



**NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Name of Committee	CABINET
Directorate:	Governance and Communications
Corporate Manager:	Nicci Marzec
Date:	30 July 2007

Report Title	Gender Equality Scheme
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Key Decision	No
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1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That Cabinet approve the adoption of the Gender Equality Scheme.
- 1.2 That Cabinet agree that the actions identified are incorporated in a Single Equality Scheme when the document is published in the Spring 2008.

2. Summary

2.1 The Gender Equality Duty came into force in April 2007 and the Council is required to publish a Gender Equality Scheme to comply with the Equality Act 2006. This gives a legal responsibility to demonstrate that we treat men and women fairly regardless of their gender.

2.2 Under the scheme the Council has the following duties:

General Duty:

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

Specific Duty:

- Prepare and publish a gender equality scheme, showing how it will meet general and specific duties and set out gender equality objectives

- In formulating overall objectives, consider the need to include objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap
- Gather and use information on how the authority's policies and practices affect gender equality in the work force and in the delivery of services
- Consult stakeholders (i.e. employees, service users and others, including trade unions) and take account of relevant information in order to determine gender equality objectives
- To assess the impact of current and proposed policies and practices on gender equality
- To implement the actions set out in its scheme within three years, unless it is unreasonable or impracticable to do so
- To report against the scheme every year and review the scheme at least every three years

3. Report Background

3.1 NBC reported Level 1 of the Equality Standard for Local Government for the period ending March 2007. Reaching Level 2 during this financial year has been identified as a priority.

3.2 At Level 1 the authority was required to have adopted a Comprehensive Equality Policy that commits it to achieving equality in race, disability, gender, age, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Formulation and adoption of this particular strand is one of the leadership and corporate commitments of the standard.

4. Options and Evaluation of Options

4.1 Publication of the scheme is a legal requirement. The document will appear on the Council's website and can be made available in other formats upon request.

5. Resource Implications (including Financial Implications)

5.1 The delivery plan contains actions that will be dealt with within existing resources and some which may require additional funding. Further work will need to be done to estimate unmet training costs or any other that may arise.

5.2 The only legal requirement for the authority is to publish the scheme

5.3 No additional budget is required for this activity.

6. Risk and Opportunity Issues

6.1 The gender equality duty is a legal requirement and is enforceable through the courts if necessary. From October 2007 enforcement will be the responsibility of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights. In the meantime, this falls with the Equal Opportunities Commission.

6.2 In adopting the scheme the Council will restate its commitment to equality of opportunity and in making progress along the Equality Standard for Local Government

7. Consultees (Internal and External)

Internal	All staff
External	Council forums networks Trade Unions Peers in other authorities

8. Compliance Issues

A: How Proposals Deliver Priority Outcomes

Recovery Plan
Corporate Plan
Council Priority 3: To promote equality, social inclusion and improve health

B: Other Implications

Other Strategies
The duties placed by this scheme must be reflected on all other strategies for the Council

Finance Comments

Legal Comments

9. Background Papers

Title	Description	Source
Draft Gender Equality Scheme	A consultation document	Intranet/NBC website
NBC Gender Equality Scheme Consultation 2007-2010	Results document	Submitted to Management Board
The Gender Equality Duty and Local Government: Guidance for Public Authorities in England- March 2007	Guidance from the Equal Opportunities Commission	Website

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Gender Equality Scheme for Northampton Borough Council 2007-2010

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Theme: Leadership and Corporate Commitment

Activities:

1. Council's working conditions, policy developments and service delivery are provided to design out inequalities
2. Simplify and rationalise equality activity
3. Equality Impact Assessments identify any adverse impact for women and men in respect of provision of services and employment
4. The Council can demonstrate that it has made marked improvements in its equality work (including gender) and share best practice with other organisations

Actions:	Milestones	Responsible person and completion date	Progress update
a. Mainstream all equalities work into a single scheme	Single Equalities Plan	Silvina Katz (Policy) March 2008	
b. Policies and strategies are reviewed to check they promote equality (including gender) and eliminate discrimination using Equality Impact Assessments	Published list of Policies Service Plans	Each Service to undertake this task during the review of their functions from 2007 to 2010	
c. Meet equality targets (and set new ones as appropriate)	Equality Standard Level 2	Nicci Marzec (Corporate Manager)/ Chief Executive – March 2008	
Equality Standard Level 3-5			
Theme: Community Engagement and accountability			
Activities:			
1. Gender related incidents are recorded and mapped			
2. Break down gender stereotypes and promote positive role models			
3. Views from community are taken into consideration for service improvement			
Action:			
a. Extend hate crime reporting to capture incidents relating to a person's gender	Common monitoring system to capture data on hate crime	Lindsey Cameron to action- Start June 2007	Progress update
b. Communications and reputation are inclusive	Communications policy	Simone Wade to monitor All staff/Communications-ongoing	
c. Forums and specialist groups are consulted as appropriate in delivery and decision making	Increased satisfaction and engagement Equality Impact Assessments carried out and lodged with	Service Managers to carry out EIA for reviews and all new policies Silvina Katz to gather	

	Policy and Governance Team for monitoring and recording	collective evidence Start June 2007 and ongoing- Review annually
Theme: Service Delivery and Customer Care		
Activities:		
1. Service areas are able to use monitoring information to assess whether gender equality targets are being met		
2. People access the services they need regardless of their gender		
3. Encourage participation of all community, inc. girls and women in council run activities		
Actions:		
All service areas carry out Equality Impact assessments and include gender as one of the strands assessed	Equality Impact Assessments carried out	EIA templates include gender strand
Customer Feedback information and satisfaction used to check whether gender is a factor or barrier in accessing services	Increased customer satisfaction	Performance/Customer Service areas-Start June 2007 and ongoing
Promote events that will contribute to achieving corporate priorities	Posters, web presence and information available	Service Managers
Use forums to address policy and decision making issues as appropriate and improve communications	Increased participation	Service Managers/ Senior Officers/ appropriate officers
Theme: Employment and Training		
Activities:		
1. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated and specific procedures will be in place to deal with such allegations		
2. Identify the barriers to part-time working and to job share opportunities with a view to removing such barriers wherever possible		
3. Ensure that all staff understand what is unlawful discrimination		
4. Break down gender stereotypes and promote positive role models		
5. Pay differences between women and men in respect of the same work or equal value have been identified and where necessary remedial measures put in place to correct differences		

Actions:	Milestones	Responsible person and completion date	Progress Update
<p>a. Review harassment and bullying procedures to ensure they reflect best practice, ensuring that the elements relating to sexual harassment are fully considered</p>	<p>Policy All employees aware of the support and advice available if they experience harassment</p>	<p>Nicole MacDonald (Human Resources) October 2007</p>	<p>Review commenced</p>
<p>b. Review part time working, job share practice and flexible work for all (including for those with caring responsibilities)</p>	<p>Policy Staff retention % of part time employees in the council by gender and % of part time employees at senior levels by gender</p>	<p>Nicole MacDonald (Human Resources) October 2007</p>	
<p>c. Provide training for all staff (inc new joiners and new councillors) and review during one to ones, appraisals and development plans</p>	<p>Increased awareness to eliminate unlawful and illegal discrimination</p>	<p>All Managers/ Training Manager- Ongoing</p>	<p>Induction scheme for new joiners and newcomers includes equality module Review and refresh</p>
<p>d. Promote positive role models through coaching, management development and training support for staff and councillors</p>	<p>Increased representation of minority groups and in relation to gender in workforce, at all levels Appraisal and Development Plans</p>	<p>All Managers/ Training Manager-Ongoing</p>	
<p>d. Equal Pay review to be completed and implemented as part of rolling programme</p>	<p>Single Status agreement in place BV11a Percentage of top 5% earners at NBC are women</p>	<p>Annie Tilson (HR) Complete March 2008 Howard Crabtree</p>	