



Subject:	Diversity Action Plans
Date:	25 October 2024
Reporting Officer:	Christine Sheridan, Director of Human Resources
Contact Officer:	Catherine Christy, Corporate Human Resources Manager (Development)

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.	
Insert number <input type="checkbox"/>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Information relating to any individual2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime	
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To agree the Gender Action Plan (GAP) and LGBTQIA+ Action Plan for 2024 – 27 including resources to deliver year 1 activity.

2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agree the Gender Action Plan (GAP) and LGBTQIA+ Action Plan for 2024 – 27 and associated year 1 costs.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>Key Issues</p> <p>Our Equality and Diversity Action Plan outlines how we will promote equality and diversity in our ambitions to create a city in which people love to live, learn, invest, work and visit. It also contributes to our compliance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.</p> <p>Actions are categorised under the following corporate plan priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing an inclusive economy • Living here • Cross cutting • Organisational priorities
3.2	<p>As part of the Equality and Diversity Action Plan the Council has committed to developing and delivering a Gender Action Plan, LGBTQIA + Action Plan and a Race Equality Action Plan. The Women’s Steering Group has developed and agreed a three-year GAP for delivery between April 2024 to March 2027. Year 1 has been costed and is being presented to Committee for approval. HR has developed a three-year LGBT+ Action Plan for 2024-27, in collaboration with the LGBTQIA + staff network and this is also being presented, with costs for year 1, for approval.</p>
	<p>Gender Action Plan (GAP)</p>
3.3	<p>Gender inequalities are deeply embedded in our social, economic and cultural systems. There is overwhelming evidence that women disproportionately experience disadvantage and discrimination, a reflection of historical unaddressed inequality, but also that inequalities have been exacerbated by austerity, welfare reform and by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Statistics affirm the persistence of gendered inequalities, which continue to inhibit women’s life opportunities in Northern Ireland. Men will benefit from gender equality as they too face gender-specific issues such as lower life expectancy, bad health, lower education levels and are impacted negatively by rigid gender norms.</p>
3.4	<p>The proposed GAP 2024-27 (see Appendix One) has been developed following a facilitated workshop to agree the overall vision and aim of the Gender Action Plan, take stock of progress to date and the current situation with regard to gender equality issues,</p>

generate ideas and proposals for the future and agree actions for the 2024-2027 action plan. The feedback from the workshop and consultation process with the Women's Steering group and the Women's Network Group has been incorporated into the draft 3 year plan. Members will be aware of the recently launched Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls and it is planned that a representation from TEO will attend CMT in the coming weeks to discuss in more detail how the Council can work with TEO to help deliver the Strategic Framework

Request for additional funding for the annual International Women's Day rally in the city.

- 3.5 At its meeting in January 2014, Strategic Policy and Resourcing Committee agreed recurring annual expenditure of £6000 to fund the annual International Women's Day rally in the city. The annual funding was increased to £6500 following approval at the Committee in January 2019. To date, the costs, like other Gender Action Plan costs, have been met through the Organisational Development (OD) budget. In December 2023, representatives from Reclaim the Agenda, organisers of the annual rally attended Women's Steering Group (WSG) to request an increase in the funding provided, to account not only for additional costs caused by inflation but also so those arising as a result of the increase in size and scope of the event. The group requested an additional £8,900, making the total request for funding £15,400. Going forward, Reclaim the Agenda has ambition to develop further the scope and size of the annual IWD celebrations and programme, in particular for 2025, the 50th anniversary of the United Nations officially adopting 8th March as International Women's Day.
- 3.6 WSG requested a breakdown of the event costs and undertook to explore the feasibility of increased funding. Reclaim the Agenda was also advised to explore the possibility of additional funding with other organisations, including those which have made contributions to the event in recent years (e.g. Equality Commission for N Ireland and various trade unions) and other organisations, in particular those that will benefit from the rally increasing its presence in the city.
- 3.7 The OD budget, which has not been increased for a number of years, funds a variety of activities and projects being delivered as part of the People Strategy and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, including officer learning and development, equality, diversity and inclusion and health and wellbeing initiatives. Other OD initiatives, for example, the elected member development programme, are also funded through the OD budget. OD commitments for 2024/25 and the next two years of the People Strategy years have been

considered and in light of current and continuing demands on the OD budget, it is possible to allocate an additional £3500 each year to the IWD rally. It is therefore proposed that the allocation in the GAP increases to £10,000 for 2024/25 and annually going forward.

LGBTQIA+ Action Plan

3.8 HR has developed a three year LGBTQIA+ Action Plan for 2024-27, in collaboration with the staff network “Proud” and this is also being presented, with costs for year 1, for approval. Please see Appendix Two. The plan has been developed to ensure that our organisational culture and working environment allows staff to feel comfortable to be their whole selves at work and that policies and practices empower talent development at all levels and the removal of any form of discrimination. It also aims to increase the understanding of the wider workforce of issues facing the LGBTQIA+ communities.

Disability Action Plan

3.9 Members should also note that the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (“DDA”) Section 49 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons, and to the need to encourage participation by disabled persons in public life. Our current Plan runs, approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and reported on annually, runs from 2022 until 2025.

Detail on all of the actions delivered as part of the Disability Action Plan, the Gender Action Plan and the LGBTQIA+ Action Plan are included in the annual report to the Equality Commission.

Race Equality Action Plan

3.10 Members will be aware that the Director of City and Organisational Strategy, as Executive Sponsor for Race, has been leading on the development of the Race Equality Action Plan. The development of the plan has considered how we deliver our services and actions that we can take as an employer to create a more diverse workforce, and as a city leader, to influence and bring about change. Directors and senior managers have undertaken Cultural Competence and Anti Racism Training and CMT has participated in one-to-one coaching with Dr Lucy Michael to identify and develop appropriate individual departmental actions. Members should also note that that Dr Michael briefed party group leaders on progress with development of the plan on 26 September 2024.

	Financial & Resource Implications
	Financial
3.11	The cost of delivery of the proposed Gender Action Plan 2024 - 2027 year 1 activities is estimated at £28 000. The cost of delivery of the LGBTQIA+ Action Plan 2024-2027 year 1 is estimated at £10 200. Both plans will be met from the Organisational Development budget.
	Human Resources
3.12	The plans also identify the role that individual business units and departments have in delivery of the plans.
	Equality, Good Relations and Rural Needs Implications
3.13	The delivery of the Gender and the LGBTQIA+ Action Plans will result in positive outcomes. The promotion of equality and diversity entails more than the elimination of discrimination, it requires proactive action. The actions contained within both plans will not only impact on internal operations but also have a positive impact externally on women and the LGBTQIA+ community in our city.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix One - Gender Action Plan 2024-2027 Appendix Two - LGBTQIA Action Plan 2024-2027