



Flook House, Belvedere Road, Taunton, TA1 1BT
admin@mankind.org.uk : www.mankind.org.uk
01823 334244

Susie Uppal,
Director of Legal Enforcement
Equality and Human Rights Commission
3 More London, Riverside,
Tooley Street,
London,
SE1 2RG

10th December 2009

Dear Ms Uppal

Freedom of Information Act: Gender Equality Duty - Compliance

As Chairman of a national charity that supports male victims of domestic abuse (The ManKind Initiative), I welcome your recent tough action on local authorities who are not complying with their statutory duties under the Gender Equality Duty.

As you have issued letters to 14 councils *"for failing to properly investigate, develop plans or deliver services that address gender inequality for women. These include providing services specifically to help women who have experienced violence"* I am formally writing to ask for information (under the Freedom of Information Act) on the following:-

- (1) What investigations has the Equalities and Human Rights Commission undertaken on whether local authorities are properly investigating, developing plans or delivering services that address the needs of male victims of domestic violence and domestic abuse within their communities?
- (2a) If such investigations have taken place, what were the outcomes of those investigations and what action does the Equalities and Human Rights Commission intend to take against those local authorities that fail to meet their statutory obligations under the Gender Equality Duty?
- (2b) If no such investigations have yet taken place, could you please set out the timetable the Equalities and Human Rights Commission will be undertaking to carry out such investigations.

As the Gender Equality Duty applies to both women and men as individuals (Equality Act 2006 Clause 8(2) which states that 'Equality means equality between individuals'), local authorities have a duty to properly investigate, develop plans and deliver services for both genders. In addition, while the charity

recognises the issues of proportionality and relevance, local authorities still have a statutory requirement under the Gender Equality Duty to properly investigate, develop plans and deliver services that address the needs of both female and male victims of domestic violence within their communities. In addition,

Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter and I look forward to receiving a favorable reply within the Freedom of Information Act timeframe (20 days from receipt).

Yours sincerely

Mark Brooks
Chairman
The ManKind Initiative