



*Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute
Valuation Joint Board*

**Disability Equality Scheme
Annual Progress Report 2007**

Disability Equality Scheme

Introduction

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended, has provided an opportunity for Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute Valuation Joint Board (VJB) to reaffirm its commitment to disability equality.

The promotion of opportunity and the elimination of discrimination in relation to disabled persons is a process to which I am personally committed. This has required changes to our operations in the past year and will require further actions in the years to come. This reports details the progress made to date and highlights the way forward

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Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer
Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute Valuation Joint Board

December 2007

The year to December 2007

1. Making sure the Disability Scheme works

- Equalities Champion chosen to promote all equalities issues to all stakeholders
- Publication of the scheme notified to all staff for their consideration
- Issues highlighted regularly at Management Team meetings
- Scheme published on the DAB-VJB website at <http://www.dab-vjb.gov.uk/assessors/documents/DisabilityEqualitySchemeDAB%2DVJB%2Epdf>
- Monitoring statistics produced and published on website at <http://www.dab-vjb.gov.uk/assessors/documents/Equalities%5FMonitoring%2Epdf>

2. Identifying relevant functions and policies

- All VJB Policies have been examined to ensure that they do not contain any barriers to the promotion of disability equality

3. Assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies to remove any adverse impact

- Monitoring forms are issued to and the returns collated for a random sample of all stakeholders under the VJB Customer Consultation Policy. All relevant comments examined by a member of the management team
- Equalities champion attending Community Planning Equalities Group
- Any complaints received being monitored for equalities issues

4. Communicating the results of assessment and monitoring

- Results communicated to management team and staff
- Results published on website at <http://www.dab-vjb.gov.uk/assessors/documents/Equalities%5FMonitoring%2Epdf>

5. Ensuring Access to buildings, functions and services

- DDA building works listed, budgeted for, and carried out during 2006/07 and 2007/08. Works include signage, an induction loop, ramps and disabled toilet provision. Alterations should ensure that the buildings are more accessible for all stakeholders
- General correspondence etc amended to Arial point 12
- Provision in Braille or tape offered on many policies, documents and forms
- Discussions ongoing with lead authority (West Dunbartonshire Council) regarding accessibility of the DAB-VJB website

6. Employment

- Monitoring forms are issued to and the returns collated for:
 - all existing staff
 - all staff training
 - all applications for promotion
 - all retirements, resignations, and redundancies as required
 - all applicants for new posts
- No monitoring of grievance or disciplinary issues have been required as none have arisen
- All applicants who have identified themselves as having a disability have been interviewed

7. Training Staff

- Key staff were identified and they attended a training course run in conjunction with Highland and Islands Equality Forum
- Training was then cascaded to all members of staff

Actions for year to December 2008

- Through the management team the VJB will ensure that equalities issues remain to the fore and that all staff remain committed to ensure that equality neutral delivery of services is maintained
- Equality Targets which can be found at http://www.dab-vjb.gov.uk/assessors/documents/Equality_Targets_Policy.pdf will be reconsidered on an ongoing basis and amended as necessary
- Discussions will continue with West Dunbartonshire Council to deliver improved web accessibility for DAB-VJB at <http://www.dab-vjb.gov.uk>
- DAB-VJB buildings to be re-examined to ensure improved DDA accessibility
- The VJB will continue to provide support to disabled staff and will encourage staff to “self declare” disabilities to assist in removing the stigma of disability and also to ensure that the VJB is properly meeting the needs of disabled people
- Training of staff will continue with accent on the early awareness of the Disability Equality Scheme in the induction procedures
- All applicants who identify themselves as having a disability will be interviewed