

## A Response to: Staff Transfer Team and Equality and Human Rights Screening Template

Issued by: Educational Skills Authority Implementation Team

December 2009

## **Introduction**

- 1.1. The Women's Support Network (WSN) welcomes the opportunity to respond to this consultation by the Educational Skills Authority Implementation Team on the Staff Transfer Scheme and Equality and Human Rights Screening Template.
- 1.2. The Women's Support Network (WSN), established in 1989, is an infrastructural umbrella organisation, which provides support services to, and represents, 58 community based Women's Centres, women's groups and projects, and women's infrastructure groups and 20 associated members across Northern Ireland (see Appendix 1).
- 1.3. Our members provide a wide range of women-centred front line services across Northern Ireland, including:
  - Specialist Advice
  - Childcare and Family Support
  - Counselling, Support and Advocacy
  - Complementary Therapies
  - Training & Education
  - Health & Wellbeing Programmes
  - Personal Development & Employment Support
  - Volunteering, Leadership & Empowerment
- 1.4. WSN aims to achieve social, political and economic justice through the promotion of the autonomous organisation of women. The Network aims to strengthen the collective voice of women's groups and to promote and develop networking opportunities, to enable collective action and to impact upon policy and decision making processes. WSN provides an accessible, feminist, relevant and high quality support service and resource for its member groups. The Network is also an important information resource on issues relevant to community based women's organisations and for other infrastructure groups, nationally and internationally.

- 1.5. Over the past 30+ years, the community based women's sector has developed a range of childcare, support, advice, and education & training services in response to the needs they identified at a grass roots level. Women's groups continue to meet the particular needs of women and their children living in areas considered to be some of most affected by the conflict, and recognised as some of the most disadvantaged areas across Northern Ireland today.
- 1.6. Network members are actively engaged with their local communities, cross-community initiatives and regional structures throughout Northern Ireland.
- 1.7. WSN comments on this consultation document relate specifically to the Equality and Human Rights Screening Template for the Education Staff Transfer Team.
- 1.8. The Equality Screening template indicates that a change of location under the scheme may potentially have an adverse impact on section 75 groups including on the grounds of gender. WSN notes that a Location Strategy is to be published at a later date for consultation.
- 1.9. WSN recommends that the implementation team should consider steps to mitigate this adverse impact as early as possible in the process for example in this Staff Transfer Scheme rather than in a later consultation document.
- 1.10. WSN welcomes the consideration of the European Convention of Human Rights in the screening template. WSN believes that it may also be useful to consider other human rights instruments including the International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and Convention on Elimination of Discrimination against Women. WSN recommends that the Implementation Team utilise these instruments in their consideration of potential negative impacts on staff.

## **Conclusion**

WSN welcomes the opportunity to comment on this consultation issued by the Educational Skills Authority Implementation Team. We have offered some suggestions which we hope the Implementation Team will consider. We would be happy to discuss these issues further if required.

### **For further Information, contact:**

Fiona O'Connell- Policy and Research Co-ordinator

Tel: 028 90236923

Email: [policy@wsn.org.uk](mailto:policy@wsn.org.uk)

## Appendix 1

### MEMBERSHIP 2009

	<u>Member Group</u>
1	All Ireland Mother's Union
2	An Munia Tober (Travellers)
3	Antrim & Ballymena Women's Aid
4	Ardmonagh Women's Group
5	Ardoyne Women's Group
6	ATLAS Women's Centre
7	Al Nisa Women's Group
8	Ballybeen Women's Centre
9	Ballymurphy Women's Group
10	Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid
11	Belvoir Women's Improvement Group
12	Carrickfergus Women's Forum
13	Carew II
14	Causeway Women's Aid
15	Chrysalis Women's Centre
16	Clan Mor Women's Group (Sure Start)
17	Derry Well Woman
18	Derry Women's Centre
19	Falls Women's Centre
20	First Steps Women's Group
21	Footprints Women's Centre
22	Foyle Women's Aid
23	Foyle Women's Information Network
24	Granaghant District Women's Group
25	Greenway Women's Centre
26	Kilcooley Women's Centre
27	Lesbian Advocacy Services Initiative
28	Lesbian Line
29	Lenadoon Women's Group
30	Ligoneil Family Centre
31	Link Women's Group
32	Manor Women's Group
33	Markets Women's Group
34	NI Women's Aid Federation
35	NI Women's European Platform
36	Fermanagh Women's Network
37	Newry & Mourne Women
38	Newtownabbey Women's Group
39	Older Women's Network NI
40	Omagh Women's Aid
41	Rape Crisis Centre
42	Rasharkin Women's Group
43	Shankill Women's Centre
44	Strabane & Lifford Women's Centre

45	Strathfoyle Women's Centre
46	The Learning Lodge
47	Voices Women's Group
48	Walkway Women's Group
49	Waterside Women's Centre
50	Windsor Women's Centre
51	Women Connect Project
52	Women into Politics
53	Women's Information Group
54	Women's News
55	Women's TEC
56	Women 2 Gather
57	Women's Resource & Development Agency
58	WISPA (Women in Sport & Physical Activity)
	<b><u>Associate Members</u></b>
1.	Ballymena Community Forum
2.	CiNI
3.	Community Relations Forum
4.	East Belfast Community Partnership
5.	Employers for Childcare
6.	HIV Centre (Women's Support Group)
7.	Mencap
8.	National Women's Council of Ireland
9.	Playboard
10.	RNIB (Women's Group)
11.	Good Morning Newtownabbey
12.	Monkstown Community Association
13.	WAVE Trauma Centre
14.	WEA
15.	Parents Advice Centre
16.	Templemore Community Action Group
17.	Gingerbread
18.	Larne Community Development Project
19.	Community First Coaching
20.	Changing Faces

	<b><u>Associate Members</u></b>
	Ballymena Community Forum
	CiNI
	Community Relations Forum
	East Belfast Community Partnership
	Employers for Childcare
	HIV Centre (Women's Support Group)
	Mencap
	National Women's Council of Ireland
	Playboard
	RNIB (Women's Group)
	Good Morning Newtownabbey
	Monkstown Community Association
	WAVE Trauma Centre
	WEA
	Parents Advice Centre
	Templemore Community Action Group