



# Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board

Mainstreaming Equalities Report  
and  
Equality Outcomes

2013 – 2017

## **Contents**

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Our Mission and Vision**
- 3. About Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board (LVJB)**
- 4. Our Equal Opportunities Policy and Strategy**
- 5. North and South Lanarkshire Community**
- 6. Our Equality Duties**
- 7. Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment**
- 8. What have we done so far**
- 9. Equal Pay**
- 10. Employee Information**
- 11. How we will achieve our objectives**
- 12. Outcomes and Involvement**

## 1. Introduction

Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board (LVJB) has set itself the aim of ensuring that fairness is a priority for all of the work that it does.

The “Mainstreaming Equalities Report” is intended to set out how this vision can be achieved. It will help Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board (LVJB) meet its legal equality duties of eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation: advancing equality of opportunity: and fostering good relations.

The report sets out how LVJB will work with others to ensure that the needs of everyone are met when using a service and to eliminate discrimination and harassment and promote positive attitudes across the areas of:

- age,
- disability,
- gender,
- gender reassignment,
- marriage and civil partnership (eliminating unlawful discrimination in employment)
- pregnancy and maternity
- race,
- religion and belief
- sexual orientation.

LVJB’s Equality and Diversity policy commits that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. This does not simply mean treating everybody the same as clearly we are all different and do have different needs. What it is about is being fair and providing equality of opportunity to everyone.

The report covers the period April 2013 to April 2017.

This report explains what LVJB is, what it does, the community it represents and how it will meet its commitments. It explains how LVJB will carry out equality and human rights impact assessments across all areas of its work and how it will be accountable to its employees and to those individuals who use its services.

Gary Bennett  
Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer

## **2. Our Mission and Vision**

### **Mission**

As an independent Local Government organisation, Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board's mission is to deliver equitable, customer focussed, professional valuation and electoral services to all stakeholders.

### **Vision**

Our vision is to deliver quality, efficient services to all service users, ensuring completeness and accuracy in the work which we undertake.

### **In order that we fulfil our Mission and achieve our Vision we will:-**

- Ensure that our services are delivered in accordance with all statutory requirements
- Plan service development and delivery in accordance with the principles of efficient government and continuous improvement
- Undertake customer care surveys to assist us in improving our service delivery
- Recognise our employees as both stakeholders and our most important asset
- Take individual and collective responsibility for the services provided by LVJB
- Encourage innovation and recognise achievement within the organisation
- Monitor and report performance levels to stakeholders
- Integrate Equalities issues into all aspects of our service provision
- Build on our achievements to date

## **3. About Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board (LVJB)**

Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board was established as part of the 1996 reorganisation of local government in terms of The Valuation Joint Boards (Scotland) Order 1995 and is vested with the functions of the valuation authorities of North and South Lanarkshire Councils. With the agreement of the two Councils, the Board also has responsibility for the Electoral Registration function for Lanarkshire.

The Board comprises of 16 members who are appointed by the constituent Councils with each Council nominating 8 members.

### **Who We Are and What We Do**

Detailed information is available on our website [www.lanarkshire-vjb.gov.uk](http://www.lanarkshire-vjb.gov.uk) under site map, downloads, LVJB information "Who We Are".

## **4. Our Equal Opportunities Policy and Strategy**

LVJB's policy on equal opportunities sets out its responsibilities and commitments with regard to promoting equality and diversity and combating discrimination. It covers LVJB's role both as an employer and service provider.

The policy's objectives contain the following broad commitment:

'We are committed to achieving equal opportunities in all our activities and responsibilities. This means ensuring that services, facilities and employment opportunities are accessible and receptive to the values and the diversity of needs within the community.

In meeting this commitment, we shall aim to prevent - as well as eliminate - any form of discrimination that occurs in the workplace, in service delivery or within the community. We also aim to provide good quality services which users (and potential users) can access freely without prejudice, discrimination and / or harassment.'

'Equal Opportunities' means the prevention, elimination or regulation of discrimination between persons on the grounds of sex or marital status, or racial grounds, or on grounds of disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or of other personal attributes, including beliefs or opinions such as religious beliefs or political opinions.

### **Summary of Policy Objectives**

#### **Legal Requirements**

We will comply with legal requirements and other relevant documentation such as codes of practice and good practice guidelines.

We will comply with the Equality Act 2010 general duty of public authorities to pay due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations across the range of protect characteristics: Age, Disability, Gender, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation. We will comply with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

#### **Best Value**

We will incorporate equality matters into Best Value strategies that comprise three main aspects: Sound Governance, Performance Measuring and Monitoring and Continuous Improvement.

#### **Policy and Procedures**

We will integrate equality considerations into all mainstream Joint Board activities, at both policy and procedural levels, to avoid the marginalisation of equal opportunities.

## **Employment**

We will aim to ensure that the workplace is free from any discrimination or harassment, and all incidents of discrimination or harassment will be tackled promptly. To assist in achieving this aim, equal opportunity standards will be integrated into employee Job Profiles as core elements of job competency.

## **Service Accessibility**

We will assess the extent to which public services are accessible, including the assessment of premises, facilities and methods of providing information. Appropriate remedial actions will be taken, wherever practical, to make services accessible.

## **Contractors**

We will encourage contractors and suppliers of goods and services to adhere to this Policy; such contractors and suppliers will be requested to provide details of their equal opportunities policies as part of the agreement of the contractual process.

## **Monitoring**

We will develop a variety of means to assess the effectiveness of Equal Opportunities Policy in practice; this will include monitoring of "double discrimination," for example, where discrimination occurs on more than one ground. All equal opportunities information which is monitored will be reported to LVJB's management team.

## **Communications and Publicity**

We will ensure that all Joint Board communications promote images that reflect the full diversity of cultural needs and aspirations of North and South Lanarkshire communities. We shall also promote both staff and public awareness of Equal Opportunities issues through participation in publicity campaigns and the production of a range of publicity/information materials.

## **Employee Development**

We will ensure that all employees receive appropriate equal opportunities training; such training will be incorporated into a broad range of training methods such as Induction, as well as both general and specific training courses.

## **Complaints**

We will deal timeously with all complaints concerning equal opportunities and ensure that such complaints are addressed; complaints will be regularly monitored by number, type and outcome.

## **Policy Review**

We will review the Equal Opportunities Policy on a regular basis and carry out a formal review annually. Principles of participation will apply to this process to ensure that staff, citizens and communities are consulted in this review. This review will assess how effectively the objectives of Policy are being implemented into practice

## 5. North and South Lanarkshire's Community

The following information sets out how the community of North and South Lanarkshire is made up. This information has been taken from the 2001 and 2011 census published by the National Records of Scotland.

### a) Population Estimates 2011

Council Area	All people	Females	%	Males	%
North Lanarkshire	337,800	174,400	51.62	163,400	48.37
South Lanarkshire	313,800	163,000	51.94	150,900	48.08
<b>Total</b>	<b>651,600</b>	<b>337,400</b>	<b>51.78</b>	<b>314,300</b>	<b>48.23</b>

### b) Population Estimates of 15 to 24 year olds

Council Area	Females Aged 15 to 24	Males Aged 15 to 24
North Lanarkshire	20,800	21,600
South Lanarkshire	18,100	18,700
<b>Total</b>	<b>38,900</b>	<b>40,300</b>

### c) Population Estimates of those over 65

Council Area	Population	Females aged 65 and over	Males aged 65 and over
North Lanarkshire	337,800	29,100	21,400
South Lanarkshire	313,800	30,600	27,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>651,600</b>	<b>59,700</b>	<b>48,900</b>

The number of people aged 65 and older has increased by 11% overall in Scotland. The number in North Lanarkshire has increased by 13.3% and in South Lanarkshire by 15.5%. The female population is older than the male.

### d) Percentage of Population over 15 on the Electoral Register

Electoral Register	Population over 15 years old	Electorate	% of Population on the Register
North Lanarkshire	277,100	254,205	91.73%
South Lanarkshire	261,900	247,532	94.51%
<b>Total</b>	<b>539,100</b>	<b>501,694</b>	<b>93.07%</b>

### e) Register of Electors (including attainers) as at 1 December 2011

Electoral Register	Electors	Attainers
North Lanarkshire	254,205	2,528
South Lanarkshire	247,532	2,559
	<b>501,694</b>	<b>5,087</b>

The total electorate has increased to 505,017 as at 1 December 2012.

### f) Population by ethnic groups, religion and health provision

As the Information on marital and civil partnership, ethnic group, religion and health will not be available until the summer of 2013, the 2001 Census data has been used where previously available.\*

### Population by Ethnicity 2001 Census

The 2001 Census shows the % of the local population from the black and ethnic minority communities.

#### g) North Lanarkshire Population by Ethnic Group

Ethnic Group	Numbers	% all
White Scottish	304,784	94.93%
Other White British	6,954	2.17%
White Irish	3,188	0.99%
Other White	2,100	0.65%
Indian	527	0.16%
Pakistani	1,756	0.55%
Bangladeshi	19	0.01%
Other South Asian	213	0.07%
Chinese	607	0.19%
Black Caribbean	59	0.02%
Black African	92	0.03%
Black Scottish/Other Black	45	0.01%
Mixed Background	479	0.15%
Other ethnic groups	244	0.08%
	<b>321,067</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

#### h) South Lanarkshire Population by Ethnic Group

Ethnic Group	Numbers	% all
White Scottish	283,624	93.85%
Other White British	10,223	3.38%
White Irish	2,678	0.89%
Other White	2,287	0.76%
Indian	536	0.18%
Pakistani	968	0.32%
Bangladeshi	29	0.01%
Other South Asian	165	0.05%
Chinese	718	0.24%
Black Caribbean	48	0.02%
Black African	111	0.04%
Black Scottish / Other Black	43	0.01%
Mixed Background	482	0.16%
Other ethnic groups	304	0.10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>302,216</b>	<b>100%</b>

\* National Records of Scotland: Scotland's Census Output Prospectus



## Health and Caring 2001 Census

The 2001 Census shows the numbers of the local population with a limiting long term illness\*.

### i) North and South Lanarkshire Population with Limiting Long-Term Illness

Council Area	All people	With a limiting long-term illness	%	Without a limiting long-term illness	%
North Lanarkshire	321,067	74,232	23.12	246,835	76.88
South Lanarkshire	302,216	65,537	21.69	236,679	78.31
<b>Total</b>	<b>623,283</b>	<b>139,769</b>	<b>22.42</b>	<b>483,514</b>	<b>77.58</b>

\*Limiting long-term illness covers any long-term illness, health problem or disability which limits daily activities or work a person can do, including problems that are due to old age.

In general women report greater levels of ill health than men, though this pattern is reversed for younger men.

Cancer is the main cause of death for both women and men; strokes are a more common cause of death for women and heart disease more common for men.

Life expectancy for women is 78.7 years and for men it's 73.9 years.

## **6. Our Equality Duties**

The general and specific equalities duties which underpin this report are summarised below. The intention of the outcomes we have developed is to tackle the ongoing disadvantage which exists in our communities and to ensure fairness across all of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

### **The Public Sector Equality Duty**

#### **The Equality Act 2010**

- Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the public sector equality duty-known as the general equality duty)
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012

The Equality Act replaces the previous public sector equality duties, the Race Equality Duty introduced in 2002, the Disability Equality Duty (2006) and the Gender Equality Duty (2007)

#### **Public Sector Equality Duty (General Equality Duty)**

The public sector general equality duty came into force on 5 April 2011. In summary, those subject to the equality duty must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

***Foster good relations*** *Tackle prejudice/promote understanding*

#### **The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012**

The purpose of the specific duties is to help those local authorities listed in the Regulations in their performance of the general equality duty.

Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board is required to produce and deliver a set of equality outcomes to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

#### **Specific Duties (Scotland)**

- report on mainstreaming the equality duty
- publish equality outcomes and report progress
- assess and review policies and practices
- consider award criteria and conditions in relation to public procurement
- publish in a manner that is accessible.

### **Specific Employment Duty**

- gather and use employee information
- publish gender pay gap information
- publish statements on equal pay

Monitoring under the Employment Duty is undertaken by LVJB however as LVJB has less than 100 employees it will not publish all of this information as there may be a risk that individuals could be identified by the data. The requirement to publish gender pay gap information and statement on equal pay only applies to public sector organisation with over 150 employees.

## **7. Equality and Human Rights Impact assessment**

At the heart of our commitment to address issues relating to equality and diversity is the process of Equality and Human Rights impact assessment. As an organisation, LVJB wants all our employees to work together to deliver the best possible services. It's therefore essential that we test our policies and procedures to ensure they promote fairness and do not discriminate against any members of the public or employee.

Impact assessments ensure that we do not discriminate and that we take every opportunity to promote equality, diversity and good relations across all local communities. An impact assessment checks to see if a proposed or existing strategy, policy, function or operating procedure is fit for purpose. It ensures that equality and human rights matters are properly considered as part of its development.

The impact assessment process anticipates what the effect will be when our proposed or existing strategy, policy, function or operating procedure is put in place. It considers the effect on all communities and our employees, making sure that, as far as possible, any negative effects are minimised or eliminated and that we make the most of opportunities for promoting equality and diversity.

The impact assessment extends to monitoring the actual effects of a strategy, policy, function or operating procedure, not just the written word. This means we can take action if the strategy, policy function or operating procedure is having or is likely to have a negative impact on any group or individual.

Impact assessment is an ongoing process that LVJB is committed to using.

## **8. What have we done so far?**

Through our previous Race, Disability, Gender and Single Equality Schemes we have already achieved many things that have made a difference to the way in which LVJB does its business and to the lives of those who live and work in our community. Some of these achievements are shown below

### **Leadership:**

- Incorporated Equality and Diversity principles into our Service Plan.
- Ensured that all employees involved in interviewing are trained so that selection is made on an objective basis.
- Put policies and processes in place to ensure that the workplace is free from any discrimination or harassment.
- Participate in SLC's Corporate Equality and Diversity Working Group, with representation from LVJB and each SLC Resource and joint trades unions.
- Identified an Equality and Diversity champion at management level in LVJB to promote these issues within LVJB.
- LVJB has a named Diversity Liaison officer to look after all Equality and Diversity issues for individual employees and to act as a point of contact for advice and support to managers.
- Identified opportunities to ensure equality and diversity issues are promoted within the development of strategic plans.
- Ensured that front line employees understand statutory duties and are competent to deliver services in accordance with LVJB's equality and diversity commitments.
- Incorporated Equality and Diversity as a standing item on Management Team Meeting agendas.
- Incorporated a section on Equality and Diversity in all Joint Board committee reports to ensure that members are aware of the issues.

### **Accessibility**

- Provided information in appropriate formats such as Braille, large print, audio tape, DVD and British Sign Language.
- Provided Interpretation, translation services including service provision standards.
- Readspeaker software was added to our website in 2007 making it more accessible and an upgrade was added in 2008.
- Availability of language line interpreting services.

## **Service Delivery**

- Customer Care questionnaires were reviewed to include an equality profile of service users to analyse customer satisfaction levels.
- Provision of the facility to confirm registration using web, text and telephone during the annual electoral registration canvass
- Conducting electoral registration personal canvass for non responding households providing assistance in completing the registration forms
- Provided training for managers and employees in Equality and Diversity issues to help them undertake impact assessment of policies, strategies and functions.
- Required contractors and suppliers to provide details of their equal opportunities policies as part of the agreement of contract process.
- Improved our complaints system to make sure we deal with discrimination and report our progress to the public regularly.

## **Employment**

- Put in place non-discriminatory recruitment practices.
- Committed to the Double Tick ✓✓ standard of guaranteeing interviews to those that consider themselves disabled if their skills meet the essential criteria of a job.
- Provided all newly recruited employees with a comprehensive induction programme clearly defining the terms and conditions under which they are being employed and making them aware of their rights and responsibilities under the Equality and Diversity Policy.
- SLC incorporated equality and diversity issues as part of core learning and development programmes – to which LVJB employees at all levels have access.
- Implemented a “Dignity at Work Policy”, which was developed in conjunction with SLC and the trade unions.
- Incorporated equality and diversity considerations into our “Employee Code of Conduct”.
- Introduced the promotion of equality and diversity as a core competence for all employees and measured performance through an annual Performance Development Review process and 6 month interim review.
- Implemented family friendly policies allowing employees to help achieve a work life balance.
- Ensured that there are effective support mechanisms in place for disabled employees in LVJB and take account of disability related illnesses when dealing with maximising absence
- Encourage attendance by LVJB employees to the employee networks of: Disability Matters, Ethnicity Matters, Caring Matters and LGBT Matters

## **9. Equal Pay**

### **Job Evaluation**

The Equality Act 2010 defines a job evaluation scheme as a study undertaken to evaluate the jobs being done 'in terms of the demands made on a person by reference to factors such as effort, skill and decision making'

LVJB adopted South Lanarkshire Council's Competence Initiative Grading Scheme which includes a job evaluation undertaken by trained evaluators which involves making assessments about the relative nature and content of the jobs. This factor evaluation of jobs is used to determine the rate of the job and published for employees to view on the SLC intranet site.

LVJB job grades operate on the basis of broad bands. Where an employee is placed within the grade depends on the employee's personal competence assessed using the Performance and Development Review process

### **Job families**

LVJB has job families which is a broad grouping of posts that are related either by similarity of tasks performed or transferability of knowledge and skills from one occupation to another. By using job families, these posts link into the Competence Initiative process whereby career progression can be identified both within and out-with the broad band.

Job families will identify career paths, promotion opportunities, career enhancement opportunities and new opportunities for development.

### **Performance and Development Review (PDR) Process**

The annual and six monthly interim PDR process facilitate communication between the employee and their line manager, allowing for discussion of performance, assessment of competence, training requirements and career development. The process also provides managers with a framework to follow when setting individual key work objectives and the link to job families ensures they have agreed competencies for managing team and individual performance.

### **Progression Guidelines**

The LVJB grades operate within broad bands for example grade 1 has 4 levels each reflecting difference in tasks undertaken. Following job evaluation which determines the grade for the job, individual placing within the grade is dependant upon the employees' personal competence, tasks undertaken and business need.

### **Living Wage**

LVJB over the last three years implemented measures to ensure relevant employees have benefited from the Living Wage and in addition received a minimum of £250 per annum (pro rata) for those earning less than £21,000 (pro rata). At 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 within LVJB 22 employees benefited from the increase in hourly rates and received the additional pay supplement (68% of which were women).

## 10. Employee Information

LVJB gathers and uses information on the composition of its workforce, recruitment, development and retention of employees to better perform the general equality duty.

In October 2012 an employee verification exercise to capture relevant monitoring information across all the protected characteristics was carried out.

The information is used to ensure that LVJB has fair and open recruitment practices, that employees are given fair access to learning and development and promotion opportunities.

**Workforce Profile as at 1 April 2013 by Age, Disability, Gender, Ethnic Group is detailed in the tables below.**

### a) Percentage of Employees by Age Band as at 1 April 2013

Age Band	Percentage
Under 21	1.45%
21-29	13.04%
30-39	21.74%
40-49	33.33%
50-59	21.74%
60-65	8.70%
over 65	0%

### b) Percentage of Employees by Gender as at 1 April 2013

Gender	Percentage
Female	49.28%
Male	50.72%

### c) Percentage of Employees by Grade and Gender as at 1 April 2013

Grade	Female	Male
Grade 1	13.04%	4.35%
Grade 2	21.74%	7.25%
Grade 3	10.14%	28.99%
Grade 4	4.35%	2.90%
Grade 5	0.00%	5.80%
Executive Director	0.00%	1.45%
<b>Total</b>	<b>49.27%</b>	<b>50.74%</b>

*Disability and ethnic group are excluded due to the employees being less than 100 and the possibility of identifying individuals sensitive personal data.*

**d) Percentage of Employees by Category as at 1 April 2013**

<b>Employee Category</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
Clerical/Administration	33.33%	5.80%
Management	1.45%	4.35%
Senior Management	0%	4.35%
Valuation	14.49%	36.23%
	<b>49.27%</b>	<b>50.73%</b>

The percentage of males employed within the clerical/administration category of employees is lower and the percentage of females is lower in the valuation category. LVJB participates in the “Delivering a Fairer Future” initiative by South Lanarkshire Council to encourage recruitment into non-traditional roles for men and women.

**e) Percentage of Employees by Ethnic Group (2011 census categories)**

<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>% all</b>
<b>White</b>	
Scottish	86.96%
Other British	10.14%
Irish	1.45%
Gypsy Traveller	0%
Polish	0%
Other White	0%
<b>Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Group</b>	
Any Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	0%
<b>Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British</b>	
Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British	0%
Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British	0%
Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British	0%
Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British	0%
Other Asian	0%
<b>African</b>	
African, African Scottish or African British	0%
Other African	0%
<b>Caribbean or Black</b>	
Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British	0%
Black, Black Scottish or Black British	0%
Other Caribbean or Black	0%
<b>Other ethnic group</b>	
Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British	0%
Other ethnic group	0%
<b>Not Disclosed</b>	
Not Disclosed	1.45%
	<b>100.00%</b>



**f) Percentage of Employees by Full/Part Time as at 1 April 2013**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Full Time</b>	<b>Part Time</b>
Female	28.99%	20.29%
Male	50.72%	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>79.71%</b>	<b>20.29%</b>

**g) Percentage of Employees by Disability**

<b>Disabled</b>	<b>Not Disabled</b>	<b>Not Declared</b>
1.45%	30.43%	68.12%

**h) Returning to work after pregnancy**

For the period April 2012 to April 2013 100% of females on maternity leave returned to work.

**Recruitment, Development and Retention**

**a) Access to Training (development)**

Throughout the LVJB's Personal Development and Review process all employees are given access to learning and development opportunities. Applications for internal training are monitored though attendance at external training, conferences or seminars is not captured.

IT systems are currently being amended to enable future reporting on this category where appropriate.

**b) Recruitment and Retention monitoring**

Equal Opportunity Monitoring forms are issued to all applicants and returns are analysed to identify any areas of disadvantage to those who share a relevant protected characteristic. Voluntary exit interviews are offered and results analysed. Due to the small numbers of individuals recruited each year the LVJB has taken the decision not to publish this information at this time to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

## 11. How we will achieve our objectives

The aim of mainstreaming equalities is to build on the achievements of our previous equality schemes and to provide new outcomes to which both employees and of LVJB and members of the community can be a part of. To do this we will focus our outcomes on the following key principles

- **Accessing** – provide services in ways that mean everyone can and does have the right to use them.
- **Informing** – ensure that everyone has access to information, in a format that suits their needs, on LVJB services.
- **Involving** – talk to groups and individuals on a one to one basis and use views and opinions to inform decision making and shape service delivery.
- **Promoting** – ensure that individuals are treated equally and given the opportunity to have full access to services.

## 12. Outcomes and involvement

At the heart of producing our mainstreaming equality report has been involvement of those who both deliver our services and those who use them. In line with the above key principles, the following are outcomes that have been developed in partnership with employees, representative groups and members of the public. By setting out to achieve these aims LVJB to offer equal access to the services we provide to the community.

1. Provide Equal Access to the Electoral Registration Process
2. Social Inclusion/Deprivation: Impact on Credit Rating through Non Registration
3. Provide Equal Access to the Valuation Appeal Process
4. Provide Equal Access to Absent Voting Methods
5. Monitor Customer Satisfaction on all service areas by the protected characteristics

The following Plan covers the four year period from 2013 to 2017. Progress will be reported to Management Team annually and regularly monitored by the Administration Manager.

## 1. Provide Equal Access to the Electoral Registration Process

Qualitative Evidence suggests that certain sub groups of individuals are less likely to be registered to vote			
Situation/Problem	Activities/Outputs	Equality Outcomes	General Duty
<p><b>a) Under registration of Young People and Students (aged 17-24)</b></p>	<p>Targeted public awareness on how to register to vote within schools/youth groups (including LGBT Youth Scotland) in North/South Lanarkshire area.</p> <p>Liaise with North Lanarkshire Council (NLC) and South Lanarkshire Council (SLC) to arrange for the issue of voter registration forms and appropriate correspondence to 16/17 year olds.</p> <p>Continue to publicise and provide alternative methods of confirming registration such as telephone, text and web.</p>	<p>Increased registration amongst 17-24 year olds (of all characteristics)</p> <p>Young people are more actively engaged in local decision making</p> <p>Increased registration of 16/17 year olds (attainers)</p> <p>Improve access to continued registration</p>	<p><b>Eliminate, Advance and Foster</b> Advance equality of opportunity</p>
<p><b>Inequality Problem</b> Estimates suggest that only 20% gypsy traveller children of secondary age attend school. To increase the number of 16/17 year olds added to the Electoral Register we target attainer lists provided by NLC/SLC. Evidence suggests that only 20% of gypsy traveller 16/17 will be picked up.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> arrange a site visit by LVJB staff or awareness mailing to provide information on registration process and impact of non registration. (liaise with SLC Partnership Meeting)</p>	<p><b>Equality Outcome:</b> improve registration of young gypsy travellers (check sites to establish response rates)</p>	<p>Foster Good Relations</p>

Situation/Problem	Activities/Outputs	Equality Outcomes	General Duty
<p><b>b) Under registration of black and minority ethnic people(BME), EU nationals and Commonwealth Citizens</b></p>	<p>Provide information in guidance notes on who is eligible to vote and face to face service via personal canvass and telephone interpreting.</p> <p>Establish baseline data from 2011 Census data for Gender and BME to identify gaps in registration for households without registered electors that are believed to be occupied.</p> <p>Raise awareness via BME employee forum/BME Groups to advise of registration process and translation service availability.</p> <p>Consult with the Registrar on the provision of voter registration forms in connection with individuals participating in the Citizenship Ceremony.</p>	<p>Increased registration in areas where under registration may occur.</p>	<p><b>Eliminate, Advance and Foster</b> Advance equality of opportunity</p>

Situation/Problem	Activities/Outputs	Equality Outcomes	General Duty
<p><b>c) Under registration of People with learning Difficulties (low literacy)/People with physical disabilities</b></p>	<p>Liaise with Resources within North Lanarkshire Council and South Lanarkshire Council on the provision of information to confirm registration of their relevant client groups.</p> <p>Registering to vote: Provide face to face service via personal canvass and raise awareness of assistance available in completing the registration forms through guidance notes.</p> <p>Absent vote: raise awareness of waiver available for those unable to sign the form.</p> <p>Offer Personal canvass for vulnerable groups who expressed preference for face to face registration – Voter Registration Forms available at South Lanarkshire Q and A offices and North Lanarkshire Libraries.</p>	<p>Increased registration in areas where under registration may occur.</p>	<p><b>Eliminate, Advance and Foster</b> Advance equality of opportunity</p>

Situation/Problem	Activities/Outputs	Equality Outcomes	General Duty
<p><b>d) Under registration of Residents of houses of Multiple Occupancy (students, care homes, hostels)</b></p>	<p>Liaise with relevant Resources within North Lanarkshire Council and South Lanarkshire Council on the provision of information to confirm registration of their client groups. Where the individual is not registered consider appropriate action to achieve registration.</p> <p>Liaise with relevant Resources within North Lanarkshire Council and South Lanarkshire Council on the provision of information to homeless/special needs units in the community.</p> <p>Offer Personal canvass for vulnerable groups who expressed preference for face to face registration – Voter Registration Forms available at South Lanarkshire Q and A offices and North Lanarkshire Libraries.</p>	<p>Increased registration</p>	<p><b>Eliminate, Advance and Foster</b> Advance equality of opportunity</p>

## 2. Social Inclusion/Deprivation: Impact on Credit Rating through Non Registration

Situation/Problem	Activities/Outputs	Equality Outcomes	General Duty
Potential for lower registration rates in deprived areas of NLC/SLC resulting in impact on obtaining credit as the register is used by the Credit Reference Agencies	Compare Multi Member ward Areas with Households that have No Registered Electors to deprived areas within NLC/SLC – (refer to SLC Performance management and community planning pages (Improve) report on “Deprived Areas in South Lanarkshire”. Target areas with a personal canvass/registration campaign.	Increased registration in areas where under registration may occur.	<b>Eliminate, Advance and Foster</b> Advance equality of opportunity

## 3. Provide Equal Access to the Valuation Appeal Process

Situation/Problem	Activities/Outputs	Equality Outcomes	General Duty
Potential for BME Community to be unaware of the appeals process/right of appeal and possible language barriers.	Publicise provision of interpreting service for individual ratepayers when discussing appeal/use of language line telephone interpreting to overcome any language barriers – survey/office visits.	Improve knowledge	<b>Eliminate, Advance and Foster</b> Foster Good Relations

#### 4. Provide Equal Access to Absent Voting Methods/EHMF Indicator

Article 29 of the UN Convention on the Rights of persons with Disabilities on participation in political and public life			
Electoral Administration Act 2006 and associated legislation contain measures aimed to make the voting process more accessible for disabled electors.			
Situation/Problem	Activities/Outputs	Equality Outcomes	General Duty
<p><b>The uptake of voting by post or proxy amongst persons with disabilities is unknown.</b></p>	<p>Information on and documents about the electoral process are continued to be made available in other languages and formats</p> <p>Electors with a disability may choose to vote by post as an alternative to voting in a polling station. The law allows an Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) to dispense with the requirement for postal vote applicants to provide a signature if the applicant is unable to do so due to a disability.</p>	<p>Improve participation, influence and voice.</p>	<p><b>Eliminate, Advance and Foster</b> Advance equality of opportunity</p>
<p>Absent Voting levels amongst electors unable to attend at a polling station due to age related issues, childcare or caring responsibilities may be lower than other Electoral Registration Officers (EROs).</p>	<p>Analysis of postal voting across all the strands to compare to census data and benchmark postal vote uptake across other ERO offices.</p> <p>Issue sample monitoring questionnaires along with postal vote applications to establish baseline data for comparison to census (establish uptake based on population)</p>	<p>Improve participation, influence and voice.</p>	<p>Advance equality of opportunity</p>



## 5. Monitor Customer Satisfaction on all service areas by the protected characteristics

Situation/Problem	Activities/Outputs	Equality Outcomes	General Duty
<p>Insufficient data on all of the protected characteristics to monitor customer satisfaction of the Electoral Registration, Non Domestic and Council Tax Valuation Service from all of the groups</p>	<p>Increase volume of random sampling of service uptake across all of the protected characteristics to improve evidence base and analyse the data to identify any inequality.</p> <p>Improve equalities monitoring of complaints/satisfaction levels.</p>	<p>Longer term improved service provision.</p>	<p><b>Eliminate, Advance and Foster</b> Eliminate unlawful discrimination</p>

### Statistical Data and Reports used for evidence gathering:

1. Electoral Commission: Understanding Electoral Registration: the extent and nature of non-registration in Britain.
2. Population Data: National Records of Scotland estimates of population of NLC/SLC and Scotland by Age group 2011.
3. Census 2011: available in Scotland commencing March 2013.
4. South Lanarkshire Council Performance management and community planning pages (Improve) report on “Deprived Areas in South Lanarkshire” (2009 Scottish Index on Multiple Deprivation). Scottish Government: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2012 local authority summary for North and South Lanarkshire Council areas.
5. GFK Under-Registered Groups & Individual Electoral Registration – a qualitative study exploring the barriers and levels to electoral registration amongst groups that have traditionally been under-registered.