

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET - 17 JUNE 2009

GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME – PROGRESS REPORT

Report by the Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Cabinet with a progress report on the 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.

3. PROGRESS

3.1 Action Plans

- 3.1.1 The Action Plan agreed previously by Cabinet is contained in Appendix 1 of the attached Gender Equality Scheme Progress Report and progress against each of the actions is noted.
- 3.1.2 In addition to producing a revised Corporate Action Plan, each Departmental/Service developed individual Equality Action Plans including gender. These Action Plans were submitted to Cabinet in December 2007.

3.1.3 Eliminate Discrimination and Promote Equality

The development of Department/Service Action Plans will ensure that the Council takes steps to eliminate discrimination and promote equality in all areas of its activities

and will allow these steps to be mainstreamed into overall Departmental/Service Plans. However, specifically in 2008-2009 a number of actions have been taken, namely:

Women's Forum: Work continues on the development of a Gender Network and work has been undertaken with the Women's Centre, Iqraa, the Asian Women's Group, LGBT Youth Scotland etc. to ensure issues are relevant to the groups involved. In order to progress matters further a meeting has been organised on 9 June 2009 to discuss the development of a Women's Forum in East Ayrshire. The aim of this Forum is to bring together voluntary and statutory agencies who work with women locally to work in partnership to progress issues affecting women working and living in East Ayrshire in a more structured and coherent manner.

Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme: The Council joined the Stonewall Scotland's Diversity Champions Programme in May 2008. The Diversity Champions Programme is a good practice forum which employers can work with Stonewall, and each other, to promote lesbian, gay and bisexual equality in the workplace. The Council is working with Stonewall Scotland to raise the issues lesbian, gay and bisexual employees face in the workplace. It is proposed to deliver relevant seminars aimed at Managers during 2009/10.

International Women's Day: An event to mark International Women's Day was held at the Northwest Area Centre, Kilmarnock on Saturday 14 March 2009. The event was organised in partnership with the local Pakistani women's group, Iqraa with information points and workshops for members of the community. 14 stall holders attended, providing information on Health, Safety, Education and Leisure, as well as hand massage, henna hand painting and card making. Workshops were centered round Women in Islam, Personal and Internet Safety and Healthy Eating. During lunch time participants were provided with food from Scotland, Poland, China and Pakistan and entertainment was provided by female members of the Gaelic learners group who sang a selection of Gaelic songs. The day was very successful, bringing 60 women from the Chinese, Polish, Pakistani and Scottish communities.

Domestic Abuse: Some of the achievements of the East Ayrshire Domestic Abuse Forum in recent years have included:

- The provision of a purpose built refuge in Kilmarnock
- A good practice handbook for service providers
- A poster campaign
- Preventative work with young people in schools and youth settings
- A charter of rights for women experiencing domestic abuse
- A toolkit for employers
- A Link Nurse Project supporting women experiencing domestic abuse with mental health problems
- Multi-agency awareness raising training
- Agency specific training
- Events promoting the White Ribbon Campaign
- The development of web pages about domestic abuse accessible through East Ayrshire Council's website

More recently, the East Ayrshire Domestic Abuse Forum as part of the Ayrshire and Arran Violence Against Women Training Consortium have organised a seminar

programme running throughout 2009 which highlights the links between domestic abuse and other forms of violence against women. A range of specialist speakers will be presenting seminars on commercial sexual exploitation, trafficking, abuse in the LGBT community, stalking, BME women's experiences of domestic abuse, working with men who abuse their female partners and children and young people's experiences of domestic abuse.

The title of the seminar programme is, 'If it were between countries we'd call it a war...', which comes from a poem by Michael Kaufman, the founder of the global White Ribbon Campaign. The White Ribbon Campaign is unique as it is the first male orientated organisation to oppose violence against women and asks men *and* women to take action against violence against women. Michael Kaufman is the keynote speaker at a conference in Ayr on 25 November 2009 which concludes the seminar programme. The conference will provide an opportunity for organisations and individuals from Ayrshire and the rest of Scotland to explore new directions to tackle not just domestic abuse, but violence against women as a whole.

3.2 Information Gathering

The Council through Department/Service Unit Action Plans is ensuring that appropriate information is being gathered in respect of all equality strands. This will be undertaken via an equality questionnaire attached to customer survey returns, community consultations, forums, monitoring forms etc.

3.3 Actions Taken as a Result of the Information Gathering

The information collated through the mechanisms highlighted in 3.3 will be used to inform future actions to ensure the Council fulfil it's commitments under the General Duty highlighted in 2.3.

4. **POLICY AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 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.

5. **COMMUNITY PLAN**

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

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 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.

7. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

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

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

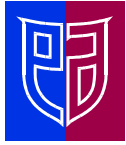
- 8.1 The Cabinet is recommended to approve the Progress Gender Equality Report.

Elizabeth Morton
**Depute Chief Executive/
Executive Director of Corporate Support**
3 June 2009

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

Implementation Officer: Alyia Zaheed, Equalities and Diversity Officer



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Gender Equality Progress Report 2009

The Equality Act (2006) amended the Sex Discrimination Act (1975) to place a statutory general duty on all public bodies, when carrying out their functions, to have 'due regard' to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
- Promote equality of opportunity between men and women

The duty provides a framework for public authorities to carry out their functions more effectively, tackle discrimination and its causes in a proactive way and also mainstream gender equality into all decisions and activities. At the heart of this framework is the Gender Equality Scheme. The Scheme includes a Corporate Action Plan detailing the steps the Council will take towards fulfilling its general duty. The duty gives the Council legal responsibility for demonstrating that they treat women and men fairly in policy-making, services and employment.

This report presents a summary of progress against the action in East Ayrshire Council's Gender Equality Scheme first published in June 2007. The Corporate Action Plan which was developed to support the Gender Equality Scheme 2007 - 2010 has been updated for the year 2008-2009. In addition, each Service completed an equality action plan listing key responsibilities, timescales and tasks to be achieved during 2008-2009. Below are the key achievements over the last year against each Objective identified in the Action Plans.

Objective

Accessible Services: Improving access to information and services within East Ayrshire

Corporate Wide Developments

- The Equality Forum structure was developed throughout 2008 and reviewed in May 2009. The main outcomes indicate that the new structures are more inclusive and community members are involved in the decision making process. A full evaluation of the engagement structures will be reported to Cabinet at the end of June 2009.
- As part of the Council membership to Stonewall Scotland's Diversity Champions Programme the Council advertised in 'Starting Out' a Lesbian and gay recruitment guide in 2008/09.
- Discussions have begun with LGBT Scotland to open dialogue with lesbian, gay and bisexual young people living and working in East Ayrshire to ensure that services provided by the Council are appropriate and accessible.
- The East Ayrshire Domestic Abuse Forum website was launched in 2008. The website is a one stop shop to information, resources, contacts etc. to help individuals and families who may experience domestic abuse and/or those organisations who work with individuals and families who experience

domestic abuse. The website can be accessed at <http://www.eastayrshire.gov.uk/ess/socialwork/DVForum/default.asp>.

- The introduction of a new Service Planning Process in April 2009 will require consideration to be given to Equalities issues at an operational level within the Council which will be further developed as the plans are reviewed.

Neighbourhood Services

- An increase in the number of female applications applying for craft apprenticeships within Building and Works was noted in 2008/09.
- Housing equality & diversity objectives and standards were set out in the Housing Business Plan in 2007. The standards will be reviewed and carried forward to the 2010-2012 Service Plan.

Corporate Support

- The Community Planning Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) 2008-2011 details that the Council will continue to take action to ensure that all the needs identified within the SOA are taken into account irrespective of disability, race, gender, age, sexual orientation and religion & belief.'
- A lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender (LGBT) Awareness Raising Session for Community Planning Partners was held in September 2008. The session aimed to increase knowledge and understanding facing LGBT young people in Scotland, explore the nature of homo/bi/transphobic discrimination, service barriers to engaging with LGBT young people and how to overcome them. 18 officers across the Community Planning Partners attended the session.
- The Skills Development & Employability Service provides childcare support to lone parents who otherwise would not be able to access training and employability initiatives. Out of the 683 clients 135 were Lone Parents, 16 were male and 119 were female.

Finance and Asset Management

- The Benefit Take Up Group undertakes regular events in partnership with Jobcentre Plus, the Pension Service, Citizens Advice Bureau and the Carers Centre. Events have been held at Kuloc, Headways, Older People's Forum, International Women's Day, Women's Aid and the Women's Centre. 20 promotional events against the target of 12 were delivered in 2008/09 generating over £5.2 million through Citizen Advice Bureau maximisation activity and additional benefits in excess of £768,000 was generated through Social Work activity.

- The annual Public Performance Report for 2007/2008 asked respondents questions regarding disability, race, gender and age. The report also included a section 'How we improve your services' which highlighted work that is being done in relation to equalities. This will be developed further for the 2008/2009 publication.

Educational and Social Services

- Formal guidance has been distributed to Head Teachers and Heads of Establishments regarding gender equality and account will be taken of this in relation to curricular access in all schools.
- Gender equality issues are being integrated into service level contracts with partner providers.
- Community Learning & Development promoted community based learning and youth work opportunities at the International Women's Day event in March 2009.
- Community Learning & Development is working towards the LGBT Charter Mark. The Charter Mark aims to mainstream LGBT issues into service delivery to ensure that LGBT people who access services can feel confident that they will be included, valued and supported. Once this has been achieved it is planned to rollout LGBT Charter Mark to all Learning Partnerships within the Council.

Objective

Staffing – Training and Monitoring

Corporate Wide Developments

- Public Sector Equality Training was delivered during 2008/09 to Elected Members, Executive Directors, Head of Services and 4th tier Managers.
- An E-Learning Equality Training course was successfully piloted in January 2009 and will be rolled out to all employees on a phased basis from June 2009. This will increase the awareness of equality issues including gender equality to all employees.
- Cross departmental work has commenced to develop an on-site learning package for employees who do not have access to the online provision. This will be rolled out during 2009.
- The equality & diversity information currently issued as part of the job induction pack to all new employees will be revised during summer 2009.

Neighbourhood Services

- Equalities updates are delivered at monthly Management Team meetings and cascaded to team meetings.

Corporate Support

- Building Standards employees have undergone an inclusive design seminar whilst it focused on disability it also included gender equality issues.
- Equalities issues are reported and discussed at team meetings.

Finance and Asset Management

- The Finance and Asset Management Equalities Group was established in September 2008. Each service area within Finance and Asset Management is represented on the equalities group which ensures that equalities information is cascades to all employees within the service.

Education and Social Services

- In May 2009 Community Learning & Development employees participated in a two day domestic violence training course provided by East Ayrshire's Women's Aid and the Domestic Abuse Forum.

- An Equality awareness training session based on the Equality Model Policy that was issued to all schools is delivered to teaching employees in August each year. The session includes all equality strands and child protection procedures.
- Information on equality issues continue to be circulated to education employees e.g. LGBT newsletters.
- The Social Work Training Section run a range of equalities courses throughout the year to ensure that employees are appropriately trained in equality and diversity issues.
- A one day 'Values & Anti-Oppressive Practice' foundation level course is open to all Social Work employees that have not had any previous training in values and anti oppressive practice. 17 officers received training during the period July 2008 to May 2009.
- A one day 'Promoting Equality' course is mandatory for employees undertaking the Social Work practice teaching qualification. The course covers all aspects of the Public Sector Duties and the Equality Regulations. 86 employees received training during the period July 2008 to May 2009.
- The existing two-day 'Promoting Equality' level 2 course is currently being reviewed to ensure that the legislative requirement contained within the impending Equality Bill are addressed. This review will lead to the development of 2 Hour equality sessions i.e. one course per equality strand which will include-gender equality.
- The Social Work Training Strategy 2008/11 was developed in consultation with representation from Social Work employees via a number of training focus groups.
- The Social Work Training Strategy 2008/11 was endorsed by Cabinet on the 27 August 2008. It includes equality proofing of all courses and course materials.

Objective

Improving Community Consultation, Involvement and Capacity Building

Corporate Wide Developments

- A new corporate equalities monitoring pro-forma to monitor equality was developed and will be submitted to Cabinet in July 2009. This will assist in monitoring services provided to the local community and help identify any gaps in provision.
- In line with the review of the Local Community Planning Forums the Equality Forum was reviewed in May 2009. A full report will be submitted to Cabinet at the end of June 2009.
- Work continues on the development of a Gender Network with further work undertaken with the Women's Centre, Iqraa, the Asian Women's Group, LGBT Youth Scotland etc. to ensure issues are relevant to the groups involved.
- Feedback from an Equalities Event held in July 2008 was disseminated across all Departments to help inform service improvements
- Employee awareness of the 'Breastfeeding Feed Happily Here' a NHS campaign has been raised through a display of posters across local network offices which positively support breast feeding.
- In order to ensure that a higher profile is given to equalities an equalities update has been included in the Annual Public Performance Report.

Neighbourhood Services

- An equalities monitoring questionnaire was developed and piloted within the Outdoor Amenities, Parks Section. The trial proved to be successful and was used as the basis of the corporate equalities monitoring form.
- The Local Transport Strategy was the target of extensive consultation which included a presentation to the Equality Forum, a number of roadshow events and a questionnaire survey which was sent to all householders within East Ayrshire as well as local organisations etc.
- The Building and Works Service is liaising with the Housing Service to develop a post repair telephone satisfaction survey to assess the satisfaction of a repair by the householder. These questions will incorporate equality monitoring information.

- The Tenants Participation Strategy has been updated to include equalities issues. Currently all Registered Tenants Organisations and the East Ayrshire Tenants Federation have equalities statement within their constitutions. This is to ensure that equalities has been embedded throughout the process and members are aware of their responsibilities in regard to the equality agenda.
- Leisure Development undertook a men's health event during Alcohol Awareness Week in October 2008 at Kilmarnock Football Club prior to a premier league match. 73 males and 5 females were offered free health checks and information on safe drinking levels.
- Leisure Development piloted a Cheer Leading programme during the summer of 2008 to encourage teenage girls to become more active. Girls gained the skills and routines associated with cheerleading over a 6 week block which culminated in a 'Battle of the Cages' performance in New Farm and Ochiltree in August 2008. This programme actively engaged young girls in physical activity with positive outcomes associated with sport. Over 130 young girls attended during the programme.
- Leisure Development currently run a number of initiatives to encourage young girls into sport. These include a programme called "Jump to the Beat" an urban dance programme, a girl's only sports club and an 'Alternative Curriculum' to work with young people within a school environment specially targeting those lacking in self esteem and confidence. To date there have been over 400 young girls who attended the programme.

Corporate Support

- Venues used for Councillor's Surgeries/public meetings have been assessed and amended as appropriate, to ensure that they are accessible to all members of the community.
- The Business Development Team support Women into Business through partnership events held 8 events every year. The events provide advice and training to women who are considering starting a business or have been in business under two years. In 2006/07 73 female attended the events in 2007/08 100 female attended and in 2008/9 93 females attended.

Finance and Asset Management

- The feedback questionnaire included in the Public Performance Report which was delivered to every household in East Ayrshire in November 2008 has been revised to gather further information about equalities. Analysis of the returns was reported to the Corporate Management Team.

Education and Social Services

- A Carers Conference was held in June 2008. The main issues highlighted from the Conference were that women form the greatest proportion of unpaid carers, they have limited access to resources and are more likely to suffer adverse financial and health consequences associated with low income. These issues will be addressed specifically in the Carers Action Plan. The Draft Carers Action Plan will be issued for consultation during National Carers week, which will take place between 8 to 14 June 2009.
- An equality training programme has been developed for Community Associations; which includes training on gender issues. This training will be rolled out from June 2009.
- Community Learning & Development supported the International Women's event in March 2009 which was organised in partnership with the local Asian Women's Group (Iqraa). Over 60 women from the various cultures attended the event.

Objective

Gathering & Utilising Information

As indicated elsewhere in this report monitoring information will be gathered through the development of a new equality monitoring form which will be submitted to Cabinet for approval in July 2009.

The new equality monitoring arrangements will assist Departments to establish who their services users are and allow Services to establish what are the barriers to accessing services are. This information will be used to inform service improvements to improve any identified barriers.

Domestic Abuse

East Ayrshire Council recognises the importance of partnership working in support of the Domestic Abuse agenda. Therefore, the Council is pleased that East Ayrshire Women's Aid has contributed the following section to the Gender Equality Progress Report.

Domestic abuse occurs all over the world and has no boundaries in terms of class, race, religion, disability, age or sexuality. However, research has shown that domestic abuse is most commonly perpetrated by men against their female partners or ex-partners. Domestic Abuse is therefore recognised as a gender based issue.

A report produced in March 2006 by Strathclyde Police 'Domestic Abuse in Ayrshire' showed that Ayrshire has a high volume of domestic violence incidents compared to other divisions in the Strathclyde Force area. Between April 2005 and March 2006 there were 2,720 incidents in Ayrshire. North Ayrshire had the highest number of domestic violence incidents for a subdivision in the Strathclyde Force area during that period (1003), South Ayrshire had the second highest (885) and East Ayrshire had the third highest (832).

More recent figures for (2007 - 2008) show East Ayrshire has the 11th highest rates of reporting domestic abuse to the police per 100,000 population (1046) for the whole of Scotland - North Ayrshire the tenth highest and South Ayrshire the 13th highest. 1249 incidents of domestic abuse were reported to the police in East Ayrshire in 2007-8, the 13th highest rate per council area in Scotland - North Ayrshire were the 12th highest and South Ayrshire the 15th highest.

The numbers of women contacting East Ayrshire Women's Aid also rises steadily each year. In 2008 - 2009, 285 women made 3836 contacts to East Ayrshire Women's Aid and 38 women and 105 children moved into the East Ayrshire refuges. (In 2007 - 2008, 262 women made 3549 contacts and 56 women and 85 children moved into East Ayrshire refuge). The decrease in numbers of women using refuge was mainly due to longer stays in Kilmarnock and less demand for the communal refuge in Auchinleck.

East Ayrshire Domestic Abuse Forum is a multi-agency partnership made up of representatives of all agencies working with women, children and young people in East Ayrshire. All the agencies on the Forum recognise that responding to domestic abuse is not the responsibility of one agency alone and are committed to working together to develop consistent, quality responses to support victims and challenge domestic abuse in East Ayrshire.

The values of the Forum centre around the themes of:

Prevention through raising awareness of domestic abuse in the community and challenging those attitudes which allow it to flourish.

Protection through encouraging and supporting the development of appropriate responses which keep women, children and young people safe.

Provision of multi-agency support which meets the practical and emotional needs of women, children and young people experiencing or affected by domestic abuse.

Participation through encouraging and supporting the participation of women, children and young people affected by domestic abuse in decisions and actions that concern them.

Some of the achievements of the Forum in recent years have included:

A good practice handbook for service providers

Approximately 500 copies of the handbook were distributed to statutory (social work, health, housing, criminal justice agencies etc.) and voluntary agencies (CAB, Victim Support, Carers, etc.) working with women, children and young people throughout East Ayrshire.

A poster campaign

Since 2005 there have been six posters issued as part of the poster campaign. The poster tie in with appropriate events such as International Women's Day or White Ribbon Day. The most recent poster (highlighting sexual abuse) was released to tie in with the Scottish Rape Crisis campaign 'This is not an invitation to rape me.'

A charter of rights for women experiencing domestic abuse

The charter of Rights for women experiencing domestic abuse was launched at the East Ayrshire 'Protection' conference and distributed through agency representatives on the East Ayrshire Domestic Abuse Forum. 1000 A4 posters and 500 postcards have been distributed to relevant agencies in East Ayrshire.

A toolkit for employers

The toolkit has been issued to a limited number of employers to date. NHS Ayrshire and Arran will shortly be launching a Domestic Abuse Staff Policy and training events connected to the toolkit are being planned for later this year.

Multi-agency awareness raising training

In 2008, 272 individuals attended multi agency training, awareness raising and seminar sessions. In 2009 - 2010, a basic awareness course was attended by 27 participants. Four seminars have been held (Ayrshire wide) and attended by

286 service providers, 94 of whom work in East Ayrshire.

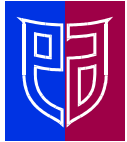
Other achievements to date have included:

- The provision of a purpose built refuge in Kilmarnock
- A Link Nurse Project supporting women experiencing domestic abuse with mental health problems
- Preventative work with young people in schools and youth settings
- Agency specific training
- Events promoting the White Ribbon Campaign
- The development of web pages about domestic abuse accessible through East Ayrshire Council's website

Throughout 2009, the East Ayrshire Domestic Abuse Forum as part of the Ayrshire and Arran Violence Against Women Training Consortium have organised a seminar which highlights the links between domestic abuse and other forms of violence against women. A range of specialist speakers will be presenting seminars aimed at statutory and voluntary agencies, community groups and women who have experienced domestic abuse on commercial sexual exploitation, trafficking, abuse in the LGBT community, stalking, BME women's experiences of domestic abuse, working with men who abuse their female partners and children and young people's experiences of domestic abuse.

The title of the seminar programme is, 'If it were between countries we'd call it a war..,' which comes from a poem by Michael Kaufman, the founder of the global White Ribbon Campaign. The White Ribbon Campaign is unique as it is the first male orientated organisation to oppose violence against women and asks men *and* women to take action against violence against women. Michael Kaufman is the keynote speaker at a conference to be held in Ayr on 25 November 2009 which concludes the seminar programme. The conference will provide an opportunity for organisations and individuals from Ayrshire and the rest of Scotland to explore new directions forward to tackle not just domestic abuse, but violence against women as a whole.

Appendix 1



East Ayrshire
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East Ayrshire Council

Gender Equality Scheme

Objectives

Progress 2009

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	Progress 2008	Progress 2009
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	Reported through the Annual Progress reports in June and reviewed every 3 years	Service Action Plans prepared. A new Equality Impact Assessment toolkit has been developed. A training programme to be developed and delivered within this year	The new Equality Impact Assessment and related training will be rolled out from May 2009
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	By December 2008	Managers identified and programme of training commenced	Training to be completed by December 2009
Provide assistance in the implementation of the Scheme at a corporate level	Guidelines and advice to be developed and disseminated via the Equalities Strategy Group	Increased awareness of gender equality and implementation of the Gender Equality Scheme	By February 2008	Development of Departmental Equality groups completed. This will ensure information disseminated throughout service areas.	Achieved

Raise the standard of Gender Equality across the Council	The Scheme will be reviewed every 3 years	Revised Scheme Annual updates to the scheme	Annual assessment with full review in 2010	As and when required	The Scheme will be reviewed in 2010 and incorporated into a single Equality Scheme. Work is underway to track progress and to prepare for completion of a Single Equality Scheme
Raise public awareness of the scheme	Scheme made available via the Council's website and summary information published via Council's publications	Increased awareness of the Council's commitment to eliminate discrimination	Reported through the Annual Progress Reports in June and reviewed every 3 years	Completed Scheme available on the Council's Intranet and Website. Hard copies available through schools, libraries and local offices. Different formats available on request	The development of new Equality page on the Council's website will further assist this process

2. Employment Duties – monitoring employment and supporting employees

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

Objective	Action	Outcome	Timescale	Progress 2008	Progress 2009
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	Completed in September 2007. Available on the Council's Intranet and Website	Further report due in September 2009
Monitor employment 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	Reports completed on a quarterly cycle and available on the Council's Intranet and Website	Monitoring information is reported to the Governance and Scrutiny Committee. These reports will be further enhanced with statistics gathered from the new 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	Reported through the Annual Progress in June reports and reviewed every 3 years	As above	As above

Contd./

2. Employment Duties – monitoring employment and supporting employees					
Purpose: Information from monitoring will be used to develop schemes.					
Objective	Action	Outcome	Timescale	Progress 2008	Progress 2009
Review the following high-priority policies under the EIA procedure including consultations with all levels of employees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment • Managing leave for parent and carers • Paternity/Maternity support leave including parenting • Adoption • Managing pregnancy and return from maternity leave • Grievance and disciplinary procedure • Retirement 	Review the functions and policies Qualitative research identifies likely impact on gender equality	Impact of council policy identified and results fed into policy revision Ongoing improvement of Councils gender equality activity	September 2007 onwards	A new Equality Impact Assessment tool was produced in April 2008. A training programme will be developed and delivered to allow the effective assessment of all policies	The new EQIA tool will be rolled out supported by training from May 2009

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	Progress	
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	Reported through the Annual Progress in reports and reviewed every 3 years	A new Equality Impact Assessment tool was produced in April 2008. A training programme will be developed and delivered to allow the effective assessment of all policies	The equality training programme will commence in June 2009
Assess the likely impact of proposed policies on promotion of gender equality	Services undertaken Impact Assessment	Qualitative research is provided to identify likely and existing impact on gender equality	Annual assessment reporting	As above	As Above
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	Annual assessment and reporting	As Above	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	Progress	
Assess the likely impact on proposed Policies on the promotion of gender duty	Services undertake gender equality impact assessments Qualitative research identifies likely impact on gender	Impact on Policy identified and results fed into policy revision	Annual assessment and reporting	A new Equality Impact Assessment tool was produced in April 2008. A training programme will be developed and delivered to allow the effective assessment of all policies	
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	As above	As above
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	Annual assessment and reporting	As above	As Above

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	Progress 2008	Progress 2009
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	Annual assessment and reporting	Work continues on the development of a Gender Network with further work has been undertaken with the Women's Centre, Iqraa, the Asian Women's Group, LGBT Youth Scotland etc. to ensure issues are relevant to the groups involved	Work continues on the development of a Gender Network and further work has been undertaken with the Women's Centre, Iqraa, the Asian Women's Group, LGBT Youth Scotland etc. to ensure issues are relevant and groups are involved. The development of a new East Ayrshire Group will assist in taking forward Women's issues. The Group will consist of local voluntary and statutory organisations as

					well as local women. The first meeting is due to take place in June 2009
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	Annual assessment and reporting	As above	
Ensure that guidance is in place for Managers	To provide guidance to Managers on the Gender Duty	Managers are equipped to support employees	September 2007	The Scheme was published in line with the Statutory Deadline. Training has been delivered to the Corporate Management Team	The majority of Managers have received 4 th Tier Manager Training which includes Gender Equality. The remaining Managers will attend by December 2009

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	Progress	
Identify arrangements for publishing results and monitoring	Results published using a variety of media and formats: internet, intranet, special reports and newsletters	Information publicly accessible	By June 2009	Information is published through the Council's Intranet and Website. Hard copies of information are made available through local offices and libraries. It is proposed to work with the Gender Network in developing new methods of distribution over 2008/2009	The appointment of a new Communication and Customer First Manger in October 2008 and the development of a new Communications Strategy will assist in progressing these issues
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	From August 2007 and through annual assessment and reporting	As above	As above
Monitor user	To Monitor the	Increased	Annual assessment	As above	As above

satisfaction	effectiveness of communication and accessibility of information	accessibility of information across the Council	and monitoring		
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June 2009

