

GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME ACTION PLAN 2007 – 2010

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As this report is for the year 2008-09, reference is made to services as they were aligned before the recent restructuring.

Action No. 1	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to date on the proposed Action
<p>We will review and, where appropriate, amend the information we hold and analyse about the users of our services including school pupils of our education service so that we can ensure we do not inadvertently discriminate against people on the grounds of their gender</p>	<p>June 2008</p>	<p>Equality of access to our services by all gender groups through effective monitoring of all our service users.</p>	<p>CE: Residents research continues to monitor the gender of all respondents. Equalities Report produced by IBP Strategy and Research sets out results of the survey by gender and other equality strands to ensure policies and functions do not adversely impact on any group. An Equalities Officer who will take the lead on gender issues was appointed in May 2009</p> <p>EL&L: SEEMIS has replaced the Phoenix school administration system in schools. The information is updated annually and enables gender specific issues to be identified.</p> <p>P&ICT: Ongoing. Development and Training Services carry out the monitoring of gender make up through recording of applications for training and the attendance at courses routinely. A revised monitoring form implemented in April 2008 allows regular management information on the workforce to be reported to Corporate Management Team.</p> <p>H&SW: Information is collected on all service users and gender equality issues are considered in all policies. Monitoring shows where gender impacts on groups differently, and services are planned to achieve greater equality. Male carers now have specific carer support provision. Work being undertaken to involve service users in designing their own services under the 'Changing Lives' policy directive. This allows qualitative data to be gathered and services developed to meet customer need and eliminate potentially discriminatory practice. Criminal Justice is now gathering gender data on service user</p>

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			<p>feedback forms.</p> <p>P&ES: Ongoing. Progress on improving gender and other equalities information held within P&ES continues. Regular management information reports are generated at a corporate level and the breakdown of these statistics to sub-service level remains an objective. The imminent restructuring of the service, with a large section of workers from catering and cleaning services transferring over to come under the management of other services has implications for this work and is the reason behind a current delay in progress</p> <p>Finance: Gender related data is gathered on systems routinely.</p>
Action No. 2	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to date on the proposed Action
Our Customer Service Project Team (CSPT) will review whether any of our customer services policies and practices need amendment in order to ensure gender equality	June 2008	Customer services policies comply with the gender duty and promote equality of opportunities for men and women	COMPLETED
Action No. 3	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to date on the proposed Action
Within a year of the May 2007 election we will survey the views of women councillors to determine whether changes in the way the council works could help more women seek election to the council in future	May 2008	To encourage more women to seek election as Aberdeenshire Councillors	Survey rescheduled, and will now take place in 2010, to coincide with local elections in 2012.
Action No. 4	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to date on the proposed Action
We will offer awareness and training in equalities, including gender equality, to all councillors.	February 2008	Awareness of gender equality issues among Aberdeenshire Councillors; gender equality is embedded into Aberdeenshire	Out of Darkness Theatre Group provided equality awareness training covering all equality strands for councillors and officers on 28 May 2009.

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		Council and it's interactions with the public of Aberdeenshire	
Action No. 5	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to date on the proposed Action
We will review every aspect of our recruitment process to ensure that it does not inadvertently discriminate against anyone in terms of their gender.	October 2007	A process, which does not discriminate against gender.	The Employment Equality Policy has been implemented, and contains a clause on gender to ensure no one is discriminated against on the basis of their gender.
Action No. 6	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to date on the proposed Action
Our Transportation & Infrastructure and Planning & Environmental Services will pilot the Council's "trendbusters" initiative, working with staff of the minority gender in functions where there is occupational segregation, to identify (1) factors that led them to seek work in that function (2) any barriers they had to overcome or still face in their work and (3) what further could be done to reduce occupational segregation in that function	Sept 2007	To identify (1) factors that led the minority gender staff to seek work in that function (2) any barriers they had to overcome or still face in their work and (3) what further could be done to reduce occupational segregation in that function	COMPLETED 2008
Action No. 7	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to date on the proposed Action
We will review the success of the Transportation & Infrastructure and Planning & Environmental Services "trendbusters" pilot and where appropriate extend it to all our functions where there is occupational segregation	June 2008	Elimination of gender Occupational segregation	The 'trendbusters' pilot did not identify any occupational segregation, and it was not considered beneficial to roll the pilot out to other functions.

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Action No. 8	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to date on the proposed Action
We will begin a new cycle of our successful Chrysalis programmes to increase the number of women managers and leaders in the council through developing their skills, abilities and confidence.	New Chrysalis programme expected to start in early September through to December	To encourage and increase the number of women in managerial and leadership positions.	The future of this programme is being considered as part of a wider review of leadership and management training.
Action No.9	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to date on the proposed Action
We will review our staff equalities awareness and training programme to ensure it meets the needs of managers and staff in relation to the Council's gender equality duty.	February 2008	To raise awareness of gender equality issues, and promote gender equality with managers and staff of the Council, therefore, embedding gender equality into Aberdeenshire Council	COMPLETED
Action No. 10	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to date on the proposed Action
We will review the format and content of our staff development and training programmes to ensure that they do not inadvertently discriminate against part-time staff or those with family responsibilities.	June 2008	Ensure the content of any training programme is not discriminatory directly or indirectly to any gender, and that there is equal opportunity to attend training.	Continuing. Employee Development Officers are reviewing content and delivery of programmed sessions by location and start time to accommodate delegates' work status and needs.
Action No. 11	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to date on the proposed Action
We will develop a Human Resources policy for staff suffering from or perpetrating domestic abuse.	July 2010	Council approved Personnel Policy in place and implemented.	Policy document is in draft form and consultation will be carried out following confirmation of the new schedule.
Action No. 12	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to date on the proposed Action
We will agree an Equal Pay Statement by the	20 September	Equal Pay Statement	Equal Pay Statement agreed by Policy and Resource committee in

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statutory deadline of 28 September 2007.	2007	agreed by Policy & Resources Committee of the Council.	2007 and an action plan was produced as a result. Employment Equality Policy was agreed at Policy and Resource Committee in March 2009, this contains policy on gender discrimination in relation to pay and grading.
Action No. 13	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to date on the proposed Action
We will monitor the implementation of single status to assess its impact on the gender balance within our workforce.	July 2008	Having had the Single Status Scheme impact assessed by an independent assessor when it was developed, there will be independent impact assessments undertaken on an annual basis.	The implementation of Single Status has not affected the gender balance of employees. The Impact Assessment is due to be undertaken in April 2010, once all appeals have taken place.
Action No. 14	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to date on the proposed Action
We will discuss with our community planning partners how equality of opportunity for all equalities groups including men and women and boys and girls can be embedded within our partnership work	Dec 2007 and thereafter as may be required	Gender equality is mainstreamed into Aberdeenshire partnership working	COMPLETED 2008
Action No. 15	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to date on the proposed Action
Each Service of the council will produce its own gender action plan to support the council gender equality scheme and address any gender issues specific to the service	June 2008	The Council achieves its gender equality objectives and meets the gender duty.	Action suspended due to move towards a Multi-Equality Scheme due to be reported to P&R committee January 2010.

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Action No. 16	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to date on the proposed Action
a. We will institute a continuing programme of multi equalities impact assessment of our policies and practices that specifically addresses gender issues.		Policies that are free from gender bias and promote equality of opportunity and good relations within the Council	
b. As part of our programme of equality impact assessment of policies we will assess the following during the second year of the Scheme:			
➤ Residents Research (CE)	April 2009		COMPLETED
Think Tank (CE)	Feb 2009		Not undertaken. This staff suggestion has been suspended pending a wider review of related issues.
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• School exclusions policy (EL&L)	Dec 2007		COMPLETED
➤ Deaf & Hard of Hearing Service (H&SW)			COMPLETED
➤ Strategic Housing Investment Programme (H&SW)	March 2009		COMPLETED
• Homelessness Policy (H&SW)	March 2009		COMPLETED
➤ Private Housing (H&SW)	Sept 2009		COMPLETED
Strategic Outcome Status for Older People (H&SW)	June 2009		Identified as appropriate for corporate Integrated Impact Assessment pilot. Revised completion date June 2010.

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➤ Physical Disability (H&SW)	Sept 2009		Revised completion date March 2010
➤ Managing Changing Behaviour Guidance (H&SW)	April 2009		COMPLETED
• Voluntary Sector Policy	May 2009		To be replaced with wider partnership agreement with voluntary/third sector. Revised completion date Nov. 2009
• Flexible Working Policy	June 2009		COMPLETED
• Retirement Policy	June 2009		COMPLETED
• Redundancy Policy	June 2009		COMPLETED
• Relocation and Resettlement Policy	June 2009		COMPLETED
➤ Absence Policy	June 2009		Title changed to Attendance Management Policy and agreed by Committee earlier this year. MEIA completed, yet still to be signed off.
c. a SMART programme of impact assessments to be agreed for each year by June	June each year		H&SW have planned the following MEIAs Sexual Health Policy (Partial) Carers Support Service retendering Tenants Participation Strategy All Strategic Outcome Group Strategies All new and reviewed policies and procedures undertaken in this time period
Action No. 17	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to date on the proposed Action
We will fill the gap in our understanding of the needs of transsexual residents and staff with the aim of ensuring that they do not suffer direct or indirect discrimination. We will ensure that appropriate actions flow from this (each	Ongoing - to be continued as required	Elimination of unlawful discrimination against transsexual people in our practices and employment	H&SW: Relevant information is collected on all service users and service provision is based on personalised and individual needs assessment. Equalities issues including gender equality issues are considered in all policies.

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service will contribute through monitoring of service users).			
Action No 18	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to date on the proposed Action
Continue to ensure that our regular two-yearly residents' and staff surveys (1) ask contributors to identify their gender so that we can identify significant differences in the experiences and views of men and women and (2) include the publication of an associated equalities report for each survey	Dec. 2008	Better understanding of, and more responsive approach, to the needs of men and women	2008 Employee Survey Overview Report prepared January 2009 is available on Arcadia. 2008 Residents Survey Equalities Report prepared March 2009 available on Arcadia. Positive trends are evident in respect of employee satisfaction and continued effort is recommended to sustain this. Work to address issues of work life balance is recommended. Residents have high expectations of the council and public perception has improved since 2007. Citizens are more likely to believe the council is better than other councils and this is becoming increasingly apparent. Both reports have given a breakdown of data by gender.
Action No. 19	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to date on the proposed Action
We will review and where necessary update all relevant contracts and service level agreements with organisations that provide us or the people of Aberdeenshire on our behalf with goods and services.	Ongoing	To ensure the organisations we do business with do not discriminate on the grounds of gender and other equalities	An equalities clause has been included within the Council's Pre-Tender Qualification Questionnaire, and the standard Terms and Conditions for services.
Action No. 20	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to date on the proposed Action
We will report annually on progress in implementing our gender equality scheme		The Council achieves its gender equality objectives and meets the gender duty.	This will be the last annual progress report on the gender equality scheme as the council moves toward a Multi-Equality Scheme.

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Action No. 21	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to date on the proposed Action
We will review our gender equality scheme every three years	2010	The Council achieves its gender equality objectives and meets the gender duty.	Action will not be carried out now due to move towards a Multi-Equality Scheme