

<b>SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>	
<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> May 2008</b>
<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>Any other Business</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	<b>DECISION</b>
<b>Author</b>	<b>Robert Dobbs</b>

<b>Gender Equality Plan</b>
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<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT</b>		
<p>To set out the agenda equality plan for Co-op Homes for 2008-11.</p> <p>The Gender Equality Duty came into force in April 2007 as part of the Equality Act 2006 and placed a general duty on all public authorities. Whilst the Housing Corporation recognises that this public duty does not apply directly to Housing Associations, it expects Associations to develop gender equality action plans whose aims should be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment, and</li> <li>• Promote equality of opportunity between men and women</li> </ul>		
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>		
To agree the Plan.		
<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>	<b>Report reference</b>	
<b>Environmental</b>	None	-
<b>Equalities</b>	Yes	Whole Report
<b>Financial</b>	None	-
<b>Personnel</b>	None	-
<b>Policy</b>	None	-
<b>Stakeholder consultation required</b>	None	-

## **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 The Gender Equality Duty came into force in April 2007 as part of the Equality Act 2006 and placed a general duty on all public authorities. Whilst the Housing Corporation recognises that this public duty does not apply directly to Housing Associations, it expects Associations to develop gender equality action plans whose aims should be to

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment, and
- Promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

1.2 Co-op Homes already has a comprehensive Equal Opportunities Policy and Procedure which is complemented by an RHP Group approach to embedding equalities within the culture and working practices of the Organisation. In terms of service provision Co-op Homes has a range of Policies and Procedures that cover Harassment, Relationship Breakdown including Domestic Violence, Anti-Social Behaviour and Vulnerable Tenants. The Gender Equality Action Plan will complement these existing Policies and Procedures and the action plan is proportionate to the size and complexity of a relatively small organisation.

1.3 Co-op Homes has extensive experience of working with a wide range of vulnerable customers and is aware of the issues that some customers are faced with regarding their gender.

1.4 Our vision for gender equality is that:

- Everyone should be able to live in a safe community free from discrimination and harassment regardless of their gender.
- All services delivered by us, and on our behalf, should be accessible to men and women and those who are transgender.
- Men, women and those who are transgender should experience equality of opportunity when applying for employment, or working with or for Co-op Homes.

1.5 Co-op Homes' Gender Equality Action Plan is attached as Appendix 1. It will be implemented and reviewed over the next two years.

## Appendix 1

### CO-OP HOMES: GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN

Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Target Date
Carry out an equal pay audit	<b>Finance Director</b>	Identify any gender pay gap and take any action that is required to address any inequalities.	<b>Dec 2008</b>
Monitor the gender of those applying for and who are short listed for employment	<b>Operations Manager</b>	Ensure equality of opportunity is upheld in the recruitment process.	<b>March 2009</b>
Monitor the gender of staff who undertake training	<b>Operations Manager</b>	Ensure all staff have equal access to training and career development	<b>March 2009</b>
Monitor the gender of staff who make a complaint, follow the grievance procedure or are subject to disciplinary action	<b>General Manager</b>	Ensure that there is no gender bias towards staff that take out grievance or are subject to disciplinary action.	<b>March 2009</b>
Monitor the gender of the Board and other committees	<b>General Manager</b>	Ensure the gender mix is not imbalanced	<b>March 2009</b>
Carry out staff satisfaction survey with Co-op Homes as an employer to include issues on gender, disability and equality.	<b>General Manager</b>	Ensure staff are satisfied with Co-op Homes and highlight any positive action that might be required to improve satisfaction.	<b>March 2009</b>
Ensure that our services are accessible to men, women and those who are transgender.	<b>Operations Manager</b>	Ensure there are no barriers across genders to access to services	<b>March 2009</b>
When reviewing any service provision or considering any new services ensures that gender equality is taken into account.	<b>Senior Management Team</b>	Gender equality is considered when looking at the provision of services or when considering a new service.	<b>March 2009</b>
Ensure the allocation policy is equal to all genders.	<b>Operations Manager</b>	Review the allocations policy and ensure there is no deliberate or unintentional discrimination eg. single men who have access to children.	<b>March 2009</b>

Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Target Date
Monitor complaints by gender to ensure there is no gender bias in complaints received.	<b>Operations Manager</b>	Review complaints received via the complaints procedure and investigate any gender bias.	<b>March 2009</b>
Review results of the Tenant Survey to be carried out in 2008 and ensure satisfaction levels with Co-op Homes are similar for men and women.	<b>Operations Manager</b>	Identify any trends in satisfaction or dissatisfaction with Co-op Homes' service. Take action required to address any problems.	<b>Dec 2008</b>
Inform approved contractors of Co-op Homes' disability and equality scheme and gender equality action plan	<b>Operations Administrator</b>	Contractors agree to abide by Co-op Homes' policies on equality.	<b>Dec 2008</b>
Review harassment policy as part of BVR of Anti- Social Behaviour. Provide support to men, women and people who are transgender that have suffered any form of harassment.	<b>Operations Manager</b>	Provide support to anyone who has suffered harassment which may include sign posting to support from external agencies such as the domestic violence unit or victim support	<b>March 2009</b>