



POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE: 21 JUNE 2007

GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME

Report by Chief Executive

PURPOSE OF REPORT To agree a Gender Equality Scheme as part of the Comhairle's duties under the Equalities Legislation.

COMPETENCE

- 1.1 There are no legal, financial or other constraints to the recommendation being implemented.

SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Gender Equality Duty (GED) came into force in April 2007 and it requires the Comhairle to promote gender equality and eliminate sex discrimination. With the Race and Disability Equality Duties in effect, the three 'Duties' have a common aim of ensuring that the Comhairle works to promote equality and eliminate discrimination in all its activities.
- 2.2 The Comhairle must prepare and publish a Gender Equality Scheme on or before 29 June 2007 which sets out the overall objectives set by the Comhairle to allow it to meet its general duty. Part of the Scheme is to address unequal pay between men and women and it is anticipated that the Single Status pay settlement will satisfy this duty.
- 2.3 The Scheme must also detail how information will be gathered on the effects on its policies and practices on men and women, in particular the extent to which equality is promoted between male and female staff, and the extent to which services and functions performed take account of the needs of men and women. The draft Scheme was approved at the last series of meetings and has since been the subject of consultation.
- 2.4 The Gender Equality Duty specifically requires that there is consultation with the Comhairle's service users, employees, trade unions and other stakeholders, as well as taking national policies, research and information into account, in developing gender equality schemes. The Comhairle has been in detailed consultation over the Equal Pay issues with employees and trade unions and has yet to reach a settlement. Stakeholders including the Trade Unions have been consulted over the proposed Gender Equality Scheme.
- 2.5 The proposed Gender Equality Scheme is attached at Appendix 1 and Action Plan at Appendix 2.

RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 **It is recommended that the proposed Gender Equality Scheme and Action Plan be approved.**

28/05/07