

NORTHERN JOINT POLICE BOARD

15 JUNE 2007

Agenda Item	
Report No	

GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME

Report by the Chief Constable

SUMMARY

To present to members Northern Constabulary's First Gender Equality Scheme.

BACKGROUND:

The Equality Act 2006 introduced the Gender Equality Duty (GED) for public bodies including Northern Constabulary and The Northern Joint Police Board. The GED sets out a number of general duties and a number of specific duties. One of the specific duties which will assist public bodies in meeting the general duty is the requirement to publish a Gender Equality Scheme by 29th June 2007.

The Gender Equality Scheme sets out how Northern Constabulary will fulfil its duties to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity between men and women, including transgender people.

In line with the Gender Equality Duty, all public bodies are required to be proactive in tackling inequality by:

1. Consulting service users and staff about how they can improve services to meet the needs of women and men.
2. Benchmark their current position against national statistics and local trends.
3. Set high level goals with resources and action to back these up.
4. Audit their current ways of working to address any unlawful discrimination and identify opportunities to promote equality.
5. Publish plans and report on progress.
6. Identify and take action on equal pay.

The scheme has been developed in line with these requirements, addressing areas where information monitoring processes are required so as to address performance measurement and trend analysis as well as equality impact assessments. Internal consultation has been addressed through the Force Gender Equality Advisory Group and the Force Survey, while service users have been consulted through the Highlands and Islands Equality Forum focus groups. Further data and the national perspective have been addressed through ACPOS Gender Issues Reference Group and the National Gender Agenda which sets out a number of national priorities to address inequality and ensure that everyone within the service is able to reach their full potential.

Progress towards meeting the requirements of the schemes will be published on an annual basis in line with the public performance reporting requirements. The NJPB has a strategic role to play in supporting the implementation of the scheme and monitoring Force progress over the next three years. The NJPB also has a statutory obligation to give due regard to the

needs of men and women, including transgender people, in terms of its functions. Northern Constabulary will work with the NJPB to ensure that these provisions are met.

The scheme and action plan are standing items on the Force Diversity Progress Group which includes Board representation.

The scheme and action plan will be presented to the Force Policy Forum on Thursday 21 June 2007 and thereafter copies will be made available to individual Members.

RECOMMENDATION

Members are asked to note the contents of this paper and to adopt the First Gender Equality Scheme which will be presented to individual members after the Force Policy Forum on 21 June 2007.

I Latimer
Chief Constable