

**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
RECORD OF EXECUTIVE / CHIEF OFFICER DECISION**

This form should be used to record key and other decisions made by individual Portfolio Holders and key decisions made by Chief Officers. The contact officer will ensure that the signed and completed form is given to Democratic Services as soon as reasonably practicable after the decision has been taken.

Unless permission has been obtained from the Chairman of Council and the Chairman of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee that this decision be treated as a matter of urgency under Rule 12.19 of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee Procedure Rules, this decision will come into force, and may then be implemented, on the expiry of five working days after the publication of the decision, unless called in under Rule 7 of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules or Rule 12 of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee Procedure Rules.

<b>Portfolio</b>	Housing Portfolio Holder
<b>Subject Matter</b>	Gender Equality Scheme
<b>Ward(s) Affected</b>	All Wards;
<b>Date Taken</b>	Wednesday, 17 March 2010
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Paul Williams, Equality and Diversity Officer (paul.williams@scamb.gov.uk)
<b>Date Published</b>	Thursday, 18 March 2010
<b>Call-In Expiry</b>	Thursday, 25 March 2010
<b>Key Decision?</b>	Yes
<b>In Forward Plan?</b>	Yes
<b>Urgent?</b>	No

<b>Purpose / Background</b>
<p>The Council adopted a Gender Equality Scheme in 2009, but is now required to review it in light of further guidance from the EHRC. The revised draft incorporates key improvements, which will address the concerns of the EHRC and ensure that the revised scheme complies with the Council's statutory duty and leads to positive and specific improvements in gender equality for the Council and wider community under the following headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender Equality in Service Delivery;</li> <li>• Gender Equality in Employment;</li> <li>• Addressing Violence in our Community.</li> </ul> <p>The revised scheme will be informed by a targeted consultation with key internal and external stakeholders, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings with key Council officers in relevant services e.g. Community and Customer Services (Community Safety), Affordable Housing (homelessness and domestic violence) and Planning and New Communities (participation in physical activity by gender)</li> <li>• An internal workshop, using the existing Gender Equality Steering Group;</li> <li>• Discussions with neighbouring authorities;</li> <li>• Discussions with relevant public, private and voluntary organisations e.g Women's Aid.</li> <li>• Public consultation via the Council's website.</li> </ul> <p>Given the short timescale for adoption of the scheme, the Portfolio Holder is asked to approve a 3-week consultation, which is below the 12-week period set out in the Cambridgeshire Compact but nevertheless an adequate period within which to carry out meaningful consultation with the groups identified above. Any further gaps in the Council's knowledge and understanding of Gender Equality priorities as an employer and service provider can be addressed through actions within the scheme itself.</p>

The draft scheme was considered by the Senior Management Team (SMT) at its meeting on 17 March 2010, and some amendments to the consultation draft are likely to be required in light of SMT's comments. Consequently the Portfolio Holder is recommended to approve the scheme for consultation in principle at this stage, and to delegate authority to the Executive Director (Operational Services) to approve a final consultation draft incorporating SMT's comments, and any additional feedback the Portfolio Holder may wish to make.

**Declaration(s) of Interest**  
*Record below any relevant interest declared by any executive Member consulted or by an officer present in relation to the decision.*

None

**Dispensation(s)**  
*In respect of any conflict(s) of interest declared above, record below any dispensation(s) granted by the Council's Standards Committee.*

None

**Consultation**  
*Record below all parties consulted in relation to the decision.*

Equality and Diversity Steering Group

Executive Management Team

Internal / external stakeholders

17 March 2010:

A task group made up of service representatives from the Gender Equality Steering Group and endorsed by the Senior Management Team (SMT) has developed the revised scheme. In addition, the Council has received, and been grateful for, the support of a specialist consultant provided and funded by the East of England Regional Assembly. The Equalities and Diversity Officer has also met with his counterpart from East Cambridgeshire District Council, which has recently revised its Gender Equality Scheme.

**Other Options Considered and Reasons for Rejection**

None.

A failure to adopt a revised Gender Equality Scheme which is fully compliant with the Council's statutory duty and within the timescale set by the EHRC may result in sanctions being taken against the Council.

<b>Final decision</b>	<b>Reason(s)</b>
<p>The Housing Portfolio Holder <b>AGREED</b> that the revised Gender Equality Scheme 2010-2013 be approved for a three-week consultation, and that authority be delegated to the Executive Director (Operational Services) to approve a final consultation draft incorporating Senior Management Team's comments, and any additional feedback the Portfolio Holder may wish to make.</p>	<p>The Council is reviewing its Gender Equality Scheme as matter of urgency, in response to a direction from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) that its current scheme be amended in order to ensure it is fully compliant with the statutory duty set out in the Sex Discrimination Act 1975. As a consequence, it is necessary to prepare, consult upon and submit a revised scheme by 30 April 2010.</p>

<b>Signed</b>	<b>Name (CAPITALS)</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
Portfolio Holder	Signed copy available upon request from Democratic Services (democratic.services@scams.gov.uk)		
Chief Officer			

<b>Further Information</b>