

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME
2007 – 2010**

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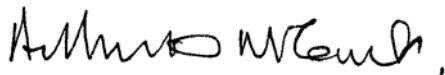
1 FOREWORD

This is The Highland Council's first Gender Equality Scheme. The scheme sets out how we will ensure that men and women living or working in the Highlands are treated fairly and have equal opportunities. It forms a key part of the Council's wider corporate equal opportunities strategies.

New legal duties on the public sector build on existing legislation. Over 30 years after the introduction of the Sex Discrimination and Equal Pay Acts there is still discrimination. The key difference is that public bodies now have a legal responsibility to demonstrate how they promote equality between men and women. This proactive approach to promote gender equality is similar to recent requirements in respect of race and disability.

To do this we need to take account of gender equality in the everyday work of the Council, making it central to our strategic priorities and the ways in which we plan and deliver our services as well as our recruitment and employment practices. Where we identify that women or men, girls or boys, experience barriers because of their gender we will address issues with specific and targeted action. For example, we have introduced a number of actions to address very low numbers of women in senior management positions, we have introduced flexible working policies, we have encouraged more men to take up employment opportunities in child care, and we support women and children who experience gender based violence.

Increasingly, we work with our Community Planning Partners to take forward initiatives that benefit communities and deliver services more effectively. In partnership we will also seek to remove barriers that prevent women or men from fully contributing and participating in the communities where they live.



Arthur McCourt
Chief Executive



Cllr Sandy Park
Convener

2	INTRODUCTION
2.1	The Gender Equality Duty aims to bring about change in the culture of organisations by shifting from a legal framework that relies on individual people complaining about discrimination, to a positive one in which the public sector has a proactive role.
2.2	The new duty to promote gender equality requires the Council to demonstrate its commitment to improve outcomes for men and women, boys and girls in a Gender Equality Scheme (GES). This should mean better services that meet their needs more closely.
2.3	Our objectives for implementing gender equality will be addressed through the framework of the Council’s Corporate Plan and its strategic priorities, service planning, equality impact assessments, monitoring, and importantly our work with the local Community Planning Partnership, the Highland Wellbeing Alliance.
2.4	The scheme is one of a number of measures taken by the Council to meet our commitment to equal opportunities. Much that the Council is already undertaking to address gender equality and challenge discrimination is reflected in the scheme. It brings together the work of individual services and contributes to our corporate approach to promoting equality and diversity. It draws on existing plans to promote gender equality and measures already introduced in the Council's Equal opportunities policies for Employment and Service Delivery, and its Race Equality Scheme and Disability Equality Scheme .
2.6	The scheme sets out our framework for implementing gender over the next three years and identifies our key priorities and actions. Each year we will publish a progress report to show how the Council has met its responsibilities.
2.7	<p>The Council’s Gender Equality Scheme identifies four key objectives that will encourage a culture in the Council to promote equality between women and men, boys and girls, challenges gender stereotypes, increases the consideration of gender equality in all activities, and tackle the potential for unlawful discrimination and harassment. These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To deliver services which are accessible for men and women, boys and girls. 2. To review Council employment practices and policies to ensure they are fair and accessible. 3. To increase engagement, involvement and representation of women and men, girls and boys. 4. To demonstrate that the Council will not tolerate gender based violence, discrimination and harassment.

3	BACKGROUND
3.1	The gender equality duty came into force on 6th April 2007 and is referred to by the Equal Opportunities Commission as the most significant development in gender legislation since the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (SDA). A summary of the legislation is set out in Appendix 1 .
3.2	It has been introduced in recognition of the need for a radical new approach to equality. The duty is intended to address the fact that, despite 30 years of individual legal rights to sex equality, gender inequalities persist. In Scotland: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a 12% pay gap between hourly full-time earnings of women and men. • Part-time women earn 34% less than full time men, hour for hour. • Twice as many women as men work in local government, 12.5% of local authority chief executive's are women. • In Education girls out perform boys in terms of attainment.
3.3	In Highland: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women make up around 51% of the population and men 49%. • 75% of elected Council Members are men • Taken overall, women earn £75 a week less than men. There are fewer women in full time work than men, and they earn £104 less a week than men. • Women are far more likely to live in single parent households. • Above working age, women are more than twice as likely as men to live alone. • Widespread occupational segregation in Scotland is reflected in the Council's workforce.
3.4	The duty aims to improve the situation, both for men and for women, for boys and for girls by encouraging public authorities to recognise the impact of gender roles and relationships. For example developing employment policies and practices that recognise care responsibilities and the different patterns of working lives, supporting women who are more vulnerable to domestic and other forms of violence, and designing services that better meet the needs of women and men.
3.5	Instead of depending on individuals making complaints about sex discrimination, the duty gives public authorities legal responsibility to demonstrate that they treat women and men fairly in policy-making, services and employment. The duty is about taking steps to promote gender equality for all and ultimately about providing better public service for all.
3.6	The Equality Act 2006 brings gender legislation in line with the public sector duties already enforced for race and disability. Initially the gender duty will be enforced by the Equal Opportunities Commission but by October 2007 all three duties will be enforceable by a new body, the Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR). The new body will also deal with other areas of equality, including age, religion and belief, and sexual orientation.

4	THE GENERAL DUTY
4.1	<p>The Equality Act 2006 amended the SDA and introduced a statutory Gender Equality Duty, the general duty, which came into effect on 6th April 2007. When carrying out all their functions (including policy-making, service provision, employment matters and decision-making) public bodies must have due regard to the need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sex • To promote equality of opportunity between women and men.
4.2	The Specific Duties
4.3	<p>Most public authorities are also covered by specific duties. These include the requirement to publish a three year Gender Equality Scheme. In Scotland, these were introduced by Ministerial Order on 09 April 2007ⁱ. By 29 June 2007 the Council is required to publish its scheme and include details of arrangements of how it will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather information on how its work affects women and men • Consult employees, service users, trade unions 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 gender equality objectives • Report annually and review progress every three years <p>By 28 September 2007 the Council is required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish an equal pay policy statement (for listed bodies with 150+ staff) and report on progress every three years.
4.4	<p>In addition, in its role as Education Authorities the Council is responsible for making arrangements for each school under its management to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather information on the effect of its policies and practices in relation to the extent to which they promote gender equality; • Assess the impact, or likely impact, of policies and practices on boys and girls • Report annually on the above • Plan and take action to achieve gender equality objectives • Maintain a copy of the Scheme.
4.5	Transsexual People
4.6	<p>The gender equality duty incorporates a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and harassment towards transsexual staff. This applies at present to employment and vocational training. The Article 13 Gender Directive, which will come into effect at the end of December 2007, will extend European Commission sex discrimination law to cover goods and services. Transsexual people will be protected against discrimination in service provision. The directive will extend the scope of the gender equality duty to include discrimination and harassment against transsexual people in goods and services.</p>

5	THE HIGHLAND CONTEXT
5.1	The Highland Council has a population of over 213,000, with over 93,000 households in a land area of 26,484 km ² . It is the largest local authority area in Scotland, comprising one-third of the total area of Scotland. Around half the population live in the inner Moray Firth area, the rest are in remote small towns and remote rural areas and many areas are sparsely populated.
5.2	With over 12,8000 employees, The Highland Council is the largest employer in the area and provides a wide range of services impacting on everyone who lives there ranging from refuse collection, education, community care, money advice, Council Tax and rates collection, housing and many others.
5.3	Geography, transport, scattered rural populations are important factors in the challenges we face to provide accessible and equitable services in remote areas.
5.4	The Highland Council Corporate Plan: The Council will produce a Corporate Plan for 2007 to 2011 which will set out the Council's priorities and how they will be delivered and reported. The Equalities duties will be included in that plan along with appropriate high level performance measures.
5.5	The Council's Workforce Management Plan: The Council's Resources Committee approved the implementation of a Workforce Management Plan in February 2007. The Plan sets the framework for people management in the Council for 2007- 08. It includes objectives which will contribute to meeting the gender equality duty and is the overall means by which the Council plans the development of its workforce to meet current and future needs while ensuring compliance with relevant employment legislation.
5.6	Best Value and Community Planning and Equal Opportunities: A 2006 report by Audit Scotland on Best Value and Community Planning regarding Highland Council's performance set an improvement agenda with a number of immediate and medium-term priorities. One of the immediate priorities is to maintain the focus on equal opportunities. The Audit Scotland report states that equal opportunities issues need more attention from The Highland Council which will require ongoing commitment and improved reporting on performance and progress.
5.7	The Community Plan for Highland: The Highland Wellbeing Alliance (the Alliance) is the formal regional community planning partnership. Its third plan will cover the period from 2008 and it will reflect how the partnership will contribute to equalities duties.
5.8	'For Highland's Children 2' is effectively the community plan for Highland's children, young people and families. It is the main driver for improvement in the delivery of integrated services and to inform and involve service users. The specific duties and arrangements for education and schools are set out in this scheme and actions will be monitored through the Integrated Children's Plan.

5.8	<p>Partnership Working: Highland Council is actively involved with partners to promote equality of opportunity and diversity. A partnership Equality and Diversity Strategy Group has recently been established. Priority activities include the development of a partnership equality and diversity strategy to encourage efficiencies, develop partnership approaches and share best practice. Following earlier collaborative work around the development of Disability Equality Scheme, consultation was carried out in partnership to identify gender priorities. Working together with agencies and communities on identified priorities will provide positive opportunities for making a real difference and for the efficient use of resources. Actions taken by the Alliance will complement and add value to each partner's work on these issues.</p>
6	<p>GENDER PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS</p>
6.1	<p>This section sets out our priorities for meeting the general duty. The Scheme is accompanied by an Action Plan (Appendix 4). Each of the four key objectives referred to in the introduction is described below with current contextual information for the region, proposed priorities and performance measures.</p>
6.2	<p>The scheme and action plan build on activities undertaken by the Council, including positive action to encourage more women into senior management. The Council is committed to retaining, developing and motivating employees and has developed and promoted a range of policies to ensure that they are able to balance work and home commitments, including Flexible Working, Home-working, Job Share and Maternity, Paternity and Adoption policies. We are active partners in multi-agency strategies to address Violence Against Women.</p>
6.3	<p>The scheme is based on existing information and evidence including consultations. It also reflects national priorities around occupational segregation, equal pay and Violence Against Women, care responsibilities, public participation and young people. These are priorities which will achieve visible progress in meeting our obligations under the duties.</p>
6.4	<p>Objective 1: To deliver services which are accessible for men and women, boys and girls.</p>
6.4.1	<p>Context In Highland, at ages 5 – 14, the gap between male and female attainment in Reading and Writing is apparent at an early age. The gap widens as pupils progress up primary school and into early secondary school beginning at around 5-10% points and increasing up to between 15-20% points. Female school leavers are more likely to enter further or higher education than males. Around two thirds of individuals entering training were found to be males, as were around 60% of those entering employment.</p>
6.4.2	<p>In terms of wider service use, some gender data is gathered in services e.g. homelessness and some Social Work client users. However gender data is not gathered across all services and it is not considered corporately in an equalities context. From September 2007 the results of the annual performance survey will include gender analysis.</p>

6.4.3	The Council is aware that women, carers and lone parents in particular can face a range of barriers to access to training and employment. The Council is involved in a wide range of activities that support and provide services for Families and Young People and that assist men and women, boys and girls, including Early Years activities, the Working for Families Project, and the Council is introducing a Childcare Voucher scheme for employees.
6.4.4	<p><u>Priorities</u></p> <p>It is recommended that the priorities are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To equality proof Council services to ensure they meet the needs of men and women and girls and boys by improving data collection, analysis and assessing all new policies, policy reviews and reviews of functions for any gender impact. 2. Taking action to address gender imbalance in service use. 3. To build relevant gender equality considerations into the procurement and grants process.
6.4.5	<p><u>Performance measures</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 100% of all new policies and functions and reviews of policies and functions are screened for gender impact. 2. By June 2008 develop a system to gather evidence to provide a gender analysis of service use and customer experience. 3. 100% of all relevant procurement contracts and grant awards comply an equal opportunities statement from 2008 – 09 onwards.
6.5	To review Council employment practices and policies to ensure they are fair and accessible.
6.5.1	<p><u>Context</u></p> <p>The Council is committed to ensuring that men and women are treated equitably in respect of recruitment, employment, pay and development. There are already a range of policies and practices in place to support these aims around Recruitment and Selection; Flexible Working; Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Leave; and developing employees. In addition, the Council has developed and implemented actions to encourage more women into senior management. Further details are in Appendix 3.</p>
6.5.2	The Council has Equal Pay objectives to ensure that both men and women are treated equally in all aspects of recruitment, selection, promotion and training. In particular the Council is committed to eliminating any differences in pay for work that is the same or work considered to be of equal value or equivalent and will ensure equal pay by seeking to implement a fair and transparent pay strategy. The Council has assessed its potential liability under the Equal Pay Act and made arrangement to address potential liabilities. A revised pay and grading structure will eliminate any remaining gender based pay inequalities.
6.5.3	The Council is currently in the process of seeking to agree the implementation of the Single Status Agreement which seeks to implement a new job evaluation scheme and eliminate differences on the grounds of sex and covers pay, grading,

	working time arrangements, and payment of bonuses.
6.5.4	The Council is committed to developing all its employees. It is a priority that all employees receive a Personal Development Plan and an annual interview where managers and staff discuss development and training needs. Equal Opportunities training is an element of the Council's Management Competency Framework and the Core Competency Framework. The Council will continue to monitor attendance at training courses by gender to ensure equality of access.
6.5.5	The Council undertakes regular staff attitude surveys and will evaluate the differing views of male and female staff.
6.5.6	Improved access to workforce information through the Payroll and Personnel system has provided additional data for the preparation of the GES. The data confirms that there is significant gender imbalance in some Services, grades and in particular occupational groups. 73% of the Council's workforce is female and 27% is male. Nearly half of our employees work on a part-time basis and part-time employees are primarily female. Further details are provided in Appendix 2 .
6.5.7	<p><u>Priorities</u></p> <p>As well as providing the statistical information above, all of the Council's employment policies, procedures and practice have been screened in terms of the Gender duty. It is recommended that the priorities are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To achieve a better balance of women and men across all occupations through staff recruitment, retention and development and working practices such as flexible working and access to leave. 2. Pay (implementing equal pay and job evaluation) 3. Raising employee awareness of Council policies and staff entitlements
6.5.8	<p><u>Performance Measures</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual increase in the number and proportion of women in management in the Council. 2. Improve the gender balance in all occupational groups in the Council by 2010. 3. By 28th September 2007 develop and publish an equal pay policy statement.
6.5.9	Transsexual staff
	The Council is committed to ensuring equality in employment for transsexual employees and job applicants. When reviewing existing policies and procedures we will ensure they provide equitable treatment and that they support the dignity and privacy of transsexual staff and those undergoing gender re-assignment. We will approach local transgender support groups for advice.

6.6	To increase engagement, involvement and representation of women and men, girls and boys.
6.6.1	<p><u>Context</u> From the May 2007 elections, 75% of elected members to the Council are men. At 15.06.07 78% of Office Bearers (including Joint Boards) are male. Information is incomplete on the gender profile of Community Councillors. In terms of Highland Youth Voice there are more girls than boys elected (44:25) and equal numbers on the HYV Executive (eight girls and eight boys)ⁱⁱ. At national level, the Commission for Public Appointments advises that more men than women hold public appointments, and similar proportions of men and women participate in voluntary activitiesⁱⁱⁱ. Information is not currently available on the gender breakdown of the boards or committees of voluntary organisations in the region, although the annual performance survey in 2007 will seek this information from survey respondents.</p>
6.6.2	<p>We will encourage men and women, boys and girls to engage in public life, such as becoming a Councillor, being involved in Pupil Councils or Ward Forums. We will do all we can to address barriers that prevent men and women from becoming involved in consultation initiatives and in taking up public duties. We will for example give careful consideration to the methods of community engagement including the timing and location of public meetings to ensure that those with caring responsibilities or work commitments are able to participate.</p>
6.6.3	<p><u>Priorities</u> It is recommended that the priorities are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Men and women, boys and girls are encouraged to engage in public life; 2. Monitoring and seeking better balance of men, women, boys and girls in the representative structures which the Council supports 3. The standards of community engagement are applied and evidenced when consulting communities on decisions affecting the services they receive
6.6.4	<p><u>Performance measures</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage better gender balance in representative structures the Council supports 2. Increased numbers of relevant staff trained in Community Engagement Standards
6.7	To demonstrate that the Council will not tolerate gender based violence, discrimination or harassment.
6.7.1	<p><u>Context</u> Violence Against Women is a key a key concern and the Council works closely with its Community Planning partners, including the voluntary sector, at strategic and operational levels to tackle this issue. The Council was a key partner in the development of a partnership Domestic Abuse Strategy.</p>
6.7.2	<p>In line with developments at national level and guidance from the Scottish Executive, the partnership is presently widening its focus from Domestic Abuse to encompass the broader agenda of Violence Against Women. The Council plays</p>

	an active role in the Highland Wellbeing Alliance Violence Against Women Training Consortium, which employs a Violence Against Women Development & Training Officer
6.7.3	With our partner agencies and voluntary organisations in the Highland Wellbeing Alliance, we are working to end violence against women and improve services for those are or have been affected and appropriate to their needs and to raise awareness of the issues around male violence against women. Together we aim to tackle and oppose all forms of violence against women such as domestic abuse, rape and assault, prostitution, pornography, child sexual abuse, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, trafficking, and stalking.
6.7.4	The Council recognises the harm that gender based violence inflicts on women, children and families and wishes to send a clear message that there can be no excuse for perpetrating male violence against women.
6.7.5	There are recognised limitations to identifying the scale of violence against women in Highland, including underreporting, the definition of violence and the recording of statistics. The British Crime Survey found that only 18 per cent of incidents of sexual victimisation reported by survey respondents had been brought to the attention of the police.
6.7.6	To promote the cultural change required, information on attitudes to gender equality and personal experiences need to be explored further. Of the available information, some headline statistics from Northern Constabulary include: ^{iv} <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2005, there were 1392 domestic abuse incidents reported to the police in Highland, 90% of these were female victims • There has been a year on year rise since 1999 in the reportage of domestic abuse incidents to the Scottish police. • In Highland, 632 domestic abuse incidents per 100,000 population were reported during 05/06. In Scotland, 899 incidents per 100,000 were reported. • In 2005/06, there were 39 rapes reported to the police in Highland and 8 attempted rapes. • Highland has a low crime rate, but has the same reported incidence of crimes of indecency as the Scottish average: 12 crimes of indecency per 10,000 population
6.7.7	<u>Priorities</u> It is recommended that the priorities are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To work with public and voluntary sector partners to deal with the issues around violence against women. 2. To provide effective and sensitive services for those affected. 3. To find efficient and effective ways to promote gender equality by learning from good practice.
6.7.8	<u>Performance measures</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased numbers of Council staff participating in partnership Violence Against Women training and awareness raising. 2. By June 2008 develop approaches for capturing feedback from staff

	service users who have experienced violence and harassment.
7	ARRANGEMENTS FOR GATHERING INFORMATION
7.1	Recent publications from the Scottish Executive have provided equalities related data at Scotland-wide level. A High Level Summary of Equality Statistics ^v was published in November 2006. In March 2007, A Gender Audit of Statistics: Comparing the Position of Women and Men in Scotland ^{vi} was produced as a key resource to assist bodies in the development and implementation of their Gender Equality Schemes. At Highland level, it is important to develop a clearer picture of our workforce and community in order to establish a baseline of the current situation of women and men, boys and girls, and to be able to set meaningful, challenging, but realistic performance improvement targets. The Council is actively working with its Community Planning Partners towards improving local baseline data across all equality strands.
7.2	The Council gathers both qualitative and quantitative information from a range of sources including employee monitoring information, an employee survey, a public performance survey, complaints, as well as various service led user surveys, reviews and consultations. Information and evidence will also be gathered as a result of undertaking equality impact assessments. This will identify which service areas already collect gender data to inform service development and provision and will encourage the collection and use of gender disaggregated data in service planning. Information gathered from a range of source in preparation of this first scheme is available in Appendix 2 .
7.3	Employment: The Council has new arrangements in place to gather information on employment and equalities monitoring as a result of a new Payroll and Personnel system. During 2006, Council employees were sent an Equal Opportunities monitoring form and asked to verify information. We now collect and analyse information by gender for applicants, appointments, training, grievances and disciplinary hearings and exit interviews. Information on the position of women and men in the workforce is already reported to Resources Committee through the regular Staffing Watch report and the requirement to report annually on the position of women in senior management posts (by earnings) is a Statutory Performance Indicator set by Audit Scotland.
7.4	The Highland Council Employee Survey is carried out every other year. This allows us to gather information and analyse the opinions of staff by gender in a number of areas such as job satisfaction, morale at work and levels of stress. The survey in 2007 will include questions on attitude to gender issues and there will be provision for following up the staff survey with more in depth research of experience of staff in the barriers and opportunities in Council employment.
7.5	Services: While the Council now has improved information on the gender profile of its workforce, and some initial analysis available, gender information on service use is inconsistent and weak. This makes it difficult to identify areas for service improvement and to set performance targets. A key priority for the Council therefore has to be in the collection and analysis of gender data in order to understand the accessibility of Council services and customer experience.

	Without this information it is not possible to understand what needs to change in order to eliminate discrimination (whether intended or not) and promote gender equality.
7.6	Through the Equality Impact Assessment process, all services will be expected to identify where information is collected, and where it would be appropriate and relevant to collect this information. With regard to gender participation in public life the Council monitors representation of women and men as Elected Council Members and their roles on strategic committees.
7.7	The Council carries out an annual Public Performance Survey and from 2007 this will be analysed by gender. The Council collects information on the gender of Council Member and representation on Youth Voice. Further work will be done to gather information on other representative structures supported by the Councils including pupil councils, Community Councils and the boards of voluntary organisations.
7.8	USING THE INFORMATION GATHERED
	Where appropriate, the Council will use the information it gathers and analyses to inform the development of gender equality objectives and targets. The information will be used when the Council reports annually on progress. When the Council comes to review the GES and associated action plan, this information will enable us to consider what additional steps may be required to promote gender equality and make improvements to subsequent schemes.
8	ARRANGEMENTS FOR IMPACT ASSESSMENT
8.1	Following pilot work on race equality assessments, additional work has been carried out by the Council to embed a systematic approach to carrying out impact assessments in the Council. Early in 2007 a number of key staff were trained in carrying out Equality Impact Assessments and a toolkit has been piloted.
8.2	Services have assessed current policies and functions for relevance to gender equality and identified a number to be assessed for impact. In addition to assessing the impact of existing policies and functions deemed relevant and a high priority, the Council is required to assess the gender impact of relevant proposed policies. It will be a priority for the Council to ensure that this assessment is carried out at an early stage in the development of new policies and functions or in the review process of existing policies and functions.
8.3	If an assessment shows that any of our proposed policies are likely to have an adverse gender impact, the Council will consider how it can meet the general duties and whether the proposed policy needs to be revised.
8.4	To further build the Council's capacity to carry out Equality Impact Assessments, in-house training will be developed for staff who will be involved and the tool-kit will be further developed into an on-line version.

8.5	The results of the Council's Equality Impact Assessments will be published on the Internet and will be used to share learning across the Council.
9	CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT STAFF, SERVICE USERS AND OTHERS
9.1	The Highland Council is committed to delivering high quality services to the public and being accountable for its performance. Our capacity to do this is directly affected by the job satisfaction, motivation and personal development which people experience as a result of working for the Council. It is important that we listen to what local men and women tell us about how best to plan and deliver services and operate in a decentralised fashion, and that we also listen to and act on feedback from our employees.
9.2	The Council's GES builds on previous consultations and information from reviews, complaints or comments on services, and is part of the information gathering needed to develop the scheme and actions. To prepare the GES, the Council has taken account of consultation with employees in the development and implementation of its Women in Management Actions, feedback from focus groups organised by the Highlands and Islands Equality Forum and presentations to the local Women@Work network managed by the Workers Educational Association, and feedback from staff and unions at training sessions on the new duties. Trade Unions are to be formally consulted on the employment actions of the scheme. The scheme has been shared with Service Managers and Elected Members.
9.3	<p>The Council's present arrangements and opportunities for consultation and involvement with men and women, boys and girls include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An annual Public Performance Survey of a sample of local households. Respondents. In future this information will be analysed by gender. • A bi-annual survey asking for the views of employees, again this will be analysed by gender in future. • The Council has adopted the National Standards of Community Engagement^{vii} and has developed a toolkit and training to support the use of the standards which will inform how we engage and consult with local residents. • Services regularly review and consult on the use of services. There is continual contact at local level with a wide range of voluntary and community groups including Community Councils. Recent restructuring has introduced proposals for new Ward Forums which will include representatives from local partner agencies and the local community. Equal Opportunities requirements will be encouraged in these new structures. • Young people are involved in Pupil Councils and Youth Voice. • Through links with local partner activities and gender related groups such as the Women@Work Project and the Men's Health initiatives.
9.4	As a result of carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment for the Council's Public Performance Survey in 2007, it is proposed to develop a framework for customer opinion and community involvement which will take equal opportunities into consideration.

10	PREPARING AND IMPLEMENTING THE SCHEME
10.1	<p>In developing the scheme, a cross-service equalities working group of officers has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Received training in the Gender Duty, • Assessed several policies and functions for relevance and tested the impact assessment tool • Identified current activities, issues, and gaps in provision and information.
10.2	<p>To implement the scheme, we will take the steps set out in the Action Plan and will put into effect arrangements. The cross-service working group will meet regularly to report on progress. There is an established reporting structure to the Council's Equalities Group, membership of which is due to be reviewed in the first year of the Scheme and which is responsible to the Senior Management Team.</p>
10.3	<p>Elected Members, managers and employees will be made aware of their responsibilities under the new duties and will be supported to carry out equality impact assessments and consider gender equality in the day to day activities of the Council. We will do this through information on the Council's performance and through providing training and briefings. All Council members and employees will be made aware of their responsibility to promote equal opportunities for women and men.</p>
10.4	<p>The Council has actively worked with its Community Planning Partners in the Highland Wellbeing Alliance to gather information and consult with women and men in the preparation of schemes.</p>
10.5	<p>Arrangements for implementing and monitoring the Education sphere of the scheme will be undertaken as part of integrated Children's Service Plan.</p>
11	ARRANGEMENTS FOR ANNUAL REPORTING, MONITORING AND REVIEWING THE SCHEME
11.1	<p>Performance on implementing the scheme will be reported annually to the appropriate committee as part of the Council's corporate annual reporting framework. This will include details of gender specific information gathered and what action has been taken as a result of the analysis of the information.</p>
11.2	<p>The Council will review its GES in 2010 and every three years thereafter. The action plan will be refreshed annually and performance measures will be reviewed. The full review in 2010 will take account of information gathered during the length of the first scheme, annual reports of progress, the impact of activities, changes in legislation and strategic developments in the preparation of subsequent schemes.</p>
11.3	<p>Review and development of the scheme and its associated action plan will be an ongoing and flexible process, and comments will be welcome at any time.</p>

12	PUBLISHING THE SCHEME
12.1	The Scheme will be published on the Council's internet (www.highland.gov.uk), and will be available in a range of other formats. A summary of the scheme will also be published. The annual report on progress, employment monitoring reports and Equality Impact Assessments that have been undertaken will also be available on the Council's website or on request.
13	EDUCATION
13.1	Background
	Highland Council has over 33,000 pupils educated in 29 secondary schools, 187 primaries, 145 nursery units and 4 special schools.
13.2	The Council in its role as Education Authority is required to publish a Gender Equality Scheme and an Equal Pay Policy Statement. In addition, the Education Authority has a responsibility to ensure that schools under its management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gather information on the effects of their policies and practices on gender equality • assess the impact of those policies and practices on gender equality • carry out steps to meet the duty in line with the education authority scheme • report on these activities annually.
13.3	Career and higher and further education choices are influenced by the subjects children study at school. Gender stereotyping influences the subject choices made by pupils. The gender equality duty provides an opportunity to explore the causes and impact of stereotyping in the choice of subjects and work experience placements. Through encouraging children and young people to consider all possible career options there is an opportunity for schools to challenge segregation in the workplace.
13.4	Information gathering
	A range of information is gathered in Education and this information can be sorted by gender. Analysis of data for the GES reveals some key messages as outlined below.
13.5	5-14 Attainment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The gap between male and female attainment in Reading and Writing is apparent throughout the 5-14 years with females showing greater progress than males. The gap widens as pupils progress up primary school and into early secondary school beginning at around 5-10% points and increasing up to between 15-20% points. • The gap between male and female attainment in Maths is in the same direction but is fairly small in comparison with attainment in reading and writing. Although it increases as pupils progress up the primary school and into the early years of secondary school a small gap remains.

13.6	<p>Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Attainment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the lowest SCQF attainment level, level 3, the attainment gap between males and females is very small and in recent years boys have moved slightly ahead of girls. This is the opposite of Highland's comparator authorities and the national averages. • This picture alters as the attainment levels increase. At attainment levels 4 and 5 the gap in attainment between males and females increases and this is mirrored across Highland's comparator authorities and at a national level. • Attainment at SCQF level 6, 'Higher' award level, is slightly different. The gap in attainment levels between males and females is fairly pronounced when examining attainment of one or more higher award. As the number of awards increases – as the attainment level increases – the gap in attainment decreases. At the highest SCQF award level, although a gap between male and female attainment still remains, this is far smaller.
13.7	<p>Exclusions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a marked contrast in the number of exclusions between males and females in Highland's primary and secondary schools. At primary level females make up around 5-7% of exclusions with virtually none at the lower end of primary school. At secondary level this increases, however females still only account for between 23% and 27% of exclusions, with the gap increasing in 2005/6. Reasons for these differences in terms of appropriateness of the curriculum to both boys and girls needs consideration.
13.8	<p>School Leavers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female school leavers were found to be more likely to enter further or higher education than males. • Around two thirds of individuals entering training were found to be males, as were around 60% of those entering employment. • Equal proportions of males were found to enter both further or higher education and employment, whereas the majority of females were found to go on to further or higher education.
13.9	<p>Meeting the Gender Equality Duty</p>
13.10	<p>Several schools in Highland have undertaken targeted work to close the gaps in attainment between boys and girls. The Learning and Teaching toolkit has a dedicated section on gender which several primary schools have been using to try to 'close the gap'. We will continue to work to improve the gap in achievement of girls and boys through a range of initiatives, including considering both teaching and learning styles.</p>
13.11	<p>For Highlands Children 2 monitors the number of temporary exclusions in Highland by school type and gender. We work to prevent exclusion through early intervention and ensure that there are opportunities for boys and girls to re-engage with a curriculum appropriate for their needs.</p>

13.12	Schools will gather information on the effects of their policies and practices and the educational opportunities available. Much information on gender is already gathered by the Education Authority and reported to the Scottish Executive. Equalities Impact assessment of Education and schools will help ensure that discrimination between boys and girls, much of it unwitting, is eliminated over time.
13.13	Schools will be expected to provide an annual report on the above matters, and each school will maintain a copy of the scheme.
13.14	All public services for children are planned, monitored and delivered through an integrated approach with community planning partners and with the engagement of children's' representatives and children and young people themselves. The Community Plan for children, <i>For Highlands Children 2</i> , sets out the services to be delivered and the outcomes to be achieved. Schools are an important part of the Council's services for children and the requirements of the GED on education authorities and schools will be fully integrated with this process and included in the new Children's Services Outcome Agreement to be piloted in the Highlands. This will include further details on the arrangements above and the identified actions included in the Action Plan.

APPENDIX 1 LEGISLATION AND KEY TERMS

Legislation:

Sex Discrimination Act 1975

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (SDA) prohibits discrimination against individuals in the areas of employment and vocational training, education, in the provision of goods, facilities or services, in the disposal or management of premises and in the exercise of public functions. It also prohibits discrimination in employment and vocational training against married people and civil partners, and people who have undergone, or who are undergoing or are intending to undergo, gender reassignment.

The SDA applies to women and men of any age, including children, and across Scotland, England, and Wales.

Equal Pay Act 1970

EqPA gives an individual a right to the same contractual pay and benefits as a person of the opposite sex in the same employment, or, where the source of the pay is the same, where the man and the woman are doing:

- like work; or
- work rated as equivalent under an analytical job evaluation study; or
- work that is proved to be of equal value.

An employer is not required to apply equal pay if it can prove that any difference in pay or benefits is genuinely due to a material factor other than one which is attributable to sex discrimination. The EqPA applies to women and men of any age, including children.

The Gender Equality Duty

The Gender Equality Duty (GED) was created by the Equality Act 2006. This Act amends the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 to place a statutory duty on public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

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

Unlawful Discrimination

Unlawful discrimination means:

- direct and indirect discrimination against women and men, in employment and education, in goods, facilities and services and in the exercise of public functions;
- harassment, sexual harassment and discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity leave;
- discrimination on the grounds of gender reassignment in employment and vocational training;
- direct and indirect discrimination in the employment field on the grounds that a person is married or a civil partner;
- victimisation as a result of raising, intending to raise a complaint or acting as a witness or give evidence in support of someone raising a complaint.

Positive action

Positive discrimination to favour one sex is unlawful. There are limited exceptions, however, allowing positive action in training, or to encourage women (or men) to apply for work in which they are under-represented. These lawful exceptions are often referred to as positive action.

Explanation of Key Terms:

Gender Equality Scheme	A scheme put in place by the employer, which sets out their gender equality goals. It includes tasks and timeframes and the individual(s) responsible for delivering each goal.
Gender	Refers to roles, attitudes, values and behaviours given to women and men by society. These characteristics can vary depending on which society and time we are born in or live in. Gender roles have changed over time from traditional roles of men going out to work while women remain at home to look after children, to current dual income households albeit women continue to have primary care and domestic responsibilities.
Gender Disaggregated Statistics	Data that has been collected and analysed by gender, such as surveys, which would highlight any difference in results between men and women, girls and boys.
Gender Impact Assessments	An assessment of planning, service and employment policies, paying specific attention as to how the services impact on gender. Based on the results public bodies should redesign their services to meet the need of men, women and transsexual people.
Occupational Segregation	When women and men are employed in different jobs in the workplace or when men or women predominate a particular job, such as men in the construction industry and women in the childcare sector.
Sex	Refers to how we are born, the biological and physical differences between men and women. People are born male and female, learn to be girls and boys and grow into women and men.
Transgender	People who identify their gender to be different from the physical one into which they were born but who choose not to undergo medical treatment and simply live their life in their new gender are not subject to the same legal protections as transsexual people.
Transsexual	A person who intends to undergo, is undergoing or has in the past undergone gender reassignment (which may or may not involve hormone therapy or surgery), and it is this individual who receives protection under the law.

Further information of legislation and key terms is available on the Equal Opportunities Commission website: <http://www.eoc.org.uk>

APPENDIX 2: GENDER PROFILE IN HIGHLAND

The Highland Council has a population of over 213,000, with over 93,000 households in a land area of 26,484 km². At around a third of the total area of Scotland, geographically it is the largest local authority area in Scotland. Around half of the population live in the inner Moray Firth area which includes the expanding city of Inverness. The rest are in small towns and remote rural areas and many of which are sparsely populated.

With over 12,000 employees, The Highland Council is the largest employer in the area. To provide a wide range of services we employ a diverse workforce including civil engineers, building workers, environmental health officers, social workers, teachers, grave diggers, sports and leisure assistants, architects, solicitors and nursery nurses

The Council has recently moved from eight Council areas to three operational management areas, with many services being delivered at local level within the new multi-member wards. The three operational management areas are: -

- [Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross](#)
- [Ross, Skye and Lochaber](#)
- [Inverness, Nairn and Badenoch and Strathspey](#)

Council Services are currently reorganising management arrangements to reflect these new area boundaries. While decision-making on policy and resource allocation will be made at Highland level, operational service delivery will focus primarily at 22 multi-member ward level

The Scottish Executive recently published a Gender Audit comparing the situation of men and women in Scotland^{viii}. Along with Community Planning Partners, the Council aims to draw together existing local gender disaggregated data. This will provide a baseline to develop and improve policy and services. It is an action for the partners to work to improve the collation of robust gender information in Highland. In the Council's first GES demographic information and workforce information is aggregated to Highland level and some key sources of information are given below under the following headings:.

HIGHLAND COUNCIL WORKFORCE PROFILE

POPULATION

PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LIFE

EDUCATION

LABOUR MARKET

INCOME AND WEALTH

CARING

HOUSING

CRIME AND JUSTICE

TRANSPORT

HIGHLAND COUNCIL WORKFORCE PROFILE

The Highland Council employs over 12,800 employees in approximately 9,500 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs. Of this, 73% of the Council's workforce is female and 27% is male. 51% of the Council's employees are employed on a full-time basis while 49% work on a part-time basis. Within this, 61% of all female employees work part-time compared to 17% of all male employees.

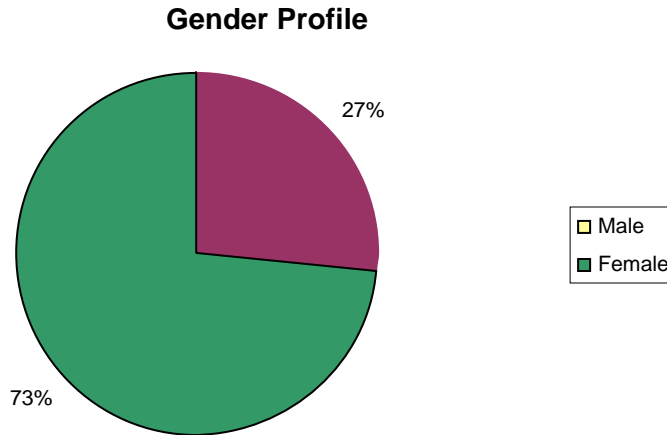


Chart 1: Employee Gender breakdown

There is significant gender based segregation by occupation in the Council's workforce reflected to some extent in the breakdown of staff by Service. There are concentrations of female employees in catering, cleaning, clerical, care and learning support/classroom assistant roles contrast with concentrations of male employees in driving, refuse collection, road maintenance and construction roles. Employees in construction related professional roles (e.g. Engineers, Architects) are also predominantly male.

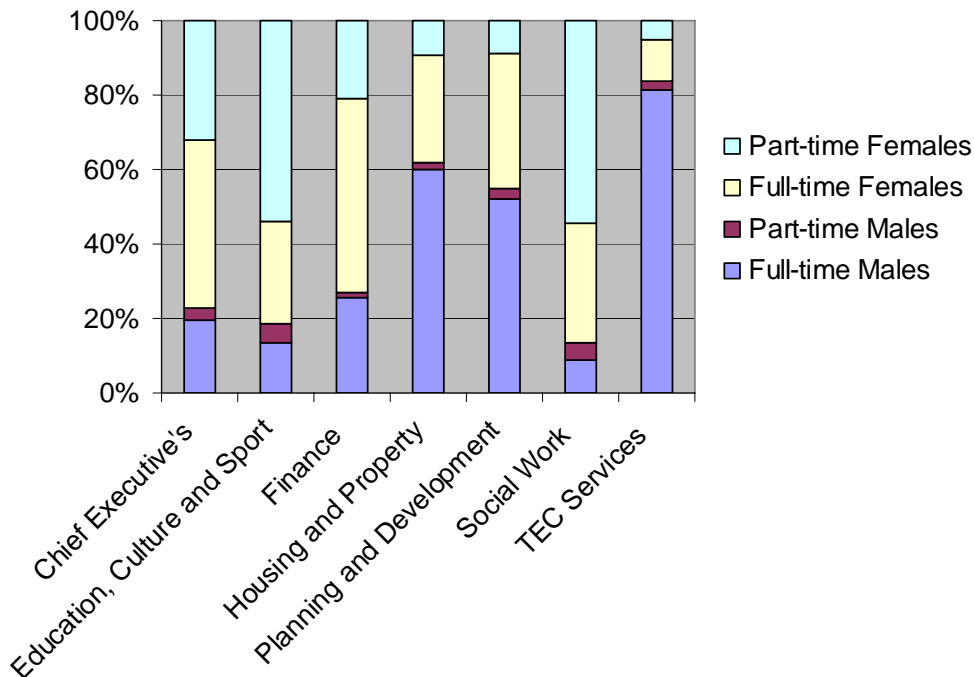


Chart 2: Male and Female part-time and full-time employees by Service

Women are under-represented in management in the Council, accounting 30.9% of the top 2% of earners and 35.7% of the top 5% of earners. Although this has improved, performance is below average compared to Scottish local authorities as a whole.

Women in Management Top 2% of earners



Chart 3: Top 2% of earners by gender

In education, men account for 8% of primary teachers and 18% of Head Teachers. In secondary schools, men account for 32% of teachers, they hold 46% of promoted posts and 73% of Head Teacher posts.

All teachers

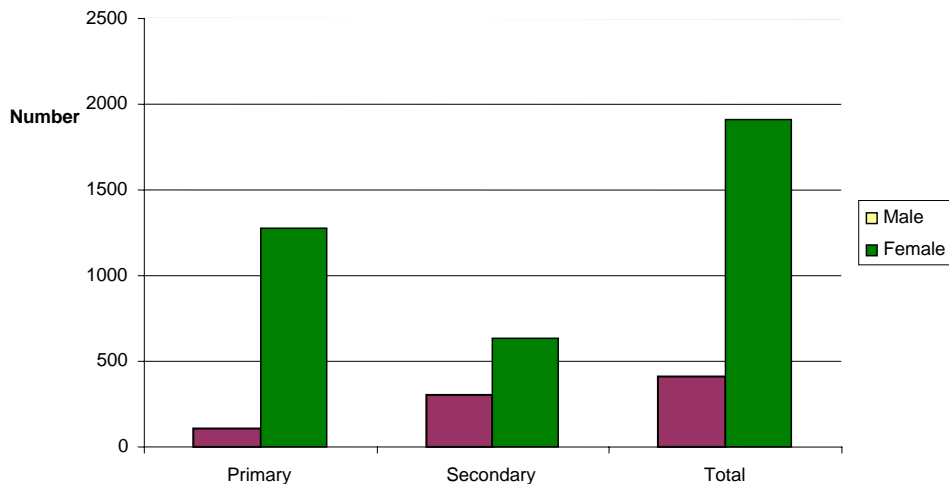


Chart 4: All teachers by gender

There is a high concentration of part-time and flexible working patterns (e.g. term-time working) in occupations predominantly held by women and a correspondingly low concentration of part-time and flexible working patterns in predominantly male held occupations. In terms of pay (excluding teachers and craft workers) a far higher proportion of lower paid posts are held by women. 94% of band 1 posts (up to £15,789) and 80 % of band 2 posts (between £15,790 and £20,673) are held by women. In terms of work patterns, 91% of all part-time employees are female (excluding teachers and craft workers). Most part-time

working is found in the lowest paid jobs. 95% of part-time employment is within bands 1 and 2 excluding teachers and craft workers. In the highest graded jobs (i.e. PO10-13 and above) there are few employees who work part-time.

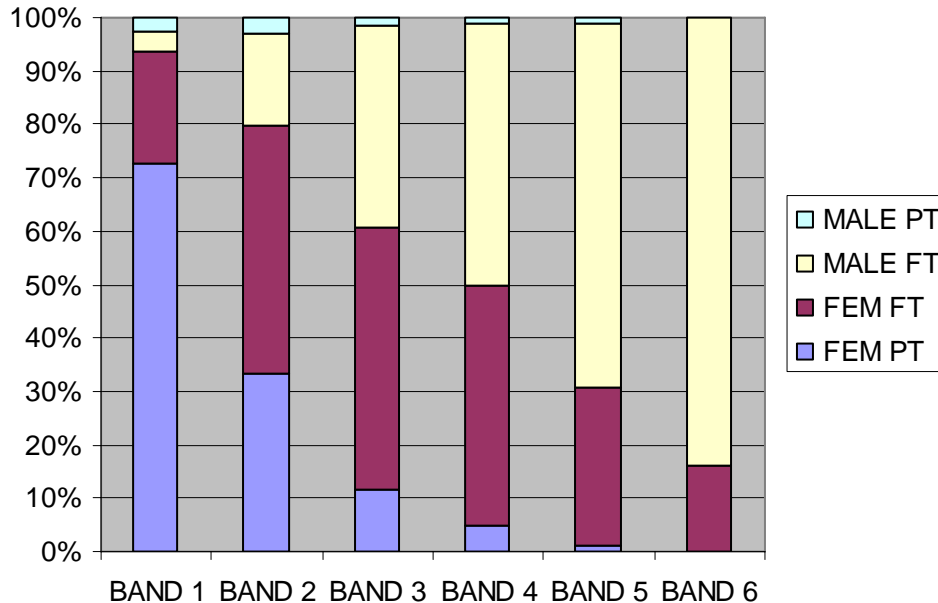


Chart 5: Full-time and part-time employees by gender and pay band (excludes teachers and manual workers)

The Council monitors recruitment activity and this information has been analysed by gender. The most obvious gender based trend revealed by this analysis is that more women than men apply for jobs in the lowest pay rates (i.e. Manual Worker and clerical jobs) whereas more men than women apply for jobs in the higher pay bands. Following this through, far more women than men are short-listed and subsequently appointed to jobs in the lower pay rates and the converse is true for jobs with higher pay rates.

Given that the prevalence of part-time and flexible working patterns is higher among jobs at the lowest pay rates it could be assumed that this has some influence over the choices that men and women make when applying for jobs with the Council.

An analysis of access to internal training courses by gender has been carried out. Taking into account the gender profile of the Council's workforce, there is no evidence of any gender based barriers. Of all employees who attended training courses during 2006-07, 74% were female and 26% were male.

An analysis has been carried out of the numbers of female employees who returned to work during 2006/07 following a period of maternity or adoption leave. The analysis reveals that over 85% of such employees have remained in employment with the Council since returning from maternity leave.

There are no apparent differences between the number of women and men subject to disciplinary proceedings during 2006/07. . Given the profile of the Council's workforce there was a higher proportion of grievances from male employees than would otherwise be expected.

Source: Highland Council, Quarterly Joint Staffing Watch Return, March 2007

POPULATION

Table 1: Population of Highland by Sex, Selected Years from 1961 to 2006

Year	Both Sexes (000s)	Males (000s)	Females (000s)	% Males	% Females	Excess % of women to men
1961	163,796	80,357	83,439	49.1	50.9	3.8
1971	175,473	87,314	88,159	49.8	50.2	1.0
1981	187,004	91,929	95,075	49.2	50.8	3.4
1986	198,850	97,580	101,270	49.1	50.9	3.8
1991	203,790	99,798	103,992	49.0	51.0	4.2
1996	208,650	101,988	106,662	48.9	51.1	4.6
2001	208,920	102,281	106,639	49.0	51.0	4.3
2002	208,140	101,891	106,249	49.0	51.0	4.3
2003	209,080	102,279	106,801	48.9	51.1	4.4
2004	211,340	103,334	108,006	48.9	51.1	4.5
2005	213,590	104,423	109,167	48.9	51.1	4.5
2006	215,310	105,285	110,025	48.9	51.1	4.5

Source: GROS Mid Year Estimates

Like the rest of Scotland, the gender balance of the Highlands has been reasonably stable with women making up around 51% of the population and men 49%, as opposed to 52% and 48% respectively in the rest of Scotland. Since 1971 there have been around 8% more women than men in Scotland generally, in Highland there are around 4.5% more.

Table 2: Projected population of Highland by sex, selected years: 2006-2026

	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026
All	214,675	216,865	217,597	217,966	217,183
males	104,982	106,109	106,562	106,537	105,891
females	109,693	110,756	111,035	111,429	111,292
Excess % of women to men	4.5	4.4	4.2	4.6	5.1

Source: Wellbeing Alliance Population Projections using GROS base data

The population of Highland is expected to continue to grow and the excess proportion of women to men is projected to increase slightly over the next 20 years. The ratio of men to women generally declines with age, more rapidly from age 60 onwards. There are peaks of people of both sexes in their mid-50s and over 40 years of age as a result of elevated birth rates after the second world war and in the 1960s. The recent decline in births is reflected in the tapering of the pyramid at younger ages. The “waisted” appearance in the population aged 20 to 39 is a result of net migration loss of young adults as they leave Highland to pursue further or higher education, or find work. Many of these young adults return to Highland in later life: more women leave than men and there is evidence that they return at different stages of their life.

The population of Highland is expected to continue to rise until 2021 before starting to fall slowly. The narrow base to the pyramid shows how the population will age with a higher proportion of the population aged over 60. The excess percentage of women to men is expected to rise slightly from 4.5% in 2006 to 5.1% in 2026.

Chart 6: Percentage of the Total Population in each Age Group, by sex, 2006 and 2026

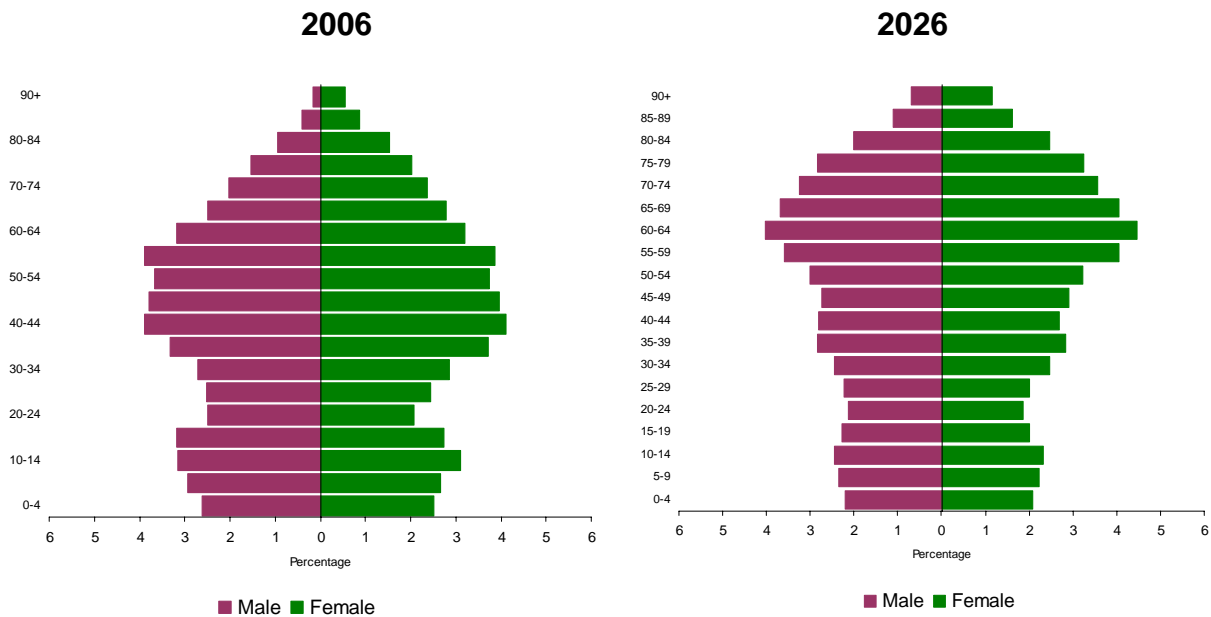


Table 3: Gender balance of the estimated population by age groups, 2006

Age Group	Highland			Scotland		
	Males	Females	Ratio M/F	Males	Females	Ratio M/F
0to14	18,759	17,788	1.05	438,014	418,069	1.05
15to44	38,985	38,655	1.01	1,030,021	1,055,149	0.98
45to64	31,284	31,802	0.98	652,447	685,232	0.95
65to74	9,698	11,088	0.87	208,352	247,392	0.84
75+	6,559	10,692	0.61	140,573	241,651	0.58
All Ages	105,285	110,025	0.96	2,469,407	2,647,493	0.93

Source: GROS Mid Year Estimates 2006

Again reflecting Scottish figures, there are more men in the younger age groups and more females than males in the older age groups. There is a slightly longer life expectancy for both women and men in Highland than in Scotland as a whole and there have been significant increases in the life expectancy of both men and women since 1981.

Table 4: Life expectancy, by sex and age, 2003-05

Life expectancy at age	Highland		Scotland	
	Males (years)	Females (years)	Males (years)	Females (years)
0	75.0	80.3	74.2	79.2
1	74.2	79.5	73.7	78.6
5	70.2	75.6	69.8	74.7
10	65.3	70.8	64.8	69.7
15	60.4	65.8	59.8	64.7
20	55.7	60.9	55.0	59.8
25	51.0	56.0	50.3	55.0
30	46.2	51.1	45.6	50.1
35	41.6	46.3	40.9	45.2
40	37.0	41.6	36.3	40.4
45	32.4	36.9	31.8	35.7
50	28.0	32.3	27.4	31.1
55	23.8	27.8	23.1	26.6
60	19.7	23.4	19.1	22.4
65	16.0	19.3	15.5	18.3
70	12.6	15.4	12.2	14.6
75	9.8	11.9	9.4	11.2
80	7.2	8.7	7.0	8.4
85	5.1	6.3	5.2	6.0

Source: GROS 2006

Chart 7: Change in Life Expectancy Through Time, by sex, 1981-83 to 2003-05

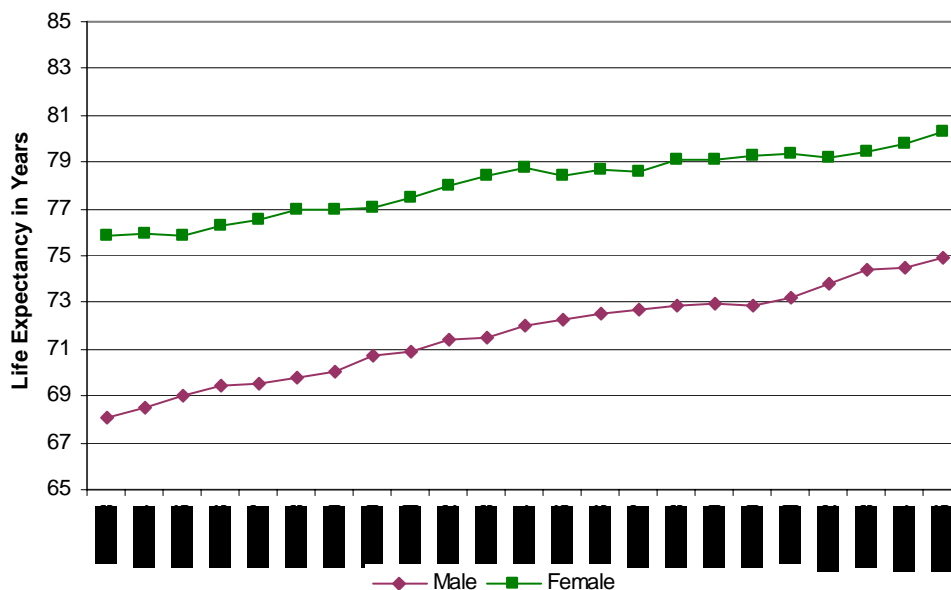


Table 5: Population in Highland and Scotland by Ethnic Group and Sex

	Highland			Scotland		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
ALL PEOPLE	102,297	106,617	208,914	5,062,011	2,432,494	2,629,517
	Percentage of Population					
White Scottish	84.9	84.2	84.5	88.1	87.9	88.3
Other white British	12.5	12.8	12.7	7.4	7.5	7.2
White Irish	0.6	0.6	0.6	1.0	1.0	1.0
Other White	1.2	1.6	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.6
White	99.2	99.2	99.2	98	97.9	98.1
Indian	0.09	0.07	0.08	0.30	0.33	0.27
Pakistani	0.08	0.05	0.06	0.63	0.67	0.59
Bangladeshi	0.08	0.05	0.06	0.04	0.05	0.03
Other South Asian	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.12	0.14	0.10
Chinese	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.32	0.33	0.31
Caribbean	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.03
African	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.10	0.11	0.09
Black Scottish or other Black	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
Any Mixed Background	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.25	0.25	0.25
Other Ethnic Group	0.07	0.13	0.10	0.19	0.19	0.19
	Number					
Minority Ethnic Groups	823	848	1,671	101,677	51,908	49,769
	Percentage of Population					
Minority Ethnic Groups	1.44	1.47	1.46	2.00	2.10	1.90

Source: 2001 Census

Ethnicity refers to a shared cultural and social background and has been defined as including a common language, a common religion and shared ancestry and geographical origin. The table above are taken from the 2001 census and the detail is limited by the categories defined at the time. Highland has a lower percentage of white Scottish people than Scotland overall, and only 1.46 percent of people from minority ethnic backgrounds compared with 1.9 percent in Scotland overall. There are more men than women from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh but for other ethnic backgrounds there is a general balance between men and women.

The Scottish Executive recommends that Scottish Gypsies/Travellers are treated as a distinct ethnic group, and the recent influx of migrant workers has focused attention on eastern Europeans as a group, but no detailed information is collected in the inter-Census period. We estimate (Highland Council Briefing Note 15^{ix}) that the number of workers moving into Highland and either staying or returning regularly was between 3,000 and 3,500 at March 2006. 51% of these were men and 49% were women, the majority were aged between 18 and 34, and nearly half were from Poland. Recent figures show that around 4,500 people move into Highland each year from the rest of the UK outwith Scotland and it is likely that the percentage of other white British has increased since the Census.

Table 6: Sex and Age by Ethnic Group in Highland

Highland	ALL PEOPLE	White	Indian	Pakistani and other South Asian	Chinese	Other
Male Population	102,297	101,474	90	224	128	381
	Percentage of Population in Age Group					
0 to 15	19.4	19.3	17.8	29.0	21.9	40.9
16 to 24	11.5	11.5	13.3	14.3	15.6	17.1
25 to 44	27.3	27.3	35.6	35.7	29.7	24.4
45 to 64	27.6	27.6	25.6	13.4	25.0	12.3
65 to 74	8.9	8.9	5.6	6.7	3.1	2.9
75+	5.4	5.4	2.2	0.9	4.7	2.4
Female population	106,617	105,769	75	164	143	466
	Percentage of Population in Age Group					
0 to 15	17.2	17.1	22.7	31.7	22.4	31.3
16 to 24	9.7	9.7	4.0	11.6	11.2	9.0
25 to 44	27.6	27.5	44.0	36.0	41.3	31.3
45 to 64	26.7	26.7	22.7	14.0	18.9	21.0
65 to 74	9.7	9.8	5.3	3.7	1.4	4.7
75+	9.1	9.2	1.3	3.0	4.9	2.6

Source: 2001 Census

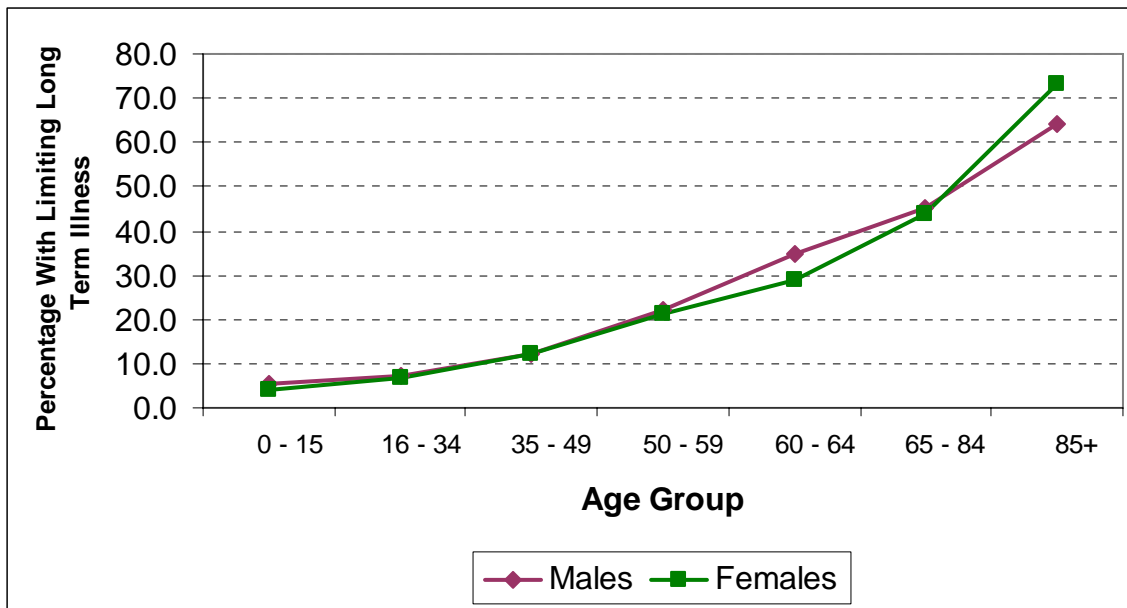
The minority ethnic population is younger overall than the white population but there are fewer women in the 16 to 24 age group and more in the 25 to 44 age group. This is comparable with the national situation where 82% of the minority ethnic population is younger than 45 years old.

Table 7: Current Religion by Gender in Highland (percent)

Religion	ALL PEOPLE	Male	Female
None	27.2	29.9	24.6
Church of Scotland	48.1	46.3	49.9
Roman Catholic	6.8	6.5	7.0
Other Christian	12.0	10.9	13.1
Buddhist	0.13	0.12	0.13
Hindu	0.03	0.03	0.03
Jewish	0.04	0.04	0.04
Muslim	0.19	0.23	0.15
Sikh	0.02	0.02	0.01
Another Religion	0.55	0.67	0.45
Not Answered	4.9	5.2	4.6

Source: 2001 Census

Chart 8: Limiting Long Term Illness by Age group and Sex at Census 2001



Source: 2001 Census

The response to this simple question in the 2001 Census is one of the best measures we have of whether people suffer from a significant medical condition. The likelihood of having a LLTI increases with advancing age: men are more likely to suffer from a LLTI in late middle age but the position is reversed in the oldest age groups.

PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LIFE

MSPs

The first Parliamentary session in 1999 saw 48 female MSPs returned (37% of MSPs). This number increased to 51 or 39.5% of all MSPs after the 2003 election. This figure compares to the 128 women elected at the UK General Election making up 19.8% of the House of Commons. In May 2007, 43 women (33.3% of MSPs) have been elected to the third Scottish Parliament.^{xxi} In the Highlands and Islands 13% of MSPs are women, all eight constituency MSPs are men and two of the seven list MSPs are women. The number of female MSP's by Party in Scotland is as follows:

Table 9: Gender Profile of MSPs

Party	MSPs	Female	Percent
SNP	47	11	23
Labour	46	24	52
Conservative	17	5	29
Lib Dem	15	2	13
Green	2	0	0
Independent	1	1	100

In 2003, 21.8% of elected council Members in Scotland were women^{xii}, dropping very slightly to 21.6% in 2007.

Table 7: Gender Profile of Candidates and Elected Members May 2007

	% Women Candidates	% Women Elected
2003	27.7	21.8
2007	22.5	21.6

In Highland, 37 (20%) of 182 candidates in the 2007 local government elections were women. Of the 80 Members elected, 20 (25%) are women, a slight drop from 2003 when there were 21 elected women Members (26%).

Prior to the May 2007 elections, in Highland Council women held approximately 33% of senior full Council and strategic Committee positions, but if Select Committees, Working groups and Joint Boards etc are included, this figure dropped to 21%. Following the 2007 and elections and restructuring which has resulted in fewer committees, the new Council has appointed women to 38% of the Council’s senior and strategic committee positions. Again, this figure drops to 22% when the Planning and Review, Inverness, and Gaelic committees, Licensing Boards and Joint Boards are included.^{xiii}

EDUCATION

The following summarises key messages arising from gender analysis of information from Highland schools:

5-14 Attainment:

- The gap between male and female attainment in Reading and Writing at primary school is apparent from primary two upwards. The gap widens as pupils progress up primary school and into early secondary school beginning at around 5-10% points and increasing up to between 15-20% points.
- The gap between male and female attainment in Maths at primary schools is fairly small in comparison with attainment in reading and writing and although it increases as pupils progress up the school and into the early years of secondary school the gap remains small.

SCQF Attainment:

- At the lowest SCQF attainment level, level 3, the attainment gap between males and females is very small and in recent years boys have moved slightly ahead of girls. This is the opposite of Highland’s comparator authorities and the national averages.
- This picture alters as the attainment levels increase. At attainment levels 4 and 5 the gap in attainment between males and females increases and this is mirrored across Highland’s comparator authorities and at a national level.
- Attainment at SCQF level 6, ‘Higher’ award level, is slightly different. The gap in attainment levels between males and females is fairly pronounced when examining attainment of one or more higher award. As the number of awards increases – as the attainment level increases – the gap in attainment decreases. At the highest SCQF award level, although a gap between male and female attainment still remains, this is far smaller.

Exclusions:

- There is a marked contrast in the number of exclusions between males and females in Highland's primary and secondary schools. At primary level females make up around 5-7% of exclusions with virtually none at the lower end of primary school. At secondary level this increases however females still only account for between 23 and 27% of exclusions, with the gap increasing in 2005/6.

School Leavers:

- Female school leavers were found to be more likely to enter further or higher education than males.
- Around two thirds of individuals entering training were found to be males, as were around 60% of those entering employment.
- Equal proportions of males were found to enter both further or higher education and employment whereas the majority of females were found to go on to further or higher education.

Source: Highland Council, Education

LABOUR MARKET

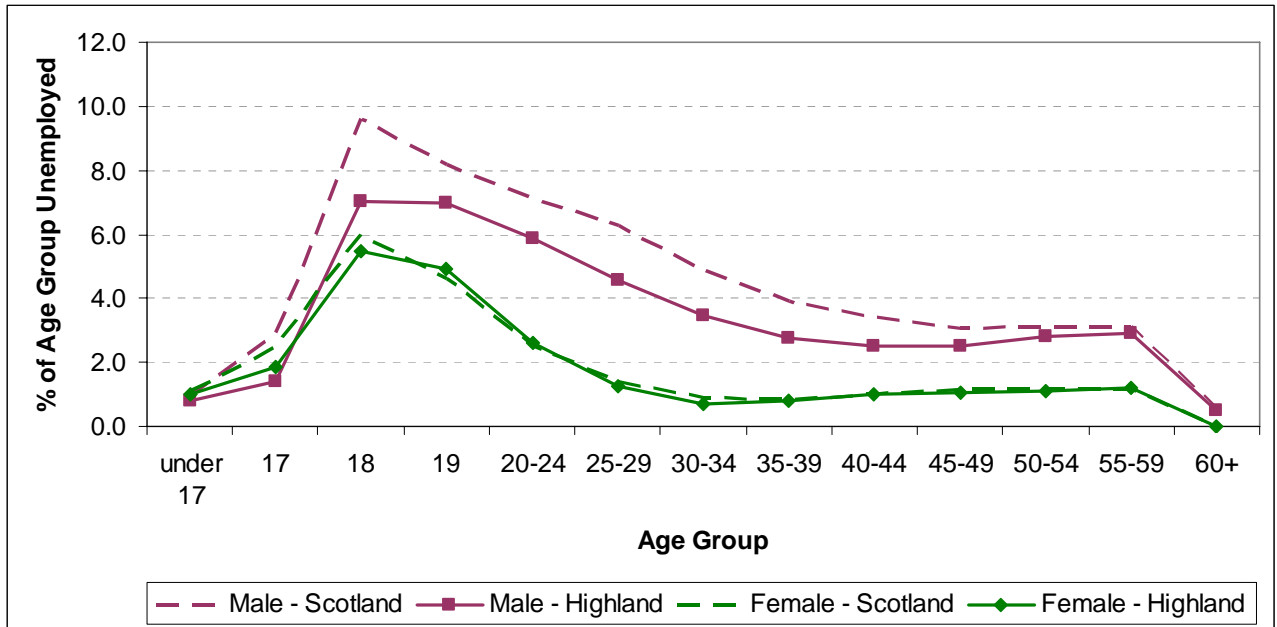
Table 8: Economic activity and economic inactivity rates, 1995-2006

Year	Economic activity Age 16-59/64 Rate Percent			
	Highland		Scotland	
	Females	Males	Females	Males
1995	76.6	87.2	71.0	83.6
1996	72.7	85.5	71.3	83.3
1997	77.1	82.9	71.0	82.6
1998	73.9	84.2	72.1	82.3
1999	75.8	83.9	72.6	81.9
2000	74.5	84.9	72.6	82.1
2001	77.9	88.1	74.0	82.7
2002	81.4	86.4	74.3	82.4
2003	84.6	84.1	75.0	82.8
2004	81.7	87.2	74.8	82.9
2005	82.8	84.6	75.5	82.8
2006	80.8	83.3	75.9	83.0

Source: Annual Population Survey / Annual Labour Force Survey

Like the rest of Scotland, Highland has seen changing patterns in the participation of both men and women labour market. While in Scotland generally the participation rate of men has dropped only slightly since 1995, in Highland it has fallen by almost 4% although figures have fluctuated. Both Scotland and Highland have seen an increase in the proportion of women in the workplace, and in Highland the gap between female and male participation has noticeably narrowed.

Chart 10: Variation of Economic Activity Rate with Age, By Gender



Source: 2001 Census

More men are economically active than women and rates of economic activity in Highland are higher than in the rest of Scotland. In Highland 75.1% of men are economically active and 61.2% of women, compared with respectively 71.7% and 58.7% in Scotland. The profiles are similar throughout the working age range except that the proportion of women in Highland who are economically active is reduced in the 25 to 34 age range.

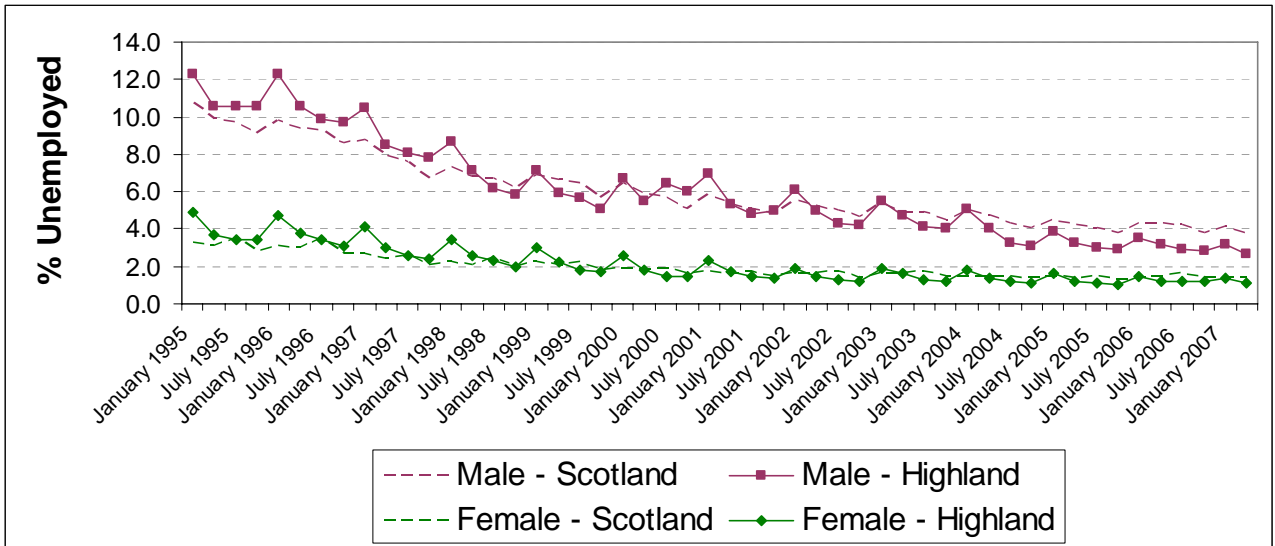
Table 8: Employment rates, 1995-2006 Percent

Year	Highland		Scotland	
	Females	Males	Females	Males
1995	71.1	75.0	65.8	74.9
1996	67.5	74.0	66.2	74.5
1997	71.1	74.0	66.1	74.2
1998	69.1	75.0	67.5	74.9
1999	71.3	74.0	68.1	74.8
2000	71.6	75.0	68.3	75.0
2001	74.3	77.0	70.0	77.1
2002	78.5	76.0	70.2	75.9
2003	81.6	78.0	71.0	77.1
2004	77.5	77.0	71.2	77.3
2005	80.8	80.9	72.1	77.6
2006	78.4	79.6	72.4	77.6

Source: Annual Population Survey / Annual Labour Force Survey

Employment rates (showing the proportion of people in employment in relation to the population of working age) again shows an increase in women's employment rates and a lesser increase in men's employment rates.

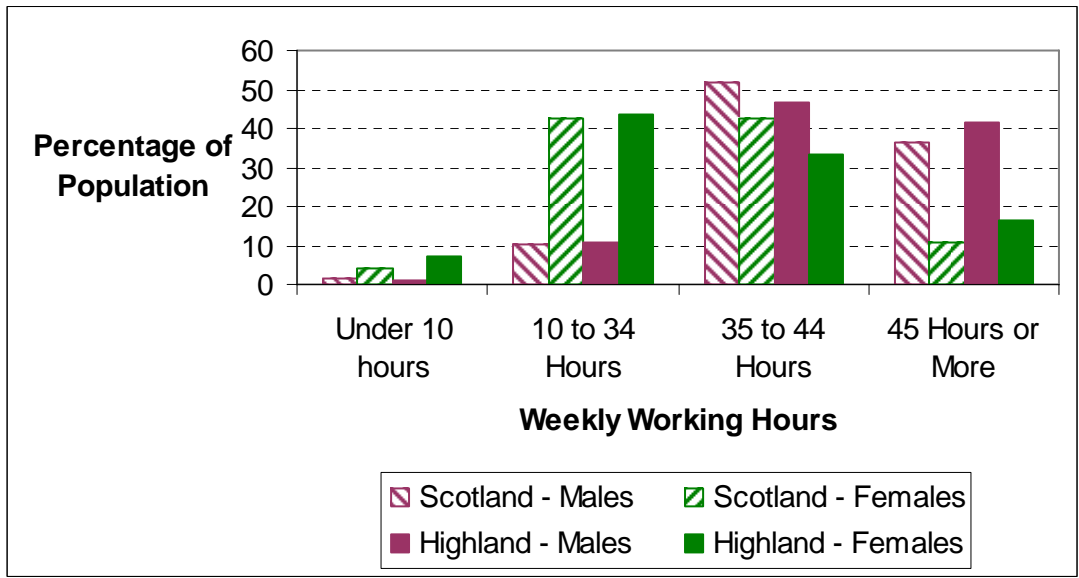
Chart 11: Unemployment Claimant Count 1995 to 2007, % of Working Age population



Source NOMIS / DWP

Unemployment rates show a reduction for both men and women since 1995, and most markedly in male levels of unemployment.

Chart 12: Weekly working hours: 2006



Source NOMIS / Annual Population Survey

The pattern of working hours in Scotland and Highland in 2006 is broadly similar, although a higher proportion of particularly men but also women worked over 45 hours.

Table 9: Percentage of female employees by industry, 1998 to 2005

	Highland								Scotland
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2005
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	23	18	22	17	22	22	24	23	23
Energy and Water supply	36	14	21	26	47	20	19	19	15
Manufacturing	27	27	28	27	25	28	27	24	26
Construction	10	14	14	11	12	9	12	14	13
Distribution, Hotel Catering, Repairs	60	61	59	57	56	58	59	58	54
Transport and Communication	22	24	23	24	23	25	28	21	24
Banking, Finance and Insurance	51	54	50	50	49	49	52	44	48
Public Admin Education, Health	70	69	75	77	77	78	75	77	72
Other services	50	42	51	50	49	52	49	54	51
Total employee jobs	50	51	53	53	52	53	54	54	51

Source NOMIS / Annual Business Inquiry

There have been changes over time in the proportion of women in different sectors. Women have increased their share of employees in Public, Administration, Education and Health, but have decreased in Energy and Water Supply, Banking, Finance and Insurance.

Table 10: Employment by ethnic group, 2001: people aged 16-74

	In employment		Employment rate	Unemployment rate
	% full-time	% part-time		
Women				
White	56	44	50	3
Indian	83	17	42	2
Pakistani & Other South Asian	33	67	48	1
Chinese	65	35	38	2
Other	51	49	40	5
All ethnic minorities	53	47	41	3
All aged 16-74	56	44	50	3
Men				
White	94	6	53	6
Indian	94	6	49	1
Pakistani & Other South Asian	59	41	38	3
Chinese	89	11	42	2
Other	91	9	56	5
All ethnic minorities	84	16	47	3
All aged 16-74	94	6	53	6

Source: 2001 census

In Highland, using Census 2001 data, minority ethnic groups represent 0.8% (1671) of the population, therefore it is problematic to produce robust information and come to firm conclusions. The available figures show lower employment rates for Pakistani and other South Asian men but not a comparable rise in unemployment rates. There is a similar pattern for Pakistani and South Asian women with a very marked difference between the proportion working full and part time compared to all other ethnic groups.

Table 11: Economic activity by sex and Limiting Long Term Illness (%) people aged 16 to 74

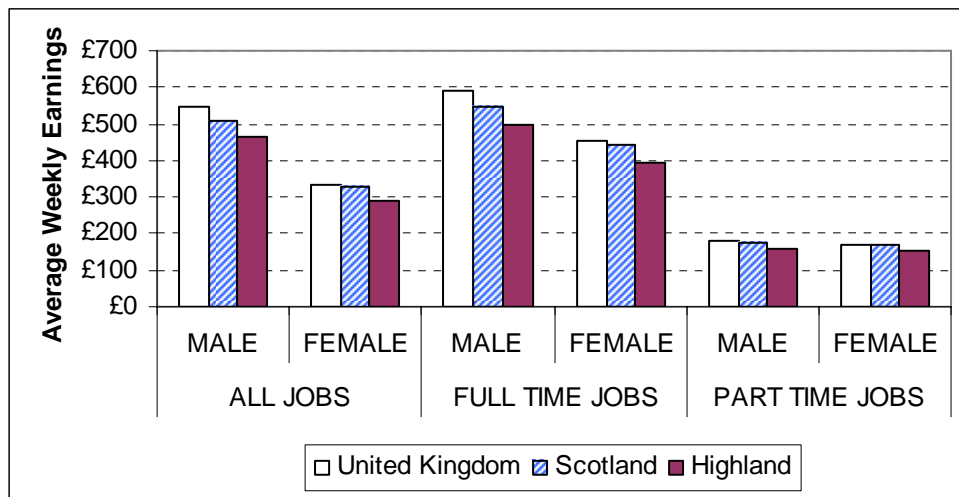
	Highland				
	Total	Female No LLTI	Female LLTI	Male No LLTI	Male LLTI
	Percentage				
Highland					
Economically active:	68	69	24	85	33
Employed	62	64	22	77	27
Part-time	15	28	11	5	5
Full-time	47	36	10	71	22
Unemployed	4	3	2	6	5
Full-time student	2	2	0	2	0
Economically inactive:	32	31	76	15	67
Retired	15	13	33	9	26
Student	2	3	1	3	1
Looking after home/family	6	11	9	1	1
Permanently sick or disabled	6	0	27	0	33
Other	4	3	7	3	6
Total	100	100	100	100	100
All people (Number)	152,684	63,690	13,484	61,771	13,739
Scotland					
Economically active:	65	69	18	83	26
Employed	58	62	16	74	21
Part-time	13	24	8	4	3
Full-time	45	38	8	70	18
Unemployed	4	3	2	6	4
Full-time student	3	4	1	3	1
Economically inactive:	35	31	82	17	74
Retired	14	12	33	8	25
Student	4	5	1	5	2
Looking after home/family	6	10	8	1	1
Permanently sick or disabled	7	0	32	0	39
Other	4	3	7	3	7
Total	100	100	100	100	100
All people (Number)	3,731,079	1,536,839	385,294	1,447,992	360,954

Source: 2001 Census

In all areas of economic activity, there are more people of both sexes in Highland with a Limiting Long Term Illness who are economically active than in Scotland as a whole. This is reflected in lower percentages of economically inactive people and lower rates of Permanently Sick or Disabled people in Highland. Unemployment rates and Retired rates are broadly similar. In Highland, 24% of women with a Long Term Limiting Illness were economically active and 33% of men, compared to 69% of women without a LLLI and 85% of men without a LLLI.

INCOME AND WEALTH

Chart 13 Average Weekly Earnings by Gender



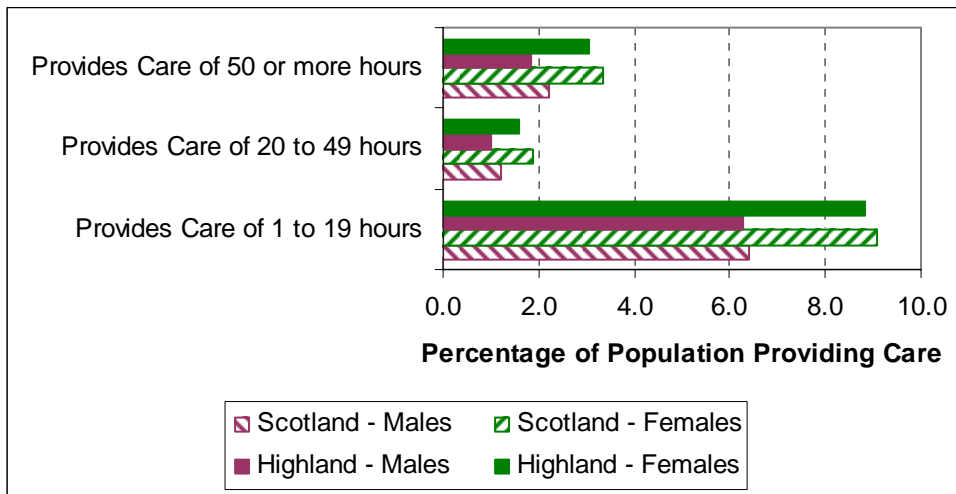
Source: NOMIS / Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2006

Average earnings of people in employment (ie excluding the self employed) in Highland are lower than in the rest of Scotland, which in turn has lower earnings than the rest of the UK. Women earn less than men: the gender gap in Highland is similar to that for the rest of Scotland although it tends to be lower than for the UK overall.

Taken overall, women in Highland earn £75 a week less than men. There are fewer women in full time work than men, and they earn £104 less a week than men. There are over five times as many women than men in part time employment but their average earnings are similar to men. Women in Highland in full time work worked around three hours a week less than men (37.4 and 41.3 hours respectively) but those in part time work worked slightly longer hours (17.8 and 17.0 hours respectively).

CARING

Chart 14: Caring Responsibilities by Gender



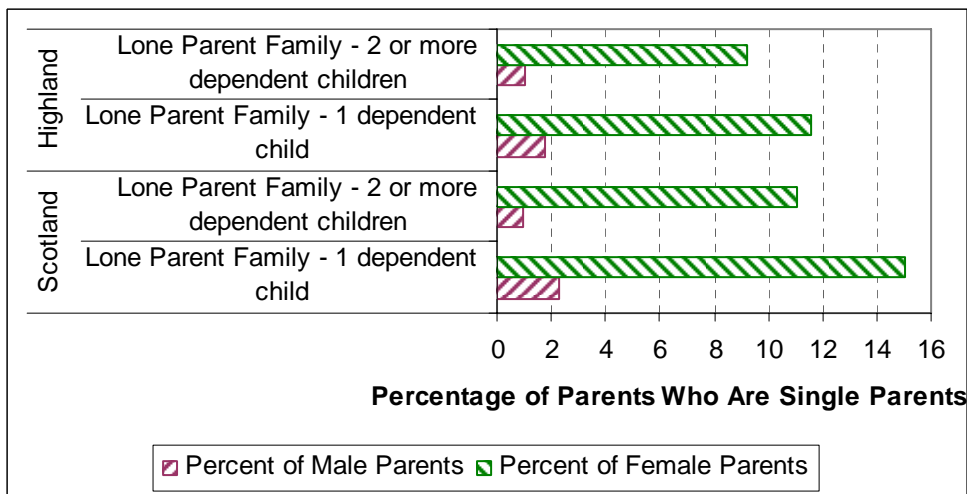
Source: 2001 Census

Caring of the very young, elderly, sick and disabled is not shared equally between men and women, with 9.1% of men in Highland providing some level of care compared with 13.5% of women: figures for Scotland are 9.8% and 14.3% respectively.

The imbalance becomes slightly more pronounced when care is provided for more than 50 hours a week.

Single Parents

Chart 14: Percentage of All Parents Who are Single Parents by Gender



Source: 2001 Census

Women in Highland are more likely than men to be single parents. 11.6% of all female parents are single parents with one dependent child and 9.2% have two or more dependent children: the figures for men are 1.8% and 1.0% respectively. Both men and women in Highland are less likely to be single parents than their counterparts in Scotland as a whole.

HOUSING

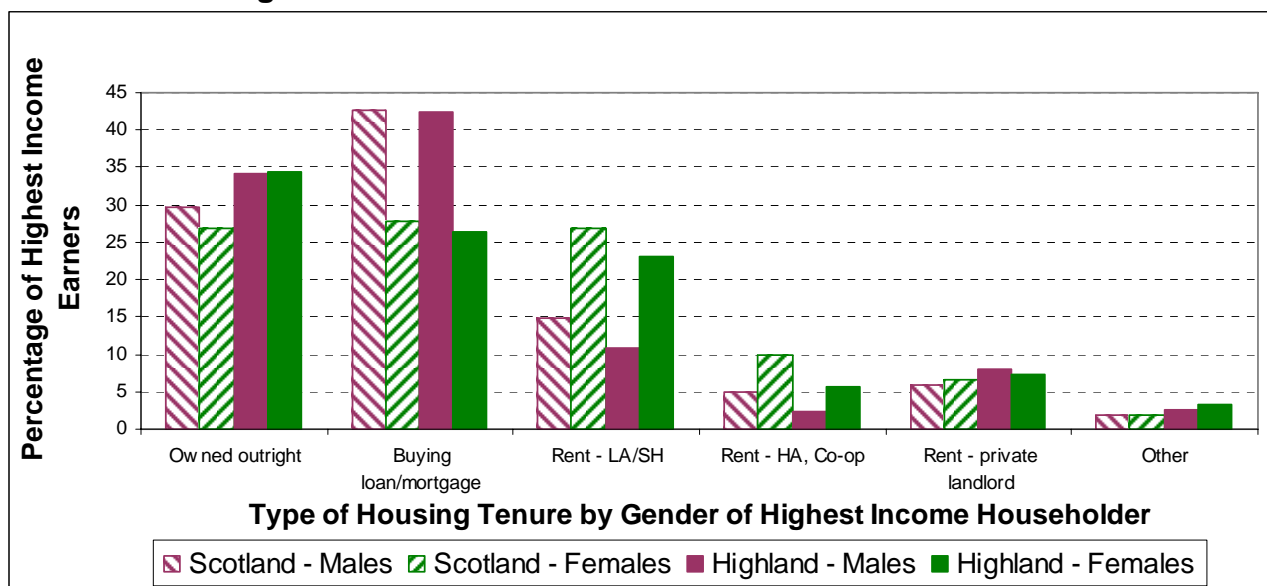
Table 12: Figure 19: Household type by sex of adult population (2003-2004) Percent

	Male		Female		Persons	
	Highland	Scotland	Highland	Scotland	Highland	Scotland
Single adult	11.1	12.7	5.1	7.8	5.1	10
Small adult	18.3	20	18.2	17.2	18.2	18.5
Single parent	0.4	0.5	4.9	5.9	4.9	3.5
Small family	16.1	15	18.2	15.1	18.2	15
Large family	9.1	9.9	10.3	9.1	10.3	9.5
Large adult	18.8	17.6	13.0	15.2	13.0	16.3
Older smaller	21.8	18.4	19.0	16.2	19.0	17.2
Single pensioner	4.4	5.9	11.2	13.4	11.2	10.1
	100	100	100	100	100	100
BASE	420	12,242	604	16,504	604	28,746

Data Source: Scottish Household Survey 2003-2004

The Scottish Household Survey shows that working age men are more likely than women to live alone, and men live more often in a small adult household. Women are far more likely to live in single parent households. Above working age, women are more than twice as likely as men to live alone. This is influenced both by women's greater life expectancy and because women tend to marry older men.

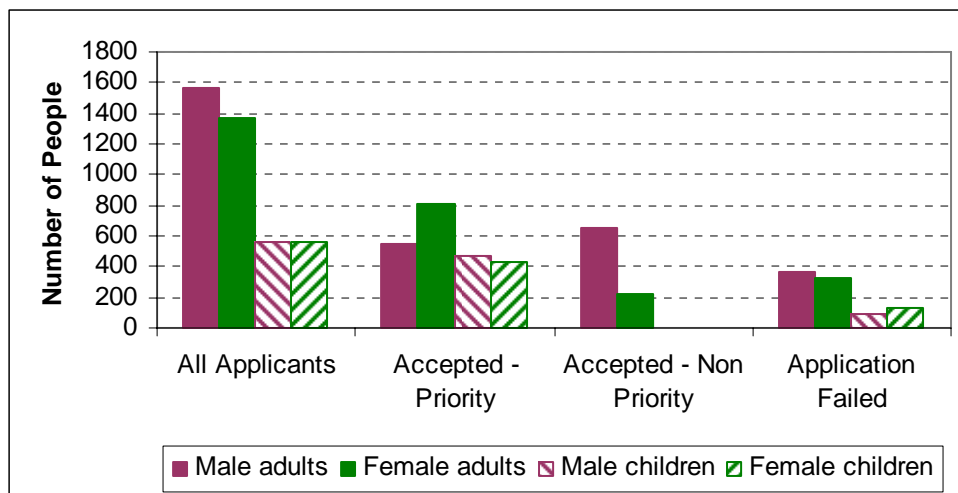
Chart 15: Housing Tenure and Gender



Source: Scottish Household Survey 2003-04

The Scottish Household Survey also shows that men are more likely to be the highest income earner in households which have a loan or mortgage, but women are more likely to be the highest income earner in homes rented from local authorities and housing associations.

Chart 16: Homelessness Applications 2005/06



Source: Highland Council Housing Service Records

In 2005/06, 4,059 people (1.9 percent of our population) applied to the Highland Council to be considered as homeless: 53 percent of the adults were women and 47 percent were men, with equal numbers of male and female children. Of the adults who were accepted as being in priority need, 60 percent were women and 40 percent were men: of those who were accepted as being in non priority need 74 percent were men and 26 percent were women. More adult women were assessed as being in priority need because a many are accompanied by children, who are assessed as being vulnerable.

CRIME AND JUSTICE

Violence against women is a key a key concern and the Council works closely with its Community Planning partners, including the voluntary sector, at strategic and operational levels to tackle this issue

There are recognised limitations to identifying the scale of violence against women in Highland, including underreporting, the definition of violence and the recording of statistics. To promote the cultural change required, information on attitudes to gender equality and personal experiences need to be explored further. Of the available information, some headline statistics from Northern Constabulary include:

- In 2005, there were 1392 domestic abuse incidents reported to the police in Highland, 90% of these were female victims
- There has been a year on year rise since 1999 in the reportage of domestic abuse incidents to the Scottish police.
- In Highland, 632 domestic abuse incidents per 100,000 population were reported during 05/06. In Scotland, 899 incidents per 100,000 were reported.
- In 2005/06, there were 39 rapes reported to the police in Highland and 8 attempted rapes.
- Highland has a low crime rate, but has the same reported incidence of crimes of indecency as the Scottish average: 12 crimes of indecency per 10,000 population

Source: Northern Constabulary as reported in: Report to Highland Wellbeing Alliance Domestic Abuse Training Consortium, Ann Rosengard Associates, Dec 2006

TRANSPORT

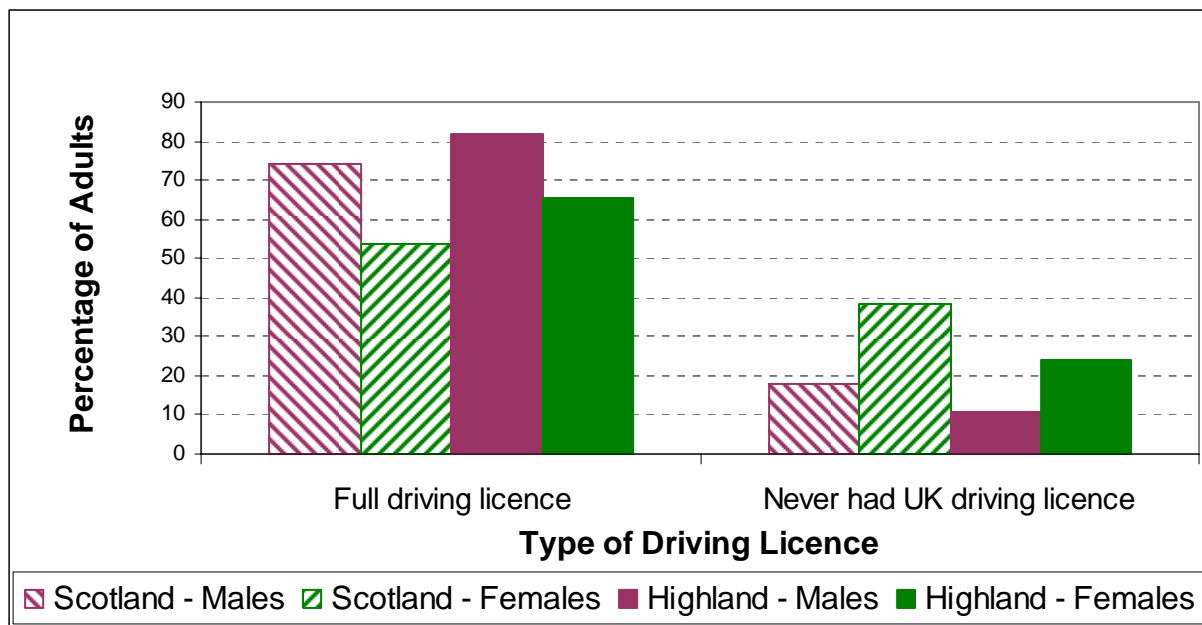
As women often have the primary care and domestic responsibilities reflected in work patterns, they have different time use patterns of transport from men. These factors influence the journeys they make and the times at which they travel in different ways to those of men.

Transport disadvantage is a main perceived drawback of rural living. A 2000 Scottish Executive study provides an insight into the problems faced by women living in isolated and remote locations. Car dependency was found to be 'stark' in such areas, especially for access to employment and essential services. These problems are exacerbated for the most vulnerable women in rural areas:

The high cost, infrequency and gaps in provision were highlighted by a number of respondents and once again pointed to the problems for women who experience domestic abuse in rural areas and their limited options to allow them to escape. Lone parents living in rural areas were also identified as a group who may experience exclusion from, for example, access to education, employment, and childcare.

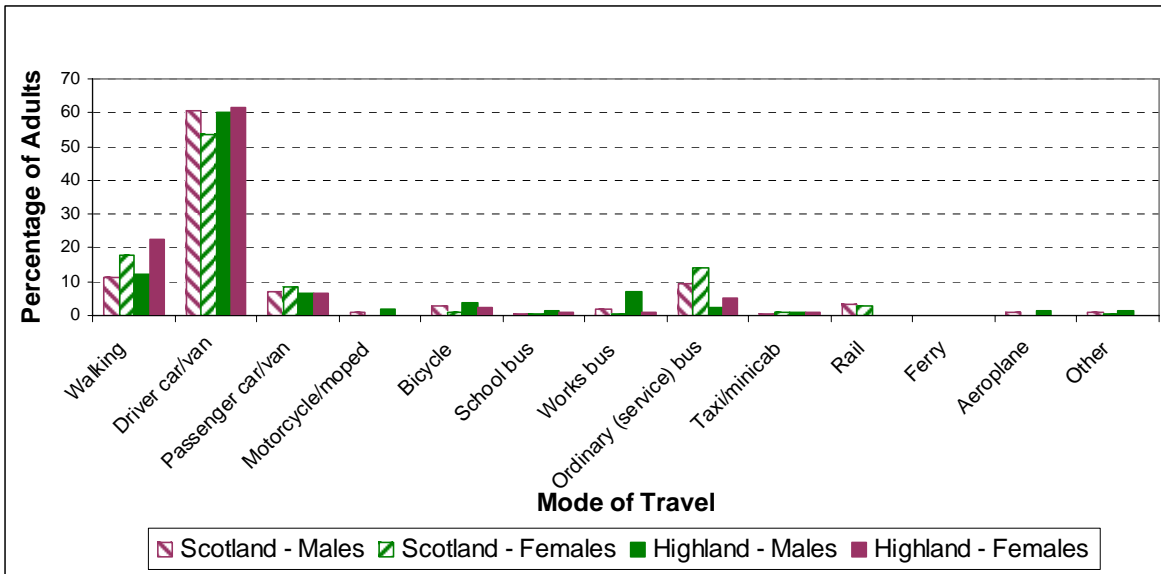
Source: Reid-Howie Associates (2000) Women and Transport: Moving Forward, Scottish Executive. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/cru/kd01/blue/transport-00.htm>

Chart 17: Driving Licence Holders by Gender



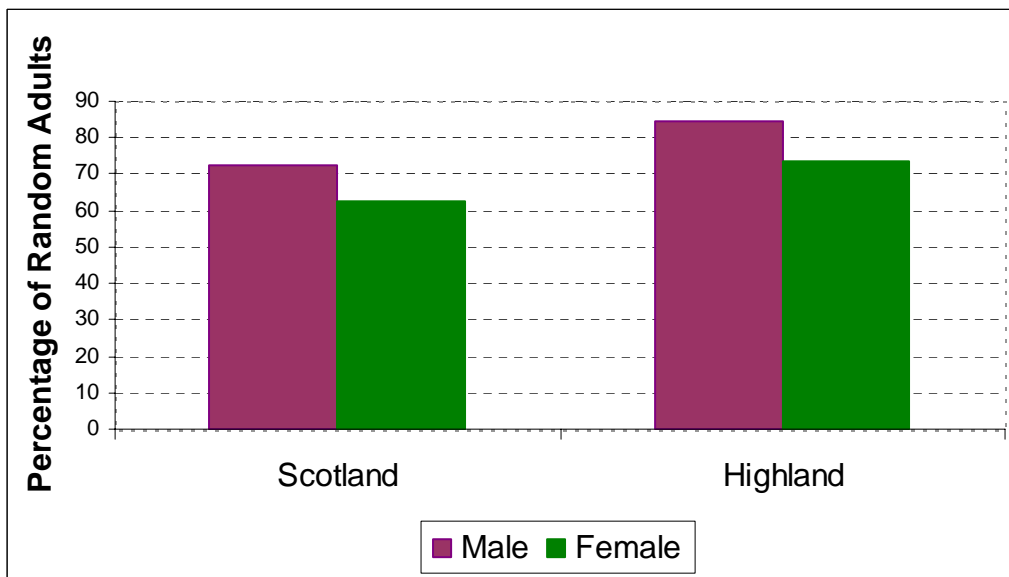
Source: Scottish Household Survey 2003-04

Chart 18: Method of Transport to Work



Source: Scottish Household Survey 2003-04

Chart 19: Availability of Cars for Private Use



Source: Scottish Household Survey 2003-04

Source: Reid-Howie Associates (2000) Women and Transport: Moving Forward, Scottish Executive. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/cru/kd01/blue/transport-00.htm>

APPENDIX 3: SOME CURRENT HIGHLAND COUNCIL INITIATIVES

Overview of Equal Opportunities: Equal opportunities activities have been overseen by a corporate Equalities Group made up of senior officers and the Council's Equal Opportunities spokesperson. The governance of Equal Opportunities in the Council is to be reviewed following recent elections. There is also an Equalities working group and a group of staff who have received training and will oversee Equality Impact Assessment work within their Services.

Women in Management: The Highland Council made a commitment to increase the percentage of women managers by addressing the barriers to management that were identified by research and feedback from staff. Since 2003, the Council has taken positive action to remove barriers to women's progression in the organisation.

The Council identified and has achieved the following actions:

- Held two seminars to raise awareness of the Council's commitment to Women in Management and good practice. The most recent seminar included a presentation on Public Appointments and encouraged participants to consider taking up available opportunities.
- Provide training events and increase networking opportunities and maintaining an improved gender balance of attendees at corporate training courses
- Establish a mentoring scheme for women
- Review personnel policies to ensure full consideration of equal opportunities issues
- Monitored changes in the numbers and pattern of women managers throughout the organisation
- Reviewed progress through the Women in Management Group and reporting to the Senior Management Team and Resources Committee

Since implementing the programme the numbers of women in the top 2% and top 5% of earners in the Council has increased. A number of these actions are continuing and are referred to in the GES Action Plan

Training: The Council offers a corporate training course on Equal Opportunities and Diversity which includes Gender Equality issues. This is open to all staff and particularly targeted at front-line and policy development staff. All service management teams have attended and this is now a core competency element of the Council's Management Passport.

Equal Pay: The Council carried out an assessment of its potential liability under the Equal Pay Act (1970) in June 2006 and made arrangements to address any identified potential liabilities. Over 95% of employees invited to accept an equal pay offer did so. Since then the Council has received 135 equal pay grievances with the greatest proportion coming from male employees. Through the implementation of a revised pay and grading structure the Council will ensure that any remaining gender based pay inequalities are eliminated.

Job Evaluation: The Council is currently working towards the implementation of a revised pay and grading structure for approximately 9000 of its employees to take account of the outcomes of a job evaluation exercise. Arrangements for the implementation of the new pay and grading structure will be subject to consultation with employee representatives.

Recruitment and Selection: The Council's Recruitment and Selection Procedures have been reviewed and relevant employees made aware of the importance of ensuring that the

recruitment process is free of gender bias. Training on the new procedures has been rolled out to staff involved in the recruitment process.

Flexible Working: Home Working, Compressed Working, term-time working, part-time working and job share are just some examples of the range of flexible working options currently in place in the Council. As well as formally agreed flexible working patterns informal arrangements (e.g. flexible start and finish times and short term home working) between employees and their managers operate in numerous Council workplaces.

Supporting Young People and Families: The Council is involved in a wide range of activities that support and provide services for Families and Young People and that assist men and women, boys and girls. We are aware that women are more likely to have care responsibilities and are far more likely than men to be single parents, and that women and lone parents in particular can face a range of barriers to access to training and employment.

Access to affordable childcare is a significant barrier to parents taking up employment, particularly in remote and rural areas. To this end, the Highland Council Childcare Information Service aims to meet the needs of parents and carers who wish to access information on local childcare and pre-school education and provides information to providers, potential providers, employers enquiring about childcare for employees and statutory bodies requesting information for planning purposes. The Highland Family Resource Alliance is part of the government's Childcare Strategy, an initiative set up to provide communities with quality, affordable and easily accessible childcare. The local Care and Learning Alliance offers a range of services that are easy to access and can be specific to children and families' needs. Initiatives have been supported such as the Alan Plus and Positive Parents projects below.

ALAN Plus: The Alan Plus project was run as a Highland Pre-school Playgroup initiative aimed at recruiting an increasing number of professionally trained men to work in all areas of early years education and childcare. To project aimed to ensure that children and families benefit from well-trained, professional staff working in the sector - both men and women. In order to improve the gender balance, the project supported and recruited men into non-traditional areas early years education and childcare. Successful candidates were trained in Child Protection, Food Hygiene, First Aid and undertook "Play and Learning into Practice" (PLIP) course. The pilot has finished but participants have worked with mobile crèches, playgroups, special needs groups and out of school clubs across Highland and some men are working over 25 hours a week. The pilot has challenged stereotypical roles, created a bank of male childcare workers and provided role models for children and other men.

Positive Parenting 'Positive Parenting', a UK wide voluntary organisation, was employed to run parenting groups for the Youth Action Team. Eight courses are run every year throughout Highland. Each lasted around 8 - 10 weeks. We observed one such course at 'The Bridge', Inverness. All the parents said they were finding the course rewarding. They were grateful for the opportunity to talk to each other about their difficulties. The group made them realise they were not alone and they learned from each other

Working for Families: "Working for Families is a 4-year pilot project delivered by Highland Council for the Scottish Executive, under the Anti-Poverty Initiative. The aim of the project is to remove the barriers to employment experienced by families on low income, lone parents, and families with other stresses such as disability, poor health or addiction issues. The geographical areas covered were those communities identified on the SIMD (Scottish Index of

Multiple Deprivation). Clients are referred from partner agencies, in an effort to deliver a seamless, holistic approach to employability. Help offered can consist of a simple financial input, such as funding childcare to bridge the gap between benefits and employment, or longer term mentoring, with self-esteem building and steps towards employability, such as volunteering or training. The Scottish target was 15,000 families registered (reached March 2007), of which 50% were to gain sustainable employment. WFF Highland have consistently reached targets, and bucks the Scottish trend by having more male clients registered (16%), perhaps reflecting traditional roles in the north. Childcare was the original focus, and WFF Highland has been instrumental in creating many new places, in nurseries, creches and childminders. The project has now evolved to reflect three main areas for development: childcare, transport and training. To date, June 2007, WFF Highland has registered 695 clients, spread across Caithness, Sutherland, Skye and Lochalsh, Easter and Mid Ross, and three projects in Inverness. Its success at strategic level has been recognised as stemming from the flexibility of response to individual circumstances, and creative and local solutions identified by Parent Champions in careful consultation with clients." www.wff-highland.org.uk

Childcare Vouchers: The Council is currently in discussion with a number of suppliers of Child Care Voucher Schemes with a view to offering this facility to staff. This is a recognised Salary Sacrifice Scheme whereby the employee agrees to purchase Child Care Vouchers through the Council and receive a reduction in the basic rate of National Insurance Contributions. The Council is hoping to introduce the scheme by the end of September 2007.

Education: The Highland Council Learning and Teaching Toolkit includes a dedicated section on gender which several primary schools have used to try to 'close the gap' in writing achievements in particular.

Violence Against Women: The Council has been an active partner in multi-agency work to tackle and raise awareness of gender based violence against women. At national level, there has been a move from the focus on domestic abuse to include a wider approach to violence against women that recognises that gender inequality is a key cause resulting from historical imbalances between men and women where men have traditionally held more power, wealth and status than women. This is reflected in Highland, and partners currently focus work around the Violence Against Women Training Consortium which employs a Training Co-ordinator. Recent development include the training of a bank of trainers from the Council and NHS Highland who will roll out awareness raising to partner agencies and the voluntary sector.

Partners have recently commissioned a piece of work to assess the needs of women and children in Highland who experience gender-based violence, to assess the level and quality of current support provision, and to make recommendations for development and improvement of provision. The recommendations of this work are currently being considered and it is planned to develop a strategy to address gender based violence. In addition the Council is committed to raising employees' awareness of the issues around male violence against women, and to ensuring that they are able to provide appropriate and informed support

Working with gender based groups: The Council has ongoing involvement with a local Women@Work project managed by the Workers Educational Association and which encourages women in the Highlands to participate and make their voices heard. The Council's Equal Opportunities Officer currently chairs the project's Advisory Group and provides a monthly e-bulletin of gender based news items.

APPENDIX 4: ACTION PLAN

The Council has proposed four key objectives in its Gender Equality Scheme. The priorities for each objective are detailed below and are followed by measurable outcomes and timetabled supporting actions:

OBJECTIVE 1: To deliver services that are accessible for men and women, boys and girls.

Priorities

1. To ensure Council services meet the needs of men and women and girls and boys we will improve data collection, analysis and assess all new policies, policy reviews and reviews of functions for any gender impact.
2. Taking action to address gender imbalance in service use.
3. To build relevant gender equality considerations into the procurement and grants process.

Measures

1. **100% of all new policies and functions and reviews of policies and functions are screened for relevance to gender impact**
 Baseline All existing policies screened
 Target 100% of all new policies and functions and reviews of policies and functions screened
2. **By June 2008 develop a system to gather evidence to provide a gender analysis of service use and customer experience**
 Baseline To be identified
 Target To be identified
3. **100% of all relevant procurement contracts and grant awards comply with an equal opportunities statement from 2008 – 09 onwards**
 Baseline Statement to be developed by June 2008
 Target 100% of relevant contracts and awards comply with statement

Supporting Activities

What we will do	How	When	Who
Improve information gathering relating to gender and service use.	Benchmark national and local demographic information.	End 2007	CEXO HoPP
Support to carry out equality impact assessments through tools, training and sharing of good practice across the Council, and publish the	Screen functions and policies for relevance to gender equality. Services to identify new policies and function and existing policies for priority for equality impact assessment (EQIA)and agreed by management teams	Review annually from June 2007	All Services Equalities working group

What we will do	How	When	Who
results of all impact assessments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff guidance on EQIA completed 2. Training for relevant staff to undertake and understand EQIA 3. Assess ongoing training needs for EQIA 4. On-line version of tool complete 5. EQIA undertaken according to priority timescale 6. Employee Development to develop EQIA briefings for staff 7. Publish completed Equality Impact Assessments 8. Progress on EQIAs in Quarterly Performance Reports 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dec 2006 2. Jan 07 & as needed 3. Annually from June 2007 4. July 2007 5. From June 2007 6. From Oct 2007 7. From July 2007 8. From Oct 2007 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CEXO EOO 2. CEXO EOO 3. CEXO EDM 4. CEXO EOO 5. All services 6. CEXO EDM 7. CEXO HoPP 8. All services
Identify where there is gender imbalance in service use and demonstrate how this is being addressed.	Use information gathered as a result Equality Impact Assessment in respect of gender, and any other relevant activities, and include in future Actions Plans and schemes.	2008 - 2010	All services
Review the Council's documentation and guidance on procurement and voluntary sector funding ensuring that the gender equality duties are taken into account.	Procurement documentation and guidance will be reviewed to take account of gender equality duties and ensure appropriate statements included.	By June 2008	Head of Finance
	Review of voluntary sector funding will take account of gender equality duties and ensure appropriate statements included in documentation.	June 2008	CEXO HoPP
Promote activities that support women and men, boys and girls to fulfil their potential	Enable women and men to enter into and progress in the workplace in order to eliminate poverty and exclusion through the Working for Families Project. Participants are monitored by gender.	Reviewed annually	P & D Economy and Regeneration Manager

What we will do	How	When	Who
	Women and men are supported through Early Years activities as identified in the Children's Service Plan (FHC2).	ongoing	Director of ECS
	Include the need for gender analysis and broader equalities analysis in the framework for customer opinion to be developed	From December 2007	CEXO HoPP
Specifically in Education we will ensure the General Duty is met through the following actions	Make arrangements to ensure all educational establishments are made aware of the Gender Equality Duties and the requirements on schools.	By June 2008	Director of ECS
	Actively promote awareness of Gender Equality within Education, Culture and Sport Service and reflect in School Development Plans.	2007 – 2010 Review annually	Director of ECS
	Establish data required to effectively monitor gender equality in schools.	By Dec 2007	Director of ECS
	Information collected by schools, e.g. academic attainment, exclusions etc will be analysed by gender and used to assess the gender impact of policies and functions on boys and girls. Teaching and learning will require to be considered to ensure the appropriateness for both boys and girls of the teaching being offered.	Underway already but further investigations and plans by end 2008.	Director of ECS
	Provide advice and guidance to schools on assessing their policies and practices for relevance. Schools to assess policies and practices involving children and young people.	2007 - 2010	Director of ECS
	Ensure that all establishments assess the impact of relevant policies, practices and provisions with reference	From Summer 2007	Director of ECS

What we will do	How	When	Who
	to gender equality.		
	Ensure the new duties for education are integrated in the FHC2 performance framework. 12 specific actions have been identified with governance and scrutiny through the Joint Committee for Children and Young People.	July 2007	Director of ECS

What we will do	How	When	Who
	consider fully equality and diversity issues and have a consistent approach to gender equality.		Manager
Gather staff views on attitudes to gender issues in the workplace and on personal experiences of barriers and opportunities in Council employment	Through employee survey: identify any gender based barriers, including barriers to recruitment in predominantly male and female occupations; gather views on attitudes to gender based issues in the workplace. , Any actions arising to be included in the GES Action Plan.	June 2008	CEXO Personnel Manager, EDM and HoPP
	When assessing employment policies and functions, we will consult with employees, trade unions and others.	2007 - 2010	CEXO Personnel Manager
	We will approach local transgender support groups for advice when reviewing employment policies to ensure equitable treatment.	By June 2008	CEXO Personnel Manager
Take positive action to achieve a better balance of women and men such as reviewing the range of flexible working options and continuing with the women in management activities	Survey employees attitudes to and *awareness of the Flexible Working Policy. Any actions arising will be included in the GES Action Plan to ensure that Corporate Plan Target can be met.	Dec 07	CEXO EDM
	Introduce Child Care Vouchers scheme	31 Jan 2008	CE
	Promote Women in Management (WIM) events and training through intranet, e-mail, flyers and Service Training Representatives	29 June 2008	CEXO EDM
	Review WIM intranet pages to ensure effectiveness provide updated and new information and links	Monthly	CEXO EOO
	Improve gender balance of participants on management development programmes	29 June 2008	CEXO EDM

What we will do	How	When	Who
	Improve gender balance of speakers on management development programmes	29 June 2008	CEXO EDM
	Increase use of Management Competency Framework and Management Passport through revised PDPs and develop supportive management style and culture through management modules to support Management Competency Framework	29 June 2008	CEXO EDM
	Maintain, evaluate and update as appropriate, the Women in Management workshops	29 June 2008	CEXO EDM
	Produce follow-up report on Pilot Mentoring Scheme one year after completion	31 July 2007	CEXO EDM
	Implement next Mentoring Scheme and increase participation	31 Sept 2008	CEXO EDM
	Increase Career Planning opportunities for women through: WIM workshops Mentoring One-to-one coaching	31 Jan 2008	CEXO EDM
	Organise a further large WIM event based on feedback from 2006 seminar Consider including other partner organisations and sessions with external providers	31 Jan 2008	CEXO EDM
	Implement pay strategy, and produce the equal pay policy statement by 28 th September 2007	Implement a revised pay and grading structure to ensure equal pay.	Dec 2007
Develop and publish an equal pay policy statement.		28 September 2007	Head of Personnel
Review and report on the equal pay policy statement.		28 September 2010	Head of Personnel

What we will do	How	When	Who
To promote the cultural change required through training and awareness raising.	Additional 300 staff trained annually in Equality and Diversity/20 courses run	2006 – 09	CEXO EDM
	Following elections, equal opportunities (including gender) is included in training for all new members.	Dec 2007	CEXO EDM and EOO

OBJECTIVE 3: To increase engagement, involvement and representation of women and men, girls and boys.

Priorities

It is recommended that the priorities are:

4. Men and women, boys and girls are encouraged to engage in public life;
5. Monitoring and seeking better balance of men, women, boys and girls in the representative structures which the Council supports
6. The standards of community engagement are applied and evidenced when consulting communities on decisions affecting the services they receive

Measures

1. Encourage better gender balance in representative structures the Council supports

Baseline To be determined by June 2008

Target To be determined by June 2008

2. Increased numbers of relevant staff trained in Community Engagement Standards

Baseline 87 as at end 2006-7

Target To exceed 100 in year 1

Supporting Activities

What we will do	How	When	Who
Raise awareness of the opportunities available for engaging in public life and work with COSLA and political parties to encourage balanced representation in the representative structures the Council supports	Promote awareness of opportunities and liaise with COSLA and political parties.	Sept 2007	CE
	Youth Voice and Pupil Councils to encourage a representative gender balance in their structures which will promote future public participation.	Ongoing Review June 2008	Director ECS
	Work with other organisations such as WEA Women@Work project to promote participation.	End 2008	CEXO EOO
Further investigate and address where there is gender imbalance in representative structures supported by the Council	Commission work to identify gender breakdown in representative structures the Council supports.	June 2008	CEXO HoPP
	Ensure review of working with Community Councils	End of 2008	CEXO HoPP

What we will do	How	When	Who
	includes consideration of equalities, including gender.		
Roll out training of the standards of community engagement and ensure compliance through ward managers	Relevant staff are trained in the Standards of Community Engagement. Training of trainers complete. Further training to be rolled out to staff across Community Planning Partnership.	2006 - 09	ECS Head of Community Learning
Investigate preferred methods to engage equalities groups in the Highlands (including gender-based groups) through events and consultation with proposals developed by autumn 2007.	Event arranged to invite equalities groups to identify preferred methods of involvement and engagement with Community Planning partners on equality issues.	October 2007	CEXO EOO
	Actions resulting from above are acted upon taken forward	TBC	CEXO EOO
	Develop a framework for involvement and engagement to take account of gender equality.	End 2007	CEXO HoPP
Specifically in Education, we will ensure that we meet the requirements of the General Duty through the following actions:	Ensure ongoing involvement of children and young people with the Scheme and in the monitoring and evaluation and impact assessment.	2007 - 2010	Director of ECS

OBJECTIVE 4 To demonstrate that the Council will not tolerate gender based violence, discrimination and harassment.

Priorities

It is recommended that the priorities are:

4. To work with public and voluntary sector partners to deal with the issues around violence against women
5. To provide effective and sensitive services for those affected
6. To find efficient and effective ways to promote gender equality by learning from good practice.

Measures

Increased numbers of Council staff participating in partnership VAW training and awareness raising

Baseline: 8 Council staff trained as trainers

Target: 200 Highland Council, NHS staff and voluntary sector representatives trained by March 2008

By June 2008 develop approaches for capturing feedback from staff and service users who have experienced violence and harassment.

Baseline

To be determined

Target

To be determined

Supporting Activities

What we will do	How	When	Who
Liaise with the current Equal Opportunities Commission, other local authorities and community planning partners to identify good practice	Continue to attend Scottish Councils Equalities Network meetings.	quarterly	CEXO EOO
	Liaise with Community Partners to address Violence Against Women and to play a key role in the future development of the Highland gender based violence against women strategy and action plan.	March 08	SW HoO CJS & CS
Complete the action plan for the partnership equality and diversity strategy	Work with partners through the Highland Wellbeing Alliance to produce robust baseline information on gender in Highland using sources from across agencies.	Ongoing Review annually June 2008	CEXO EOO
	1. Review partnership approach to Equal Opportunities	1. Dec 2007	CEXO EOO

What we will do	How	When	Who
	approved 2. Develop partnership Action Plan	2. Dec 2007	
Finalise and implement the Council's employment support for staff affected by gender based violence	Develop and implement guidance for managers in supporting employees affected by domestic abuse	June 2008	CEXO Personnel Manager
Continue to play an active role in the Highland Wellbeing Alliance Violence Against Women Training Consortium and to work with partners to tackle and address violence against women and to raise awareness of gender based violence and the impact on women, children and families through training and guidance	Provide trainers with further development opportunities	By April 2008	HWBA TC
	Identify and recruit additional trainers as necessary	By April 2008	HWBA TC
	Examine funding sources and mechanisms for ensuring long term sustainability of training and wider VAW work in Highland	By April 2008	HWBA TC
	Ensure Council and partnership actions relating to Violence Against Women are integrated in the Gender Equality Scheme.	June 2008 and review annually	CEXO HoPP & SW HoO CJS & CS
	Develop approaches for capturing feedback from staff and service users who have experienced violence and harassment.	June 2008	SW HoO CJS & CS
	Actions to protect children and young people from the effects of violence against women including domestic abuse are monitored through FHC2	See FHC2	See FHC2
Specifically in Education, we will ensure that we meet the requirements of the General Duty through the following actions:	Ensure that incidents of gender harassment or discrimination are reported, monitored and dealt with appropriately.	June 2008	Director of ECS

ENSURING WE MEET THE GENDER EQUALITY DUTY

The four key objectives above encourage a culture in the Council to promote equality between women and men, boys and girls, challenges gender stereotypes, increases the consideration of gender equality in all activities, and tackle the potential for unlawful discrimination and harassment. In order to ensure the Council meets the requirements of the Duty we will report and review as noted below:

What we will do	How	When	Who
Ensure that gender equality is given a high profile and that the Council meets its responsibilities under the Gender Equality Duty	Ensure Senior Management commitment through implementation of Gender Equality Scheme actions.	As per Action Plan	CE
	Publish GES including Education elements	29 June 2007	CE and Director of ECS
	Annual progress Report at Senior Management Team and Council	June 08 -10	CE
	Review Gender Equality Scheme	June 2010	CE
Specifically in Education, we will ensure that we meet the requirements of the General Duty through the following actions:	Ensure the new gender equality duties for children and young people are integrated with the Children's Plan performance framework.	July 2007	Director of ECS
	Annual report on progress.	June 08- 10	Director of ECS
	Review scheme after 3 years	June 2010	Director of ECS

Abbreviations:

CEXO	Chief Executive's Office	CE	Chief Executive
ECS	Education, Culture & Sport	HoPP	Head of Policy and Performance
P & D	Planning & Development	EOO	Equal Opportunities Officer
SW	Social Work	HoO CJS & CS	Head of Operations
HWBA	Highland Wellbeing Alliance	FHC2	For Highlands Children 2
		TC	Training Co-ordinator

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- ⁱ The Sex Discrimination (Public Authorities) (Statutory Duties) (Scotland) Order 2007
- ⁱⁱ Highland Council 2007
- ⁱⁱⁱ Scottish Household Survey
- ^{iv} Report to Highland Wellbeing Alliance Domestic Abuse Training Consortium, Ann Rosengard Associates, Dec 2006
- ^v [High Level Summary of Equality Statistics: Key Trends for Scotland 2006](#), Scottish Executive, March 2006
- ^{vi} [A Gender Audit of Statistics: Comparing the Position of Women and Men in Scotland](#), Scottish Executive, March 2007
- ^{vii} National Standards of Community Engagement, Communities Scotland, 2006,
http://www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/webpages/lccs_008411.pdf
- ^{viii} A Gender Audit of Statistics: Comparing the Position of Women and Men in Scotland, Scottish Executive, March 2007
- ^{ix} <http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourcouncil/highlandfactsandfigures/publications/papersandbriefingnotes.htm>
- ^{xi} <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/research/briefings-07/SB07-21.pdf>Election 2007, SPICE briefing, 08 May 2007
- ^{xii} Scotland's Councillors 2003 <http://www.cosla.gov.uk/attachments/publications/cllrsurvey2003.pdf>
- ^{xiii} The Highland Council