

NORTHERN JOINT POLICE BOARD

28 August 2009

Agenda Item	
Report No	

Gender Equality Scheme Annual Report 2009

Report by the Chief Constable

SUMMARY

This Report updates the Board on progress towards meeting the Gender Equality Duty.

Introduction

The Gender Equality Duty places an obligation on Northern Constabulary to promote gender equality and prevent discrimination. This duty was established by the Equality Act 2006. The scheme was first introduced in June 2007 and this document is the second of our annual reports and highlights the progress we have made with regard to the action plan created in 2007.

Progress & Next Steps

One of Northern Constabulary's organisational development objectives this year is the creation of a Single Equality Scheme. This scheme will bring together our existing scheme on race equality, a revised disability equality scheme and an updated gender equality scheme. In addition it will contain actions in the areas of age, sexual orientation, gender identity and religion/belief. This objective is being taken forward in advance of the Single Equality Bill that is currently in progress in the Westminster Parliament. Spring 2010 has been cited as a likely date for the bill to be given Royal Assent. Equalities legislation is reserved to Westminster but parts of the bill will apply in Scotland.

In line with our statutory duty to publish the details of our progress, this report is made publicly available at www.northern.police.uk

RECOMMENDATION

The Board is invited to note the content of this briefing document.

I Latimer
Chief Constable
10 August 2009

Northern Constabulary

Gender Equality Scheme

Annual Report 2009 – subject to noting by the
Northern Joint Police Board meeting on 28 August

Chief Constable's Foreword

Much work has been taken forward to promote gender equality within Northern Constabulary in recent years and 2008/09 is no exception. This annual report demonstrates our commitment to modernising our workforce and being an employer of choice. Northern Constabulary is proud to serve the diverse and dynamic communities of the Highlands and Islands and we understand that we need to attract, retain and promote staff from a wide range of backgrounds to make our service reflective of our communities and to meet their needs.



We launched our Gender Equality Scheme in 2007 and have documented our progress since then in the form of annual reports, made publicly available on our website. Since June 2008 we have continued our commitment to community engagement, equality impact assessments and equal pay. This report summaries our progress in these areas. As I reported last year, there remains considerable work to be done to shift the course of the mainstream to enable us to include everyone in our community but I believe that we are taking the necessary incremental steps to achieve greater equality for all in the Highlands and Islands.

In conclusion, I would like to express my thanks to those staff, community advisors, external partners and others from the Scottish Police Service who assist us on our journey.

Ian Latimer
Chief Constable

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Background

1.1 Gender Equality Duty [GED]

The GED is a legal obligation which came into force in April 2007. It was introduced by the Equality Act 2006, which in turn amended the Sex Discrimination Act 1975. The GED places a general duty on Northern Constabulary to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and harassment
- Promote equality of opportunity between men, women and transgender people.

There are also a number of specific duties. These are:

- gather information on how their work affects women and men
- consult employees, service users, trades union 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
- have published a gender equality scheme by 29 June 2007, report annually, and review progress every three years
- have published an equal pay policy statement (for listed authorities with more than 150 staff) by 28 September 2007, and
- report on progress every three years.

1.2 Gender Equality Action Plan

In June 2007 the Force published its Gender Equality Action Plan. The action plan reflects national and local data and the results of consultation with service users, police officers and staff and the NJPB custody visitor's scheme. It outlines the actions that the force will take to ensure that it is promoting equality between men, women and transgender people and states clearly who is responsible for each action within the timescale given. By the end of 2009/10 the Force will have in place a Single Equality Scheme and the Gender Equality Scheme along with the action plan will be incorporated into this.

1.3 Gender Equality Duty Annual Report

This annual report is a summary of the work that the Force is undertaking to fulfil its obligations under the Gender Equality Duty. The sections outlined in the report follow the objectives of the action plan. The original action plan was identified through gathering local and national data and a series of consultation events with men, women and transgender people, staff and police officers.

How We Deliver Our Gender Priorities

2.1 Diversity Progress Group

The Force has an established Diversity Progress Group that was initially set up to respond and focus on the Race Equality Scheme. With the introduction of the Disability and Gender Equality Duties, the group has reviewed its priorities and has decided that it will centre on the strategic direction of the Force and maintain its monitoring function of the three schemes. The group had agreed to set terms of reference and review membership to progress diversity issues through to 2010. This has now been completed. The group is chaired by the Head of Support Services and meets on a quarterly basis.

2.2 Community Advisory Group

In August 2008 Northern Constabulary set up its strategic Community Advisory Group. The purpose of this group is for the Force to engage with equalities groups at a strategic level and for local interest and community groups to have their input into the long-term planning of services that most affect their communities. The framework for this engagement comes from the equality duties and schemes we currently have in place surrounding gender, race and disability and throughout 2009/10 we are extending the scope of our equality schemes to include the areas of age, sexual orientation and religion and belief. The group meets every second month and is chaired by the Head of Support Services. At a divisional level there are also plans to develop this model to deal with matters relating to operational policing and good community relations.

2.3 Diversity Officers

The Force has appointed Diversity Officers in all area commands to drive forward and support all strands of diversity. The Diversity Officers act as a single point of contact within their area for diversity matters and support the delivery of the Force's objectives at operational level.

2.4 Strategic Diversity Advisor

The post of Strategic Diversity Advisor sits in the Policy and Co-ordination Unit of Corporate Services. The post-holder supports the Force by providing advice and guidance to staff at all levels across the Force on matters of gender equality and coordinates the implementation of the action plan. The post-holder also supports the local Community Planning Partnership Equality and Diversity Group to deliver joint actions.

2.5 ACPOS Gender Reference Group

The Force is a member of the ACPOS Gender Reference Group. This group aims to share information and highlight areas pertinent to operational policing and community engagement across the eight forces. The group is re-energising its portfolio after the creation of Forces' equality schemes by considering how best to involve key stakeholders. There is a slight overlap between other ACPOS business areas and so the group are playing a monitoring role to ensue that these issues are not lost between portfolios.

2.6 ACPOS LGBT Reference Group

The LGBT Reference Group works to share good practice in the areas of sexual orientation and transgender issues. There is a recognition by the group that transgender issues are about gender identity and not sexual orientation, however, in Scotland the manner in which LGBT community organisation's have been developed is by grouping sexual orientation and gender identity together. There is involvement of these national organisations at the reference group meetings.

2.7 Women's Development Forum

The Women's Development Forum aims to promote and implement Gender Agenda 2, an action plan aimed at enhancing equality of opportunity. The Force supports this group through regular attendance at meetings and by participating in the positive action events and seminars organised by the group.

2.8 Community Planning Partnership Equality and Diversity Group

The Force actively participates in this strategic group, which is part of the local community planning structure. The group works collaboratively to enhance access to a range of public services, improve consultation and involvement of under-represented groups and share information on a broad spectrum of equalities matters. Throughout 2008/2009 the group developed an online reporting system for all types of hate incident. It covers the eight areas of diversity that are age, disability, gender, gender identity, religion/belief, sexual orientation and social origin. The aim of the site is to encourage reporting and provide greater accessibility to policing and wider public services. We hope to provide an update report in May 2010.

Information Gathering

3.1 Last year we reported that the Force has undertaken a variety of information gathering activities in addition to those carried out in preparation for the creation of the Gender Equality Scheme. Building on the work already undertaken with regard to gathering information, in July 2007, the Highland Wellbeing Alliance Equality and Diversity Group commissioned a piece of research work that concentrated on four key areas:

- 1 Design and implement a process to engage with equalities groups with regard to the group's strategic framework
- 2 Consult equalities groups with regard to the benefits and actions required to establish a structure for ongoing engagement
- 3 Conduct an assessment of the readiness of equalities groups to work together
- 4 Work in partnership with other agencies with similar interests to the Highland Wellbeing Alliance

The results of this research demonstrate a number of crucial findings that centre on the community groups' capacity to respond to the engagement desired by the Alliance. These actions have been taken forward, with the assistance of ODS (an external consultancy group), in the form of follow-up consultations across the Highland Area. The first of these is planned for June 2009, with other events being held throughout August and September 2009.

Northern Constabulary also works with local authorities in each of the island areas. In 2008 the Force recognised the need to improve the relationship with equalities groups in these areas and have made in-roads into establishing better links with under-represented communities. The Force will continue to engage with these partners throughout the development of its Single Equality Scheme.

Eliminating Unlawful Discrimination

4.1 Impact Assessment

The Force has reviewed its Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process to ensure it is focussed on outcomes. In recognition of the way in which gender matters cut across all areas of our business, the EIA process now includes greater emphasis on engagement with a wide variety of equality groups, including cross-strand consultation, for example, gender and disability. Moreover, the EIA toolkit we have developed includes clearly laid out questions surrounding impact on equalities groups and the actions to be taken in order to eliminate any negative impact. There is also a plan in place to address the employment priorities of the Force and work is reaching

completion with regard to the Force Reference Document on Promotion and Selection.

At a national level, the ACPOS Equality and Diversity Business Area and the Personnel and Training Business Area are currently working on a review of how Forces conduct Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) and Northern Constabulary has participated in this. Once complete, the findings of this review will be considered by Northern Constabulary and any relevant recommendations adopted within the Force's internal EIA process.

4.2 Equality Monitoring Data

The Policy & Coordination Unit will ensure that equality monitoring data is collected through the biannual public consultation survey due during 2009. In terms of the responses gained from the employee opinion survey we saw that 62.8% of respondents were male and 37.2% were female.

We also monitor data with regard to officers applying for promotion. This information has been analysed further during an EIA on the Selection and Promotion FRD.

4.3 Eliminating unfair employment practice

The action plan states that we would be eliminating unfair employment practice by developing monitoring systems to identify and address any disproportionate impact on men and women arising from transfer and deployment process. To support this action the Force has a database that records details of all applicants for existing vacancies and is used to identify any disproportionate impact. This database also records successful candidates. In addition to this, the forthcoming SCOPE system which is a resource management tool and to be adopted by the force as a whole can review the human resource profile of individual Sections within Divisions and Service Units.

Service Delivery

5.1 Gender-based Violence

Information on domestic abuse, prostitution and human trafficking is available for all officers on the Force's Diversity Guide. The new ACPOS Diversity Guide has now been published and is available to all staff via our intranet. The Community Planning Partnership has recently published its Violence Against Women Strategy 2008 – 2011 and is available on request.

5.2 Accessibility

The results of the Force Review ensured that access to police services is available in all areas of the Force. Under the divisional structure there are three divisions; North, Central and East. A graphic depiction of this is available at <http://www.northern.police.uk/divisions.html>. The mission of the Force's Service Point Strategy is "to provide and maintain traditional policing service throughout the Highlands and Islands through a locally accessible, accountable, responsive and visible approach in the communities which it serves." Within this strategy, the Force highlights and offers a range of communication means to the public including telephone, email, Text Phone for British Sign Language users/ people who are hard-of-hearing or by visiting local stations.

5.3 Drug and Alcohol Misuse

Drug and Alcohol Misuse

In the action plan the Force identified the need to work with partner agencies to ensure provision of information about the dangers of drugs and alcohol. The Force continues its commitment to working in partnership with other agencies to provide information to and engage with young people on the misuse of drugs and alcohol. The Force is heavily involved in the delivery of the Know the Score educational package known as "Get Real" in primary and secondary schools, colleges and workplaces. Quarterly returns are made to the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency on the progress for the programme.

Employment

6.1 Women's Development Forum

The Staff Development Officer supports the work of the Women's Development Forum by establishing communication networks with line managers to encourage involvement in the Forum's activities. The representation of Northern Constabulary on this national group is currently under review.

6.2 Promotion barriers

As part of a review and Equality Impact Assessment of the Force Promotion and Selection FRD focus groups have been carried out with groups of male and female officers. The results of this work show that there are additional barriers that women in particular face when considering applying for promotion. These barriers are linked to other policies and not necessarily the promotion and selection policy. One of the identified actions of this EIA is to explore this disproportionate impact during an EIA on the transfer policy.

6.3 Special constables/cadets

It has been identified that there is a disproportionate number of female to male special constables. At the end of 2009 71% of newly appointed special constables were female and 29% were male. This is in comparison to the overall number of special constables where two thirds are male and one third female. One of the Force's organisational development objectives for 2009/10 is a review of the recruitment, deployment, development and training of special constables. Part of this review will involve a further analysis of the monitoring statistics.

6.4 Employment monitoring Systems

Quarterly monitoring figures are collated and reviewed. Currently the overall percentage of female officers is 23% and male officers is 77%. For police staff this changes to 73% female and 23% male. In order to lessen the gap between these groups there is a range of work being undertaken such as further positive action measures in recruitment, retention and progression.

6.5 Equal Pay

The Force also published its Equal Pay Statement in June 2007. Work to eliminate unfair employment practice is ongoing. We are carrying out consultations with staff associations and are reviewing the current pay model for support staff in line with legislative requirements. We have revised our timescale for this and aim to have this work complete by March

2010. The same is true of the recommendations that will be made with regards to appropriate pay models. The action plan stated that we would provide training and guidance to those involved in determining equal pay. This action is also now complete.

Involvement and Consultation

7.1 Engagement

As detailed throughout this report, the Force use a variety of engagement mechanisms from staff surveys and specific focus group events to partnership working with gender-focussed community groups. A strategic Community Advisory Group has also been set up. Members representing gender issues include Inverness Women's Aid, SWANS and the Terrence Higgins Trust. There is also a wider set of individuals and community groups who are involved in consultation carried out via the Community Planning Partnership.

The information gathered as a result of these activities has been used to; inform the action plan; identify trends; and make changes to practice. A successful example of this is the representation of one of our community groups at the ACPOS Diversity Business Area LGBT Reference Group.

Promoting Equality of Opportunity

8.1 Addressing complaints

The Head of Professional Standards reports any matters regarding complaints of discriminatory behaviour received by members of the public to the Diversity Progress Group.

8.2 Awareness Raising

Diversity and Community Beat Officers in divisional commands continue to meet with local groups.

8.3 Gender Equality Awareness

The local Violence Against Women Partnership has conducted a number of multi-agency training sessions this year and has recently launched its strategy. Northern Constabulary continue to be represented on this forum.

Procurement and Partnerships

9.1 Mainstreaming gender equality through procurement

The Force has reviewed and amended a variety of its procurement mechanisms to reflect the provisions of the GED including updates to the pre-qualification questionnaire, contractual conditions and standing orders. Further work is being carried out to reflect these changes in our Force Reference Documents and training for staff on these changes are on-going.

Annual Reporting

10.1 Publication

This report will be made available on Northern Constabulary's website. www.northern.police.uk

Part of the results of this year's plan will be included in the Public Performance Report, which includes the staff profile broken down by gender. This will be published in August 2009.

10.2 How to give feedback

Implementing our Gender Equality Scheme is an ongoing process. This annual report is one step to achieving greater gender equality for our people and members of the public. We would welcome any feedback, concerns and suggestions regarding any part of this report and our wider Gender Equality Scheme. We will be delighted to hear from you and promise to consider your comments as part of our regular review process. If you would like a direct response please provide your contact details and Northern Constabulary will be happy to oblige. Contact us:

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