



# Multi Equality Scheme

2010 - 2013



Aberdeenshire Council has agreed a Multi Equality Scheme which sets how we will promote equality and diversity in Aberdeenshire, and work to eliminate unlawful discrimination. It brings together our actions on race, gender, disability, sexuality and how we intend to promote equality for all the new protected characteristics, as required under the Equality Act 2010.

The Multi Equality Scheme explains to everyone who works for the Council:

- what the equality law needs the Council as an organisation to do
- the responsibility of staff
- what needs to be done to improve services for the people who use them
- how to promote equality and good relations between different people in Aberdeenshire

It also tells you what the Council has done in the past and what it will be doing in the future to eliminate discrimination, promote equality and good relations, and improve services.

## What Aberdeenshire Council must do

The Equality Act 2010, and earlier equality legislation, requires the Council to do certain things.

The law says all Aberdeenshire Council services must:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination. This means staff and service users must not be treated less favourably because of their age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief or their sexual orientation;
- eliminate harassment. This means that staff and service users must not be treated as less important because of their age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief or their sexual orientation;
- promote equality of opportunity and good relations among different groups.

Aberdeenshire Council must:

- agree equality objectives and what will make life better for everyone in Aberdeenshire, and publish them;
- check that policies, decisions,

and the work that is done by the Council does not adversely affect the people the legislation is trying to protect. (This is called an equality impact assessment);

- be transparent. This means involving and consulting people on matters that affect them and make decisions based on the evidence;
- ensure that the people in Aberdeenshire have access to information about the services we provide and to the services themselves;
- write action plans.

## General and Specific Duty

From 5th April 2011, there has been a new General Duty on all public authorities. The new General Duty also known as the Single Equality Duty, has replaced the three separate duties on Race, Disability and Gender. This means that Aberdeenshire Council must promote equality and good relations between different groups, and eliminate discrimination and harassment, and must be able to show that it is doing that.

The specific duties are expected to be introduced by the Scottish Government later in 2011.

## Action Plan

An action plan is included in the Scheme which says, for each of the equality groups, what we are going to do, who is responsible for doing it and when it is expected to be done by. The action plan is updated every year and the revised plan together with a description of what has been achieved, is published on the Council's website.

## Equality Impact Assessments

All Council services are encouraged to carry out equality impact assessments to assess the impact each of our new policies, plans and strategies might have on equality and to reduce any negative impact and prevent unlawful discrimination. This also applies when reviewing old ones. The impact assessments are also published on our website.

## Multi Equality Scheme

You will find the full Multi Equality Scheme on our website. Alternatively, you can see a copy in your local library, or at main council offices throughout Aberdeenshire. The Multi Equality Scheme is also available in Polish, Latvian, Lithuanian and Russian from the website, and is available in other formats on request.

### Website Contacts:

The Multi Equality Scheme can be found on our website at:

<http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/about/equality.asp>

The latest version of the action plan can be found at:

<http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/about/equality.asp>

The completed impact assessments can be found at:

<http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/about/equality.asp>

