



First ever Government action plan to advance transgender equality

Yesterday Lynne Featherstone, the Minister for Equalities, launched the first ever Government transgender action plan – *Advancing transgender equality: a plan for action*:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/equalities/lgbt-equality-publications/transgender-action-plan>.

It lays out our vision and focus for our commitment to deliver equality for transgender people and includes firm actions across the breadth of social policy aimed at making a real difference to transgender people's lives.

The action plan was shaped and developed through active engagement with the transgender community. As part of this engagement we launched a series of online surveys to ensure we reached the widest possible number of people. In total we received an amazing 2,172 responses – making our surveys the largest form of engagement with the transgender community ever to be conducted in the UK.

Click on the following link to view Lynne Featherstone talking about the action plan:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pi1mdqUevWU>.

The video also includes a message from Harri Cole-Weeks talking about his personal experiences of being transgender and why he thinks it is so important Government takes action.

Gender Pay Gap

New statistics for the gender pay gap were published by the Office for National Statistics on 23rd November. The gender pay gap for all employees (based on median earnings) has fallen from 19.8% in 2010 to 19.5% in 2011. For full-time workers only, the pay gap fell from 10.1% to 9.1%. We welcome this reduction in the gender pay gap. However, the gap remains too large and the government will continue to take action to ensure that women are able to fulfil their potential.

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/ashe/annual-survey-of-hours-and-earnings/ashe-results-2011/index.html>

Police and Crime Commissioners

The historic first elections will take place on 15 November 2012. Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) will aim to cut crime and deliver an effective and efficient police service within their force area.

To provide stronger and more transparent accountability of the police, PCCs will be elected by the public to hold chief constables and the force to account; effectively making the police answerable to the communities they serve. The PCCs will be important figures in the communities they represent, but you don't have to be a politician to stand. In fact, you can be independent of political parties. If you have a commitment to public service and the skills to be a good leader, then this could be right for you.

You could have experience in the private, voluntary or public sector and come from any background. Women, people from ethnic minorities and disabled people are under-represented in elected office. This is an opportunity for people from all walks of life to stand and make a difference. This is your chance to put yourself forward to help protect the public and help support the police to cut crime. This is your chance to stand for election as a PCC.

You can find out more about what it means to be a PCC in an information booklet:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/police/pcc/have-got-what-takes/got-what-it-takes>

This explains key information about the role and who is eligible. More information is available on the Home Office website: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/police/police-crime-commissioners/questions/>

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/>