



www.saferglasgow.com



Equality Policy

Glasgow Community and Safety Services

Introduction

Glasgow Community and Safety Services (GCSS) is committed to ensuring equality in the delivery of our services, in the formation of our policies and in our employment practices. This document:

- explains what we mean by equality
- affirms our commitment to tackling discrimination and promoting equal opportunity in everything we do
- sets out how we will do this

What is equality?

No one should be discriminated against because of their race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation or religion/belief. There is a mistaken belief that by treating everyone the same, or equally, no one will experience discrimination. This is not the case. A policy or function can affect different groups of people in different ways. Therefore we may have to treat some people differently to ensure that they have equal access to a service or a job. The following is an example of such a scenario:

A meeting has been arranged to consult with the community in a local venue. A member of the community who is a wheelchair user is keen to attend but it is difficult because a) there is no transport available to or from the meeting and/or b) the venue is not accessible. Therefore that person is experiencing discrimination because he/she is unable to attend. By providing transport and/or ensuring the venue is accessible, the disabled person is being treated differently but can now participate in the meeting along with other members of the community.

Therefore equality means understanding and tackling the different barriers to equal opportunities for different groups of people.

Why we need an equality policy

Glasgow is probably the most diverse city in Scotland with a wide range of communities making up its population.

- 52% of the population is female
- Around a third of residents are aged between 15 to 34
- The City has the largest black and minority ethnic community in Scotland, estimated at around 10%, encompassing almost 100 languages and dialects
- Over 25% of Glaswegians are disabled or have a long term illness
- There are almost a quarter of a million households. 15% of households are lone parent households and 9 out of 10 of these parents are women
- 1 in 9 households is a lone pensioner and three quarters of them are women
- Glasgow is home to the largest LGBT community in Scotland

The diversity of the city must be reflected in how we plan and deliver our services, and how we recruit and treat our employees. Therefore adopting and implementing an Equality Policy will:

- ensure a consistent understanding within GCSS of what we mean by equality
- inform and guide planning and delivery of our services and in employment
- ensure our customers and employees are treated with equity and respect
- affirm GCSS's commitment to promoting equality and eliminating discrimination
- help us to meet our legal obligations in terms of equality

Strategic context

Glasgow Community and Safety Services' key objectives

This Equality Policy will provide a framework to guide and influence our plans and strategies and will ensure that equality is mainstreamed through all we do in order to meet our key objectives.

These are as follows:

- to reduce antisocial behaviour and crime
- to increase prevention and diversion opportunities for young people
- to make Glasgow a cleaner place
- to provide community reassurance in relation to antisocial behaviour and crime
- to provide support to families and individuals in relation to antisocial behaviour
- to reduce violence against women

Integrated equality scheme

In addition, this policy is linked to Glasgow City Council's Integrated Equality Scheme which details the action that the Council, and its Arms Length External Organisations, will take to promote equality and eliminate discrimination. GCSS's Equality Action Plan is an integral part of this Equality Scheme.

Glasgow Community and Safety Services Equality Working Group

GCSS has an internal Equality Working Group comprising of senior managers and officers from relevant departments. The purpose of the Equality Working Group is to oversee and co-ordinate all work on equality within the organisation. GCSS is also represented on Glasgow City Council's Equality Working Group to ensure continuity and joined-up working.

Equality Aims and Objectives

Our aims are to promote equality, eliminate discrimination and ensure fairness and respect:

- 1 - within the community
- 2 - in access to, and delivery of, our services
- 3 - in employment and staff development
- 4 - in policy and planning

To help us meet these aims we will:

1 - eliminate discrimination and promote equality within the community

- promote good relations between different racial groups in the city
- develop and promote a third party reporting process in relation to Hate Crime incidents
- provide support to people who are experiencing discrimination within the community and seek solutions through locality based case conferences
- support and develop the Glasgow Violence Against Women Partnership and its working groups
- develop and maintain Violence Against Women Implementation Groups in localities
- develop and support activity during 16 Days of Action to Eliminate Violence Against Women
- work in partnership with appropriate agencies to support women who have been trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation (TARA)
- work in partnership with key agencies to support those who are experiencing domestic abuse and are involved in the criminal justice system (ASSIST)

2 - eliminate discrimination in access to, and delivery of, our services

- ensure that consultation with equality groups is an integral part of the service planning process
- offer information about our services in alternative formats and languages
- ensure our services are accessible and take into account the particular needs of disabled people
- gather equality data on our service users
- analyse data to identify potential areas of discrimination and low uptake by particular equality groups
- ensure all staff receive equality training appropriate to their service area
- recognise peoples' differences and treat our customers with respect and dignity

3 - eliminate discrimination and promote equality in employment and staff development, and ensure all employees are treated with equity, dignity and respect)

- ensure equality monitoring is part of the recruitment and selection process
- ensure equality monitoring of grievances, disciplinary action, leavers and harassment complaints
- ensure the company induction programme incorporates equality issues, including hate crime
- deliver general awareness raising training on equality to all staff
- maintain standards required in our employment and training practices to retain the use of the 'double tick – positive about disabled people' symbol
- tackle harassment (including sexual harassment) and bullying in the workplace
- continue to promote family friendly policies including flexible working hours, home working, and maternity/paternity leave

4 - consider equality issues in policy, planning and strategy

- develop Glasgow Community and Safety Services' Equality Action Plan and update annually
- assess the impact on equality groups of new policies or functions as well as significant changes to existing ones
- ensure equality issues are considered and integrated into all aspects of service planning and delivery
- carry out Equality Impact Assessments, prioritising policies or services where evidence suggests that discrimination or inequality already exists
- gather and analyse equality data (equality monitoring) in relation to service users and employment to identify areas of actual or potential discrimination
- take account of the equality duties in the procurement of goods or services
- work with our partners, key agencies, and our employees to ensure effective implementation of this policy

Implementation and monitoring

This policy will be implemented through GCSS's Equality Action Plan which will be aligned to Glasgow City Council's Integrated Equality Scheme. Progress on the Policy and Action Plan will be overseen by GCSS's Equality Working Group and update reports will be presented to the Senior Management Team on a quarterly basis. The entire plan will be refreshed annually.

Additionally, progress reports on the Equality Action Plan will be presented to the relevant Scrutiny Committee of Glasgow City Council and thereafter published on our website.

Responsibility

The Senior Management Team has overall responsibility to ensure the effective implementation of this policy.

All managers have a responsibility to ensure that equality issues are core to the planning and delivery of their services.

Training will be provided to all employees to support them in their responsibility to promote equality and challenge discrimination in the course of their work.

Key Legislation in relation to Equality

Below is a list of KEY legislation in terms of Equality. The list is not exhaustive and will change as new Acts are introduced or existing Acts are amended.

Sex Discrimination Act 1975, makes it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of sex or marital status in areas such as employment, education and the provision of goods and services.

Race Relations Act 1976 makes it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin.

Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 outlaws discrimination in all public authority functions, and places a general duty on public authorities to promote race equality and good race relations. There is also a specific duty on public bodies to produce a Race Equality Policy and undertake race equality impact assessments.

Disability Discrimination Act 1995 makes it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of disability in the areas of employment, the provision of goods and services and education.

Disability Discrimination Act 2005 makes substantial amendments to the 1995 Act. It introduces a duty on all public bodies to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people. In particular, public bodies have to produce a Disability Equality Scheme to promote disability and to explain how they intend to fulfil the duty to promote equality. It also extends the definition of disability.

Equality Act 2006 makes provision for the establishment of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) by merging the Equal opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equality and the Disability Rights Commission. In addition to legislation relating to these three strands it specifically mentions removing discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief and sexual orientation. It also creates a duty on public authorities to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and to promote equality of opportunity between women and men' by requiring them to produce a Gender Equality Scheme.

Human Rights Act 1998 gives effect to rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights. The legislation makes it unlawful for a public authority to breach convention rights, unless an Act of Parliament prevents it from acting differently.

Equal Pay Act 1970 (amended 1983) makes it unlawful for employers to discriminate between men and women in terms of their pay and conditions (including pay, holiday entitlement, pension etc) where they are doing the same or similar work; work rated as equivalent; or work of equal value.

Employment Act 2002 makes provision for rights to paternity and adoption leave and pay; amends the law relating to statutory maternity leave and pay; makes provision for the use of statutory procedures in relation to employment disputes; and covers the right to request flexible working.

Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 make it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of religion or religious belief in employment and vocational training.

Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 make it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of sexual orientation in employment and vocational training.

Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 make it unlawful to discriminate against employees, job seekers or trainees on grounds of age in employment and vocational training. They introduce a minimum retirement age of 65; a duty on employers to respond to requests to work beyond retirement age; and remove the upper age limit for claiming a redundancy payment or unfair dismissal.

Equality Bill 2008

There is a vast array of legislation in relation to equality and tackling discrimination, some of which is outlined above. However there is a recognition that the law is becoming complex and cumbersome to implement. Therefore, in order to streamline the law and build on developing work in the area of equality, a new Equality Bill is currently progressing through Parliament. The Bill intends to strengthen existing legislation and will include additional public sector duties. It is expected to achieve Royal Assent in 2010 and be implemented in 2011.

Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (Section 96)

This allows for an aggravation on the grounds of racial prejudice to be added to any offence against the person or property ranging from graffiti, vandalism, harassment etc. to the most serious physical assaults. The aggravation can be added by the Procurator Fiscal to the original charge.

Offences Aggravated by Prejudice (Scotland) Act 2009

This Act will allow the police and PF to add the existing aggravation (as it applies to race and religion) to the social groupings defined by 'sexual orientation/transgender' and 'disability'. This is, to date, the most far reaching legislation of its kind in Europe due to the inclusion of the 'transgender' definition.

Codes of practice

Race Equality Duty, Statutory Code of Practice, Scotland, 2002

Disability Equality Duty, Statutory Code of Practice, Scotland, 2006

Gender Equality Duty, Statutory Code of Practice, Scotland, 2007

The above Codes of Practice give practical guidance to public authorities on how to meet the duties imposed on them to promote equality in terms of Race, Disability and Gender. The Codes do not impose legal obligations. They are 'statutory' Codes which means that they have been approved by Parliament and are admissible as evidence in legal proceedings under any of the Acts in relation to Race, Disability and Gender equality.

This Policy was approved by Glasgow Community and Safety Services Board in October 2009

Please contact us if you would like this policy translated into any community language or if you would like it in any other format for example large print or audio.



www.saferglassgow.com



Glasgow Community and Safety Services, Westergate, 11 Hope Street, Glasgow, G2 6AB

Telephone: 0141 276 7400 Fax: 0141 276 7699 Email: gcsenquiries@glasgow.gov.uk

Glasgow Community and Safety Services is a limited company incorporated in Scotland (No. 130604) and a registered charity (SCO17889). Managing Director: Phil Walker