

GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME

PORTFOLIO RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE

CABINET

22ND MARCH, 2007

Wards Affected

County Wide

Purpose

To approve the Gender Equality Scheme 2007-2010.

Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

Recommendation

THAT

- (a) the requirement of the Gender Equality Duty be noted; (This has come into Force under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, as amended by the Equality Act 2006) and;**
- (b) the proposed Gender Equality Scheme and resulting Action Plan be approved.**

Reasons

- All Members have a responsibility to lead and promote equality and diversity issues.
- The Gender Equality Duty is part of the Equality Duty 2006. The Equality Duty 2006 has, as one of the three functions, "to create a duty on public authorities to promote equality of opportunity between men and women and to prohibit sex discrimination in the workplace".

Considerations

1. The Gender Equality Duty requires all public authorities (including voluntary and private organisations that carry out public functions) as employers and as service providers to have due regard to eliminate discrimination and harassment that is unlawful under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (SDA) and discrimination that is unlawful under the Equal Pay Act 1970 (EqPA). There is general duty and specific duty. The General Duty has three parts:

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Neville Meredith, Race Equality Development Officer on (01432) 267307

- The need to eliminate unlawful discrimination.
- To eliminate harassment.
- To promote equality of opportunity between women and men.

2. Specific Duties are:

- Publish a Gender Equality Scheme and review on a three-year cycle. The Scheme must identify gender equality goals and produce an action plan to implement these. An annual progress report should also be produced.
- Publish an equal pay policy which must:
 - include pay arrangements
 - outline measures to ensure fair promotion and development opportunities
 - address three specific causes of the pay gap (which are pay discrimination, caring responsibilities and occupational segregation)
- Conduct gender specific impact assessment. Herefordshire Council has completed impact assessments in relation to gender (2004 –2007).

Risk Management

It is a legal requirement to have the Gender Equality Scheme in place by 6th April, 2007.

Alternative Options

There are no Alternative Options.

Consultees

Sources used to inform the GES and action plan:

- Minority Ethnic People's Experience in Herefordshire 04
- Disability Equality Scheme 06-09
- Race Equality Scheme 05-08
- Staff Opinion Survey 06
- Older People's Strategy 06
- Supporting the health of young people in Herefordshire 06
- Communities Against Racism group
- Rainbow Forum
- LGBT Staff Group
- Traveller's Health Project
- Herefordshire Women's Aid
- Equality Impact Assessments
- Herefordshire Branch of Unison
- Statistics from Register Offices

Appendices

Appendix 1 – The Gender Equality Scheme 2007-2010 and Action Plan

Background Papers

None identified.