



GENDER ACTION PLAN FOR SOLACE NI JULY 2007

SOLACE NI is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity for elected members and officers of Councils.

In line with this commitment and in support of the 'Women in Local Councils' initiative, SOLACE NI has developed a Gender Action Plan. The Plan provides a framework to consider the key issues in respect of sex equality and complements public authorities' requirements under S75 NI Act.

SOLACE NI wishes to address any gender under-representation and identify barriers which may exist. We are keen to encourage more integration of men and women into non-traditional roles and ensure equality of opportunity in terms of access to all levels of employment/leadership, training and in relation to promotional opportunities. SOLACE NI specifically wishes to address ...*[For example, the low proportion of women applying for employment in respect of senior management vacancies.]*

SOLACE NI will review the plan regularly with the support of the Local Government Staff Commission. The first review will take place by 30 April 2008 and annually thereafter.

SOLACE NI will provide the appropriate resources to ensure the effective implementation of the plan. Identified targets will be reviewed by the Executive Committee on a regular basis.

The aim of the action plan is:

- 1.** To ensure that Local Government's policies and practices meet legal requirements.
- 2.** To aim to promote best practice in relation to sex equality.
- 3.** To address gender under-representations and job segregation by;
 - Promoting sex equality
 - Developing and implementing strategies to identify and remove barriers

The following action plan summarises the key actions adopted by the SOLACE NI in pursuit of this strategy.

| ACTION | INDICATORS |
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| Organisational Commitment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to and Promote Declaration of Principles on Gender Equality • Establish and support Gender Champion role • Integrate Gender Plan into Corporate aims and culture • Promote SOLACE as a strategic organisation. |
| Organisational Stock-taking and Goal Setting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of gender representation in employment across the local government sector • Identify barriers within the workplace. • Set goals and timetables. |
| Implementation and Monitoring | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and promote flexible working arrangements in line with legislative requirements and best practice • Establish regular progress reporting on Council action plans. |
| Recruitment, Nomination and Selection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep under regular review the composition of SOLACE delegations and representation on public and other bodies. |
| Internal and External Communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate leadership and commitment to gender equality in articulation of SOLACE's corporate aims and culture. • Publish Declaration of Principles on website and replicate in SOLACE materials. • Underpin commitment by regular restatement at SOLACE meetings and to the public. • Ensure regular briefings on progress on action plans and update Members on new developments. • Build upon external links to further promote the gender action plan. |
| Training and Development Strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review SOLACE NI training and development strategy from gender perspective. • Introduce targeted training and mentoring/shadowing to encourage development. • Examine best practice models elsewhere. • Establish a network within SOLACE NI for support and learning. |
| Evaluation and Review | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and regularly review implementation of action plan. • Review progress against goals and targets and provide rationale for results. • Refocus action plan to improve results as necessary. |