
Report To:	Policy & Resources Committee	Date:	5 February 2019
Report By:	Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	Report No:	PR/03/19/RB
Contact Officer:	Ruth Binks	Contact No:	01475 712748
Subject:	Women's Forum		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update for the Policy and Resources Committee on the progress of the Women's Forum.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Women's Forum has met on several occasions and has taken forward some important issues over the last year. These include the White Ribbon Campaign and contributing to an International Women's day event.
- 2.2 Terms of Reference for the Forum have been drawn up and are outlined in Appendix 1.
- 2.3 It is proposed to remit the appointment of a Women's Champion to the Full Council. The proposed role of the Women's Champion is attached in Appendix 2.
- 2.4 Members of the group feel that there is merit in continuing the group as a forum and keeping the same number and political make-up of the group.
- 2.5 The current work-plan for the Forum includes contributing towards the organisation of the next International Women's Day and continuing to promote the success of females in the community.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the Policy and Resources Committee:
- notes the progress made by the Women's Forum
 - agrees to the terms of reference for the group
 - agrees to the continuation of the Forum in the current format
 - agrees to the proposed remit of a Women's Champion
 - agrees to remit to the Full Council the appointment of a Women's Champion.

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Corporate Director
Education, Communities & Organisational Development

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 At a meeting of Inverclyde Council in June 2017 it was agreed that a Women’s Forum be established, initially as a working group of the Council comprising five members, Councillors Murphy, Quinn, Robertson, McCabe and McEleny, and that it be remitted to the Forum to form a chair.
- 4.2 Councillor Quinn was appointed Chair to the Forum and Terms of Reference have been drawn up (Appendix 1). The Terms of Reference were reviewed in September 2018. The Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development provides the lead support for the Forum.
- 4.3 Regular meetings of the Forum have taken place, although there was an understandable gap during the illness of the former Corporate Director.

5.0 CURRENT POSITION

- 5.1 The Forum agreed that there is merit in continuing the work of the Forum and that the format of the group should continue as a forum over the coming year. This is because the forum or working group approach allows the group to work on a less formal basis than a committee and is able to undertake more flexible work plans to achieve the aims and Terms of Reference of the group. This format also allows for the flexibility of working with community planning partners and external agencies.

It is suggested that the number of representatives (5) and the political make-up of the group should remain the same (the three female members being representatives of their respective groups) with the remainder of the group being made up as follows:

Political Party	5 Members on Body		Other Acceptable Allocation Option
	Numerical Entitlement	Allocation Based on Numbers	Allocation Based on Spread
LAB	1.82	2	2
SNP	1.59	2	3
INTERNAL IND COALITION	0.91	1	
CON	0.45	0	
LD	0.23		
	<u>5</u>		

Whilst the Forum membership remains at 5, opportunities will be explored to take forward information events about particular aspects of the work of the Forum which will be open to all Councillors and appropriate partner agencies.

- 5.2 The group agreed that the proposed main duties of a Women’s Champion (Appendix 2) be taken to the Policy and Resources Committee for approval and that the establishment of a Women’s Champion be remitted to the Full Council.

The Forum was instrumental in ensuring that the White Ribbon Campaign, the largest international campaign which aims to involve men in addressing issues of violence against women, was brought to the attention of Elected Members and contained in a report to the Education and Communities Committee in May 2018.

The Forum also supported a highly successful International Women’s Day in March 2018 where female Councillors gave an overview of their roles to attendees.

- 5.3 The Equalities Officer will attend the group from December 2018 onwards as well as the Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development. This is because there is overlap between the aims of the group and Inverclyde Council’s Equality Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes report. An audit has taken place identifying where the work of the group links into the report and subsequent plan.
- 5.4 International Women’s Day will be a significant key date for the work of the group and initial planning has already taken place to for the next event. The focus of the event will link into the bicentenary of James Watt and encourage Women to consider careers in STEM subjects.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

Finance

- 6.1 There are no financial implications from the report.

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

Legal

- 6.2 There are no legal implications

Human Resources

- 6.3 There are no HR implications from this report

Equalities

- 6.4 Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

Yes See attached appendix

No

This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Repopulation

6.5 N/A

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

7.1 N/A

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 This report supports the continuation of the Inverclyde Council Women's Forum.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 N/A.

Terms of Reference for Women's Forum	
Name of Group	Women's Forum
Purpose	<p>The purpose of the Women's Forum is twofold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i to identify the barriers preventing women in Inverclyde from entering public life ii to update knowledge and understanding of the issues facing women in Inverclyde, such as domestic violence, period poverty, and breastfeeding, by bringing the 'community voice' into meetings of the Women's Forum <p>The Women's Forum aims to look for opportunities to influence action which will assist in addressing the above matters and improve outcomes for women living in Inverclyde.</p>
Membership	<p>Councillor Quinn – Chair Councillor McCabe Councillor McEleny Councillor Murphy Councillor Robertson Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development Corporate Equalities Officer</p>
Frequency of Meetings	6 weekly meetings
Reporting / monitoring arrangements	Report to P and R Committee/Inverclyde Council as required.
Review Arrangements	February 2020

Role of the Women's Champion

Overall Purpose of Champion:

To be the Council's Women's Champion by raising and promoting women's issues and ensuring that the needs and preferences of women are fully taken into account in the planning and development of policies and services.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1.	To be the Council's ambassador and spokesperson for issues relating to women.
2.	To highlight and promote the concerns of women living in Inverclyde both within the Council and with external agencies and the public.
3.	To promote and support the objectives and key aims of specific gender issues arising in the Corporate Equalities Action Plan.
4.	To promote and support local activities, events and service developments that are aimed at promoting the specific rights of women e.g. 50/50 group, gender pay gaps, period poverty, violence against women etc.
5.	To work in partnership with local organisations that provide services specifically for women to ensure that effective communication is taking place.
6.	To promote and support local activities, events and service developments that promote the rights of women.
7.	To liaise with Government and MPs/MSPs regarding the development of services and policies that specifically affect women.