
Report To:	Inverclyde Council	Date:	22 February 2018
Report By:	Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources	Report No:	SL/LP/021/18
Contact Officer:	Sharon Lang	Contact No:	01475 712112
Subject:	Women 50:50 Campaign – Taking Action on Women’s Under Representation: Request by Councillor McCabe		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Council of a request received from Councillor McCabe that it consider whether it would wish to support the Women 50:50 Campaign whose aim is to tackle women’s under representation in Scotland’s local Councils through (1) agreeing a motion of support and (2) using the “What Women Want” resource.
- 1.2 A copy of the correspondence received from the Women 50:50 Campaign, including a proposed draft motion, is attached as Appendix 1.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Council is asked to consider the request by Councillor McCabe.

Dear Council Leader,

We are writing to you in hope you will work with us to tackle women's under-representation in Scotland's local councils.

We are the Women 50:50 campaign, a cross party campaign group established in 2014, with one purpose; to tackle structural inequality and deliver fair representation for women in Scotland. We believe that whilst small gains have been made through voluntary mechanisms to increase the number of women in councils, these mechanisms do not go far enough, and despite them, women are still only 29% of councillors. As such, we are campaigning for legislated candidate quotas which would mean that all political parties had to put forward at least 50% women candidates in local and national elections. This measure is proportional and a well evidenced approach to tackling under-representation.

We have the support of four out of five party leaders and the majority of MSPs and we hope we can garner your support and the support of your council.

We recognize however that many councillors are independent and therefore not aligned to any political party. The measures we seek are specifically targeted at political parties, as they have the structures to create this change and deliver specific outreach to seek candidates across seats in Scotland. We know that this will influence the wider culture of our councils and politics, and we hope it will also encourage more women to run as independent candidates.

You can support our campaign in two ways:

1. By talking about it to your council colleagues and taking forward a motion of support; a draft of which is attached. If you choose to do this, please let us know the outcome, as if we would like to add you to the list of councils which support the campaign on our website.
2. By using the "what women want" resource we have produced with our partner organisation, Engender (attached). This resource provides key questions for Councillors to consider when making decisions to ensure women are engaged and involved in your council's activities and that gender equality is a key feature within local politics.

We hope you agree with us that women's under-representation is unacceptable and now is the time to take bold action.

Thank you in advance, if you have any questions please email us.

Talat Yaqoob

Chair and Co-Founder

Women 50:50

The campaign for fair representation in Scotland

e: scottishwomen5050@gmail.com

w: www.women5050.org

@women5050 f: www.facebook.com/women5050

What Women Want

(from their elected representatives)



ENGENDER

WOMEN

50:50

WOMEN ARE UNDERREPRESENTED
IN SCOTTISH POLITICS.

29%

35%

OF COUNCILLORS

OF MSPs

Women in Scotland are from different backgrounds, races, religions, and sexualities, and are both disabled and non-disabled. Right now this diversity is missing from our elected bodies.

This means that it is vital that all elected representatives work to promote equality for all women.

Engender and Women 5050 have been talking with women across Scotland to form these key questions you should ask yourself, and your colleagues, regularly.

Keep this resource with you, and look at it regularly. It will help you ensure you are doing the best you can for the women you represent.

How are my decisions
working for women?

1.

How much will this policy/programme cost, and how much will be spent on men and boys, and girls and women?

2.

How will this policy or programme tackle discrimination and gender inequality? How will it increase women's and men's equality?

3.

How many men were involved in deciding what this policy or programme should include? How many women?

Am I representing all women in my constituency?

1.

This year, have I received training from specialist organisations on human rights, violence against women and equalities?

2.

Am I communicating in an accessible way? Do I advertise my surgeries in a range of places and formats, and offer other ways to communicate including phone and house calls? Is it easy for women to hold me to account over my decisions?

3.

Within the last month, have I spoken to women in my community including women from all faiths and none, black minority ethnic women, lesbian bisexual and trans women, women from all social-economic backgrounds, disabled women, older and younger women, mothers, carers and refugees?

How am I using my position to promote equality?

1.

When I chair meetings and events, do I make sure women and men have equal time to speak?

2.

What have I done this month to ensure that more women, including BME, disabled and LGBT women, are elected for my party next time?

3.

Have I publicly said that gender equality and issues principally affecting women are important to me, and how I am working for change, in the past month?

We hope you find this resource useful.

www.engender.org.uk/whatwomenwant

info@engender.org.uk

[@Engenderscot](#)

[@Women5050](#)



ENGENDER

WOMEN

50:50

EXAMPLE MOTION TO COUNCIL:

The council notes that women are under-represented across councils in Scotland and make up only 29% of councillors. Council further notes that whilst voluntary mechanisms such as all women shortlists, networks and mentoring have made some progress, women are still not represented equally.

Council notes that despite these measures 29% is the highest proportion of women in council in Scotland's history.

The council congratulates the Women 50:50 campaign which has been working across all political parties and has gained support from the SNP, Scottish Labour, Scottish Liberal Democrats and Scottish Green Party leaders and co-conveners.

The council supports Women 50:50's aim for fair representation of women in Scotland through legislated candidate quotas and backs the campaign's call for fair representation of women across Scotland's public life.

The council recognises that women are not a homogenous group, and that in any of our outreach work to encourage and champion women we should ensure that we engage a diverse group of women from different races, cultures, religions, disabilities, socio-economic statuses and sexualities.