



**Glasgow City Council**  
**City Administration Committee**

**Item 12**

26th March 2026

**Report by Councillor Allan Casey, City Convener for Workforce  
& Homelessness and Addiction Services**

**Contact: Christine Brown, Head of HR**

**EQUALLY SAFE AT WORK EMPLOYMENT POLICY UPDATES**

**Purpose of Report:**

To inform committee of the updates required to the Council's Employment Policies to achieve bronze level accreditation in the Equally Safe at Work Programme.

**Recommendations:**

Committee is asked to note the report and agree to the proposed changes to Employment Policies and Conditions of Service as detailed in section 4.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes  No  consulted: Yes  No

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Members will be aware the Council is progressing towards bronze accreditation under Close the Gap's Equally Safe at Work (ESAW) programme. This followed the full Council motion in 2021 to participate.

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The ESAW framework evaluates organisations across six key areas: leadership, data (including pay gaps), flexible working, occupational segregation, workplace culture, and responses to violence against women. It offers a structured approach to strengthening gender-sensitive policies, fostering a more inclusive workplace culture, and improving support for women affected by gender-based violence (GBV).
- 2.2 The Council's application for bronze accreditation was accepted in 2022. In November 2023, the Council was awarded Development Tier accreditation, Close the Gap advised that remaining at this tier for approximately 18 months would best support readiness for Bronze. Work towards achieving bronze accreditation formally commenced in October 2024, and a Working group was established to carry out the activity required.
- 2.3 The ESAW Working Group is chaired by the Director of Legal and Administration, as the Leadership Sponsor for the Council's Women's Network, with representation from Corporate and Strategic HR, trade union equality leads, employee equality networks, the Glasgow Violence Against Women Partnership and the Council's Hate Crime Policy Officer. The governance structure ensures an intersectional approach, recognising the distinct barriers experienced by Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic, disabled and LGBTI+ women. Regular updates are also provided to the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Cross-Party ED&I Working Group.

## **3.0 COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

- 3.1 WEECE on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2026 considered a report on Employment Policy updates and action needed to achieve bronze ESAW accreditation, they noted the report and agreed to refer the formal policy changes required to meet ESAW bronze accreditation to City Administration Committee for approval.

## **4.0 SUMMARY OF POLICY AND GUIDANCE UPDATES REQUIRED**

- 4.1 A gap analysis identified a series of policy and guidance updates required to strengthen the Council's approach to gender equality and the prevention of GBV. These updates will ensure clearer expectations of behaviour, reinforce the Council's commitment to tackling GBV and sexism, improve transparency in employment processes, strengthen reporting routes and supports, and ensure that policies reflect the experiences and needs of all women. A summary of the required updates is provided in sections 4.2 to 4.8.

- 4.2 Flexible Working Procedure/Work Life Balance Policy require two updates including some wording on the link between flexible working, gender equality and GBV and more detail on contract change processes.
- 4.3 The Equal Opportunities Policy requires seven updates, as follows:
- Clarification of employer and employee expectations and responsibilities
  - Commitments to addressing occupational segregation
  - Definitions, commitments and non-tolerance of GBV and sexism.
  - Clarification on the link between women’s workplace inequality and GBV.
  - Clearer reporting procedures and support for those experiencing GBV at work.
- 4.4 The Code of Conduct requires inclusions of definitions, commitments and non-tolerance of GBV, sexism and intersectionality. Also required is reference to the link between women’s workplace inequality and GBV.
- 4.5 The Recruitment and Selection Policy, Toolkit and Job Advertisements will be updated to include statements on flexible working and positive equality statements in all job adverts and requirements for recruitment panel members be trained in non-discriminatory practice, be gender balanced and where possible be representative of other protected characteristics too.
- 4.6 The Guide to Employees Experiencing GBV requires some clarification on manager and colleague responsibilities, clarity on reporting mechanisms and opportunities to provide feedback on how disclosures are handled.
- 4.7 The examples provided in the Sexual Harassment section of the Bullying and Harassment Policy will be expanded to reflect the diverse range of women affected.
- 4.8 The provision of paid Miscellaneous Leave for victim-survivors of GBV is already in place. However, this will now be explicitly referenced in the Council’s Leave Conditions of Service.

## 5.0 Policy and Resource Implications

### Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	No additional financial requirements to implement the changes.
<i>Legal:</i>	No additional legal implications.
<i>Personnel:</i>	No significant changes to personnel processes required. Implementation will be delivered within existing resources.

*Procurement:* No procurement implications.

**Council Strategic Plan:** Specify which Grand Challenge (s) and Mission (s) the proposal supports. Where appropriate the relevant Commitment can also be listed.

Grand Challenge 4 Deliver Essential Services in a Sustainable, Innovative and Efficient way for our Communities.

Mission 3: Enable staff to deliver a sustainable and innovative Council structure that delivers value for money.

**Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:**

*Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2025-29. Please specify.*

Yes - achievement of ESAW Bronze Accreditation is listed as an action under the Aspiration to 'Reduce barriers faced by women to remain and progress in the workplace'. This sits under the GCC as an employer Equality Outcome to Advance Equality, Diversity and Inclusion through Workforce Policy and Culture

*What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?*

A positive impact is anticipated, particularly for women and for employees with protected characteristics who may be disproportionately affected by workplace inequality, gender-based violence or discriminatory practice. Individual policies or guidance will be subject to an Employment Equality Impact Assessment Screening or full assessment if required.

*Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.*

It is widely evidenced that women experience greater economic disadvantage than men, due to factors such as lower median earnings, higher rates of part-time work, and increased exposure to persistent poverty.

Because the ESAW framework supports organisations to understand and address the drivers of women's workplace inequality, including gender pay gaps and occupational segregation, participation in the programme, and thereby these policy updates, can contribute meaningfully to reducing women's economic disadvantage.

### **Climate Impacts:**

*Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:* No, the proposal relates to employment policy only.

*What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?* No impact anticipated.

*Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?* No contribution anticipated.

### **Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:**

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report  
Yes/ No

## **6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 Committee is asked to note the report and agree to the proposed changes to Employment Policies and Conditions of Service as detailed in section 4.