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Welcome to the SPCB’s fifth Annual Equalities Report. This report provides us with the opportunity to highlight the important equalities work that has taken place over the previous year as well as looking ahead at what we aim to achieve over the coming year: improving access to our services and the building; being an inclusive employer and meeting our legal obligations.

During 2007 a variety of work has been carried out by the organisation to adhere to our founding principles of ensuring that the Parliament is accessible and open to all. Some of this work has been highlighted in the report and includes, for example, the development and publication of our first Gender Equality Scheme which demonstrates our commitment to promoting gender equality and sets out what we aim to deliver over the next three years.

In fulfilling our aim to promote equality in the Parliament we also held an Equality & Diversity Week during November. The week provided, I hope, one of many opportunities for Members, Members staff and SPCB staff to come together to debate and discuss matters of equality in the context of the Parliament.

Our aim is now to continue the good work highlighted in this report and to further strengthen our progress towards promoting equality.

Presiding Officer and Chair of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body
Introduction

This report details the activities and progress we have made in the last year to promote equality. It highlights many examples of good practice across the Parliament, how we have taken forward our equality priorities and the plans in place to further enhance our approach to promoting equality. The report reviews the performance of the SPCB in relation to the equalities agenda and the high level of commitment towards mainstreaming equality.

It also details some of the developments we are making to better meet the needs of Members, their staff, visitors and Parliament staff in relation to equalities.

This report pulls together our achievements across each of the directorates in the Parliament. In compiling this report each directorate is asked to provide a progress report on how they have proactively promoted equality within their functions. Since introducing this process five years ago, it has been an extremely useful exercise in measuring the success of our equalities work and to what extent this has impacted on the organisation. It has helped us to gauge the level of activity taking place and areas where further action may be required.

This report is structured in seven sections. The first section reviews the level of involvement and participation within the Parliament to ensure that we are enabling everyone to have equal access to the work that we do. Section two focuses on the training we provide to staff so that they have a good level of understanding around inequalities which exist within society and how these can be overcome in how we carry out our business. Section three concentrates on the services we provide to the public and how we are continually striving towards making our services accessible to everyone. Within section four, we look at what achievements have been made to build equality into our employment practices. Section five concerns monitoring which is the most essential component for delivering equality. Finally, the last two sections describe how we have progressed with our actions for change and what we intend to do in 2008.

Our Equalities Framework

Delivering equality in an organisational context requires a comprehensive and robust framework. In the last few years, we have developed a strong framework which supports the implementation of the equalities agenda. This includes the work of the Equalities Team, a policy framework for equality, strong leadership and commitment and a formal process for monitoring progress.

The Equalities Team

The Equalities Team, which is based in the Strategy and Development Office, is responsible for strategic oversight of and supporting the equalities agenda of mainstreaming of equality. This means that they design strategies to build equality into the work of the organisation as well as monitor the SPCB policies, practices and services, to ensure there is no potential for discrimination. The Team act as an important source of advice for offices across the organisation.
Policy Framework for Equality

The Parliament has adopted a comprehensive policy framework for equalities which sets our commitment to equality. There are a number of policies contained within the framework as well as practical guidance to assist anyone connected with the Parliament. This covers all aspects of our business in the Parliament.

Part of this framework includes the equality schemes which have been developed for race and disability as well as our newly developed Gender Equality Scheme. Each scheme includes a three year action plan showing how we intend to promote equality in the areas of race, disability and gender.

There are also a number of areas where we have streamlined equality into our formal decision making and planning processes. For example, staff team meetings are structured in such a way that they include equalities as a standard agenda item and all proposals and papers put forward to Directors and the SPCB must also consider any equalities implications.

The Equal Opportunities Committee

An important part of our framework is the annual reporting of our equalities work to the Equal Opportunities Committee. This provides an opportunity for the SPCB to give evidence on what progress it has made within the last year. Such scrutiny by the Committee helps us to maintain a strong parliamentary focus on our equality priorities.

Mainstreaming Equality

We recognise that “mainstreaming” is fundamental to the success of achieving greater equality within the Parliament. It is about the integration of equality of opportunity principles, strategies and practices into the everyday work of the Parliament. It means that equalities should be considered from the outset as an integral part of the policy and service delivery processes and the achievement of equality should inform all aspects of our work. This report provides many examples of how we have mainstreamed equality; however, our intention is to strengthen this process and to build upon what we have developed so far. The actions which we have set for 2009 demonstrate our commitment to improve our processes for mainstreaming.
Section 1: Participation and Involvement in the Parliament

1.1 Introduction

We continuously aim to increase understanding of what the Parliament does and provide greater opportunities for all to engage and participate in parliamentary business and other activities within the Parliament. This section highlights some of the steps we have taken to meet these aims as well as highlighting the strong commitment of staff in meeting those aims.

1.2 Consultation with external organisations

We use consultation and involvement as a way of reaching and involving people in the business of the Parliament. During the year we have continued to work with external organisations and individuals on a variety of issues and areas which have helped us take forward our equalities work and provide more inclusive services. Some examples are detailed below.

- The Public Information Service awarded a contract for the provision of information in Easy Read during the year. Prior to the specification for this contract being drawn up discussions were held with the Scottish Consortium on Learning Difficulties (SCLD) to seek their advice on how best to provide our public information in Easy Read and about the difficulties faced when as yet there are no standards for the production of materials in Easy Read.

- The Web eServices Team visited the RNIB Training Centre to review pages on the website containing tables and to test their usability with screen readers. This enabled us to make format changes to our website in order to make it more accessible. We now have a positive working relationship with RNIB trainers who have subsequently been able to test specific pages at our request.

- During the year, work continued on the actions arising from the Disability Equality Scheme and a meeting of the Disability Equality Group was held in December to consider the progress made so far. The group which consists of a variety of representatives from external disability organisations and individuals as well as Parliament staff continues to provide advice and guidance to the organisation on various disability issues.

- The Strategy and Development Office provided advice to the Fire Evacuation Exercise Planning group to ensure that evacuation of disabled people was included in the exercises held at the Parliament. This has included arranging for disabled volunteers to come into the building and test the evacuation procedures and the alerting pager system for Deaf people. This work has assisted the organisation in ensuring our fire evacuation processes are working for all and to raise awareness of the availability of our alerting pager system.
The Strategy and Development Office and colleagues in the Visitor Services Office have consulted with the Audio Description Association on using an audio description service for tours of the Parliament for blind and visually impaired people and a pilot of the system took place in November with participants providing feedback on this service and other relevant areas. Further work on the possibilities surrounding provision of audio description services will be undertaken early in 2008.

The Strategy and Development Office and the Personnel Office have been working on developing a positive action programme for Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) people, the aim of which would be to encourage applications from BME communities and raise awareness of the Parliament as a potential employer and have been sharing best practice with external organisations such as Linknet and Bank of Scotland on how to provide such a programme.

Procurement Services consulted with various external organisations as part of their open consultation on the draft Responsible Purchasing strategy. Various positive comments were received on the strategy including from the Equal Opportunity Commission.

The Strategy and Development Office continued to work closely with a voluntary organisation called PAMIS on the procurement and installation of a suitable permanent hoist in the Parliament for use in one of our large accessible toilets with changing bench facilities.

1.3 Increasing engagement and involvement

We have continued to carry out a variety of work with the aim of increasing the opportunities for engagement and involvement to as wide and diverse an audience as possible throughout the year. Some examples of this work are detailed below.

The Parliament's Presiding Officers have led by example and promoted the founding principles of equal opportunities and accessibility to external audiences and encouraged engagement and participation through speeches and attendance at various equality related events in their roles as Presiding Officers. Some examples have included:

- Attending and speaking at the Scottish Disability Equality Forum, which highlighted the Parliament's efforts in making the building and our procedures increasingly accessible to people with learning disabilities;

- Chairing the Scottish Interfaith Council Workshop during Equality & Diversity Week which promoted the Parliament's celebration of the diverse faiths which exist in modern Scotland;

- Attending and speaking at the Scottish Indian-Arts Forum where the Presiding Officer relayed the message, "we are all Scotland's people" in this multi-cultural nation; and
Hosting the “Travelling the Distance” book launch and Young Women in Politics Seminar which highlighted the Parliaments’ efforts in the area of gender equality, and encouraging the participation of women in the political process.

Presiding Officer Alex Fergusson MSP is shown here speaking at the Scottish Indian Arts Forum event to mark the 60th anniversary of India’s independence

The Strategy and Development Office worked with the Glasgow Anti Racist Alliance (GARA) to provide a full day’s programme at the Parliament as part of their Politician Job Shadowing Scheme in November. The aim of the Scheme is to get young BME people interested and involved in politics. The day included presentations on how the Parliament works and how they could get involved, attending First Ministers Questions to see the Chamber in action and meeting a number of MSPs to hear about their work.

The Media Relations Office assisted in increasing engagement and participation by raising awareness of equalities issues and the equalities work of the Parliament through news releases. Some examples of these were:-

- Highlighting youth participation in January when “Teens to quiz Microsoft chairman Bill Gates during 2007 Government Leaders Forum” was released.

- In February it was announced that Trevor Phillips would be launching a major equal opportunities event at the Parliament.

- Also in February it was highlighted that one of the “Glasgow girls” was to speak at the Women in Politics Seminar.

- In March they assisted the Health Committee in announcing that they would be scrutinising the evaluation of free personal care.
In April Food and Faith lessons were served up in the Parliament.

In July and November the Office reported on the advertisement and subsequent appointment of the Chair of Scottish Commission for Human Rights.

In November awareness was raised on how the Parliament was marking European Year of Equal Opportunities for All.

The Public Information Service worked with Business Information Technology (BIT) on the provision of a pilot text messaging service, which will benefit a number of disabled groups, particularly the Deaf community, and provides alternative ways for people to engage with the Parliament. The service was run over a trial period of three months with provision of a permanent service being considered during 2008. To raise awareness of the service Public Information emailed Deaf and disability organisations and at the end of the text messaging service pilot they contacted the organisations to request feedback on the service and on how it had been promoted. Some responses were received which will be fed into the consideration of a permanent service.

The Strategy and Development Office led on a project with Visitor Services, Public Information Service and the Royal College of Language and Speech Therapists (RCLST) to consider the issues and barriers faced by people with different communication needs. A visit to the Parliament took place in March 2007 with a group of volunteers with varying communication needs and an audit of our written information and website was carried out by a variety of organisations working with the RCLST to identify any issues in our information for people who have had a stroke or have aphasia or have other communication needs. The RCLST prepared a report and recommendations based on the feedback received from both the visit and audit. A response to the report and its recommendations will be developed and published in spring 2008. This will help us develop our communication methods further with the aim of increasing engagement and involvement for those with various communication needs in the Parliament.

The Public Petitions Committee clerking team issued a letter in summer 2007 to ethnic minority groups and individuals informing them of the existence and purpose of the Public Petitions Committee. The letter enclosed the guidance leaflet How to submit a public petition (currently available in several languages) with the hope of engaging ethnic minority groups and individuals more in the petitions process.

1.4 Gender Equality Group

Whilst the SPCB are not currently covered by the statutory Gender Equality Duty we agreed that it would be best practice to prepare a scheme which would help us to meet the general duty to eliminate discrimination and harassment and to promote equality between men and women.
During the year the Strategy and Development Office worked on developing a Gender Equality Scheme for the organisation. This work included the need to raise awareness of the duty to colleagues by attending office head and team meetings and discussing the duty to highlight what it meant for the organisation as a whole as well as the impact on individual offices of the development and implementation of a scheme.

A working group of colleagues from across the organisation was set up to develop the scheme. They considered the information gathered on what had already been achieved by the organisation in terms of gender equality and identified and discussed which functions would be most relevant to the duty. Part of their role was also to consider the way forward and develop appropriate actions for the organisation to take to meet the duty over the next 3 years.

As part of this work the Strategy and Development Office also carried out other consultations with stakeholders by holding focus groups. These focus groups were for Members and Members staff and SPCB staff. The groups were well attended by both men and women and the feedback assisted in forming the discussion and development of actions for the Gender Equality Scheme.

The Scheme was agreed by SPCB in December 2007 and published in February 2008.

1.5 Disability Equality Group

The Disability Equality Group set up during 2006 to develop the Disability Equality Scheme, continued to meet this year. The group considered the progress the organisation had made on the Disability Equality Scheme and also provided advice and guidance on other disability related issues which had arisen during the year. The group’s members, both internal and external, continue to provide valuable expertise and personal experience on disability issues and have proven to be a well respected source of information and advice for the organisation in moving our disability equality agenda forward. Progress on some of the actions in the Disability Equality Scheme can be found in Section 6 of this report and also on our website at:

Section 2: Equalities training and awareness raising

2.1 Introduction

We are always considering how best to ensure that all of our staff receives equalities training and also how we can best raise awareness within the Parliament of equalities issues and the barriers faced by people. Whilst our core equalities training, details of which are below, continues to provide the basis of our equalities training in the Parliament we have also undertaken other initiatives during the year to raise the awareness of staff and wherever possible Members and their staff. Details of these initiatives can be found below.

2.2 Core equalities training programme

During 2007 we ran two “Equalities and Diversity” full day courses and four “Dignity at Work” half day courses. These are mandatory for all new staff to attend and during 2007 a total of 92 staff attended these courses.

The Equalities and Diversity course provides staff with information on equalities legislation, what to expect in terms of equalities whilst working in the Parliament and what is expected of them as employees in terms of equalities.

The Dignity at Work course provides staff with advice on the Dignity at Work Policy and complaints policy and how to ensure that they are treated with dignity and respect and also treat others with dignity and respect but also how to deal with harassment and bullying should they be subject to such behaviour or be a witness to it.

2.3 Leadership Training for Senior Management

Leadership training was developed during the year with the aim of helping the Chief Executive and Directors:-

- to understand further the principles of equality and how they apply to their role as leaders;
- to act as champions of equality and to encourage best practice across the organisation;
- to challenge complacency with regard to the need for the continuing promotion of equality in the workplace; and
- to motivate and influence staff to mainstream equality.

The training was delivered in October 2007 by our equalities training consultants, Challenge Consultancy, with positive feedback from attendees on providing them with further thoughts and ideas on how to ensure the equality work in the Parliament continues to move forward and is mainstreamed throughout all their areas of responsibility.
2.4 Equality and Diversity Week

During the year the Strategy and Development Office developed and delivered, with the help of other colleagues, an Equality and Diversity Week. The aims of the week, which was held in November, were to promote the value of equality and diversity and to recognise the significant contribution which has been made to promote equality in the work of the Parliament. The overall intention of the event was to provide Members, Members’ staff and SPCB staff with the opportunity, using a variety of methods, to develop a wider understanding of discrimination and the barriers which people face in participating equally in society.

The programme for the week was developed so that a variety of methods, such as film, art and discussion were used to cover different equalities issues. The programme covered issues such as mental health and stress at work, challenging racism, deaf awareness, age discrimination and what it means to be religious in 2007. Over 180 participants from SPCB Staff, Members and Members staff got involved during the 4 day programme.

Both staff and Members were involved as participants but also as hosts and speakers at the events. The week was launched on the Monday with a session on sharing good practice where SPCB staff spoke to attendees about equalities work they have undertaken as part of their role during the year. Other sessions were held on Monday and Tuesday, as mentioned above, with the main event “Equalities Matters: Room 101” and the Equality and Diversity week reception held on the Wednesday evening. The Room 101 style session was hosted by Margaret Mitchell MSP, as convener of the Equal Opportunities Committee, with guests Jackie Baillie MSP, Aileen Campbell MSP, Robin Harper MSP and Hugh O’Donnell MSP. The guests were invited to discuss various equalities related issues and make a case whether the issue should go into Room 101 or not. The session was a great success and was followed by an evening reception where guests were welcomed by Mike Pringle MSP, SPCB portfolio member with responsibility for equalities, and Paul Grice, Clerk/Chief Executive and then had the opportunity to discuss equalities issues with a number of equalities organisations and gather information from stalls.

Throughout the week we also held a photographic exhibition, developed by our in-house photographic team, highlighting good practice in the organisation and the impact of equalities legislation on staff and Members.

The week was a great success and raised awareness of equalities issues with all in the Parliament. It also provided the SPCB with an opportunity to mark the 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All, and tie into Scottish Interfaith Week.
During the Equalities Matters: Room 101 session the panel pictured above were asked to talk about several equalities related issues and whether they should or should not go in Room 101!

Paul Grice, Clerk/Chief Executive and SPCB Portfolio member with responsibility for equalities, Mike Pringle MSP, welcomed guests to the Equality & Diversity Week Reception.
Above are some of the guests at the Equality & Diversity Week reception.

Robin Harper MSP meets some of the guests at the Equality & Diversity week reception.
2.5 Food and Faith Seminar

In April 2007 the Scottish Interfaith Council provided an awareness session for members of staff and colleagues from our catering contractors, Sodexho, on some of the facts surrounding Food and Faith. The session focused on providing catering staff with a background to different faiths, an understanding of the importance of the way food is presented and prepared, and highlighted the forthcoming regulations covering religion and belief. The session provided the opportunity for participants to learn more about how they can help make catered events in the Parliament more accessible for those of different faith groups.

2.6 British Sign Language training programmes

The Strategy and Development Office have worked closely with the Personnel Office to develop and implement a 7 year strategy for providing British Sign Language Training to SPCB staff including a maintenance programme for those already with a higher level of BSL and in future for those who achieve that level.

The programme was agreed by Directors in October 2007 and will enable the SPCB to build up and maintain a pool of BSL trained staff which in turn will provide better communication with Deaf BSL users coming to the Parliament as general visitors or as attendees at events like the Festival of Politics.

The aim of the strategy will not be to replace the professional support of BSL/English interpreters but rather to enhance that support to Deaf people by trained staff acting as meeters and greeters, ushering at events and helping with communication prior to an interpreter arriving. Anyone taking part in the training will be asked to commit to providing this kind of support when needed.

2.7 Job-specific training on equal opportunities issues

Whilst as mentioned above we run mandatory equalities training and the Equalities Team develops and runs other organisational related training, individuals and offices attended other equal opportunities training which was specific to their role in the Parliament. Some examples of equalities related training staff took part in during the year are detailed below.

- The Public Information Service assisted the Personnel Office with training on their newly installed text phone.
- The Public Information Service and the Scottish Government’s Central Enquiry Unit take part in a monthly practice session on the text phone to help staff maintain their skills in operating the text phone.
- Staff attended Deaf Awareness sessions during the year enabling them to understand the needs of Deaf people in accessing the Parliament. It also gave the participants an opportunity to find out more about Deaf issues and how to work with BSL/English interpreters.
The Personnel Office and the Strategy and Development Office attended a session run by Brodies in March in relation to Age Discrimination and redundancies.

Staff from Procurement Services, Legal Services and the Strategy and Development Office attended a session run by Brodies in October in relation to Responsible Purchasing, part of which looked at ways of including equalities considerations in the process.

Staff from the Strategy and Development Office and Procurement Services attended training on the Procurement aspect of the Gender Equality Duty. This helped in preparing and developing the procurement related actions for inclusion in the Gender Equality Scheme.

The Personnel Office and the Strategy and Development Office attended an awareness session on Bipolar Disorder in September 2007. The session raised awareness of the workplace issues faced by people who have Bipolar Disorder.

The Strategy and Development Office attended a training session on Impact Assessment in relation to the Disability Equality Duty. This training will help in developing an impact assessment tool for the organisation.

Following on from the Equalities and Diversity week, the Finance Office organised a session with Care First about the role of a manager in recognising stress in the workplace.

Other offices have also arranged sessions with Care First to make their staff more aware of the services they provide including counselling and information services on a range of subjects.

Staff have also attended the recently developed two new management courses: Moving into Management and Management Skills Essentials which encourage an assertive and inclusive approach to managing staff within our corporate values of integrity, impartiality, professionalism and mutual respect.

Staff who volunteered for the role of maternity mentors undertook mentoring training in July and September.

2.8 Making our training accessible and inclusive for all

We continue to work with our training suppliers to ensure that all training venues and materials are accessible and inclusive. With this in mind we reviewed our joining instructions during the year to make it clearer that if staff have specific requirements they should contact the Training & Development team in advance so that arrangements can and are made to suit their individual needs in ensuring they can fully access the course. For example, this could be in relation to access of the venues, dietary requirements or the format of course materials.
Section 3: Delivering services to the public

3.1 Introduction

This report has already highlighted how we look to meet our aim of increasing awareness and understanding through engagement and participation. For that engagement and participation to be successful we also need to deliver appropriate and inclusive services to the public. This section of the report highlights some of the areas we have looked to improve upon to deliver better services and some the work that the organisation has undertaken over the last year to maintain the services we already have.

3.2 Providing BSL Interpreters or other Communication Support

Throughout 2007, we have continued to meet requests for British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters or other communication support. Between January and December 2007 the SPCB provided communication support on 22 occasions. The majority of these were to provide BSL/English Interpreters for Deaf visitors. This service was used to provide access to a variety of business and events at the Parliament some examples of this support is detailed below.

- Business in the Chamber for example interpretation has been provided for First Minister’s Questions, ‘Time for Reflection’ and a Members debate on the National Deaf Children's Society Change Your World Consultation.
- Meetings of Committees for example; the Public Petitions Committee used the service on three occasions in order to facilitate the participation of individuals with hearing difficulties in committee proceedings.
- The Oath/Affirmation Ceremony in the Chamber following the elections in May was BSL/English interpreted to enable guests in the gallery to watch members taking the Oath.
- Three sessions at the Festival of Politics were BSL/English interpreted as standard. These were Charles Kennedy in Conversation, Kate Adie – Dispatches from the Frontline, and Life of the Lens – the changing face of photojournalism. Interpretation for the remaining sessions was available on request.
- Her Majesty the Queen’s speech was interpreted as part of the Ceremony for the Opening of Session 3 of the Parliament. Interpreters were also available for Deaf guests during the day.
- Tours of the building took place during the year where BSL was provided. This included a group visit by St Vincent’s School for the Deaf, Glasgow; lipspeakers were also provided for two other guided tours.
- BSL interpretation was also provided for meetings at the Parliament including the Disability Equality Group and fire evacuation testing.

![BSL interpreters at work during the Festival of Politics in August.](image)

### 3.3 Ensuring that our information is accessible to all

In addition to the work on BSL, whilst we need to provide good services to ensure we are being inclusive and accessible as an organisation we also need to consider our written information as this also is of great importance in the accessibility and inclusivity of an organisation. As in previous years we have continued to provide our information in a range of formats and languages. Our various formats help us to provide information to a range of people in a way that suits their own needs. Similarly, our range of languages reflects the languages most used in Scotland by residents and visitors. Below you will find some examples.

- In promoting the new BSL DVD and online version of *How the Scottish Parliament Works*, which was developed during the year, Public Information has emailed disabled organisations to tell them about the new film and have stated that any feedback would be welcome. It is available to view on the website or on request from the Public Information Service. Nineteen copies of the DVD were requested within two weeks of publication due to the promotion work undertaken.

- The Public Information Service awarded a contract for the provision of information in Easy Read during the year. Easy Read is a suitable format for providing information to people with learning disabilities by making use of plain and easy words and pictures which also show the meaning of the information. The contract was awarded to Enable, a charitable organisation run by its members, who campaign and support children and adults with learning disabilities. The first publication to be produced in Easy Read *How the Scottish Parliament Works* is currently being developed and tested with user groups at various stages of the process.
Revised editions of the publications *How the Scottish Parliament Works* and *MSPs and their Work*, as well as the text of the leaflet *How to submit a public petition* were translated into Polish and posted on the Parliament website. These translations were made in order to meet a recognised demand for materials in this language.

### 3.4 Updating guidance documents

Guidance in the Parliament is available for staff, Members and members of the public on a number of areas and issues. Guidance is usually produced to help staff carry out their work and provide information on how the Parliament’s processes work for others. During the year some pieces of guidance have been updated with equalities issues in mind or to provide more detailed information on equalities considerations. Examples of this work can be found below.

- Guidance in different languages including Braille have been prepared for issue to visitors explaining about prohibited articles on entry to the Parliament building. This results in a more effective method of communication with groups who require access to the guidance and provides access to consistent information.

- It is standard practice to ensure that all venues for meetings or stakeholder events are checked for accessibility prior to booking. Information is held centrally in the Committee Office on venues that are suitable to host such events, which is regularly updated.

- The Clerking manual advises staff on a number of issues including how to ensure that information is sought about any specific requirements of committee witnesses; during the year, the witness confirmation form in relation to the disclosure of individual access requirements was updated.

- A new process for booking personal assistants to support disabled witnesses was introduced this year by the Clerking and Reporting Directorate. The Clerking manual was updated to provide information on how to use the new process.

- The witness feedback form has been amended to include the opportunity for witnesses to report anonymously on their age, gender, ethnicity and nationality and whether they consider themselves to be disabled. The purpose of monitoring is to check whether administrative services provided to witnesses have any adverse or disproportionate impact on any group identified. A report will be made at the end of the parliamentary year.

- Our Responsible Purchasing strategy was developed during the year and includes specific targets in respect of equalities issues.

- As part of the Personnel Office realignment project new guidance was devised that explicitly addresses equalities issues and the avoidance of discrimination. This guidance and the issues they address have been incorporated into the revised recruitment and selection training.
The Personnel Office worked to ensure that the requirements of the Work and Families Act 2006 were incorporated into the SPCB's Occupational Maternity Scheme.

The Legal Services Directorate is undertaking a substantive review of their induction material at present. With the intention of revising their induction pack to include a general overview section, relevant to all staff, with a further detailed section more tailored to the needs of the different staff in the Directorate. When carrying out this review, they will re-visit the information provided in respect of equalities issues and update and refresh, as necessary.

3.5 Organising inclusive events and exhibitions

Our work in hosting and running events and exhibitions in the Parliament has continued at a high level throughout the year. The majority of events and exhibitions in the Parliament are sponsored by Members or SPCB staff and involve external organisations. Some examples of the events and exhibitions held during the year are detailed below.

Examples of equality related events and exhibitions during the year are:

- In February 2007 the Parliament hosted a Young Women in Politics seminar. More than 100 students from Kirkwall to Galashiels attended the day-long event which focused on the contemporary role of women in campaigning, party politics and government.

- The Equal Opportunities Committee hosted “Equalities in Scotland: a Review of Progress” in the Chamber of the Parliament in February with keynote speaker Trevor Phillips, Chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC). The event brought together more than 80 different age, disability, gender, race, religion/belief and sexual orientation groups in an open debate and focussed on equalities issues in Scotland.

- The women's suffrage movement in Scotland was the focus of an exhibition at the Scottish Parliament December 2006 to March 2007. The exhibition entitled “If I can't vote, I don't count” looked at how women in Scotland gained support for their campaign for the vote, and the sense of achievement when the law was finally changed.
Other events were also held in the Parliament during the year. These were hosted by organisations working in various equalities fields. Some of the organisations who hosted events at the Parliament during 2007 included:

- Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB)
- Commission for Racial Equality (CRE)
- Engender
- Help the Aged
- Scottish Society for Autism
- Barnardos
- Men in Childcare
- Scottish Consortium on Learning Difficulties (SCLD)
- Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations (CEMVO)
- Muscular Dystrophy Campaign
- Children in Scotland
The above photograph was taken during the event held by the Commission for Racial Equality to mark the closing of their doors.

Participants at work during the Council for Ethnic Minority Voluntary Service Organisations Civic Conference.

### 3.6 Outreach work

Our Outreach and Education services work throughout the year to increase the engagement and awareness of a variety of groups. Both inward and outward education and awareness raising sessions were held during the year for a range of disability and other community groups as well as formal education groups. Some examples of the sessions which have taken place are:

- A visit for a youth group from the RNIB;
- a talk to the Scottish Disability Equality Forum;
➢ a presentation at the Shelter and Scottish Refugee Council conference;
➢ a talk to young women at Glasgow Women’s Library;
➢ talks to 10 Access Panels in venues across Scotland;
➢ presentations to Scottish Interfaith Women’s groups;
➢ a presentation at the Civic Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisations (CEMVO) conference; and
➢ a joint training session with the Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) for people with learning disabilities

Outreach staff meeting attendees at a presentation to the Scottish Interfaith Council’s Women’s Group in Edinburgh on the work of the Parliament.

3.7 The work of committees

The clerking teams are responsible for supporting the work of the Parliament’s committees. As part of the responsibility they look to ensure that the committees build equality issues into all of their work. Below are some examples of the practical steps taken by clerking teams in meeting that responsibility.

➢ For the Equal Opportunities Committee equalities review event, steps were taken to ensure that all equality strands were covered equally. Fifteen organisations were originally invited for each equality strand, with a reserve list.

➢ The Justice Committee clerks facilitated fact-finding visits to prisons and ensured that Cornton Vale prison was included so that issues particular to female and male prisoners could be examined and contrasted.
In the Audit Committee lines of questioning are developed which reflect particular impacts of policies on equality groups, for example when considering issues such as health care, youth offending and police call management which may have disproportionate effects on young, elderly or disabled people.

The Finance Committee included a section on equalities in its guidance to subject committees in connection with scrutiny of the Scottish Government’s draft budget. The clerks arranged for the committee’s budget adviser to become a member of the Equality Proofing the Budget and Policy Advisory Group (EPBPAG) to provide advice on linking financial scrutiny to equalities. The committee also endorsed a recommendation from the Equal Opportunities Committee that a senior member of the Scottish Government's finance directorate be made a member of EPBPAG.

When the Health Committee considered the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Bill and the Health Board Elections (Scotland) Bill, the clerks wrote to the proposers of both bills to ask them how they had taken equal opportunities into account. That approach has again been adopted in the Public Health etc (Scotland) Bill. That bill could potentially have a disproportionate impact on migrant and asylum seeker groups and the committee is seeking out evidence from those groups. It is also seeking specific input from faith groups on provisions on mortuaries.

The Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee included a specific question on the accessibility of vessels in the interactive response form published on its web page as part of the call for evidence on its inquiry into ferry services in Scotland. The Members also ensured that questions on accessibility were included in lines of questioning relating to transportation issues.

3.8 The Parliament Building at Holyrood

Whilst the Parliament building at Holyrood is accessible, we continue to recognise that there are aspects of accessibility which change or require improving. Over 2007 we have undertaken further work to make our building more accessible and some examples of this work are detailed below.

- Portable seating introduced for tours to assist visitors who may find standing for a long period difficult.

- During the work to develop the Gender Equality Scheme and Maternity Mentoring Project it was recognised that the current facilities for breastfeeding, parenting and resting mothers needed improvement. Whilst there were facilities available in the Crèche which were suitable for breastfeeding, parenting and baby changing it was agreed that an additional facility was needed to provide improved facilities for these aspects and also to provide a quiet space for expectant mothers to rest. The room includes a number of soft furnishings such as; 2 nursing mother chairs, a daybed, a wall mounted baby nappy changing unit and dimmable lighting. This facility
was launched by the Chief Executive at the Equality & Diversity Week Reception in November.

- During the year a fixed track ceiling hoist was installed in the Garden Lobby Changing Places toilet. The hoist was installed in June 2007 and has been used since then by visitors attending events or visiting the Parliament. Working with PAMIS on this project helped raise awareness of the need for such equipment to be installed and available in public buildings and the effect a lack of such facilities can have on people with multiple disabilities. PAMIS then nominated the SPCB for a national award for this Changing Places facility. In December the Loo of the Year Awards presented the SPCB with the Changing Places National Award for Scotland as well as an overall grade award of 5 Stars and a national category winner award for our other toilets.

- Installation of a vibrating pager fire alerting system for deaf and hard of hearing people was undertaken during the year and became fully operational in December.

- An additional induction loop was installed in September 2007 on the travel desk in the Garden Lobby to improve services to deaf or hard of hearing people in the Parliament when dealing with the Allowances Office.

- A trial of wireless hold-open devices for fire doors in the upper basement was undertaken during the year. By holding open doors these areas are made more accessible for all building users, but particularly for disabled people.

- In March 2007, new 'D' style handles were fitted to all Committee Room doors and to several rooms occupied by staff. This improves access for all, but are particularly helpful for people with reduced dexterity and strength.

- Work has been undertaken during the year to improve induction loop facilities through the building. The loop on the floor of the Debating Chamber was extended during September 2007. This enabled us to extend the existing coverage of public areas. This additional induction loop to the Chamber will help Members during business and be useful for other future chamber events. In addition, an extension to the areas not covered by the existing loop system in Committee Room 6 was undertaken as a trial. The facility was extended to cover the committee room table and has proved successful. Work to extend the systems in the remaining Committee Rooms is planned for March 2008.
The above photograph shows the hoist that was installed during the year and the below is the newly improved facilities for breastfeeding, parenting and a rest space for expectant mothers.

3.9 The Disability Allowance

The Disability Allowance provides funds for MSPs to improve the accessibility of their services. During 2007 13 applications were made for funds from the allowance, an increase from the previous year. During the year £7,094.24 was spent on improving the accessibility of MSP’s services.

Here are examples of some of the ways in which Members of the Scottish Parliament used the Parliament’s Disability Allowance in 2007/08:

- British Sign Language Interpreters were used on 18 occasions during the year.
- Portable ramps were installed in 2 MSP offices.
- A letter was produced in DVD format for Deaf constituents.
- A portable wireless doorbell was installed for easier access to a local office.
- A slide opening door was installed in one local office to improve the access.
Section 4: Recruiting & Retaining Staff

4.1 Introduction

The SPCB employs approximately 500 staff in the Parliament and continuously aims to recruit staff using equalities best practice and legislation. Taking our role as an equal opportunities employer seriously, we also want to retain our staff and this section includes some examples of actions we have taken to ensure we undertake best practice recruitment and also improve how we help and assist staff in carrying out their roles.

4.2 Our Recruitment Procedures

Whilst our recruitment procedures already contain many measures to ensure that they are fair to all applicants we have continued during 2007 to review and improve our recruitment procedures. Below are some examples of this work.

- Steps have been taken as a result of the introduction of Age Discrimination Legislation, in particular in the way that we specify job adverts in terms of qualifications and experience. This meant that someone who may not have been able to apply for a post previously on the grounds of a lack of a specific amount of experience was able to be considered and was appointed.

- The Personnel Office attended Black & Minority Ethnic job fairs in Glasgow and Edinburgh, with the Glasgow event proving successful on the day. The recruitment team have met with a number of external organisations during the year, for instance the job centre in respect of disadvantaged groups in general.

- The Recruitment Team continue to expand our equalities distribution list. We have also made more use of advertising in more specialised publications such as “Able” which focuses on disability issues.

- All recruitment literature (internal and external) now encourages disabled applicants and potential applicants to contact us if they have any questions about an advertised vacancy. Also all recruitment literature has been reviewed to simplify language where possible. Competencies are now described in much greater detail to give applicants a fuller understanding of what we are looking for.

- Personnel Office installed a textphone in September so that deaf people can call the Personnel Office direct about any job opportunities.

4.3 Flexible working

Our good flexible working arrangements and policies are one of the ways that help us to retain staff. Wherever business needs allow we aim to agree as many flexible working requests as is possible. Whilst we do all we can to ensure staff
have flexible working we also need to balance this with enabling teams to deliver their services. During 2007 staff across the whole organisation made great use of our flexible working arrangements including:

- Working compacted hours;
- Working Part-time hours;
- Using Job-share arrangements; and
- Home working.

These flexible working practices have been used for several reasons including meeting family, caring, and cultural commitments. The practices are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that they continue to work for both the staff concerned and the organisation. Many staff throughout the organisation have also made use of our maternity and paternity arrangements during 2007.

4.4 Making adjustments for disabled staff

Under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) the SPCB has a duty to make reasonable adjustments. During 2007 we continued to look at changes that could make a significant difference to individual staff members. Such changes were often straightforward and meant providing equipment for staff or considering the way in which we work and altering it to meet an individuals needs. Below are some examples of some of the adjustments made across the organisation during the year.

- Various adjustments have been made to staffing rosters to accommodate staff who require a different working pattern.

- Adjustments have been made to the working environment to locate a hearing-impaired member of staff in the most suitable position in their office to minimise noise interference.

- Adjustments have been made to accommodate and help several members of staff in returning to work and in carrying out their duties including help with travel and provision of car parking in the building.

- Specific training and mentoring has been provided for staff when needed.

- Several members of staff have been provided with equipment to help them carry out their work such as a different chair to provide better support and specialist IT equipment.

- Staff have also been able to return to work on a reduced hours basis to allow them to gradually build up their hours and help them to carry out their duties whilst minimising the impact on their health.
A photo exhibition formed part of our Equality & Diversity Week in November. The above photograph was used to highlight the issue of reasonable adjustments.

4.5 Maternity Mentoring Project

Two significant pieces of UK legislation were introduced in April 2007 encouraging employers to take a more proactive approach to gender equality and particularly in the support they provide to working parents. These were the Work and Families Act and the Gender Equality Duty. With these pieces of legislation in mind and as part of our preparation to develop the SPCB’s Gender Equality Scheme the Strategy & Development Office undertook an exercise in February 2007. They interviewed 85% of the women who had returned from maternity leave while working at the Parliament during the last five years. The intention of carrying out this exercise was to find out about the experiences of staff returning to work and to invite them to consider whether they would have benefited from additional support before, during and after their time off. This was an extremely useful exercise and highlighted a number of key issues that supported the implementation of a mentoring and maternity programme.

A pilot maternity mentoring scheme to support female staff during their pregnancy, maternity leave and on their return to work was agreed by Directors in March 2007.

A working group was set up to develop the scheme and run the pilot. The group was led by the Equalities Team with other members from the Personnel Office, Allowances Policy and Office Holders and Facilities Management. The team worked together to develop aims and objectives for the project, a selection process for both mentors and mentees as well as guidance for both.

Training for mentors was developed and took place in July and September. The group then matched mentees with suitable mentors based on the requirements stated in their application forms. In total 16 mentors were trained with 10 of those successfully matched with a mentee. The majority of the initial meetings for
mentors and mentees took place in early December with others arranged for January 2008.

A maternity staff network will also be set up as part of the pilot with the first meeting planned for February. This will be open to staff who are planning a family as well as expectant mothers. The pilot will run for a period of 15 months with evaluation of the process and benefit to mentees and mentors carried out every 3 months. A report will be prepared for Directors following the end of the pilot in early 2009.

Maternity mentors during their training in July for the SPCB’s new Maternity Mentoring Scheme.
Section 5: Monitoring

5.1 Introduction

During 2007 we continued to look at ways of improving our processes for measuring the impact and progress of our equalities work. The production of Directorate Annual Equalities reports and the publication of this organisational report on the back of those Directorate reports is one of the tools we use to report our progress on equalities. Some other examples of monitoring that we have developed or which has taken place during the year can be found below.

5.2 Employment Related Monitoring

Recruitment

The recruitment equalities report for 2007 is currently being completed. The report covers applications, success rate, internal promotions and temporary promotions by gender, disability and ethnic origin, and is scheduled to be presented in May 2008.

Child Care

During the past year 77 SPCB staff have used the Child Care Voucher scheme, 37 male and 40 female. This equates to an overall uptake of 14.98% of the average whole staff complement. The gender split is very close indicating that the scheme is being promoted equally to all.

In addition staff are entitled to claim for additional Child Care expenses incurred if, for example, they are required to work overtime or attend training events when they would otherwise care for their child/children themselves. In the year to Dec 07 there were two such claims, both by female staff.

Salaries

The Personnel Office monitors average salaries of men and women by grade. The result of this year’s monitoring is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Average Male</th>
<th>Average Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G2</td>
<td>£20,504</td>
<td>£19,968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G3</td>
<td>£25,353</td>
<td>£25,531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G4</td>
<td>£33,221</td>
<td>£33,006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G5</td>
<td>£42,339</td>
<td>£42,253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G6</td>
<td>£52,804</td>
<td>£52,997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G7</td>
<td>£64,862</td>
<td>£65,027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G8</td>
<td>£86,248</td>
<td>£94,002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This data shows that in grades 3, 6, 7 and 8 the average salary is higher for females while in grades 2, 4 and 5 it is higher for males. We conclude that there is no evidence of a gender bias in the level of salaries earned.

**Voluntary Further Education Programme and Language Programme**

We receive formal applications from staff for support from our Voluntary Further Education Programme and Language Programme regardless of whether or not they have been supported by line managers. This ensures that we can monitor any applications which are not supported for equality reasons, e.g. if someone had a particular disability and their manager thought they weren’t able to cope with the course as the equality legislation notes that we need to ensure there is equal access to training and career development opportunities. There have been no issues in 2007 – all applications were supported.

**Maternity Monitoring**

In order to help us determine the need for a mentoring and maternity scheme we carried out some maternity monitoring. To gather our information we interviewed 85% of the women who have returned from maternity leave while working at the Parliament during the last five years. We did not interview women who are currently on maternity leave. The following information highlights the key issues coming out of those interviews.

- 71% of the respondents said that the SPCB’s maternity arrangements had influenced their decision to either work at the Parliament in the first instance or to continue to work at the Parliament. All respondents recognised the support towards working parents and the arrangements we have in place which go beyond the minimum statutory requirements.

- 65% of respondents felt that they would have benefited from having more contact with the organisation during their maternity leave. Although staff did on occasion come into the organisation to meet with colleagues on a personal level, contact with the organisation on a more formal basis would have been welcomed. It was felt that sometimes there is a misperception that when someone is on maternity leave they would prefer to remain distant from the organisation. Respondents felt they would prefer more contact as this would make them feel more involved with the organisation.

- 82% of the respondents expressed the need for clearer and further guidance and advice on their entitlements, optional arrangements, childcare and what their rights were as pregnant workers.

- There were a wide range of skills which respondents said they had acquired while on maternity leave. Examples given were time management, negotiation and organisational skills. These were recognised as being transferable to the workplace which can be seen as a positive when returning to work.

- All women who were interviewed felt they would have benefited from participating in a mentoring programme or network. Four respondents also expressed an interest in becoming a mentor.
➢ 23% of respondents were concerned about the reaction of their manager and colleagues in returning to work part time and whether they are jeopardising future career prospects. This created some anxiety before returning back to work.

The gathering of this information provided support and evidence that a Maternity Mentoring Scheme and network would help in providing improved support to those women on maternity leave.

5.3 Equalities Staff Audit

During 2007 we developed our third Staff Equalities Audit questionnaire. This audit takes place every two years and enables the organisation to gather and analyse staff perceptions of equalities issues in the Parliament.

This year more questions were included on the Dignity at Work Network and Work Life Balance to provide more data on how staff felt the policies and support were working for them. The questionnaire was issued to all staff in May with responses required by the middle of July. As usual the responses were anonymous and confidential and gathered by our equalities consultants, Challenge Consultancy. 85% of staff working in the Parliament at the time provided responses. Our SPICe researchers prepared a report based on the data supplied by Challenge. The report, recommendations arising from it and a response on how we are going to take forward any recommendations will be published in spring 2008.

5.4 Service Monitoring

The Public Petitions Committee continued to issue an equalities monitoring form to every petitioner to assist it in identifying the diversity of petitioners - in age, racial/ethnic group and geographical location. It holds detailed information under those headings. During the year petitions submitted were also monitored in relation to gender in line with our Gender Equality Duty and the Committee will report on this monitoring at the end of the parliamentary year.

The committee witness feedback form has been amended during the year to include the opportunity for witnesses to report anonymously on their age, gender, ethnicity and nationality and whether they consider themselves to be disabled. The questions were developed with the purpose of monitoring to check whether administrative services provided to witnesses have any adverse or disproportionate impact on any group identified. Data continues to be collected and a report will be made by the Committee Office at the end of the parliamentary year.

Procurement Services has established equality targets as part of the organisations Responsible Purchasing strategy and have continued to work on meeting these targets.

Catering provided in the Parliament is monitored through monthly audits and customer feedback to ensure food provided where possible meets the needs of our customers. Examples of equality initiatives include: highlighting on menus dairy
free and gluten free meals. We also highlight and promote via signage and menus healthy options. We can, and have this year, catered for events which required the food to be prepared and cooked to religious requirements.

5.5 Disability and Race Equality Schemes

During the year the organisation has continued to work on taking forward the relevant actions from the Disability and Race Equality Schemes. Progress on these actions is reported on by each of the Directorates in their annual equalities reports.

Some examples of the actions taken under these Schemes during the year can be found below with a fuller update on progress available on the Parliament’s website or by contacting the Equalities Team using the details provided at the end of this report.

- **Review ways in which we can improve feedback from disabled people attending events in the Parliament including Festival of Politics. (Disability Equality Scheme) (By May 2008)**

  Festival of Politics feedback forms were amended to ask disability related questions in August 2007. The Events Team will monitor a random number of events per month between February and summer recess 2008 to specifically evaluate the event delegates as well as the event organisers looking at disability, guest satisfaction, gender etc.

  The Media Relations Office have recently (September 2007) reviewed their media mailing lists and updated their disability interest mailing list to ensure as wide an audience as possible.

- **Ensure that Director's Group and Senior Management Team (SMT), in carrying out all of their functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and promote racial equality and good race relations. (Ongoing) (Race Equality Scheme)**

  Directors Group and Senior Management Team continue to take account of all equality issues when considering papers. In 2007, the Directors Group secretariat introduced a revised paper template which includes an equalities heading to ensure that staff consider such issues when drafting their paper. Directors group did not consider any specific race equality related papers during 2007.

- **Consider whether an appropriate mechanism is needed to ensure that committee and members’ bills fully take into account disability equality issues. (Disability Equality Scheme)**

  The Head of the Committee Office and the Head of the Chamber Office reviewed the procedures for committee and members’ bills. These both require the policy memorandum to cover equalities issues. The existing mechanisms for consultation cover these types of business.
- Ensure the Presiding Officers, in carrying out all of their functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and promote racial equality and good race relations. (Ongoing) (Race Equality Scheme)

  Private Office staff ensure the Presiding Officers continued promotion of the founding principles of equal opportunities and accessibility to all by for example attendance at the Scottish Indian-Arts Forum event where the Presiding Officer was a guest speaker and relayed the message, "we are all Scotland's people" in this multi-cultural nation.

- Review the recruitment board process to offer potential applicants the option to contact the Parliament in advance of making an application by May 2007. (Disability Equality Scheme)

  All recruitment literature (internal and external) now encourages disabled applicants and potential applicants to contact us if they have any questions about an advertised vacancy.

- Review exit interview process to include monitoring on race. (Race Equality Scheme)

  The exit interview process has been reviewed and will be amended by end of February 2008.

- Ensure that staff are familiar with the Race Relations Act 1976, including amendments made by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and relevant subordinate legislation. (Race Equality Scheme)

  As a result of induction training and the Equality & Diversity courses run by the Parliament, our staff are aware generally of the provisions of the Race Relations legislation.

  When compiling our training programme for 2008, we will consider whether a "refresher" session on the Race Relations legislation would assist our staff in their understanding of equalities issues in this area.

- Include equalities guidance and information on the Members Channel for new members following the 2007 elections by May 2007. (Disability Equality Scheme)

  The Equalities Team provided advice to the MSP Support team in advance of producing MSP guidance on terms and conditions. This was subsequently distributed to Members.

- Ensure that the Crèche takes into account the need to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and promote racial equality and good race relations when providing educational material and toys. (Race Equality Scheme)

  This is an annual standard in the Care Commission’s audit. All toys and educational material are assessed at the time of purchase to ensure that there is no discrimination and that racial equality is promoted.
5.6 Seeking feedback from members of the public

Over 352,450 people (an increase of 7.5% on 2006) visited the Scottish Parliament during 2007 from a variety of communities and locations across Scotland as well as from other parts of the country and outwith the UK. Our Visitor Services survey collects information about age; sexual orientation and race and provides visitors with an opportunity to provide feedback on our services. At present, data is not systematically analysed as suitable software is not available. This will be addressed through the information management system project (to be completed by summer 2008) and an update provided in our next annual report.
Section 6: Update on 2007 action points

In 2006, each directorate prepared a list of action points for 2007 relating to equality issues. This section provides an update on the key action points that were included in the SPCB’s last Equal Opportunities Report in 2006.

- **Ensure that all action points in the disability and race equality schemes are met.** (All Directorates)

  Excellent progress has been made towards meeting the action points from both schemes. Some examples of the progress made during the year can be found in section 5 of this report and a fuller update is available on the Parliament’s website.

- **Provide the three main public information publications in easy read along with other formats.** (Access & Information)

  All main publications are available in Braille and audio; two are now also available in British Sign Language. The contract for provision of information in Easy Read was awarded during the year and development of the first Easy Read version undertaken. Our first Easy Read version will be published in February 2008.

- **During the review of Outreach and Education Services when reviewing wider activity of engagement and participation include the needs of disabled stakeholders.** (Access & Information)

  The Education and Outreach review included consideration of the needs of disabled stakeholders and recommended the targeting of disability groups for community outreach work to improve engagement and participation. The detail of how the Scottish Parliament will deliver on this will be developed during 2008 and onwards.

- **The Committee Office is to review how equalities issues are considered by committees in general and how the consultation process is undertaken with disabled people and people from other equalities strands.** (Clerking & Reporting)

  This review has been completed. The clerks’ recommendation that committees undertake an equalities review was forwarded to the Equal Opportunities Committee. The matter is now being considered by the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee and is being taken forward through political channels.

  The review of consultations was put on hold pending the creation of the single equalities body which occurred in October 2007. Since then, the Equal Opportunities Committee team has commenced a review of the mainstreaming guidelines and is developing proposals to improve and clarify them if
appropriate. This exercise will be followed by a review of how the guidelines are being implemented in the committee teams, whether the processes are accessible, the feedback options are adequate and if alternative methods are needed.

- **Produce and publish a Gender Equality Scheme to be approved by the SPCB by June 2007.** (Chief Executive’s Group)

  Work on developing a Gender Equality Scheme was led by the Strategy & Development Unit during the year. Whilst the SPCB have no current legal requirement to produce a Scheme it was agreed that best practice would be followed and a scheme produced. Whilst the production of a Scheme was delayed during the year the SPCB agreed it in December 2007 and the Scheme was published in February 2008.

- **Develop an equalities mainstreaming strategy incorporating all equality related schemes and other equality led initiatives and agree structures for mainstreaming equality across the Parliament by autumn 2007.** (Chief Executive’s Group)

  The incorporation of a mainstreaming strategy has been amended to fit in with the development of an impact assessment tool and a single equality scheme. This project will now form part of the full review of our existing equalities strategy and framework during 2008.

- **Develop an equalities impact assessment process to critically assess the impact of all policies and activities of the Parliament on groups which have been traditionally discriminated against and create a process for publishing the results of all impact assessments by December 2007.** (Strategy & Development Office)

  This project has been delayed due to the late production of our Gender Equality Scheme and other work priorities. The information gathering part of the process was undertaken in January 2008 with the aim to have a toolkit and impact assessment process in place by December 2008.

- **Provide a fire alerting system for deaf and hard of hearing people by May 2007.** (Technology & Facilities Management)

  A fire alerting system for deaf and hard of hearing people was installed in July 2007 and has been fully operational since December 2007. Testing of this system was built into our fire evacuation exercise during December with the assistance of several volunteers from some of the deaf organisations in Scotland.

- **Include consideration of all access and equality issues in future review of public space. Commence review in 2007. Including alternative styles of chair, different heights and chairs with and without arms.** (Access & Information and Technology & Facilities Management)

  Consideration of access and equality issues will be included and progressed under the Visitor Services Review implementation plan; the timescale for this is yet to be confirmed.
Publish SPCB Annual Equal Opportunities Report by March 2007. (Resources & Governance)

The 2006 SPCB Annual Equalities Report was published during April 2007.

The Personnel Office will complete a review of its recruitment procedures to ensure that procedures comply with the equalities framework and equalities best practice by December 2008 (Resources & Governance)

Whilst a formal review has not taken place, recruitment procedures are constantly monitored and reviewed and a number of improvements have been implemented in line with recommendations from the Disability Equality and Gender Equality Schemes. More detail on those improvements can be found earlier in this report.

To monitor and review the usefulness of the equal opportunities sections in papers to the SPCB and Senior Management. (Chief Executive’s Group)

The SPCB continues to have due regard to all equality issues by ensuring such matters are addressed in any paper being presented for its consideration. In 2007, the Director’s Group secretariat introduced a revised briefing template which includes an equalities heading to ensure that staff consider such issues when drafting their paper.

Introduce a mentoring scheme in the Parliament to support female staff during their pregnancy, maternity leave and on their return to work. (Resources & Governance and Chief Executive’s Group)

A pilot maternity mentoring scheme was agreed by Directors in March 2007 and is currently underway with support being provided to female staff that are pregnant, on leave or due back from maternity leave. More information on the pilot scheme can be found in section 4 of this report.

Review current policies and provision to ensure compliance with the new equality regulations outlawing discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief and sexual orientation in the provision of goods, facilities and services by April 2007 and to provide appropriate training to staff. (Strategy & Development Office)

Review of policies will be built into a single equalities scheme, which will be developed over the course of 2008. The new Scheme will cover the current legally required schemes of race, disability and gender as well as the three additional strands of religion or belief, sexual orientation and age.

Install a fixed-track ceiling hoist in garden lobby megaloo to allow the changing bench to be used safely and to make the Parliament more accessible to people who require the use of a hoist by March 2007. (Resources & Governance and Technology & Facilities Management)
A fixed-track ceiling hoist was installed in the garden lobby toilet during June 2007 to enable improved access to the Parliament for people with multiple and profound disabilities.

- **Along with Public Information and Procurement, Corporate Publications Team will have a contract in place for the production of easy-read versions of publications and to produce BSL DVDs, which includes text captioning.** *(Access & Information)*

A contract for BSL DVDs was put in place in March 2007, with an easy read contract awarded in November 2007. A new BSL DVD has been developed and published during the year and the first easy read version has been developed and will be published early in 2008.

- **An induction loop facility to be installed in the well of the Main Chamber by Easter 2007.** *(Access & Information)*

An induction loop was installed in the well of the Chamber in the summer of 2007 to improve the access of the Chamber floor for other events to deaf and hard of hearing people.

- **Continued promotion of equality related issues on the Scottish Parliament website homepage and news release content.** *(Access & Information)*

Promotion of equality related issues on the website homepage has continued throughout the year with a variety of events and news releases promoted. Further information on this can be found in section 3 of this report.

- **The Petitions Committee will develop and implement an equalities programme to address the equalities issues identified in their equality report for 2006.** *(Clerking & Reporting)*

The Petitions Committee has indicated its intention to take forward an inquiry in 2008 into improving and increasing access, participation and engagement with the public petitions system from a wider divergence of individuals and organisations. This wide ranging inquiry will look at many issues, for example, the relevance of the public petitions system to ethnic communities or young people and whether there is any action the Committee can take to ensure equitable access to it across Scottish society.

- **Ensure new corporate planning process has disability and other equality issues built in from the very outset. Implement monitoring process to ensure planning process includes disability and other equality issues.** *(April 2007).** *(Resources & Governance)*

The Equalities Manager was consulted during the drafting of the 2008-11 Management Plan and equality issues built into the development of the plan.
The Training and Development Team will work with the Equalities Team to review our current approach to equalities training (e.g. general equalities training/BSL requirements) in order to fulfil business needs and develop an implementation plan. As part of this work we will develop training for senior managers and refresher updates for staff who attended their mandatory training some years ago. (Resources & Governance)

The Equalities Team and Training and Development Team worked closely together during the year on a variety of equality training requirements.

- Equality & Diversity Courses and Dignity at Work courses continued to run for new staff during the year.
- A new strategy for providing British Sign Language Training to SPCB staff over the next 7 years was developed.
- Induction training included a session on equalities for both MSP and SPCB staff continued during the year.
- Equalities leadership training incorporating disability equality took place in October for the Chief Executive and Directors.
- Refresher equalities training for all staff who attended training 3 or more years ago was agreed by Directors and will run during 2008.
Section 7: Our plans for 2008

Each directorate in our organisation has already prepared a list of action points for 2008 relating to equality issues. These action points will be built into the management and budget planning process and also into individual job-plans, where appropriate.

Here are details of the key action points relating to this area of work which we aim to achieve in 2008 (along with the name of the lead directorate in each case).

- Chief Executive and Directors to continue to provide a leadership role in promoting equality throughout the organisation. (*Chief Executive & Directors*)

- Develop an equalities impact assessment process to critically assess the impact of all policies and activities of the Parliament on groups which have been traditionally discriminated against and create a process for publishing the results of all impact assessments by December 2008. (*Chief Executive’s Group*)

- Review progress, revise and update schemes on race, disability and gender as part of the single equalities scheme by December 2008. (*Chief Executive’s Group*)

- Publish SPCB 2007 Annual Equalities Report by April 2008. (*Chief Executive’s Group*)

- Develop and deliver refresher equalities training for all staff who attended equalities training three or more years ago by November 2008. (*Chief Executive’s Group*)

- Ongoing implementation of Visitor Service review including the introduction of audio tours, a review of the use of the main hall, and the procurement of an information management system to monitor visitor numbers and trends. (*Access & Information Directorate*)

- Review technologies in the provision of guided tours e.g. sound-assistive systems. (*Access & Information Directorate*)

- The Committee Office to monitor witness feedback and report on any adverse or disproportionate impact on any group identified by December 2008. (*Clerking & Reporting Directorate*)

- The Public Petitions Committee to consider, among other things, how to increase access to and participation in the petitions process by younger people, ethnic minorities and people from disadvantaged communities. The committee will seek to gather views from those specific groups to broaden its understanding of their views and impression of the petitions system. (*Clerking & Reporting Directorate*)

- Develop robust monitoring and reporting procedures for equality statistics over the year by December 2008. (*Resources & Governance Directorate*)
➤ Audit the numbers of disabled staff employed by the SPCB and then, using that information, formulate a Working Group to look at reasonable adjustments across the organisation. (*Resources & Governance Directorate*)

➤ Lighting levels to be improved to Public Foyer (main hall) to improve accessibility for all, but particularly for blind and partially sighted people, by replacing the existing fittings with brighter and more efficient ones. (*Technology & Facilities Management Directorate*)

➤ Review and improve signage in areas open to the public, including size of font and location of signs and use of symbols. (*Technology & Facilities Management Directorate*)
If you would like more information about anything contained within this report, you are welcome to contact the Scottish Parliament’s Equalities Manager or Equalities Adviser:

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Airson fiosrachaidh ann an cànanan eile seach Beurla no ann an cruth eile (m.e. ann am Braille, ann an clò mòr, air teip hluaim no ann an cruth eadar-dhealaichte coimpiutair), sgriobhalb thugainn dhan seòladh os cionn no cuiribh fios thugainn le facs no post-D. Tha sinn a’ cur fàilte air sgriobhaidhean ann an cànan sam bith.

للحصول على المعلومات بلغات أخرى غير اللغة الإنجليزية أو ببيانات وصيغة بديلة (لغة برايل أو بطباعة الحروف الكبيرة أو على أسرطة تسجيل صوتية أو بالتصوير في كمبيوتر البيئات المختلفة مثل) يرجى كتابة رسالة إلينا وإرسالها إلى العنوان المذكور أعلاه أو إرسال استفساراتكم إلينا عبر طريق الهاتف أو البريد الإلكتروني. إننا نريح بالرسائل المكتوبة فيما كانت اللغة المستخدمة في كتابتها.

Greek: Συναντήστε μας στην επικαλυπτήριο της ομάδας αναπηρίας (ιδίων και ομαδικών) μέσω της τηλεφωνικής έδρας τους συνομιλία με παραλλαγές, με την χρήση ενισχυτικών συστημάτων, ή κατά το αναμιγνύοντας την έννοια της πρότασης και στην περίπτωση της πρότασης της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης και την ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρότασης στην ενεργεία της πρόταş