

# The gender equality duty and local government: Guidance for public authorities in England

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**Women. Men. Different. Equal.**  
Equal Opportunities Commission

# **The gender equality duty and local government: Guidance for public authorities in England**

**gender**  
equality duty

**March 2007**

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## **Key things to remember about the gender equality duty:**

- The gender equality duty is a tool to achieve change, helping you provide good quality services, widening employment options and ensuring that new policies and developments offer opportunities for all
- Gender equality objectives need to be set to demonstrate actions you will take to address gender inequalities. If you develop a single equality scheme covering other equality strands your gender equality objectives must be clearly identifiable.
- Use your work towards mainstream objectives, such as PSA targets, CPA requirements and the Single Status Agreement to help you set gender equality objectives.
- Specific duties are practical steps to help you meet the general duty, not an end in themselves
- Impact assessments are an ongoing planning and evaluation process, not an action to be undertaken once and forgotten.
- Consultation is a requirement to help you set objectives. It should be conducted with trade unions, service users, employees from all levels and the wider community.
- Ensure you build gender equality into all your planning and policy development processes. This will make it easier in the long run.
- Think about the advisory and decision making structures in the local authority and how women and men are represented within them. Your neighbourhood meetings may be attended by a lot of women, but do the men that are involved say more and hold the positions of power? Does the Equality Team answer directly to the Chief Executive?
- Build the reporting process into the annual report – it shows that equalities are taken seriously and recognised as affecting the work of the authority.
- Remember that the gender equality duty is about services and policies, not just employment.

## INTRODUCTION

The gender equality duty will help you provide good quality services that meet service users' needs and improve your employment and policy-making functions. Local government is ideally placed to deliver real change for gender equality through its roles as:

- community leader;
- provider and commissioner of services;
- planner;
- regulator;
- major employer;
- and a key player in critical partnerships.

Local authorities have a unique role to play: councils represent local people through their elected members and their services and employment practices should reflect the needs of all women and men from different local communities.

The gender equality duty Code of Practice sets out the legal requirements and guidance for public authorities. It is available on the internet at <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-duties> and should be the main reference point for public authorities. This guidance is intended to provide more detail on issues specific to local government in England.

The Code of Practice applies to public authorities in England and Wales. There is a separate Scottish Code of Practice. The specific duties outlined in Chapter 3 of the gender equality duty Code apply to public authorities in England and non-devolved ones in Wales, but not to public authorities whose functions are solely in Wales. The advice that EOC Wales and the Welsh Assembly Government is issuing to public authorities in Wales is:

- In the interests of clarity and transparency they should have a gender equality scheme outlining their gender equality objectives and the action that is being taken to achieve them
- They should prioritise action to address the most significant gender inequalities within their remit and take actions that are likely to deliver the best gender equality outcomes.

In addition to the Code of Practice, the EOC is producing guidance on several areas of work: gender impact assessments, gathering and using information, gender equality schemes, employment, trans employment and procurement. There are also sector-specific pieces of guidance for health, further education, higher education, schools, the voluntary sector and criminal justice. There will be separate Scottish guidance when the Scottish Code of Practice has been laid before the Scottish Parliament, and Welsh guidance in due course. This guidance will all be published on the EHRC's website.

### **What is in this guidance?**

This guidance is for people working in local government. This includes: service managers, equalities workers and elected members. The guidance links the gender equality duty with existing work and initiatives in local government.

The guidance has been drawn up by the EOC in consultation with many representatives from local government, voluntary and private sectors. The Local Government Association (LGA), the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA), London Councils (formerly the Association of London Government), and the Audit Commission have all been part of the consultation process. Information and comments have been gathered from the Code of Practice consultation events in early 2006, the online consultation and individuals' comments made directly to the gender equality duty team at conferences and directly to the office. Diane Bunyan of Gem Consultancy provided background information on local government systems and procedures.

This chapter briefly outlines the gender equality duty. For more detail, read the gender duty Code of Practice and the generic guidance. Chapter 1 relates it to the local government policy context, and Chapter 2 details the steps needed to implement the specific duties. Chapter 3 looks at gender issues in some areas of service delivery and strategy development. Chapter 4 highlights some of the issues involved in working in partnerships and Chapter 5 outlines the role of the elected members. Chapter 6 lists what different people need to do in order to comply with the gender equality duty and Chapter 7 contains a list of top tips to remember when implementing the gender equality duty. The appendices give details of some organisations and resources that might help support your work.

### **What is the gender equality duty?**

The gender equality duty is a new legal requirement on public authorities, when carrying out all their functions, to pay due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sex
- Promote equality of opportunity between women and men.

This is known as the general duty.

Functions include:

- policy-making
- service provision
- employment matters
- statutory discretion and decision-making.

Men and women may have different needs and may be affected by services and policies in different ways. Treating everyone the same, therefore, may not offer equality of opportunity, and may actually perpetuate rather than address discrimination and harassment. Under the gender equality duty, authorities also have an obligation to eliminate discrimination and harassment towards current and potential transsexual staff. In December 2007, the gender equality duty will also require action to eliminate discrimination and harassment towards transsexual service users.

Public authorities have to act proportionately to the relevance of gender to the issue. This means that where there is a major gender impact, there needs to be major action taken (such as on the causes of a gender pay gap, or the provision of childcare).

Specific duties have been designed to support the implementation of the general duty. These are outlined in Chapter 2.

The duties are a legal (statutory) requirement; local authorities cannot ignore them. Resources must be allocated to meet their responsibilities. The EOC recommends that gender equality objectives are set alongside other objectives you might have to set, such as when meeting performance indicators or PSA targets. This should ensure proper consideration of resource implications.

The gender equality duty does not replace individual legal cases, nor does it take away the right of individuals to take out legal cases. It is an extra tool for tackling discrimination and promoting equality in the public sector. The approach is fundamentally different from previous legal frameworks for gender equality because it puts the legal obligation on public authorities to take action.

### **Who is subject to the gender equality duty?**

The general duty applies to all public bodies (or public authorities). The Equality Act states that: "public authorities are bodies whose functions are those of a public nature". This includes private and voluntary organisations when they are carrying out public functions. "Public functions" has a specific legal meaning – for more details, see the Code of Practice (Appendix A).

### **Who is subject to the specific duties?**

All local authorities are subject to the specific duties, as are many of the organisations with which local authorities work.

This includes:

- County Councils
- Unitary Authorities
- District Councils
- London Boroughs
- Fire Authorities
- The Greater London Authority
- The Housing Corporation
- Metropolitan Police Authority and all police forces and authorities
- Local probation boards
- Prison Service
- Governing bodies of LEA schools, FE and HE institutions
- NHS Trusts
- Primary Care Trusts

and many more. This list is not exhaustive. The full list can be found in Appendix D of the Gender Equality Duty Code of Practice. Appendix 1 of this guidance lists those organisations most relevant to local government.

The gender equality duty also applies to a public authority in relation to services and functions that are contracted out. Local authorities need to ensure that they are still fulfilling their

obligations under the gender equality duty when they have contracted out a service. There is more detail in the Code of Practice (chapter 5), and in forthcoming guidance on procurement.

### **What impact will the gender equality duty have?**

The gender equality duty is a key tool for public sector managers to make the public sector more efficient, effective and responsive to the realities of how we live our lives. It should be a catalyst for change in the way that public sector organisations think about their work, and in the way that policies and services are designed and delivered. The gender equality duty will help them to understand and address the different needs of women and men and to make the most of their skills in the workforce. The following example illustrates what kind of action public authorities can take to promote gender equality:

An urban transport provider in Ireland surveyed non-users as well as users in order to identify unmet needs. The survey showed that women make multiple trips on public transport facilities, taking children to school or care, shopping, visiting older or sick relatives, as well as travelling to work. For men, the main journey is commuting to the workplace. Factors like income and caring responsibilities limit women's transport choices. This in turn limits their entry into the labour market, leisure activities, and education and training opportunities. New pilot services were introduced which extended bus routes, provided cheaper multi-trip fares and targeted women and older people. There was a 35% increase in usage, particularly by older women. There was a 13% increase in city centre economic activity in 2002, which was believed to be directly linked to the increasing numbers of people coming into the city centre during the day.

### **How does the gender equality duty affect single sex services?**

Organisations can only provide single-sex services if those activities come within one of the exemptions in the Sex Discrimination Act. These exemptions vary depending on whether the activity in question is classed as education, as goods, facilities and services, or as a public function. Public authorities will therefore need to take particular care to determine whether any proposed single-sex approach is lawful. The law in this area is complex and more detail is contained in the Code of Practice (Chapter 2 and Appendix F).

The gender equality duty does not change the law on the provision of single sex-services. It requires public authorities proactively to address the needs of women and men in all their functions. In certain circumstances, authorities may therefore wish to address gender inequality by developing policies or providing services on a single-sex basis. The most common examples of this in practice are rape crisis centres or refuges for women who are victims of domestic violence, which are legal under the Sex Discrimination Act (SDA). Public authorities must satisfy themselves, however, that any approach to single-sex activities complies with the SDA.

### **How is the gender equality duty enforced?**

The gender equality duty is a legal requirement and is enforceable through the courts if necessary. It will be enforced by the EOC and then by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) after October 2007. Chapter 4 and Appendix G of the Gender Equality Duty Code of Practice sets out the enforcement procedure in detail. The Audit Commission will also need to see evidence of action to implement the gender equality duty when it conducts its inspections and assessments.

Public authorities are likely to be assessed on the following criteria:

- Have challenging but workable gender equality objectives been set, including any pay objective?
- Has the local authority collected good quality information that allows it to understand the different needs of men and women?
- Has the local authority consulted with a variety of relevant individuals and organisations, men and women in order to identify the big gender issues?
- Has the local authority used the information it has collected and the consultation process in order to set the objectives?
- Has action been taken to implement the objectives?
- If there is no pay objective, has the local authority given a valid reason?

## Chapter 1: Relating the gender equality duty to Local Government

Local authorities are subject to huge pressure and expectation: from the public, from central government, from the Audit Commission. The gender equality duty gives a clear opportunity to look at all ways of working, policies and procedures, and services to make sure they are fit for purpose and are serving all parts of the community effectively. The gender equality duty needs to be seen in the context of existing plans, initiatives and ways of working, not separately from them.

Community engagement and consultation processes involving all sections of the community, including both women and men, can help make the authority more accountable (along with the public sector duties on disability equality and race equality). This is particularly important where the profile of councillors is not demographically representative of people in the area they serve.

This chapter sets out the relationship between the gender equality duty and some of the key policies and structures of local government, in order to support the mainstreaming of gender equality. There is also a summary of key points relating to gender equality from the recent Local Government White Paper, *Strong & Prosperous Communities*.

### What are the biggest gender equality issues in local government?

- Differing needs of men and women are often not identified and addressed in local strategies such as housing, regeneration and transport (see chapter 3 for more information on gender issues in different areas of work)
- Community cohesion – Men and women experience poverty and social inclusion in different ways. To be effective, community cohesion strategies need to take their differing needs and experiences into account.
- Services concerning children need to recognise the role of fathers and address the complexity of parenting (including lone fathers, stepparents and the effect of family breakdown on children and parents).
- Violence against women (including stalking, harassment, abuse and rape as well as domestic violence) is often not recognised as an issue that cuts across all services, policies and employment practices.
- There are more women than men working in local government, but comparatively few reach senior management positions.
- There is still a major gender segregation of the workforce, with predominantly men in manual work and women in caring and clerical work.
- Equal pay remains a challenge for local authorities that have not yet fully implemented the 2004 Single Status Agreement. Ensuring that local authorities have paid due regard to the need to eliminate pay discrimination is an essential part of meeting the gender duty.

### What does a council performing well on gender equality look like?

- It uses its influence and leadership to ensure best practice across its supplier chains and in the local community

- It engages with others in the private, voluntary and public sectors, placing particular emphasis on making the most effective use of partners' experiences of gender issues
- Women and men are positively encouraged and supported where they have been traditionally disadvantaged in work places and training opportunities
- The causes of any gender pay gap have been identified and addressed. If pay discrimination is a factor, an equal pay review has been conducted and acted on
- Bullying and harassment are addressed in an appropriate and timely manner, including harassment of transgender people.
- Strategies are developed with gender equality clearly addressed, e.g. community safety strategy covers violence in the home and addresses differing safety fears of women (sexual assault) and men (crime against property)
- Policies are in place that address issues which apply particularly to men or to women e.g. a practical, workable, successful policy concerning violence against women, covering domestic violence, rape, stalking, and sexual harassment. This includes funding for refuges, help with housing allocation and better links with the police
- Services meet the needs of men and women, e.g. housing and public transport strategies address differences in both women's and men's needs; sport and leisure services are designed to attract both male and female participants; adequate support for victims of domestic violence
- Information is collected that can be disaggregated by gender on service usage, customer satisfaction and allocation of resources (see guidance on information gathering) as well as employment issues.
- Resources are targeted effectively in order to ensure that they are allocated to address women's and men's needs as a result of gender impact assessments (see guidance on EHRC website on carrying out gender impact assessments)
- There are no inequalities in employment, e.g. there is no gender pay gap; women and men are both represented at all levels of the organisation and in all employment areas across the authority.
- Men and women feel supported in balancing work and their care responsibilities e.g. through flexible working at all levels of the authority.

## **Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG)**

Like local authorities, the CLG is subject to the gender equality duty in all its functions. This includes assessing the gender impact of the policies it develops in relation to local government.

### **"Stronger and Prosperous Communities" – the Local Government White Paper**

The White Paper focuses on engaging communities, strong leadership, devolution and community cohesion. When you are planning how to address the White Paper's issues, remember that there are gender aspects to many themes within it. For example:

- Models of leadership – it will be important to ensure that whatever model of leadership the council chooses, it has considered the need for balanced representation of men and women at all levels of decision-making. This might mean addressing barriers to involvement, for example, by ensuring that there is adequate childcare support for those attending council, cabinet and committee meetings.

- The duty to secure participation of citizens – there are many suggestions on how to coordinate engagement and consultation in order to achieve the best results from the process without risking “consultation fatigue”. If your engagement strategy and Sustainable Community Strategy includes examining gender issues, it could provide you with the information that could help you set your gender equality objectives, and fulfil the requirement to consult in the gender equality duty. Ensuring women's full engagement will also improve your democratic accountability
- A coherent approach to transport planning – Given that local authorities have to develop local transport plans, consideration needs to be paid to the needs of both men and women when planning transport (see chapter 3 on gender equality duty in service delivery)
- The strengthening and extending of the Local Area Agreements – targets set under LAAs could be linked to gender equality objectives that can then be highlighted in the gender Equality Scheme. They do not need to be separate objectives – implementing the gender equality duty should help you prioritise work to improve services to everyone.
- Overview and scrutiny committees will have new powers –these bodies could be important in ensuring that there are gender equality objectives within policies, practices and services.
- The single performance framework for local authorities could be an ideal opportunity to set gender equality objectives. Local authorities will have to set outcome based priorities, alone or in partnerships, taking into account national priorities. They could, therefore ensure that their gender equality duty objectives tie in with their local performance indicators.

The EOC will be working with the Audit Commission to ensure that the new national performance indicators include equality measures.

## **Targets**

Local authorities should consider gender equality issues when aiming for current PSA, BVPI or Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) targets. Setting gender equality objectives that support BVPI, LSP or PSA targets will help integrate gender equality into the mainstream work of the local authority. They will support each other.

Obviously PSA targets and BVPIs change over time. Appendix 3 lists the current BVPIs and PSA targets that relate directly to gender. In addition, there are currently several DCLG PSA targets where taking gender equality into consideration will help local authorities meet their targets:

## **The Equality Standard for Local Government**

The Equality Standard for Local Government is an improvement tool, established to address inequalities in local government services, employment and policies. The Dialog team at the IDeA has recently revised it. BVPI 2a relates to the implementation of the Equality Standard.

By contrast, implementation of the gender equality duty is an absolute legal requirement. The two complement each other but working through the Equality Standard alone will not ensure compliance with the gender equality duty.

However, if your authority has been working with the Equality Standard, there will be people within the authority that are familiar with many of the concepts and practices involved in implementing the gender equality duty, such as consultation, gathering information, impact assessments and equality schemes. Therefore, the Equality Standard complements the gender equality duty; they do not compete with each other.

## **Beacon Schemes**

There are equality and diversity elements for each of the Beacon Scheme criteria. Demonstrating how you have implemented the gender equality duty will help fulfil this element and support your application for Beacon Status. The EOC is working with the DRC, the CRE and the IDeA to integrate the public sector duties on gender equality, disability equality and race equality with the Beacon Scheme.

## **Equal Pay and the Single Status Agreement**

Following the steer given by the Local Government Pay Commission, local government employers and unions in England and Wales signed the 2004 Single Status Agreement, which commits all local authorities that have not already done so to carrying out a pay review by March 2007. Progress towards the implementation of the 2004 Agreement is slow, with only an estimated one third of local authorities having carried out an equal pay review. Those authorities that have done so have tended to use the EOC's Equal Pay Review Kit, the stages of which are roughly comparable with the levels of the Equality Standard for Local Government. Local authorities are not obliged to use the EOC model, but it is advisable to ensure that any equal pay review meets the standards set out in the Code of Practice on Equal Pay (2003):

“Whatever kind of equal pay review process is used it should include:

- Comparing the pay of men and women doing equal work. Here you need to check for one of more of the following: like work; work rated as equivalent; work of equal value. These checks are the foundations of an equal pay review.
- Identifying any equal pay gaps
- Eliminating those pay gaps that cannot satisfactorily be explained on grounds other than sex”

Within the gender equality duty, there is a specific duty to “consider the need to have objectives which address the causes of any gender pay gap” (see the gender equality duty Code of Practice Chapter 3)

Taken with the specific duty to gather and use information, and the one to consult, most local authorities are likely to need an objective to address the causes of the gender pay gap. If a local authority does not choose to set a pay objective, it must include a reason for this in its gender equality scheme, for example if it has implemented the Single Status Agreement and addressed any inequalities that the pay review highlights.

There is more information on equal pay in the EOC's GED employment guidance and in other parts of the EHRC website.

The Single Status Agreement is concerned with equal pay within a local authority's workforce. Authorities must also consider the need to have an objective to address the causes of the gender pay gap that they can influence by their broader policy and service delivery roles. This is addressed in chapter three of this guidance.

## **Every Child Matters (ECM)**

The 'Every Child Matters' framework seeks to ensure that every child is supported and enabled to achieve. This means having regard to their physical and mental well being, and providing children and young people with opportunities to make positive contributions to their local communities.

The framework is structured around five outcomes, with gender relevant in all five:

- being healthy - understanding the differences in boys and girl's risks, behaviour and attitudes increases the effectiveness of interventions (mental health, attitudes to exercise, smoking, sexual health etc)
- staying safe - girls and boys suffer different forms of bullying. Sexist language and playground banter can legitimise violence against women
- enjoying and achieving – there are clear gender patterns to achievement, which need to be addressed. The patterns are complex and any effective strategy must address the experience of specific groups e.g. working class girls or Black Caribbean boys. There is strong link between the “achieve economic well-being” and gender-based segregation in education subjects
- making a positive contribution - choosing not to bully and discriminate is a key aim, so robust and well implemented policies to tackle sexist bullying and harassment are critical
- achieving economic wellbeing – this is impossible to achieve effectively without understanding how gender segregation in education contributes to the gender pay gap and women's greater risk of poverty; good information on opportunities and pay rates is important to widen choices

There is more information about the gender issues in the 'Every Child Matters' framework in the EOC's GED schools education guidance. Local authorities, in their role as education authorities, need to consider the gender elements of ECM when working with schools, and in their other areas of work with children and young people (see section on Child & Family Services in Chapter 3).

## **Employment**

In 2004, there were 2,120,174 jobs in local government, so action on gender equality in local government employment will have a significant impact on gender equality in employment nationally. The local government workforce is predominantly female: in 2004, 74% of the workforce in England was 74% female and 26% male. Despite the high proportion of women employed in the sector, in 2005 only 17.9% of Chief Executives and 24.8% of first tier officers were women. Local government therefore needs to examine its working practices to tackle this problem.

The EOC has produced separate GED employment guidance and local authorities should refer to this. The guidance covers a wide range of employment issues including harassment, recruitment and selection, promotion, pregnancy discrimination, pay and flexible working.

## **Inspection and Assessment**

Inspection of public services is currently being re-organised and the precise roles and responsibilities of each new inspection body have not been finalised. Comprehensive

Performance Assessment (CPA - the harder test) is the current inspection framework for local government, but the Local Government White Paper indicates a move away from this in 2009. The EOC (and then the EHRC) will work with the Audit Commission on the new assessment regime to ensure that it integrates gender equality considerations.

The Audit Commission is subject to the gender equality duty as a public authority in its own right. This means that it needs to pay due regard to gender equality within all its functions including inspection and assessment of local government under the current and future frameworks.

Other inspectorates (such as CSCI & Ofsted) co-operate with the Audit Commission in order to target inspections where they are most needed. They are also subject to the gender equality duty.

### **Comprehensive Performance Assessment – the harder test**

Throughout the process, the Audit Commission expects local authorities to identify the needs of communities and use this information to help the design of services. Inspectors will check how service users have been consulted so implementing the gender equality duty (particularly the consultation element) will help you meet these requirements.

#### *Annual Service inspections*

Equality is built into the Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE), which are used by local authorities in their self-assessments and by external inspectors. For example in the Cross-cutting “Regeneration KLOE 2.5 Diversity”, a level three council is one where:

*In delivering services the council tackles the widest gaps in service quality and service outcomes between disadvantaged communities and the rest of the areas.*

and a level two council:

*is aware of the gaps between the most and the least disadvantaged communities but has difficulty in making decisions to reallocate resources to make a significant difference.*

In order to be aware of the gaps of the most and least disadvantaged communities, you need to gather information from local people about their priorities, needs and wants. This information can then help to re-design services if necessary, using the evidence you have collected. Implementing the gender equality duty will help identify specific needs of different groups in society. This will give you evidence for your self-assessments.

#### *Periodic Corporate Assessments*

The Audit Commission specifies that the executive summary of this inspection include a statement about how the council addresses inequalities. You should include some of the actions taken to implement the gender equality duty in this statement.

#### *Annual use of resources*

You need to ensure that gender impact assessments have been conducted on any changes to policies or practices. For example, if an authority were proposing to change the arrangements for childcare, this would need to be assessed to determine its effect on men and women. Gender impact assessments must be undertaken as part of all plans for changes in activities, including any cuts.

#### *Direction of Travel*

The EOC is working with the Audit Commission to ensure that the inspection process and the equality processes should work together. This would mean that the direction of travel should

not be "improving well" or "improving strongly" if the local authority is not adequately implementing the gender equality duty, or the other equality duties.

## Chapter 2: Meeting the Specific Duties

There are various practical steps you will need to take to implement the gender equality duty. This chapter guides you through the different elements of the specific duties, linking them into the local government context. For more detail, you should read the guidance on gathering & using information, consultation, gender impact assessments and gender equality schemes. To view this guidance, visit <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-duties>

The following sections examine the elements of the specific duties separately as they apply to local government. It is important to remember that gender impact assessments are tools that form an ongoing process alongside all the other elements. They need to be built into all service, policy and development planning and therefore will be part of a continuous process and not a one-off exercise.

### Gender Equality Objectives

Gender equality objectives are at the heart of the gender equality duty. In order to implement the overall gender equality duty, local authorities need to set, work towards and achieve their objectives. The gender equality objectives need to be strong enough to match the requirements of the general duty – i.e. to eliminate discrimination and harassment and to promote equality of opportunity. Authorities need to set objectives which are challenging but achievable, and are in proportion to the extent of the problem. The processes required in the specific duties (gathering and using information, assessing the impact of policies and practices on gender equality and consulting relevant people) will help local authorities to clarify the main gender inequalities. It is better to have a few strong but achievable objectives than a larger number that don't achieve change.

When setting objectives, we recommend you take into account national gender equality goals (such as BVPIs or PSA Targets on increasing the number of women in senior roles, and closing the gender pay gap). Consider gender equality objectives that have been set by other public authorities that work in partnership with you. You should look at the gender dimensions of your core work - for example, linking it with the goals needed in Local Area Agreements or achieving the 'Every Child Matters' outcomes. You need to use the evidence you have collected and the views of the people with whom you have consulted. Your objectives should aim to address the most significant gender equality issues within your remit and must address all three elements of the general duty: the promotion of equality of opportunity, the elimination of discrimination and the elimination of harassment.

The following examples illustrate the type of objectives that local authorities might choose to set:

#### *Service delivery:*

- an increase in the number of funded refuge places in the local area
- more effective funding for rape crisis centres
- specific reductions in women's fear of using public transport or being out after dark
- a specific increase in the rate of women taking up paid work as a result of regeneration schemes
- a specific increase in the take up of family services by fathers

- greater gender balance in the use of services such as leisure facilities and libraries

*Employment:*

- a specific increase in the number of women in senior positions within the workforce
- a specific increase in the proportion of women returning to work after maternity leave
- a specific reduction in the incidence of sexual harassment (with a target of eliminating it altogether)
- action to ensure dignity at work for all transgender staff

*Tackling the causes of the gender pay gap*

Local authorities must consider the need to have an objective addressing the causes of the gender pay gap. There are three key issues here:

- What is meant by having a duty to consider setting pay objectives
- The impact local authorities have on the pay gap as employers
- The impact local authorities have on the pay gap as service providers and policy makers

The GED Code of Practice makes it clear that, when considering whether or not they need to set objectives to tackle the causes of the gender pay gap, local authorities must take into account relevant data and the results of consultation with, amongst others, staff and trade unions. The requirement to take relevant data into accounts means that if any authority has a gender pay gap within its own workforce, it will need to set an objective to tackle its causes. This is the case regardless of the cause of the gap, which could be occupational segregation, discrimination, the impact of caring responsibilities or any other cause. However, pay discrimination is particularly important in local government because of the problems associated with the slow implementation of the Single Status Agreement.

In addition to considering the pay gap within their own workforce, local authorities must also consider setting objectives that relate to the influence they have over the gender pay gap in the economy in their local area. This could include measures to address occupational segregation in local regeneration employment schemes or improvements in childcare provision to support people with caring responsibilities in taking up employment or training opportunities.

Sheffield Hallam University's research into gender and employment in local labour markets provides useful case studies: further details are in Appendix 2 of this guidance.

**Gender Equality Scheme**

Every local authority must have a gender equality scheme. This must set out how the authority will meet its obligations under both the general and specific duties. The scheme needs to include the authority's gender equality objectives, including any pay objective(s), and show the actions it has taken or intends to take to:

- consult stakeholders in the preparation of its scheme (including setting the objectives)
- assess the impact or likely impact of existing and proposed policies and practices on gender equality
- gather and use information and
- implement the actions set out in the scheme

These four aspects are examined in more detail in the rest of this chapter. More details of what must be included in a scheme are contained in Chapter 3 of the Code of Practice.

It is important that elected members are fully aware of the legal implications of the gender equality duty and the importance of the authority's scheme. It is good practice for an elected member to act as a champion for gender equality, for example by taking responsibility for checking that the scheme is in place and has been developed in the appropriate way. Chapter 5 gives more details about the responsibilities of elected members.

Other frequently asked questions about gender equality schemes are:

*Is it acceptable for a gender equality scheme to form part of a wider single equality scheme?*

Many local authorities are developing single equality schemes, addressing the legal obligations in the race equality duty, the disability equality and the gender equality duty. This is legal so long as the elements of each duty are clearly identifiable. For the gender equality duty, this particularly means ensuring that gender equality objectives are clearly set out, along with the actions that the authority has taken or intends to take to achieve them, and addressing the gender pay gap. For more details, the EOC will be publishing a paper outlining some of the similarities and differences in the three public sector duties. This is not a guidance document, however, and we would urge any authority planning on publishing a single equality scheme to study the individual codes of practice carefully.

*What should be the relationship between specialist equality staff and service managers?*

It is important that the local authority sets out strategic gender equality objectives in its scheme. There needs to be ownership from the equality team, the Chief Executive and the elected members. However, there also needs to be full involvement of service managers or it is likely that there will be no change on the ground. Frontline workers can help service managers to identify gender issues in their particular area of work. Involving frontline staff will also help to ensure that all staff know how gender equality relates to their own work.

## **Gender Impact Assessments**

There is separate GED guidance on gender impact assessments on the EHRC's website. To view this guidance, visit <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-duties>. Chapter 3 outlines some key issues in different services areas to give you a few starting points. Appendix 2 points you to some further information, reports and research.

Gender impact assessments are a tool to help you identify the differential impact on men and women, boys and girls of services, policies and practices. They form part of a continuous process of planning and evaluation and are an ongoing obligation under the gender equality duty for all new policies and practices. Over the three-year period of your scheme, you will also have to assess the impact on gender equality of existing policies and practices.

London Borough of Tower Hamlets has a system where the service team or policy unit conducts impact assessments. The equality team provides support, such as offering further information sources and helping the service team to identify the issues. The equality team then reviews the assessment to ensure that relevant equality areas are covered, but responsibility for conducting the assessments lies with service managers. A senior member of staff in the relevant

department, not the equality unit, signs it off and accepts responsibility for addressing its findings.

Some authorities build equality impact assessments into their risk assessment process. When considering a new policy, practice or function, as well as conducting a health & safety risk assessment, for example, an equality impact assessment should be conducted to identify the gender equality issues that might be affected. This would mean ensuring that risk assessment specialists are also knowledgeable about the gender issues in different areas of work (see chapter 3 for some initial ideas).

### **Gathering and using information**

There is a specific duty to gather and use information. Information is key to the implementation of the gender equality duty. Without good quality information, no objectives can be set and gender impact assessments will be difficult or impossible to undertake. The quality of the information gathered and how it has been used is one of the things the EOC will be looking for when monitoring and enforcing the gender equality duty. There is separate guidance on gathering and using information for the gender equality duty.

The specific duty to gather and use information to set objectives covers information gathered locally *and any other relevant information*. This is intended to encourage public bodies to use national level information to help them understand the major national issues in gender equality in their areas of responsibility, alongside local data. There is a report on the EHRC's website - *Gender Statistics: an Evaluation* by Esther Breitenbach - which includes up-to-date sources of gender information in local government and an overview of data gaps. Extensive data is available on the local government workforce and employment issues, which should allow you to benchmark your local situation against the national picture. Data is less comprehensive in service areas but there are some sources.

Local government is not just a major user of data produced by government departments and statistical services, but it also produces statistics and disseminates them. Information is routinely collected but it may not always be used. Most information that can be analysed by gender is, however, only about employment. Local authorities need to improve their gathering and analysis of information in service provision (see Chapter 3 for some key gender issues in service delivery, and Appendix 2 for more resources).

The Gender and Employment in Local Labour Markets research programme (GELLM) produced profiles of 12 local labour markets (Birmingham, Camden, East Staffordshire, Leicester, Newcastle, Sandwell, Somerset, Southwark, Thurrock, Trafford, Wakefield, West Sussex), which explored: women's part-time employment; the difficulties some women faced in accessing paid work; the particular difficulties facing some women from ethnic minority groups; the factors affecting qualified women's career development in public sector jobs; the impact of urban regeneration policy on women in poor neighbourhoods; and supply and demand issues affecting employment in domiciliary care. The studies and conclusions are available in full at [www.shu.ac.uk/research/csi](http://www.shu.ac.uk/research/csi) and [www.leeds.ac.uk/sociology/research.htm](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/sociology/research.htm). The studies may give some indications of issues that are likely to be pertinent in your local area, if your area shares the demographics of the areas studied. The GELLM team is also happy to be contacted for advice on how to conduct similar surveys.

Some authorities have found it useful to bring together all the information needed for all risk assessments (health & safety, race equality, disability equality, gender equality, environmental impact etc). This stays in a central database that staff within the authority can use. This would

be a good way to ensure all the information is available to anyone conducting an impact assessment. Care will need to be taken to ensure that use and storage of the data complies with the Data Protection Act.

## Consultation

There is a duty to consult relevant stakeholders when setting gender equality objectives and preparing your gender equality scheme. There is separate brief guidance on the EHRC's website (<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-duties>) to help you identify and address the gender issues concerned with consultation. Good consultation, following good information gathering and analysis, will help you to identify major gender inequalities.

Local authorities already conduct numerous consultation activities, working with a large number of organisations and individuals and collect information in a great variety of formats. Rather than start from scratch, look at what you already do as a council or within your department. How can you adapt your existing methods of consultation to meet the requirements of the gender equality duty? This might include: complaints documents, user satisfaction surveys, regeneration suggestions surveys, regular consultation events, feedback forms on the council's website. In addition, look at consultation mechanisms used to fulfil the Race Equality Duty, or involvement processes for the Disability Equality Duty.

The consultation process must be meaningful and not an add-on at the end of the process. You must ensure that questions are asked that enable the views of men and women to be identified and addressed. If done properly, at the right time, it can significantly help the design of your services.

Who should local government consult?

- Staff – men and women at different levels of the organisation
- Trades unions
- Service users – ensuring women and men are consulted
- Potential service users – ensuring men and women from different sections of the local communities are consulted (covering the local population in terms of race, disability, age and faith etc.)
- The local community (such as through voluntary and community sector organisations and faith & religious groups)
- Partners such as those in the Local Strategic Partnership
- Girls and boys (where appropriate)
- Women's groups, men's groups and trans groups where appropriate

Gender equality issues to bear in mind when carrying out consultation include:

- Ensure that consultation is with all sections of different communities, for example local authorities need to find ways of consulting with all parts of the community (including women) and not just those who traditionally represent them (often men)
- Consultation needs to be undertaken in ways that are accessible for women and men. This includes including taking into account that women may be less likely to use new

technologies and women are more likely to need childcare provided. In addition, times and venues need to be accessible to everyone.

- There is evidence that separate consultation exercises for men and women may give different responses: examples include the Bristol 'Women Say' Consultation and 'Capital Women' annual conference in London. Local authorities should consider this approach in appropriate circumstances.

## **Reporting and reviewing**

### *Annual reporting*

You need to report every year what has been done, or what you plan to do to meet the gender equality duty. This need not be a lengthy document; the specific duty requires a "summary report". Including a summary within your standard annual report rather than in a separate document may have more impact. It will also demonstrate that gender equality is part of mainstream of the local authority's work.

Reporting annually on actions will give you an opportunity to monitor progress towards your gender equality objectives and make sure your actions will help you reach them. The first progress report must be published within a year of your first gender equality scheme. This means by 30<sup>th</sup> April 2008. It might be earlier if you include it in your annual report.

### *Reviewing*

You must review your gender equality scheme at least every three years and publish a revised scheme. If your gender equality objectives are part of a generic or single equality scheme, you still need to review them within three years.

The reviewing process is an opportunity for you to evaluate progress made towards the achievement of your gender equality goals and to decide, in consultation with stakeholders, on priorities for the next three years.

## Chapter 3: Gender issues in service delivery

Local authorities have responsibility for providing, commissioning, procuring or contracting various services, including planning, social care, environmental and leisure services. They have responsibilities to produce community strategies, such as on transport, safety and regeneration, often in partnership with others. This chapter summarises some of the major gender equality issues in these different areas and more.

The main thing to consider is not so much "what is provided to men and what is provided to women?" but questions such as:

- Do women and men have similar or differing needs in relation to this service?
- Are men and women affected in different ways by different types of service delivery?
- Is there any sex discrimination, including unintentional and indirect discrimination, resulting from the way we deliver this service?
- Does this service contribute to the goal of greater sex equality?

Information on gender issues in some of these areas is only beginning to emerge. Therefore the following lists are not exhaustive and you may well be able to think of other gender issues. They aim to give you an idea of ways of looking at gender within a service.

All local authorities procure some services from the voluntary and community sector and from private companies, so service managers need to incorporate gender equality issues into contracts. You should consult the procurement section of the EOC's GED Code of Practice for statutory guidance, agreed with the Office for Government Commerce, on complying with the GED via procurement. Non-statutory guidance on good practice in procurement will be on the EHRC's website shortly. You should ensure that the procurement staff in your local authority are aware of what the gender duty means for their work.

### Housing

Local authorities no longer provide the majority of social housing, but because they assess people's housing needs, and are responsible for the local housing strategy, they need to be aware of the gender issues in housing. Local authorities are also responsible for provision for homeless people. Local authorities are often responsible for housing the most socially excluded and disadvantaged people. This is likely to include particular groups of women, such as lone parents and poor single pensioners. Local authority housing estates may also lack other facilities for social and economic activity. Gender equality objectives could therefore be set which could help to address inequalities in more than one area of work, such as regeneration strategies being affected by transport and childcare strategies.

*Gender issues in housing:*

- Women generally have a lower income than men, and therefore have fewer housing choices than men. Single mothers and women pensioners are particularly likely to be found in low-income groups.
- More women than men are in the social housing sector because it is cheaper than private rented or home ownership

- 16% of families that are re-housed by local authorities are homeless because of domestic violence. In 2001/2002 nearly 18,000 families lost their homes as a result of domestic violence.
- Men and women are homeless for different reasons, therefore the solutions may also need to be different
- Men's hostel accommodation often doesn't have facilities for children, or is not suitable for children to stay or visit
- Homeless women are more likely than homeless men to stay with friends and family, which is a hidden form of homelessness.

Areas in which you might like to develop gender equality objectives:

- Develop more appropriate emergency and hostel accommodation for women and/or men
- Develop, implement and monitor robust domestic violence policies and make sure all staff are aware of them and use them
- Review housing policy to ensure it prioritises the safety of women in violent situations and does not result in a woman losing her home and her abuser retaining the tenancy.

## **Regeneration and Development**

Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) are subject to both the general and the specific duties. They may have dedicated diversity teams, but all RDA staff need to understand the importance of gender in regeneration and development. When working together with RDAs, local authority staff need to be able to demonstrate how they are addressing gender inequalities.

Gender is often overlooked in regeneration work, despite its considerable importance. Men and women experience poverty in different ways and for different reasons, and have different priorities for change. The *Gender and Employment in Local Labour Markets* study on local labour market initiatives concluded that most regeneration schemes had not helped the poorest women to access jobs. It showed that participation in the labour market is an aim that many women have, but that it is a decision related to household pressures, caring responsibilities and lack of local services as well as economics. For example:

- Women are more likely than men to live in deprived areas
- Women spend more time than men in their neighbourhood but are less likely than men to be involved in planning it
- More women than men are involved in community groups but men have more decision-making power
- Barriers men experience attending meetings include: lack of trust, poor information, unwelcoming venue
- Barriers women experience attending meetings include: lack of childcare provision, transport difficulties, timing of meetings
- Almost half of housing employees are women but most do not work in professions that construct the environment
- Women are underrepresented on bodies representing business therefore their interests are less likely to be heard

- Local authorities provide a variety of support to local businesses. Gender disaggregated information on the users of these services would help to shape them to support women entrepreneurs effectively
- Banks are less likely to give start up loans to women than to men
- Women are more likely than men to work close to home, fitting paid work around caring responsibilities, often in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs that do not use their skills.

The Accelerating Women's Development Partnership (AWE) brings together a number of leading agencies operating at the cutting edge of women's enterprise development spanning the English regions. Together they have developed a programme of activities and interventions that test approaches to ensure that mainstream business support meets the needs of excluded groups of women, such as ethnic minority women, lone parents, women returners, unemployed and low income women, disabled women, young and older women and women from deprived rural and urban areas. Their initiatives include researching the financial needs of women's businesses in order to develop new financial products; a best-practice guide on micro-credit for women entrepreneurs; post-loan support, and the development of women's time banks and peer lending circles. They have also developed a training pack for bankers and policy-makers on the issues affecting women entrepreneurs.

Areas in which you might like to develop gender equality objectives:

- Improve representation of men and participation of women on decision-making bodies such as Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and Community Empowerment Networks (CENs).
- Ensure that where women's and men's needs are different, these differences are taken into account when planning.
- Provide regeneration practitioners with training on gender issues in regeneration
- Require grant recipients to include gender analysis and targets in their work
- Find out what local women need to get involved in local regeneration activities and respond actively.
- Use existing toolkits and information on gender as part of regeneration planning (for example, Oxfam's gender and regeneration toolkit *Into the Lion's Den*)
- Allocate more effective ongoing support to women wanting to start and develop businesses
- Provide skills training and support for non-traditional employment for women and men
- Ensure there are mechanisms to convert women's experience and skills in community and voluntary activities into formal qualifications
- Provide affordable, high quality childcare and dependent care to enable carers (mostly women) to participate in decision making and make use of new services and opportunities
- Work with employers in non-traditional work areas such as in work placements or recruitment
- Adapt your job creation schemes to target women's particular barriers

## Education

There is guidance on the gender equality duty and education on the EHRC's website (<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-duties>), including separate guidance for the further education, higher education and schools sectors.

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) describes the role of the local authority in relation to schools in the following terms:

“good schools manage themselves; and...Authorities only intervene in schools' management in inverse proportion to those schools' success.”

Alongside this role in relation to individual schools, local authorities are responsible for strategic planning of a range of education activities across their area including:

- planning the supply of school places, taking account of population trends and transport patterns across authority boundaries
- arranging suitable transport for children who need it, especially in rural areas, to support parental choice
- securing fair school admissions policies and making sure that every child has access to a suitable school place, or has suitable provision made for him or her outside mainstream school
- taking decisions, in consultation with schools, about the distribution of funds to schools to take account of schools' differing needs
- drawing together education authority and school targets and the authority's contribution to meeting them in an Education Development Plan
- providing training and advice to schools (headteachers, governors)
- providing and analysing statistics on local schools, (including gender equality issues), provide a strategic focus for schools on setting their gender equality objectives, and
- key partner in local partnerships that impact directly on schools (children's trust, 14-19 partnerships).

Local authorities need to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and promote gender equality in exercising all these education functions. This means that the local authority will need to consider any impacts, or potential impacts, of its education policies and practices on gender equality. This could be particularly important in areas where there are single sex schools that results in a gender imbalance in the number of places available.

### Advice and training for schools

Local authorities also have responsibility for providing advice and training to schools, and this will form a key part of the role of local authorities in relation to the gender equality duty. They need to provide accurate information on schools' responsibilities under the gender equality duty.

Alongside School Improvement Partners, local authorities can provide advice and guidance to schools on setting their gender equality priorities and developing their gender equality schemes. Local authorities have a strategic overview of the education provision in their area so they can bring schools together and enable them to share information and experiences throughout this process. Local authorities can also play a key role by helping schools to get access to relevant

information and evidence that they will need when developing their gender equality schemes and conducting impact assessments.

Local authorities can also provide support and training to schools in carrying out gender impact assessments. A local authority may have developed an impact assessment tool for its own internal use that is not entirely appropriate for schools, with their very different scale and resources. Local authorities should work with schools to help them develop a method of conducting impact assessments that is proportionate and fits with the way schools work.

#### Advice and training for school governors

Local authorities also provide advice, support and training for school governors. School governors will need training on how to carry out their responsibilities in relation to the gender equality duty. There is specific guidance on the gender equality duty and school governors in the EOC's schools education guidance.

#### Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP)

The CYPP sets out improvements to the outcomes for all children and young people and will identify outcome measures for specific groups. This will include outcomes related to gender equality where they have been identified through the detailed needs analysis that underpins the plan.

#### Management of Schools

The EOC recommends that schools consider including their gender equality scheme within their School Development Plan, and that monitoring and reviewing the scheme should be done as part of the school's self-evaluation.

#### Employment

Local authorities need to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity in their employment practice. In addition, they will need to consider the need to have objectives to meet the causes of any gender pay gap. Local authorities will need to look at whether there is a gender pay gap in schools where the local authority is the legal employers of school staff, and take action accordingly.

#### Teenage mothers

Local authorities are responsible for ensuring teenage mothers have access to the full curriculum. Clearly their success in doing so has considerable impact on gender equality as young fathers do not suffer the same problems in accessing education that face young mothers. If young mothers drop out of education or have a poorer education than other young people, they may suffer lasting consequences, including poor employment prospects, low pay and poverty. 40% of teenage mothers leave school with no qualifications. Reintegration officers are extremely successful in helping young mums continue their education, yet not all local education authorities employ them.

#### Partnership working

Local authorities are the key partner in a number of local partnerships that have a direct relationship to schools and the education system. These include children's trusts, Local 14-19 partnerships and others. More information on partnerships and the gender equality duty is given in Chapter 4.

## Crime

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs), sometimes known as Community Safety Partnerships are responsible for co-operation between agencies to tackle crime, anti-social behaviour and substance misuse. Domestic violence fora are often part of the CDRP and domestic violence is explicitly included in CDRP plans. See Chapter 4 for more information on the gender equality duty and partnerships. The EOC is also publishing separate GED guidance on criminal justice, which will explore these areas in more detail.

Gender issues useful for CDRP strategies and plans include:

- The British Crime Survey of 2000 records that domestic violence represents two fifths of the violent incidents reported by women and a tenth of the violent incidents reported by men.<sup>1</sup>
- Women's greatest fear of crime is of rape and sexual assault, and men's is theft of, or from, vehicles.<sup>2</sup>
- Older women have a particularly high fear of crime and this is likely to restrict their daily activities, and hence their wellbeing. Local authorities should address this.
- Although women are more likely to take part in meetings, men are more likely to take decisions resulting from community engagement.
- Gender disaggregated information on incidents and contacts is vital to inform practice.

Areas in which you should consider developing gender equality objectives include:

- Allocating resources to activities preventing and addressing gender based violence
- Ensuring safety audits are carried out in relation to those most affected by both crime and the fear of crime.
- Allocate resources to address the outcomes of audits, such as street lighting, policing, community wardens etc

## Children and Family Services

The local authority is responsible for producing a Children's and Young People's Plan (CYPP) – the strategic plan for all services for children and young people in an area. Children's trusts commission services, but are accountable to the Director of Children's Services and the Lead elected member in the local authority.

Children's trusts should also work together with schools, Learning and Skills Councils and other local agencies to ensure that appropriate support services exist for teenage mothers and teenage fathers. In particular, teenage mothers need to be supported to continue with their education both during pregnancy and after the birth of their child

Areas in which you should consider developing gender equality objectives include:

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<sup>1</sup> Chris Kershaw, Tracey Budd, Graham Kinshott, Joanna Mattinson, Pat Mayhew & Andy Myhill The British Crime Survey 2000 London Home Office Statistical Bulletin 18/00

<sup>2</sup> *Key Indicators of Women's Position in Britain* WEU 2002, p195

- Working with schools to reduce the exclusion of teenage mothers.
- Training professional staff to understand the effects of their actions in delivering gender equality
- Helping schools to integrate gender awareness into the curriculum in order to address stereotypical behaviours and attitudes, including sexist and sexual bullying
- Reducing the incidence of sexist bullying and harassment
- Ensuring careers advice positively promotes and supports non-traditional job and training choices for both girls and boys

Local authorities are also responsible for the care of children ("looked after children"), and *Every Child Matters* has a major role to play here. The numbers are high: around 60,000 children are looked after in England alone, with 90,000 passing through the care system in any year. (see <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk>). Recent EOC research ("Public Service Agreement Targets: a Gendered Analysis") shows that there are significant gender issues in working towards the PSA target to:

"Narrow the gap in educational achievement between looked-after children and that of their peers, and improve their educational support and the stability of their lives so that by 2008, 80 per cent of children under 16 who have been looked after for 2.5 or more years will have been living in the same placement for at least two years, or are placed for adoption"  
(Government PSA target on Every Child Matters website)

Evidence in the EOC's report shows that there are distinct gender differences in educational attainment, mental health, and access to information on sexual health, but data on these areas is not currently disaggregated by gender, and therefore proper gendered analysis is not possible, and services cannot be targeted to meet the real needs of particularly vulnerable girls and boys. For example, for most young people as a whole, girls are gaining better school results on average than boys, but the reverse is true for looked-after children and education strategies for looked after children must take account of this.

## **Childcare**

Local authorities are not just providers of childcare but are also responsible for the provision of information on local provision and for developing strategies to ensure that the local supply of childcare matches demand. Action in this area could make a significant difference to closing the gender pay gap locally; many women are either unable to work or unable to work in jobs that match their skills because of a lack of affordable and accessible childcare.

The Childcare Act 2006 places duties on English local authorities to improve outcomes for young children, reduce inequalities between them and to secure sufficient childcare to enable parents to work. The duty to assess sufficiency of childcare comes into effect in April 2007, the same time as the gender equality duty. Local authorities need to have completed their assessments of sufficiency before the duty to ensure that there is sufficient childcare in April 2008.

Because childcare is central to women's equality of opportunity, assessing the provision of childcare has a strong gender impact. Childcare provision assessments will therefore form part of the "relevant information" local authorities are required to take into account when setting gender equality objectives.

When assessing demand, it is important to consult with parents who are not currently using the childcare provided locally as well as with those who are. EOC research shows that formal childcare is less likely to be used by particular types of families – including ethnic minority families, families with a disabled child and families on a low income – because available childcare is either inappropriate for their needs or too expensive. *Moving on Up*, the report of the EOC's formal investigation into barriers to employment faced by Pakistani, Bangladeshi and African Caribbean women and 'Parental care and employment in early childhood. Analysis of the Millennium Cohort Study Sweeps 1 and 2' by Shirley Dex and Kelly Ward, give more detail on these issues.

In addition, it is important to ensure that childcare provision is accessible to fathers as well as mothers. New performance indicators from the DfES on childcare centres support this (<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/>). This is another area in which you might like to set gender equality objectives.

The One Parent Families Support and Information Network (now known as the Centre for Separated Families), based in York, is a leading organisation working on behalf of separated families, with a focus on gender and poverty. They reviewed their services to identify gaps in service provision and realised that, although 9% of their registered lone parents were male, only 2% of those using their services were male. The organisation reviewed their structures and outputs and, as a result, reserved a place for a male lone parent on the board of trustees, and actively recruited male members of staff and volunteers. They also changed their recruitment and interview procedures to screen out assumptions about men. The work stemmed from their commitment to equal opportunities and was supported by strong leadership. Everyone from trustees to service users took part in training and was supported throughout it.

The project set up a men's project with the support of Oxfam. At the beginning, the men wanted to meet other men bringing up children on their own, but they also did not want to impose upon the women's space. The men's project was able to provide them with space and reassurance when some of the men were uncomfortable or nervous about asking for help, about the risk of being seen to fail, or about social services involvement.

## Transport

Local authorities are responsible for local transport strategy and planning, although private companies provide most transport services. Men and women are affected by transport policies differently but most transport planning does not take this into account. This has wide-ranging negative impacts on women, and also on the economy and on the effectiveness of public policy. Transport policy makers often aren't aware of the differences in need and use. If gender is considered, it is likely to be seen as an 'add-on' to 'proper' transport planning. Implementing the gender equality duty should help address this. There is a gender and transport checklist available on the Department of Transport website (see Appendix 2 - Resources). The EOC has published a report on the gender issues in transport (see Appendix 2 - Resources), which found that transport systems were largely organised by men for men.

### *Gender issues in transport:*

- More women than men use public transport, therefore poor public transport affects more women than men.
- More men than women own and use a private vehicle therefore parking and driving policies and practices affect men more as drivers, and women more as pedestrians or passengers

- Men tend to use public transport for commuting to full time employment; women tend to use it for a combination of food shopping, part-time work and journeys with children.
- Government policies on employment, environment, health and social inclusion are undermined by the transport problems many people face in accessing public services such as training, education, health services and childcare. This particularly affects lower income groups, including many different groups of women.
- The number of journeys that women cannot make due to poor transport is not visible in transport statistics.
- Women are more likely than men to feel insecure and vulnerable to attack. This restricts their travel, especially at night.
- Few women work in transport but there are major skills shortages in the sector that could be addressed by getting more women into these jobs.
- The trend towards out of town superstore developments disadvantages those who do not have access to a car and who are on lower incomes. This particularly disadvantages women because they are both less likely than men to have access to a car, and more likely than men to do household shopping.

Areas in which you might like to develop gender equality objectives:

- New public transport routes and timetables, taking into account the different needs of men and women at different times of day
- Consult men and women on locations of traffic calming measures and parking policies
- Ensure that there are more women at decision making level in the transport sector
- Target women (with recruitment, education and training strategies) to fill vacancies in the transport sector.
- Address employment, environment, health and social exclusion policies by removing the transport barriers that many women face when using public services.

## **Adult Social Care and Health**

Local authorities work with Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and other partners in Local Strategic Partnerships. In some areas joint trusts have been set up to deliver joint services for instance, adult mental health or care trusts for people with learning difficulties. Chapter 4 has more information on the gender equality duty and partnerships. There is separate guidance on the EHRC's website on the gender equality duty and health.

Disabled adults who are parents may need support in their parenting role rather than provision of childcare. This is particularly true for disabled fathers who are often offered childcare over parenting support.

*Gender issues:*

- Home care service provision needs to be delivered equitably
- Because there are more older women than older men, changes in the level or nature of services for older people will disproportionately affect women
- Men often receive more support than women for domestic work due to a perception that they are less able to undertake these tasks

- Men's take up of primary health care services is generally lower than that of women, resulting in later diagnosis of problems, greater risks for their health and greater cost to the health service
- Women are two to three times more likely than men to suffer from anxiety or depression
- Three times more men than women die from suicide.

The Bradford Health of Men Healthy Living Initiative project aims to achieve greater equality in primary health by providing health information and services that suit men. The services are delivered within the community rather than in traditional health service settings. The locations picked - which include pubs, barbershops, shops, mosques, betting shops and sporting clubs - have been selected because they are places where men in the target group are likely to feel comfortable.

Areas in which you might like to develop gender equality objectives include:

- Training social care staff to understand the specific care needs of women and men
- Targeting resources in order to address gender differences in social care e.g. more publicity and resources on men's health at the preventative stage
- Ensuring parenting support is offered to disabled fathers as well as to disabled mothers.

### **Democratic Engagement**

A recent Electoral Commission study found that:

- Women are more interested in local than national politics
- Only 30% of women and 49% of men feel they have knowledge of political issues
- Just 51% of women and 62% of men say they are interested in politics
- Women are more likely than men to be on the electoral register therefore campaigns may need to particularly target young men.

Electoral services should look at the literature and campaign material that they use to address these findings to maximise voter registration and participation.

### **Environmental Services**

- Recycling - fewer women have access to cars and therefore doorstep collections are particularly valuable for them
- Dropped kerbs – more dropped kerbs at road crossing points help people with pushchairs and buggies, who are disproportionately likely to be women
- Better street lighting reduces public fear of crime and increases feelings of safety, which affect the extent to which many women feel able to leave their homes
- Household waste collection - some women may find it difficult to take dustbins to a collection point, whether because they have to walk down dark alleyways, or because they can't leave young children on their own in the house while they do so.

## Leisure Services

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport provides data on the use of leisure and sports facilities in its national (English) survey "Taking Part". The Sports Councils also provide data. "Taking Part" provides information that can be analysed by gender on attendance at museums and galleries, use of libraries, and participation in active and moderately active sports. In 2003 this showed little difference between men and women attending museums and galleries, but women are more likely to make use of libraries and are much less likely than men to take part in either moderate or active sport.

Sport England produced a fact sheet on "Women's participation in sport" (2002) showing the gender differences in sport. Sports Council Wales produces more comprehensive information through its rolling programme of biennial surveys on sport participation, members and volunteering across a range of ages.

Local authorities should make sure that they have relevant local evidence that will enable them to consider the gender impact of these services.

Areas you may want to consider when setting gender equality objectives include:

- Funding services that benefit both women and men, for example netball courts or exercise classes as well as football training
- Providing facilities to change nappies in the men's changing areas as well as the women's
- Providing areas where parents can easily change for swimming and sport with their children. For example, if a woman is taking her ten year old boy swimming she might not be happy for him to go into the men's changing area on his own.

## Chapter 4: Partnerships

This chapter is about the local authority's role when working in partnership. There is separate forthcoming guidance on procurement, where the authority pays another organisation to provide goods, facilities or services. There is also good guidance on the CRE website about applying the race equality duty to partnerships.

There are many different types of partnerships. Most, however, are not legal entities in their own right, and therefore are not subject to the gender equality duty as a partnership. Local authorities are always subject to the gender equality duty and therefore need to ensure that any work they do in partnership with others contributes to their delivery of the gender equality duty.

Local authorities work in a number of partnerships across different sectors - health, education and the voluntary sector. Some of the types of partnership where the gender equality duty is likely to apply include:

- Local Strategic Partnerships
- Crime & Disorder Partnerships
- Information and advice partnerships
- Local Criminal Justice partnerships
- Sure Start Partnerships
- Children's trusts <sup>3</sup>

The gender equality duty applies to different organisations in different ways within those partnerships. In an LSP, for example, some partners will be subject to the GED in their own right but others will not. The relevant partners need to co-operate with the authority in order for the partnership to work.

It is important to remember that for a public authority to be compliant with the gender equality duty, it needs to have a gender equality scheme that covers all of its functions and policies, not just those it conducts in partnership. Therefore although it might be good practice to have equalities schemes for partnerships, with commitments to equality in all the work done together, that scheme would not be enough in order for each individual organisation to meet their legal requirements in total.

### **How can you ensure you are implementing the gender equality duty in the partnership?**

- Make sure that the partnership's objectives and action plans will help to eliminate sex discrimination and harassment and promote gender equality
- Make gender equality an explicit part of the funding application process (for example, expecting organisations funded by the partnership to explain how they take gender equality into account with regards to services, beneficiaries, the management committee and employment practices)
- Having a gender balance in the active membership of the partnership and in consultation processes.

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<sup>3</sup> Partnership arrangements made under S10 of the Children Act 2004 (the Duty to Co-operate – children's trusts)

## Chapter 5: Elected Members

Elected members are legally accountable for the implementation of the gender equality duty. This means that it is the responsibility of the members to ensure that council officers implement the gender equality duty. Your council may have a member (or team of members) with a portfolio for equalities. In which case, they need to be particularly clear about the requirements of the gender equality duty and the other public sector equality duties (on race and disability equality). It will also be important, however, that all councillors have a basic familiarity with the gender equality duty.

### Representation

Women are poorly represented in amongst local government elected members. The 2006 IDeA census of councillors shows that 29.3% of councillors in England are women, up from 27.8% in 1997. However, this still falls far short of the proportion of women in the population: 52%. Legislation in 2004 allows positive action by political parties in relation to selection of local council candidates. Clearly this is an issue for political parties to address and is not within the scope of the gender equality duty. The gender equality duty, however, offers another way to improve accountability. By ensuring that men and women are equally effectively involved in consultation processes, policies, practices and services can be responsive to local community needs.

### Conduct of business

Councils can make changes in the way they conduct business that may encourage more women to come forward for election. There is no specific GED equivalent to the Disability Equality Duty, which has a specific requirement to promote the participation of disabled people in public life. However, there are key issues to consider in widening participation that affect women and men differently. For example:

- Timings of meetings - this is as much about the length as well as about the time of day. Varying the times of meetings will make them more accessible to different groups of people.
- Paying carers' expenses or providing childcare
- Providing mentoring, shadowing and other support to help people from under-represented groups to take or prepare for new roles
- Ensuring that the Local Government Code of Conduct<sup>4</sup> is followed and that elected members and officers treat each other with respect, with zero tolerance of sexist or sexual bullying and harassment.

### Leadership and Induction

Male councillors are more likely than women to be leader, deputy leader, or chair or vice chair of council committees (Employers' Organisation for Local Government 2004a). Member induction courses and programmes should give information on the gender equality duty and members' responsibilities under it. All leadership programmes, such as those run by IDeA and the Leadership Academy, should look at gender equality, give information on gender issues in local government and the need to take gender equality into account.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.standardsboard.co.uk/TheCodeofConduct/IntroductiontotheCodeofConduct/>

“It was evident from the conference that many individuals at member level are doing the same jobs in separate silos, experiencing strong feelings of isolation. Women can find it difficult to challenge the culture, or to work out how they can most have an influence in local government. Consequently, they do not stand again. By sharing experiences and building links between authorities these insecurities should diminish.”

(IDeA Conference on Women in leadership held in February 2006)

## **Overview and Scrutiny**

Councillors carrying out the overview and scrutiny role should ensure compliance with the gender equality duty. The scrutiny role could also be a mechanism for ensuring monitoring of equality scheme objectives within specific services or other areas of a council’s work. This includes health scrutiny and scrutinising the Local Strategic Partnership. Indeed, the Government consultation paper on Local Strategic Partnerships is clear that “...the local authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be responsible for ensuring that all crosscutting issues are picked up”.

This should include the implementation of the gender equality duty as well as other public sector duties (on race equality and disability equality).

The Local Government White Paper indicates a move to strengthen the role of overview and scrutiny committees.

## **What benefits could the GED deliver for democratic accountability?**

- If councils were more responsive to the needs of women as service users more women may stand and be elected as councillors and councils would be more representative of their local communities
- Changes to the ways councils operate, both in arrangements and behaviour might encourage more women to become elected members and to remain and take decision making positions
- Enhanced democracy, with more people likely to vote if consulted and involved and if the issues they raise are acted on

## **How could council officers support their elected members?**

- Be able to brief elected members clearly on their legal responsibilities.
- Ensure that scrutiny committee members know about the gender equality duty and how to consider gender equality in their scrutiny function
- Support members in identifying equality issues in different areas of work
- Ensure that the lead councillor(s) understand their responsibility

## Top Tips for Elected Members:

- Remember that it is your legal responsibility to ensure the implementation of the gender equality duty
- Remember the first Gender Equality Scheme has to be published by 30th April 2007.
- Ask your Chief Executive what she or he is doing with regards to the gender equality duty.
- Remind service managers that it is their responsibility, as well as in their interests, to conduct impact assessments, develop an action plan and have a robust equality scheme.
- Ask to see the gender impact assessment of any new or existing policy or practice
- Ensure that progress on the gender equality scheme is included in the Annual Report
- Make sure that there is someone, or a small team, who has responsibility within the council for equalities issues.
- Ask for support when you need it. Your equality or diversity team should be able to provide you with more information, or know where you can get it.
- When you work with other organisations, or represent the council on partnership bodies, ask what they are doing about the gender equality duty. Build it into whatever you are doing.
- Look at your working practices and the make up of your council. Is the way you work preventing some groups of people standing for council?

## **Chapter 6: Who Needs to Do What?**

This chapter looks at roles within the local authority and gives an indication of what they need to do. It is not a comprehensive list, and does not refer to job titles, but gives some information for people who hold different roles in the authority.

### **Chief Executive**

- Legally accountable for implementation (along with elected members)
- Needs to take leadership, ensure there is a clear gender equality vision linked to the council's mainstream business and drive this through the authority
- Make sure that the council selects robust gender equality objectives and considers the need to set an objective to tackle the causes of any gender pay gap.
- Ensure that the gender equality duty appears on agenda for meetings of senior management regularly
- Raise the gender equality duty on conference platforms and in partnership meetings

### **Elected Members**

- Legally accountable for implementation (along with Chief Executives)
- Ensure that gender equality duty is discussed when meeting with senior management
- Ensure gender equality duty is debated in council
- Ensure someone in the council has responsibility for gender equality duty implementation
- Ask for briefings from service managers on how the gender equality duty applies to different service areas
- Ensure gender impact assessments are used when making decisions.

### **Managers – services and personnel**

- Ensure that you have identified gender equality objectives in your area of work
- Ensure that impact assessments are carried out by staff who understand their implications and the importance of them
- Ensure that the results of the impact assessments are fed into service planning
- Brief senior managers and elected members on how you are implementing the gender equality duty
- Build the gender equality duty into staff performance appraisal systems
- Ensure you are consulting on the work you are doing to implement the gender equality duty
- Ensure the gender equality duty is regularly discussed in team meetings

### **Procurement Staff**

- Ensure that you know the requirements of the gender equality duty in procurement

- Use the EOC's GED Code of Practice and forthcoming guidance to make sure you include relevant gender issues in specifications and contracts
- Check that those organisations bidding for contracts have not got recent Sex Discrimination Act or Equal Pay Act judgements against them, or that where they have, they have taken steps to change their policies or practices.

## **Equality Teams**

- Make sure that you are not responsible for all the work done to implement the gender equality duty! You may end up writing the scheme, but service managers and senior staff need to identify their objectives, set out the actions they need to take, and implement the scheme.
- Support staff in the local authority when they are conducting impact assessments
- Help staff identify what the gender equality issues are in their areas of work
- Ensure you know the details of the specific duties, and how it relates to local government. You are likely to be asked for this information!
- Ensure you can give advice about linking the gender equality duty into mainstream methods of working, such as performance assessment processes and business planning.
- Encourage training on gender equality and impact assessments. You may need to provide or source this training yourself.
- Ensure that the scheme is reported on annually – this doesn't necessarily mean you have to do it, but you should make sure that it happens. Ideally, it will be part of another document, such as the Annual Report, thus integrating it into the main part of the authority's work.

Remember, the gender equality duty is a tool to be used to improve working conditions, policy development and service delivery to all people using, potentially using and working for the local authority.

## Chapter 7: Top Tips

These were drawn up with feedback from local government personnel as part of the EOC's consultation on the Code of Practice and guidance development. They are intended as pointers of things to remember when starting up.

1. Integrate equalities issues into the business and service planning processes. That way your organisation is more likely to be complying with the public sector duties.
2. Include equalities issues in performance management & appraisal systems. Ensure everyone knows how consideration of equalities benefits and affects his or her work.
3. When there is organisational change, make sure equalities are taken into account. Build them into all policy development and change structure so that they are considered as a matter of course.
4. Consider where the Equality and Diversity Team fits within the organisation. If it answers directly to the Chief Executive, the gender equality duty is more likely to be successfully implemented.
5. Acknowledge and use both formal and informal networks. Influential staff may not be in a high-level position.
6. Establish equality champions in different parts of the organisation.
7. It's important to bring the community in to give them a voice. They should be used in setting priorities and monitoring progress.
8. Use the requirements of the gender equality duty to give you the evidence you need for service inspections and corporate assessments.
9. It's ok to find an adverse impact, but it's not ok to do nothing about it. Adverse impacts help identify the major gender inequalities, from which you can set your gender equality objectives.
10. Some activities can be done alongside work for the race equality duty and the disability equality duty. This would include information gathering, consultation and involvement, impact assessments and reviewing and monitoring. Remember that there are differences in the requirements though - don't risk non-compliance!

## Appendix 1 – Relevant organisations subject to the specific duties

The following is a summary of key organisations relevant to local government that are subject to the specific duties. The full list is set out in the Code of Practice (Appendix D) which can be found on the EHRC's website (<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-duties>).

<b>SECTOR</b>	<b>EXAMPLES OF BODIES COVERED</b>
Central government	Ministers of the Crown, government departments, the National Assembly for Wales
Health	NHS trusts, Primary Care Trusts, Health Authorities, Special Health Authorities, Strategic Health Authorities, General Medical Council, General Optical Council, General Chiropractic Council, General Osteopathic Council, Local Health Boards, General Dental Council, Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health, Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence, Health Protection Agency, Health and Safety Commission, Health and Safety Executive, Nursing and Midwifery Council
Education	Governing Bodies of LEA schools, Governing bodies of FE institutions, Governing bodies of HE institutions, Governing bodies of primary schools, Governing bodies of secondary schools, Governing bodies of special schools, Learning and Skills Council, Local Education Authorities, General Teaching Council for England, HE Funding Councils, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, Student Loans Company, Training and Development Agency for Schools
Criminal justice	Metropolitan Police Authority, Chief Constables of Police Forces, Central Police Training and Development Authority, local probation boards, Serious Organised Crime Agency, Prison Service, Probation Service, Police Authorities, Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service, Commissioner of Police for the City of London, Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority, Independent Police Complaints Commission
Local government	County Councils, London Boroughs, District Councils, Unitary Authorities, Greater London Authority, Fire Authorities
Housing	Local authority housing departments, Housing Action Trusts, Housing Corporation
Transport	Department for Transport, Passenger Transport Executives, Strategic Rail Authority, Transport for London, British Transport Police
Inspectorates	Audit Commission, Commission for Healthcare Audit and Inspection, Commission for Social Care Inspection
Non-departmental public bodies	Equal Opportunities Commission, Commission for Racial Equality, Disability Rights Commission, Electoral Commission
<i>Other</i>	<i>BBC, Channel 4</i>

## Appendix 2 – Resources

The following websites and documents are potential sources of information to help identify gender issues in local government, particularly in service delivery. There are also references to the public sector duties on race equality and disability equality, and some specific toolkits from the Audit Commission.

### General

Race Equality Duty – guidance for local government

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-duties>

Race Equality Duty – guidance on partnerships:

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-duties>

Disability Equality Duty - guidance for local government

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-duties>

Disability Equality Duty - guidance on involvement

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-duties>

Equal Opportunities Commission

Public Service Agreement Targets: a gendered analysis

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-duties>

### Women & crime

Women's Aid

[http://www.womensaid.org.uk/landing\\_page.asp?section=000100010008](http://www.womensaid.org.uk/landing_page.asp?section=000100010008)

End Violence Against Women Campaign

<http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/home.asp>

Crime Reduction - Violence against women initiative

<http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/domesticviolence/domesticviolence19.htm>

Womankind worldwide

<http://www.womankind.org.uk/violence-against-women.html>

## **Regeneration**

Gender and Employment in Local Labour Markets, Synthesis Reports

[http://www.shu.ac.uk/research/csi/publications06\\_0003.html](http://www.shu.ac.uk/research/csi/publications06_0003.html)

Oxfam Poverty Programme

Into the lion's den: A practical guide to including women in regeneration

<http://www.oxfamgb.org/ukpp/resources/intothelionsden.htm>

Data for Neighbourhood Renewal

[www.data4nr.net](http://www.data4nr.net)

## **Housing**

Greater London Authority

Homes for London's Women

[http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/housing/women\\_and\\_housing/women\\_and\\_housing2.pdf](http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/housing/women_and_housing/women_and_housing2.pdf)

## **Transport**

Department of Transport

Women and Public Transport Checklist

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/inclusion/women/womenandpublictransportthech3267>

## **Children and Families**

Fathers Direct

<http://www.fathersdirect.com/index.php?id=3&cID=544>

Sure Start

<http://www.surestart.gov.uk/>

## **Gender mainstreaming**

Council of Europe:

[http://www.coe.int/T/E/Human\\_Rights/Equality/02\\_Gender\\_mainstreaming/](http://www.coe.int/T/E/Human_Rights/Equality/02_Gender_mainstreaming/)

## Resources from the Audit Commission

### *Knowing your communities toolkit:*

<http://www.userfocus.audit-commission.gov.uk/KycHome.aspx>

This is an interactive toolkit designed to help councils assess their current progress; benchmark their progress with others; and understand what they need to do to improve their performance.

### *Area Profiles:*

[http://www.areaprofiles.audit-commission.gov.uk/\(hvm15r455xiiou55avjkzw55\)/StaticPage.aspx?info=25&menu=56](http://www.areaprofiles.audit-commission.gov.uk/(hvm15r455xiiou55avjkzw55)/StaticPage.aspx?info=25&menu=56)

A resource giving information on people, quality of life, and service provision on a local area. They can be useful to provide information for service providers to improve service provision.

## Appendix 3 – BVPI and PSA Targets specific to gender

### **Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI)**

#### BVPI 11a

The percentage of the top 5% of earners that are women (excluding all staff in schools)

#### BVPI 176

The number of domestic violence refuge places, per 10, 000 population, supported by the local authority

#### BVPI 183a

The average length of stay in bed & breakfast accommodation of households, which include dependant children or a pregnant woman and which are unintentionally homeless and in priority need.

#### BVPI 183b

The average length of stay in hotel accommodation of households, which include dependant children or a pregnant woman and which are unintentionally homeless and in priority need.

#### BVPI 197

Change in the number of conceptions to females aged under 18, resident in an area, per thousand females aged 15-17 resident in the area compared with the baseline year of 1998.

#### BVPI 225

Actions against Domestic Violence

There is no specific BVPI equivalent to BVPI 2b on implementing the Race Equality Duty.

### **DCLG PSA Targets**

PSA Target 9: By 2008, working with all Departments, bring about measurable improvements in gender equality across a range of indicators, as part of the Government's objectives on equality and social cohesion.

*(Formerly PSA 9 for the Department for Trade and Industry)*

PSA Target 1: Tackle social exclusion and deliver neighbourhood renewal, working with departments to help them meet their PSA floor targets, in particular narrowing the gap in health, education, crime, worklessness, housing and liveability outcomes between the most deprived areas and the rest of England, with measurable improvement by 2010.

Gender is relevant to this target because there are more women than men living in poverty and many regeneration policies do not take account of this. Identifying the different needs and experience of men and women will enable departments to target their resources at people most in need. Work in these areas should also take into account that more women than men are living in poverty, women fear and experience crime in different ways from men, men are less likely to use primary health services than women, more women are in social housing than men, and men and women experience worklessness in different ways. Men are often unemployed because of a reduction of traditional industries; women because they are unable to find appropriately flexible work to enable them to care for children. Where needs differ, solutions will only be effective if they are tailored to address specific needs.

PSA Target 4: By 2008, improve the effectiveness and efficiency of local government in leading and delivering services to all communities

The specific duty to gather and use information to set gender equality objectives will enable service managers to identify the needs of service users and potential services users and therefore target resources where most needed.

PSA Target 7: By 2010, bring all social housing into a decent condition with most of this improvement taking place in deprived areas, and for vulnerable households in the private sector, including families with children, increase the proportion who live in homes that are in decent condition.

More women than men live in social housing, therefore action in this area is likely to have a big gender impact.

PSA Target 10: Reduce race inequalities and build community cohesion.  
*(Formerly PSA 7 for the Home Office)*

Men and women's experience of their communities can differ. For example, women spend more time than men in the immediate area where they live because they are less likely to be employed and, if they are employed, women are more likely than men to work close to where they live. Therefore it is important to identify how men and women perceive and experience racism and community cohesion, and address any differing needs there may be.

# Contacts

## **England**

Arndale House  
Arndale Centre  
Manchester M4 3AQ

### **Helpline:**

Main number  
0845 604 6610

Textphone  
0845 604 6620

Fax  
0845 604 6630

## **Scotland**

The Optima Building  
58 Robertson Street  
Glasgow G2 8DU

### **Helpline:**

Main number  
0845 604 5510

Textphone  
0845 604 5520

Fax  
0845 604 5530

## **Wales**

3rd Floor  
3 Callaghan Square  
Cardiff CF10 5BT

### **Helpline:**

Main number  
0845 604 8810

Textphone  
0845 604 8820

Fax  
0845 604 8830

### **Helpline opening times:**

Monday to Friday: 9am-5pm.

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If you require this publication in an alternative format and/or language please contact the relevant helpline to discuss your needs. All publications are also available to download and order in a variety of formats from our website

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