

Our Ref: JS/AG  
Your Ref:  
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Date: 30 March 2018

**Corporate & Community Services**  
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Ms C McKelvie  
Convener, Equalities & Human  
Rights Committee  
T2.60  
The Scottish Parliament  
EDINBURGH  
EH99 1SP

Dear Convener

### **Making the most of our equalities and human rights levers**

I refer to your letter to Ms Lorraine McMillan, Chief Executive, dated 16 February 2017, on the above-mentioned subject in which you requested responses to the questions below.

On behalf of East Renfrewshire Council, I am glad to respond as follows:

**How are equalities taken into account in your budget process? Please include information on whether they are considered at the budget setting stage, on a case by case basis, include national equalities priorities, or in some other way.**

Departments and services are required to take each budget proposal and carry out an equality impact assessment if the proposal is deemed to be relevant to one or more of the three needs of the equality duty.

**What use have you made of the information gathered through the Public Sector Equality Duty to inform your budgetary processes?**

The Council's Departments and services are informed by our Equality and Human Rights Community Conference reports as well as our agreed Equality and Human Rights Outcomes when making budget decisions.

**How do you make the equalities aspects of your budget decisions transparent to the public?**

Among others, we do this by including representatives of equality groups in our budget consultation events; representing in our budget publications, budget allocations on the basis of age, gender, disability etc; and responding to queries from the public arising from our published budget decisions.



**Please provide an example of best practice in equality budget decision making or any guidance relating to equalities and the budgetary process.**

During our Budget Conversation for 2018-2021 we undertook a new approach to engaging our communities about East Renfrewshire Council budget choices. In addition to our traditional consultation we established a number of Budget Panels. Comprising key stakeholders for each service area, the budget panels met over two sessions to discuss savings proposals in detail. Representatives from a number of equalities groups, including the East Renfrewshire Youth Forum, Disability Action East Renfrewshire and Diversity East Renfrewshire took part in our Environment and Community Services Panel. Findings from the panels were feedback to elected members ahead of the budget vote. The reports from the panels can be found online [here](#).

**What is your understanding of taking a human rights' approach to budgeting.**

Our understanding of taking a human rights approach to budgeting is in line with guidance from the Scottish Human Rights Commission. Thus we believe that "PANEL" principles, namely Participation, Accountability, Non Discrimination, Empowerment and Legality should underpin our approach to budgeting. In addition, we have built human rights considerations into our impact assessment process so that budgetary proposals can be scrutinised for their likely impact on the human rights of citizens.

Yours faithfully

JIM SNEDDON  
Head of Democratic & Partnership Services

