

FIRST MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON WOMEN AND GIRLS**11/12 SEPTEMBER – EDINBURGH****SUMMARY NOTES****COUNCIL MEMBERS**

- Amina Ahmed: Scottish Government Fairer Future Codesign Panel
- Kara Brown: International Legal Officer, Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland - apologies
- Tressa Burke: CEO, Glasgow Disability Alliance
- Catherine Calderwood: Chief Medical Officer
- Vicky Featherstone: Artistic Director, London's Royal Court Theatre – 12th only
- Jacqui Ferguson: Non-Executive Director, Wood Group - apologies
- Professor Anne Glover: President, Royal Society of Edinburgh - apologies
- Dame Katherine Grainger: Chair, UK Women in Sport
- Katie Horsburgh: Volunteer Advocate, Girlguiding Scotland
- Baroness Kennedy of the Shaws: QC
- Louise Macdonald OBE: Independent Chair and CEO, Young Scot
- Satwat Rehman: CEO, One Parent Families Scotland
- Emma Ritch: Executive Director, Engender
- Suki Wan: Vice Chair, Scottish Youth Parliament - apologies
- Talat Yaqoob: Director, Equate Scotland and Co-Founder, Women 5050 - apologies

- Deborah Gallagher: Scottish Government – Lead Secretariat
- Camila Dentone: Scottish Government - Secretariat

Welcome from Chair

Members attended a pre-event session ahead of the meeting of the First Minister's Advisory Council on Women and Girls (the Council) the following day. As the Council is moving to end of year report development, members agreed on extending the pre-meeting working dinner to accommodate a facilitated session to work on its aims and vision, as well as report recommendations.

The Chair opened the meeting noting apologies and asked all attendees to introduce themselves, as this meeting was the first meeting for some members. The Chair shared her hopes for the sessions: recognising the stage that the Council is at, and working out aspirations and visions for the end of year report recommendations.

Facilitated session

The session, facilitated by Selina Stephen (SG Improvement Methodology Adviser), started with a recap on driver diagrams. The facilitator brought several examples to illustrate what to have in mind when creating a driver diagram. Selina explained the composition of driver diagrams, clarifying that primary drivers are concepts and principles, whereas actions are drilled down in the secondary drivers. The last part of this visual focus tool is change ideas, which entail drilling down a further level to identify actions to be taken to accomplish drivers.

After an extensive discussion, the members and the facilitator agreed on the main draft aim for their report driver diagram: **“Scotland is recognised as leading nation in taking action to improve attitudes and culture in gender equality.”** There was a brainstorming session that followed, where members were asked to write down ideas for potential drivers and group them into primary and secondary. With the help of the Chair and lead Secretariat, Selina grouped the ideas into themes and worked with members to help weed down and agree on primary/secondary drivers.

The members discussed two main points:

- **Diversity, intersectionality and women’s lived experiences:** the members agreed that this was a core principle, but also, is something they didn’t want to be isolated. They agreed that lived experiences should be underpinning everything.
- Various ideas focused on awareness raising, and there were some concern about using this as a strategy. A Council member expressed that raising awareness is not necessarily creating effective change. This is because some evidence shows that understanding a problem doesn’t mean that people will necessarily change or will take action to tackle it - evidence says that people understand the problem and then forget about it.

Considering these points of discussion, the Council agreed on the following **primary drivers**:

- a) Accountability**
- b) Leadership**
- c) Creating conditions for change**

After agreeing the draft structure for the driver diagram, members moved on to discuss how challenging it is to make effective change. It was agreed that it would be a good idea to address this by feeding evidence on what works in attitudes and culture change into the driver diagram. Before moving on to discuss the Circle Event questions, the Chair emphasised that it was important to decide whether the driver diagram would be an internal mechanism that works as an anchor for the report or if they will get it into a point to share it widely.

The Council then decided what would be helpful to hear from the Circle the following day. After reviewing outputs from previous sessions, members felt that they had covered lots of ground on the subject. They agreed that they would only ask two questions this time and would keep them simple. A conversation then took place around feedback from the last event, where participants discussed concerns about things that were said that were not true and that any clarifications on the matter is lost in that setting. It was then agreed that to try and manage these improvements they would be built into the facilitator guidance note that secretariat circulate, primarily for them to undertake a 'rules of discussion' before starting. This included facilitators pointing out that fact/opinion needed highlighting during discussion.

Council members decided to ask the following questions of the Circle:

Council's aim: "**Scotland is recognised as a world leading nation in taking action to improve attitudes and culture in gender equality**".

1. Fast forward to 2025 - Scotland has achieved that aim. Tell us:

- a) What Scotland looks like?
- b) How does it feel?
- c) In what way your organisation/community is different, and what did you do?

2. What are the top 3 high level/strategic recommendations we should make to achieve this aim?

The Chair closed the session underlining the main actions to take forward to produce the report. They agreed that the report should be ready by December 3rd, noting they will only have 10 weeks to produce it. Louise emphasised that this would be a demanding time for Council members, on top of their already challenging commitments. Members agreed that the next steps to take were to produce a first frame, which will cover a draft of what has been discussed during these sessions. After this, volunteers were identified for a writing group to start pulling it all together. The Chair also highlighted that the Council needs to be very disciplined in terms of our responses as we move into this report writing phase.

Session two: buffet working dinner

The Chair opened proceedings giving a short recap for members that were unable to attend the earlier meeting, she moved on to bring everyone up to date on the latest developments. The discussion covered the following points:

- **Spotlight topics:** Sexual harassment, poverty and currently masculinity - sport to be covered in October. Feedback from the public hasn't been overwhelming, but it's been improving every month and the current month has seen the most to date.

- **Spotlight feedback reports:** members suggested to revisit the reports to ensure they explicitly state that this is coming from the general public and not necessarily the views of the Council.
- **Programme for Government (PFG):** the NACWG proposal was included ([for reference, see online document, page 101](#)) – **to put in place a robust process to ensure that the next and future PFGs are gender sensitive.**
- Chair to meet with Permanent Secretary on 10 October to discuss the NACWG's first report – main objective of this meeting is to understand the Perm Sec's ambitions for this report and given the draft recommendations that will be formulated by this stage, how they fit into the National Performance Framework.
- **Tomorrow:** The Chair talked members through the programme for tomorrow. Particularly with First Minister attending the meeting in the afternoon.
- Charlotte Liddell's period shadowing the Chair has come to an end. Secretariat sent flowers and a thank you letter to Charlotte on behalf of the Council.

Thinking ahead – report writing and planning for next year

Report writing

- The Council agreed that a smaller drafting group would be most productive, to do the heavy lifting, before sharing wider for input. Scottish Government's Equality Unit will give feedback to the Council on the draft report, for consideration and the Scottish Government's Analytical Services Department will provide support if required.
- The Chair emphasised the importance of committing to deadlines and advised on timescales for a 3 December submission to First Minister. Following this, there would be a half day meeting on 30 January 2019, to discuss recommendations with the Circle.
- The Council will explore testing report recommendation ideas with stakeholders, informally and privately.
- Priority: report recommendations. Council members were asked by the Chair to supply their top 3-5 recommendations based on the discussions over the year on Attitudes and Culture Change, and advise where they sit in our primary drivers.
- A short discussion about how to fill the evidence gap. First idea: gather the best evidence and figure out how to operationalise it. Second: for the evidence on attitudes on culture change, it would be helpful to recommend intense focus on demonstration projects. Build gender competence into that.

Dates for next year

- It was agreed that the 30 January meeting would be a half day meeting, the objective being to feed back to Circle on the report recommendations. Paul Johnston, Director General, Education, Communities and Justice, had committed to attend the January meeting, so secretariat will try and secure him for the March meeting instead.
- Secretariat to recirculate dates for 2019 Council/Circle meetings, which would now be March, June and September.
- The Chair asked Emma to take forward a roundtable event in February, so that frontline organisations could provide their insight and expertise to the next topic, Policy Coherence.

- Young Person Event: a meeting with the younger members of the Council was held to discuss the potential of a dedicated NACWG event with young people. Generally in favour but there's a lot more to discuss (making it a safe space, purpose, etc.). Although generally in favour there is a lot to work through and Lou Brodie has agreed in principle to work with us on this and share her insight and expertise from delivering at WOW.

The meeting came to a close at 19:30.

**THE FIRST MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON WOMEN AND GIRLS
THE HUB, MAIN GALLERY, EDINBURGH
12 SEPTEMBER 2018 - 10:00 – 13:30**

THE CIRCLE SESSION

The Chair of the First Minister's National Advisory Council on Women and Girls opened the meeting and noted some delegates had not attended a meeting before and dedicated some time to setting the context and described the Council's 'Story so Far'.

After this, the Chair highlighted the achievement of the Council's suggestion being accepted as part of the 2018-19 Programme for Government. This was announced the previous week – which was, to put in place a robust process to ensure that the next and future Programmes for Government are gender sensitive.

The Chair explained in some detail the report writing stage that the Council would be moving into after today, emphasising that today's table discussions would also be considered in the writing process. Louise also talked about how the Spotlight feedback would be taken into account when drafting the report.

The Chair also underlined the Council's ambition to extend its reach and that new models of engagement are being explored – the main one being that Satellite Wee Circle Events are to be tested, to run alongside the main events. The main objective being to ensure more of Scotland feeds into the Council's strategy.

The Chair introduced the main speaker of the day, Tressa Burke, CEO of Glasgow Disability Alliance, and Council member. Tressa delivered an insightful speech, emphasising the importance of building disabled women's confidence. Tressa highlighted that disabled women's voices need to be heard and to ensure this happens, they need access and support to become visible in public life, work and media. Tressa stressed that attitudes and culture change must be accompanied by a willingness to improve the lives of disabled women. In this sense, she said that it was crucial to create the right conditions to take action about disability and other barriers that prevent women to be empowered. At the heart of change is believing in the lived experiences of disabled women. High level and small actions that can be life changing for disabled women must be pushed forward.

During her presentation, Tressa shared two videos that captured the lived experiences of two disabled women, Caitlyn, who suffered from social anxiety, and Margo, a women that has Multiple Sclerosis. Both videos remarked the importance of supporting disabled women to develop their skills and confidence so they can have more choice and control in their life.

The Chair thanked Tressa for her presentation, remarking to the audience that she hoped it left them angry and committed to changing this reality.

The Chair then discussed the vital role that arts play in changing attitudes and cultures. The programme of the day had included Beldina Odenyo Onassis, a noted singer, poet and songwriter based in Glasgow. Beldina's work explores the differences and kinship between her dual Kenyan and Scottish heritage. Louise informed the audience that unfortunately, Beldina couldn't attend the meeting, and invited everyone to check out her work online.

After a short comfort break, facilitated table discussions followed.

Table Discussion Feedback Summary (full feedback at Annex A)

After sharing the draft end of year report **aim** with tables:

Scotland is recognised as a leading nation taking action to improve attitudes and culture change in gender equality.

Tables were asked:

Q: Fast forward to 2025, Scotland has achieved that aim. Tell us:

- What Scotland looks like
- How it feels?
- In what way is your organisation/community different and what did you do?

When imagining a gender equal Scotland, most described it as a place where all barriers have been removed, where there is support for all, and where women and men are confident and empowered, freed of gender norms. The table discussions also emphasised the importance of having a diverse workforce at all levels, with more men in occupations such as teaching and care work. Also in this line, the delegates highlighted the importance of having a flexible work pattern for all, to reconcile work with domestic/care responsibilities. Exploring the implementation of universal payments was a recommendation that came up in various tables, a measure which delegates see as a solution to put value into everyone's work, especially women's which tends to be invisible or not economically/culturally valued. The conversations also revolved around the importance of language in two different levels: reframing the current narrative to emphasise that gender equality is positive for society as a whole, as well as challenging language that reinforces gender stereotypes and discrimination.

After the table discussions finished, the Chair closed the event with a speech that had an analogy with The Truman Show. She demonstrated the invisible constraints that police societies and how difficult it can be to take a different path, even though we truly believe it is the right one.



The Circle session ended with a networking lunch and closed at 13:30.

**FIRST MINISTER'S NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON WOMEN AND GIRLS 12
SEPTEMBER 2018 – 14:00–16:30**

THE HUB, LIBRARY WEST

The Council convened at 14:00 in The Hub's Library West and had a short discussion on the morning, before the First Minister arrived.

The Chair provided a general update for those who couldn't attend yesterday:

- The meeting on the 11th **was** a fantastic session taking us deeper into our aims and set of recommendations. It included a discussion around report writing and creating small drafting groups. This work would be aligned with current policy and will consider advice from the Scottish Government.
- The Council agreed that the end of year report recommendations need to be precise, strong and clearly targeted. The Chair asked Council Members to share with her and secretariat their top three recommendations.
- It was agreed that Emma will lead a roundtable in February with women's organisations, on our new annual topic of policy coherence, so they can share their knowledge and ideas.
- Response to interim briefing from First Minister: The First Minister has now responded to interim feedback to her, earlier this year. It was agreed that the Council will welcome the Interim Report response from First Minister and discuss further how to handle any feedback from June/Sept meetings. The Council also reflected on lessons learned from this process and discussed the need to clarify to FM that the interim feedback is not a recommendation, but rather a way of letting her hear what we are hearing as we go.
- There was a small discussion around the interim feedback response. Some Council members flagged that there was too much emphasis on what the Scottish Government is already doing, highlighting projects that are meaningful, but that don't address the need for systemic change. Regarding this, Council members agreed that building people and addressing strategic change shouldn't be mutually exclusive, and that it is crucial to create the conditions for organisations and services to deliver actions. There is a need to link individual empowerment with collective action and institutional change.

Reflections of the day

- The Council discussed what they'd observed and heard during the table discussions in the morning session. They agreed that the level of the conversation was rich, but questioned the ambition. They acknowledged the difficulty of stepping up, being objective and strategic – reflecting on their own struggles. They thought that there still isn't enough challenge in the outputs and some members emphasised that if you really want to make change and break the status quo, you need disruption. Members discussed how they could help the Circle to think outside the box and one of the suggestions was considering seating plans to help discussions.

First Minister joined the meeting with Toni, and after giving them a warm welcome, the Chair introduced the Council's model to the First Minister's Mentee. After this, Louise thanked First Minister for her response to the Interim Feedback and clarified that the report wasn't looking at recommendations. The Council and First Minister went on to discuss the end of year report recommendations, the First Minister's ambitions for the report and reflections of the morning session with the Circle. Here is a summary of the main points covered in the conversation:

- Leadership, accountability and creating conditions for change are the main themes to include in the report (the Attitude and Culture Change Primary Drivers).
- First Minister shared her thoughts and ambitions for the end of year report. She emphasised her conviction that as well as any short term solutions, it was the strategic, systemic and long term action she was looking for, as it is this that will bring about the required change. She understands that for attitudes and culture change to happen, we need to embed gender equality across all sectors of society. First Minister also highlighted her ambition to make sure that we respond to the real issues that women and girls face currently in Scotland.
- The Council members agreed with First Minister's vision, and emphasised the need to be bold and ambitious. They discussed about the importance of being revolutionary to disrupt systems. The conversation also covered the importance of linking individual empowerment and holding institutions into account. First Minister shared her thoughts on this, and agreed both are intertwined, it's not either or.
- The discussion with First Minister also addressed how to effect culture change. In this sense, First Minister used the smoking ban as a successful example of how sometimes legislation can help to accelerate attitude and culture change.
- The discussion also revolved around the need to consider lived experiences as well as current and new expressions of gender inequality (online harassment, body image, algorithms that perpetuate gender inequality, gender stereotypes in advertising). Problems such as the gender pay gap still need to be addressed, but it is crucial to make sure we don't lose sight of other current issues.
- The discussion also covered how we need to bring women with us in this journey. Peer support is crucial for women, alliances and friendships are an important part of it and empowerment.
- Council members and First Minister also discussed how changing structures involves power loss. First Minister used the example of 50/50 on boards to illustrate how this would entail certain power loss. Power loss is not a problem *per se*, the challenge is to make those in power think about the greater good over individual.
- Engaging with men was discussed and how to help them understand that gender equality would be beneficial for them too. Some Council members suggested to draw in some men to see what comes out of that. Regarding this, the Council highlighted how the Young Person event that they are planning could be a good opportunity to get young men involved in this conversation.
- The Council also discussed the importance of research and evidence. Understanding what research is there, what their limitations are, as well as considering bringing in the feminist organisations and gender experts for report writing. In this sense, Council members underlined the collaborative presentation presented in the June Circle meeting, which discussed what works and what doesn't when trying to change

attitudes and cultures. How do we get that 42% of not switched on to shift in this direction? We have ideas but we still need the actual toolbox.

Summary and Next Steps

The First Minister left the meeting and the Council members continued. There was a strong feeling of understanding how much the First Minister is committed to this agenda and is expecting bold and strategic recommendations from the Council. Members acknowledged that First Minister was willing to take forward pieces of legislation that could support change to happen.

There was a discussion around parental leave. Council members underlined that most problems related to employment and provisions for parental leave are reserved, and explored the possibility of asking for more powers on this. The members also discussed about parental leave for men, using Nordic countries as an example, and its “use it or lose it” basis, which means that leave is reserved and non-transferable. In Nordic countries, parental leave is funded by social security, not the employer. Taking parental leave as an example, some members highlighted that it is easier to get powers devolved when there is a specific ask.

The Council moved to discuss how to build in improvements going forward. There were mixed responses to working in Basecamp, so it was agreed to use email as the main channel of communication and using Basecamp to store documents. WhatsApp group to continue to be used for general communications and secretariat will use it to alert to emails, emphasising any deadlines. The younger members emphasised that, when getting dates sorted, secretariat should consider the academic calendar.

Before closing the session, the Council agreed on actions to start drafting the end of year report:

- All Council Members to share their top 3 recommendations, to Louise and secretariat.
- Chair to ask gender experts for their top 3 list of recommendations for us to consider when writing the end of year report.
- Secretariat putting together a report framework before first report group meeting (so far, Louise, Emma, and Deborah). It was agreed that we should formally seek feedback of the SG (via the Equality Unit) for consideration.
- To explore testing ideas with stakeholders, informally and privately.
- Report writing group to agree what evidence is required and a request will be made to SG analytical services.
- To follow up with the SG official who couldn't come yesterday, to ensure we understand fully the Gender Pay Gap Ministerial Group's recommendations as they develop.

After a short round of top line reflections from Council members, the Chair brought the meeting to a close at 16:30.

Annex A

Table Discussions Feedback

Considering the Council's draft aim of the year "**Scotland is recognised as a world leading nation in taking action to improve attitudes and culture in gender equality**". The Circle members were invited to discuss two questions which were focused on imagining a Scotland that has achieved gender equality, as well as giving recommendations on how to achieve this aim.

FULL FEEDBACK:

Q1) Fast forward to 2025 - Scotland has achieved that aim.

Tell us:

a) What Scotland looks like?

- It seems like a very short time to generate real and lasting change
- All have access, power, voice
- Barriers have been removed, BSL, transport access, support to all
- Education: we know our rights and can use them
- Women are supporting women – doesn't always happen
- All has to be underpinned by good infrastructure and services
- Equal opportunity is real
- Integration: more access for all, we don't need GDA as an activist group, morphs into something different like a national network.
- Less reliance on mental health services
- Disabled people have the same rights
- Communications is free flowing across all medias
- No food banks
- Accessibility is key, opportunities are led by full access.
- Women are powerful and have higher and bigger aspirations
- Greater media representation of disabled women. Disabled women as role models
- Decline in health inequalities
- We don't have the need to encourage girls and women into STEM subjects or men and boys into nursing and childcare because it happens
- Significantly reduced rates of rape, sexual assault - Scotland is a leader in Europe
- Gender equality seen in the top jobs, not just boards
- Significant reduction in the gender pay gap
- Good example of challenging gender stereotyping in early years education – projects by Zero Tolerance are delivered with the Care Commission
- Greater visibility of women, more role models
- Greater visibility of men in traditional female roles
- Men and women sharing caring roles as a norm

- Diversity of education for boys and girls
- Childcare needs to be accessible to all and provided by men and women
- Men are empowered to feel a caring role is desirable and acceptable
- Parents are equal parties and this is socially desirable
- Opportunities would be the same for all
- Boards, management reflect full diversity
- More visible, positive and diverse role models
- More flexible about all work and working hours
- More men doing the caring – both paid + family rules
- Violence against women/girls reduced / reporting may increase however
- Creating diversity in nursery school teachers
- Reduced inequality
- It's everyone's responsibility
- It's more diverse and think that's more right
- More affordable adult care
- Gender sensitive advertising
- Diversity of applicants in recruitment is standard. People feel free to apply for jobs.
- More male role models in nursery and teaching
- No gender stereotypes – interaction as human beings
- No more gendered insults
- Equal representation in occupations and equal pay
- Caring and domestic responsibilities are split
- Work-life balance for all
- No gender expectations on children – equal opportunities to express and develop and experience emotions
- Safe in public places and online
- Needs of women considered in city planning
- Equal recognition and ambition in the workplace
- Everyone understand unconscious bias + put in place measures to counter it
- Equal and fair representation of women in the media
- No more gendered versions and same products
- Visibility – more women in power “less remarkable”
- All education is checked/delivered with gender equality in mind
- Positive discrimination – more men into roles they're not doing now
- Women feel they can do it, don't feel the barriers that currently exist
- Every public body is gender balanced
- No child has limits placed on them (education reviewed at every stage, doesn't just happen in schools)
- Senior management teams more gender balanced
- More accountability
- Menopause policy in every organisation – no longer the “m” word
- More support for the value of carers/child carers (raise the value of this work, not only money wise)
- Very diverse workforce at all levels
- Communities empowered

- Regulation in place to support change – including racial equality
- Legislation/policies have times scales
- Longer sentences for perpetrators
- “Hard to reach” or “inaccessible” aren’t phrases anymore
- Invisible work done by women in 2018 is more visible and seen as valuable
- Universal payments are in place + effective
- Men take domestic responsibilities
- Gender equality wouldn’t even be in people’s minds as a problem.
- People around the table with gender-equality roles would be redundant (a good thing!).
- The media would not be demonising women (e.g. the tropes of ‘victim’ and ‘protagonist’).
- There would be numerical equality in NHS surgeons (currently highly skewed to men), and certain Police specialisms (like firearms officers). Both numerical equality was still a necessary step as well as ‘equal experience/opportunity’.
- People will be “punished” for mistakes equally – i.e. in terms of career advancement. There was a feeling that today women have to constantly “prove” their ability, and one mistake can send everything crashing, while the same is not true of men. Women will not have to ‘over-deliver’ in order to prove themselves worthy or capable.
- Women will not think twice about speaking up to male senior colleagues. This was felt to be a part of the NHS / doctor / clinician culture and hierarchy.
- Reference was made at this point to the Scottish Government’s consultation on the role of an independent national whistleblowing officer:
 - 2015/16 consultation: <https://consult.gov.scot/health-workforce/independent-national-whistleblowing-officer/>
 - 2018 information: <https://www.gov.scot/Publications/2018/07/2673/1>
- Job interviews would not involve discussion of plans to have children. It was noted this is illegal, but many around the table felt a judgement and ‘risk assessment’ did take place, even if this wasn’t overtly discussed.
- Job interviews would take less consideration of appearance.
- More application processes would be anonymised. It was noted that some Police processes, such as applying for the Police Diploma, and not anonymous, meaning unconscious bias remains a barrier for women to even get to that table.
- In the 2025 future, Human Resources departments will have been helped to overcome unconscious bias.
- While there a lot of enthusiasm around the table for the idea of gender-anonymous applications, the table quickly dismissed this as ‘impossible’ – because changing IT systems would be too complicated and costly to do. This felt like a ‘blockage’ where NACWG might be able to provide ‘strategic’ recommendation, e.g. if SG invested in creating an anonymous application IT solution which could be used for free by all

businesses and SMEs in Scotland – taking the cost burden off individual organisations. For reference: <https://www.beapplied.com/>

- By 2025, ‘barriers’ to women’s progress would have been removed – (not just more women ‘encouraged to step up’).
- We would no longer be in the scenario where senior people say “women aren’t interested in that job/role”.
- ALL sectors would have advanced. It was thought there was huge disparity in progress made by some organisations, and others still very much in the “Dark Ages”. Pockets of awareness and progress will extend everywhere. In general, the Public Sector was thought to have made greater progress than the Private Sector.
- Women would routinely be on interview/promotion panels.
- The kind of disability issues raised by Tressa in her speech, would be normal practice to consider.
- Policies and tick boxes will have developed into actual action and change. Equality will have been ‘mainstreamed’ vs a tick box exercise. There won’t just be policy change, but “the stuff under the surface, and the culture” will have changed – they are the real problem,
- Pregnancy news will be celebrated as a joyful thing in workplaces. Women will not have to go and “apologise” to their boss for being pregnant, or “keep it quiet” from people. The table felt pregnancy-news at work was currently seen as a negative, or a problem to be solved. One person talked about a workplace tradition where many individuals knitted squares to create a baby blanket – as a mark of celebration and support.
- Everyone would feel confident and comfortable having conversations about gender and equality more broadly. It was felt things could be going backwards right now – with people not sure what it’s OK to say, or what will cause offence, fear of talking to people about different cultures and religions.
- A recurring theme was how today, raising gender equality issues implies “hostility and attack”; “going after” someone. This was felt to hinder productive dialogue. There was discussion about how, in a better-future, people would see diversity and equality as ‘beneficial to everyone / business performance’ – rather than something they were being forced to do out of political correctness, or something that gets in the way of the function and success of an organisation. It was felt there was an emerging narrative that gender-diverse boards lead to better performance – but this wasn’t as strong as it could be and needed to extend into other areas of gender equality. Re-framing gender equality from “political correctness” to “better outcomes for everyone”.
- A recurring theme was tackling ‘resistance’. By 2025, Scotland would have understood and tackled ‘resistance’ to gender equality progress. It was felt this is still not well-enough understood, and is very important.

- Language was felt to be important. It was noted the Police talk about being a “service” rather than a “force”. The table felt addressing language was a way of supporting cultural change. By 2025 the table hoped not to see language like golfer/lady-golfer; scientist / female-scientist.
- The table talked about how, in a better-future, employers would be focused on the “skills of the future”. The skills, behaviours and (importantly) the values that all staff are expected to demonstrate. The idea that a clear definition of these “future skills and values” would help transcend gender. Recruiting, appraising and rewarding people for being fair, supportive of others etc. – not for ruthless delivery at all costs. On this point, it was noted that the Police Scotland oath takes a ‘human rights’ approach. The table discussed the fact that some equality issues are about human rights fundamentally – not about gender. How can organisations be encouraged to see the value of embracing human rights? The right to fair treatment, the right to family, the right to be informed equally, etc. Under the full UN definition, ‘workers right are human rights’
- Aligned to the point above: rather than “teaching gender equality’ in schools – embed ‘higher level’ values, and appreciation of fairness, and human rights. This will benefit all sorts of different aspects of behaviour and culture – not just gender e.g. hate crimes
- It was noted that efforts to tackle gender equality in schools could easily backfire, given strong social/cultural norms. Example was shared on one Circle member’s child’s school, where two ‘work/play’ areas were set up in the classroom: one a construction site, and one a hairdressers. The teacher encouraged the boys and girls to mix, and play in both – but in practice, the boys were excited to go to the construction area and the girls were excited by the hairdresser area. So a well-intentioned gender-equality initiative only served to reinforce gender ideas primary school children had already absorbed.
- It was felt that by 13, many girls had ruled themselves out of careers they might previously have been interested in. Something happens to erode their confidence, or they become more aware of the “reality” of what it would take to get there.
- The impact of culture and society on the youngest children was noted – e.g. by age 3 children often conclude that girls don’t play football. Toys, clothing, TV programmes etc. How could the Council help influence these earliest years (so schools aren’t effectively being expected to ‘re-program’ children once they’re age 5+ - which could be unrealistic).
- The table talked about the need for a mix of ‘ground-up’ and ‘top down’ action. Ground-up being about opportunities, and top-down being about removing barriers in practice.
- In a better 2025 – society would respect the role of bringing up children (by both genders). ‘Care’ would no longer be “done on the cheap”.

b) How it feels?

- Confident, compassionate, inclusive.

- We don't know how we feel, we don't know how to express our emotions
 - Our minds are free
 - Scotland feels less masculine
 - People are happier and living longer
 - Feels easier to be a women, a lesbian and a transgender women
 - Feels free to do what you want to do, make your own choices
 - Everyone would feel empowered, heard and valued
 - Women would not feel guilty about their choices
 - Feel more flexible in the working world
 - Anyone feels empowered to challenge gender inequality and norms
 - Boys/men feel able to challenge gender norms – Why can't I wear a dress?
 - It needs to feel mighty real – not just as a box-ticking exercise
 - Business case for diversity is understood
 - No more asking for/thanks for performing domestic tasks
 - No more being called bossy
 - Gender impacts are understood by men as well as women
 - Everyone has confidence to call out gender stereotypes
 - Equal training options for all are worth – worth skills
 - Women support women
 - We believe when somebody calls out inequality
 - Schools enables – listen and support girls
 - Understand why we have discussions in identity and how we define ourselves
 - Less stress – general better feeling with women which will impact the whole of Scotland
 - People understand what the benefits of diversity are
 - Fairer
 - Men feel they are contributing to a fairer society
 - Employers have the confidence to take positive action in the workplace
 - It would feel like a fair place, with opportunities for all people.
 - Equality and fairness would be measured by lived experience (not just 'numbers').
 - It would feel relaxed! Like a huge burden of frustration, fear, anger, suspicion had been lifted.
 - You'd feel nothing – it would just be natural.
 - Women would feel supported.
 - Differences (like pregnancy) would be celebrated.
 - People wouldn't feel they are being "difficult" by asking for a female doctor, or support for a disability.
 - Equality would be the 'mainstream' position.
 - It would be easy and normal to anonymise things like college / job applications.
- c) In what way your organisation/community is different, and what did you do?
- Involved in consultation, influencing policy development.
 - Awareness raising (e-petition)

- Virtual education (AI)
- Encouraged women in their career aspirations and encouraged men to support women in their career aspirations
- More role models and mentors so women can see it and be it
- We would be led by people who are informed and represented by our communities
- Providing free care provision so everyone who wants to work can
- Gender equality activity is redundant
- Gender abuse on social media would be criminalised
- Institutional stigma of women who use drugs is ended
- Greater diversity in public service (doctors, social workers)
- Greater understanding among the professional of other people's lives
- More person-centred care of women who use drugs
- By 2025 we will no longer be talking about the same issues/ challenges
- Leadership male role models
- Encouraged by colleagues to invest in childcare
- Learn from arts and culture
- Equality commitment (knowledge, skills, attitudes, leadership)
- Challenge gender stereotypes
- Men can take day off as well as women to take care of children
- Policy coherence with values (incentives and consequences)
- Tax non-gender neutral products
- Quality of part-time work so more diversity
- Higher salaries in caring roles
- Gendered language becomes socially unacceptable
- Sharing good practice from organisations and role models
- Training opportunities/support networks gender split and open to all
- More senior role models
- VAW-friendly HR policies
- Shared parental leave
- Operational roles accommodate caring responsibilities where possible
- Support groups for women returning from maternity leave/career breaks
- Equal chance of promotion for part-time workers – job share
- Employers to promote flexibility and encourage everyone
- Practical consequences for media for pushing gender stereotypes
- Positive aspects aging – older (women empowered)
- Mainstream gender equality to policy
- Influencing media
- More men involved in chat + solutions
- Equality and diversity at forefront discussions, actions against prejudice
- Cascading information

- A lot more freedom for everyone to be able to express their gender/sexuality/self without question or judgement
- Never hearing “what does your husband thinks about that”?
- Recruited men as allies to this cause + men accept and understand this
- More senior men go flexible/part time work
- Schools have a more diverse workforce
- Structural powers are gone
- Barriers are removed
- People held responsible.
- Change came from the young-up, and also from the powerful-down.
- People were recruited based more on their values, as well as experience.
- Appraisals became based on values, empathy and competencies vs ‘targets’.
- Job adverts and descriptions were worded in a way that increased interest from female candidates.
- Diversity became seen as a ‘benefit’, rather than an ‘attack’ on the organisation.
- Gender equality becomes seen as good for men too.
- Mentors would be better (examples of mentors telling women to ‘prove yourself’, or ‘volunteer for extra things more’ – which wasn’t felt to be helpful).

Q2) What are the top 3 high level/strategic recommendations we should make to achieve this aim?

- Building good communication: jargon free, graphic recording, BSL, font size, foster access, power, build capacity and empowerment. Also, we need to know ourselves, learn how to listen and have dialogue. This is a fundamental and basic need and will help tackle barriers we have as gendered beings.
- We need time to create change. We need a 4 day working week and a living wage (basic income) as well as the infrastructure to allow us to have the conversation to work together to develop a new culture. Planning needs to be bottom up, with people, instead of being done to people.
- Education: unleash creativity at all levels. Principles are used actively at school and for life.
- Reduction in all stigma
- Education: training the teachers and trainers. Women have power, we use technology to change culture (virtual learning and AI
- Education: mandatory training in pre-qualification training (PGCE) in gender, consent, sexual health
- An education system that is de-gendered, non-binary from nursery level throughout

- Making caring a societal responsibility and culturally normal
- Normalising flexibility in the workplace regardless of circumstance so that everyone can reach their potential
- Scottish government to use its full range of fiscal and economic power to create gender equality – child care, parental leave (follow the Nordics) and in all the public organisations they fund. Use the public sector equality duty to require EQIA reports – followed by evaluation and monitoring
- Far more education of gender impact in social work, medicine, psychotherapy, community learning and development
- In creative Scotland, more gender equality required through the funding they grant
- More resources to services like Rape Crisis and funding to support the record numbers of people coming forward
- Poverty: digital divide, affordable and healthy food/
- Accessibility: influence policy, integration, transport, communication, everyone has a voice and is visible.
- Greater person-centred care across services (user-led, more intersectional. Considers all the barriers that individuals face. Patients/service users are more empowered)
- More pushing of flexible working as a norm. Equality of flexibility (both men and women). Greater guidance for organisations to be more flexible in their employment practices. Case studies
- Universal income or other options for radical redistribution of wealth in our country. Explore options and implement
- Hold all public funding to account for gender equality. Being sure to include impact on sub-contractors, freelancers, etc.
- A holistic approach to policy at national and local level, developing a culture of equality and inclusivity – starting point (rather than after thought) of developing policy. Local/national government modelling
- Learn from e.g. Fife pride – national educational campaign celebrating gender equality. Having a gender equality day rather than international Women's/Men's. A big party! Celebrating diversity day = pride. A flag or symbol unique for everyone/
- Regulation of non-gendered products e.g. toys, domestic products, etc. Gender friendly flag
- Gender conversation. Understanding what fear there may be that stops the change. Hear more from men on why this not top of their list
- Use equalities act more. Create gender balance a requirement. Focus equal access structures (not quotas/tick box). It's everybody's issue to fix
- Poverty reduction, economic equality + parity
- VAW- systems in place to explore issues safely
- All laws are fully enacted + apply the PSED and private so just one duty
- Self-regulation- Need to provide the tools to enable society
- Enforce legislation + make sure it is doing what it is supposed to do – ensure resourced adequately
- A gender proofed manager's toolkit, that covers everything that an organisation might need. Like the baby box example.
- Commitment to progress – Scotland encourages all the small things, always. We should share info better, sharing best practice. Help the country to feel better/understand will help to encourage the attitudes and culture change that we need
- Narrative that is positive

- Universal citizens income → legislation to enact
- State funded care – child, older people and all care in fact
- Diversity in all areas of public life – legislation (chamber, government)
- Neutral toilets with baby changing in all of them – policies that enforce inclusive design of facilities
- People in mentoring roles should have equality and diversity training, and an obligation to act and support mentees. The group thought there was a lot of ‘bad’ mentoring going on (e.g. women being told to ‘prove yourself’ or ‘volunteer for more extra things more’). The table felt that mentoring could easily be proposed as a way to help tackle gender inequality, but not actually done very well.
- More done in schools / education (though not necessarily ‘teaching’ equality; thinking about ways of embedding values / human rights / being aware of cultural/societal influences etc.). Recognising children have often formed strong ideas before they start primary school, so thinking about gender-equal early years.
- Re-framing equality and diversity training so that it is not a “punishment” you get sent on for doing something wrong; instead positioning it as something beneficial to everyone.
- Rewarding, recruiting, appraising, promoting based on skills, values and competencies.
- Understanding / mapping resistance. Breaking out of the ‘bubble’ of talking to people keen to address gender inequality. Listening to people who are less convinced, or aware, or actively resistant. Understanding why change isn’t happening. Recognising barriers can sometimes be quite functional e.g. cost/hassle of changing IT systems; not always fundamental resistance to the issues.
- Striking a balance between improving ‘numbers’ and looking at ‘lived experience’. Both are important.
- Elevating the debate above women vs men. Making it about principles like fairness, making Scotland better for everyone, the skills of the future, the values people hold. Akin to ‘He For She’ – getting across that this is for everyone to address, and in everyone’s benefit.
- Leadership at a Parliamentary / cross-party level. Removing any risk this is a party-political agenda. Making equality as part of the democratic system.
- Addressing language in the media (similar to ongoing work around mental health and suicide). Work with the NUJ – in terms of how journalists are trained.
- Ensuring there are consequences for inaction or resistance – at a senior level.
- Not expecting men and women to be the same (i.e. women downplaying aspects of their lived experience to be more like men, and vice versa). Allowing differences to be talked about and celebrated (e.g. pregnancy). Equality has to include a positive, safe space for difference, rather than casting difference as a problem.

- Putting gender equality in a bigger picture of fairness, values and human rights. Parliamentary vs. party support. The skills and values needed for Scotland to flourish in the future.
- Re-framing gender equality as a benefit for everyone (not a threat/nuisance/nonsense).
- Really getting under the skin of resistance.
- Removing barriers, (as well as growing/broadening aspirations).
- Meaningful consequences for lack of action / progress.
- Broadening emerging pockets of success e.g. public sector into private sector.
- Tackling the powerful influence of language, media, and popular culture.
- Improving quality (recognising 'education', 'mentoring' etc. can sometimes sound great, but be done ineffectively).