

gender AGENDA 2

Women making their full contribution to policing



Gender Agenda 2 has been refocused and reinvigorated on behalf of women in policing by the British Association for Women in Policing

Contents

1	Executive Summary
2	Gender Agenda 2
3	The case for Gender Agenda 2
6	Long Term Aim 1
10	Long Term Aim 2
14	Long Term Aim 3
18	Long Term Aim 4
22	Long Term Aim 5

The original Gender Agenda was inspired and developed by Action E, The British Association for Women in Policing, ACPO Women's Forum, representatives from the Senior Women in Policing Conference, the Police Federation, the Association of Senior Women Officers of the Metropolitan Police Service.



Executive Summary

In the review and continued development of the gender agenda we have endeavoured to embrace the views of women and men from across England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland into the new updated version. These views were gleaned during special workshops held nationwide. Our aim throughout has been to develop a common agenda of the issues affecting women and our ability to achieve our potential within the Service; whether this is in our current rank or grade, in our current role or in a rank or role to which we aspire and have the ability to achieve. We also recognise the double jeopardy experienced by visible ethnic minority women and gay women.

Gender Agenda 2 recognises the progress made since 2001 and sets out the challenges for the next five years. It focuses on both the needs of the 22% of women officers within the service and the women working in police staff roles. Although women make up 64% of police staff, they are disproportionately under represented in the senior management and director positions. We believe by focusing on the agenda the Police Service will ensure benefits for both women and the greater organisation.

This document clearly explains our vision, values, raison d'être and our five long term aims, which are;

- For the Police Service to demonstrate consistently that it values all women working in policing
- To achieve a gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation balance across the rank and grade structure and specialisms consistent with the proportion of women in the economically active population
- To have a woman's voice in influential policy forums focusing on both internal and external service delivery
- To develop an understanding of the competing demands in achieving a work/life balance and a successful career in policing
- To have a working environment and equipment of the right quality and standards to enable women to do their job professionally

It then clearly and succinctly outlines the case for the agenda, giving the Service five good reasons why it should pursue it with vigour.

Finally, each long term aim has been broken down to give the reality of what it means. We clearly identify the barriers to progress, what action needs to be undertaken to break down the barriers, examples of positive initiatives currently happening to improve the situation and finally possible future issues. The introduction preceding each aim highlights progress since 2001 and highlights some of the critical challenges for the next five years.

Gender Agenda 2 is a living document with progress regularly updated and further information available on the British Association for Women in Policing website at www.bawp.org. Consequently, we invite organisations to contribute to the implementation of the agenda and to keep us informed of progress. We particularly welcome further positive initiatives which can be cited to assist others who are grappling with the issues.

Gender Agenda 2 seeks to awaken the Service to issues which must be tackled if it is to develop its potential as a deliverer of quality services to the public it serves in the 21st century.

‘Women making their full contribution to policing’



Gender Agenda 2

The case for Gender Agenda 2

Vision

To generate a thriving Police Service which supports women in achieving their full potential and making their full contribution to policing.

Values

We support a moral and ethical approach which ensures that all staff, regardless of their membership of any identifiable category, are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged in pursuing their duty or their career. We believe the Service must be inclusive.

The agenda seeks to;

- Maintain focus on the issues impacting disproportionately on women
- Challenge tradition, myth and discrimination
- Identify potential solutions for every identified issue/obstacle/problem
- Ensure all our arguments are evidence based
- Explain and create an understanding within and outside the service of the challenges facing women
- Endeavour to make sure beneficial changes happen

Long term aims

1. For the Police Service to demonstrate consistently that it values women in policing.
2. To achieve a gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation balance across the rank and role structure and specialisms.
3. To have a woman's voice in influential policy forums focusing on both internal and external service delivery.
4. To develop an understanding of the competing demands in achieving a work/life balance and a successful career.
5. To have a working environment and equipment of the right quality and standards to enable women to do their jobs professionally.

Gender Agenda 2 seeks continued improvements for women through increased dialogue and the creation of greater understanding about the challenges and dilemmas they face. The agenda recognises and credits the Service for the positive progress it has made over the last five years. However, despite the progress, women officers remain a minority group and disproportionately under represented within both the ranks and specialisms. Although women hold 64% of police staff roles, they consistently feel under valued and are under represented in the senior grades.

Although the theoretical and legal arguments for equality of opportunity and promotion and selection on merit have been made, these have not yet been fully reflected in reality. Why?

- the perpetuation of dated stereotypes and myths;
- inflexible thinking on flexible working;
- policy development excluding the female perspective;
- a failure to recognise the impact and consequences of the predominant and dominating culture on minority groups.

Why embrace Gender Agenda 2?

Although the focus of the agenda is on the position of women, tackling the issues it raises will have significant benefits for the rest of the Service.

1. **Women are 22% of police officer strength whilst being over 50% of the population, with 44% of the economically active population being female.**
(i.e. 35% of full time employees and 83% of part time employees are female, and 55% of ethnic minority women are economically active)
- There has been a 6% increase in officer strength since 2001. There is still room for improvement, particularly in the recruitment of black and minority ethnic women who only form approximately 1% of the Service but who bring cultural insights, language skills and knowledge that support more sensitive and informed policing. They are also vital bridges into the diverse communities we police.
 - A modern responsive police service needs the range of viewpoints and experience that only a balanced workforce can supply.
 - To meet future resource requirements the business imperative demands that the Service fully accesses the talent pool of both women and men.

2. To make the Service the employer of choice for both women and men, and the best deliverer of service to the public, its policies must be gender-proofed.

- If strategies and policies for what happens are not shaped by men and women, the thinking and decision making processes will not benefit from all the brain power, insights and judgements available and the result will be an unbalanced organisation delivering an unbalanced service.

3. Untapped potential and loss of expertise is a waste of resources and must stop.

- For as long as they are in a minority, women will need active support to achieve their potential. Networking (both mixed and single sex) is positive and needs to be encouraged. Men only and mixed networking occurs automatically; the same is not true for women only. Opportunities must therefore be created for women to get together without being made to feel uncomfortable in a culture which frequently seeks to question the benefits.

4. It is an opportunity to take action to prevent unnecessary employment tribunals – reasonableness and negotiation are the keys to employer/employee harmony.

- Reducing employment tribunals will reduce the monetary costs, human costs and negative impacts on the organisation and individuals.
- The Human Rights Act and the Gender Duty require organisations to treat staff properly.

5. To achieve a balance between the organisation and individuals' needs through a fresh and more flexible approach to working practices.

- Everybody is entitled to a work/life balance but not to the detriment of providing the service – reasonable boundaries need to be negotiated and lessons learned from other organisations.
- The challenge for managers is that flexible working is perceived as more difficult to manage but has the potential to be more responsive to service demands.
- Part time workers are not part able or part committed – but this is the way the organisation frequently makes them feel. Supportive, flexible managers make it work and improve productivity.
- All workers are part of an emergency service and must be able to respond to the unpredictability of the role.

Gender Agenda 2 recognises that many men support and endeavour to understand the dilemmas faced by minority groups, and women in particular, and not all women do.

The case for Gender Agenda 2



Long Term Aim 1

For the Police Service to demonstrate consistently that it values women in policing.

Female police officers recognise that the Service has made considerable progress in demonstrating that it values women. The changes to the fitness test, from focusing on male attributes to one which focuses on being fit for policing, has been significant in increasing the recruitment pool of talented individuals available for selection. This has no doubt contributed to the rise in the percentage of women in the Service. Much has also been done to encourage women to apply for roles and specialisms where they previously felt excluded, although question marks still hang over the validity of some of the fitness tests which act as a gateway into these specialisms.

Commitment by those forces that have consulted and actively engaged with women over their development needs and the barriers to overcome has been rewarded. A working environment has been created where women officers have been able to demonstrate their skills, become more confident and truly reflect the valuable role that they can play. Personal development programmes have been introduced and the opportunities for demonstrating their skills and abilities across the Service increased.

The significance of this success is that it has been achieved without a perception of lowering standards or a sense of tokenism or undermining the relationship with male colleagues, and where appropriate those women who have been instrumental in creating barriers have been challenged.

However, there is considerable work to be done in tackling the culture within the Service, which suggests that police staff have a less meaningful role to play. Many female police staff feel undervalued. As the profile of the workforce changes, so the Service must recognise the importance in addressing this.

The influence of the media is still significant with a sense of greater challenges over the moral right for a woman with children to be a police officer. The use of gender specific language by senior and influential figures outside the service continues to undermine the role and value of women in the Service. The confidence amongst many to challenge this behaviour and attitude has done much to raise awareness, but there remains a need amongst many leaders in the Service to support this.

The challenge for the Service and Government is to decide whether it really wants to make its rhetoric of a diverse representative workforce a reality. The evidence shows at current recruitment and retention levels it will take 14-30 years to achieve an acceptable gender and ethnicity balance. Making a real difference in shorter time frames will take action and leadership. If it's not a reality that is wanted then the rhetoric must stop.

Forces must not underestimate the significant impact that failing to address the needs of women in any aspect of their role has on their perception of whether the Service consistently values women.

Barriers to Progress

The Traditional Image of Women in the Service.

The public have a gendered view of policing capabilities and have stereotypical views of the roles of men and women, e.g. men deal with violence; women with sexual offences.

The role of women in police staff roles is invisible to the public.

The challenges of raising awareness of the role for female officers are now replicated for female police staff.

The media still challenge the moral value and capability of women police officers with children in the Service.

Our workforce is not diverse or representative. Only 22% of officers are female, with only 1% of the service being female BME officers. Although 64% of police staff are female, this is not replicated in higher grades (*Police Service Strength Data 2006*). Society is 51% female, 49% male. To achieve 35% women officers, i.e. a more balanced service, will take 14 years at current recruitment levels, which is too long.

Specialist departments have entry requirements that exceed the reality of the role.

Action to break down the barrier

Work needs to be progressed on marketing women's and men's capability to deal professionally with the full range of policing tasks.

Work with the media to raise awareness of the role of police staff.

Forces must consider opportunities to highlight the role and achievements of women.

Encourage the Home Office to support research on the impact of 'negative' portrayal by the media on the recruitment, retention and progression of women.

To achieve a representative service within 5-7 years we must adopt a twin track approach of:

- a) positive action and
- b) affirmative action, i.e. time limited managed disproportionate recruitment of capable people to redress the current imbalances (not lawful at current time - 2006).

Review specialist department entry requirements, particularly fitness tests.

Positive Initiatives

BAWP has developed credibility within media outlets and actively pursue opportunities to raise awareness.

The PSNI positive managed programme to redress the catholic/non-catholic imbalance. The current level of 19% catholic officers would have taken 50 years to achieve under normal recruitment conditions.

BAWP/ACPO are leading a working group to explore the potential for affirmative action and ensure positive action is fully exploited.

Future Issues

It could impact on the recruitment and selection of senior women to the ACPO ranks as Police Authorities are members of the public, usually without a policing background.

The public lack confidence in policing as capable women fail to reach ACPO and policing decisions are taken by predominantly white men.

As women secure senior positions, the media challenges will focus on the fact it is a female officer as opposed to the issue itself.

The ability of forces to continue to recruit and retain female police officers and PCSOs will be severely hampered if women continue to feel undervalued.

Barriers to Progress	Action to break down the barrier	Positive Initiatives	Future Issues
Female Police staff are not valued within the Service Police officers do not recognise the value of police staff, particularly women in supervisory or senior posts. Many police staff feel they are still viewed as 'just civilians'. The culture of the Service does not encourage officers to recognise the authority of police staff supervisors. Perception that anyone who occupies a senior role in the Service must have operational policing experience. This is aggravated by the perception that police officers can perform all roles despite the need for professional accreditation for those roles. Female police staff must recognise their own skills and abilities and not create their own barriers to recognition. Lack of career advice and formal career development for police staff. Female PCSOs feel that they are the lowest tier of the Service (42% of PCSOs are female but there is no career structure unless they join the Service as an officer). There is a need to recognise that most PCSOs who consider becoming police officers are male, therefore there is a risk that female PCSOs are ignored.	Joint training and development opportunities for police officers and staff. Raise officers' awareness of the grading of police staff roles and how they compare with police ranks. Encourage ACPO, Staff Associations and Unions to raise the profile of female police staff in senior positions. Workforce development and Integrated Competency Framework must challenge this notion and place greater emphasis on professional skills and personal competencies. Need to review the means by which police staff are employed within fixed contracts which frustrate lateral development for future progression. Consistent use of the Integrated Competency Framework. Ensure that Professional Development Reviews are in place for all police staff.	Police staff are eligible to apply for the Strategic Command Course and High Potential Development Scheme. There is a need to ensure that these opportunities are communicated effectively. The creation of female police staff networks and support groups. (MPS Senior Female Police Staff Association) Springboard Programmes have been developed to address the needs for female police staff	Workforce development provides opportunities for greater integration of police staff, there must be a greater appreciation of the value that they bring to the Service. The Service needs to recognise the 'other' issues facing women; such as caring responsibilities and the menopause. Need to learn the lessons from the long hours culture, the negative image of part time working which hindered the progression of female police officers. The Government has pledged to substantially increase the number of PCSOs, and so the representation of female and black and minority ethnic PCSOs is likely to be significantly higher. This will mean that women and minority group members are focused in the lower paid policing roles.

Barriers to Progress	Action to break down the barrier	Positive Initiatives	Future Issues
Inconsistency with policies for officers and staff.	Review the anomalies between pay scales and grading of police staff working alongside officers. Lack of opportunities in some forces for PCSOs to work flexible or part time hours.		
Women fail to recognise their ability to succeed. Line managers must have a greater understanding of the issues facing women, and the inability of some women to articulate the issues and their concerns confidently. There is still too much emphasis on women putting themselves forward without line managers recognising their role in encouraging, supporting and developing their staff. Female officers have the confidence to take promotion exams but the pass rate amongst women is not replicated in the representation within the rank structure. Success and achievement is only seen as upward progression. Forces need to consider what success for an individual 'looks like'. The LSE (London School of Economics) identified that albeit racism was not overt, sexism in the workplace was. Bullying and sexual harassment are still present and its impact should not be underestimated. It undermines confidence levels and must be made unacceptable in the workplace.	Continue to invest in development programmes, encouraging women to recognise their skills and abilities. Encourage role models, particularly amongst police staff. The hierarchical structure of the Service does not allow for lateral development and so reinforces the perception that every move is a big step with greater risks in an environment of little support and isolation. There is a need to demonstrate the success of lateral development. Rewards and recognition must reflect these achievements. Good, accessible, workable fairness at work procedures. Supervisors and managers who are confident in tackling the issues.	Springboard programme tailored for different levels within the Service, also encouraging the development of female police staff alongside officers. Greater integration within networks and support groups between female police staff and officers. ACPO Women's Forum have taken a greater role in mentoring and supporting female colleagues. Secondment opportunities for female police staff, providing an opportunity to learn more about the role in a non-threatening environment, and have greater confidence in their skills to perform that role. Establishment of Professional Networks by BAWP to provide support across forces amongst specialist posts. Comprehensive training of federation representatives in equality issues. Confidential reporting lines. Advisors / First Contact schemes to support both affected staff and managers.	Unexploited potential means the organisation fails to achieve its potential.

Long Term Aim 2

To achieve a gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation balance across the rank and role structure and specialisms

The police service has seen a considerable change in the representation of female police officers across the rank structure and specialisms. There are numerous examples of forces holding positive action days to encourage women to talk to colleagues to enable a greater awareness of the demands of the role. This enables career choices and lifestyle decisions to be made with a full rather than a partial or incomplete understanding of what is needed.

Success has been achieved through the support of managers, both male and female, who have taken a positive approach to understanding the different needs of women under their management, and the barriers that existing procedures and attitudes may create.

Forces have been encouraged to monitor the representation of women within specialist posts without the need to set formal targets.

Whilst representation in ranks and roles consistent with the percentage of women in the Service, and then with the proportion of women in the economically active population, may take time to achieve, forces must consider the issue of isolation. Isolation remains a real issue for many women. Forces are at different stages in encouraging the use of support networks to break down this isolation. However, in many forces women themselves have initiated the networks but do not have the full support or understanding of the organisation.

One of the greatest barriers that remains to the achievement of work/life balance are the traditional methods of service delivery and inflexibility around the way business is conducted. Forces need to exploit the opportunities technology brings to reap the advantages of a workforce that is technologically enabled, motivated and flexible.

The public still have a gendered view of policing and consequently the Service must consider how it best promotes the Police Service as a challenging, rewarding career for women, whether this is as a police officer or a member of police staff, regardless of ethnicity and sexuality. Women act as significant bridges into communities and women within communities have different policing priorities to men; without able women from all sections of the community the service we give will fail to be balanced and reflect the range of need and reassurance communities need.

Barriers to Progress	Action to break down the barrier	Positive Initiatives	Future Issues
Public Perception of Policing as a career. The public do not recognise the opportunities for women in policing roles. Need for the media to better portray the role of police employees within the Service. (LTA1)	Recruiting departments to proactively market the opportunities. Forces to recognise development and progression opportunities for police staff. Encourage role models, particularly amongst police staff. Forces must ensure that where police staff occupy supervisory or senior posts they are integrated as members of Management Teams, occupying meaningful roles.	Workforce development provides opportunities for greater integration of police staff. There must be a greater appreciation of the value that they bring to the Service. Open Days and Positive Action Days which encourage female police staff to learn about departments and consider their skills.	Need to establish and maintain effective support and network groups for women police staff across roles and specialisms to prevent sense of isolation and exclusion.
Cultural Perception of Policing as a career. Progression rates for black and minority ethnic women remains poor despite success rates in recruitment and promotion exams and the academic skills profile of female police staff.	Marketing of the police service as a dynamic, challenging profession among black and minority ethnic female groups and specifically focus on the achievement of women in the Service. Positive Action programme for women from minority communities. Need a greater understanding of career and life expectations amongst young people. Young people are not attracted by the inflexibility in working practices, long hours culture and excessive demands.	Police staff are eligible to apply for the Strategic Command Course and High Potential Development Scheme. There is a need to ensure that these opportunities are communicated effectively. The creation of female police staff networks and support groups. The Centrex positive action leadership programme for individuals from a range of minority groups.	In setting targets there must be a recognition that many communities are diverse, but not necessarily visible ethnic minorities. To achieve a greater balance, there is a need to consider the wider aspect of diversity. Having achieved a more representative balance across rank, role and specialisms, the Service must ensure that it able to retain staff. The Service must not be blind to the expectations of its staff.

Barriers to Progress	Action to break down the barrier	Positive Initiatives	Future Issues
	Forces must challenge the traditional approaches to delivering a service, learn from other organisations on flexible working and positive development opportunities.		
Inflexible training and development opportunities.	Specifically design courses to support or recognise the needs of women in the Service. Training needs to be available for all staff regardless of their working pattern. There is great inconsistency across forces around the availability of training for those staff and officers who do not work full time. National training establishments must set example and ensure that all nationally accredited training is fit for purpose in being suitable for all staff.	Advanced planning of training courses for officers and staff who do not work fixed hours. Use of e-learning and distance learning packages. Strategic Command Course is modular.	As the balance is achieved, there is a need to consider the different challenges facing women. Currently the perception is that the needs of women are focused around child care. As the workforce develops this will change and need to take into account general caring responsibilities as well as the needs of an older workforce.
Constraints of traditional inflexible structures and processes.	There is a need to review how we deliver our policing service. Most working patterns and structures for working are based on tradition and create barriers which need not exist. Demands for on-call are based on traditional methods and create a barrier for women with caring commitments. Examine the demand profile for different aspects of the Service. Consider the need for all rotas to be based on 24/7 and all posts 40 hours. Opportunity to consider flexible deployment of resources throughout a 24 hour period meeting the demand profile. Traditional perception that police officers cannot get promoted within specialist posts, and that they have to move from specialist posts into an operational role to get the relevant experience. Greater emphasis must be placed on the skills and competencies that	Reviews of specialist posts which have identified a demand in excess of 40 hours, providing greater flexibility and opportunity for staff on reduced / compressed hours.	Need to address the in-balance across forces in marketing the opportunities for flexible and part time working across roles, ranks and specialisms. Need to consider the opportunities that advances in technology provide.

Barriers to Progress	Action to break down the barrier	Positive Initiatives	Future Issues
	the officer has and are required for the role they aspire to. Move away from the perception that skills required for an operational role cannot be attained within a specialism.		
Our business is conducted in a traditional manner which excludes women with caring responsibilities. Meetings are conducted early in the morning. Senior officers who demand attendance outside 'core hours' exclude women. Isolation of Women.	Need to challenge why business is conducted in this way, and to encourage 'core hours'.	Meeting rooms are only available during 'core hours'.	
Progression for women within ranks and specialisms can lead to isolation.	Proactive support for formal and informal networks. Support to take into account the specific needs of the individual, whether isolation is due to being a minority in that role, or the challenges of geographic isolation.	BAWP has created a Specialist Network which seeks to facilitate contact across specialist posts, and is used to encourage those officers and staff thinking of applying for specific roles.	
As representation across rank and role structure and specialisms improves this will reduce but there is a need to ensure effective support is in place.		Many forces have created Networks and support groups.	



Long Term
Aim 3

To have a woman's voice in influential policy forums
focusing on both internal and external service delivery

As the police service continues to operate in an ever changing environment, so the needs of its employees and the communities it serves change. For the Service to ensure that it has the capability to respond to communities' needs effectively, and provide the best working environment for its staff, it must ensure that women have an influential voice.

Since the original Gender Agenda was launched in 2001 there has been regular engagement at a national level with ministers and national bodies, including representation on policing and ministerial working groups. With it has come the opportunity to influence and inform national policy and legislation. These engagements have been valuable in raising awareness of issues facing women within the Service, and have contributed to identifying and addressing the needs of vulnerable women in our communities. Women feel valued and motivated through having had this opportunity; it has had a significant impact on their ability to make their full contribution to policing.

Within forces, engagement at strategic and tactical levels varies considerably. In many cases the levels at which women have the opportunity to influence and inform reflects the position and role of women within the force. Overwhelmingly women are deployed at a tactical level, and this is reflected in the forums in which they are engaged. Forces also frequently expect women on working groups to ensure the women's perspective is considered. If this is wanted they must know beforehand so they can do the appropriate amount of research prior to the meeting. Remember they will usually be there for their role, command or specialisms, not their gender; and it should not be forgotten that women's perspectives can also be given by men who understand the issue and have taken soundings from female colleagues.

However, women taking on the specialist representative role often feel that their contribution and commitment is not valued and are regularly put under pressure to perform these roles quietly in their own time. As with any group, the needs of people are different, and so effective engagement and consultation must allow sufficient time to consider the needs of those being represented.

The Gender Duty places a requirement on Police Authorities to consider the needs of women within the force and the community it serves. We must learn from lessons so far to ensure that women of all ranks and roles, from all communities and with differing needs, have an effective voice in influential policy forums.

Our overall aim is to get to a position where both women and men who are focused on developing a professional citizen focused organisation properly consider the needs of women in the development of their internal and external facing strategies.

Barriers to Progress	Action to break down the barrier	Positive Initiatives	Future Issues
Lack of women's perspective on key policy bodies at strategic and tactical levels in decision making forums. The level at which women are engaged tends to reflect their representation within ranks, roles and specialisms. The manner in which women are engaged beyond that representation tends to be adhoc and does not allow for effective contribution.	Forces must recognise that the needs of women vary and effective mechanisms must be in place to ensure that contributions are meaningful.	BAWP representation at Ministerial working groups. Regular input to Senior Leadership Development Programme, Workforce Development and Diversity Impact Assessments. BAWP contribution to The Gender Duty and active role in informing Codes of Practice with Equal Opportunities Commission. Reserved seats, Federation and Superintendents Association.	Lessons must be learnt from engagement within the Service to ensure effective consultation of women within communities under Gender Duty.
Failure to recognise the positive contribution that working within policy forums and working groups has on the professional development of staff. Women are not afforded time and support to carry out these roles.	The contribution that women make to informing policy and decision making should be recognised. The skill of engaging with people of diverse needs to inform decision making should be reflected in PDR and personal development plans.	Memorandum of Understanding between Staff Support Associations and Chief Officer Group to recognise the contribution of staff on policy groups and forums on PDRs. (British Transport Police)	

Barriers to Progress	Action to break down the barrier	Positive Initiatives	Future Issues
Lack of structured process by which the needs of women within communities are recognised and inform policy and decision making. Formal consultation mechanisms do not take into account the worklife roles and responsibilities of women in the community. Over reliance on women to lead and shape both the internal and external agendas. Pure presence of women is often seen as sufficient to justify the claim that issues for women have been considered.	Mechanisms for consultation must take into account the different needs within diverse communities, vulnerability and isolation of women. Use market segmentation techniques and data to aid the development of policing strategies that ensure women's policing needs are addressed. Intelligence led operations that focus on the exploitation of women.	BAWP/WNC (Women's National Commission) research into the needs of vulnerable women (Seen But Not Heard). BAWP research into the skills required of police officers – 'The well conducted Constable: Development of roles and attributes associated with efficient and effective policing'. ACPO Race & Diversity Business Area external facing gender portfolio. Operation Pentameter which focuses on the trafficking of women as part of the illegal sex trade.	Gender Duty places a responsibility on Authorities to effectively consult with women in their communities to ensure effective service delivery



Long Term Aim 4

To develop an understanding of the competing demands in achieving a work/life balance and a successful career

The need to understand the competing demands of staff achieving a work / life balance and a successful career has impacted on all forces. There has been a noticeable improvement in an appreciation of the issues and implementation of flexible working options.

However, implementation is inconsistent across, and even within, forces. This generates frustration and often fuels claims for unfair treatment by employees.

Where forces have been courageous and worked outside the traditional boundaries, the rewards have been tangible. They have secured a more motivated and healthy workforce that takes pride and responsibility in their roles.

Work/life balance is frequently perceived to be about managing childcare. With it comes a belief that an approved request for flexible working arrangements is doing the individual a favour rather than complying with a legal requirement or recognising an opportunity for the organisation to better use its resources to meet changing demands.

Every force states it has a suite of policies supporting work/life balance, but the challenge is to make these policies 'live' and to create a framework within which staff and supervisors are supported in managing working hours outside the norm and which meet organisational demands.

With the changing expectations of society and the differing priorities of our workforce, the reasons for wanting flexible working are changing. Childcare is no longer solely the domain of women, older employees have different needs, menopause impacts many women's lives, and of course many simply want to pursue personal interests. A commitment to understand the changing world and to support staff creates an environment where they feel valued and are able to make a valuable contribution to policing.

With a shrinking pool of candidates, from which many businesses and organisations are also recruiting, and the need to maximise our investment in our workforce, the business imperative to seize opportunities provided by flexible working has never been greater.

Barriers to Progress	Action to break down the barrier	Positive Initiatives	Future Issues
Continued perception that part time or flexible working is about women and children. Perception that part time or flexible working is part commitment. Attitude that staff are asking for a favour as opposed to an entitlement. Need to recognise the changing lifestyle of employees with demands as carers, or pursuing other interests as factors influencing demands for flexible working.	Change the attitude and culture around the image of part time working. Recognise the increasing demands from male colleagues for flexible working arrangements. Campaign to change myth, stereotype and perception of those who choose to work differently. Opportunities for police staff to take career breaks.	Opportunities for couples to discuss their needs in managing demands of childcare with their individual career development. (Dorset) Need for supervisors to balance the demands of the organisation, with the individual, against new legislation and codes of practice.	Ignorance of the needs and personal choices of all employees will frustrate the development, progression and representation of the police service. Increase the representation of role models. Women to support their male colleagues in overcoming the stereotype and myths of part time working. Need greater encouragement and support of supervisors to make decisions.
Lack of flexibility in structures, working practices and management thinking. Inconsistency across and within forces in using existing policies to enable staff to work flexibly.	Use of existing networks to explore solutions and share good practice. Policies need to be 'live'. Need for a greater understanding and awareness of policies that have been introduced to allow flexible working. Supervisors should be required to have knowledge of and evidence practical	Supervisors given training in employment policies through 'Master Classes'. (Kent) Shift patterns have been changed to allow for reduced hours working. (Surrey) Creation of 'Term Time Working' policy. (MPS) Establishing a 'high level' champion. (Hertfordshire)	

Barriers to Progress	Action to break down the barrier	Positive Initiatives	Future Issues
Part time officers and staff are expected to do the work of a full time colleague.	application of employment policies. Need to reduce the bureaucratic negotiation of terms and conditions of flexible working when moving between roles and posts. Greater consideration of the needs for each post and allocate resources accordingly.	Part time staff have been posted to the same beats or responsibilities to enable them to produce their own working patterns which satisfy the individual and the organisation. (MDP)	
Part time staff are excluded from responding and supporting serious and major incidents. Perception that part time staff are totally inflexible and focus only on self interest.	Need for more imaginative use of resources when responding to incidents.		
Special Constables required to leave when pregnant.			
Requirement that officers of certain ranks or roles will undertake 'on call' responsibilities above their core responsibilities.	Line managers to have a greater understanding of the competing work / life challenges and the influence of the culture of the organisation on women.	Proactively identifying the barriers to women seeking progression and promotion. (Surrey)	
Despite being contrary to police regulations, officers are expected to undertake these responsibilities if they want to progress or pursue specialist roles.		Positive Action Initiatives with representatives who are working flexibly, or who can discuss specific requirements.	
Flexible working seen as incompatible with operational supervisory responsibilities.	Need for more imaginative initiatives to ensure continued effective supervision and development of staff. Forces should be required to outline why a role is not suitable for flexible working.	See work by Surrey (above)	

Barriers to Progress	Action to break down the barrier	Positive Initiatives	Future Issues
Failure to understand and take account of issues impacting on women's lives. Culture that working long hours demonstrates greater commitment to role. Meetings scheduled before and after core working hours excludes those on reduced hours or flexible working.	Forces must accurately assess the demands of specific roles and posts.		
Failure to recognise health and stress related issues.	Greater understanding of the health issues for an older workforce.	Research commissioned by BAWP on the impact of the menopause – "Women Police Officers: Ageing, Work and Health".	Need for access to information and advice on wider range of health related matters.
Failure to recognise the stress associated with returning to work after significant period of absence, e.g. maternity, sickness, career break	Consider need for flexibility in deployment of women during critical stages of their body clock. Contact programmes whilst staff absent for extended periods. Better integration back into the workplace.	Parent Network Group (Dorset) Occupational Health involvement in return to work programme for working mothers. (Lincolnshire) Opportunities for mothers still breastfeeding to perform non operational duties. (BTP)	

Long Term Aim 5

To have a working environment and equipment of the right quality and standards to enable women to do their jobs professionally

Ensuring that uniform, equipment and the working environment are fit for purpose for women continues to be a significant barrier to progress.

In the main, women are wearing uniform designed and purchased for men. Where uniform is supplied specifically for women it can still be ill fitting and impractical, thereby physically impeding their ability to carry out their role.

The significance of this issue is frequently seen as minor, but as the police service develops new roles for all employees, it must recognise the major influence this has on the ability of women to make their full contribution to policing. Ill fitting uniform sets women up to fail or under perform.

This has now become a critical issue because women gauge the extent to which the Service values them by, amongst other things, the uniform, equipment and working environment they are provided with.

Where change has been most significant, women now have the opportunity to work alongside male colleagues in specialist roles. Previously the provision of one make and style of equipment prevented them joining and developing their career. Once again, breaking down this barrier has created advantages for others too; men who are not standard shapes and sizes have benefited from an approach that is based on individual need and professionalism.

Across the country, women still have to make do with unsuitable toilet and changing facilities and are forced to make requests to senior officers for appropriate sanitary provisions and facilities designated for use solely by women.

The working environment must reflect the needs of women as an individual and an employee wanting and making a significant contribution to policing. Those needs may be specific to a point in their lives or career; for example expressing milk whilst breast feeding, or to assist the impact of hormonal changes later in life. Similarly, if women from minority communities are to see us as employers of choice, our uniform and dress codes must properly reflect and be sensitive to their cultural norms.

For some women there have been slight improvements and for a few the commitment of their forces has been commendable, but overall progress has been too slow and learning lessons from elsewhere adhoc.

The introduction of the Gender Duty will, for the first time place a duty on organisations and authorities to conduct a 'gender impact assessment' prior to the purchase and commissioning of goods and services. This is welcomed but for too many women, their experience is that forces only react when legislation dictates. To demonstrate that women are valued within the Police Service, forces must engage and respond now.

Barriers to Progress	Action to break down the barrier	Positive Initiatives	Future Issues
Uniform and equipment is purchased without appropriate consideration of the needs of all users. As more policing roles are open to women employees, greater consideration must be given to the needs of individual to enable them to perform professionally. The sense of appearing to continuously challenge the uniform and equipment provided undermines the confidence of women. Ensure uniform, equipment and the working environment supports cultural needs and norms.	Women must be an integral part of Uniform and Equipment Committees, engaged in the design, testing and procurement of goods. Devolvment of budgets to allow flexibility for local or individual needs. Ensure uniform and dress codes recognise cultural norms. Consider the provision of a quiet 'multi faith' room for reflection and prayer. Ask minority ethnic officers and staff whether the service is inadvertently making their lives more difficult than colleagues'.	Uniform designed by pregnant female officer (West Midlands) Devolvment of budgets has enabled Command Units and specialist teams to purchase uniform and equipment better suited for the individual. Need to ensure and maintain corporacy and health & safety standards. Uniform headwear designed for Muslim officer. (West Midlands)	Ill fitting uniform and unsuitable equipment places Health and Safety liabilities on the Police Service. As the Service becomes more representative of communities, with women from ethnic minority groups, it must consider their wish to have uniform which considers their cultural dress codes. Failing to address the needs of women will further frustrate the representation and progression of women from ethnic minority communities in policing.
Women are excluded from specialist posts and roles because the equipment is not suitable for them to perform their role professionally. Women on a specialist response team received personal protective equipment after their male colleagues because of a failure to recognise different needs.		Provision of two piece public order uniform	Gender Duty will require all authorities to carry out Gender Impact Assessment on the purchase and procurement of uniform and equipment.

Barriers to Progress	Action to break down the barrier	Positive Initiatives	Future Issues
Women consider they are less valued by the police service because of the standard of uniform and equipment provided. PCSOs provided with a different specification of uniform which does not take account of working conditions and different demands placed upon them. Feeling there is two-tiered clothing provision. Women in part time roles are not provided with personal issue radios, creating a sense of exclusion. Aide memoire cards provided to officers designed on the specification of the pocket on a male uniform shirt which do not fit women's shirts.	Include PCSOs on uniform and equipment working groups.	Seamstresses/tailors are employed to alter all uniform accordingly (Devon and Cornwall) Women given all the equipment they need, regardless of whether they are full or part-time	If PCSOs get lower standard uniform we run the risk of alienating PCSOs and having a two tier, divided service.
Working environment excludes women from playing an active and meaningful role. Women unable to access suitable toilet and changing facilities, often having to share amenities or access so awkward to render impossible working environment. Many women undertaking specialist training courses are expected to share changing and toilet facilities with male colleagues. Perception that forces only take action when there is a legal requirement, and in the case of providing toilet facilities for people with disability, the women's facilities were taken over.	Suitable facilities for women expressing milk whilst breast feeding. Changing and shower facilities for both men and women must be standard in every police premises.	Welfare Rooms suitable for administering medication and expressing milk. Separate female facilities at public order exercises and live operations.	

Barriers to Progress	Action to break down the barrier	Positive Initiatives	Future Issues
Little or no consideration given to the additional working environment requirements of women going through the menopause.	Make the small adjustments recommended by the BAWP research carried out by Nottingham University entitled "Women Police Officers: Ageing, Work and Health".		



