

Ariane Burgess MSP
Convener, Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee
Scottish Parliament
By email only

From: Dr Lesley Sawers OBE,
Deputy Chair and
Scotland Commissioner

26th March 2025

Dear Convener,

Our strategic plan for 2025 to 2028

I am writing to share our new strategic plan for 2025 to 2028 published today.

We are Britain's independent equality regulator and a National Human Rights Institution. In Scotland we share the human rights mandate with the Scottish Human Rights Commission and we lead on human rights for matters reserved to the UK Parliament. We protect and promote equality and human rights so that everyone gets a fair chance in life. This includes making sure governments, organisations and individuals recognise and adhere to equality and human rights laws. Our new strategic plan sets out how we will make the best use of our resources over the next three years to fulfil the mission set out for us in the Equality Act 2006.

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More than 2,000 organisations and individuals across Britain responded to the consultation on our draft strategic plan. Their contributions have helped shape the plan that I'm pleased to share with you today. We have prioritised action based on where there is clear evidence of need and where we have a unique contribution to make. Our goal is to focus our resources on where we can make a real, lasting and positive difference to the lives of people across Britain.

There are three pillars in our new strategic plan which represent our agile, independent and authoritative approach - they are:

Core regulation of equality and human rights

We will monitor compliance and provide organisations and employers with the essential tools and advice they need to understand and follow the law.

Agile response to equality and human rights risks and opportunities

We will act with speed and precision when responding to the most significant and urgent threats to equality and human rights. Acting swiftly and decisively on the equality and human rights issues of the day will improve our ability to address risks and seize opportunities to improve equality for all protected characteristics.

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Programmes focused on complex equality and human rights challenges

We will deliver three focussed programmes of work selected where we can contribute to measurable and long-term improvement in people's lives.

They are:

- Programme 1: Tackling harassment, discrimination and victimisation in the uniformed services
- Programme 2: Clarifying the law and supporting effective responses to balance of rights, including freedom of expression
- Programme 3: Strengthening participation in society by addressing barriers to key public services, often faced by protected characteristic groups. For example, older and disabled people can face barriers when accessing public transport.

We will publish our business plan in spring 2025 with more detail on how we will deliver the first year of our strategic plan.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have on our new strategic plan.

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Yours sincerely,

Dr Lesley Sawers OBE
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