



*Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute  
Valuation Joint Board*

**Disability Equality Scheme  
Annual Progress Report 2008**

# **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 recent years and will require further actions in the years to come. This second report details the progress made to date and highlights the way forward

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**Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute Valuation Joint Board**

November 2008

## **The year to November 2008**

### **1. Making sure the Disability Scheme works**

- Equalities Champion continues to promote all equalities issues to all stakeholders
- All new staff are trained in equalities issues as part of the staff induction processes
- Issues highlighted regularly at Management Team meetings
- Scheme and annual reports published on the DAB-VJB website at <http://www.dab-vjb.gov.uk/equalities/>
- 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 are 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 is a member of the Community Planning Equalities Group
- Any complaints received being monitored for equalities issues
- The Board has been developing procedures to allow Equality Impact Assessments to be carried out on new policies and processes. At this early stage only some existing policies have been screened for relevance.

### **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/equalities/>

### **5. Ensuring Access to buildings, functions and services**

- DDA building works completed during 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
- Provision in Braille or tape offered on many policies, documents and forms
- Discussions completed with lead authority (West Dunbartonshire Council) regarding accessibility of the DAB-VJB website. The website has been updated to improve accessibility for the visually impaired, the dyslexic, and those with cognitive difficulties.

- “text phones” have been installed in both offices to enable severely hearing impaired people to communicate using a telephone with a small keyboard and screen
- The facility to text “no change” notification for the Electoral Register during the annual canvass has been developed in addition to the existing options of Web, telephone and paper return
- Link added to website to access the Electoral Commission “easy Guide to Voting in Scotland” pamphlet

## **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
  - all temporary staff
- No grievance or disciplinary procedures have arisen for disabled members of staff
- All applicants who have identified themselves as having a disability have been interviewed

## **7. Training Staff**

- All new staff are trained in aspects of the Joint Board's Equality Policies

### **Actions for year to December 2009**

- 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
- Equalities champion to continue to attend Community Planning Equalities Group meetings
- Equality Targets which can be found at [http://www.dab-vjb.gov.uk/assessors/documents/Equality\\_Targets\\_Policy.pdf](http://www.dab-vjb.gov.uk/assessors/documents/Equality_Targets_Policy.pdf) will be updated at the end of each calendar year, reconsidered on an ongoing basis, and amended as necessary
- DAB-VJB buildings to be monitored to ensure DDA accessibility
- Check that buildings used for Valuation Appeal Committee meetings comply with accessibility guidelines

- 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
- Continue to monitor personnel as in the current year
- Issue full equality monitoring forms as part of the Customer Satisfaction Procedures
- Continue to develop and implement our Equality Impacts Assessments