



*Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute
Valuation Joint Board*

Public Sector Equality Duty

April 2023

Foreword

This Public Sector Equality Duty report is the backbone of a positive equal opportunities agenda which includes the promotion of equality by the Board within Argyll & Bute, and East and West Dunbartonshire.

The Board is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities and this report is the basis of that commitment and part of Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute Valuation Joint Board's wider equal opportunities actions.

The Board's performance in relation to the proposals contained in this report will be monitored and audited, and progress reported to elected members of the Board and to the citizens of Argyll & Bute and East and West Dunbartonshire.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Board.

The Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute 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 three valuation authorities (Argyll & Bute Council , East Dunbartonshire Council and West Dunbartonshire Council) in the former Strathclyde Region. With the agreement of the three councils the Board also has responsibility for the Electoral Registration function. The Board has therefore appointed the Assessor to be the Electoral Registration Officer and to be responsible for the preparation and maintenance of the Register of Electors.

The Board comprises 16 members who are appointed by the three councils with the Argyll & Bute Council and West Dunbartonshire Council each nominating 5 members and East Dunbartonshire Council 6 members.

1.2 Functions of the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer

Electoral Registration - This service is responsible for the compilation and maintenance of the Electoral Register. The Electoral Register is used at all elections and only persons who appear on the Register can vote. Electoral communications are issued every year to all properties that are residences. This service therefore reaches every member of the community who is aged 16 years or over. A statement is included with the forms stating that the form can be made available in other languages or larger print.

Valuation for Non Domestic Rating - This service is responsible for the compilation and maintenance of the Valuation Roll. The Valuation Roll is used by the Directors of Finance of the Board's constituent Councils to bill occupiers/owners for non-domestic rates. A statement is included with relevant forms and Notices stating that they can be made available in other languages or larger print.

Council Tax - This service is responsible for the compilation and maintenance of the Council Tax List. The List is used by the Directors of Finance of the Board's constituent Councils to bill occupiers/owners for Council Tax payments. Council Tax Banding Notices are issued to new dwellings, and certain altered dwellings. This Service reaches all Council Taxpayers in Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute. A statement is included with relevant forms and Notices stating that they can be made available in other languages or larger print.

1.3 Service Mission and Vision

Who we are

Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute Valuation Joint Board is an independent local government body which was established by The Valuation Joint Boards (Scotland) Order 1995

What we do

We professionally compile and maintain the Valuation Rolls, Council Tax Valuation Lists and Registers of Electors for the Argyll & Bute, East Dunbartonshire and West Dunbartonshire council areas

Our aims

Building on our established professionalism, we aim to provide high quality, transparent, effective and responsive services to all of our stakeholders

Commitments

Within the constraints of the continuing tight public finance regime, we are committed to:

- Consulting our stakeholders, and listening and responding to their views
- Valuing staff and providing them with opportunities to develop and contribute
- Reacting innovatively to change
- Encouraging innovation and recognising achievement within the organisation
- Treating all stakeholders, including staff, in a fair, consistent manner.
- Striving for continuous improvement in all aspects of service delivery
- Ensuring that we are accessible and accountable to stakeholders
- Pro-actively planning workloads and deploying resources efficiently
- Using language which is easy to understand
- Working with our partners in the Scottish Assessors' Association to ensure transparency and Scotland-wide consistency of approach to service delivery
- Using and caring for the data we hold in an appropriate way.

It can therefore be seen from the above that the Board, by embedding a firm commitment to achieving equality of service provision into its Vision, Mission and Commitments statements, has established equalities into the ethos of the organisation.

2.0 Equal Pay

The Equality Impact Assessment carried out on behalf of Unison following the completion of the Pay Modernisation processes for the Board's staff states "On the basis of the information supplied, the new pay scheme is consistent with the principles of equal pay for work of equal value. It reduces the overall pay gap and removes any significant pay gap for work rated as equivalent. The overall pay gap has fallen by 14% since we last reported. The Board will, through recruitment and promotion, attempt to remove this imbalance when the appropriate opportunities arise.

The Board will not implement conditions of employment restricting staff from making public what they are paid when attempting to identify discrimination.

3.0 Positive Action

Prior to the 2010 legislation, 'positive action' was permitted to allow employers to encourage applications for employment from under-represented groups.

Positive action does not mean positive discrimination. Recruitment or promotion must still be based on merit. A person cannot be appointed just because he or she possesses a protected characteristic. That would be positive discrimination, which continues to be unlawful in the UK.

The VJB operates a scheme that guarantees an interview where an applicant has declared having a disability and they have the minimum requirements for the post.

The Board will take proportionate measures to overcome any perceived disadvantage or to meet specific needs for a person with a protected characteristic, much along the lines of providing facilities for disabled persons.

4.0 Public Sector Duties

The Public Sector Equality duty covers the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Public Sector Equality duty also covers marriage and civil partnerships, with regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination in employment.

The Board when carrying out its functions will have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons sharing a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Consider the needs of all individuals in their day to day work, in developing policy, in delivering services, and in relation to their own employees.

Consideration of equality issues must influence the decisions reached by the Board – such as in how we act as employers; how we develop, evaluate and review policy; how we design, deliver and evaluate services and how we commission and procure services from others.

5.0 Specific Equality Duties

In line with the requirements of The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 the Joint Board will comply with the following duties;

- To report progress on mainstreaming the Equality Duty.
- To publish equality outcomes and report progress.
- To Equality Impact Assess Policies and Practices.
- To gather and to use employee information.
- To consider award criteria in relation to public procurement.
- To publish required information in a manner which is accessible.
- To publish gender pay gap information.
- To publish statements on equal pay.

The Board is committed to integrating equality into its processes and ensuring that equality features explicitly and proportionately in its business operations.

6.0 Monitoring

Reports will be prepared and published on the Board's website annually to present staff statistics on the following:

- Analysis of data by age
- Analysis of data by carer responsibility
- Analysis of data by disability
- Analysis of data by gender reassignment
- Analysis of data by marriage and civil partnership
- Analysis of data by pregnancy and maternity
- Analysis of data by race
- Analysis of data by religion or belief
- Analysis of data by sex
- Analysis of data by sexual orientation

These reports will be used to identify where inequality exists and where actions are required in respect of any of the protected characteristics.

Use of the information from Staff Monitoring forms an essential part of our revised equalities outcomes. More information on this area can be found under Equalities Outcomes.

7.0 Customer Consultation

The Board issues invitations to complete Customer Consultation questionnaires which are statistically analysed to allow an annual report on stakeholder opinions on the service provided. This customer consultation examines the returns from all persons with, and without, protected characteristics and will continue to be used to identify where inequality exists in service provision or where positive actions are required in respect of any of the protected characteristics.

The Board also operates a Customer Complaints Policy with suggestion, comments and complaints forms available online.

Use of the information from Customer Consultation Questionnaires forms an essential part of our revised equalities outcomes. More information on this area can be found under Equalities Outcomes.

8.0 Access to the Board's premises and Information

Assessments have been made of the Board's premises and accesses have been improved, disabled toilets installed and a hearing loop installed where required. Unfortunately access to the upper floors of both offices is restricted for some stakeholders with mobility issues, but provision has been made to allow all services to be provided on the ground floors.

The Board has contracted with a translation service, to provide translations whenever necessary and staff are retrained annually on its application.

Those publications made on paper can generally also be made available, on request, in different languages, in Braille, audio tapes and other similar mediums.

Most forms issued provide details of how to obtain these alternative formats.

9.0 Training

The Board has identified and put in place arrangements for training its staff in relation to its duties to promote equality. The Board is committed to ensuring that staff receive adequate training in these areas. A rolling programme of refresher training on equalities and the equalities duties is embedded into our core training programme that covers all members of staff.

The Board considers it important that its own members receive training in its obligations with regard to equality, and will ensure that current and future members participate in training programmes provided by its constituent authorities.

A statement of commitment to Equality is included in staff Induction packs. All new staff, through the induction procedures, are made aware of all relevant Equality issues and retraining of all staff takes place when required.

Our Core Training programme also includes an annual refresh of translation service Training.

10.0 Equality Impact Assessments

There has never been a formal legal requirement on the Board to produce formal Equality Impact Assessments and no formal requirement exists in the public sector Equality Duty. The Valuation Joint Board however remains committed to conducting Equalities Impact Assessments (EIAs) on all new and amended Policies and for changes to service provision. The Management Team

of the Board uses its established Risk Management approach to identify the effects of changes of policy and legislation on persons with protected characteristics utilising, where appropriate, the Equality Impact Assessment tool developed by West Dunbartonshire Council. Negative effects for these persons are avoided, mitigated or accepted as appropriate and, where the risk is deemed to be high, a full Impact Assessment is carried out. The Impact Assessment identifies where the Joint Board can promote equality of opportunity and any gaps in policy or adverse effects will be addressed.

The details of the approach to full Impact Assessments will vary depending upon the nature of the change and its likely effect for persons with protected characteristics but each will include the following general steps:

- (a) Consider all available data and research findings
- (b) Assess the effect on persons (as above)
- (c) Consider mitigation action
- (d) Consider alternative approaches and opportunities to promote equalities
- (e) Decide on the most appropriate actions
- (f) Establish arrangements for monitoring outcomes
- (g) Publish the Impact Assessment
- (h) Promote positive effects

The where appropriate assessments are provided to the Valuation Joint Board meetings.

Workforce Monitoring Report for 2022/23

Introduction

Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute Valuation Joint Board (the Board) is committed to providing a working environment which values diversity. It fosters a workplace culture which is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying and where all employees and the wider community they serve are treated with dignity and respect.

As an employer, the Board has made progress in fostering an inclusive working environment by:

- Introducing a range of policies and practices, including Wellbeing Support, Flexible Working, Agile Working, Equality at Work and Dignity at Work which promote equality at work, foster a positive working environment and eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. A Disability Leave Scheme has also been introduced and several employees have tailored adjustment agreements to reflect their particular needs. All policies which impact on employees have been developed in consultation with Trades Unions.
- Mainstreaming equality into training and development,
- Setting up an Equality Champion to promote equality across all Board services. The Champion is a member of, and reports to, the Management Team on a regular basis,
- Highlighting Equal Opportunity objectives and actions within our Performance and Development Review framework.
- Including Equalities as a standing agenda item for Management Team Meetings

The Board recognises that we must ensure that any steps taken to promote equality translate into meaningful change for employees and that our duty to advance equality of opportunity is an ongoing one.

One of the key tools we can use to evaluate the effectiveness of our equality measures is to annually monitor the make up of our workforce. By doing this, we are better able to identify any equality issues in employment and take action to overcome any disadvantage. Monitoring also enables us to understand the impact of our policies and procedures on employees and identify any trends or patterns.

We will use our workforce monitoring data to:

- Identify areas of occupational segregation by gender and consider measures to address these.
- Identify any disparities in the profile of our workforce by protected characteristic.
- Develop equality outcomes to overcome disadvantage and further the equality duty
- Compare our data with any available national statistics.
- Identify gaps in workforce data and take steps to address these.

Legal Framework and EHRC Guidance

By embracing the diversity of our employees and maximising their individual potential, we can foster innovation, deliver high quality services and create a positive workplace culture. As a public body, the Board also has legal obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations require us to gather and publish information annually on the composition of our workforce and on the recruitment, development and retention of our employees with respect to their protected characteristics.

Non statutory guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission on the specific duties recommends that organisations work towards gathering and using information disaggregated by protected characteristics on the following:

- Recruitment and promotion
- Numbers of part-time and full-time staff
- Pay and remuneration
- Training and development
- Return to work of women on maternity leave
- Return to work of disabled employees following sick leave relating to their disability

- Grievances (including about harassment)
- Disciplinary action (including for harassment)
- Dismissals and other reasons for leaving.

Where possible, this report will report on the aforementioned categories by protected characteristic. Where our reporting mechanisms are unable to provide information, we will highlight the gaps and take steps to gather the data for our next annual monitoring report.

A series of information emails were sent to staff to ensure that they were fully aware of the significance of the information being requested. The data from our workforce used within this report was ingathered during the first quarter of 2023.

There is no requirement for the member of staff to complete all or any of the survey, however it did get a response rate of 75% and tables in this section reflect the outcome of this survey. The Reporting categories for our workforce are age, carer responsibility, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

Scope of Report

This report provides an overview of our workforce profile as at 31st March 2023 and is structured as follows:

- Analysis of data by age
- Analysis of data by carer responsibility
- Analysis of data by disability
- Analysis of data by gender reassignment
- Analysis of data by marriage and civil partnership
- Analysis of data by pregnancy and maternity
- Analysis of data by race
- Analysis of data by religion or belief
- Analysis of data by sex
- Analysis of data by sexual orientation

Our Workforce profile is also split to show all staff, full time staff and part time staff.

Analysis by Protected Characteristic

Age

Age Profile of Workforce

- The largest percentage of our workforce is made up by employees in the 51 to 60 age group which make up 32% of staff. 24% of employees are aged 41 to 50. 20% are aged 22 to 30, 17% are aged 31 to 40, 5% are over 61 and 2% of all employees are aged between 18 to 21
- All our part time work force is aged 41 or over.

Age Range	All Staff	Full Time	Part Time
16 -17	0%	0%	0%
18 -21	2%	3%	0%
22 – 30	20%	21%	0%
31 – 40	17%	18%	%
41 – 50	24%	23%	50%
51 – 60	32%	31%	50%
61 – 65	5%	5%	0%
66 – 70	0%	0%	0%
71+	0%	0%	0%
Do not wish to declare	0%	0%	0%

Analysis by Protected Characteristic

Carer Responsibility

Profile of Workforce

- 10% of employees have caring responsibilities while 90% have none.

8% of full time staff and 50% of part time staff having caring responsibilities

Carer Responsibility	All Staff	Full Time	Part Time
No	90%	92%	50%
Yes	10%	8%	50%
Do not wish to declare	0%	0%	0%

Analysis by Protected Characteristic

Disability

Disability Profile of Workforce

- 15% of employees have stated that they have a disability. 83% do not have a disability whilst 2% preferred not to say.
- Half of our Part time staff declared having a disability

Disability	All Staff	Full Time	Part Time
No	83%	85%	50%
Yes	15%	13%	50%
Do not wish to declare	2%	1%	0%

Analysis by Protected Characteristic

Gender Reassignment

Workforce Profile by Gender Reassignment

- None of the workforce declared that they have undergone gender reassignment

Gender Reassignment	All Staff	Full Time	Part Time
No	100%	100%	100%
Yes	0	0	0
Do not wish to declare	0	0	0

Analysis by Protected Characteristic

Marital Status & Civil Partnership

Workforce Profile by Marital/ Civil Partnership Status

- 41% of the Board's employees are married. 44% have never been married or registered in a same sex partnership. 12% are divorced, and 2% are in a registered Civil Partnership.
- Half of our part time workforce are married and half have never been married or registered in a same sex partnership

Marriage and Civil Partnership	All Staff	Full Time	Part Time
Divorced	12%	13%	0%
Formerly in same sex partnership which is now legally dissolved	0%	0%	0%
In registered same sex civil partnership	2%	3%	0%
Married	41%	41%	50%
Never married or registered in same sex partnership	44%	44%	50%
Separated but married	0%	0%	0%
Separated but still in same sex civil partnership	0%	0%	0%
Surviving partner from same sex civil partnership	0%	0%	0%
Widowed	0%	0%	0%
Do not wish to declare	0%	0%	0%

Analysis by Protected Characteristic

Pregnancy and Maternity

Return to Work of Women on Maternity Leave

- There were two members of staff on or returning from Maternity Leave during the period.

Staff Pregnant	Maternity under 26 weeks
1	0

Analysis by Protected Characteristic

Race

Racial Profile of Workforce

- All staff are British, English, Northern Irish or Scottish.

Race	Collective Group	All Staff	Full Time	Part Time
British, English, NI, Scottish	White	100%	100%	100%

Analysis by Protected Characteristic

Religion and Belief

Profile of Workforce

- 51% of staff declared as Christian whereas 49% have no religion.
- All of our part time workforce and 49% of our full time workforce are Christian

Religion and Belief	All Staff	Full Time	Part Time
Buddhist	0%	0%	0%
Christian	51%	49%	100%
Hindu	0%	0%	0%
Jewish	0%	0%	0%
Muslim	0%	0%	0%
No Religion	49%	51%	0%
Other	0%	0%	0%
Sikh	0%	0%	0%
Do not wish to declare	0%	0%	0%

Analysis by Protected Characteristic

Sex

Gender Profile of Workforce

- The Board's workforce is predominantly female, with 63% of employees being female and 37% male. However this is closer to parity than the national position within local authorities, where 74% (193,000) of people in employment in Local Authorities in Scotland are female compared with 26% (68,000) being male.¹
- Our Part time workforce is an even split between male and female.

Gender	All Staff	Full Time	Part Time
Female	64%	64%	50%
Male	37%	36%	50%

¹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/public-sector-employment-statistics-web-tables/>

Analysis by Protected Characteristic

Sexual Orientation

Workforce profile by Sexual Orientation

- 90% of the staff are heterosexual straight with 5% declaring as gay or lesbian and 5% declaring as bisexual.
- This is a slightly higher percentage than the most recent (2019) findings of the Scottish Household Survey²

Sexual Orientation	All Staff	Full Time	Part Time
Bisexual	5%	5%	0%
Gay or Lesbian	5%	5%	0%
Heterosexual straight	90%	90%	100%
Other	0%	0%	0%
Do not wish to declare	0%	0%	0%

² <https://scotland.shinyapps.io/sg-scottish-household-survey-data-explorer/>

Recruitment Monitoring for 2022/23

The Joint Board make use of the National Recruitment Portal (www.myjobscotland.gov.uk). Submitting equalities data is not mandatory for applicants and is not made available to the recruitment panel, other than disability information. If a candidate meets the minimum job requirements and states that they have a disability then they are guaranteed an interview.

The Board is supported in our recruitment processes by West Dunbartonshire Council. The recruitment portal has recently expanded the equalities monitoring information to include all protected characteristics although the categories within the protected characteristics in some instances do not mirror exactly those within our employee survey.

During 2022/23 The Board advertised 16 posts, due to the possibility of identifying individuals from this no equality information will be published for the successful applicant other than that contained within our overall workforce monitoring.

The following information relates to the applications received for the posts.

Age Range	Percentage of Applicants
16 -17	2%
18 -21	21%
22 – 30	33%
31 – 40	12%
41 – 50	11%
51 – 60	20%
61 – 65	1%
66 – 70	0%
71+	0%
Do not wish to declare	0%

Carer Responsibility	Percentage of Applicants
No	89%
Yes	7%
Do not wish to declare	4%

Disability	Percentage of Applicants
No	88%
Yes	9%
Do not wish to declare	2%

Gender Reassignment	Percentage of Applicants
No	80%
Yes	0%
Do not wish to declare	5%

Marriage and Civil Partnership	Percentage of Applicants
Divorced	4%
Living with Partner	1%
Married / Civil Partnership	23%
Single	58%
Separated	1%
Widowed	1%
Do not wish to declare	0%

Ethnicity	Percentage of Applicants
White, British, English, NI, Scottish	87%
Asian	5%
Black African	2%
Other	0%
Do not wish to declare	6%

Religion and Belief	Percentage of Applicants
Hindu	1%
Christian	31%
Muslim	1%
No Religion	58%
Do not wish to declare	8%

Gender	Percentage of Applicants
Female	52%
Male	45%
Do not wish to declare	2%

Sexual Orientation	Percentage of Applicants
Bisexual	2%
Gay or Lesbian	5%
Heterosexual straight	83%
Do not wish to declare	10%

Training

Core Training formalises the training for a number of topics that are essential for all employees to undertake. Topics within this include Equalities, Health and Safety and Information Security.

DABVJB has enhanced the focus for online training through the i-learn platform provided via West Dunbartonshire Council. These online training resources can be accessed by employees from either their place of work or from their computer at home. The resource is available 24/7 which means that training is available at a time and place that suits employees with no need for an application or approval.

Management Team personnel has completely changed since figures were last reported. The new management team will undertake e-training on Equality Impact Assessments.

Therefore training has been provided and planned across the workforce.

Staff Retention

All members of staff on leaving DABVJB are requested to complete an exit questionnaire including equalities questions. The responses in these questionnaires are considered. During 2022/23 twelve members of staff left but only two responses were received

Due to the low numbers involved it would not be appropriate to publish the equalities data however no equalities issues were raised by either respondent in their feedback.

Pay Gap Reporting

The average hourly rates of pay for our staff as at 31st March 2023 are shown below:

Grouping	Mean Average Hourly Rate	Difference from All Male
All Female	£18.90	19%
All Male	£23.46	
Female Full Time	£19.95	15%
Male Full Time	£24.61	
Female Part Time	£16.43	30%
Male Part Time	£15.00	

The median hourly rates of pay for our staff as at 31st March 2021 are shown below

Grouping	Median Hourly Rate	Difference from All Male
All Female	£15.38	16%
All Male	£18.39	
Female Full Time	£17.47	5%
Male Full Time	£19.15	
Female Part Time	£14.52	21%
Male Part Time	£15	

Note: Part time is any employee with a working pattern averaging fewer than 35 hours per week

DABVJB has a relatively small number of staff and the gender pay gap can be significantly impacted through small changes in the profile of the workforce.

The gender pay gap is higher than the national average of 5.45% and higher than the median gender pay gap of 9.71%³. This is due in part to the predominance of Chartered Surveyors within promoted posts. The Surveying Profession has traditionally been male dominated with only 8% of RICS members being female in 1999.⁴ This proportion has slowly increased in the intervening period to 15%. It is encouraging to note however that since we last reported DABVJB's mean gender pay gap fell by 14% from 33% in 2021 to 19% in 2023. Over the same period the median gender pay gap has fallen 13%.

³ Source [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dit-gender-pay-gap-report-and-data-2021-to-2022/dit-gender-pay-gap-report-2021-to-2022#:~:text=The%202022%20mean%20GPG%20\(the,and%20the%20median%20is%209.71%25.](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dit-gender-pay-gap-report-and-data-2021-to-2022/dit-gender-pay-gap-report-2021-to-2022#:~:text=The%202022%20mean%20GPG%20(the,and%20the%20median%20is%209.71%25.)

⁴ Source RICS

Within DABVJB, all Chief Officer grades are male but the three Grade 10 & 11 posts are now female. If we look at other posts where Chartered Surveyors are found we now have 57% of Valuer grade (Grade 8) and 67% of Divisional Valuer grade (Grade 9) staff female (noting that the other 33% is currently vacant. In addition 86% of our Trainee Valuers (Grades 3-6), the Chartered Surveyors of the future, are female.

The table below shows the distribution by gender across the pay grades with DABVJB

Grade	All	Male	Female
Grade 1	2%	100%	0%
Grade 3	25%	23%	77%
Grade 4	20%	30%	70%
Grade 5	12%	0%	100%
Grade 6	10%	60%	40%
Grade 7	2%	0%	100%
Grade 8	14%	43%	57%
Grade 9	6%	33%	67%
Grade 10	2%	0%	100%
Grade 11	4%	0%	100%
CO Grade	%	100%	0%

Equal Pay Statement

Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute Valuation Joint Board (DABVJB) is committed to the principle of equal opportunities for all and to ensure that employees are not discriminated against irrespective of their age, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender re-assignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, religion or belief.

As an employer DABVJB will continuously strive to treat all staff equally as individuals free from any prejudice or other bias and will take action to eliminate any form of discrimination it encounters.

As part of this principle all employees should receive equal pay for the same or broadly similar work, for work rated as equivalent, and for work of equal value.

With this in mind DABVJB will operate a pay and benefits system which is transparent, based on objective criteria, and free from bias.

In support of this commitment to equality in pay, DABVJB will:

- examine existing and future pay practices for all employees to ensure that they comply with best equal pay practice and most current legislation
- carry out regular monitoring of the impact of these practices
- inform employees of how these practices work and how their pay and benefits are arrived at
- provide training and guidance for those involved in making decisions about pay and benefits
- consult on all changes to pay policy with trade union representatives

Through these actions, DABVJB will aim to avoid unfair discrimination in its pay and benefits system and reward fairly the skills, knowledge and competences of all employees.

Equality Outcomes

Equalities Outcome 1:

We are seen as an inclusive equal opportunities employer where all staff feel valued and respected.

Context

In 2012 our workforce survey had 5% of staff declaring that they had a disability, a number of information sessions took place and subsequent surveys showed an increase in the percentage declaring this characteristic bringing the survey more in line with the wider community.

Until recently nobody within the workforce had declared themselves to be LGB. DAB-VJB is committed to providing an environment where members of our staff can confidently declare their status.

How will we measure this?

Description	Base line*	Performance Indicator	Update Frequency	Data Source
% of our workforce who have declared a disability	5%	Increase in the percentage of people who self declare a disability	Annual	Annual Staff survey
% of our workforce who have stated they are LGB	0%	Increase in the percentage of people who self declare they are LGB	Annual	Annual staff survey

*Baseline established from December 2012 staff survey

General Equality Duty

Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those that do not.

Progress Made

Description	Base line December 2012	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	22/23
% of our workforce who have declared a disability	5%	23%	24%	19%	12%	18%	19%	23%	15%
% of our workforce who have stated they are LGB	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	2%	10%

Since the adoption of this Equality Outcome we have used our employee information to identify the need to better inform our employees about the protected characteristics. There were a series of information events held covering topics such as the definition found within the Equality Act for Disability, how the information is handled and what it is used for. Information from a variety of groups such as Stonewall and the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHCR) has also been made available. This has led to an increase in the number members of staff who identified themselves as having a disability and it is now around the same level as the national average for working age population.

The percentage of people declaring themselves to be LGB has significantly risen and work will continue to ensure that any LGB members of staff can feel confident about declaring their status. However it should be noted that information contained in the Scottish Government website suggests that there is possibly underreporting of this characteristic for a number of reasons including:

- Asking about sexual orientation/identity is a new development in national surveys and such questions can be seen as intrusive and personal.
- There is still significant prejudice and discrimination against LGB people in society. In a context where some LGB people will not have told friends and family about their sexual identity, there is a real question about whether LGB people generally would want to be open with an employer.
- The default option for being uncertain about one's sexual orientation may be to respond 'straight/heterosexual' rather than to say 'Don't know / not sure'.
- Particular LGB people are still less likely to be open where they belong to groups or communities where an LGB identity is less accepted.

See: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Equality/Equalities/DataGrid/SexualOrientation>

It is within this context that we will continue to try to create an environment where LGB members of staff can feel confident about declaring this characteristic.

Review

The progress made with the declaration of disability and sexual orientation within the workforce is encouraging, however, further monitoring and reinforcing the message with our staff is vital to ensuring that this is imbedded within the organisation.

It is important that the positive steps that have been undertaken are continued and, as such, this Equality Outcome will continue to be in place from 2023.

Our Workforce characteristic survey tends to get a return rate of about 70-80% and our annual staff survey has tended to get a return rate of between 28 and 50%. We will look at ways to try and increase the levels of returns for both surveys to ensure they are an accurate reflection of our workforce and their views.

Equality at Work	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Do you think there is a good level of commitment shown by the Board to promote equality and diversity in the workplace?	6	7	1	0	0
I could confidently raise issues and concerns regarding discrimination and harassment	7	6	1	0	0
I feel that the Joint Board is a safe and inclusive place to work for people from all backgrounds and groups	7	7	0	0	0
Have you experienced or reported harassment, discrimination or been disadvantaged because of any protected characteristic <u>in the last year?</u>				Yes	0
				No	14

Equality Outcome 2:

Our Services meet the needs of, and are accessible to, all member of our community and our staff treat all service users, clients and colleagues with dignity and respect.

Context

DAB-VJB have consistently achieved high customer satisfaction rates this has been analysed across all the current protected characteristics.

How will we measure this?

Description	Base line	Performance Indicator	Update Frequency	Data Source
% of disabled people who rate DAB-VJB as professional, courteous and helpful	To be established in revised customer satisfaction survey	To have similar levels of customer satisfaction across all protected characteristics	Annual	Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey
% of Females who rate DAB-VJB as professional, courteous and helpful	To be established in revised customer satisfaction survey	To have similar levels of customer satisfaction across all protected characteristics	Annual	Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey
% of Males who rate DAB-VJB as professional, courteous and helpful	To be established in revised customer satisfaction survey	To have similar levels of customer satisfaction across all protected characteristics	Annual	Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey
% of People aged 50+ who rate DAB-VJB as professional, courteous and helpful	To be established in revised customer satisfaction survey	To have similar levels of customer satisfaction across all protected characteristics	Annual	Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey
% of people under 30 who rate DAB-VJB as professional, courteous and helpful	To be established in revised customer satisfaction survey	To have similar levels of customer satisfaction across all protected characteristics	Annual	Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey
% of BME people who rate DAB-VJB	To be established in revised	To have similar levels of customer satisfaction	Annual	Annual Customer

as professional, courteous and helpful	customer satisfaction survey	across all protected characteristics		Satisfaction Survey
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% of LGB people who rate DAB-VJB as professional, courteous and helpful	To be established in revised customer satisfaction survey	To have similar levels of customer satisfaction across all protected characteristics	Annual	Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey
% of Heterosexual people who rate DAB-VJB as professional, courteous and helpful	To be established in revised customer satisfaction survey	To have similar levels of customer satisfaction across all protected characteristics	Annual	Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey
% of people from minority religions who rate DAB-VJB as professional, courteous and helpful	To be established in revised customer satisfaction survey	To have similar levels of customer satisfaction across all protected characteristics	Annual	Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey
% of Christians who rate DAB-VJB as professional, courteous and helpful	To be established in revised customer satisfaction survey	To have similar levels of customer satisfaction across all protected characteristics	Annual	Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey
% of those with no religious belief who rate DAB-VJB as professional, courteous and helpful	To be established in revised customer satisfaction survey	To have similar levels of customer satisfaction across all protected characteristics	Annual	Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey

General Equality Duty

Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those that do not.

Progress Made

The outcomes of the last six Customer Satisfaction surveys are detailed in the table below. The very positive outcome across the protected characteristics is welcomed, however, this has to be viewed in the context of the variable sample sizes ranging from 348 returns to 108, with not all returns including response to

all of the equalities questions. The smallest sample size was during 20/21 where undoubtedly the COVID pandemic had an impact on the demands for our services and on how they were delivered.

Description	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
% of all respondents who rate DAB-VJB as professional, courteous and helpful	99%	94%	98%	92%	96%	94%
% of disabled people who rate DAB-VJB as professional, courteous and helpful	100%	96%	93%	94%	97%	90%
% of Females who rate DAB-VJB as professional, courteous and helpful	99%	97%	94%	89%	92%	97%
% of Males who rate DAB-VJB as professional, courteous and helpful	99%	92%	96%	95%	97%	93%
% of People aged 50+ who rate DAB-VJB as professional, courteous and helpful	98%	98%	95%	94%	98%	95%
% of people under 30 who rate DAB-VJB as professional, courteous and helpful	100%	100%	90%	90%	93%	92%
% of BME people who rate DAB-VJB as professional, courteous and helpful	100%	75%	100%	100%	95%	97%
% of LGB people who rate DAB-VJB as professional, courteous and helpful	100%	100%	90%	100%	100%	100%
% of Heterosexual people who rate DAB-VJB as professional, courteous and helpful	99%	96%	96%	99%	98%	94%
% of people from minority religions who rate DAB-VJB as professional, courteous and helpful	100%	100%	94%	100%	96%	91%
% of Christians who rate DAB-VJB as professional, courteous and helpful	98%	96%	98%	97%	96%	96%
% of those with no religious belief who rate DAB-VJB as professional, courteous and helpful	100%	87%	95%	100%	95%	92%

It is important to continue to monitor how our service users view our service delivery particularly as we look at changes to working practices and demands for our services following COVID.

Equality Outcome 3:

The VJB has a reduced level of gender based occupational segregation.

Context

The VJB has a pay gap in the average hourly pay rate of 19% between male and female staff. This is a significant reduction from 33% when we last reported. 71% of our female staff are in Grades 1-6 with 29% Grade 7 and above. This represents a 7% increase since we last reported. 63% of our male staff are in Grades 1-6 and 38% are Grade 7 and above.

How will we measure this?

The table below shows the distribution by gender across the pay grades within DABVJB. This will be monitored on an annual basis.

Grade	All	Male	Female
Grade 1	2%	100%	0%
Grade 3	25%	23%	77%
Grade 4	20%	30%	70%
Grade 5	12%	0%	100%
Grade 6	10%	60%	40%
Grade 7	2%	0%	100%
Grade 8	14%	43%	57%
Grade 9	6%	33%	67%
Grade 10	2%	0%	100%
Grade 11	4%	0%	100%
CO Grade	%	100%	0%
Grade 1	2%	100%	0%

General Equality Duty

Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those that do not.