

# SCRA OUTCOMES AND MAINSTREAMING REPORT

PROGRESS REPORT APRIL 2019



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## Foreword

Welcome to SCRA's Equality Mainstreaming Report 2017-19. This is a progress report for the two year period from April 2017 on how we mainstream equality, diversity and inclusion, in the work that we do to deliver care and justice for Scotland's children and internally in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

In April 2017, SCRA published a four year Equalities Strategy summarising our approach to addressing equalities and achieving key associated outcomes over the period 2017-21<sup>1</sup>. Following an ambitious broadening of the scope and detail of our approach, we published a revised Equalities Outcomes, Progress and Mainstream Report in May 2018<sup>2</sup>. This Equalities Mainstream Report demonstrates our continued commitment to developing and embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in our culture and behaviours and as an intrinsic part of our day to day business and decision making.

Inclusivity is key to who we are and to achieving all of our outcomes. We are fully committed to providing an environment based on fairness, equality, cultural diversity, dignity and respect where everyone is supported to flourish and fulfil their potential, irrespective of their sex, gender identity, care experience, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, faith, age, or socio-economic background. To be fully inclusive requires sustained, proactive hard work. We know there are areas where we have work to do if we are to become truly representative of the people we serve. The gender pay gap remains challenging and is something we are addressing through our Women into Leadership action plan, Succession Planning frameworks and by ensuring that our reward strategies have a positive impact on our workforce.

We continue to "hard wire" inclusivity throughout our policies, processes and practices. This work does not belong to one group or network, but rather is embedded in all that we do. There is a role for everyone in achieving our ambition. It requires continued strong leadership and action led by the Principal Reporter/CEO, the Executive Management Team and the Board. Being inclusive makes us better at everything that we do and helps us to attract the kind of diverse, expert and dedicated talent we need to recruit and retain in SCRA. A more inclusive culture improves our daily lives and enhances our capacity to recognise and respond to the diverse and unique needs of the children, young people and their families whom we serve.

Our role as Corporate Parents is very important to us, and at the heart of our approach is inclusivity, transparency and participation.

We set ourselves an ambitious programme of work. This report reflects our dedication to fulfilling our responsibilities to our staff and the children, young people and their families and the progress we have made over the past two years. It also provides an update on how we gather and use workforce equality data.

1. Our Equalities Outcomes, Progress and Mainstream Report 2017-21 is published on our website: [scra.gov.uk](https://www.scra.gov.uk)  
2. Our revised Equalities and Inclusion Strategy and Outcomes 2018-21 is published on our website: [scra.gov.uk](https://www.scra.gov.uk)

# Introduction

## Our Role

The Children's Hearings System is an important part of the wider system of child protection, youth justice and children's services. SCRA is a Non-Departmental Public Body responsible to the Scottish Government. Our role within this system involves several responsibilities including:

- Making effective decisions about a need to refer a child/young person to a Children's Hearing.
- Preparing for and participating in court proceedings where statement of grounds or Hearings findings are appealed, and ensuring the wellbeing of children and young people – particularly vulnerable witnesses – is protected throughout the court process.
- Supporting Panel Members (although we are not involved in making Hearing decisions) and ensuring fair process in Hearings.
- Enabling children, young people and families to participate in Hearings.
- Publishing information and data to influence, inform and reassure.
- Providing premises for Hearings to take place.
- Working collaboratively with partners to support and facilitate the Getting it Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) agenda.

All of this only tells part of the story – it tells us what we do, but not how we should do it. As an organisation whose decision making can have a major impact on the lives of children, young people and families we provide services to, we have wider responsibilities in terms of children's rights, corporate parenting and equalities. These reflect different aspects of people's lives and so they interact and overlap in a way that can be complex. We have worked hard to further strengthen the links between these strands so that we seamlessly consider them in our day to day service delivery.

For more detailed information on our range of work and our plans for the future, please see our Corporate Plan and our Corporate Parenting Plan <sup>3</sup>.

3. Our Corporate Plan and Corporate Parenting Plan 2017-20 is published on our website: [scra.gov.uk](http://scra.gov.uk)

## Mission Statement, Vision and Values

Our revised Equality and Inclusion Strategy and Outcomes 2018-21 sets out how we will meet our Public Sector Equality Duty and mainstream equality across all parts of our organisation and in the provision of our service to children, young people and their families.

SCRA aspires to be a leader in terms of our behaviours and attitudes to diversity and inclusion. Our mission statement, vision and values shown below guide all of our actions and behaviours:-

### Mission Statement

SCRA is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our workforce and throughout our organisation at large. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. Our aim is that SCRA embraces, acknowledges and is representative of all sections of society; promoting equality and respect for all so that everyone is able to achieve their potential. SCRA is committed to promoting the practice of equality and diversity in all its services, operations and dealings with employees, children, young people and their families and all partner agencies. SCRA aims to ensure that it employs and deploys a workforce that is diverse and equipped with the right mix of skills and experience to deliver a quality service to children and young people.

**This statement is supported by:**

### Our vision

Our vision sets out what we want the world to be like for children and young people in Scotland. Vulnerable children and young people in Scotland are safe protected and offered positive futures.

### Our values

Children and young people's experiences and opinions guide us. We are approachable and open. We bring the best of the past with us into the future to meet new challenges.

### Context for the Report

SCRA is fully committed to the vision, values and ethos of the Equality Act 2010 and to fulfilling the three key elements of the general equality duty as defined in the Act.

- Elimination unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The protected characteristics are:-

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race, this includes ethnicity, colour and national origin
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage/civil partnership, but only in respect of the requirement to have due regards to the need to eliminate discrimination

Every one of us has “protected characteristics”. However, in this context, the focus is on the treatment individuals and groups receive, the level of autonomy they have, and the positive or negative outcomes for them.

SCRA’s approach is to go beyond the compliance obligations and to develop an inclusive ethos within the organisation based on fairness, equality, cultural diversity, dignity and respect. In May 2017, SCRA publically supported the Who Cares? Scotland campaign to recognise equality for children, young people and adults who have experienced of the care system. SCRA recognises care experience as a “tenth protected characteristic” and we continue to review our practice, policies and processes to reflect this.

This report:-

- Builds on our Mainstreaming Reports of 2017 and 2018 and provides an overview of key achievements and mainstreaming progress made within the SCRA since their publication
- Provides detail of our progress in relation to each of our 2017 Equality Outcomes, and our work with our staff, partners and the children, young people and their families whom we serve.
- Sets out the actions we will take to further progress our Equality Outcomes

It is important to note that this report covers activity up to March 2019 and that all work is ongoing.

## Section 1: Mainstreaming equality

Mainstreaming is a specific requirement for public bodies in relation to implementing the Equality Duty. In simple terms, it means integrating equality into the day to day working of the organisations, considering equality as part of everything we do.

Mainstreaming the equality duty has a number of benefits including:-

- Equality becomes part of the structures, behaviours and culture of the organisation
- SCRA knows, and can demonstrate, how in carrying out its functions it is promoting equality
- Mainstreaming equality contributes to continuous improvement and better performance

### Specific Duties in Relation to Mainstreaming Equality

In Scotland, the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 (and subsequent updates) are designed to help public authorities like the SCRA meet the general duty.

The specific duties require SCRA to report every two years on mainstreaming the equality duty and the progress against achieving SCRA's equality outcomes. SCRA's Equality Mainstreaming Report must include:

- Information on our progress made to make the general equality duty integral to the exercise of SCRA's functions
- An annual breakdown of employment monitoring information under the duty to gather and use employee information
- Details of the progress made in gathering and using employment monitoring information to perform the general equality duty
- Information on the gender composition of SCRA's Board of Management, and the steps taken/planned towards ensuring diversity in relation to the protected characteristics of SCRA's board members.

The above information must be published in an accessible manner. We published our first Mainstreaming Report in April 2013, which included our equality outcomes. Subsequent reports were published in 2015 and in April 2017. SCRA published a second set of equality outcomes to achieve by April 2021, and reported on our work to progress achievement of equalities outcomes and mainstreaming equalities. Full information about the development of our equality outcomes 2017 – 2021 is in our April 2017 Equality Outcomes, Progress and Mainstreaming Report. We further revised these outcomes in May 2018 to reflect the broader scope of our work and full information on these revised outcomes is in our Equalities and Inclusion Strategy and Outcomes 2018-2021.

In addition to this core equality legislation, there is also a range of other Scottish Government strategies and policies that impact on and inform our work on equality, diversity and inclusion. These include the Children and Young Person (Scotland) Act 2014 (particularly in relation to our Corporate Parenting duties) and the British Sign

Language Scotland Act 2015. Where these policies have generated or we have identified actions or targets for SCRA, we have aimed to reflect these in our equality action plans.

It is important that equality is built into the design, delivery and evaluation of SCRA's services, employment policies and practice. SCRA is committed to monitoring equality, promoting diversity and to ensuring that it is at the heart of carrying out or functions effectively and fairly. Within SCRA mainstreaming means that:

- All staff take responsibility for and are involved in all equality matters and the creation of a respectful working environment
- All managers are aware of and meet their responsibilities in relation to the provision of services and in supporting staff within and across localities.
- Board members are aware of their responsibilities and the decisions they make.
- We develop fair, consistent and respectful policies and practices for all staff and the children, young people and their families whom we serve.

We have carried out a number of activities to promote awareness of the responsibilities outlined above and to ensure SCRA is mainstreaming equality. The main ways that we achieve this and the progress we have made as an organisation are noted below:-

## Leadership, Governance and Business Planning

### Leadership

Equalities matters to us and commitment by our Board, PR/CEO and senior management continues to be a key factor in our mainstreaming approach. Equality is forms part of SCRA's Corporate Planning cycle as part of our corporate planning and reporting process.

### Governance

SCRA has an equality governance structure in place to meet its equality duties.

SCRA's Executive Management team exercises its duty to ensure compliance, and governs the implementation of the Equality Strategy, outcomes and action plans, whilst SCRA's Board oversees the fulfilment of our equality duties.

SCRA's Principal Reporter/Chief Executive is accountable for the fulfilment of SCRA's equality duties, and is supported in this by SCRA's Equalities Network. Its key responsibilities are:-

- Considering implications for SCRA of relevant legislative developments
- Approving ongoing development of SCRA's Equality Strategy and outcomes
- Promoting and advocating increased organisational understanding of SCRA's equality commitments
- Ensuring consistency across the organisation in SCRA's approach to delivering these commitments



Board members receive a report twice per year on our equalities work that provide decision makers with updates on equality matters to ensure strong governance and transparency.

### SCRA's Equalities Network

SCRA's Equalities Network is chaired by the Board chair and during the reporting period the Equalities Network met thirteen times to monitor, record progress and discuss work to mainstream equalities across the organisation.

### SCRA's Equalities Sub Groups

We have established six sub groups, which together cover all of the protected characteristics. A member of our Equalities Network facilitates each sub group. The Equalities Sub Groups report directly to the Equalities Network and work proactively to provide guidance and support to meet the equality duties, as well as sharing good practice and producing briefings and awareness raising for staff.

### Equalities Ambassadors

SCRA benefits from a group of Equalities Ambassadors – dedicated front line staff from across Scotland who volunteer to support their colleagues and promote equality and diversity across our activities. The Equalities Ambassadors:-

- Communicate information on equality issues, developments and best practice to Locality teams
- Identify potential equality issues and challenges across the organisation, collecting objective data where appropriate
- Build and maintain positive relationships with partner agencies and organisations in their localities who can partner SCRA to address any equality issues

We have increased dialogue with our Equalities Ambassadors and other staff groups to monitor progress towards SCRA's equality outcomes. In May 2018, the Equalities Network and Equalities Ambassadors attended a development day to reflect on progress made, identify areas of good practice and agree future priority areas for development.

### Policies and Procedures

We are promoting requirements to mainstream equality in policy development and policy reviews. During the reporting period we reviewed three of the key policies:

We recently replaced our **Equal Opportunity Policy** with a more comprehensive policy that references all protected characteristics and outlines both employers and employee responsibilities and commitments towards encouraging a diverse and inclusive work environment in which every employee is able to fulfil their potential.

We are revising our **Dignity at Work Policy**, which aims to ensure that, as far as reasonably practicable, everyone is able to work in an environment free of any form of bullying, harassment, victimisation or discrimination.

Our **Recruitment and Selection Policy** is being revised and updated. We believe that all our staff have talent and we have refreshed our approach and processes to encourage diversity and inclusion.

We will continue to review our other policies to ensure they reflect our unwavering commitment to ensuring that everyone can feel valued, included and empowered to maximise their potential in the workplace.

### Corporate Parents and Care Experience

We continue to embed equality, diversity and inclusion as a theme across our corporate parenting duties and our corporate planning process. We are developing a corporate objective for all business areas relating to delivering the public sector equality duty and specifically mainstreaming and equality outcomes. Our Head of Human Resources, Equalities Lead and the Corporate Planning and Performance team have worked closely together to ensure equalities and diversity is reflected in our Corporate Plan and our Corporate Parenting Plans 2017-2020. This will ensure that every aspect of our service provision and employment responsibilities has considered the impact or likely impact of each of the protected characteristics.

SCRA publically supported the Who Cares? Scotland campaign to recognise equality for children and young people who have experience of the care system. In October 2018, we hosted a fund raising coffee morning to raise awareness of equality for those with experience of care. Several of our staff including senior managers also attended the Who Cares? Scotland Lifetime of Love Rally supporting the demand for love to be shown to people in care.

This year a number of staff volunteered to support the Who Cares? Scotland Christmas campaign. Staff helped to make a memorable Christmas day for people who have experience of the care system and who would have otherwise spent Christmas day on their own. Staff donated many gifts and vouchers all of which were made into age appropriate Christmas sacks for those attending on Christmas day.

### Property Strategy

In 2017, SCRA's Property Strategy was revised for the 5 year period 2017 to 2022. The revised strategy was developed around five key themes:

- Meeting the Needs of Property Users
- Flexible Service Delivery
- Location and Quality of Hearing Centres
- Sustainability
- Working in Partnership

Our focus is concentrated on providing a welcoming and appropriate environment for hearings that allows all participants to feel relaxed, engaged and able to fully participate in the hearing. Significant progress has been made in recent years to replace property in our estate that cannot meet our requirements, particularly in relation to providing an accessible facility. Improvements to existing properties have

also been undertaken to ensure our buildings continue to provide an appropriate environment.

As part of SCRA's corporate parenting duties and our on-going commitment to improving Hearing rooms for children and young people, we have been rolling out a Hearing room improvement programme since 2015 to upgrade facilities for children and young people attending Hearings. With the invaluable contribution of Hearings-experienced children and young people, a variety of participative rooms were successfully introduced across the country, and to date, nineteen rooms have been upgraded to a more participative style.

In 2017, a new approach was introduced to create a portfolio of three key options to choose from. This was in order to create a professionally designed variety of inclusive environments for the ongoing roll-out. Young people continued to identify a number of distinct themes to help them feel more relaxed and able to participate in their Children's Hearing. In particular, they asked for calming, less formal rooms with friendly colours, the removal of the large table, the addition of plants, a variety of seating options to suit those with disabilities, and an identified play area for younger children.

### **SCRA Research Ethics Committee**

In 2016, we established a Research Ethics Committee to review all research proposals conducted by, or involving, SCRA to make recommendations and ensure that our research, and external research that we contribute to, meets legal requirements and the highest professional standards for social research. In considering equalities and inclusion issues in each research proposal, the Committee protects and promotes the rights and interests of the children and families with protected characteristics.

### **Procurement**

In line with the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012, we consider equality throughout our tender processes and comply fully with legislation. Where relevant and proportionate, suppliers are required to provide details of any equality policies and systems that they have in place and that will be utilised when delivering the contract. This is addressed in SCRA's standard Terms & Conditions.

SCRA has a Fair Work Practices Policy which should be considered as early as possible in the procurement process to ensure that where it is relevant to how the contract is carried out, assessing a supplier's approach to fair employment, including the Living Wage, can be an important part of the procurement exercise. A statement on Fair Work Practices is included in all tender documents and we consider on a case by case basis whether to include a weighted quality question in regulated procurements. A question is included in all EU regulated procurements. Where relevant, suppliers are asked to describe how they will commit to fair work practices for workers (including any Agency and Sub-contractor workers) engaged in the delivery of the contract.

## Equalities Monitoring Campaign

Data monitoring has improved within SCRA with all protected characteristics except care experience being monitored for all staff and applicants. Age, sex, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, religion/belief and ethnicity are established with data available. Robust and accurate equality evidence, properly understood and analysed, is at the root of effective compliance with the general equality duty. We are encouraging staff to update their personal and sensitive details on iTrent, SCRA's e-hr system. In November 2018, we launched a campaign providing information about the purpose and value of disclosing this data whilst reassuring staff that it is optional and anonymous. The campaign resulted in an increase in reporting across most protected characteristics, notably disability (15%), faith or belief (14%) and nationality (9.5%).

## Learning and Development

SCRA is dedicated to equality of opportunity for colleagues within our organisation. Last year, our e-hr system ensured that every employee had ability to record their personal learning record, which they now use to record their development activities. This supports better informed discussions with line managers as part of our approach to managing personal and professional development and performance within supervision and appraisal frameworks.

Our Board and senior leaders were at the forefront of the roll-out of equalities, diversity and inclusion training. During 2018, we launched our diversity and inclusion awareness raising training for staff. The newly designed course identifies legislative requirements and practical responsibilities and forms part of SCRA's mandatory training suite of materials for all staff whether experienced or new to the organisation. To embed the knowledge of equalities, line managers were given the responsibility of ensuring this was delivered within local teams and allowed the opportunity to discuss equalities and what it meant for individual employees, service delivery, as well as the local team. Additionally our board members and all staff completed Unconscious Bias e-learning training. This ensures that our Board members and all of our staff have an understanding of SCRA's diversity and inclusion aims and expected behaviours.

In November 2017, Nil by Mouth delivered excellent training to our staff on Hate Crime and Barnardo's raised awareness of how to identify child sexual exploitation in the children and young people referred to us. Two members of staff attended training in November 2018 delivered by Shakti Women's Aid on domestic abuse and the impact on women and children from minority ethnic backgrounds. LGBT Youth gave us a thought provoking insight into the challenges that many children and young people in the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community face and what steps we can take to ensure that we create a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for those accessing our services.

Staff have also had the opportunity to access mental health awareness training delivered by SAMH and to develop as mental health first aiders to support staff within and across our localities. Dementia awareness training was well attended by

staff across several localities and we have recruited fourteen mindfulness ambassadors to train and deliver mindfulness sessions across our localities.

We have continued to raise awareness of the public sector equality duty through our staff intranet, our National Reporter in-house magazine and Team Briefs issued by our Principal Reporter/CEO. All staff have access to a diversity calendar and guidance and materials to promote and raise awareness around faith, disability, LGBT, gender equality and other protected characteristics.

Working collaboratively with our Equalities ambassadors and HR Business Partners, we published a series of awareness raising briefings for staff. In November 2018, we promoted World Mental Health Day and launched our briefing for managers on supporting mental health and wellbeing in the workplace.

We supported Carers Day in the workplace and published a briefing for staff highlighting the supports that are available within and out with the workplace. Three members of staff including our Principal Reporter/Chief Executive officer shared their experiences of being a working carer in case study form and these were uploaded on our intranet.

Further briefings were issued in 2018 to help managers understand the symptoms of menopause and how to support colleague's health and wellbeing. A new guide was also launched to help staff when arranging a Hearing for a child or young person with Autism. The Guide to Autism stemmed from our work with the charity Reach for Autism. They are a Greenock-based charity helping children and young people with Autism. Young people from the charity helped us develop the guide following a visit to a Hearings centre. The guide will be refreshed and developed further as we learn more about how we can better support children, young people and their parents/carers with Autism and ensure they can effectively participate in the Hearing.

We regularly provide opportunities for staff to attend Women into Leadership events across Scotland. These events enable women to hear from other women about their journeys into leadership, what barriers they had to overcome and advice and guidance on how to self-care, self-promote and self-identify through your own journey. The opportunity to network in such a positive and supportive environment is major benefit to those attending.

## Health and Wellbeing

SCRA has a strategic aim to develop effective, confident and resilient staff through promoting high standards of health and wellbeing for all. SCRA's Health and Wellbeing Group meets regularly throughout the year to plan opportunities for staff to participate in activities to improve their health and wellbeing. The group comprises staff from across a range of roles and localities to ensure that initiatives are widely promoted throughout the organisation. Promoting a culture of wellbeing aims to improve morale, lower staff turnover, reduce sickness absence levels and increase productivity. A quarterly e-zine has had great reviews within interesting articles and promotional materials. Examples of activities that have been promoted to staff during 2017-2019 include:-

- Mindfulness sessions/yoga – opportunity to be trained as a Locality Mindfulness Champion to embed this practice further across the organisation.
- Various healthy eating promotions
- Cycle to work scheme
- Wellbeing sessions as part of Continuing Professional Development
- Walking groups within localities
- Health promotions linked to exercise and wellbeing

## Modern Apprentices

In working to improve the diversity of SCRA's workforce, we have adopted an inclusive approach to our recent modern apprenticeship recruitment. The recruitment campaign was launched in November with advertisements on multiple sites including a recruitment agency, our own website and through agencies working with young people in Edinburgh. We also promoted the post through social media and also targeted partner organisations. Our existing Modern Apprentices worked with our HR Business partners prior to interviews to highlight changes to the process and to reinforce the importance of equality and diversity. We have ensured that appropriate pastoral support has been put in place for those who need it.

## Living Wage

In 2016, we gained our Living Wage accreditation. Paying the Living Wage allows employees to access the goods and services which most people deem necessary to participate in society. Research also shows that paying the Living Wage can increase staff retention and reduce sickness whilst improving morale, productivity and motivation.

## Employee Survey

Our annual staff survey provides a key metric of employees' views on what it is like to work for the organisation, covering such diverse topics as communication, learning and development, managing change and our organisational objectives. In 2017, the Head of Human Resources agreed for the following equality-related question to be included in the annual survey:

"I understand how Equalities and Diversity relates to my job"

The results provided a useful baseline measure in 2017 and in the 2018 results 87% of those staff responding to the survey indicated that they agreed they understood how equalities and diversity relates to their job. This indicates an increase in staffs awareness and understanding of knowledge and attitudes and helped inform the equality outcomes SCRA developed for 2017-2021.

## Disability Confident Employer

In 2016, SCRA became a Disability Confident Employer, which was further reaccruited in 2018. The Disability Confident Employment Scheme is a government scheme designed to encourage employers to recruit and retain disabled people and those with health conditions.



By using the Disability Confident logo on our website we make it clear that SCRA welcomes applicants with disabilities. It also demonstrates to SCRA employees that their contribution is valued and that they will be treated fairly if they have a disability or become disabled while working for SCRA.

SCRA have attended Disability Confident events to promote the work undertaken to achieve the accreditation and to support and encourage other local employers to undertake the same journey. SCRA is now aiming to become a Disability Confident Leader to promote this work further.

## **Carer Positive**

Carer Positive is an organisation which aims to encourage employers to create a supportive working environment for carers in the workplace. SCRA is currently accredited at the Engaged level and we are working towards achieving the next level of accreditation, Established. Carer Positive demonstrates SCRA's commitment to creating a supportive working environment for carers in the workplace. Supporting carers to manage the sometimes difficult job of balancing work with caring responsibilities can deliver real benefits and help our staff and their families.

## **Publishing Public Information in Accessible Formats**

SCRA is committed to ensuring that our website achieves a high standard of accessibility for the benefit of all of our visitors, regardless of disability or impairment. Recite Me software is available throughout our website. It provides greater functionality to website visitors with different needs. The functionality includes: text to speech functionality, dyslexia software, an interactive dictionary, a translation tool with over 100 languages and it works across all devices.

We published leaflets for children, young people and their families about going to court and how to make a complaint in easy read versions. There is also a series of videos for children and young people and their parents/ carers about pre-hearing visits, going to a children's hearing and going to court. We have also produced a video for parents/carers with learning disabilities who have a child or children attending children's hearings. Versions of this film are available in British Sign Language and with subtitles.

Podcasts are also available on our website to provide first-hand accounts from young people who have gone through the children's hearing system.

We continue to further develop our website. This is the main way we share general information about our services with children, young people and their families, and the partners we work with. This year we created a dedicated site for translators, interpreters and transcribers to increase awareness and understanding of the Children's Hearings System as part of our ongoing commitment to supporting the effective participation of children, young people and their families in the Hearings process.

## **Staff Networks**

In October 2018, we launched our Women into Leadership Network. The purpose of the Network is to support and encourage women across all localities and in all roles by inspiring and empowering them to take on and seek opportunities for development, maximise their potential, foster valuable connections, and facilitate success through personal and professional growth. Four Network events are planned for each year and inspirational speakers have been identified to share their experiences of leadership.

We supported four women to attend the annual Women into Leadership conference and will continue to support two women attending each year. Two women also attended a “Women in Work” conference in October 2018 and we will continue to identify opportunities to empower and revitalise women to take ownership of their development, make sustainable connections and learn from partners and external organisations.

## **Pride in Justice**

To support the development of staff and enhance the impact networks can have on the organisation, SCRA has made provision for staff to attend the Pride in Justice Network. This new network for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex staff and allies working across Scotland’s justice partners, focusses on how to work together to increase inclusivity, raise awareness of LGBTI issues and share best practice in supporting people from LGBTI communities.

## **Monitoring Legislation and Good Practice**

We continue to monitor changes in legislation, and good practice in other organisations to ensure our processes and policies keep pace with developments.

## **Professional Memberships**

### ***Stonewall***

SCRA participates in the Stonewall workplace equality index and will continue to work towards improving our score and ranking.

### ***LGBT Youth***

In August 2018, SCRA’s Executive Management Team provided funding to work towards the LGBT Youth Charter. This has provided us with the opportunity to work in collaboration with LGBT Youth, access training opportunities and consultancy services to ensure that our policies and practice reflect the needs of children and young people from the LGBT community.

We celebrated Purple Friday in February 2018 with further celebrations planned for this year and we will show our ongoing support of the LGBT community through a robust ongoing social media campaign.



### **Enei**

In 2015, the SCRA Executive Management Team approved becoming a member of the Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion (Enei). Being a member has allowed us access to their many workplace guides which we have used when developing our own equality, diversity and human rights policies, and in developing the role and remit of our staff networks and equalities ambassadors.

### **Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPB) Equality Forum**

We participate in the NDPB Equality Forum, a collaboration of Scottish public sector bodies who each have a responsibility for responding to the Public Sector Equality Duties. The forum draws expertise and resources from a range of partners to influence and support the development and implementation of policy and practice on equality, diversity and inclusion in Scotland.

### **Working Group on Interpreting and Translation (WGIT)**

We are a member of this group, which comprises the main justice organisations and aims to work collaboratively to establish common standards for interpreting and translation throughout the Scottish justices. One of the first priorities for this group is to work with the Scottish Government on the delivery of Scotland's first British Sign Language (BSL) National Plan, as required by the BSL (Scotland) Act 2015.

## Section 2: Progress on achieving our equality outcomes 2017-2021

The equality outcomes we set in April 2017 were based on evidence and finalised in consultation with the Equalities Network, Board members and Executive Management Team. Whilst we published a revised Equalities Strategy in 2018, our equality outcomes remain unchanged and applied to all relevant protected characteristics. Our equality outcomes for 2017-2021 are:-

### Equality outcome 1

We have a better understanding of the needs and experiences of children, young people and families

### Equality outcome 2

All children, young people and families can engage with our services with ease and confidence

### Equality outcome 3

We have a culture where staff feel more knowledgeable, engaged, supported and valued.

### Equality outcome 4

We have a workforce that is more representative of the Scottish population.

We created an action plan of 26 key milestones to be achieved by the end of March 2021. Progress against our equality outcomes to date has been good and can be summarised as follows:-

- 18 milestones are now complete
- 8 milestones are ongoing

More detailed information about these and other activities is provided in Appendix A.

## Section 3: Workforce equality monitoring

SCRA is committed to ensuring employees and job applicants are treated with dignity and respect. The specific duties require SCRA to take steps to gather and use information on the composition of its employees and information on the recruitment, development and retention of people as employees by protected characteristic.

**Appendix B** provides a detailed report on SCRA's workforce employment monitoring across each of the protected characteristics and information on the gender composition of members of SCRA's Board of Management.

## Section 4: Looking forward

The key priority in SCRA's 2019/20 Business Plan is the implementation of our digital programme. SCRA is taking a structured approach to managing organisational readiness and optimising capacity to ensure appropriate resources are available to focus on this priority. To enable Locality Teams to respond positively to the needs of the digital programme and its implementation, SCRA has taken the conscious decision to remove demands that would otherwise have impacted on Locality resources. SCRA will continue to provide a focus on Equalities in 2019/20 however the activities and action plans will be scaled accordingly to the resource needs of the Digital Programme.

However, looking forward, we acknowledge there is further work to be done in relation to mainstreaming and advancing our Public Sector Equality Duty. We have made significant improvements and progress over the past two years, and will continue to progress our equality work through a number of equality related projects and initiatives. The introduction of our Equality Outcomes in 2017 and this mainstream report have served as building blocks and stepping stones as we strive to realise our vision.

The reinvigoration of the Equalities Network and the appointment of an Equalities Lead are positive steps to ensure we can continue to take a strategic and planned approach to our equalities, diversity and inclusion agenda. Our involvement in initiatives such as the LGBT Youth Charter, Stonewall, Disability Confident Scheme and Carer Positive will provide the framework against which we can truly self-assess ourselves and address the challenges we have identified in this report.

There is a lot to do starting with our immediate priorities:-

1. Improve inclusivity on the service we provide to children, young people and their families
2. Improve the availability and quality of our workforce data
3. Seek a more gender balanced workforce demographic particularly at senior levels
4. Increase the proportion of staff at all levels who have a disability or are from a minority ethnic background
5. Refresh our equality impact assessment processes, guidance and training to integrate impact assessments on children's rights and wellbeing, human rights and the socio economic duty.
6. Support staff at all levels to ensure more effective pathways and actions for career development.
7. SCRA will further explore the anticipated impact of our equality outcomes by outlining, planning and evaluating our expectations regarding these outcomes and the associated timescales

The Equalities Network will ensure action plans are in place to drive forward these immediate priorities, with clear targets.

## Representation

SCRA needs to attract talent from a wide range of backgrounds if we are to meet the needs of a modern and diverse Scotland. To date, our progress on increasing diversity of SCRA has been inconsistent. Progress on increasing the representation of ethnic minority, care experienced and staff with disabilities has been incremental but too slow to match our ambitions. Therefore, we will launch targeted recruitment campaigns to improve the representation of ethnic minority, care experienced and staff with a disability across SCRA.

There has been significant improvement in the proportion of staff who identify as having a disability, those from a minority ethnic background and those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender following the launch of our Equalities monitoring campaign in November 2018. As a Disability Confident Employer, we will continue to seek opportunities to become a Disability Confident Leader and will seek to increase our index with Stonewall.

## Women into Leadership Action Plan

Our Women into Leadership Action Plan sits within Equality Outcomes Three and Four of our 2018-21 Outcomes by End March 2021. This plan details the specific actions to tackle gender imbalances and we will strive to progress this to improved outcomes.

We will continue to support two women attending the annual Women into Leadership conference and shall develop a strategy offering coaching and mentoring opportunities to women within the organisation.

## Learning and Development

Equalities, diversity and inclusion and unconscious bias training will be embedded for new staff at corporate induction. We will also ensure our corporate induction module outlines the requirements of the Equality Act, Public Sector Equality Duty and respect and dignity at work and is integral to the development of new Board members.

We have launched a mental health awareness raising campaign for all staff and will be training staff as mental health first aiders to support mental health and wellbeing in the workplace.

## Equality Impact Assessments

We are further enhancing our equality impact assessments to include an assessment of human rights, children's rights and wellbeing and the socio economic considerations. This approach will align with our Corporate Parenting Plan commitments, to ensure that care experience is given equal consideration to other protected characteristics.

We shall reflect the needs of those who have experience of the care system in our equality, human rights and children's rights and wellbeing impact assessments.

Embedding our refreshed approach helps to improve the way SCRA works as an employer and service provider. It is a systematic way of finding out whether and how SCRA's policies, actions or plans impact, or could potentially impact, on our employees, children, young people and their families and anyone accessing our service and on people who share different protected characteristics, and people who do not share them. An analysis of the equality impact assessments also helps us to identify whether a policy, service or function will contribute to good relations between different groups of people, promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination.

### **Improving Inclusivity in our Service Provision**

Working closely with colleagues leading on Corporate Parenting and the Better Hearings Agenda, the Participation Group and our Equalities Ambassadors, we shall mainstream the equality duty as part of our children's and families consultations to ensure that we can respond to the individualised needs of those accessing our services. We shall consolidate our collaborative partnership working with the charity Reach for Autism to produce a video to support children and young people attending children's hearings and continue to raise awareness amongst our staff of the issues facing children and young people who have autism.

### **Reporting on Outcomes**

A key challenge for the future is the ongoing reporting and embedding of completed activity so that it continues to have an impact. We will do this through revisions to business and locality plan updates to ensure progress continues to be reported and tracked by managers.

We also plan to reduce our equality outcomes' lifespan to 3 years to align it with our corporate planning cycle. We will publish an Equalities and Mainstream Report Outcomes for 2020 -2023 to ensure that there is alignment between all plans.

SCRA will continue to work with our staff, partners and organisations and consult appropriately with the children, young people and their families to advance our commitment and further progress our equality, diversity and inclusion objectives and ambitions and public sector reporting duties.

Copies of this report in alternative formats and community languages will be made available on request.

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