



# DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL

## GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME

*(Strategy to eliminate discrimination and unfair treatment on the basis of gender and promote equality of opportunity for all.)*

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Committing to Excellence	Promoting Civic Pride & And Active Community	Creating a Clean, Tidy & Safe Environment	Providing Affordable Housing while Protecting Green Space	Ensuring a Sustainable Local Economy & Jobs
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## **Foreword**

Dacorum Borough Council welcomes the introduction of the Equality Act 2006 and the introduction of the Gender Equality Duty. We acknowledge that the successful promotion of gender equality requires us to deliver real change by identifying and implementing relevant and appropriate improvements in the working lives of women and men. The duty will provide us with a mechanism through which we can make our functions, activities, policies, practices, services and opportunities more efficient, effective and responsive on the grounds of gender. It will help us understand and address the different needs of men and women and make better use of their talents and abilities in the workforce.

This Gender Equality Scheme (GES) outlines how the Council will meet its legislative requirements to eliminate gender inequality. It demonstrates our ongoing commitment to ensure that we meet the needs of all individuals regardless of gender, whether as employees or service users. The Council recognises that the community it serves and its service users have a diverse range of backgrounds, needs and requirements. It recognises that gender equality cannot and should not be considered in isolation from other equality issues.

This Gender Equality Scheme is an addendum to our Corporate Equality Strategy (CES), which sets out the Council's strategic aims and objectives with regard to promoting equality and diversity. We aim to ensure that all aspects of equalities and diversity are "mainstreamed", in other words considered in relation to all of our services, activities and functions. We are committed to ensuring that all services and opportunities are accessible and appropriate to all. We will develop a robust monitoring evaluation and review process to identify the progress we have made and identify the areas for improvement.

This GES reinforces our commitment in our CES to ensure: -

- *All types of unlawful discrimination and unfair treatment are eliminated.*
- *All aspects of equalities are addressed (i.e. gender, race, disability, sexuality/ gender, religion/ belief and age)*
- *All aspects of equality are mainstreamed into all aspects of policy and practice.*

We will work with and consult individuals in the community, local organisations, groups, partners, and stakeholders on our equality aims, objectives, and performance. We will report on progress made annually and update the entire CES including the GES every three years.

*Chief Executive*

## **Profile of Dacorum**

The Borough of Dacorum is in Hertfordshire. It is composed of the main towns of Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted and Tring and number of large and small villages. According to the 2001 census it has a total population of 137,799 residents.

The composition of Dacorum on the grounds of gender is:

	<b>Hemel Hempstead</b>	<b>Berkhamsted</b>	<b>Tring</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Male</b>	39,760	7,919	6,393	13,419	67,491
<b>Female</b>	41,383	8,579	6,926	13,419	70,307

*(Source: 2001 Census - All figures have been calculated from rounded percentages. This means that there will be some small discrepancies between these figures and the actual figures collected in the census)*

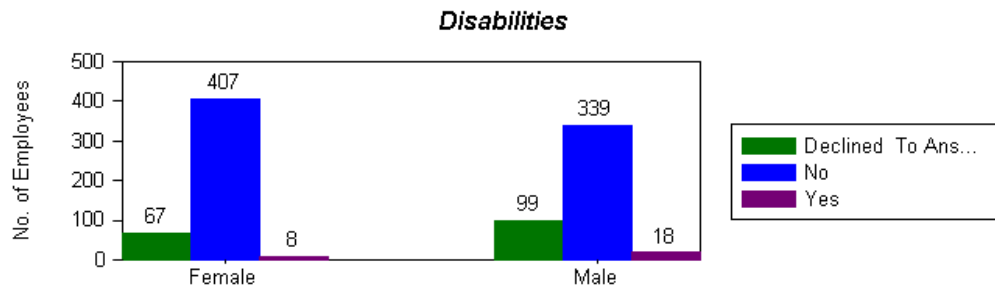
Research indicates that the lives of men and women are becoming increasingly similar, however in the key areas of health, family and economic activity there are some significant differences which include the following: -

- There are more women than men in the population.
- Women tend to be the victims of domestic violence.
- Men are more likely to be single, whilst more women are divorced, widowed or are lone parents.
- Girls outperform boys in secondary school attainment results.
- Women are more likely to work part-time or flexible hours.
- Women generally earn less than men do, although the gender pay gap is narrowing.
- Approximately two and a half million men and three and a half million women have caring responsibilities for elderly dependants.
- The unemployment rates for black and ethnic minority women are more than twice that for white women.
- Cultural issues have been shown to affect the ability of some black and ethnic minority women to follow career paths that develop their full potential.
- Women from black and ethnic minority backgrounds are more likely to be full – time carers within their households.
- Approximately 91% of job sharers and 84% of term time working employees are women.
- Women with dependant children under the age of five have the highest rate of job sharing.

The composition of the Councils workforce on the basis of gender is:

Gender:	Total
Female	482
Male	456
Grand Total:	938

With regard to disabilities, the profile of the workforce by gender is: -



#### Top five percent of Council workforce by gender

Gender	Total:	% Grand Total
Male	34	72.34 %
Female	13	27.66 %
Grand Total:	47	

The Council is committed to ensuring that the promotion of gender equality is integrated into all policy and practice. We will address and evaluate:

- The different issues and priorities for women and men in accessing services, facilities and opportunities.
- The different needs and requirements of men and women.
- Whether some services are more effectively delivered on the grounds of gender.
- The inequalities faced by men and women and how we can work to eliminate them.

The Council acknowledges that issues such as age, ethnic origin, disability and sexual orientation all have a specific impact on gender equality and the challenges faced by men and women. We are committed to identifying and responding to all gender related issues. We perceive equality as being more than just compliance with our legal duties. It is about fairness, in terms of ensuring that the services we provide are appropriate and accessible to all.

Our vision in terms of equality and diversity is of an inclusive and cohesive borough with strong positive relationships between the diverse communities and individuals. We are committed to attaining the progressive levels of the Equality Standard for Local Government, which provides us with a framework to mainstream our equality and diversity objectives. We are in the process of developing equality objectives and targets through the use of the Equality Impact Assessment toolkit, which will help us work towards achieving Level III. We have set ourselves a performance target to reach Level 4 by 2009.

### **Our objectives.**

This Scheme sets out the framework within which the Council will promote gender equality work towards the elimination of discrimination and disadvantage against individuals, groups and communities as service users, employees and members of the community. The following objectives are intended to support and complement our commitment:

#### ***Objective 1 – We will promote gender equality by:***

- Removing barriers to accessibility, in relation to employment, services and opportunities.
- Encouraging good practice in the private sector through our procurement strategy.
- Ensuring that our equality standards are met.

#### ***Objective 2 – We will tackle discrimination and disadvantage on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity by:***

- Promoting positive images of individuals on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity.
- Challenging unfair and discriminating attitudes and behaviour.
- Challenging anti-social behaviour against, or harassment of individuals and groups on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity.
- Identifying the additional gender equality issues with regard to age, disability and ethnic origin.

#### ***Objective 3 – We will support all individuals, groups and communities to achieve their full potential by:***

- Providing appropriate services, support, opportunities, and information.
- Supporting the formation of groups, networks and services for individuals and groups on the basis of gender.
- Supporting all according to their individual need/s.

#### ***Objective 4 – We will work in partnership with employees, service users, customers, and groups by:***

- Enabling participation of all on the basis of gender in all aspects of public life.
- Involving all on the basis of gender in the changes and improvements we make.
- Consulting individuals, communities and groups on gender equality issues.
- Utilising the skills, knowledge and experiences of all sectors of the community to identify and deliver our gender equality objectives.

### **The Gender Equality Duty.**

The gender equality duty introduces a new requirement on the Council when carrying out all of its functions to have due regard to the need: -

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sex.
- To promote equality of opportunity between women and men.

This includes people of all ages, all ethnic origins, faiths and beliefs, sexual orientation and gender identity. It includes the different types of disability in terms of physical disability, learning difficulties, mental health difficulties, and sensory and other impairments.

The definition of functions includes all policy making, service provision, employment matters, statutory discretion and decision making. "Due regard" means that the Council must give due weight to the need to promote gender equality in proportion to its relevance.

The duty requires us to take action on the most important gender equality issues within our functions. The promotion of equal opportunities between men and women requires us to recognise that men and women do not start from an equal footing and therefore the same treatment will not always be appropriate. Under the duty, the Council also has an obligation to eliminate harassment and discrimination of current and potential transsexual employees, this duty will be extended to cover transsexual service users.

The gender equality duty is made up of two elements namely the "general duty" and the "specific duty". The general duty comprises the overall duty to *eliminate discrimination and promote equality*. The specific duties are a means to meeting the general duty and require the Council to: -

- Prepare and publish this gender equality scheme, showing how it will meet its general and specific duties and set out its gender equality objectives.
- In formulating its overall objectives, consider the need to include objectives that address the causes of any gender pay gaps.
- Gather and use information on how the Council's policies and practices affect gender equality in the workforce and the delivery of services.
- Consult stakeholder (i.e. employees, service users and others including trade unions) and take account of relevant information in order to determine the gender equality objectives.
- Assess the impact of our current and proposed policies and practices on gender equality.
- Implement the actions set out in the Gender Equality Scheme within three years, unless it is unreasonable or impracticable to do so.
- Report on the progress of the scheme every year and review it at least every three years.

In accordance with the Gender Equality Duty, the Council will not on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation or gender identity: -

- Refuse to provide a service or opportunity.
- Provide a service of a lower standard.
- Provide a service on worse terms.
- Permit victimisation of individuals for exercising their legal rights.
- Permit discrimination against individuals or groups.

**The “specific duty”.**

The specific duties set out requirement for the Council to produce this GES and specify what it should include.

**Employment implications.**

The gender equality duty applies to all employees. It relates to all areas and all aspects of employment, including recruitment, retention, training, and development. The Council is required to ensure that its recruitment processes and arrangements for determining employment do not discriminate against or treat individuals unfairly on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity. It also relates to the terms and conditions of employment and opportunities such as promotion, transfer, training or receiving any other benefit. Failure to provide an opportunity on the grounds of a person’s gender will constitute unlawful gender discrimination. The Act also covers formal processes such as disciplinaries, dismissal, and redundancy policies and makes it illegal to subject a person to harassment for gender related reasons.

Our employment objectives in relation to gender equality are: -

- Continue to monitor key employment processes and procedures on a number of equalities and diversity grounds including gender.
- Support and advise services to collect and use equalities monitoring information to identify appropriate action to improve the recruitment, selection and retention of a diverse workforce.
- Continue to work towards eliminating gender related harassment, bullying and victimisation.
- Continue to develop and implement appropriate initiatives, policies and practices that promote worklife balance for men and women.
- Conduct equalities impact assessments of all employment policies, practices and procedures.
- Actively develop and facilitate links with appropriate organisations, groups and individuals to promote gender equality.
- Continue to ensure that all staff are supported and trained to in equalities and diversity, including the specific issues relating to gender.
- Continue to provide a range of work placement opportunities that support gender equality.

- Develop and implement a pay system that delivers equal pay regardless of gender.
- Consider the use of positive action initiatives to tackle issues of non/ under-representation on the basis of gender.

### **Service delivery implications.**

The Council as a provider of services must ensure that it does not discriminate on the basis of gender, sexual orientation and gender identity in the provision of services. This positive duty requires us to look at gender equality at the beginning of processes, rather than make adjustments at the end. Equality must be mainstreamed into all policies, procedures, and activities at the outset. The duty covers all Council functions and activities including budget setting, commissioning and procurement, regulatory functions and setting the framework in which it will deliver services.

Our service delivery objectives in relation to gender equality are: -

- Ensure that we identify and address gender related service delivery issues.
- Provide appropriate and inclusive services that address gender related issues.
- Ensure that services develop and implement systems to collate and analyse gender related data to improve service delivery.
- Ensure all service users are treated with dignity and respect.
- Ensure services and opportunities are equally available to men and women.
- Eliminate harassment, bullying and victimisation in all aspects of service delivery.

### **Consultation, involvement and participation of stakeholders**

The gender equality duty requires the Council to “*involve people who appear to have an interest in the way it carries out its functions in the development of the Gender Equality Scheme*”. The duty requires us to actively engage with appropriate individuals, organisations, and groups. This scheme will be developed, reviewed, and monitored with the involvement, and participation of employees, service users, stakeholders, partners, community and voluntary groups. We perceive the scheme to be a “living document” which will be constantly reviewed and regularly monitored.

Intrinsic to the success of the Council in developing an appropriate and relevant strategy document is the participation and involvement of all stakeholders. We are committed to consultation and participation with regard to the development of appropriate, relevant, and measurable objectives and targets and the evaluation, review and monitoring of our performance.

We are committed to involving stakeholders to assist us to:

- Identify barriers faced by individuals, groups and communities on the basis of gender, sexual orientation and gender identity in relation to accessing employment opportunities and services.
- Identify appropriate priorities for developing and implementing action plans.

- Identify and implement appropriate policies, initiatives, and activities to address the gender equality.

In order to make involvement and participation effective, the Council will: -

- Continuously review policies and practices in relation to gender equality.
- Develop appropriate participation and involvement processes that are accessible to all.
- Ensure it implements a proportionate approach that takes into account its resources.
- Promote open and transparent reporting on the outcomes of the involvement and participation initiatives and provide information on what action will be taken.

The Council will undertake consultation, participation, and survey initiatives with customers, service users, and employees at regular intervals in acknowledgement of the fact that gender equality agenda is constantly evolving. The results consultation will be used to review the appropriateness and effectiveness of its action plans and targets.

#### **Equalities Impact Assessments (EIAs).**

The Council has developed an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) process to systematically review all policies, procedures, functions, and activities in relation to the various strands of equality and diversity including gender equality.

The EIA will help us drive forward the equalities agenda locally and with our partners by helping us:

- Take into account the needs and experiences of those groups of people who will be affected by our policies.
- Identify the real and possible inequalities people experience and the impact on Council policy and practice.
- Think about alternative policies or measures that might address any adverse impact or inequality.
- Help mainstream equalities into all our policies and practice.
- Help us identify the resources required and target them effectively.
- Increase transparency in the way policies / services are developed and delivered.

All new proposals will be reviewed in terms of the relevance to equality. This is the initial stage of the impact assessment process, which is the “screening”. The aims and

objectives of the policy or proposal will be reviewed and information will be collected on how it will be implemented, which groups it is likely to affect and what the likely outcomes will be. This information will be gained from regular involvement and consultation with those likely to be affected or have an interest in it.

All current policies, processes, and functions will be continuously monitored under the auspices of the equality impact assessment process. This will assess the impact in relation to all aspects of equalities and diversity, which includes gender equality. Where a policy function or activity has been assessed as being relevant to gender equality, it will be assigned a high, medium, or low priority depending on the following considerations: -

High Impact	<p>The assessment shows that: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The outcomes are relevant to the delivery of the Council's key business objectives.</li> <li>• The policy/ function does not promote gender equality, so the Council would not meet the requirements of equality legislation, specifically gender equality.</li> <li>• There is disproportionate and unjustifiable adverse impact on employees, service users, customers and / or the community.</li> </ul>
Low Impact	<p>The assessment shows that: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There may be some differential impact but this does not have disproportionate or inequitable outcomes and can be justified.</li> <li>• The policy is not an immediate priority for the Council.</li> <li>• There is no relevance.</li> </ul>
Medium Impact	<p>The assessment falls in-between the two categories above.</p>

**Procurement and partnerships.**

The Council is committed to ensuring that all contractors and those who provide services on its behalf comply with the duty to eliminate gender discrimination and promote gender equality. It will undertake the following: -

- Include information regarding the gender equality duty and the requirement to promote gender equality into the terms and conditions of all contracts and partnership arrangements.
- Ensure that government guidance on social and equality issues in procurement are adhered to.
- Insert a clause in all contracts specifying compliance with the anti-discrimination provisions of the gender equality duty.
- Specify the information that will be required of all contractors in order to demonstrate compliance.

- Ensure that equality criteria, including specific gender equality criteria is appropriately reflected and given due weight in the specification, selection and award criteria.
- Ensure that all contractors and partners understand the gender equality requirements of all contracts and partnerships.
- Undertake monitoring and review of performance in relation to gender equality.
- Provide training for all staff involved in procurement and partnership arrangements, to ensure they fully understand the provisions of the gender equality legislation and the relevance of gender equality.

In line with the assessment of all present functions and policies for adverse impact on gender equality, the Council will review all of its present contracts and partnership arrangements and include the above criteria. The Council will publish summaries of the results of all EIAs, as required by equality and diversity legislation, ensuring that the information is available in a variety of formats.

The reports will include the following: -

- A description and explanation of the policy, service or function that has been assessed.
- A summary of the results of the assessment, including its impact.
- A summary of the consultation/ participation undertaken.
- A summary of the agreed action and proposals.

Full reports and information will be available on request. Feedback will also be included in appropriate documents such as the Corporate Performance Plan, The Corporate Equality Strategy, the Council's website, Dacorum Digest and other publications. This is in line with the Council's commitment to promote equality and diversity including gender equality in a transparent and informed way.

### **Policy implications.**

In order to meet its obligations and develop appropriate targets and actions the Council will gather relevant data. It will undertake research and seek feedback on the grounds of gender about what policies, practices, and services are working well, identify where the gaps are and what the priorities should be. Integral to this process will be the involvement and participation of people on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Information and evidence gathering will be part of the process of achieving greater gender equality, ensuring that the Council treats all individuals fairly and appropriately.

The Council will use a variety of methods to gather information such as: -

- Customer and staff surveys.
- Consultation with, participation of and feedback from all stakeholders.
- Facilitating involvement and participation initiatives.

- Utilising consultation and survey techniques such as mystery shopping Undertaking targeted research (qualitative and quantitative).
- Monitoring and analysing customer feedback including complaints.
- Seeking feedback from relevant organisations, groups, forums and individuals.
- Continuing to undertake equalities monitoring on the grounds of gender.

### **Equalities monitoring.**

The Council currently undertakes monitoring of various aspects of service delivery and employment practices. We will continue to ensure that monitoring is an intrinsic and regular feature of our policy and practice, enabling us to evaluate and review our performance. The collection and analysis of equalities information will continue to contribute to the systematic development of anti- discriminatory and inclusive service delivery and opportunities. It will assist us to monitor our compliance with our legal and statutory duties and build a comprehensive picture of our performance in relation to the duties.

With regard to gender equality the Council will continue to gather information on the effect of our policies and practices on men and women, in particular: -

- The extent to which we promote equality between men and women.
- The extent to which our services, policies, practices and procedures promote equality of opportunity between men and women.
- Identifying who uses our services and who the non service users are.

The fundamental objective of all monitoring will continue to be to provide us with an indication of the extent to which our services and opportunities are accessible and appropriate to all sections of the community. In relation to gender equality, we are committed to the following principles when requesting information from individuals.

- Assurances will be given that all information is entirely confidential and will not be disclosed without prior permission.
- An explanation will be given as to why the information is being requested and how it will be used to improve services and opportunities.

Implementation of the Gender Equality Scheme

This Gender Equality Scheme is based on the following areas: -,

1. Making sure the Gender Equality Scheme is put into practice
2. Identifying relevant functions and policies
3. Assessing and consulting on the likely impact of proposed policies
4. Monitoring Council policies for adverse impact
5. Communicating the results of assessment, consultation, and monitoring
6. Making sure the public have access to opportunities, information and services
7. Monitoring recruitment and selection and other aspects of employment and supporting employees
8. Training and supporting employees with regard to their rights and responsibilities.

Action Plan

The action plan has been developed to set out how the Council will meet its gender equality duties in terms of its services, policies, practices, functions, employees and the community. It sets out our aims and objectives as well as the associated outcomes with regard to our objectives of improving service delivery, eliminating discrimination, disadvantage and unfair treatment and actively promoting gender equality. We will use the action plan to develop appropriate policies and practices that focus on the actions that need to be taken.

**1. Making sure the Gender Equality Scheme is put into practice**

Purpose: To ensure compliance with our duty to promote equality of opportunity for all by ensuring that gender equality is mainstreamed into all policies, functions and procedures of the Council

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome/PI</b>	<b>Responsible Officer Timescale</b>
Involve stakeholder in the development and implementation and review of the Gender Equality Scheme.	Prepare a draft Gender Equality Scheme and promote the involvement of gender specific communities and employees to meet the gender duty.	Inclusive gender equality scheme produced.	Corporate Equalities Officer (CEO). Draft Scheme – April 2007.
Develop detailed gender equality objectives and targets resulting from consultation.	Develop and implement a programme of consultation on the draft scheme.	Internal and external involvement and agreement of the gender equality objectives and priorities.	CEO. October 2007.
To ensure all strategic objectives include a commitment to promote gender equality and eliminate discrimination and unfair treatment.	Develop appropriate gender equality objectives and include in all strategic objectives.	Commitment to gender equality is integrated into all strategic objectives.	Corporate Equalities Officer (CEO). Directorate Support Officers (DSO's).  Ongoing.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome/PI</b>	<b>Responsible Officer Timescale</b>
To implement the Gender Equality Scheme.	Prepare action plan(s) to review functions, policies, and procedures in relation to gender equality.	Completion of action plan(s).	CEO – Ongoing.
	Review and report on the progress with regard to the implementation of the scheme.	Transparent evaluation of the Council's performance and a revision of targets and actions to reflect progress.	CEO – Biannually.
		Increased awareness of gender equality within Dacorum.	CEO – Ongoing.
Identification of employees responsibilities regarding the implementation of the Gender Equality Scheme.	The requirement to promote gender equality to be included in the appraisal process with specific competencies against which performance is assessed.	All employees aware of their responsibility to promote gender equality.	CEO. Training and Development Officer (TDO) Human Resources.
		Development of mechanism to monitor and evaluate employee performance.	December 2007.
To provide assistance in the implementation of the scheme at a corporate level, directorate and service level.	Guidelines and advice to be developed and disseminated.	Increased awareness of gender equality and the implementation of the Gender Equality Scheme.	CEO December 2007.
	All Directorates to incorporate gender equality objectives and targets with service and financial plans	Clear measurable targets and actions across all services	CEO. DSO's. All services. Annually
Development of gender stakeholder panels and interest groups.	Develop proposal to establish the panel.	Panel created to scrutinise our gender equality work.	CEO November 2007.
	Identify and liaise with appropriate individuals, groups and communities.	More effective and responsive gender equality policies and schemes across the Council.	CEO. Communications. Services. Ongoing.

Raise awareness of gender equality across the Council.	The Scheme will be reviewed every 3 years.	Revised Scheme.  Continued updates to the Scheme.	CEO Ongoing
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome/PI</b>	<b>Responsible Officer Timescale</b>
To raise public awareness of the Scheme.	Scheme publicised and made available in appropriate formats.	Increased awareness of the Council's commitment to eliminate gender discrimination, disadvantage and unfair treatment.	CEO. Communications. Ongoing.
To ensure individuals on the basis of gender, sexual orientation and gender identity are provided with mechanisms to articulate their needs and requirements	To establish and support community and focus groups based on gender.  Harness the potential of current gender networks, groups and organisations.	Established mechanisms for consultation, information and participation.  Established networks with appropriate stakeholders	CEO. Communications. September 2007.  CEO. Services. Communications. Ongoing.
Identify the experiences of employees, customers and service users based on gender.	Develop and implement a corporate equality monitoring policy and practice which monitors and evaluates how services and opportunities are experienced on the grounds of gender.	Established database of monitoring information based on gender.  Information on areas of under and non-representation based on gender.  Transparency of data and action demonstrating service delivery, treatment and access on the grounds of gender.	CEO Services. December 2007.  CEO. Services. Ongoing.  CEO Services. Ongoing.
To monitor the implementation of the Scheme.	Annual monitoring and reporting of Gender Equality Scheme action plan tasks.	Satisfaction across the authority of the progress made under the Scheme.  The Scheme is revised as necessary.	Corporate Management Team (CMT) Cabinet  CEO. Ongoing.

## 2. Identifying relevant functions and policies

**Purpose:** To give appropriate priority to the promotion of gender equality when carrying out functions and policies

<p>To mainstream gender equalities into all aspects of service delivery and employment.</p>	<p>Identification of the commonalities between the different strands of equalities and diversity ensuring that gender equality is integrated and embedded into relevant policies, procedures and practices.</p> <p>Development and implementation of an equalities and diversity good practice guide.</p>	<p>Gender equality is actively considered and implemented.</p> <p>Consistent promotion of gender equality.</p>	<p>CEO Directorates</p> <p>September 2007.</p>
<p>Develop appropriate gender equality performance management mechanisms</p>	<p>Incorporate appropriate gender equality guidance within the service and financial planning guidance.</p> <p>Link the promotion of gender equality into the Best Value Performance indicators relating to gender.</p> <p>Establish appropriate gender equality target and benchmarks</p>	<p>Clear gender equality targets informing the development and implementation of appropriate policy, practice and initiatives.</p>	<p>CEO Directorates Services DSO's Improving Dacorum</p> <p>March 2008.</p>
<p>To meet the requirements of the Gender Equality Duty</p>	<p>To review all the functions and policies of the Council according to our duty to promote gender equality (the Scheme)</p>	<p>All functions and policies are reviewed as set out in the Scheme</p> <p>Application of the Scheme across all Directorates and services.</p>	<p>Heads of Service Service Managers DSO &amp; CEO</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

### 3. Assessing and consulting on the likely impact of proposed policies

**Purpose:** To determine how policies, functions and procedures affect individuals, groups and communities on the basis of gender, sexual orientation and gender identity (in service delivery and employment) and whether they are having an adverse impact on some groups or individuals.

<p>Inform all senior managers of the need to capture gender data necessary for long-term impact to be assessed.</p> <p>To ensure that arrangements are made to monitor any adverse impact on the promotion of gender equality.</p>	<p>A generic monitoring form and guidance is developed and implemented.</p> <p>Ongoing appropriate consultation and an evaluation of their effectiveness in supporting objectives.</p>	<p>Data is collected and monitored in a consistent manner throughout the Council.</p> <p>Corporate baseline statistics established.</p> <p>Regular reviews of information and the implementation of appropriate policy and practice.</p>	<p>CEO &amp; DSO's</p> <p>CEO &amp; DSO's</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>To ensure the consistent use of an equalities monitoring procedure.</p> <p>To include specific gender equality monitoring categories.</p> <p>To analyse monitoring information with regard to policy and practice implications</p>	<p>Implementation of corporate equalities monitoring guidance and procedure.</p> <p>Extend monitoring of key employment and service delivery data to cover all aspects of gender equality.</p> <p>Equalities monitoring information is analysed used by services.</p>	<p>Service delivery is more able to meet the needs of the service users on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation and gender identity.</p> <p>Impact of policies and practices based on gender is clearly and consistently identified with regard to non and under-representation.</p> <p>Corporate, directorate and service monitoring data is used to progress the gender equality agenda and inform policy and practice.</p>	<p>CEO &amp; DSO's</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>CEO. December 2007.</p> <p>CEO. Directorates. Ongoing.</p>
<p>To establish data on the experiences of individuals, groups and communities on the basis of gender, sexual orientation and gender identity in relation to accessing the Councils services and employment opportunities.</p>	<p>Develop and implement appropriate information and data collection systems.</p>	<p>Data collected and available on the experiences of individuals, communities and groups on the basis of gender, sexual orientation and gender identity as customers, service users, applicants for jobs and employees.</p>	<p>Heads of Service Service Managers DSO's &amp; CEO</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Incorporation of Gender Equality Scheme considerations within corporate service and financial planning guidelines.</p>	<p>Work towards standardising service planning guidelines with regard to promoting gender equality across the Council.</p>	<p>Improved service delivery by development of SMART targets and outcomes within services.</p>	<p>Heads of Service Service Managers DSO's &amp; CEO</p>

#### 4. Monitoring Council policies for adverse impact

**Purpose:** To build gender equality into the policy-making ensuring that processes are clear, open and

inclusive			
Objective	Action	Outcome/PI	Responsible Officer Timescale
To assess the likely impact of proposed policies on the promotion of gender equality.	All services to undertake Equality Impact Assessments in line with guidance from the Corporate Equalities Groups.	Qualitative research is provided to identify likely and existing impact, on gender equality.	Heads of Service Service Managers DSO's & CEO October 2007.
	Ensure that gender equality is incorporated into the Equality Standard actions.	Service actions and improvements with regard to gender equality are identified and effectively actioned.	CEO. Directorates. Services. Ongoing.
Active promotion of gender equality within the equality impact assessment process	Develop guidelines for drawing out gender equality issues considered as part of the Impact Assessments.	Guidelines developed and training available.	CEO.
	Training designed to disseminate this information to officers completing impact assessments.		CEO & DSO's October 2007
Annual monitoring of adverse impacts identified in the equality impact assessments and other feedback mechanisms.	Collection of adverse impact information considered by each service unit across the authority.	Monitoring reports to be produced by all services.	Heads of Service Service Managers DSO's & CEO. October 2007.
	Compilation of information and consideration of impact on council service delivery and employment processes.		CEO & DSO's. January 2008.
<b>5. Communicating the results of assessment, consultation and monitoring</b>			
<b>Purpose:</b> To make sure that monitoring, assessment and consultation activities, and the results are appropriate clear and plain to our customers and staff on the basis of gender, sexual orientation and gender identity.			
Actively promoting the involvement of all in public life regardless of gender.	Encourage and support individuals to be involved in the public processes.	Democratic processes reflect the gender and diversity composition of the Borough.	CEO Communications March 2008.
	Develop a robust consultation and participation strategy	Implementation of a robust strategy will encourage involvement	CEO. Communications. September 2007.

	with regard to gender equality	and participation of a diversity of individuals and interest group/ stakeholders.	
Identification of information needed.	Guidance developed for services on what information needs to be available.	Information made available in appropriate and accessible formats.	CEO. Communications. DSO's  November 2007.
To identify arrangements for publishing results of assessments, consultations and monitoring.	Results are published using a variety of media and formats.	Publicly available record of progress and performance.	CEO. Communications. DSO's.  January 2008.
Development of accessible communication channels.	The identification of appropriate communication channels for different community groups and employees undertaken through various consultation mechanisms.	Maintenance and development of communication channels between the public and the Council.	CEO. Communications. DSO's.  January 2008.
User satisfaction monitoring.	Monitoring customer satisfaction levels on the basis of gender, sexual orientation and gender identity to identify gender specific issues.	Increased satisfaction in relation to gender equality.	Heads of Service. Service Managers. CEO & DSO's.  Ongoing.

#### **6. Working to ensure all Council services and opportunities promote gender equality.**

**Purpose:** To make sure Council services and opportunities are appropriate and accessible on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation and remove any barriers to access.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome/PI</b>	<b>Responsible Officer Timescale</b>
To identify service needs on the basis of gender, sexual orientation and gender identity and identify any barriers to accessing	Use consultation and monitoring arrangements and other available means to identify need.	Increased satisfaction levels.	CEO. Communications. DSO's.  September 2007.

services.			
To provide appropriate and relevant information that promotes gender equality.	Develop and implement a good practice guide with regard to promoting gender equality.	A greater take up of service or satisfaction with the service provided.	CEO. Communications. DSO's.  September 2007
To actively promote a worklife balance.	Continue to develop and raise awareness of all potential and actual employees of worklife balance options that are available to both male and female employees.	Individuals aware of Council commitment and practices with regard to worklife balance.	Human Resources CEO  Ongoing.
To increase awareness of worklife balance opportunities.	Review the content of application information packs and the induction programme to ensure worklife balance options are actively and consistently promoted.	All employees aware of available worklife balance opportunities.	Human Resources CEO  Ongoing.
To increase the take up of worklife balance opportunities.	Monitor and evaluate employee awareness and take up of flexible working opportunities	Increased gender balance of employees utilising worklife balance opportunities.	Human Resources CEO  Ongoing.
Awareness and commitment of all staff to actively promote gender equality.	Communicate the gender equality agenda to all staff.	Gender equality is consistently promoted within the organisation.  All staff are aware of their responsibilities with regard to the promotion of gender equality.	CEO Senior Managers DSO's  Ongoing
<b>Objective 7: Employment duties – monitoring employment and supporting employees on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation and gender identity.</b>			
<b>Purpose:</b> To identify under and over representation issues and develop appropriate positive action initiatives.			
Annual employment monitoring.	Annual reporting and dissemination of employment monitoring information on the basis of gender.	Produce annual employment trends and develop action plans arising from trend analysis.  Identification of appropriate positive	Human Resources CEO  Ongoing

		action initiatives.	
Identify and implement appropriate targets for the employment, retention, and career progression on the basis of gender.	Review employment monitoring information and identify appropriate targets.	Appropriate targets set, monitored, and reviewed.	Human Resources CEO  December 2007
To eliminate any possible discrimination in the workforce.	Augment existing monitoring practices by conducting a staff questionnaire on gender equality issues.	Results used to update workforce representation.  Publish staff profile identifying policy and practice implications.	Human Resources CEO  June 2008
To identify barriers to access employment and to work with other public sector agencies to positively promote gender equality in the recruitment, selection and retention of staff	Continue existing work to develop new initiatives through continued consultation and scrutiny mechanisms.	Improvement and further development of statistical workforce profile information.  Publish statistical results in performance reviews.  Implementation of appropriate positive action initiatives.	Human Resources CEO  December 2007
To eliminate any possible discrimination in the recruitment and selection process.	Explore the development and implementation of initiatives, policies, and practices to recruit and retain a diversity of staff.  Augment existing monitoring practices to enable appropriate gender statistical analysis.	Equality of gender equality in employment.    Gender equality integrated into monitoring arrangements.	Human Resources CEO  December 2007.  Human Resources CEO  December 2007.

<p>Identify and remove any gender pay gaps.</p>	<p>Conduct equal pay review and develop appropriate job evaluation mechanisms.</p> <p>Measure responsibilities and benchmark job roles to identify any gender pay gaps.</p>	<p>Gender pay gaps identified and eliminated, ensuring men and women receive equal pay for work of equal value.</p> <p>Implementation of a pay system that delivers equal pay regardless of gender. Systems in place to monitor pay based on gender equality.</p>	<p>Human Resources CEO. Trade Unions.</p> <p>Human Resources. CEO. Trade Unions.</p>
<p>Actively promote gender equality in all aspects of employment policy and practice.</p>	<p>Undertake an equalities impact assessment of the appraisal process to identify any possible adverse impact on the grounds of gender.</p> <p>Complete an equalities impact assessment of current employment policies such as conduct, grievance, bullying and harassment complaints to identify any possible adverse impact on the grounds of gender.</p> <p>Identify, actively develop and encourage links with appropriate organisations and groups to assist with the recruitment and retention of applicants from underrepresented groups.</p> <p>Continue to identify and be involved in events and initiatives that promote gender equalities and the Council's commitment.</p> <p>Identify placement opportunities that promote and incorporate placements within non-traditional gender roles.</p>	<p>Areas of actual and potential adverse impact / unfair treatment based on gender are identified and eliminated.</p> <p>Potential and actual gender discrimination is identified and removed.</p> <p>Increased representation of non- and under-represented individuals. Positive targeting of under-represented individuals and groups.</p> <p>Annual support of International Women's Day recognising and celebrating the achievements of women.</p> <p>Support and empowerment of women from a diversity of backgrounds.</p>	<p>Human Resources Directorates/ Services</p>

Engage in appropriate consultation and develop initiatives aimed at increasing the gender representation and balance within workforce representation.	Identify non and under representation of individuals based on gender across the different sectors of the workforce and implement appropriate action to remove barriers and increase representation.	Representation of individuals based on gender within all sections of the workforce.	Human Resources. CEO.  December 2007.
	Develop and maintain existing consultation mechanisms to discuss how to further promote gender equality.	Development of organisational culture, policy and practice which embraces and positively promotes gender equality.	CEO. Communications. Ongoing.

**Objective 8: Training staff.**

**Purpose:** To provide quality gender equality training to all staff to empower them with the skills and knowledge to implement the gender equality scheme and positively promote gender equality.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome/PI</b>	<b>Responsible Officer Timescale</b>
To incorporate the requirements of the Gender Equality Scheme into current training programmes.	Ensure trainers (external and internal) include where appropriate gender equality issues	Training reflects the requirements of the Gender Equality Scheme.	CEO. TDO.  December 2007.
	Monitor training programmes.	Annual statistics for gender related training of staff.	CEO. TDO. Ongoing.
To ensure that employees have the relevant information about the Scheme commensurate with their post.	Managers to cascade information and arrange appropriate training.	To raise awareness of the gender equality duty.	CEO. Training and Development Officer.  Ongoing.
To ensure that training remains relevant and of a high standard.	Develop a robust monitoring and evaluation system.	Training continues to meet the needs of employees and remains of a high standard.	CEO Training and Development Officer  Ongoing
Continual update and dissemination of staff guidelines on new gender equality legislation.	Continue to develop and deliver appropriate equalities and diversity training, briefings, information and support.	Increased awareness among all employees of legislative requirements.	CEO Training and Development Officer  Ongoing
	Review and enhance the content of current	Employees informed of legislative requirements.	CEO September 2007.

	<p>equality and diversity training to ensure that gender specific issues are incorporated.</p> <p>Review and enhance the content of the recruitment and selection training course with regard to gender equality.</p> <p>Develop and implement a managing diversity toolkit for managers on managing a diverse workforce and delivering services to meet diverse needs.</p> <p>Development of gender equality briefings.</p>	<p>All employees involved in recruitment and selection actively promote gender equality.</p> <p>Business benefits of managing equalities and diversity.</p>	<p>Human Resources. October 2007.</p> <p>CEO Human Resources. January 2008.</p> <p>CEO. Ongoing.</p>
<p>To ensure senior managers and Members are trained and supported to implement gender equality in order to enable them to give due regard when making decisions.</p>	<p>Development and implementation of training, information, and guidance.</p>	<p>Senior management integrates gender equality into decision-making processes.</p> <p>Increased awareness of gender equality issues within the decision making process.</p>	<p>CEO Training and Development Officer. Member Development.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p>
<p>Active involvement of Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Members in the implementation of the GES.</p>	<p>Development and implementation of appropriate information, guidance and support.</p> <p>Regular review and evaluation of gender equality issues.</p>	<p>Active implementation of the GES by CMT and Members.</p>	<p>CEO. Training and Development Officer. Member Development.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p>

This publication contains sets out the Councils Gender Equality Scheme. If you would like this information in another format such as large print, audiotape or another language, please call 01442 228089.

To contact the Council via the minicom service, please call 01442 867877.

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