Equalities in the budgeting process

How were equalities issues taken into consideration in allocating budgets in 2012-13? (Please describe the process undertaken)

One of the major factors influencing the budget allocation across the Council’s services is the recognition that continued annual expenditure at previous levels is not sustainable within the challenging financial environment. This has required the Council to identify efficiency savings whilst continuing to meeting service user needs and expectations of services.

Renfrewshire Council’s Services undertook an initial screening of all the proposed efficiency savings to identify any potential negative impact which require to be addressed and implement measures to ensure standard of services are maintained for the evolving diverse population of Renfrewshire.

The initial screening results were further assessed to ensure that the application of the new or revised policies or procedures complies with the requirements of the general duty and there is no disproportionate impact on equality groups.

The results and evidence of the equality impact assessment are considered by the members of the Corporate Management Team prior to formal approval to apply the proposed new or revised policy or practice by the Council’s relevant Policy Boards.

Renfrewshire Council Services has arrangements to monitor the actual impact of the policy or procedure as it is implemented, and where necessary revise any relevant policies or procedures to reduce or mitigate any negative impact.

Renfrewshire Council is committed to improving the process of producing robust equality impact assessment and will be working Scottish Human Rights Commission and Equality Human Rights Commission to develop shared common approaches to integrate human rights and equality principles within equality impact assessment process.

Was the approach taken for the 2012-13 budgets any different from that taken in 2011-12? (If YES, please describe what changed in your approach)

During 2012-13 there was an increase in the number of equality impact assessments compared to 2011-12.

Can you provide any examples of how equalities considerations influenced agreed budgets? (Please provide up to THREE examples)

Equality issues are integral and considered as part of the overall strategic planning process requiring Renfrewshire Council’s services to develop innovative approaches to maintain service delivery standards and effective use of resources.

The process has utilised a range of range of consultation methods this includes workshops, initial equality impact screening and utilising corporate assessment tools to seek views on the priorities for the next three years.

Renfrewshire Council has taken a proactive approach to redesign working practices and systems through the Transforming Renfrewshire programme and working closely with a wide range of community planning partners to develop better understanding of the equality groups.
Environmental Service’s consulted a wide range of employees to identify priority actions and initiatives for the Service. Improvement plans have been developed from the views gathered from the self assessment improvement tools, such as the Best Value 2 and Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF).

Social Work Service consulted a wide range of staff through the Social Work Staff Panel, health partners through the Joint Planning and Performance Implementation Groups (JPPIGs), engagement with key stakeholders, service users and carers through two local Change Fund events.

**Equalities in mainstream services**

For your three most significant mainstream services (in terms of cost), please provide details of

a. **The total budget for this service in 2011-12 and 2012-13**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2012-13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education and Leisure Services</td>
<td>£154.97</td>
<td>£151.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work Services</td>
<td>£90.15m</td>
<td>£89.22m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Services</td>
<td>£29.43m</td>
<td>£35.07m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. **The impact (positive or negative) that this service has on equality groups**

**Education and Leisure Services**

Education and Leisure Services promotes ‘building a positive future for Renfrewshire, through learning, leisure and culture for all’, and empowering individuals to fulfil their potential and contribute to the economic, social and cultural wellbeing of our communities.

A wide range of provision and activities are in place ensuring positive impact on all service users accessing formal education, and a wide range of support services to ensure inclusion of children with additional support needs within schools and nurseries. Pupil exclusion has been reduced as a result of providing support to vulnerable learners. The continued commitment to the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programmes continues to have a positive impact enabling learners making progress to further/higher education, training or employment.

External inspectors (Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate) frequently make positive comments in inspection report regarding integrating equality within educational establishments.

**Social Work Services**

Renfrewshire Social Work’s vision and role is, ‘changing lives, promoting independent living, protecting vulnerable people’. Social Work provides a variety of services to an increasingly diverse range of people and the most vulnerable people who do not always engage on a voluntary basis.

Social Work service continues to works in close partnership with other organisations contributing to public protection to ensure that adults and children live as safely as possible within the community, and in assessing and managing risks to individuals through robust child and adult protection arrangements.

**Environmental Services**

Environmental Services delivers a wide range of services to over 170 Council premises and over 80,000 households and businesses across Renfrewshire.

Environmental Services also provides statutory enforcement and related advisory/educational activities, to ensure safeguarding of public health, and the protection of the environment, consumers, workers & local communities within Renfrewshire.
c. The impact (if any) that any budget changes have had on equality groups

Service efficiencies have been made in the way services are provided, by increasing productivity, and not the level of service provision, there is no disproportionate impact on equality groups to the services they receive. Renfrewshire Council, through its EIA process, has taken care to avoid any negative impact on equalities groups due to the need to identify efficiencies when setting the Council’s budget within the challenging financial environment.

Service provision for equalities groups
For up to THREE services with a specific focus or provision for equalities groups, please provide details of

The total budget for this service in 2011-12 and 2012-13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Services</th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2012-13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education and Leisure Services</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>£124.2m</td>
<td>£134.6m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Support Needs (ASN)</td>
<td>£7.9m</td>
<td>£7.7m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure</td>
<td>£11.2m</td>
<td>£12.2m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Work Services</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults (Supplementation)</td>
<td>£20,774,026</td>
<td>£20,509,836*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older People – Residential Care (Internal &amp; external)</td>
<td>£22,453,697</td>
<td>£24,230,286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare – Fostering</td>
<td>£9,778,227</td>
<td>£10,001,508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environmental Services</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refuse Collection and Disposal</td>
<td>£13.7m</td>
<td>£14.1m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street-scene</td>
<td>£9.0m</td>
<td>£8.3m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaning, Housekeeping and Janitorial</td>
<td>£4.0m</td>
<td>£4.0m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The impact (positive or negative) that this service has on equality groups

**Education and Leisure Services**

Schools
Education and leisure establishments in Renfrewshire continue to actively promote a positive ethos as part of the curriculum, ensuring equality and diversity is embedded within service delivery in all educational establishments and annual improvement plans.

A range of policy guidance and support has been issued in order to support the engagement of children in education, tackling bullying and monitoring of bullying incidents. Schools have continued to work to reduce the number of racist incidents and promote the reporting of incidents and issues of inequality are actively challenged.

Additional Support Needs
Provision of additional resources, including specific equipment and staffing such as classroom assistants, specialist teachers and translation/interpretation services are key commitments to ensuring inclusion and maintaining a positive impact for children with additional support needs.

Leisure
The local Arts Centre actively target and programme performances for the diverse community of Renfrewshire, this includes providing regular performances which are captioned for the deaf and hard of hearing. The Arts Centres & Museums have a dedicated Outreach Team working with a number of groups and organisations to promote equality of access to cultural activities, and creating opportunities for involvement which are relevant and accessible to all.
The Arts & Museums ‘What’s On Guide’ is available in Braille and large print. Renfrewshire libraries offer a wide selection of books to ensure meeting the needs of service users from the diverse communities.

A book delivery and collection service is available to house bound residents such as the elderly and individuals with a visual impairment. Additionally, ‘First Click’ a basic ICT training course is being delivered. In order to ensure access a range of leaflets and information is provided in a variety of different languages relating to services offered.

All education and leisure service buildings meet the required standards set by previous Disability Discrimination legislation therefore ensuring that buildings are accessible.

**Social Work Services**

**Learning Disability – supported living**

Adults with learning disabilities are supported by Renfrewshire Learning Disability Service to live as independently as possible within their own homes and communities. Very personalised packages of care and accommodation based on assessed need are commissioned in consultation with service users and their carers. These services have a very positive impact on the lives of local adults with learning disabilities and their carers.

More recently the Council has worked with an external provider to place a small number of adults on the autistic spectrum, in accommodation at Blackhall. This and other developments are key to ensuring that adults with learning disabilities can live as independently as possible in local communities, rather than living in external placements away from the local area.

**Care home placements**

Care home placements make up a significant proportion of the social work budget, and in 11/12 1075 older adults were supported in care home placements. The service has established a provider forum for care home providers locally in order to monitor and explore options for developing the support that older people receive locally within the care home sector. In terms of the Council’s 3 modern and purpose built care homes, we continue to take forward a number of developments which have a positive impact on residents, their families and the local community including intergenerational practice, enhanced co-ordination of health and wellbeing activities and investment to maintain the buildings and their fixtures and fittings.

**Fostering**

Fostering activity is supported by our in-house Fostering and Adoption team who work closely with wider services for accommodated children within the Council.

The Council has increased investment in the fostering service over the past 2-3 years to support Social Work in developing service provision in this area and to focus on recruiting more local foster carers. 144 children are now placed in local authority foster care placements, which is the highest level recorded. Development of this service ensures that as many children as possible are able to be cared for within the local area where this is appropriate.

**Environmental Services**

**Refuse**

A refuse collection container pull out service are available for elderly and residents with disabilities can apply for the service following an assessment by the department. Introduction of accessible increased recycling service has enhanced the ability to recycle as opposed to households being required to take recycled goods to centres and recycling points.

**Street Cleaning and Grounds Maintenance**
Council continues to maintain street and open spaces as safe places to ensure a positive impact on the diverse community of Renfrewshire, particularly young people, elderly and people with disabilities, services includes keeping street clean and free of debris, gritting and salting during the winter. 1,100 hectares of open spaces including public parks, play areas, golf course, cemeteries and war memorials are maintained, any hazards and dangers are cleared to minimise negative impact.

Cleaning, Housekeeping and Janitorial
To ensure participation and access to services a wide range of cleaning, housekeeping and janitorial services are provided to maintain standards of cleanliness and hazard free establishments including schools providing additional support needs, nurseries, care homes, day care centres, sheltered housing units, and children’s homes, as well as general offices. Furthermore in order to ensure contribution towards the health and wellbeing, 1.2 million nutritious meals are provided to educational establishments, and a wide range of social work establishments for the elderly and young vulnerable children.

The impact (if any) that any budget changes have had on equality groups
The above response exemplifies and demonstrates that Renfrewshire Council’s services are having a positive impact across the equality groups. The Council’s commitment to continuous improvement and effective monitoring will ensure that negative impact is addressed to ensure compliance with the general equality duty.

Mainstreaming equalities
What specialist services or programmes have been, or are being altered, in the interests of mainstreaming?

Renfrewshire Council is taking a proactive approach to integrate equality as a component of the Council’s policies, practices and procedures to ensure meeting the needs of an evolving diverse population. Examples of the approach being taken detailed below illustrate Renfrewshire Council's commitment to mainstreaming equality.

- Council has invested an additional £1m through the Change Fund for Older People to support the development of housing services, support for carers and the development of community capacity building.
- Adults with learning disabilities will be supported to participate in mainstream and specialist activities within the new integrated hubs at two local leisure centres.
- Council’s complaints procedure has been revised to ensure compliance with the public sector equality duty and the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman’s guidance
- Council has developed a portfolio of equality and diversity training to ensure that Staff are aware of the need to take into account needs and experiences of the protected characteristics
- The Council's ongoing website development programme to achieve the internationally recognised AA standard of accessibility and to improve the website content for the diverse communities.
- Renfrewshire Council in accordance with the requirements of the specific equality duty will publish report in April 2013 detailing the progress made in integrating the equality into activities/functions of the Council
What monitoring is in place to ensure that the relevant equality groups continue to access an appropriate service?

Renfrewshire Council had adopted a wide range of approaches to gather information and evidence to establish take up of services by equality groups and to identify data gaps that need to addressed examples include;

- Public Services Panel is one of the main consultation method to establish views on a wide range of issues and monitor the effectiveness of services. The Panel is representative of equality groups.

- Customer Satisfaction surveys has been revised to capture data across the equality groups.

- Housing options interview process monitor service provision by equality groups.

- Council receives regular feedback and engages with a wide range of local and national equality groups to develop a better understanding of the needs and experience of equality groups to ensure access to Council services.

David Martin
Chief Executive
Renfrewshire Council
9 October 2012