

# Report

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Report to:	<b>Corporate Resources Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>2 July 2008</b>
Report by:	<b>Executive Director (Corporate Resources)</b>

Subject:	<b>Gender Equality Scheme Annual Update</b>
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## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ advise of the progress the Council has made in implementing the Gender Equality Scheme in the last year

## 2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that progress to date be noted.

## 3. Background

3.1. The gender equality duty was introduced by the Equality Act 2006 which amended the Sex Discrimination Act and places a statutory duty on public authorities when carrying out their functions to have “due regard” to the need to:-

- ◆ eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
- ◆ promote equality of opportunity between women and men

This “general duty” came into force on 6 April 2007 and applies to all of the Council's functions including policy making, service provision, decision making and employment. The duty applies to services and functions which are contracted out, and also where any private or voluntary organisation is carrying out a public function on behalf of the Council.

3.2. As part of the duty, public authorities are required to have “due regard” to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment in employment and vocational training in respect of people who intend to undergo, or have undergone, gender reassignment.

3.3. A series of “specific duties” were required to be met by public authorities by 29 June 2007. These were to:-

- ◆ gather information on how their work affects women and men, boys and girls
- ◆ consult employees, service users and other stakeholders
- ◆ assess the different impact of policies and practices on both sexes and use this information to inform their work
- ◆ identify priorities and set gender equality objectives

- ◆ plan and take action to achieve these objectives
- ◆ publish a gender quality scheme, report annually and review progress every three years

3.4. A separate duty applies to education authorities in Scotland. In addition to publishing their own scheme and equal pay statement, they have to ensure that the schools they manage gather information on the effects of their policies and practices on gender equality, assess the impact of these policies, and report on these activities. The fact that staff within education “authorities” are employed by Councils and therefore covered by their Council’s employment policies was pointed out to the Equal Opportunities Commission who remained of the opinion that a separate equal pay statement was required. The Executive Director (Education Resources) has prepared a separate “gender equality statement of commitment” for publication and an annual report will be published in line with the Council’s.

#### **4. Our Progress to Date**

4.1. Our work in the last year has focussed on taking forward the actions identified in the Gender Equality Scheme Action Plan. A summary of these is attached at Appendix 1 and will be published in June as part our annual update.

This work has involved the promotion of our positive action programme ‘Delivering a Fairer Future’ to employees across Resources and aims to address the imbalance that exists in our workforce.

The Advancing Women’s Employability (AWE) project has assisted 36 local women aged 50+ to re-evaluate their career options and consider if further learning would allow promotion opportunities and careers aspirations to be achieved.

270 teaching staff in Education Resources participated in Delivering a Fairer Future training to better promote non-traditional roles to pupils. Over 100 work tasters, job shadowing and work placement opportunities have taken place allowing employees the opportunity to try a non-traditional role.

4.2. Examples of progress include:-

- ◆ In 2007 South Lanarkshire Council was above the Scottish average for the percentage of highest paid two and five per cent of earners that were women, ranking 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> respectively.
- ◆ Doorway, South Lanarkshire’s Partnership on Domestic Abuse and Violence against Women identified the need to improve the response to women who were experiencing domestic abuse and the need to broaden services to meet their needs.
- ◆ The partnership has set up Local Action Groups (LAGs) in the four areas of East Kilbride, Hamilton/Blantyre, Clydesdale and Cambuslang/Rutherglen, which meet on a six weekly basis and facilitate a multi-agency approach to accessing services.
- ◆ Doorway has carried out awareness raising training for over 1,000 practitioners and service users to highlight the issue of domestic abuse and the services that are available to victims.

## **5. Priorities for the Year Ahead**

- 5.1. We are not complacent about the work we need to do and as such have identified priorities and actions for 2008. The details of these are contained within the Annual Progress Report in Appendix 1.
- 5.2. Some examples of actions in the workplan for 2008 include:-
  - ◆ Establish an equalities network for the Community Planning Partnership to share good practice and continue to develop services for men and women from all sections of the community
  - ◆ Results of the recent customer satisfaction survey will be collated to provide a clearer picture of the community make-up and provide a better understanding of what services men and women use.
  - ◆ We will use monitoring reports of service uptake to ensure that all services are available to both men and women.
  - ◆ Delivering Fairer Future training will be rolled out across all schools in the Hamilton, East Kilbride and Cambuslang/Rutherglen areas in the coming year.

## **6. Employee Implications**

- 6.1. The Gender Equality Scheme affects all Council employees as it applies to Council service delivery as well as to the Council as an employer.
- 6.2. A comprehensive package of training relating to equality and diversity awareness is available to all employees and elected members.

## **7. Financial Implications**

- 7.1. Costs associated with the Gender Equality Scheme action plan and associated consultation will be met from existing resources.

## **8. Other Implications**

- 8.1. A further annual progress report will be produced in June 2009.
- 8.2. Our progress report and Education's statement of commitment will be available on the Council's website.

## **9. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

- 9.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.
- 9.2. Consultation took place in the planning and development of the Gender Equality Scheme with members of the community and the Citizens' Panel.

**Robert McIlwain**  
**Executive Director (Corporate Resources)**

3 June 2008

## **Link(s) to Council Objectives**

- ◆ Fair and open
- ◆ Accountable effective and efficient

- ◆ Tackling disadvantage and deprivation
- ◆ Working with and respecting others

### **Previous References**

Corporate Resources Committee – 27 June 2008

### **List of Background Papers**

Gender Equality Duty:        Statutory code of practice  
   Guidance for local government in Scotland

### **Contact for Further Information**

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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## **South Lanarkshire Council Gender Equality Scheme**

### **Annual progress report June 2008**

#### **Introduction:**

Since the introduction of our Gender Equality Scheme in June 2007, South Lanarkshire Council has worked alongside the community and its workforce to promote equality of opportunity between men and women. We want to ensure that gender equality, like all equality issues, is not seen as merely an “add on”, but is “built in” to the services that we provide. At the heart of this work is our Council plan ‘Connect’ and our vision to “improve the quality of life of everyone in South Lanarkshire.”

Through regular ‘listening’ events, forums and working groups, the Council has involved individuals and groups. By asking for feedback, people have helped the Council to make a difference to the services which it provides. Our work has been focused by our action plan and this has enabled our performance to be monitored and open to scrutiny.

During this last year the Council has published ‘Connect’ which is the Council’s commitments for the next 4 years, 2007-2011. This document describes our priorities and objectives for our services. It also explains the values which underpin everything we do and which can help us achieve our vision. The values are:

- Fair and open
- People Focused
- Working with and respecting others
- Excellent employer
- Accountable, effective and efficient
- Tackling disadvantage and deprivation
- Sustainable development

With these in mind we have taken significant steps forward in gender equality in the last year but do recognise that there is still much to be done. Our positive action programme for employees ‘Delivering a Fairer Future’, is an example of an initiative which has produced good results, but which has also generated more actions for the future. Similarly our involvement with Oxfam’s ‘Engender’ project has directed us towards more areas and ways in which gender inequality can be tackled.

There is no quick and easy way to eliminate gender inequality, however it is an area of work where large public sector organisations like ourselves can and need to tackle difficult issues. If we do so then we can lead by example and show that embedding equality into everything we do will ensure that we are providing the best, most effective and efficient services possible that meet the needs of those living in our community.

Archibald Strang  
Chief Executive

### **Action Plan Progress:**

Our Gender Equality Scheme Action Plan was based on the Council's 6 priorities for change contained within the Council Plan "Fourcast". Some of the key achievements we have made in the past year from this are noted below. We are however keen to highlight that work is still to be done and will be an ongoing process over the years ahead. We have also highlighted some key action points for the coming year.

### **Achievements to date June 2007 – June 2008:**

#### **Theme 1: Creating successful communities**

##### **Objectives:**

- Working in partnership with all sectors to promote a strong and diverse economy, involving all local communities in physical, environmental, economic and social regeneration
- Promoting local economies by supporting business improvement, providing the right conditions for growth, improving skills and employability.

#### **Build a well informed culture of gender equality within the council.**

- Diversity champions identified for each Resource to raise awareness amongst staff and ensure we are delivering on the scheme.
- Elected members are participating in diversity awareness courses. This will ensure all within the Council have knowledge of how to utilise the diverse skills and abilities we have available in South Lanarkshire.

#### **Ensure regeneration projects address gender inequality in terms of access to employment and training.**

- Through Routes to Inclusion targeted programmes are delivered to meet identified need. Working for Families targets lone parents, parents on a low income, and parents with other stresses in the household and has a predominantly female client base although the project does seek to actively engage the male client group.
- An Oxfam officer was based for 2 years in the Changing Places office and worked with the Community Planning Partnership to better understand how equalities and in particular gender equality could be built into partnership working and regeneration.
- Advancing Women's Employability (AWE) Project – assisted 36 local women aged 50+ to re-evaluate their careers options and consider if further learning would allow promotion opportunities and careers aspirations to be achieved. The 12 week programme saw women develop their own personalised plan to reflect their interests and aptitudes.
- The Older Worker's Learning (OWL) Project supported employed and unemployed people aged 50+, to consider their learning options and to develop their skills, inside and outside the workplace. In 2007 41 women and 19 men participated in the project.

- POW (Positive Options for Women) Programme – offers support to beneficiaries to overcome significant personal barriers e.g. mental health issues, substance misuse etc. Whilst on the course, beneficiaries have the chance to undertake tasks designed to promote confidence, develop motivation and boost self-esteem, culminating in the completion of the Institute of Leadership and Management qualification. There are 40 participants per year and over 80% of the clients on the South Lanarkshire POW courses this year have gone on to access further training provision with a significant number now looking to develop their employability skills through tailored provision that will equip them to take the next step into the job market.

#### **Publish equal pay policy statement and tackle equal pay issues arising from equal pay review.**

- A policy statement on equal pay has been published and equal pay reviews are on going.
- In 2007 South Lanarkshire Council was above the Scottish average for the percentage of highest paid 2 and 5 per cent of earners that were women, ranking 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> respectively.
- 37.1% of highest paid 2 per cent of earners were women.
- 49.1% of highest paid 5 per cent of earners were women.

#### **Tackle issues and perceptions around motorway safety for women drivers.**

- Roads and Transportation Services Road Safety Section, following feedback from female lone parents, instigated a motorway campaign on “Hard Shoulder Safety”. The project was funded by Strathclyde Fire and Rescue and supported by Strathclyde Police and Amey Highways.
- A questionnaire asking what to do in the event of an emergency on the motorway was conducted at the Bothwell and Hamilton motorway service stations and over 600 people participated of which nearly 50% were female.
- Those who took part received information leaflets on what to do in case of an emergency and were also issued with items such as a high visibility vest.
- Overall feedback was very positive on the campaign and it was recently highlighted in the South Lanarkshire Reporter.

### **Theme 2: Learning in the community**

#### **Objectives:**

- Establishing high quality learning and training opportunities which support learners of all abilities and ages to achieve their full potential.
- Bringing up to date the way in which education and training is provided in our schools and in the communities; improving the way we teach; enabling all learners to meet the challenges of new and changing technologies.

#### **Improve participation rates of men in community/adult learning and volunteering activities.**

- After a concerted effort to target learning programmes to specific groups in the community and improve monitoring procedures across the Community Learning and Development

Partnership, there has been a recorded increase of male participation from 2,825 in '05-'06 to 12,097 in '06-'07.

- As a result the percentage gender split has increased towards male learners.

### **Improve boys' and girls' awareness and understanding of choices available in career pathways avoiding gender stereotyping.**

- The vocational development programme offers over 900 pupils in S3 and S4, from across South Lanarkshire's 17 secondary schools, the opportunity to try non-traditional roles in a college environment.
- Promotional materials have been developed to positively promote that there are "no subjects for boys and no subjects for girls".
- Research was conducted with Oxfam to better understand why boys and girls choose specific options and this informed the development of the promotional materials to ensure that they appealed to both boys and girls.

### **Improve participation levels of men in arts/cultural activities.**

- An analysis of courses being run at Hamilton Townhouse showed that 57% of attendees were male.
- Quest focus groups have been organised in each cultural venue to consult with both men and women. Feedback from men has so far suggested that they are happy with the way activities are promoted.
- Detailed analysis of activity attendance is planned for June and July 2008 to consider what changes to marketing and activity structure could be made.

### **Work with Education Resources to support implementation of the Education Resources Gender Equality Statement of Commitment.**

- Over 270 staff in the Clydesdale area participated in 'Delivering a Fairer Future' training to better promote non-traditional roles to pupils.

## **Theme 3: Living in the community**

### **Objectives:**

- Working with our communities and partners to achieve quality of life improvements in local areas.
- Promoting the well-being of citizens through improvements in local service delivery and enhancements in general amenities and facilities.

### **Ensure gender equality issues are built into the development and monitoring of community safety strategies**

- The Community Safety Partnership's 'Be Smart Be Safe' project is attended mainly by women but is aimed at both sexes and is promoted as such.

### **Increased confidence of women re safety/access to parks/countryside**



- Our 'Paths to Health' programme is targeted specifically at those who have health problems and who would benefit from walking but often don't have the confidence to do so.
- We now have a bank of some 80 volunteers running supported walks right across South Lanarkshire.
- Currently, male participation in the walks programme is 25% and though work will be done to encourage more men to participate. This does represent that the project is working, as often it is older women who feel the least confident about accessing countryside areas alone and it they who are taking the opportunity to participate in the programme.

**Continue to act as a lead agency in partnerships aimed at tackling domestic abuse and providing a co-ordinated response for service users.**

- 'Doorway', South Lanarkshire's Partnership on Domestic Abuse and Violence against Women identified the need to improve the response to women who were experiencing domestic abuse and the need to broaden services to meet their needs.
- The partnership has set up Local Action Groups (LAGs) in the four areas of East Kilbride, Hamilton/Blantyre, Clydesdale and Cambuslang/Rutherglen, which meet on a six weekly basis and facilitate a multi-agency approach to accessing services.
- 'Doorway' has carried out awareness raising training for over 1000 practitioners and service users to highlight the issue of domestic abuse and the services that are available to victims.
- In March 2008 'Doorway' produced a report on marginalised women which investigated the barriers to services that they faced and how these could be overcome. The research focused on disabled women, older women and women from black and ethnic minorities. Recommendations have been set to improve publicising of services, provide regular training, and develop links with community groups to improve understanding of how needs can be met.
- Articles appeared in the Council's internal magazine "The Works" to highlight the 16 Days of Action for the Elimination of Violence Against Women in which Doorway held the Men Against Violence Against Women conference and the 104 Pairs of Shoes exhibition.

**Implement South Lanarkshire Carers' Strategy**

- All carers are entitled to an assessment of needs and 76% of carers identified in 2007 took up the offer an assessment.
- Of the 68 carried out 45 were female and 23 were male.

**Theme 4: Supporting our communities**

**Objectives:**

- Working in partnership with others to promote the health and well-being of citizens and communities.
- Promoting safe and sustainable communities addressing issues such as social inclusion, drugs and alcohol misuse.

**Use the Council's lead role in the community planning process to influence and promote gender equality across South Lanarkshire**

- “Tackling Inequalities, A Guide to Better Services” booklet has been produced as a result of working together with the Oxfam ‘Engender’ programme. The booklet helps map out a design process for projects and programmes to help ensure inequalities are considered from the outset.
- This has been developed and shared with the Community Planning Partnership (CPP).

## **Theme 5: Modernising Services**

Objectives:

- Delivering services in a responsive, modern and cost-effective manner
- Delivering Best Value in all aspects of service delivery either alone or by working in partnership with others.

### **Ensure that gender equality issues are identified/included in all the Council’s partnership working**

- An equalities impact assessment form has been designed by the Council’s Equal Opportunities Working Group and is being shared with CPP partners to help quality assure the ongoing work of the partnership.
- The Council’s corporate training course for impact assessments is being provided to CPP partners to help set a standard amongst the partners.

### **Following the launch of revised consultation policy there is evidence of “inclusive” consultation and there is evidence that the views of consultees have been taken account of in the development/review of Council policies.**

- Procedures have been developed to ensure that all community/equality groups are involved and considered for consultation.
- Monitoring procedures have been developed to provide an equalities profile of the individuals involved in consultation and of the views they have expressed.
- Information and results of consultation ongoing and completed is available on the council website.
- An Accessible Information Strategy is being developed with the involvement of men and women, young and old from across community groups such as Lanarkshire Ethnic Minority Action Group, Better Government for Older People, South Lanarkshire Disability Partnership and South Lanarkshire Youth Council.

## **Theme 6: Resource management**

Objectives:

- Maximising the potential of the workforce to ensure that the Council attracts and retains employees who are both valued and motivated.
- Maximising the use of properties and assets.

## **Make a firm and visible commitment to promoting a culture of gender equality in the Council's role as an employer**

- The Council's positive action programme 'Delivering a Fairer Future' aims to address the gender imbalance that exists in our workforce.
- Over 100 work tasters, job shadowing and work placement opportunities have taken place allowing employees the opportunity to try a non-traditional role.
- Over 60 employees have had career discussions to look at how they can progress their careers in a non-traditional route.

## **Ensure gender equality is embedded into South Lanarkshire Council standing orders on contracts and procurement practices**

- An equality procurement toolkit has been developed and implemented to ensure that all equality issues are properly considered and monitored during the procurement process.
- A good practice guide to community and voluntary sector grants has been developed to ensure equalities issues are properly accounted for in the distribution of monies to groups.

## **Gender Equality Scheme Action Plan 2008:**

With all of the good work that has begun this year we are keen to keep learning about and developing the services we provide as a council. We want to continue to promote the idea and message of "Delivering a Fairer Future" to all those living and working in our community. With this in mind we are aware that there is still work to be done and we have set the following out as just some of our priorities for 2008 to ensure that the gender equalities agenda continues to be embedded in our day to day work. These priorities are set out under the values of the new council plan, "Connect" in which we aim to be: fair and open; accountable effective and efficient; committed to tackling disadvantage and deprivation; determined to act in a responsible and sustainable way.

### **Priorities for 2008:**

- Establish an equalities network for the Community Planning Partnership to share good practice and continue to develop services for men and women from all sections of the community.
- Run an awareness raising campaign for Delivering a Fairer Future in our schools and community to highlight the opportunities for men and women in non-traditional roles.
- The Community Safety Unit will work with Better Government for Older People to develop proposals that will attract and involve men in the 'Be Smart Be Safe' project.
- Further develop the website for the Doorway project to ensure better accessibility to advice and support networks.
- The Doorway project will undertake research focusing on and highlighting violence against women, and training will be developed to raise awareness of this issue.
- Results of the recent customer satisfaction survey will be collated to provide a clearer picture of the community make-up and provide a better understanding of what services men and women use.

- The Accessible Information Strategy will be launched and will provide a clear understanding of how to communicate with all members of the community in a way that best meets their needs.
- “Delivering a Fairer Future” training will be rolled out across all schools in the Hamilton, East Kilbride and Cambuslang/Rutherglen areas in the coming year.
- We will use monitoring reports of service uptake to ensure that all services are available to both men and women.

**Conclusion:**

In 2007-08 we have made much progress but the challenge still exists to involve and improve the lives of all in our community. As such we look forward to continuing the partnerships old and new in the coming year to help us ensure that we raise the awareness of gender equality for everybody living in South Lanarkshire. We are committed to the continual improvement of the services we provide and the quality of life that we all lead.

For more information or if you want this information in a different format or language, please phone 01698 453886 or email [simon.cameron@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:simon.cameron@southlanarkshire.gov.uk)