

# Results of the EQHRIA

## Renfrewshire Council

**To:** Council

**On:** 28<sup>th</sup> September

### Report by Chief Executive

#### Overview

Our Renfrewshire is the Community Plan for ten years 2017-2027 and is also Renfrewshire's Local Outcome Improvement Plan, as required by the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. Renfrewshire faces a number of exciting opportunities over the next ten years that we want to harness, and make sure that everyone can feel the benefit of those opportunities. We also face significant challenges, which we will only overcome by working together. Our Renfrewshire has been developed together and will be signed up to by key public, private and third sector organisations. It marks a shared responsibility to work together to get things right for people in Renfrewshire, and a commitment to addressing the inequalities that exist. The content of Our Renfrewshire is the result of dialogue with partners and local people about opportunities, challenges and aspirations, informed by a comprehensive data and evidence set. The vision for Our Renfrewshire is - "Working together to make Renfrewshire a fairer, more inclusive place where all our people, communities and businesses thrive"

And the priorities are:

- Our Renfrewshire is thriving: Maximising economic growth, which is inclusive and sustainable
- Our Renfrewshire is well: Supporting the wellness and resilience of our citizens and communities
- Our Renfrewshire is fair: Addressing the inequalities which limit life chances
- Our Renfrewshire is safe: Protecting vulnerable people, and working together to manage the risk of harm

The Plan recognizes a large number of potential and actual equality impacts and has, in large part, turned these into priorities that will support meeting our three general duties. Some of our key areas of activity under each strategic outcome area explicitly recognize and are designed to tackle a specific issue affecting one or more equality groups, whereas others while not appearing equality related, are built on an embedded equalities approach.

The first priority is about maximizing inclusive and sustainable economic growth. In this priority area, it is recognized that there are patterns to the benefits of economic growth, for example on the basis of age or sex, which is why this outcome specifically references inclusive growth. Any specific projects within this priority area have either undergone or will undergo their own EQIA, for example the Renfrew Riverside project as part of City Deal has already undergone an impact assessment, recognizing the particular impacts of this project on older people, disabled people and younger people. The section on skills recognizes gender imbalances and under representation of black and minority ethnic people and disabled people in some sectors, which this priority area seeks to address.

The second priority area related to wellness and resilience. Again this priority recognizes current imbalances, starkly illustrated by the life expectancy gap between most and least affluent communities. This priority area clearly recognizes the impact of an ageing

population and seeks to shift the balance to improving people's healthy life expectancy, rather than just looking at how long they live. There is also necessarily a focus on mental health and substance misuse in this section to reflect not only impacts on health and wellbeing, but also how this impacts on all areas of peoples' lives. This is one area that has emerged as a key priority to be threaded through all of the priority areas.

The third priority is related to addressing inequalities and limiting life chances. This has a significant focus on children and young people, realizing the potential of early intervention and continued opportunities at key life stages. This section also recognizes and reflects the significant issues related to equality groups and access.

The fourth priority is to protect vulnerable people and work together to manage the risk of harm. This priority again takes in a number of specific equality priorities, for example gender based violence and hate crime reporting. While these two priorities are specifically designed to address a clear inequality, the other areas of activity are equality minded in their approach. For example the anti terrorism agenda is an area with much potential for discrimination based on race and/ or religion and belief and so is designed with a robust equalities approach.

The fifth priority is to have a Community Planning Partnership which is sustainable and connected. This priority embodies equality and diversity in its approach, by ensuring that community voices and the voices of individuals are heard from the equality groups across Renfrewshire.

As explained there are activity areas related to specific equality groups, but this does not mean that those without specific activity areas have not been thought about. For example, we recognize that we do not have good data or established support organizations with LGB&T communities, but the Council and partners have put in place actions to support and develop such organizations. It should be noted that a large number of individual areas of work and projects sit behind the priorities, each of which will have a specific EQIA undertaken.

No changes recommended at this stage. The activities and actions will be further developed and monitored with equality in mind and in partnership with the community to ensure that every opportunity to embody the general duties is taken advantage of.

## **Evidence of assessment**

A strategic needs assessment was undertaken in 2017 to establish a full picture of the current and future residents of Renfrewshire. The data profiles were useful to understand the demography of the area and identify where specific needs may lie. We have engaged with local equalities led community groups to better understand needs and aspirations and undertaken much community involvement in developing the plan. Consultation was undertaken with all community level structures, such as community councils, Local Area Communities and also through local equalities led community groups, public consultation and open sessions. We have identified that for some protected characteristics, there are very few if any equalities led community groups. In these cases we have drawn on national research and included support for emerging groups as part of wider equalities work. This combination of quantitative and qualitative information has been used to both develop the Community Plan and this accompanying impact assessment.

The highlights from the evidence include:

- Our population is ageing and it is projected that the number of people aged over 65 is expected to rise significantly in the next twenty years, particularly in the over 75 age group.

- Renfrewshire is less ethnically diverse than Scotland as a whole, with almost 95% of Renfrewshire citizens identifying as White Scottish or White British. Almost half of Renfrewshire citizens born outside of the UK have been here for over 10 years. However, Renfrewshire's Black and Minority Ethnic population is rising gradually, particularly with economic migrants from other European countries such as Poland. Our schools data gives us an indication that Renfrewshire is becoming more ethnically diverse.
- There is some evidence to suggest there are more disabled people in Renfrewshire than in Scotland as a whole. 20.5% of economically inactive people between 16-74 are long-term sick or disabled. The profile of different disabilities is similar to Scotland, and of those whose day to day life is limited a lot by health or disability, and 31% of people have more than one condition. We find that our highest rates of disability are also in our most deprived wards, as measured by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). Our approach to tackling poverty, promoting equality and readiness for the socio economic duty implementation put us in a good position to understand and respond to this picture.
- Reliable statistics on sexual orientation remain an issue. Household surveys indicate that 2% of people identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) in Scotland, with younger people much more likely to identify as LGB. It should be noted that the Stonewall estimate of lesbian, gay and bisexual people is between 5-7%, and this estimate is widely used within public authorities. Demographic information on gender re-assignment is even less reliable.
- We have also gathered our own monitoring data in specific Council service areas to understand better who our citizens are and how we can best meet their needs. These data sets have also been taken into account.
- The Diversity and Equality Alliance in Renfrewshire (DEAR) Group, facilitated by our Community Planning Partnership were able to feed into developments. This group has been really helpful in articulating aspirations for equality in Renfrewshire and developing the community plan which is the complementary plan to this one. We also recognise that many people will choose not to be involved in a community group and so we have tried to reflect individual voices by using our Public Services Panel and other open engagement sessions.

Our Renfrewshire has given us the opportunity to reflect on the most recent equalities data and involvement with equalities led community groups. The plan reflects those themes identified by our local groups and includes specific areas of activity to reflect the needs of our demographics.

No actions are required to remove or mitigate negative impacts, but it will be kept under review during performance monitoring, review and further public involvement. Opportunities to maximize positive impacts have been taken in the drafting of the plan and will continue to be taken as the key areas of activity are developed.

To be published with Board report

## **Conclusion**

The quantitative and qualitative data gathered shows that Our Renfrewshire will reflect the priorities and meets the needs of the diverse communities in Renfrewshire. Our continuing general public involvement and involvement with our equalities led community groups has shown that we have kept in mind and addressed the needs of those with protected characteristics. As the Community Plan covers such a wide range of priorities, further EQIAs are required to be undertaken on specific projects.

The monitoring and review arrangements will take place via a number of coordinated channels, including:

- Community planning community events
- Community planning meetings and partner information sharing
- Community planning DEAR group engagement
- Through Service Improvement Plans where the equality outcomes are Council owned
- Through regular review and publicly available information