

## **‘Equally Safe at Work’ - employer accreditation programme**

‘Equally Safe at Work’ is an employer accreditation programme developed by ‘Close the Gap’, Scotland’s national policy and advocacy body working on women’s labour market equality, to address gender inequality and violence against women.

This programme is being piloted in seven councils between January and December 2019, including Aberdeen City Council.

Its aim is to support employers in reviewing workplace culture and ensuring that policies and practices are enhanced to address the barriers that women face at work.

Participation in the pilot provides the opportunity to demonstrate leadership both in the workplace and within the wider community by showing that steps are being taken to address gender inequality and prevent violence against women.

There are six standards under a framework that require to be met to achieve the accreditation with various criteria under each. The three levels are Bronze, Silver and Gold, with the Council aiming to achieve the Bronze level during the pilot period.

By the end of the pilot, there will be a framework to guide future work on women’s workplace equality and violence against women. There will also be improved understanding of the causes and consequences of women’s workplace inequality and how this relates to violence against women.

The programme will involve undertaking a range of activities including awareness raising, surveying of staff and reviewing of policies and procedures.

The potential benefits of participation include having a wider range of skills, experiences and perspectives; being able to recruit from a wider talent pool; increased employee morale and retention rates; and enhanced performance of the public-sector equality duty.

The Council is committed to ensuring gender equality in the workplace and preventing violence against women and being a part of ‘Equally Safe at Work’ will assist in meeting these aims. It also recognises the link between women’s labour market inequality, violence against women and wider gender inequality.

There is evidence to support a correlation between gender equality at work and improved business performance. There is also evidence of the benefits of providing flexible working and the gains where women’s under-used skills are more effectively utilised, particularly in areas where there are concentrations of females in certain jobs.

Attainment of the accreditation will align with the Council’s strategic aims contributing to making progress towards the Local Outcome Improvement Plan. Once the standards have been achieved and the practices under the programme embedded in the organisation, this will help ensure sustainability in progressing gender equality and preventing violence against women.

**Angela Scott** Councillor **Jenny Laing**  
Chief Executive            Co-Leader

**Councillor Douglas Lumsden**  
Co-Leader