

CULTURE, TOURISM, EUROPE AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

CENSUS (AMENDMENT) (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

East Ayrshire Council support the proposal to add the new questions in relation to trans and sexual orientation. The Council believes that the addition of these questions in the Census will aim to harmonise existing equality legislation which include the public sector duty. The addition of these questions promotes an inclusive approach for all, especially those who do not identify as either male or female.

The Council also support that the questions should be voluntary and therefore people will not feel forced or under pressure to answer the questions. The addition of these questions also ties into the questions which the public sector organisations are required to ask in relation to the public sector duty with regards to recruitment and employment.

Research from previous publications in relation to the Equality Employment Monitoring duty states that a high percentage of people applying for posts tend not to answer questions in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity. However these questions are added to the census, they may be seen as inclusive questions to ask, and encourage people to answer all questions.

In addition, these questions will also provide vital information that can be used in future service and policy development to ensure that the services the Council offer are inclusive to all our residents.