

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET - 16 JUNE 2010

REVIEW OF THE GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME 2007 - 2010 AND THE INTERIM GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME 2010

Report by the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Cabinet with a review of the Gender Equality Scheme and to submit for approval an Interim Gender Equality Scheme.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At its meeting on 21 June 2007, Council approved the Gender Equality Scheme which outlined the Council's framework for meeting its obligations under the Equality Bill 2006.
- 2.2 Under this legislation the Council has placed on it a General and Specific Duties. The purpose of these Duties is to put in place a framework for the Council to carry out its functions more effectively and to tackle discrimination and its causes in a proactive way.
- 2.3 The Council must, on an annual basis, publish a report containing a summary of:
- The steps it has taken to fulfil its Gender Equality Duty (the action plan);
 - What the Council has done to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment, taking active steps to comply with both the Sex Discrimination Act and Equal Pay Act and promote equality of opportunity;
- 2.4 This report provides information on the matters identified in section 2.3 above.
- 2.5 As indicated in paragraph 2.3 above as part of the Specific Duty, the Council is obliged to produce a Gender Equality Scheme covering a three year period. The current Scheme covers the years 2007 -2010 and in normal circumstances a Scheme for 2010 – 2013 would be being

submitted for approval at this time. However, under the new Equality Act, which received Royal Assent in April 2010, the Council will produce a Single Equality Scheme covering all of the protected characteristics of race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion and belief, pregnant and maternity and gender re-assignment. Accordingly, having regard to this changing legislative framework, it is proposed to adopt an interim Gender Equality Scheme for 2010.

3. REVIEW OF THE GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME 2007 – 2010

3.1 Review of Our Actions

The Action Plan contained in the 2007-2010 Gender Equality Scheme has been updated and attached as Appendix 1. In line with the Specific Duties, the Action Plan has also been reviewed and the following outcomes identified:-

3.1.1 Developing the Scheme

The Gender Equality Scheme was implemented in June 2007 and made available on the Council's websites, local offices, libraries and schools. Alternative formats were also available on request.

Each Department within the Council developed Equality Action Plans in 2007 to ensure equality was embedded into practice across the Council. The Actions Plans are reported on a quarterly basis to the Equalities Strategy Group.

A full training programme on equality training which included gender equality, commenced in October 2007. To date all Elected Members, Executive Directors, Heads of Service and the majority of 4th Tier Managers have received relevant training.

An on-line Equality & Diversity Training Course was successfully piloted in January 2009 and to date 1,918 employees have completed the course. The delivery mode will be on a phased basis for each service area within the Council.

An off-line course has also been developed and will be rolled out from August 2010 for those employees who do not have computer access.

3.1.2 Employment Duties

The Council is committed to ensuring that our workforce is representative of our community. Currently 71.1% of the employee workforce is female and 28.9% male. The Equality Act 2006 requires that the Council make

clear its monitoring arrangements in relation to all aspects of employment and to publish annually the results of any such monitoring. The Council's Human Resources Service recognises that it has a key role to play in meeting the duties contained in the Equality Act 2006 particularly in relation to employment practice.

The Council monitors current employees, applicants for employment and those who:

- apply for formal training;
- participate in formal training;
- apply for promoted posts;
- raise a formal grievance;
- are the subject of disciplinary action;
- benefit or suffer a detriment as a result of performance assessments;
- leave the employment of the Council; and
- raise a whistle blowing complaint

The Council will continue to use information obtained through monitoring employment practices to build a workforce that reflects the diversity of our local community and to ensure that employees receive equality of treatment. The Council recognises that this will not happen through monitoring alone. Employment procedures and practices will continue to be reviewed on an annual basis and amended, where unlawful, discrimination or adverse impact is shown. This will require flexibility in the Action Plans and priority areas relating to employment issues.

3.1.3 Identifying Relevant Functions and Policies and Monitoring Council Policies for Adverse Impact

The Council has implemented a system for carrying out Equality Impact Assessments. The system allows policies, procedures and proposed changes to be assessed to ensure that the Council's decisions and activities do not disadvantage any one group. It allows the Council to identify where it might better promote equality of opportunity for men and women (boys and girls) and where parts of the Gender Equality Duty might be built into these policies and practices.

Lead Policy Officers operating in each service area carry out impact assessments on relevant policies. Each service area has prioritised its functions and policies for review and indicates when the review will be completed.

The findings from the assessments are reported to the relevant Head of Service and any actions arising from the EQIA are dealt with by the Lead

Policy Officer. The results of Equality Impact Assessments are published on the Council's websites.

3.1.4 Assessing, Consulting and Involving

A new web-based Performance Management System, Corvu, has been rolled out across the Council, and this new system will be used to help the Council further improve performance, contribute to outcome focused planning and delivery of services.

Monitoring information on equality strands is also collated in a number of different ways within the Council.

The Equalities Strategy Group produced a Corporate Equality Monitoring Form to ensure continuity and consistency within the Council. This was approved by Cabinet on 2 December 2009. This will ensure that information collated will be easily analysed in order to inform policy and used to take appropriate action to rectify any adverse impact identified by each service area.

The Council successfully developed new community engagement structures in January 2008 to ensure equality issues are addressed with the establishment of an Equality Forum, Local Community Planning Forums and the Young Peoples' Forum.

The Equality Forum meets bi-annually and is supported by four Networks covering Race, Gender, Disability and Older People. The Equality Forum consists of 16 community representatives, 4 from each of the Networks, 7 Elected Members and 5 Council Officers.

The Council is aware that other methods should be utilised alongside the development of the Equality Networks and Forums and uses a number of varied methods of communication, such as direct contact with individuals and organisations, the development of Women in Public Services' Forum etc.

A review of the Equality Forum was conducted in May 2009. The feedback from all relevant parties was that the new structure was working effectively.

Separately the Council also engages with LGBT Scotland, East Ayrshire Women's Aid, Stonewall Scotland and the Terrance Higgins Trust to ensure a cross section of communities under the Gender umbrella are consulted.

3.1.5 Communicating the Results of Assessment, Consultation and Monitoring

The Council will continue to use existing methods of disseminating information on assessments, consultation and monitoring. Full reports of individual Equality Impact Assessments or consultations will be available on request from relevant service areas. Summaries of these results will be published within three months of the impact assessment and annually as part of the review of the Gender Equality Scheme. Information on Equality Impact Assessments, consultations and monitoring results and actions will be published widely in a variety of Council publications including:

- Headlines Newsletter
- Newsletters
- Annual Reports
- Local Media
- Internet and Intranet sites

Information will be available in various accessible formats on request, for example:

- Braille
- Audio-tape
- Translations into community languages

All service areas will also update the Council's internet and intranet sites to keep our customers, service users and employees informed of the outcomes of the integrated impact assessments undertaken.

4. INTERIM GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME 2010

- 4.1 As indicated above, the Council has a statutory obligation to review the Gender Equality Scheme on a three yearly basis. A draft Interim Gender Equality Scheme for 2010 is attached as Appendix 1.
- 4.2 The Interim Gender Equality Scheme 2010 sets out the Council's intentions in fulfilling both the specific and general duties over the next year and will then be replaced by the Council's new Single Equality Scheme in November 2010.
- 4.3 The Scheme sets out the points raised within paragraph 2.3 of this report highlighting the support the Council offers to men and women from various service areas and Gender Equality in Education.
- 4.4 In addition the Scheme has been developed in a similar style to that of both the Race and Disability Equality Schemes in order to assist the development of the Single Equality Scheme during 2010.

5. POLICY AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Gender Scheme and its related Action Plan will enable the Council to meet its statutory obligations and its policy objectives in relation to the promotion of equality for all its citizens.

6. COMMUNITY PLAN

- 6.1 The Gender Equality Scheme contributes to the achievement of all of the Community Plan Themes.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising at this time. Any future financial implications arising from action taken under the Gender Equality Scheme and related Action Plan will be met from within existing budgets.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 The proposals contained within this report will allow the Council to meet its statutory obligations as an employer and provider of services.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The Cabinet is recommended to:
- (i) note the review of the Gender Equality Scheme 2007-20010;
 - (ii) approve the Interim Disability Equality Scheme 2010; and
 - (iii) otherwise not the content of the report.

Alex McPhee
Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support
3 June 2010

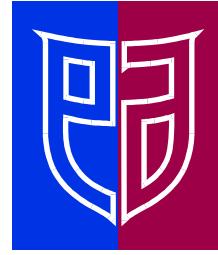
BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Gender Equality Scheme – Report by Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support to Policy and Resources Committee – 21 June 2007.

2. Gender Equality Scheme Progress Report – Report by the Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support to Cabinet of 18 June 2008
3. Gender Equality Scheme Progress Report – Report by the Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support to Cabinet of 17 June 2009

Any person wishing further information should contact Martin Rose, Head of Human Resources, Tel: (01563) 576092.

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East Ayrshire
COUNCIL

INTERIM GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME

2010

Foreword

Welcome to East Ayrshire Council's Interim Gender Equality Scheme 2009 – 2010. The Council published its first Gender Equality Scheme in 2007 and this is an Interim Scheme while the Council develops and publishes its first Single Equality Scheme during 2010.

East Ayrshire Council is committed to working to reduce disadvantage, discrimination and inequality of opportunity. The Council aims to promote diversity in terms of the people we serve, our workforce, the partners we work with and the services we deliver.

East Ayrshire Council's aim is not just to meet our legal obligations, but to make East Ayrshire a place where everyone matters and is treated as an equal citizen in light of their different needs.

In the meantime, the Council will work towards developing a Single Equality Scheme, involving and consulting disabled people, groups and organisations to ensure that the Council eliminates discrimination and disadvantage in East Ayrshire.

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Appendix 1 – Corporate Action Plan Update 2007- 2010

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE INTERIM GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME

Introduction

The Equality Act 2006

This Gender Equality Scheme has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Equality Act 2006 which amended the Sex Discrimination Act 1975.

The Gender Equality Duty [GED] came into force in April 2007 and it required public authorities to promote gender equality and eliminate sex discrimination. Instead of depending on individuals making complaints about sex discrimination, the duty places the legal responsibility on public authorities to demonstrate that they treat men and women fairly. The duty affected policy making, public services, such as transport, and employment practices such as recruitment and flexible working.

The legislation carries both General and Specific Duties.

The General Duty

The General Duty requires that every public authority in carrying out its functions should:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment, taking active steps to comply with both the Sex Discrimination Act and Equal Pay Act.
- Take active steps to promote equality of opportunity between men and women when carrying out their functions and activities.

The Specific Duties

The General Duty was the first positive step towards ensuring that women and men (girls & boys) receive services and are offered employment and development opportunities that met more closely their needs, abilities and aspirations. To support progress in delivering the General Duty, there are also a number of Specific Duties with which the Council must comply. These are:-

- To produce and publish a Gender Equality Scheme (GES) identifying Gender Equality goals and actions to meet those goals.
- To consult with employees and stakeholders in the development of the GES.
- To publish an annual report on progress with the Action Plan.
- To develop and publish an Equal Pay Policy including measures to address promotion, development and occupational segregation.
- To conduct and publish gender impact assessment of all legislation and major policy development and publish their criteria for conducting such assessments

2. EAST AYRSHIRE PROFILE



East Ayrshire is situated in West Central Scotland, approximately thirty miles south of Glasgow.

The authority covers an area of four hundred and ninety square miles in the south west of Scotland bordered by five other local authorities. The 2001 National Census indicates that East Ayrshire has a population of approximately 119,400 of which 57,500 are male (48%) and 61,900 female (52%) living in a total of 50,346 households. There are twenty one main communities and settlements in a diverse geographical area, embracing both rural and urban settlement. The main population centres are Kilmarnock, Stewarton and Galston in the North of the authority and Cumnock, New Cumnock, Dalmellington and Auchinleck in the South.

18 per cent of the population lives in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) zero to 15 per cent most deprived areas. This is a relatively high level of deprivation, and brings with it challenges in terms of health, education, social inequality and community safety.

The transport connections into East Ayrshire are relatively good but the transport links internally, between the remoter communities, are more variable.

East Ayrshire has a high quality environment with good quality services, including health, education, social services and a strong community spirit. However, East Ayrshire as a whole has significantly higher levels of poverty than the Scottish average and compared to other authorities in Scotland, as a proportion of the relevant population, for example East Ayrshire has the:

- third highest proportion of unemployed people claiming benefit;
- sixth highest proportion of children of families claiming benefit;
- fourth highest proportion of lone parents claiming benefit;
- the highest proportion of carers claiming carers allowance.

East Ayrshire Council is the largest employer in the area with a workforce of around 6,800 comprising 70.8% females with 34.1% working part-time.

It is estimated that the overall population in East Ayrshire is likely to decline by 9% up to the year 2013. This will be an uneven decline with the decline of the population of people aged 20-39 years declining as much as 26%. This will lead to an estimated growth in the relative percentage of people over 60 by 6% to 27%.

3. OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

East Ayrshire's guiding principles which are detailed in the Community Plan will direct how we identify and prioritise what needs to be done and plan, co-ordinate and deliver action to meet identified priorities. By planning together, working together and achieving together East Ayrshire Council will:

Promote Social Justice and Social Inclusion

The Social Justice principles of equality and social inclusion are about making sure that women, men, children and young people, or minority ethnic communities, no matter what their life circumstances, have opportunities and choices.

Build Sustainability

East Ayrshire Council is committed to making sure that the outcomes of social, economic and environmental improvements are sustainable and will stand the test of time. A sustainable community is one which makes sure today's decisions do not have a negative effect on the future and where actions will have a long-lasting effect.

Succeed in Joint Working and Involving People

East Ayrshire Council acknowledges that the major problems facing the area cannot be dealt with by public agencies working in isolation within their own limited budgets. We need to work together and involve men and women (boys and girls), communities, voluntary organisations and the private sector more effectively to get the best value from the public money that is invested in the area and to deliver real and lasting change for everyone.

Ensure Effective Engagement in the Planning of Local Services

East Ayrshire Council recognises the importance of effective engagement in the planning and development of local services. By working together, consulting and involving, we will plan and develop services tailored to the needs of men and women (boys and girls) living and working in East Ayrshire.

Ensure Quality and Accessibility

East Ayrshire Council recognises men and women (boys and girls) who use public services need access to more than one agency at a given time. Making sure our services are high quality, accessible, efficient and effective involves joining up our services to meet everyone's needs rather than sending people from one agency to another which is how services have traditionally been offered. By listening and involving men and women (boys and girls) receiving services and using what they tell us to influence how we develop services, we will make their needs the focus of policy making to tailor services to the needs of users.

Deliver Continuous Improvement and Best Value

East Ayrshire Council will develop a set of standards against which we can measure our performance. Men and women (boys and girls) will be able to see how we are achieving the targets set out in the Action Plans which form part of the Community Plan. We will track our progress by monitoring a range of socio-economic measures, for example, the levels of reported crime or the levels of unemployment. By comparing these with our base line position, we will know whether we are making a real difference. We will report regularly to the people of East Ayrshire on how well we are doing and the progress we are making towards meeting our targets.

4. THE COMMUNITY PLAN

The Gender Equality Scheme takes account of and will contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Community Plan which sets out the overall vision of the Council:

“East Ayrshire will be a place with strong, vibrant communities where everyone has a good quality of life and access to opportunities, choices and high quality services which are sustainable, accessible and meet people's needs.”

The four key themes of the Community Plan which have been developed with our partners are:-

Promoting Community Learning

Promoting Lifelong Learning offers the chance to develop potential and improve the quality of lives for men and women (boys and girls). It also offers an opportunity for people to take an active part in local community life and in making decisions which affect their lives.

Improving Community Safety

East Ayrshire Council is committed to creating safe places for men and women (boys and girls) in which to live, work and play by reducing crime and improving public safety in neighbourhoods and homes.

Health and Wellbeing

East Ayrshire Council is committed to improving the health and well-being of men and women (boys and girls) by reducing risk, bringing about change to tackle the worst health problems, making sure that services are fully accessible, helping people of all ages live healthy lifestyles.

Delivering Community Regeneration

East Ayrshire Council is committed to protecting, improving and using our natural and built environment in an environmentally friendly way that will benefit men and women (boys and girls).

East Ayrshire Council will work to tackle poverty by working to attract good quality jobs, increasing employment rates for disabled people, supporting carers, tackling links between poor housing and ill health etc.

The Community Plan seeks to ensure that all of East Ayrshire's citizens can contribute in the community free from barriers both structural and organisational.

The Council in seeking to meet the aims of the Community Plan is keen to ensure that the needs and wishes of men and women (boys and girls) are taken account of in all aspects of its service delivery.

The Council and its Community Planning Partners have recently reviewed the Community Plan which is underpinned by measurable Action Plans. This can be viewed on www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk

Information will be available in various accessible formats on request, for example:

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5. REVIEW OF THE GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME 2007 – 2010

Review of our Actions

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The Council will continue to use existing methods of disseminating information on assessments, consultation and monitoring. Full reports of individual Equality Impact Assessments or consultations will be available on request from relevant service areas. Summaries of these results will be published within three months of the impact assessment and annually as part of the review of the Gender Equality Scheme. Information on Equality Impact Assessments, consultations and monitoring results and actions will be published widely in a variety of Council publications including:

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All service areas will also update the Council's internet and intranet sites to keep our customers, service users and employees informed of the outcomes of the integrated impact assessments undertaken.

6. GENDER EQUALITY IN SERVICE DELIVERY

Education

All different; All equal was the theme of the 2008 Annual Youth Conference and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) awareness played a large part in the day with positive feedback from many young people.

In addition, over the course of the week during which the Conference was held, a range of activities promoting equalities was delivered throughout East Ayrshire ranging from Diversity Workshops to an Anti-Sectarianism radio session. The various programmes, classes and workshops attracted 893 young people.

Following on from these activities, as part of the Community Learning and Development (CLD) improvement planning process, it was identified that more work required to be done in respect of issues relating to young people who may be lesbian, gay, bi-sexual or transgender. The issue was also highlighted in the auditing of practice in relation to equalities legislation.

Through its contacts with LGBT Youth Scotland, the Service was aware of the developing Charter Mark status and, having investigated what was involved, decided to work towards achieving the Charter Mark.

LGBT Youth Charter Mark status is a means by which LGBT issues can be mainstreamed into CLD activities and ensures that the service is accessible to LGBT people and that they can feel confident that they will be included, valued and supported. To achieve Charter Mark status, CLD submitted a portfolio to LGBT, Scotland. Included in this portfolio was evidence of how the service addressed issues relating to:

- policy;
- training and ongoing employee development;
- publicity and awareness raising of LGBT issues;
- information for service users; and
- ongoing review of procedures.

LGBT Youth Charter Mark status was achieved in September 2009. CLD is the first local authority service to be awarded Charter Mark status.

The service introduced LGBT awareness training to community learning and development employees as part of the annual rolling training programme for frontline youth work employees. Other equalities training in the rolling programme includes disability awareness training.

Employees from CLD assist in promoting LGBT campaigns and distributing information relating to LGBT advice and information services.

The service, in consultation with LGBT Scotland identified gaps in policy and changes in procedure relevant to LGBT issues, which will be taken through the corporate processes of the Council.

Through its partnership arrangements, the service has an influence on the practice of other services and community groups in respect of practice in relation to the LGBT community.

Neighbourhood Services

Girls Physical Activity

Recognising that many teenaged girls and young women are less likely to participate in Sport a range of specific activities are delivered, namely:

Jump 2the Beat

Jump 2the Beat Clubs create a fun and friendly environment where girls are allowed to progress and develop at their own pace using the medium of Dance,

Double Dutch Skipping and Cheerleading. There are currently 6 clubs operating throughout the authority on a weekly basis.

Since April 2009 there have been over 4,192 attendances by girls aged between 10 – 18 years of age.

Empower

This is a pilot programme delivered on Friday nights at St Joseph's Academy in Kilmarnock. The activity seeks to engage teenage girls in Sport and physical activity in a friendly, informal setting with activities that are programmed in consultation with them and delivered by female coaches.

Although this activity was initially set up as a diversionary activity delivered on a Friday night from 7.30pm - 9.30pm, it has attracted young females who are over weight and who wouldn't normally take part in sports to come along each week due to the relaxed and friendly atmosphere and this has helped in building up their self esteem and confidence.

This year as part of International Women's Day, Empower held a mother and daughters night which proved to be successful with 6 mothers and daughters taking part in all the activities.

In terms of creating female role models, young women are actively encouraged to complete Coach Education opportunities. Since April 2009, 23 females have completed coaching qualifications meaning that there are an additional 3 Dance Leaders and 1 Badminton Coach operating in the authority.

Men's Health

In response to national concerns around the uptake of medical advice by men, the Community Health Development Team delivers a range of interventions that specifically target Men, namely:

At least 4 week long events are delivered per annum targeting men and their health. The CHIP van is timetabled to attend selected venues and various premises are used to promote positive lifestyle choices and raise awareness around male health issues. Premises targeted have included bookmakers, pubs and football grounds. Relevant themes are adopted and employees of East Ayrshire Council are also targeted. Men have the chance to speak to a member of the Community Health Development team about any health concerns they have, receive literature on a range of topics and take part in a mini health MOT.

The entire population of Kilmarnock Prison is male and the CHIP team work in partnership with Prison Staff and partners from the NHS and Voluntary Sector to deliver 3 healthy lifestyle events per year. These events include health MOTs and lifestyle advice as well as information about ways of keeping fit and healthy upon release.

Women's Forum

In August 2009, an East Ayrshire Women's Forum was established to ensure that issues surrounding women living and working in East Ayrshire could be addressed.

The group consists of statutory and voluntary organisations based in East Ayrshire and at present the Council undertakes the lead role.

The Forum organised a week of planned events throughout East Ayrshire to celebrate International Women's Day which was received extremely positively.

It is anticipated that the Forum will organise a number of events throughout the year to highlight issues facing women of all ages and all backgrounds. A Health and Wellbeing Conference will be planned in autumn/winter 2010.

In April 2010 Audit Scotland published the Best Value 2 Pathfinder Audit for East Ayrshire Council. The main findings of the report found that the Council has a clear and ambitious vision for East Ayrshire, based on a sound understanding of the area and the needs of local communities.

The report also highlighted that there is strong leadership from the Chief Executive and the Council demonstrates a good awareness of equalities issues and has made progress in developing processes and structures to promote equalities.

The Audit Commission recognised that the Council has in place Equalities Networks for race, gender, disability and older people to support engagement with different equalities groups. However, the Council recognises the need for further progress with development and embedding of equality.

The full report can be accessed on: http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/docs/local/2010/bv2_100401_east_ayrshire.pdf

7. GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

The Council, as an Education Authority, is required to produce a Gender Equality Scheme. In addition the responsibility is placed on the Education Service to ensure that schools:

- gather information on the effects of their policies and practices on gender equality
- assess the impact of those policies and practices on gender equality
- carry out steps to meet the duty in line with the education authority scheme
- report on these activities

The major priorities for education in East Ayrshire are:

- raise attainment in numeracy
- raise attainment in literacy
- improve attendance and levels of inclusion
- promote health and wellbeing to ensure sustainable development

Pupil Choice

The subjects that children study in school influence the choices they make in the job market. Gender stereotyping influences the choices made by children and young people. The Gender Equality Duty provides an opportunity to look at what causes such stereotyping in the choice of subjects and work experience placement. By encouraging children and young people to consider all possible career options, schools can begin to challenge segregation in the workplace.

Pupil Attainment

The Gender Equality Duty is an incentive to evaluate learning, teaching and assessment methods for gender bias. There is evidence that girls out perform boys at schools.

Equality Impact Assessment

Equality Impact Assessment will ensure that policies and their implementation will not discriminate against girls and boys. A model policy is being produced which will ensure that policies are impact assessed.

Monitoring and reporting on progress

The monitoring and progress will be published annually. Educational Services will work with schools to agree the most appropriate mechanisms for reporting on the work done to promote Gender Equality within the new Single Equality Scheme which will be published in November 2010.

Responsibilities

The responsibility for gender equality in education lies with the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services. Head Teachers and employees in schools are responsible within their establishments for ensuring gender equality in education.

8. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

In June 2009, the Scottish government published 'Safer Lives, Changed Lives' which provides a framework for a shared approach to tackling all forms of violence against women including domestic abuse, rape and sexual assault, sexual harassment and commercial sexual exploitation. In response to the document, East Ayrshire Domestic Abuse Forum is in the process of reconfiguring to East Ayrshire Violence Against Women Partnership in order to address this widened agenda.

Two seminars on violence against women were attended by East Ayrshire Council Elected Members in late 2009. The seminars were presented by East Ayrshire Women's Aid and included speakers from Strathclyde Police and the Rape Counselling and Resource Service.

Between January and December 2009, East Ayrshire Women's Aid provided information and support to 225 women experiencing domestic abuse. 49 women and 51 children and young people moved into refuge accommodation and 111 children and young people received outreach support. 23 women received one-to-one follow-on support after leaving refuge and 67 women accessed the

individual support, groups and courses support available from Kilmarnock Women's Centre.

In partnership with NHS Scotland, East Ayrshire Women's Aid are working with Kilmarnock College to introduce gender based violence into the HNC Health and Social Care curriculum. The course is designed to help staff in the public sector recognise the early signs of abuse and respond appropriately. On completion of the pilot, a detailed proposal is being developed for consideration by the Scottish Convention of Principals to be rolled out to colleges across the country.

East Ayrshire Women's Aid are providing training to NHS Ayrshire and Arran staff to support the implementation of routine enquiry into domestic abuse and child sexual abuse in priority healthcare settings including maternity, mental health and accident and emergency services.

9. LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER (LGBT) EQUALITY

The Council recognises the importance of promoting equality of opportunity for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community as part of the Gender Equality Scheme. To this end the Council is developing a number of initiatives such as:

- workshops highlighting LGBT issues in the workplace
- rollout of LGBT Charter Mark for frontline services
- work with the Terrance Higgins Trust to engage with gay communities in East Ayrshire
- to develop an Equality Employees Consultative Forum to ensure that needs to LGBT employees are addressed

The above will be consulted on during the consultation period for the development of the Councils' new Single Equality Scheme which will be published in November 2010.

10. TRANSGENDER

Since April 2007, the Gender Equality Duty required the Council to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender reassignment in the fields of employment and vocational training (including higher and further education).

Since April 2008, the scope of the Gender Equality Duty has been extended to further require the Council to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender reassignment in the provision of goods, facilities and services.

The Equality Act will remove the requirement for trans people to undergo gender reassignment under medical supervision and therefore will require the Council to

into account the needs of a wider group of trans people when providing goods, facilities and services.

The above will be consulted on during the consultation period for the development of the Councils' new Single Equality Scheme which will be published in November 2010.

11. EMPLOYMENT

The Council is committed to ensuring that our workforce is representative of our community. Currently 71.9% of the employee workforce is female and 28.9% male. The Equality Act 2006 requires that the Council make clear its monitoring arrangements in relation to all aspects of employment and to publish annually the results of any such monitoring. The Council's Human Resources Service recognises that it has a key role to play in meeting the duties contained in the Equality Act 2006 particularly in relation to employment practice.

The Council monitors current employees, applicants for employment and those who:

- apply for formal training;
- participate in formal training;
- apply for promoted posts;
- raise a formal grievance;
- are the subject of disciplinary action;
- benefit or suffer a detriment as a result of performance assessments;
- leave the employment of the Council;
- raise a whistle blowing complaint

The Council will continue to use information obtained through monitoring employment practices to build a workforce that reflects the diversity of our local community and to ensure that employees receive equality of treatment. The Council recognises that this will not happen through monitoring alone. Employment procedures and practices will continue to be reviewed on an annual basis and amended, where unlawful, discrimination or adverse impact is shown. This will require flexibility in the Action Plans and priority areas relating to employment.

12. PROCUREMENT

Procurement is a function of all public authorities and although the General Duty does not override other legislation or regulations on procurement, it may be relevant in the following three areas:

- services provided under contract or agreement;
- contractors equal opportunities policies and practices;

- contract opportunities for businesses owned or run by disabled people.

The Council will be responsible for meeting the General Duty and specific duties when:

- any of the Council's functions or services are carried out by a private company or voluntary organisation under a contract or some other arrangement;
- the duty to promote equality for disabled people applies to those functions or service.

The Council has recently developed procedures to build Gender Equality considerations into the pre-contract evaluation, in-contract conditions and post contract monitoring. This will enable the Council to check that those companies and organisations providing services on our behalf do so fairly and equitably.

The Council will be updating information regarding equality in procurement in line with recommendations contained within the new Equality Act. This information will be incorporated in the new Single Equality Scheme published in 2010.

13. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SCHEME

The following levels of responsibility for the Gender Equality Scheme and its related Action Plan are in place:-

- the Council through Cabinet has responsibility for approving and maintaining the Scheme and for ensuring that Services meet their obligations as laid down in the Scheme and its accompanying Action Plan;
- the Chief Executive and Executive Directors are responsible for ensuring the Scheme is implemented effectively throughout the Council's Services;
- the Equalities Strategy Group, which is chaired by the Chief Executive and includes all Executive Directors, will ensure that Elected Members and Chief Officers receive current advice on best practice relating to Gender issues.

14. ASSESSING, CONSULTING AND INVOLVING

East Ayrshire Council values the role that consultation plays in formulating and delivering appropriate services and improving public confidence and trust. The Council are constantly striving to develop and improve services to meet the needs of the people we serve. The Council provide information, consult about existing and developing services and engage in active partnership with local people. We use a range of methods, including our community planning forums,

residents' panels, newsletters, engagement with community groups, working with partner agencies, etc. The Council has also endorsed the National Standards for Community Involvement.

Although the Council has formal links with a number of groups representing men and women (boys and girls) and some of these groups were involved with the development of the Scheme through attendance at workshops, it was felt that these links needed to be strengthened to meet the requirements regarding consultation.

The Council therefore developed new structures to engage and involve men and women (boys and girls) at all levels. This included the development of a Gender Network, however as Gender encompasses a number of groups, including lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender, work continues to be developed through different avenues.

The Council is working with East Ayrshire Women's Aid, Iqraa Asian Women's Group, LGBT Scotland, the Terrance Higgins Trust, Stonewall Scotland, Yip World etc. to ensure that all aspects of gender work are addressed

15. ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan, which is contained in Appendix 1, details the actions which were carried out during 2007 to 2010 to ensure, the Council met its General Duty. Specifically:

- The strategic priorities of the Council including business milestones and major projects to be implemented over the timescales of the Scheme;
- Evidence of where problems and priorities lie and action which will be taken as a result; and
- Specific outcomes which the Council wishes to achieve to promote Gender Equality set against a realistic timetable.

16. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

The Council has implemented a system for carrying out Equality Impact Assessments. The system allows policies, procedures and proposed changes to be assessed to ensure that the Council's decisions and activities do not disadvantage any one group. It allows the Council to identify where it might better promote equality of opportunity for people with disabilities and where different parts of the Gender Equality Duty might be built into these policies and practices.

Lead Policy Officers operating in each service area carry out impact assessments on relevant policies. Each service area has prioritised its functions and polices for review and indicate when the review will be completed.

The findings from the assessments are reported to the relevant Head of Service for information and action by the Lead Policy Officer. The results of Equality Impact Assessments are published on the Council's websites.

17. PUBLISHING THE RESULTS

East Ayrshire Council is committed to governance undertaken with integrity and in the public's interest. Our decision making processes are open, honest and accountable, involving and extending awareness of our activities.

The Council will use existing methods of disseminating information on assessments, consultation and monitoring. Full reports of individual Equality Impact Assessments or consultations will be available on request from relevant service areas. Summaries will be published within three months of the impact assessment and annually as part of the review of the Gender Equality Scheme. Information on Equality Impact Assessments, consultations and monitoring results and actions will be published widely in a variety of Council publications including:

- Headlines Newsletter
- Newsletters
- Annual Reports
- Local Media
- Internet and Intranet sites

Information will be available in various accessible formats on request, for example:

- Braille
- Audio-tape
- Translations into community languages

All service areas will also update the Council's internet and intranet sites to keep our customers and employees informed of the outcomes of the integrated impact assessments undertaken.

18. REVIEWING THE GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME

The Equalities Strategy Group and the Equality and Diversity Officer will be responsible for driving forward the Gender Equality Scheme and monitoring progress. Reports from the Equality Strategy Group will be considered by Cabinet. The Gender Network also contributes to the review of the Scheme.

The Scheme will be reviewed annually using the Equality and Human Rights Commission's framework standards and guidance.

Employees and members of the public will be kept up to date on progress made in promoting Gender equality through newsletters, the internet, intranet, annual reports etc.

19. COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

Comments or complaints relating to the Gender Equality Scheme in either employment or service delivery will be dealt with under the Council's existing arrangements.

Reporting on how complaints have been dealt with will form part of the annual review of the Gender Equality Scheme. The Equalities Strategy Group and departmental equality groups will also consider individual complaints where appropriate to identify areas of improvement.

Complaints by employees will be dealt with under the Council's Grievance Procedure.

If anyone has comments on the Gender Equality Scheme please contact the Council's Equality and Diversity Officer at:

East Ayrshire Council
Council Headquarters
London Road
Kilmarnock
KA3 7BU
Tel: 01563 576244
E-mail: alyia.zaheed@east-ayrshire.gov.uk

East Ayrshire Council

Gender Equality Scheme

Objectives

2007 – 2010

1. Developing the Scheme

Purpose: To mainstream compliance with our duty to promote equality of opportunity for all by ensuring gender equality is mainstreamed into all policies, functions and procedures of the Council

Objective	Action	Outcome	Timescales	Update
To implement the Gender Equality Scheme	Prepare service action plan to review functions, policies and procedures, and all other elements of the scheme	Completion of action plans	Ongoing from March 2007	Equality Action Plans prepared and passed by Cabinet in 2007. All Service Plans are reported quarterly to the Equality Strategy Group. A new Single Equality Scheme will be published in November 2010.
Identification of managers' responsibility regarding the implementation of the Gender Equality Scheme	The requirement to promote gender equality as part of generic managers' competencies	Increased emphasis given to gender within all decision making across the Council	Ongoing from June 2007	Equality Training delivered to Managers and backed by an e-learning Equality and Diversity training course.
To provide assistance in the implementation of the scheme at a corporate level	Guideline and advice to be developed and disseminated via the Equality Strategy Group	Increased awareness of gender equality and implementation of the Gender Equality Scheme	By February 2008	Development of Departmental Equality Groups completed. This ensures information is disseminated throughout Departments.
Raise the standard of Gender Equality across the Council	The Scheme will be reviewed every 3 years	Revised Scheme Continued updates to the scheme	Annual assessment with full review in 2010	Review of the Gender Equality Scheme in June 2010. Incorporate into the Single Equality Scheme in November 2010

To raise public awareness of the Scheme	Scheme made available via the Council's website and summary information published via the Council's publication	Increased awareness of the Council's commitment to eliminate discrimination	Ongoing from March 2007	The Gender Equality Scheme is available on the Council's websites, local libraries, local offices etc. The Gender Equality Scheme is also available in community languages and alternative formats on request.
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2. Employment Duties – monitoring employment and supporting employees

Purpose: Information from monitoring will be used to develop schemes.

Objective	Action	Outcome	Timescale	Update
To produce an Equal Pay Policy	Develop and publish a policy on developing equal pay arrangements between men and women – including measures to promote equal pay, ensure fair development opportunities and tackle occupational segregation	A fair Equal Pay Policy is developed	September 2007	Equal Pay Policy published in September 2007.
To monitor employment statistics annually	Create annual reporting and dissemination of monitoring information	Produce annual employment trends and develop action plans arising from trend analysis	Annual assessment and reporting	Monitoring information is reported to the Governance and Scrutiny Committee. These reports will be further enhanced with statistics gathered from the online recruitment portal.
To eliminate any possible discrimination in the workforce	Augment existing monitoring practices by including: Training applications Harassment and discrimination complaints Grievances; Disciplinary proceedings and Exit Interviews	A greater take up of service satisfaction with the service provided	Ongoing from May 2007	As above

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2. Employment Duties – monitoring employment and supporting employees				
Purpose: Information from monitoring will be used to develop schemes.				
Objective	Action	Outcome	Timescale	Update
<p>Review the following high-priority policies under an Equality Impact Assessment procedure including consultations with all levels of employees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and Selction • Managing leave requests for parent and carers • Paternity/Maternity support leave including parenting • Adoption Leave • Managing pregnancy and return from maternity leave • Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure • Retirement 	<p>Review the functions and policies</p> <p>Qualitative research identifies likely impact on gender equality</p>	<p>Impact of Council policy identified and results fed into policy revision</p> <p>Ongoing improvement of Council's gender equality activity</p>	<p>September 2007 onwards</p>	<p>A new Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) toolkit has been rolled out throughout the Council. Completed EQIA are published on the Council's Intranet/Internet sites. Human Resources have revised the timetable for EQIA on HR policies and this will be incorporated into the new Single Equality Scheme published in November 2010.</p>

3. Identifying Relevant Functions and Policies – Assessing and consulting on the likely impact of proposed policies

Purpose: To give appropriate priority to the promotion of gender equality when carrying out function and policies

Objective	Action	Outcome	Timescale	Update
To meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2006	Review all functions and policies of the Council according to our duty to promote gender equality	All functions and policies reviewed as per the Scheme	Ongoing from August 2007	Audit of prioritisation is complete and available on the Council's websites. This will also form part of the Council's Single Equality Scheme. An equality training programme commenced in January 2009 for all employees. This includes gender equality training. A new EQIA tool was developed in April 2008 and training was rolled out from June 2009.
To assess the likely impact of proposed policies on promotion of gender equality	Services undertake Impact Assessments	Qualitative research is provided to identify likely and existing impact on gender equality	Annual assessment reporting	As above. All completed screenings and full EQIA are published on the Council's websites.
To monitor adverse impacts	Annual monitoring of adverse impacts identified in gender equality impact assessment and other feedback mechanisms (Equality Strategy Group, Women's Forum, employees)	Collection of adverse impact information considered by each service across the Council Annual monitoring report	Ongoing annual assessment and reporting	As above

4. Monitoring council policies for adverse impact

Purpose: To build gender equality into the policy-making process and to make that process clear open and inclusive

Objective	Action	Outcome	Timescales	Update
To assess the likely impact or proposed policies on the promotion of gender duty	Services undertake gender equality impact assessments Qualitative research identifies likely impact on gender	Impact of policy identified and results fed into policy revision	Annual assessment and reporting	The Gender Equality Impact Assessment is incorporated into the Council's EQIA which is available on the Council's websites, local offices, libraries etc on request.
To support ongoing additions and improvements to policies	Develop guidelines for drawing out gender equality issues as part of the impact assessments	Guidelines developed and training available	By September 2007	Gender guidelines have been incorporated into the guidance for the Council's EQIA Toolkit.
To monitor annually adverse impacts identified in Gender Equality Impacts Assessments	Adverse impact information considered by each service across the authority	Ongoing improvement of council gender equality activity	Ongoing assessment and reporting	All completed screenings and full EQIA are published on the Council's websites.

5. Assessing, Consulting and Involving

Purpose: To ensure compliance with our duty to not only consult but involve people in the development of the scheme

Objective	Action	Outcome	Timescales	Update
To meet the specific duty of the Gender Duty	Establish a forum for women and men from different backgrounds to ensure meaningful involvement of the Gender Duty	Women and men are involved throughout the process	Ongoing from March 2007	A new Women's Forum was established in 2009 to tackle women's issues in East Ayrshire. Talks are on going with the Terrance Higgins Trust, LGBT Youth and the Council joined the Stonewall's Diversity Champions Programme in 2008. Work with the Women's Centre and East Ayrshire Women's Aid is ongoing.
To ensure meaningful involvement with appropriate support mechanisms with a cross section of people	Establish a timetable of meetings Ensure different methods of involvement are used such as direct mailing, e-mailing, meetings etc.	Structures are in place for planned consultation and involvement Men and women are represented at all levels in the decision making process	Ongoing from March 2007	As above
Ensure that relevant guidance is in place for Managers	To provide guidance to Managers on the Gender Duty	Managers are equipped to support employees	September 2007	This has been incorporated into the Equality and Diversity Training Programme.

6. Communicating the results of assessment, consultation and monitoring

Purpose: To ensure that monitoring, assessment and consultation activities, and their results are clear and plain to our customers and employees

Objective	Action	Outcome	Timescales	Update
To identify arrangements for publishing results and monitoring	Results published using a variety of media and formats: internet, intranet, special reports and newsletters	Publicly available record of progress	By June 2009	The Equality pages on the Internet have been updated and will be re-launched in summer 2010. The Council's Intranet web pages will be updated by June 2010 and both will include information on Gender Equality, Equality Monitoring, EQIA etc.
To develop accessible communication channels	The identification of appropriate communication channels for different community groups and employees through various consultations mechanisms	Maintenance and development of communication channels between the public and the Council	Ongoing from August 2007	As above
To monitor user satisfaction	Monitoring on effectiveness of communication channels and accessibility of information	Increased accessibility of information across the Council	Annual assessment and monitoring	As above