts the Council's policies on pay and terms and conditions. So far as the equal pay statement is concerned, the terms are the same as those which have been approved by Shetland Islands Council. The Board intends to review its Equal Pay Statement in line with the Council's every four years.

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April 2013

**ORKNEY AND SHETLAND VALUATION JOINT BOARD
EQUALITIES MONITORING –AS AT 1 APRIL 2013**

EMPLOYEES BY GENDER

MALE	FEMALE
8	6

EMPLOYEE AGE DISTRIBUTION

AGE	MALE	%	FEMALE	%	TOTAL	%
0-19	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
20-29	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
30-39	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
40-49	4	50.0%	5	83.3%	9	64.3%
50-59	3	37.5%	1	16.7%	4	28.6%
60-69	1	12.5%	0	0.0%	1	7.1%
70 +	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
ALL	8	100%	6	100%	14	100%

DISABILITY

	MALE	FEMALE
DISABLED	0	0
NOT DISABLED	8	6

ETHNIC GROUP

CURRENT STAFFING PROFILE		NUMBER OF STAFF	%
RACE	WHITE BRITISH	14	100%
	MIXED	0	
	ASIAN	0	
	BLACK	0	
	OTHER	0	
DISABILITY	DISABLED	0	
	ABLE BODIED	14	100%
GENDER	FEMALE	6	42.9%
	MALE	8	57.1%

SALARY

SALARIES		GRADE F	GRADE G	GRADE H	GRADE I	GRADE J	GRADE K	GRADE L	GRADE M	GRADE N	CHIEF OFFICER	TOTAL
RACE	WHITE	4	5	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	14
	MIXED											
	ASIAN											
	BLACK											
	OTHER											
DISABILITY	DISABLED											
	ABLE BODIED	4	5	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	14
GENDER	FEMALE	4	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
	MALE	0	4	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	8

SALARIES IN PERCENTAGES		GRADE F	GRADE G	GRADE H	GRADE I	GRADE J	GRADE K	GRADE L	GRADE M	GRADE N	CHIEF OFFICER	TOTAL
RACE	WHITE	28.57%	35.71%	0.00%	7.14%	7.14%	7.14%	0.00%	0.00%	7.14%	7.14%	100%
	MIXED											
	ASIAN											
	BLACK											
	OTHER											
DISABILITY	DISABLED											
	ABLE BODIED	28.57%	35.71%	0.00%	7.14%	7.14%	7.14%	0.00%	0.00%	7.14%	7.14%	100%
GENDER	FEMALE	28.57%	7.14%	0.00%	7.14%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	43%
	MALE	0.00%	28.57%	0.00%	0.00%	7.14%	7.14%	0.00%	0.00%	7.14%	7.14%	57%