



Government  
**Equalities** Office

Putting equality at the heart of government

**Turning Policy  
into Action**

**Business Plan  
2010/11**



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# Chapter 1: Foreword



I am delighted to introduce the Government Equalities Office's (GEO's) third Business Plan as a separate department. It sets out our current plans, and is based on widespread engagement with our partners inside and outside Government, and

reflects some very helpful feedback at our Stakeholder Conference held in early March 2010. We are also working closely with the two bodies we fund – the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)<sup>1</sup> and the Women's National Commission (WNC)<sup>2</sup> – to ensure our plans complement each other.

Over the last two years, we have made strong progress in achieving our vision of a fair and equal society for all. But there is much still to do, as the report<sup>3</sup> of the National Equality Panel (NEP) published in January 2010 showed. In particular it underlined the importance of recognising the cross-cutting and persistent nature of many of the issues we tackle. A key mission for GEO is to pull together evidence on what we know about the needs of different groups; women, disabled, older people, ethnic minorities, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGB & T) people, so as to help tackle issues in a co-ordinated and cross-cutting way.

As we look forward, 2010/11 will be a year of considerable change: public spending pressures make it even more important that the needs of different groups are integrated into public sector strategies and not seen as an add-on and that our own operations and policy-making represent good value for money; as the economy recovers from recession we must provide practical help and advice to both private and voluntary sectors; and we need to be flexible and swift-footed to deal with new political priorities following a general election.

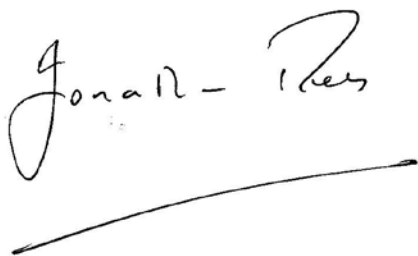
The theme of the plan is turning policy into action. Much effort has been spent by GEO and many others on ensuring we have an updated and effective legislative framework. We are planning on the basis that the Equality Bill receives Royal Assent shortly. A key challenge now will be to ensure it is implemented in a way that delivers improved outcomes for all, in a proportionate and cost effective way. GEO will do this directly, and working closely with EHRC and others on, for instance, guidance and support. We will also continue to initiate and influence across Government, building for instance on our work with the Department of Health (DH) on tackling age discrimination in the health service, with the Home Office on implementing the first ever cross Government strategy on violence against women, and with Department for International Development (DfID) and Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) on ensuring equality is promoted in our international work.

1 <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/>

2 <http://www.thewnc.org.uk/>

3 An Anatomy of Economic Inequality in the UK – Report by the NEP  
<http://www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/NEP%20Report%20bookmarkedfinal.pdf>

Above all we will continue to make the case for equality: that individuals should be able to fulfil their potential, whatever their age, race, sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief, disability or transgender status. We look forward to working with a wide range of partners to achieve this goal.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonathan Rees". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke underneath.

**Jonathan Rees**  
**Director General, GEO**

# Chapter 2: Highlights 2009/2010

- Equality Bill introduced on schedule
- National Equality Panel (NEP) report and Government response published
- Service Families Employment & Skills Taskforce Report published and reception for service families at No. 11 Downing Street
- Harriet Harman co-hosted largest ever women Ministers' summit with Spanish EU Presidency and "Cadiz Declaration" published.

## Equality Bill

- The Equality Bill completed most of its parliamentary stages. The final stage – Commons consideration of Lords amendments – is due to take place on 6 April. The Bill simplifies and harmonises existing laws and introduces a range of new measures which will strengthen protection and support the drive towards a more equal society.
- Government policy statement on shape of the new Equality Duty published
- Government policy statement on ending age discrimination in services and public functions published

## A Fair and flexible labour market

- "Working towards equality: A framework for action" which includes a response to July 2009 Women and Work Commission (WWC) recommendations published
- Right to request flexible working extended and awareness campaign launched
- New flexibility for working parents over maternity and paternity leave and pay announced
- Supported the TUC evaluation of the impact of union equality representatives
- Development of first ever National Equality Framework for Business (NEFB) announced

## Opening up opportunities in public and political life

- Targets to increase the diversity in public appointments announced. Mentoring scheme & ambassadors for Public Appointments Network launched
- BAME councillors' shadowing scheme launched
- GEO leads response to speaker's conference report on increasing diversity of M.P.s
- GEO represents the UK on the Council Of Europe Experts Group on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

## Improving life chances and public services

- Cross-Government Equality Task Group on equality duty compliance convened
- Government Digest of Best Practice compliance with Public Sector equality duties published.
- Equality in Procurement Trailblazers Group established.
- Women in Focus workshops on women offenders

## Promoting physical safety and freedom from violence

- First ever Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy published.
- £2.25 million fund for the sexual violence voluntary sector, with Office for Criminal Justice Reform (OCJR)
- “The Stern Review” into how rape complaints are handled by public authorities in England and Wales published
- Government action plan to meet the challenges of dealing with Hate Crime
- First ever Government factsheet on female genital mutilation published

# Chapter 3: Why equality matters

The Government's vision is for a fair and equal society for all because:

- Fairness and equality are important for individuals. We should all have the right to achieve our potential, regardless of our background or personal characteristics such as gender, race or age, and it is unacceptable that factors such as where we are born should have a significant and lasting difference to our ability to realise our aspirations.
- Realising this ambition will be critical not just for each of us as individuals, but is also critical for our society and for our economy, and for a return to sustained growth. In 2006, the Women and Work Commission<sup>4</sup> estimated that removing barriers to women working in occupations traditionally undertaken by men and increasing women's participation in the labour market could be worth between £15 and £23 billion or 1.3 to 2.0 per cent of GDP. The estimated annual spending power of disabled people has been estimated to be in the region of £80 billion. A key element of the Government's strategy to increase prosperity for the future therefore will be to ensure that we draw on, develop and retain all the available talents, and that goods and services are accessible by all.
- An equal society is more cohesive and at ease with itself.

Despite progress in narrowing gaps in some areas, substantial inequalities remain in Britain today, for example:

- Up to age 44 women are better qualified than men, but despite progress women's overall

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.equalities.gov.uk/what\\_we\\_do/women\\_and\\_work/women\\_and\\_work\\_commission.aspx](http://www.equalities.gov.uk/what_we_do/women_and_work/women_and_work_commission.aspx)

median hourly pay is still 22 per cent lower than that of men;

- Employment rates of disabled people are less than half those of non-disabled people, with median hourly wages 20% lower for disabled men and 12 per cent lower for disabled women compared with their non-disabled counterparts;
- There are major differences in children's readiness to school associated with their parents' income, occupation and education, and by the age of seven, of children with a higher social class background but low assessed ability overtake those from a lower social class background with high ability;
- 47% of transgender people do not use public, social or leisure facilities the fear of discriminatory treatment;
- More than 6 out of 10 lesbian and gay schoolchildren experience homophobic bullying; and
- Out of 645 MPs only 15 are Black or Asian. In order to be representative of the population there would need to be more than 4 times that number.

In a tight fiscal climate where public spending will be more limited, it is even more important that scarce resources are used effectively with help focused clearly on meeting the needs of different groups in society. All of this emphasises the importance of our work across departments and, in partnership with the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and others, to deliver the Government's aim, as well as the costs of not taking strong action to protect individuals and ensure a level playing field.

# Chapter 4: Overview

This is the Government Equalities Office's (GEO's) third Business Plan. Our vision is a fair and equal society for all. We have responsibility within Government for equality strategy and legislation and take the lead on issues relating to women, sexual orientation and transgender equality matters. In the last two years we have overhauled the legislative framework, initiated new work to improve representation in civic and public life, driven forward programmes to enable all to participate fairly in work, and helped victims of violence.

We also have a much better understanding of the nature and scale of inequality and its varied impact on different groups following the groundbreaking report<sup>5</sup> of the National Equality Panel in January 2010. The report reinforces the importance of tackling cross-cutting issues, such as the impact of social class on economic outcomes, and the relationship between socio-economic background and other characteristics. It also supports the need for a continued strand-based approach which uses specific interventions to tackle the deep seated and persistent inequalities which remain among groups such as women, older people, and people from an ethnic minority background.

The report contains a clear message that social background makes a substantial and lasting difference to individuals' opportunities at school, at work and in later life. All too often inequality is a cumulative process, building up over the lifespan

and passed from one generation to the next. Alongside the NEP's work, the report of the Marmot Review "*Fair Society, Healthy Lives*"<sup>6</sup> deepens our understanding of how social background also links to health inequalities. Together, these reports emphasise the crucial role which public policies and public services can play in tackling disadvantage, ensuring children have fair chances in life, supporting families, helping individuals to fulfil their potential in the labour market and helping ensure people can enjoy a secure and healthy later life.

The landscape in which we operate is also changing rapidly: public money will be tighter, the economy is emerging from a sharp recession, society is ageing and more people than ever, especially women, are juggling work and caring responsibilities.

This plan therefore builds on what we've achieved while retaining flexibility for changing circumstances. It sets out our intentions to:

- Work with public, private and voluntary sectors to ensure that the new Equality Act<sup>7</sup> delivers benefits for individuals, society and the economy;
- Work across Government and with partners outside to ensure a joined-up approach in policy and public services to tackling the deep-rooted disadvantage and inequality of opportunity facing particular groups. We will continue to place a particular focus on

5 An Anatomy of Economic Inequality in the UK – Report by NEP  
<http://www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/NEP%20Report%20bookmarkedfinal.pdf>

6 <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/gheg/marmotreview>

7 Subject to further Parliamentary scrutiny and Royal Assent

inequality, in the labour market, representation in public life, and promoting physical safety;

- Continue to influence in Government, responding to new challenges and areas of work as they arise;
- Promote equality in the EU and internationally;
- Work smarter and more efficiently, to ensure we deliver the very best value for money particularly ensuring effective governance controls and work programmes are in place in the two arms-length bodies we sponsor.

In taking forward these aims we will continue to involve and consult widely with partners in the public, private and third sectors, and we will build on our experience over the last two years of using a range of different engagement methods to ensure that we are open, inclusive, and hearing the voices of all the different groups affected by our work.

### **Making the Equality Act 2010 work for all**

- Over the last four decades discrimination legislation has played an important role in helping to make Britain a more equal society. However, the legislation is complex and, despite the progress that has been made, inequality and discrimination persist and progress on some issues has been stubbornly slow. The Equality Act 2010 will provide a new cross-cutting legislative framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all; updating, simplifying and strengthening previous legislation. It delivers a simple, modern and accessible framework of discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fairer and more equal society.

- To release the full potential of the legislation we need to ensure the development and delivery of a comprehensive and high-quality suite of secondary legislation and supporting materials and to prepare public, private and third sector organisations for its implementation. This implementation project will be a key part of our work programme over the next 12 months.
- Discrimination law is constantly evolving and being clarified through case law and other domestic and European developments. We will continue to monitor these developments, intervening where appropriate, in order to maintain our legislative framework and ensure we respond to changes.
- With the commencement of the Equality Act, everyone in Great Britain will benefit from a stronger and simplified legal framework of protection from discrimination. We continue to work with the EU Commission and other Member States to provide similar protections across Europe. Negotiations are ongoing on the EU equal treatment Directive and we continue to negotiate with a view to encourage other Member States to provide equivalent protections.

During 2010/11, we will:

### Equality Act 2010

- Manage the implementation project for the Equality Act 2010, covering four main areas:
  - Commencement** – ensuring the timely preparation of commencement orders and detailed implementing of secondary legislation and statutory guidance, in conjunction with other government departments and working with the devolved administrations to ensure a coherent approach across Great Britain;
  - Capability** – building the capability of the public, private and third sectors to comply with and implement key provisions in the Equality Act, working with the Equality and Human Rights Commission to ensure the delivery and dissemination of straightforward, practical guidance and Codes of Practice to help people understand their responsibilities and rights;
  - Communication** – promoting awareness and understanding of the new Equality Act and what it means for businesses, the public and voluntary sectors and individuals; and
  - Enforcement** – taking measures to improve access to justice for those who have been discriminated against and to ensure effective enforcement of the Equality Act.

### Maintenance of the legislative framework

- Monitor and respond to EU and domestic case law
- Help shape the law, intervening where appropriate
- Manage any EU infraction cases
- Implement any EU Directives

### Improving compliance and access to justice

- Build on the work to develop new guidance and Codes of Practice for the Equality Act 2010 by developing clear and accessible procedures, guidance and forms to help claimants and respondents to resolve disputes.
- Recruit expert lay assessors to sit with judges in all types of non-employment discrimination cases.
- Invite the Judicial Studies Board to provide special discrimination law training available to all judges.

### Article 19 EU Directive

- Negotiate positively to try to reach agreement on a new equal treatment directive that will provide meaningful minimum standards of protection from discrimination on the relevant grounds throughout the European Union.
- Aim to ensure that the UK's interests are promoted and protected during negotiations and that the Directive reflects the provisions in the Equality Act.

## A fair and flexible labour market

- Britain's labour market is diverse and flexible. However, there continues to be evidence that major inequalities remain in access to jobs, career progression, pay and experience of discrimination or harassment for many groups – including women, disabled people, people from ethnic minorities, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and older workers. The National Equality Panel has also analysed inequalities relating to social background. These inequalities matter not only for individuals, but also for Britain's economy. If we want Britain to have a strong and prosperous economy, we need to develop and use everyone's skills and enable people to reach their potential. Diverse organisations are more effective and productive; they can attract and retain talent and meet the needs of their customers more effectively.
- We will therefore continue to focus this year on promoting equality and tackling discrimination in the workplace for all, narrowing the gender pay gap, supporting families to balance caring for children, partners and others with paid work and supporting employers to tackle homophobia and transphobia in their workplaces. We will work with colleagues across and outside government to join up with work on employment, skills and social mobility.
- The private and third sectors are key stakeholders in developing a more equal society. This year will be an important period for economic recovery and we want to focus on how to support business through this time. We will strive to make sure guidance supporting the Act and other tools to assist business deliver more effectively is clear and well targeted. We want to reduce unnecessary burdens on the private sector and will work actively to reduce the limited paperwork burdens that arise from equality law. To help business, we will develop a new National Equality Framework to provide a benchmarking tool to help business understand equality law, measure their performance and improve.
- Working with the courts and tribunals, we will to ensure they are able to implement the new dual discrimination protection and wider recommendations.

*Working towards equality: A framework for action*<sup>8</sup> published in February 2010 set out a programme of work to ensure our labour market offers women genuine choices, wider opportunities and better career structures which enable them to progress and to fulfil their potential. We will lead implementation of the strategic framework and action plan, as well as taking forward key commitments such as developing support for flexible working and quality part-time work, exploring issues affecting the sustainability of the childcare sector and working with business to increase the number of women in senior positions.

8 Working towards equality: A framework for action [http://www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/MAINGEO\\_WorkingTogether\\_acc.pdf](http://www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/MAINGEO_WorkingTogether_acc.pdf)

During 2010/11, we will:

### Support business to grow and compete through promoting fairness

- Oversee the development of a new National Equality Framework for Business against which private sector can benchmark themselves for legal compliance, and measure their progress towards good and exemplary practice.
- Encourage the third sector (especially equality standard providers) to provide effective support to business to embed equality.
- Build upon research to enhance and communicate the business case for equality, demonstrating the benefits that can be released through good practice.
- Consider how we can best support employers to embed LGB and T equality in their workplaces; following the publication in Summer 2010 of the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR) report commissioned by GEO on workplace equality for LGB and T people.
- Contribute to Government programmes to reduce burdens on the private sector.

### Reduce the gender pay gap

- Continue to monitor and raise awareness of the gender pay gap (PSA Indicator 1)

- Implement the actions for GEO set out in *Working Towards Equality*<sup>9</sup> (published February 2010), including:
  - Working with business to overcome the barriers to women's progression into senior management and the boardroom, and continuing to improve the evidence on women's under-representation on public and private boards
  - With Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF), looking at how we can support further development of a robust childcare sector that meets the needs of children, parents, employers and the economy, and continues to grow in a sustainable way
  - Taking forward work to stimulate the supply of quality part-time work including new training for managers in designing part time jobs and managing part time staff, and piloting a new business mentoring twinning scheme on part time working which would allow companies to share best practice in this area
  - Supporting EHRC's project to encourage private and voluntary sector employers with at least 250 staff to publish information on their gender pay gaps.
- Implement the relevant provisions in the new Equality Act which include expanding the way positive action can be used.

9 Working Towards Equality: A framework for action [http://www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/MAINGEO\\_WorkingTogether\\_acc.pdf](http://www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/MAINGEO_WorkingTogether_acc.pdf)

continued

### Reduce inequality and discrimination in the workplace

- Continue to research and raise awareness of workplace discrimination and its impact (PSA indicator 4).
- Pursue the implications of the NEP findings on the interaction between gender and other factors in influencing employment opportunities.
- Lead work across Government to support and join-up action aimed at tackling workplace discrimination.
- Follow up evaluation of the impact of equality reps in the workplace and build the business case for engaging with union equality representatives.
- Use equality in procurement activity (see “Improving life chances and public services” page 14) to encourage better equality performance for those engaged in public contracts.
- Encourage compliance with the Equality Act 2010 by helping business to learn the lessons from judgments and recommendations made by tribunals.
- Implement the relevant provisions in the new Equality Act including allowing tribunals to make wider recommendations in discrimination cases.

### Opening up opportunities in public and political life

- All groups should have a voice to influence decisions that affect them and opportunities to be involved in public and political life. Our society and our public and political institutions are strengthened by reflecting the diversity of the population and a range of different perspectives which individuals from different groups can bring. However, the composition of those institutions does not sufficiently reflect the diversity of those they serve.
- We undertook a full programme of activity last year to stimulate and support the inclusion and participation of under-represented groups in public and political life. We will continue that work next year with the aim of increasing the representation of women, people from ethnic minorities, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGB & T) people and disabled people in civic participation, in public appointments and in political life.
- Many of our existing cross-cutting programmes such as our programme of support for targets on public appointments, following up findings from the Speakers Conference on representation in Parliament and the report of the cross-party Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) women councillors task force, and promoting wider participation in civic life as part of our existing Public Service Agreement target (PSA 15 – see “Annex A” page 25) will therefore be pursued into the 2010/11 financial year.
- The broader and more flexible positive action provisions in the Equality Act 2010 provide an important opportunity to step up action to increase diversity in public and political life. We will work with the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA), political parties, other government departments (OGDs), EHRC and others to promote the broader range of action which can be taken to encourage a more diverse range of people to participate in our public and political institutions. We will consult political parties and others to develop proposals for regulations to require reporting on the diversity of political candidates at all stages of the selection process.

During 2010/11, we will:

### Public appointments

- Ensure that progress is made towards the targets set out in our action plan “*Public Appointments Opening Doors – Increasing Diversity*”<sup>10</sup>. This includes delivery and evaluation of key work programmes such as;
  - the ambassadors programme
  - mentoring schemes
  - media campaign
  - training for Boards and for new Non-Executive Directors.
- consider the recommendations for further action across Government following the publication in Summer 2010 of the report we have commissioned into barriers faced by LGB and T people on participating in civic society.

### Widening Representation

- Consult key stakeholders and political parties and deliver by Autumn 2010 a cross Government Action Plan to take forward the recommendations for Government contained in the Speaker’s Conference which aims to improve the diversity of those holding parliamentary seats; in partnership with the Ministry of Justice (MoJ).
- Consult with political parties, the Electoral Commission and the EHRC about the provision in the Equality Bill to require

political parties to report on the diversity of their candidate selections. We will use their feedback to draft regulations which will, among other things, deal with what data is to be published, when it is to be published, how it will be published and to which parties the duty will apply.

- Convene a one year on progress event to assess the impact of the BAME women councillors taskforce with taskforce members and evaluate the progress against their report’s recommendations.
- Ensure the delivery of the first ever BAME women councillors shadowing scheme by May/June 2010.
- Raise awareness of under representation in public life providing updated information, statistics and evidence about the under representation in public and political life both internationally and domestically of women, disabled people and people from an ethnic minority background.

### Engaging as Equal and Active Citizens

- Continue to work with partners to improve civic participation rates by under represented groups (PSA15 Indicator 3).
- Exploit the findings and priorities of the Manchester University research programme on Civic Life and Equality to inform our work.

<sup>10</sup> Public Appointments Opening Doors – Increasing Diversity  
[http://www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/296514\\_GEO\\_ActionPlan\\_acc.pdf](http://www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/296514_GEO_ActionPlan_acc.pdf)

## Improving life chances and public services

- Public services affect people's day-to-day lives and their future life chances through the policies they make, the services they deliver, their spending decisions and in their roles as major employers. Our aim is tackle the barriers that limit people's choices and opportunities by ensuring that public services promote equality and improve life chances. We intend to use the introduction of the new Single Equality Duty to help public services develop more efficient services that meet the needs of all recipients. By aligning the new duty with the business planning process, public bodies can maximise their investment and spend every penny more effectively. We will consult on draft regulations setting out the specific duties to support the new public sector Equality Duty by summer 2010. The duty is due to come into force in April 2011, and we will work closely with the EHRC, other departments and partners to ensure public bodies are ready to implement the duty within their organisations, building their capacity to understand the needs of different groups, to engage better with them, and deliver better services and policy.
- We also intend to build on the report of the National Equality Panel which examined the relationships between inequalities in economic outcomes and differences related to people's characteristics such as race, gender, social background, age and religion. These findings support the need for a multi-dimensional approach to tackling inequality and the GEO will be at the forefront of driving this thinking across Government policy in the year ahead. We will work to ensure that the results of the Panel are actively disseminated among policy makers, to better understand the relationship between socio-economic factors and other equality characteristics, and produce a progress report to the Government response by December 2010.
- In summer 2010 we will consult on draft guidance to support implementation of the new Socio-economic Duty, in preparation for its implementation in April 2011.
- The power of public procurement continues to be a powerful lever to influence beneficial outcomes. We will continue to work with EHRC and the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) and wider public sector partners to ensure equality plays an appropriate role in this area as we prepare public bodies to fulfil the new specific duties on them.
- Our society is ageing. With the number of people aged over 85 set to double over the next two decades, we need to ensure that older people are treated fairly, have fulfilling lives and are able to play a full part in society. The Equality Act bans unjustifiable age discrimination against over-18 year olds when providing services or public functions. This will enable us to tackle the discrimination many older people face in areas such as health and social care and some financial services, such as insurance. We will consult on a draft Order setting out exceptions from the new ban on age discrimination in services and public functions by autumn 2010, in preparation for implementation of the ban in 2012.
- One of the changes the Equality Act brings is the removal of the express prohibition which prevents civil partnerships from taking place on religious premises. In order to make it possible for civil partnerships to take place in religious premises, we are conducting a formal consultation on the issues concerned before we make any further changes to the relevant regulations or legislation.
- The voluntary sector deliver vital services and advocacy in equality groups and those in the most need at local and regional levels. The GEO will build on the valuable lessons we have learnt from our work with Violence Against Women and Girls

(VAWG) voluntary sector and we will be looking more broadly at how we can better support the voluntary sector and deliver services and advocacy to equality groups and stakeholders.

- We will work with the Office of the Third Sector (OTS) to produce a strategic policy paper “Third Sector Strategy” to address the underlying issues.

During 2010/11, we will:

### **Building capacity of the public sector to comply with equality duties**

- Work closely with public sector bodies – and interested stakeholders – to design and introduce specific regulations to underpin the new Public Sector Equality Duty that bring about improved service delivery, building upon lessons and experiences of the existing duties.
- Help increase capacity and prepare public bodies to fulfil the new Equality Duty including raising awareness and prepare for implementation of the procurement measures in the public sector equality duty
- Continue to promote and drive awareness of the existing equality duties across the public sector through various channels including the use of the new “Public Sector Digest”.
- Further strengthen the capacity of the Civil Service to act as an exemplar in fulfilling existing and new equality duties.
- Through the Equality Duty, ensure that public bodies consider the diverse needs of their community in planning and delivering services, in particular; by supporting these authorities understand the needs of their LGB and T communities.
- Embed learning on;
  - how to deliver and measure effective public services and securing value for money in the process (linked to PSA indicator 5)
  - how to understand and engage effectively with communities and inform the design of the public service delivered for them.

### **Develop and promote guidance on tackling socio-economic inequalities**

- Develop statutory guidance on the new duty to tackle socio-economic inequalities, for publication by the end of 2010.
- Promote knowledge and understanding of the guidance among key public bodies ahead of commencement of the duty on April 2011.

### **Equality in Procurement**

- Ensure production of equality in procurement guidance that is sector specific and provides constructive assistance to public bodies (including in their fulfilment of new specific duties on procurement)
- Research the extent to which it is possible to measure the social and equality impact of using equality considerations within public procurement and to develop a social impact model which could measure that impact.
- Use the equality in procurement trailblazer group, a group representing public bodies and organisations who are already proactively embedding equality considerations within their procurement functions and contracts, as champions, ambassadors and mentors for public sector contracting authorities.
- Encourage a better understanding at European level of the relationship between social issues and the public procurement Directives.

continued

### Women offenders

- Build on the successful Women in Focus programme to ensure that women who are not dangerous or serious offenders are diverted from custody. We will deliver the recommendations in the final report:
  - Supporting the early interventions project
  - joining up on work with Criminal Justice Women's Strategy Unit (CJWSU) in relation to the women's voluntary sector.

### Age discrimination

- Consult on a draft Order setting out exceptions from the new ban on age discrimination in services and public functions by autumn 2010, in preparation for implementation of the ban in 2012.
- Work with other government departments to ensure the age element of the new single Equality Duty is implemented effectively to improve public services for people of all ages.

### Civil Partnerships

- Conduct a public consultation on the arrangements for allowing religious organisations which wish to do so, to host civil partnership registrations in their premises.

### Develop the policy implications of NEP Report and Response

- Disseminate and encourage a better understanding of the implications arising for the NEP report, other major equality reviews and their related responses.
- Join up with key stakeholders to develop new thinking around policy development, planning and delivery of services which embrace the multidimensional challenges of equality.

### Promoting physical safety and freedom from violence

- Violence against women in all its forms is unacceptable. Women are still much more likely to experience domestic violence than men and newer forms of violence, including trafficking, still require specific and sustained attention.
- GEO also has responsibility for aspects of the legislative framework that affect people's wider safety and freedom from harassment.
- During 2010-11 we will continue to work with partners across government and beyond to promote physical safety and freedom from violence, including by tackling harassment and victimisation, disabled, homophobic and transphobic hate crime and support for victims. We will work with the third sector to achieve

this. In addition, we will begin to work across Government to explore how to tackle homophobia and transphobia in sport.

- Our work programme will bring together the legislative framework, awareness raising to change behaviours and the provision of support to those affected by these crimes. In particular we will look to respond to the recommendations of Baroness Stern's review<sup>11</sup> of the handling of rape complaints.

11 The Stern Review: A Report by Baroness Vivien Stern CBE of an Independent Review into How Rape Complaints are Handled by Public Authorities in England and Wales [http://www.equalities.gov.uk/PDF/Stern\\_Review\\_acc\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.equalities.gov.uk/PDF/Stern_Review_acc_FINAL.pdf)

During 2010/11, we will:

### **Delivering against the Stern Review**

- Deliver, by the end of the year, a cross Government Action Plan for recommendations from the Stern Review of handling rape complaints; in partnership with the key departments (including Home Office, Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and Department of Health (DH)).
- Deliver a co-ordinated media campaign to address attitudes towards rape victims.

### **Sustainability of the violence against women voluntary sector**

- Build on the cross government work and the two special funds led by GEO we will complete a consultation exercise and deliver an action plan, by the end of the year, to work towards the sustainability of the violence against women third sector; based on three key areas (cash, commissioning and capacity). This will include:
  - Deliver on a commitment for sustainable funding, building on the considerable investment made by GEO in the sexual violence voluntary sector;
  - Support the sector to build capacity at national and local levels;
  - Work with Office for Criminal Justice Reform (OCJR) to deliver 10/11 combined fund and to build on the insight of the national victims' service;
  - Work with partners to ensure commissioning takes into account violence against women where appropriate;

– Evaluate the Special Funds delivered in the previous two years.

- Work with the EHRC, WNC and Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), to ensure that the Gender Equality Duty (GED) is promoted widely across the women's voluntary sector; in particular the Violence Against Women Sector, to support the delivery of these vital services.

### **Tackling hate crime, bullying and harassment against LGB and T and disabled people**

- Continue to work with other government departments, including the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), to tackle homophobic and transphobic hate crime and bullying.
- Work across Government to explore measures which can be taken to tackle homophobia and transphobia in sport, both for participants and for those attending sporting events, as part of the preparation for the London Olympics and Paralympics in 2012.
- Work to support the delivery of appropriate refuge support for transgender people in need of safe and secure accommodation; in partnership with the transgender community and the third sector domestic violence service providers. This will be informed by forthcoming Home Office research.
- Work with ODI and others, including EHRC, on tackling hate crime against disabled people.

# Chapter 5: Improving our evidence base: Strengthening analysis

We will draw up a new research programme for 2010/11 and will complete existing research projects, identified as key areas for GEO including LGB and T, caste and the business case for equality.

The cross cutting nature of the equality agenda mean it touches on many important areas of work in other government departments', to further deepen our knowledge we will:

- continue and extend dialogue with strategy and policy makers, research stakeholders, and leading experts, to identify gaps and focus resources on the priority areas contained within the business plan;
- rationalise the evidence and research efforts across Government and Government agencies by seeking effective partnerships and developing comprehensive and efficient networks.

During 2010/11, we will:

- Build on the evidence in the National Equality Panel report to:

- enhance our understanding on the relationship between socio-economic factors and equality characteristics;
- repeat some of the analysis with more data from Labour Force Survey 2009 and 2010 quarters to understand whether the recession had a differential impact;
- continue production and analysis of the Individual Income Series;
- work with other government departments to enhance the understanding of the challenges set out in the NEP report;
- strengthen our effort to understand the context and reasons for the economic inequalities identified by the NEP report.

## Developing the evidence base

- Continue to develop our evidence base to support the achievement of our key business plan objectives:
  - making the Equality Act 2010 work for all;

- ensuring a fair and flexible labour market;
- opening up opportunities in public and political life;
- improving life chances and public services; and
- promoting physical safety and freedom from violence.
- Specifically we anticipate that this will include funding research on:
  - Strengthening the understanding of the societal case for equality
  - Monitoring the impact of the recession and recovery on particular groups
  - Women in the labour market
  - Representation of groups in public and private spheres
  - Establishing the size of the transgender population
  - Evaluation of the impact of the special funds for the sexual violence third sector
  - Evidence on the impact of the gender equality duty

*continued*

- Research in support of the implementation of the Equality Act including specific duties
- We will also be focusing research in support of the implementation of the Equality Act.
- Strengthening analysis**
- Looking across all dimensions of inequality, continue to focus analytical resource on:
  - The production and interpretation of data and evidence
  - The impact assessment of policies and programmes
  - Proportionate monitoring and evaluation
  - The provision of analytical advice to Ministers and policy colleagues

# Chapter 6: Working Internationally

There is a major international dimension to our work on equality. We will want to build upon progress last year to help influence and shape relevant policy at EU and international level. Our priorities include ensuring that we negotiate actively on the draft anti-discrimination directive, build on our existing work to tackle homophobia and transphobia across Europe and internationally, advancing the rights and protection of LGB and T people across the world, that the new EU “gender roadmap” due in 2010/11 delivers real benefits for women, and that the new UN gender entity supports women throughout the world.

GEO is responsible for key aspects of gender equality international work. We lead across the UK Government on a core United Nation’s Human Rights Convention – the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)<sup>12</sup>. This is an important year as GEO will be leading on preparing and drafting the UK’s 7<sup>th</sup> Periodic report and the review of the Commonwealth gender action plan. We will do so in close collaboration with government departments, the Devolved Administrations and women’s organisations, stakeholders and the Women’s National Commission.

During 2010/11, we will:

## **Working Internationally – Influencing the EU agenda**

- Build and maintain a good reputation on equality across the EU and influence the developing thinking on wider equality mainstreaming. We will do this by using all opportunities to build relationships with member states and the European Commission. We take a leadership role where appropriate and share good practice and UK initiatives widely.
- Help other government departments (OGDs) to reflect equality considerations in their EU engagement policy work and negotiations, including using existing networks and stakeholder groups.

- Influence and develop thinking to align procurement and social issues at EU level by building links with key EU partners and MEPs as well as using our position on EU equality experts groups to raise awareness and input to policy decisions.

## **Working Internationally – Gender Based International Strategy**

- Work closely with Member States and EU Institutions to ensure that the implementation of the principles of the new EU Women’s Charter and the practical measures from the Lisbon 2020 process reflect and support the Government’s priorities for women and wider UK policy.
- Use our roles on advisory and high level groups to champion the UK’s approach to closing the gender pay gap by advocating a fair

<sup>12</sup> Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)  
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>

*continued*

and family friendly labour market, building a society where women are free from violence and increasing women's greater participate in public life. We will work collaboratively with the present and future EU Presidencies and we aim to build upon the successful partnerships we formed with the Swedish and Spanish presidencies to follow up the Cadiz Declaration in which EU women ministers committed to progress gender equality.

- Lead and coordinate the UK's input in EU policy frameworks enabling us to share our good practice and also learn which we promote across government.
- Work with Department for International Development (DfID) and Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) to work with other countries, UN officials and bodies in support of the new Women's Agency (also known as the Gender Entity) to ensure that it is a strong and effective body capable of delivering for women.

### **Working internationally – LGB and T**

- Build on our existing work to tackle homophobia and transphobia across Europe and internationally, advancing the rights and protection of LGB and T people in the EU and across the world.
- Update Schedule 20 to the Civil Partnership Act, which lists the overseas same-sex partnerships the UK automatically recognises as equivalent to UK civil partnerships
- Explore and seek to secure mutual recognition of UK civil partnerships across Europe.

# Chapter 7: Sponsoring the EHRC and WNC

## Sponsoring the EHRC and WNC

GEO sponsors two bodies: the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and the Women's National Commission (WNC). We give funding of about £60m to EHRC and £0.75m to WNC. EHRC is an arm's length body to which Parliament gave a high degree of independence. In response to the difficulties it has faced in the last year, we have reinvigorated the EHRC's Board with 9 new members, reduced its budget by 11% and worked closely to improve its governance and financial control systems with a new Framework Agreement and Financial Improvement Plan. Over the next year we will continue to work closely with EHRC to help it improve its controls, and review its priorities and structure.

## WNC

The Women's National Commission have discussed their priorities with their partners and, for 2010/11, agreed that Violence against Women, Women in Decision Making, Women in the Economy and Making Gender Equality Happen through national and international mechanisms should be the main focus of their activity.

## EHRC

EHRC will publish its own work programme for 2010-11 separately. Much of its work programme will support delivery of GEO's objectives for 2010-11, including the activities set out in the table below.

### Making the Equality Act 2010 work for all

- publication of guidance and Codes of Practice;
- enforcement of the law;
- support for individuals to exercise their rights;
- frontline support through helpline and website.

### A fair and flexible labour market

- following up its inquiries into the financial, construction and meat packing sectors;
- develop the National Equality framework with GEO;
- continue the Working Better project to promote flexible working;
- host dialogue with the private sector to transform workplace culture;
- continue the gender pay metrics project to improve gender pay transparency.

### Improve life chances and public services

- work with public sector bodies to prepare them for the new public sector equality duty;
- production of guidance on the promotion of equality through procurement.

### Promote physical safety and freedom from violence

- inquiry into human trafficking in Scotland;
- development and implementation of a violence against women and girls strategy, including the publication of a 'Map of Needs' modelling the range and number of services required across Britain and enforcement action against public bodies who fail to meet the requirements of the gender equality duty.

*continued*

- Gather and examine evidence from disabled people who have been affected by disability-related harassment and conduct an inquiry into what steps public authorities are taking to tackle the issue.

#### **Improve the evidence base**

- further development of the Equality Measurement Framework;
- publication of the Triennial Review in the Autumn;
- research on LGBT people's access to services.

# Chapter 8: Improving as a Department

We know that the constraints on public expenditure will be significant in the period ahead and GEO will play its part in operating in the most efficient way possible, looking for opportunities to streamline and work more smartly. We will continue to engage closely with staff and seek to improve their learning and development. Our most recent staff survey showed an improvement by 5% points or more on half the areas surveyed with less than 10% worsening. We will conduct a further survey in October 2010 as part of the Civil Service wide survey. On efficiency, we will dovetail our business plans with the two bodies that we sponsor; the EHRC and WNC and explore all opportunities for us and them to work more efficiently.

Moreover we will focus on how equality outcomes can best be achieved working through, and with partners, of all sectors. More can be done to avoid duplication of effort such as research and awareness raising and we will look to multiply the impact of spending at a national and local level by building closer working relationships with those able to act directly and indirectly as change agents. We will play an active role in considering future performance management and governance regimes to follow the existing Public Service Agreement and local government delivery targets which expire this year.

## Next Steps

GEO was set up as a cross cutting department to promote equality. Our work is therefore inevitably in part project-based with new programmes and projects succeeding each other depending on Ministerial priorities, changing challenges and where we can make a difference. This Plan will therefore be subject to change, and we would welcome your comments on it.

# Annex A: Our Departmental Strategic Objective and our Public Service Agreement

## PSA 15 – Equality

The Government's priorities for 2008–11 were announced by Alistair Darling as part of 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR 2007). These priorities are set out in the 30 Public Service Agreements (PSAs) which span the whole of the Government's work – from improving skills to tackling climate change. Many of these PSAs contain commitments to tackling inequalities. For example, PSA 8 seeks to narrow employment gaps for disadvantaged groups, while other PSAs seek to address inequalities in health, criminal justice and other areas (for more on PSAs see HM Treasury website<sup>13</sup>).

GEO is the lead Department for PSA 15 – the Equality PSA – which is an important part of the overall suite. Over the three years to March 2011, PSA 15 sets out GEO's ambition to address the disadvantage that individuals experience because of their gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief. It is made of the following commitments:

1. narrow the gender pay gap;
2. tackle barriers that limit people's choice and control;
3. address inequalities in civic participation;
4. tackle discrimination in employment; and
5. improve understanding and address unfair treatment.

For each of the above commitments, there is a related statistical indicator. Details of these and the methodology for measuring progress were set out in the Delivery Agreement published by HM Treasury<sup>14</sup>.

As lead Department, GEO is responsible for the overall programme management of the PSA, including chairing a Management Board which meets quarterly to oversee and drive progress on the PSA priorities, monitoring progress on the statistical indicators, managing risks and co-ordinating action across Government. The Prime Minister's Delivery Unit (PMDU) reports twice-yearly to the Prime Minister and the Cabinet on the delivery of PSA indicators.

However, responsibility for achieving the PSA is not down to GEO alone. The Office for Disability Issues (ODI) at Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) leads on increasing disabled people's choice and control. Communities and Local Government (CLG) lead on civic participation. GEO leads on the remaining three priorities, but with the involvement of departments across Whitehall. An updated version of the delivery plans for the PSA was published in October 2009<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/pbr\\_csr07\\_psaindex.htm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/pbr_csr07_psaindex.htm)

<sup>14</sup> [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/pbr\\_csr07\\_psa15.pdf](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/pbr_csr07_psa15.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.equalities.gov.uk/what\\_we\\_do/equality\\_psa.aspx](http://www.equalities.gov.uk/what_we_do/equality_psa.aspx)

## Departmental Strategic Objective

Departmental Strategic Objectives (DSOs) are linked to PSA delivery and help ensure that the Government's key commitments are embedded in the work of all Departments. Our DSO, published in March 2008, reflects the wording of the Equality PSA and is supported by some of the same indicators. Additional indicators have been included to capture the totality of our work.

## GEO's Departmental Strategic Objective

To address the disadvantage that individuals experience because of their gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief by:

6. Ensuring progress against the Minister for Women's priorities.
7. Developing and supporting delivery of the Government's equality strategy.
8. Reducing the gender pay gap.
9. Increasing disabled people's choice and control.
10. Addressing inequalities in civic participation.
11. Reducing discrimination in employment.
12. Addressing unfair treatment.

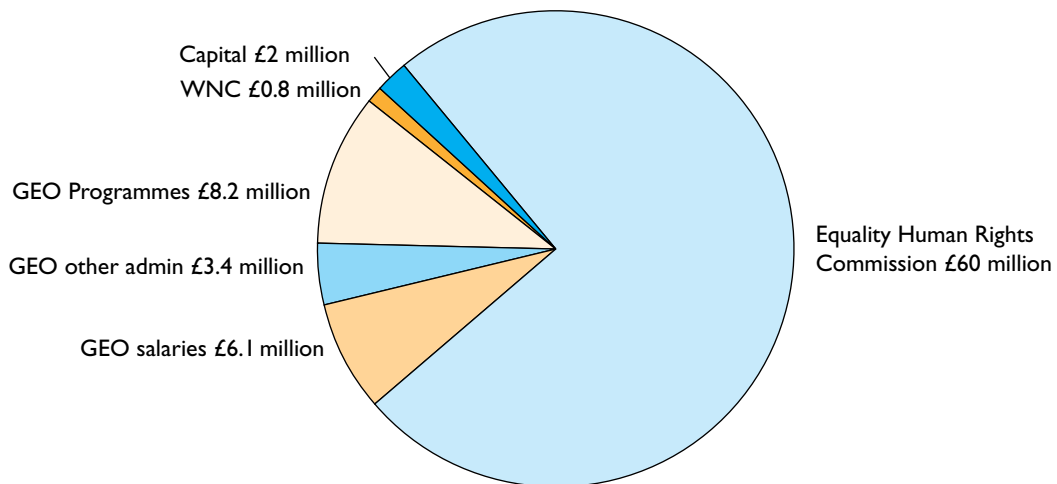
# Annex B: Resources

GEO's budget for 2010/11 is £80 million, of which some £62 million is ear-marked as grant-in-aid for the EHRC. £9.5 million is allocated to administration (salaries and non-pay costs such as accommodation, IT and audit services) and £8.5 million supports evidence-based policy-making by research, publications and events.

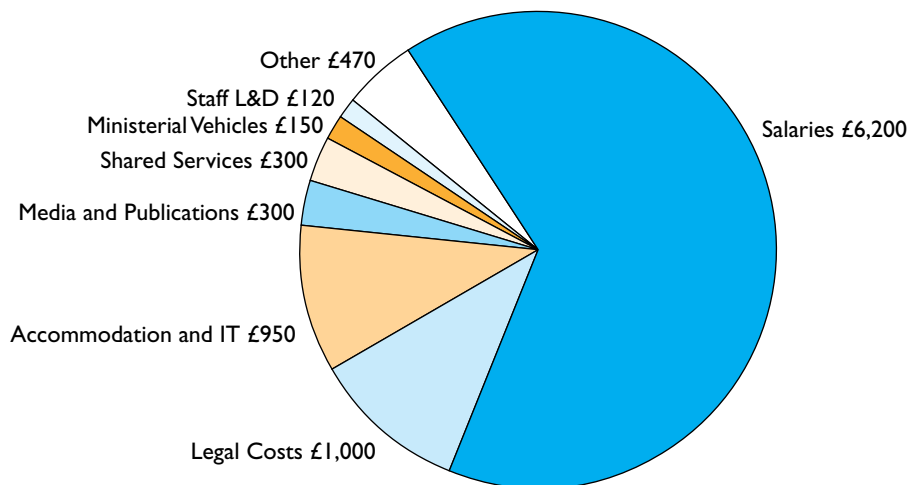
The challenge in 2010-11 will be to consolidate on gains made as GEO has developed since 2007 and to secure further improvements in a time of

financial constraint. Our smarter working programme, a structured training programme and improved information management systems should help us find better ways of working and make the most of our resources. In doing this we will have full regard to benchmarks set out in the recent Smarter Government white papers and to the requirements of the Operational Efficiency Programme (OEP). We shall also require EHRC to assess itself against the benchmarks and OEP requirements.

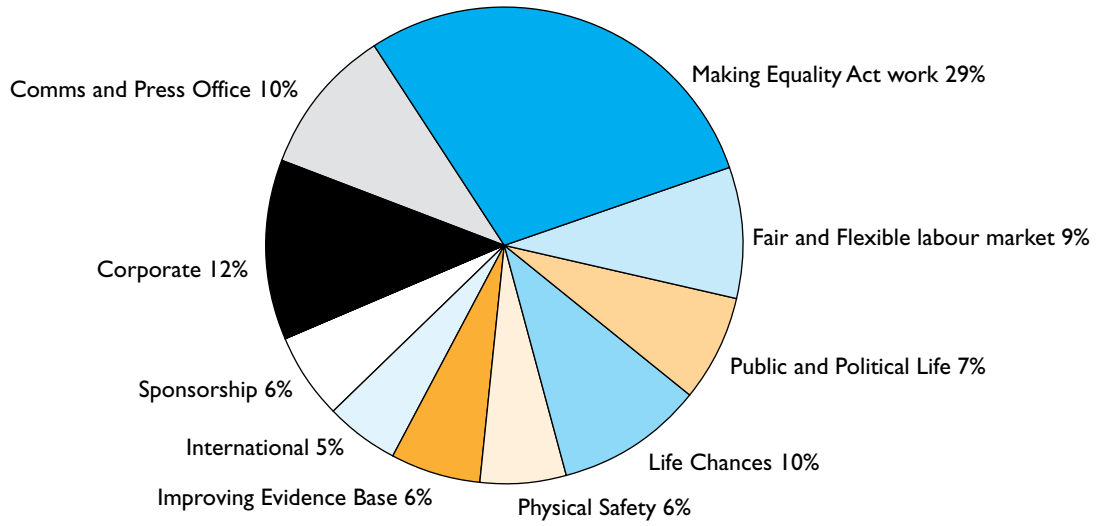
## GEO expenditure



## GEO Admin breakdown £k



## Salary by Unit



# Annex C: GEO values

<h2 style="text-align: center;">Our Vision</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">‘A fair and equal society for all’</h3>			
GEO Values			
Openness	Inclusion	Respect	Achievement
<p>We are open, honest and committed to integrity in all that we do</p>	<p>We work together for GEO's vision and aims</p>	<p>We respect each other and value people, our talents, skills and diversity</p>	<p>We deliver measurable improvements to equality</p>
What it means for our staff			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We communicate openly and honestly with each other and welcome feedback</li> <li>We listen to what people say and what they don't say, building on each other's ideas and creating a supportive atmosphere</li> <li>We are transparent about how decisions are reached</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We aim to work smarter, learning from each other, and sharing skills and resources across teams</li> <li>We value opinions and give them full consideration, empower people to take risks and achieve their best</li> <li>We are courteous, supportive and considerate of each other, keep our promises and the commitments we make</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We respect and value the professionalism, views and diversity of our people</li> <li>We give everyone the opportunity to unlock their talent and shine</li> <li>We seek and provide constructive feedback and challenge unacceptable behaviour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are passionate about equality and proud of what GEO is achieving</li> <li>We champion equality and lead by example, influencing others to help achieve our goals</li> <li>We are focused on delivering the priorities set out in our business plan</li> </ul>
What it means for our stakeholders and partners			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are open and honest with our stakeholders and partners, sharing GEO work plans to build trust and confidence</li> <li>We listen to our stakeholders and partners, and are open and honest about what we can and can't do</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We regularly consult and involve stakeholders and partners</li> <li>We build mutually supportive and effective relationships with our partners and share responsibility for outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have effective operating frameworks with our partners and respect the interests of each organisation</li> <li>We respect and value the professionalism and views of our stakeholders and partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We work collaboratively with our stakeholders and partners to achieve results</li> <li>GEO and our stakeholders and partners have a shared ambition to improve equality</li> </ul>
What it means for society			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We welcome people's views and respond to ensure our policies reflect the UK's diverse society</li> <li>We ensure our communications are accessible to all equality groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We collaborate with colleagues across Government to respond to individual concerns about equality</li> <li>We influence other Government Departments, the EU and the UN to tackle deep rooted problems of inequality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We respect people's right to equality, to be free from prejudice and discrimination</li> <li>We treat all groups fairly. We respect and understand the different needs of different groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We develop policies based on evidence and research</li> <li>We understand the impact of our policies on people's lives</li> </ul>
How will we know that we are living our values?			
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin: 5px;">Annual staff surveys</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; width: 20%;">Stakeholder perception audit</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; width: 20%;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; width: 20%;">Annual staff appraisals</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; width: 20%;"></div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; width: 60%;">360 degree appraisals for SCS staff</div> </div>			
<p><b>Openness</b> We are open, honest and committed to integrity in all that we do</p>	<p><b>Inclusion</b> We work together for GEO's vision and aims</p>	<p><b>Respect</b> We respect each other and value people, our talents, skills and diversity</p>	<p><b>Achievement</b> We deliver measurable improvements to equality</p>

# Annex D: Glossary of acronyms and abbreviations

**BAME:** Black, Asian and minority ethnic

**BIS:** department of Business Innovation and Skills

**CEDAW:** Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

**CJWSU:** Criminal Justice Women's Strategy Unit

**CLG:** department for Communities and Local Government

**CSR:** Comprehensive Spending Review

**DCSF:** Department for Children, Schools and Families

**DfID:** Department for International Development

**DH:** Department of Health

**DSO:** Departmental Strategic Objective

**DWP:** Department for Work and Pensions

**EHRC:** Equality and Human Rights Commission

**EU:** European Union

**FCO:** Foreign and Commonwealth Office

**GDP:** Gross Domestic Product

**GED:** Gender Equality Duty

**GEO:** Government Equalities Office

**LGB & T:** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender

**MoJ:** Ministry of Justice

**NEFB:** National Equality Framework for Business

**NEP:** National Equality Panel

**NGOs:** Non-Government Organisations

**NIESR:** National Institute of Economic and Social Research

**OCJR:** Office for Criminal Justice Reform

**OCPA:** Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments

**ODI:** Office for Disability Issues

**OGC:** Office of Government Commerce

**OGDs:** Other Government Departments

**OTS:** Office of the Third Sector

**PMDU:** Prime Minister's Delivery Unit

**PSA:** Public Service Agreement

**TUC:** Trades Union Congress

**UN:** United Nations

**VAWG:** Violence against Women and Girls

**WNC:** Women's National Commission

**WWC:** Women and Work Commission







Alternative Formats:

We will consider any requests for alternative formats that may be required.

Please send your request to:

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Email: [enquiries@geo.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@geo.gsi.gov.uk)

The document can be accessed online at [www.equalities.gov.uk](http://www.equalities.gov.uk)