

To: YOUTH AND EQUALITIES COMMITTEE		Subject: SCOTTISH NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
From: HEAD OF EDUCATION (SKILLS, LIFELONG LEARNING & YOUTH EMPLOYMENT)		
Date: 7 April 2016	Ref: LMcM/KR	

### 1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to advise committee of the implications for the Council of the Scottish National Action Plan for Human Rights (SNAP) and the progress made to date, in terms of the implementation of pSNAP.

### 2. Background

Human rights are the basic rights and freedoms that belong to everyone. Ideas about human rights have evolved over many centuries but they achieved strong international support following the Holocaust and World War II. To seek to protect future generations from a repeat of those horrors, the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. For the first time, the Universal Declaration set out the fundamental rights and freedoms shared by all human beings. This was then followed by the ratification of the European Convention on Human Rights in 1951

In the UK the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Scotland Act 1998 brought the rights of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) directly into the law of Scotland and provided public authorities with a legal framework to help them to ensure that their actions respect the human rights of those for whom they provide services.

### 3. Considerations

#### 3.1 Scottish National Action Plan for Human Rights (SNAP)

Launched in December 2013, SNAP seeks to underpin the delivery of a transformative programme for the realisation of all internationally recognised human rights. The action plan established an approach whereby a wide range of public bodies and voluntary organisations can work towards the delivery of three outcomes:-

- Better Culture
- Better lives; and
- Better world

As public bodies with statutory duties to protect, respect and fulfil human rights, local authorities have a crucial role to play in helping achieve SNAP's overall vision of a Scotland where everyone can live with human dignity.

The following progress in the implementation of SNAP has been made:-

- The Scottish Government is investing in a campaign to raise awareness of human rights. This will help people understand their human rights, particularly in the context of the public services they use;

- Taking into consideration the centrality of human rights to public service delivery and to public policy, work is taking place to link human rights to the National Performance Framework and the Scottish Government's wider social justice agenda;
- SNAP partners are working on specific initiatives to advance people's understanding and organisations' delivery of human rights in specific areas concerned with the outcome Better Lives such as:
  - health and social care services,
  - justice and safety and
  - improving living standards and tackling poverty; and
- Pilot initiative was undertaken in Perth and Kinross that explored what a better human rights culture would look like in a local authority area and what steps could be taken to achieve this.

#### **4. Conclusions**

The Scottish Human Rights Commission and the Scottish Government now intend to share the learning and approaches taken in Perth & Kinross across Scotland over the coming year to help shape and embed a better human rights culture across the country.

In order that the Council is best placed to progress any recommendations coming from the Perth and Kinross pilot, Committee is asked to consider undertaking a joint development session with key officers on Human Rights and their application in the delivery of Council services at the end of the summer.

#### **5. Recommendations**

Committee is asked to approve that a joint development session be arranged for members of the Youth and Equalities Committee, and officers of North Lanarkshire Council, on Human Rights and their application in the delivery of Council services.



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Local Government Access to Information Act: for further information about this report, please contact Lizanne McMurrich, Head of Education (Skills, Lifelong Learning & Youth Employment) on 01236 812338 or Barbara Philliben, Community Learning and Inclusion Manager on 01236 812526