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PAGE: 1

**REPORT TO: EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CORPORATE ADVISORY FORUM
11 APRIL 2014**

SUBJECT: EIA SEMINAR

BY: EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES OFFICER

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 The Equality and Diversity Corporate Advisory Forum is asked to approve the recommendations regarding a seminar on Equality Impact Assessments to be held in September 2014.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Equality and Diversity Corporate Advisory Forum is asked to approve the proposed seminar aimed at improving the standard of Equality Impact Assessments prepared by officers and the due consideration of these by Elected Members.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Moray Council's annual report on Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs), which was published on 7 March 2014, shows that the awareness among officers and elected members of the need to carry out equality impact assessments has grown significantly. On a number of occasions EIAs themselves have become a subject of debate in Chambers. The question as to whether the EIA is robust enough is increasingly becoming a factor in the decision making process.
- 3.2 Much work has been done to establish procedures which ensures that the public sector equality duties are considered in every report that is submitted to the committees. Now that these have been established there is likely to be a greater demand on the quality of the EIAs.
- 3.3 To assist in this, it is proposed to hold a seminar in September 2014. aimed at giving elected members and officers more guidance on gauging the robustness of EIAs and how to use them in the decision making process. The seminar would consist of

- 2 two-hour sessions: a morning session for officers (3rd tier and above) and an afternoon session for elected members.
- A key-note address at the start of each session, ideally by a representative of the Equality and Human Rights Commission for Scotland on applying “proportionality” and “relevance” to the EIA process.
- A question and answer round.
- An interactive part in each session. The officer’s session would involve group work on putting together an EIA on a variety of issues. The elected member session would involve group work on establishing whether the EIAs produced in the morning give them enough grounds to make an informed decision.
- Feedback from the group exercises

3.4 The results of the seminar will be collated to produce more in-depth guidance to complement existing guidance on carrying out an EIA, and an FAQ sheet. These will be submitted to the Communities Committee prior to publication on the intranet.

4. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) Council / Community Planning Priorities

The proposals support the Equality and Diversity commitments as stated in “Moray 2023: A plan for the future”, the 10-year plan of the Community Planning Partnership in Moray.

(b) Policy and Legal

The proposal will assist in meeting the Moray Council’s general equality duties under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003.

(c) Financial implications

There will be costs associated with providing refreshments to participants. Further consideration can be given to arranging a simple lunch for keynote speakers and facilitators.

(d) Risk Implications

There are no risks associated with the proposals.

(e) Staffing Implications

The Equal Opportunities Officer will liaise with the Community Support Unit in organising the event. There will be 4 or 5 facilitators needed during the event. Officers from across the various services attending the event will need to allow at least 2 hours of their time.

(f) Property

The proposed venue is the training room in the Moray Council Annexe.

(g) Equalities

The proposals will assist the Moray Council in meeting the public sector equality duty relating to assessing the impacts of all its activities, as stated in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

(h) Consultations

The proposals are put to the Equality and Diversity Corporate Advisory Forum for consultation.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The Equality and Diversity Corporate Advisory Forum is asked to approve the proposed seminar aimed at improving the standard of Equality Impact Assessments prepared by officers and the due consideration of these by Elected Members.

Author of Report: Don Toonen
Background Papers:
Ref: 20140411 EDCAF report EIA seminar

Signature: _____ Date : _____

Designation: _____ Name: _____