

GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME 2007-2010

INTRODUCTION

1. This Report provides an update on the development of the draft Gender Equality Scheme 2007-2010.

BACKGROUND AND INFORMATION

2. The Gender Equality Duty is the biggest change in Sex Equality Legislation in 30 years since the introduction of the Sex Discrimination Act itself.
3. The Gender Equality Act 2006 amends the Sex Discrimination Act to place a statutory duty on all public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need:
 - to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
 - to promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

This is known as the general duty and will come into effect on 6 April 2007.

4. Police Forces are required to produce and publish a Gender Equality Scheme by 30 April 2007.
5. Full consideration, during the development and writing of the scheme has been given to ACPO guidance, 'Setting Gender Equality Duty' and the Equal Opportunities Commission Code of Practice.

CURRENT POSITION

6. At present the development of the Scheme is being progressed through a project board. Consultation is taking place with Managers across the Force to assess the services they provide to make recommendations for change.
7. Work already commenced through the Gender Agenda Steering Group and issues raised through the Women's Network will be incorporated into the Scheme and to generate further issues. Consultation with our employees and the wider community is

also planned. These will be incorporated into an all encompassing action plan for the next 3 years.

8. The draft Scheme will be considered by Chief Officers prior to publication at the end of April 2007 and will be made available for further consultation with employees, staff associations and the community.
9. There is a requirement that within three years of publishing the Scheme all the actions will be completed. In addition an annual report must be published identifying the steps taken, the information gathered in monitoring the effects of policing and practices and the outcomes achieved.

RECOMMENDATIONS

10. It is recommended that;
 - i. Members note the progression to the Gender Equality Scheme;
 - ii. further Reports be provided on implementation of the action plans on an annual basis.

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Background Papers:

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