

SUBMISSION FROM DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

Addressing gender segregation in the labour market:

Dundee City Council has not any specific council programs aimed at addressing gender segregation in the labour market. The City Councils Education Department encourages and supports a diverse range work placement's opportunities for male and female students in partnership with the careers service and the college sectors in the city.

Equal pay:

Information on equal pay is currently being compiled by HR in line with the specific equality duty to publish percentage difference between men and women's average hourly pay rates (excluding overtime) and use the information to assist in meeting its public sector duty.

Example of good practice:

The Best Value 2 (Audit Scotland statutory performance indicator) found that the percentage of women in higher salary bands for Dundee City Council was below the Scottish average and was in decline at the time of their audit.

A short -term 'gender equality working group' was established to identify the barriers faced by female managers to progressing into senior management posts and to make recommendations to the City Council on how these barriers can be overcome.

Membership of the working group comprised of female senior council officers and middle managers from Education, Leisure & Communities, Finance, Support Services and Housing departments. Over the period of some months the working group reviewed a wide range of published evidence and examples of good practice.

The findings of the sub-group were presented in a report to the City Council's Senior Management Team and the reports findings and recommendations were fully accepted by the SMT in December 2012.

The gender sub-group identified the following as barriers to progression for female managers:

- While the council had an established flexible working policy for all staff, the working group were of the perception that such practices are only encouraged for Local Government Employee grades up to grade 13 and in schools are only available for teachers up to principal teacher level.
- The definition of flexibility differs between departments with some happy to accommodate, and others viewing it as a staff responsibility "to demonstrate flexibility".
- A culture of long working hours - "Presenteeism", including evening working makes it more difficult for women who have family responsibilities to be as flexible with their time.

- Part-time workers can sometimes unfairly be perceived as a 'problem', and their commitment levels questioned.
- Senior posts can be isolating for many women with no network of support.
- Only 6 out of 29 elected members are female. 20%.
- Only 2 out of 8 of the Senior Management Team are female. 25%.
- Only 28 of the 92 senior managers in the council are female. 31%.
- The current Leadership programme has 36% females on the Certificate Level and 25% females on the Diploma Level.
- Where restructures occur and where management posts have agreement to be filled, this may be done through the existing pool of senior officers who are predominantly male, thus increasing the gender imbalance.

The gender sub-group went on to recommend:

- That the benefits of part-time working, job sharing and flexibility continue to be widely promoted and advocated for all categories of staff with decisions based on operational requirement rather than on grade/level of post in the organisation. Dundee City Council, in adopting a more inclusive, flexible approach, can improve staff motivation and satisfaction and be seen as an employer of choice at all levels.
- That all Chief Officers are discouraged from supporting and advocating long hours, or a 'presenteeism' culture, with a move to embrace mobile/flexible working hours. The value of an individual's contributions and productivity, not the length of their working day, should be the determining factor. This could initially be tackled through awareness raising, underpinned by the Council's e-learning strategy and the revised Employee Professional Development and Review (EPDR) process.
- A network and mentoring scheme could be introduced which would facilitate support, introduce training and provide guidance for women who are in management posts and for those who have the potential to be senior officers in the future. This could be associated with the Leadership development scheme. There is currently an effective scheme within the Social Work department and this could be replicated in other departments. This would reduce the feelings of isolation for females already in senior posts and may encourage more women to apply for promotion when the opportunity arises.
- Prior to the recruitment and selection of Chief Officers, the selection panels (including elected members) should be made aware of all equality issues, including those relating to gender to enable better understanding. This is already being taken forward through briefing sessions arranged by the Council's Equality & Diversity Co-ordinator and could be strengthened in recruitment and selection training.

- A review process to be established to encourage the implementation of these recommendations and to monitor progress with annual reports to the Senior Management Team on trends.

David Dorward
Chief Executive
Dundee City Council
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