

GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME ACTION PLAN 2007 – 2010  
2008 Progress Report

Action No. 1	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to October 2008
<p>We will review and, where appropriate, amend the information we hold and analyse about the users of our services including school pupils of our education service so that we can ensure we do not inadvertently discriminate against people on the grounds of their gender</p>	<p>June 2008</p>	<p>Equality of access to our services by all gender groups through effective monitoring of all our service users.</p>	<p><b>CE:</b> Residents' research monitors the gender of respondents, among other characteristics and equalities report produced every two years following large scale satisfaction survey. Citizens' Panel surveys also monitor the gender of respondents. The research consultant holds all personal information - gender, age, ethnicity, disability, willingness to take part in focus groups etc.</p> <p><b>EL&amp;L:</b> The Phoenix school administration system is being replaced by SEEMIS and holds comprehensive information on all pupils. This is updated on an annual basis and can be analysed according to gender. This enables gender specific issues to be identified.</p> <p><b>P&amp;ICT:</b> Regular management information reports on the workforce are made available to corporate management team to enable them to consider any required action. The gender make up of employees and managers is known. Revised monitoring form implemented in April 08 also asks employees whether they have caring responsibilities. Development and Training services are analysed by gender and reported in the annual report.</p> <p><b>H&amp;SW:</b> Gender information is collected on all service users and gender equality issues are considered in all policies. Further evidence will be collected through multi equality impact assessment (MEIA) process. Criminal Justice part of the service to commence gathering gender data on its service user feedback forms by end of 2008 which will enable any gender specific issues to be identified and addressed.</p> <p><b>P&amp;ES:</b> Information held by each service within PE&amp;S is currently under review with a view to improved statistics being held. This is being conducted on a multi equality basis not confined to gender</p> <p><b>Finance:</b> Gender related data is retained on most systems used within Finance. Any</p>

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			specific issues identified during the screening of policies through multi equality impact assessment (MEIA) will be considered for further review.
<b>Action No. 2</b>	<b>Completion date</b>	<b>Intended outcome</b>	<b>Progress to October 2008</b>
Our Customer Service Project Team (CSPT) will review whether any of our customer services policies and practices need amendment in order to ensure gender equality	June 2008	Customer services policies comply with the gender duty and promote equality of opportunities for men and women	<b>Completed.</b>
<b>Action No. 3</b>	<b>Completion date</b>	<b>Intended outcome</b>	<b>Progress to October 2008</b>
Within a year of the May 2007 election we will survey the views of women councillors to determine whether changes in the way the council works could help more women seek election to the council in future	May 2008	To encourage more women to seek election as Aberdeenshire Councillors	Pending update from Law & Admin. service.
<b>Action No. 4</b>	<b>Completion date</b>	<b>Intended outcome</b>	<b>Progress to October 2008</b>
We will offer awareness and training in equalities, including gender equality, to all councillors.	February 2008	Awareness of gender equality issues among Aberdeenshire Councillors; gender equality is embedded into Aberdeenshire Council and its interactions with the public of Aberdeenshire	Equality awareness and training still pending. Earlier date of 24 April 08 was later cancelled by the external trainers/contractor.
<b>Action No. 5</b>	<b>Completion date</b>	<b>Intended outcome</b>	<b>Progress to October 2008</b>
We will review every aspect of our recruitment process to ensure that it does not inadvertently discriminate against either gender.	October 2007	A process, which does not discriminate against either gender.	The Personnel Service is currently undertaking systematic review of the recruitment process. This began with the agreement of Policy and Resources Committee in January 2008 to implement Recruitment Manager - an automated checklist and an audit trail for good recruitment practice. The creation of Recruitment Manager allows the process

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			to be amended without going to Committee, meaning that the recruitment process can become more responsive to external forces such as legislative change and the labour market. The review process is currently underway with eligibility and references undergoing changes. However, the on-going review of the remaining elements of the recruitment process is anticipated to continue into 2009.
Action No. 6	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to October 2008
Our Transportation & Infrastructure and Planning & Environmental Services will pilot the Council's "trendbusters" initiative, working with staff of the minority gender in functions where there is occupational segregation, to identify (1) factors that led them to seek work in that function (2) any barriers they had to overcome or still face in their work and (3) what further could be done to reduce occupational segregation in that function	Sept 2007	To identify (1) factors that led the minority gender staff to seek work in that function (2) any barriers they had to overcome or still face in their work and (3) what further could be done to reduce occupational segregation in that function	<b>Completed.</b>  The pilot did not find anything that needs fixing. Staff involved did not perceive that there were any barriers from employment or recruitment practices. Any issues seem to relate to the "norms" in the society in terms of what sort of jobs men/women traditionally do.
Action No. 7	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to October 2008
We will review the success of the Transportation & Infrastructure and Planning & Environmental Services "trendbusters" pilot and where appropriate extend it to all our functions where there is occupational segregation	June 2008	Elimination of gender Occupational segregation	<b>Completed.</b> No evidence from elsewhere which would suggest that positive action is required

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Action No. 8	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to October 2008
We will begin a new cycle of our successful Chrysalis programmes to increase the number of women managers and leaders in the council through developing their skills, abilities and confidence.	December 2007	To encourage and increase the number of women in managerial and leadership positions.	Chrysalis 6 completed. Review of demand or need for future events to be undertaken.
Action No.9	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to October 2008
We will review our staff equalities awareness and training programme to ensure it meets the needs of managers and staff in relation to the Council's gender equality duty.	February 2008	To raise awareness of gender equality issues, and promote gender equality with managers and staff of the Council, therefore, embedding gender equality into Aberdeenshire Council	Completed. Equality & Diversity awareness DVD and workbook have been reviewed.
Action No. 10	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to October 2008
We will review the format and content of our staff development and training programmes to ensure that they do not inadvertently discriminate against part-time staff or those with family responsibilities.	June 2008	Ensure the content of any training programme is not discriminatory directly or indirectly to any gender, and that there is equal opportunity to attend training.	Completed. Review undertaken. Range of delivery options expanded to include support outwith Monday to Friday, 9 to 5, for example twilight and evening work. Modular approach continuing.
Action No. 11	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to October 2008
We will develop a personnel policy for staff suffering from or perpetrating domestic abuse.	July 2008	Council approved Personnel Policy in place and implemented.	Draft domestic abuse policy has been developed which will be considered by Personnel Policy Group early 2009. Aim is to be with Policy & Resources Committee in March 2009

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Action No. 12	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to October 2008
We will agree an Equal Pay Statement by the statutory deadline of 28 September 2007.	20 September 2007	Equal Pay Statement agreed by Policy & Resources Committee of the Council.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Statement agreed by P&amp;R in Sept 2007</li> <li>2. An Equal Pay Action Plan has been prepared which details how the Council intends to meet the aspirations outlined in the statement.</li> <li>3. Equal Pay Policy will be developed as part of suite of policies being worked on in 2009.</li> </ol>
Action No. 13	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to October 2008
We will monitor the implementation of single status to assess its impact on the gender balance within our workforce.	July 2008	Having had the Single Status Scheme impact assessed by an independent assessor when it was developed, there will be independent impact assessments undertaken on an annual basis.	Independent Equality Impact Assessment will not be undertaken until completion of Appeals process probably now in June 2009
Action No. 14	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to October 2008
We will discuss with our community planning partners how equality of opportunity for all equalities groups including men and women and boys and girls can be embedded within our partnership work	Dec 2007 and thereafter as may be required	Gender equality is mainstreamed into Aberdeenshire partnership working	<p><b>Completed.</b></p> <p>Equalities discussed at the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Executive and Board meetings in November 2007. The CPP continues to work under the principle of "inclusion", one of the 6 working principles. There are links to Partners' equality schemes on the Community Planning website.</p>
Action No. 15	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to October 2008
Each Service of the council will produce its own gender action plan to support the council gender equality scheme and address any gender issues specific to the service	June 2008	The Council achieves its gender equality objectives and meets the gender duty.	This action has been suspended as the Council moves to a multi equality scheme approach in 2009.

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Action No. 16	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to October 2008
a. We will institute a continuing programme of equalities impact assessment of our policies and practices that specifically address gender issues.		Policies that are free from gender bias and promote equality of opportunity and good relations within the Council	Proposed list of policies to be drafted and/or reviewed by next annual due date - June 2009 - is attached as Appendix 2.
b. As part of our programme of equality impact assessment of policies we will assess the following during the first year of the Scheme:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council's new Strategic Plan</li> </ul>	Dec. 2007		Completed May 2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School exclusions policy (EL&amp;L)</li> </ul>	Dec. 2007		Under review. Data is being gathered through the SEEMIS administration system New completion - June 2009.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fraud policy (Finance)</li> </ul>	Dec. 2007		Not undertaken
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Customer Care Policy (Finance)</li> </ul>	Dec. 2007		Completed Nov 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disciplinary Policy (P&amp;ICT)</li> </ul>	Dec. 2007		Under review; a multi-equality impact assessment is to be undertaken as part of the review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Autism Strategy (H&amp;SW)</li> </ul>	Feb. 2008		Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Have Your Say" - our Compliments, Comments and Complaints procedure (CE/CSPT)</li> </ul>	March 2008		Multi equality impact assessment report pending
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service Plan (Law &amp; Administration)</li> </ul>	May 2008		Not undertaken
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service Plan (Planning &amp; Env'tl Services)</li> </ul>	Oct. 2007		By agreement with CEG this was changed to Management of Unauthorised Gypsy Travellers Encampments - <b>completed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roads: Design, Maintenance &amp; Public Transport (T&amp;I)</li> </ul>	May 2008		Not undertaken
c. a SMART programme of impact assessment to be agreed for each year by June	June each year		See Appendix 2

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Action No. 17	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to October 2008
We will fill the gap in our understanding of the needs of transsexual residents and staff with the aim of ensuring that they do not suffer direct or indirect discrimination. We will ensure that appropriate actions flow from this (each service will contribute through monitoring of service users).	Ongoing - to be continued as required	Elimination of unlawful discrimination against transsexual people in our practices and employment	<p><b>CE:</b> New residents' and employee survey forms ask relevant information regarding transsexual identity.</p> <p><b>EL&amp;L:</b> Circular issued to schools regarding Equalities Act 2006. No emerging issues have been identified.</p> <p><b>P&amp;ICT:</b> Limited progress has been made with regard to staff. A new personnel monitoring form now in place, which asks staff if they consider themselves a trans person. The new information will assist in ensuring that appropriate actions are taken and any necessary support given. Grievances raised are monitored.</p>
Action No 18	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to October 2008
Continue to ensure that our regular two-yearly residents' and staff surveys (1) ask contributors to identify their gender so that we can identify significant differences in the experiences and views of men and women and (2) include the publication of an associated equalities report for each survey	Dec. 2008	Better understanding of, and more responsive approach, to the needs of men and women	2008 employee survey undertaken in September. Analysis of results from the range of equalities dimensions due by February 2009.
Action No. 19	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to October 2008
We will review and where necessary update all relevant contracts and service level agreements with organisations that provide us or the people of Aberdeenshire on our behalf with goods and services.	Ongoing	To ensure the organisations we do business with do not discriminate on the grounds of gender and other equalities	An Equalities clause has been included within the Council's tender documentation as part of a pre-qualifying questionnaire. Tenders have to evidence their compliance.

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Action No. 20	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to October 2008
We will report annually on progress in implementing our gender equality scheme	June 2008	The Council achieves its gender equality objectives and meets the gender duty.	2008 completed.  Next review due June 2009.
Action No. 21	Completion date	Intended outcome	Progress to October 2008
We will review our gender equality scheme every three years		The Council achieves its gender equality objectives meets the gender duty.	Scheme review due June 2010