

Section 75
Audit of Inequalities
February 2018

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1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This document presents the outcome of the Audit of Inequalities undertaken by the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee (NILGOSC). The Audit of Inequalities has been used to inform the Section 75¹ Equality Action Plan 2018-2021, which follows on from NILGOSC's Action Plan 2015-2018.
- 1.1.2 The Audit of Inequalities was conducted across all NILGOSC functions during the period July 2017 to December 2017. The purpose of the audit was to identify inequalities that exist for those affected by the functions and policies of the NILGOSC pension scheme. All nine of the Section 75 groups were considered as part of the audit.
- 1.1.3 As part of this consultation exercise, NILGOSC is seeking the views and comments of all interested parties on its revised Equality Action Plan 2018-2021. NILGOSC welcomes comments on any aspects of its Equality Action Plan by post, email, phone, fax or in person. Please forward any comments you wish to make on the document to:

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NILGOSC
Templeton House
411 Hollywood Road
Belfast
BT4 2LP

Tel: 0345 3197 320
Fax: 0345 3197 321
Typetalk: 18001 0345 3197 320 (for
people using a textphone)
Email: equality@nilgosc.org.uk

1.2 Alternative formats of communication

- 1.2.1 This document is available on the NILGOSC website www.nilgosc.org.uk and in paper format. The documentation is also available on request in alternative formats where reasonably practicable, such as large print, Braille, audio, disc and other languages for those whose first language is not English.
- 1.2.2 If you require the document in an alternative format, please do not hesitate to contact us via the details above.
- 1.2.3 Consultation on this document will run for 12 weeks until 26th April 2018. The final agreed action plan will be sent to the Equality Commission.

2 NILGOSC and its Functions

- 2.1 NILGOSC is the administering body for the Local Government Pension Scheme in Northern Ireland. NILGOSC was set up by the Government in April 1950 to operate a pension scheme for the local councils and other similar bodies in Northern Ireland. The pension scheme is known as the Local Government Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) and is a defined benefit scheme. The pension scheme is funded by contributions paid by both employees and the scheme employers.

¹ Section 75 of the NI Act 1998

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- 2.2 The pension scheme is managed by a Committee² (similar to a board of directors or trustees) which consists of a chairman, five members nominated by employers' organisations, five members nominated by employees' organisations and two independent members. Committee members are appointed by the Department for Communities via the public appointments process. The day to day administration of the pension scheme is carried out by the Secretary, supported by approximately 90 staff members.
- 2.3 NILGOSC has two functions: to administer the scheme in accordance with regulations; and to manage and maintain a fund out of which benefits are met. As an administering body, NILGOSC's function is to comply with statutory regulations, which are made by the Department for Communities. NILGOSC therefore has limited discretion over how it administers the pension scheme on a day to day basis.

3 Equality Scheme Commitments

- 3.1 Section 75 (1) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between the nine equality categories of: persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; men and women generally; persons with a disability and persons without; and persons with dependents and persons without. Section 75 (2) also requires public authorities to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial group.
- 3.2 NILGOSC's Corporate Plan includes a specific objective on equality; *To be committed to the need to promote equality of opportunity, the desirability of promoting good relations and the fulfilment of its Section 75 obligations.* NILGOSC will commit the necessary available resources in terms of people, time and money to ensure that the Section 75 statutory duties are complied with and that the equality scheme can be implemented effectively.
- 3.3 NILGOSC's Equality Scheme is available on its website at <http://www.nilgosc.org.uk/equality-scheme>. The Equality Scheme includes NILGOSC's Action Plan 2015-2018 which sets out actions NILGOSC agreed to take to promote equality of opportunity and good relations.
- 3.4 The Action Plan 2015-2018 was reviewed by the Senior Management Team bi-annually and NILGOSC reported to the Equality Commission on an annual basis to confirm the actions it has undertaken in the previous financial year.
- 3.5 NILGOSC committed to updating the action plan as necessary to ensure that it remained effective and relevant to NILGOSC's functions and work.
- 3.6 In alignment with NILGOSC's corporate planning process, the action plan required a review and update by the end of March 2018 to outline actions and priorities for the period 2018-2021. An Audit of Inequalities was carried out to inform the development of the revised action plan and, in line with the commitment in its Equality Scheme, NILGOSC is seeking comments from its stakeholders on the revised Action Plan 2018-2021 set out at Appendix A of this document.

² The Committee is redesignated as the Pension Board from 1 April 2015.

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4 The Audit of Inequalities

- 4.1 In reviewing its action plan, NILGOSC considered whether any actions from the Action Plan 2015-2018 had not been achieved. Those actions were still considered to be relevant and were carried over into the revised action plan.
- 4.2 The Senior Management Team confirmed that many of the potential inequalities identified at the time of the previous Audit of Inequalities in 2015 were still relevant as they were ongoing or derived from areas that were not under NILGOSC's direct control. Any relevant issues were carried forward into the Action Plan 2018-2021. A copy of the findings of the 2015 Audit of Inequalities is available on the website at <http://www.nilgosc.org.uk/equality-scheme> or can be requested (see section 1 for contact details).
- 4.3 In order to gather up-to-date data in respect of the pension scheme, NILGOSC carried out a specific survey of the membership profile of the scheme and the local government workforce. NILGOSC sought the help of the employing authorities in the scheme and requested anonymised data on the eligible workforce of each employer, broken down by the nine equality groups in August 2017. Following gaps in data and poor response rates in the surveys completed for previous audits of inequalities, equality data on NILGOSC members only within the employer workforce was also requested and only the 14 largest employers were targeted, with view to increasing the representative sample size and working more closely to address the gaps in data. In addition, the age profile of single members was also requested to identify if the previous underrepresentation of single members related to a particular age group. As a comparator dataset, a voluntary equality monitoring questionnaire was issued via an electronic survey, to approximately 11,017 scheme members with email addresses, as a means of obtaining a larger representative sample of individuals who chose to remain in the NILGOSC scheme. This was amalgamated with the previous 2015 survey results issued in paper format, so not to exclude any particular user groups. While this sampling approach does have its limitations, it was considered to be a more efficient and effective method of obtaining monitoring datasets relevant to NILGOSC's functions.
- 4.4 NILGOSC also carried out a review of internal and external research and datasets regarding key inequalities within Northern Ireland to help inform the Action Plan 2018-2021. A list of the sources reviewed is set out at Appendix B.

5 Key Findings of the Audit of Inequalities

5.1 NILGOSC Survey data

- 5.1.1 The results of the employing authority and pension scheme member questionnaires referred to at 4.3 above were mixed with a response rate of 86% and 9% respectively.
- 5.1.2 A total of 12 employers responded to the request for monitoring data on the local government workforce, providing information on 50,596 employees³. The majority of employers were able to provide data on gender, age and religion, with information on race and marital status available for approximately 65% and 61% of employees respectively. Limited information was available in respect of

³ This is used as a proxy for the local government workforce in Northern Ireland, being the population who are eligible to join the NILGOSC scheme.

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political opinion (2% response rate). Despite response rates, information on sexual orientation and persons with dependants was obtained for 10,553 employees (21% response rate) and 12,003 employees (24% response rate) respectively. With regard to disability, 4.7% of those employees for whom monitoring data was provided have declared a disability to their employer.

- 5.1.3 989 responses to the electronic scheme member survey were received which was a notable improvement, in comparison to the previous audit of inequalities. This was due to the survey requests reaching a larger number of scheme members as they were issued electronically to 11,017 members of the pension scheme⁴. The majority of those responding completed all sections of the monitoring form. Political opinion was the most contentious area with 18% of respondents choosing not to answer those particular questions. An improvement in completion of the sexual orientation section was noted since the previous 2015 survey exercise, with 6% choosing not to answer.
- 5.1.4 The Section 75 profile of the pension members was compared to the profile of the local government workforce to help identify if any particular group is underrepresented in the scheme. It is acknowledged that the reliance on the survey responses as a proxy has its limitations, particularly for those Section 75 groups which are self declared and for which only limited information is available. Further information on the scheme membership profile was obtained from NILGOSC's pension system and some employers were also able to provide monitoring data for scheme members only. This was used as further analysis for certain equality categories where available. The full results of the survey and analysis are included at Appendix C, however no particular groups were identified as being underrepresented in the scheme when compared to the local government workforce.

5.2 NILGOSC alternative communication data

- 5.2.1 NILGOSC records all requests for alternative communication formats on its pension administration database. A total of 56 alternative communication needs are recorded on the database and can be broken down as follows: large print (44); audio tapes (2); translation into another language (6); deaf (2) and minicom (2). Out of a total of 121,292⁵ members including 34,685 pensioners, NILGOSC has received 59 requests for alternative formats suited to those with a hearing or sight disability and 11 requests for communications in an alternative language.
- 5.2.2 Responses to the electronic surveys of scheme members identified 27 individuals out of 989 respondents (2.7%) whose main language was not English. In those cases the main languages identified were Polish (3) and Irish (12) with the remaining 12 respondents selecting "Other". Statistics from the 2011 census highlighted that English was not the main language for 3.1% of usual residents aged 3 years and over, almost one quarter of whom (24%) lived in the Belfast Local Government District. The most prevalent main language other than English was Polish (17,700 people, 1.0%). Whilst this does not directly equate to the language needs of the eligible workforce, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation Report on "The Economic and Social Mobility of Ethnic Minority Communities in Northern Ireland" suggests that a key barrier to employment or progression within employment is often language. Further data was obtained from NILGOSC's largest employing authority, providing the nationalities of its workforce and

⁴ This is used as a proxy of the membership profile of the NILGOSC scheme.

⁵ Membership data as at November 2017

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NILGOSC members only within its organisation (approximately 8% of NILGOSC's total membership). It was noted that the split of the nationalities of the NILGOSC members was broadly similar to the employer's overall workforce.

- 5.2.3 Available data on the level of age-related disability in the UK suggests that the number of relevant alternative communication indicators recorded by NILGOSC remains lower than would be expected. Publicly available statistics show that *"One in five people aged 75 and over are living with sight loss"*⁶ and *"More than 40% of people over 50 years old have hearing loss, rising to 71% of people over the age of 70"*⁷. The results of the Northern Ireland Survey of People with Activity Limitations and Disabilities (NISALD) which was conducted throughout 2006/07, showed that there is a clear increase in disability with age, rising to 60% amongst those aged 75 and above. Two-thirds of those aged 85 and above were living with a disability or disabilities.
- 5.2.4 Given the potential complexity of pension scheme correspondence and overall low number of alternative communication requests, it is therefore reasonable to assume that NILGOSC is not currently capturing the full extent of the alternative communication needs of its members and pensioners. In particular, there could potentially be barriers to those with an age related disability and those not fluent in written English. Further measures have therefore been included in the Action Plan, with view to improving access to information for members with alternative communication needs.

5.3 Staff recruitment applicant and appointee data

- 5.3.1 The audit of inequalities included a review of staff recruitment applicant and appointee monitoring data, as included in NILGOSC's Fair Employment Monitoring Return of 1 January 2017. An underrepresentation of appointees who had declared a disability (17%⁸) and males at management level (26%) was identified from the monitoring data. It was also noted that while the gender split of applicants was broadly similar to the Northern Ireland comparator⁹, there was underrepresentation of applicants over 30 years old (approximately 26%), with a disability (15%) and married or in a partnership (26%). A significant majority of applicants had however applied for the graduate recruitment vacancies, therefore this is likely to be directly correlated to the underrepresentation in applicants who are married/in a partnership and aged over 30. The age and marital status underrepresentations also do not apply to NILGOSC's workforce. Further limitations have also been noted in the reliability of the data, in particular, for disabled persons. There is potential for those with a disability to not have declared this and the comparator used is based on the 2011 NI Census population as a whole, which is likely to include disabled persons who are unable to work.

5.4 Committee monitoring data

- 5.4.1 A review of equality monitoring data gathered on the composition of NILGOSC's Management Committee, as at 1 January 2017, was also carried out. It was noted that there was underrepresentation of Committee members who were

⁶ Royal National Institute of Blind People <https://www.rnib.org.uk/professionals/knowledge-and-research-hub/key-information-and-statistics>

⁷ Action on Hearing Loss <http://www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/about-us/our-research-and-evidence/facts-and-figures/>

⁸ Percentage underrepresentations included are calculated as difference in monitoring data and NI Census comparator e.g. 4% of staff versus 21% of the NI population who have declared a disability

⁹ ECNI Fair Employment Monitoring Report No 27 – Annual Summary of Monitoring Returns 2016

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single (24%) and aged between 20-44 (48%). The appointment of Committee members is outside NILGOSC's control as the Department for Communities are responsible for this via the public appointments process. NILGOSC has however submitted feedback to the Department to inform them of the underrepresentations.

5.5 Other qualitative and quantitative data

5.5.1 A review of other relevant internal quantitative and qualitative data was carried out to identify any further potential inequalities or opportunities to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. This included discussions with management and review of previous equality screening templates, equality action plans, consultation responses, staff surveys, the 2016 report on the review of NILGOSC's Equality Scheme and the annual member stakeholder satisfaction surveys. It was noted that positive feedback was received from the 2017 member satisfaction surveys, with an average score of 4.24 and 4.18 out of 5, on ease of understanding and presentation and layout of scheme communications respectively. The following was identified as potential areas where opportunities for further actions to promote equality of opportunity and good relations could be taken;

a) It was noted that a number of Committee members' terms of appointments are due to expire in 2018 and equality/good relations training will need to be carried out for all new members, to enable them to fulfil their equality duties as part of their role.

b) It was identified that a review of the current equality training module completed by all staff would be of value, to update for any further additions relevant to NILGOSC, following feedback from staff surveys and review of the Equality Scheme in 2016. This could also be used as new refresher training for existing staff.

c) In the most recent staff satisfaction/good relations surveys, in particular the 2015 survey, not all staff noted that they felt comfortable openly discussing differences of culture and background in the workplace. Further communication of the Equality Action Plan, Dignity at work procedures and Equality Scheme was also identified as an area for improvement. A number of actions have already been taken over the past few years to address issues raised following the surveys, including additional equality training. Further face to face staff training on equality related policies including raising concerns, has been identified as an additional means of seeking to address the issues as far as possible.

d) Actions have been included for the subsequent review of NILGOSC's Equality Scheme and Audit of Inequalities to align these with the corporate planning cycle.

e) It was noted that following the various actions taken to address the issues raised in the staff surveys, it would be useful to issue a follow up equality and good relations survey to all staff, to evaluate the effectiveness of actions taken and identify any further opportunities to promote equality and good relations.

f) On discussion with management, it was noted that consideration of equality factors is included in NILGOSC's purchasing policy, however there is scope for further detail on this.

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5.6 Limitations

- 5.6.1 The lack of complete data on the more sensitive of the Section 75 groups presents limitations in respect of reliability and in determining whether a potential inequality exists. Equality data was however still provided for a large number of scheme members and the overall eligible workforce by employers, outside of information on political opinion. The samples are therefore deemed representative in comparison to NILGOSC's membership and assumed reliable. In respect of political opinion, it is difficult to identify whether scheme membership is reflective of the eligible local government workforce. Based on discussions with management, it is however considered extremely unlikely that the political opinion of employees in the local government workforce would have any impact on them joining or remaining in the pension scheme.
- 5.6.2 There are a number of publicly available sources which provide useful comparators for the wider Northern Ireland population. NILGOSC's function as an administering body is to provide a service to those local government employees who choose to join the pension scheme. The relevant comparator for NILGOSC is therefore the demographic of the local government workforce rather than the wider population. As this information is not readily available, NILGOSC has been reliant on the co-operation of the employing authorities in the pension scheme to provide a breakdown of each workforce. NILGOSC would like to acknowledge the time taken by the 12 employing authorities who responded to this request and would like to express its thanks for their help and support in undertaking this audit of inequalities.

6 Action Plan

- 6.1 The NILGOSC Action Plan 2018-2021 is set out at Appendix A. It has been developed using the findings set out at section 5 above. The inequalities identified in 2015 that are still relevant today have also been taken into consideration and the actions from the Action Plan 2015-2018 that were not fully completed have been carried forward into the current draft.
- 6.2 Actions have been prioritised according to where the greatest inequalities exist and the greatest impact can be made, in particular potential barriers to members with alternative communication needs and underrepresentations in applicants and appointees from the relevant Section 75 groups. Resources and external constraints have also been taken into consideration.
- 6.3 The actions in respect of staff training, the staff survey, the audit of inequalities and review of the Equality Scheme are relevant to both equality duties under Section 75 (1) and (2). The remaining actions are directly relevant to Section 75 (1), outside updating NILGOSC's Good Relations policy.
- 6.4 Responsibility for the delivery of the action plan lies with the Senior Management Team.

7 Monitoring and Review Process

- 7.1 The Action Plan 2018-2021 will be monitored on a bi-annual basis by the Senior Management Team. The Senior Management Team will review the progress in implementing the agreed actions and will also consider any developments and the need for additional actions or monitoring data in the intervening period.

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- 7.2 The action plan has been aligned with NILGOSC's three year corporate planning cycle. NILGOSC reports quarterly on its progress in implementing its Corporate Plan including the equality objectives.
- 7.3 In addition, NILGOSC will prepare an annual report on progress made over the previous year. This report will form part of the Annual Review of Progress on Section 75 implementation which is sent to the Equality Commission.
- 7.4 The collation of information on progress will allow for regular and ongoing review of the action plan to ensure that it remains effective and relevant to NILGOSC's functions. Any significant changes or amendments to the action plan will be reported to the Equality Commission.

Ref	Identified Inequality/Area	Objectives/Intended Impact	Action Required	Performance Indicator	Timescale	Owner
1	Staff Training (All 9 groups)	To improve staff awareness and skills	Deliver Equality and Good Relations training to new Committee Members	100% of new Committee members received training	31 March 2019	CK
2			Review and update current Equality e-learning module for completion by all NILGOSC staff	Module updated	31 August 2019	CK
3			Ensure all new and existing NILGOSC staff complete updated Equality and Good Relations learning module	100% of staff completed module	31 December 2019	RW
4			Deliver further face to face training to all staff on NILGOSC's equality related policies, including raising equality related concerns	100% of staff received training	30 September 2019	JC/CK
5*	Statutory Obligations	To ensure appropriate policies and provisions relating to equality, good relations and disability are in place and that all new and revised policies have been equality screened (All 9 groups)	Update NILGOSC's Good Relations Policy	Policy updated and approved	31 December 2018	CK
6*			Review and update Disability Action Plan	Plan reviewed and updated	31 December 2018	JC
7*			Refurbishment of Templeton House, in line with recommendations made as a result of accessibility audit	Refurbishment completed	31 March 2020	JC/CK

Ref	Identified Inequality/Area	Objectives/Intended Impact	Action Required	Performance Indicator	Timescale	Owner
8			Review of audit of inequalities and revised action plan	Audit of Inequalities completed and Action Plan published	31 March 2021	CK
9			Review of Equality Scheme	Equality Scheme reviewed and published	31 March 2021	CK
10	Potential barriers to members with alternative communication needs, particularly for people with a disability and/or whose first language is not English	1. Access to information is improved for people with a disability or whose first language is not English 2. Increase in number of requests for alternative communications	Design and issue a new Basic Guide to the Pension Scheme	Basic Guide designed and published on website	30 June 2018	ZK
11			Review basic guide taking any feedback into consideration	Review completed	30 June 2019	ZK
12			Translate and issue Basic Guide in other languages	Basic Guide translated and published	31 December 2018	ZK
13			Review/consider changes to NILGOSC's website homepage to further publicise alternative communication requests	Review complete	31 March 2019	ZK

Ref	Identified Inequality/Area	Objectives/Intended Impact	Action Required	Performance Indicator	Timescale	Owner
14	Underrepresentation of applicants and staff employed with disabilities**	To increase the number of applicants and staff employed from underrepresented groups	Implement all recruitment and selection actions in Disability Action Plan	Increase in % of applicants applying and employed from underrepresented groups	31 December 18	JC
15	Underrepresentation of males at management level in the workforce		Positive targeting of underrepresented groups through job advertising		Ongoing	JC
16			Further analysis to identify if underrepresentation at management level is at applicant or appointee stage	Analysis completed	30 April 2018	JC
17	Working environment	To promote a positive working environment in NILGOSC for all existing and future staff	Issue an Equality and Good Relations survey to staff on the workplace environment/culture, following the refurbishment and review feedback	Positive/improved responses in staff survey	31 December 2020	JC
18	Lack of detail on consideration of equality implications in purchasing policy	To ensure purchasing policy reflects the requirement for full consideration of equality implications	Update purchasing policy to include further detail on consideration of equality	Purchasing policy updated	30 April 2018	JH

* Carried forward from 2015-2018 Equality Action Plan

** Underrepresented by reference to the entire working population but not significantly different from local government and employer workforce statistics.

List of internal and external reports and datasets reviewed as part of Audit of Inequalities 2017

- NILGOSC Committee and Staff Equality Monitoring Data
- Statistical data from membership database
- Opt out statistics
- Consultee responses
- Staff Survey results
- Reports on review of NILGOSC's Equality Scheme 2016
- Results of 2017 annual member stakeholder satisfaction surveys
- Northern Ireland Census 2011
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation Report on "The Economic and Social Mobility of Ethnic Minority Communities in Northern Ireland"
- ECNI Fair Employment Monitoring Report No 27 – Annual Summary of Monitoring Returns 2016
- Northern Ireland Survey of People with Activity Limitations and Disabilities 2006/07
- The Commissioner for Public Appointments Northern Ireland – "Guardian of the Public Appointment Process" Annual Report 2016/17
- The Commissioner for Public Appointments Northern Ireland – "Under-Representation and Lack of Diversity in Public Appointments in Northern Ireland" January 2014
- Action on Hearing Loss "Facts and Figures"
- RNIB (Royal National Institute for Blind People) "Key information and statistics"
- Disability Action
- NI Life & Times Survey 2016
- ONS "Experimental Official Statistics on sexual identity in the UK in 2016"
- UK Data Archive Study Number 7236 – "Northern Ireland Survey of Activity Limitations and Disability", 2006-2007
- ECNI Section Advice to Public Authorities: Approaching an "Audit of Inequalities" 2012
- ECNI Statement of Key Inequalities in Northern Ireland 2007
- ECNI Key Inequalities in Employment in Northern Ireland 2017

The table below sets out the results of the NILGOSC member surveys and analysis by S75 category.

S75 Category	Inequality Identified
Gender	The male/female ratio of members (taken from the pension software system) reflected that of the eligible local government workforce ¹⁰ taken from the employer survey. No gender inequality identified.
Age	The actual age profile of scheme members was taken from the NILGOSC database and compared to the eligible workforce. The age profile of the scheme members is broadly similar to the eligible workforce, with a slight under-representation in the scheme of those aged 20-29 (1.5%) and over 65 (2.2%) however this is not considered significant. No age related inequality identified.
Religion	The community background of information provided on scheme members in the employers ¹¹ workforce was compared to that of the eligible local government workforce. The community background split of the scheme members is broadly similar to the eligible workforce, with a slight under-representation in Roman Catholics (1.5%) which is not considered significant. It should be noted however, that when compared to the data within the ECNI Fair Employment Monitoring Report No. 27, the scheme membership data is broadly similar, i.e. per ECNI 51.2% of public sector workforce is Protestant and 48.8% is Roman Catholic; per scheme data, 50.3% of members are Protestant and 45.3% are Roman Catholic (4.4% chose 'Other'). Overall, there is no significant inequality identified in respect of religious belief.
Race	The ethnicity profile of scheme members reflected that of the eligible workforce. No racial inequality identified.
Disability	The number of scheme members declaring a disability (10.7%) on the member survey is higher than that of the eligible workforce (4.7%). No inequality on the grounds of disability identified.

¹⁰ Figures for eligible local government workforce based on data provided by 12 employers. The male/female ratio for the member profile also broadly reflects figures regarding the public sector workforce within the ECNI Fair Employment Monitoring Report No.27.

¹¹ Five employers provided community background information for a total of 28,071 scheme members in their workforce, along with eligible workforce data.

S75 Category	Inequality Identified
Political Opinion	Employers were unable to provide this information for 98% of the workforce. Insufficient data to conclude if inequality on the grounds of political opinion exists.
Marital Status	<p>The marital status of the members (taken from the pension software system) was compared to that of the eligible workforce taken from the employer survey.</p> <p>The marital status split of the scheme members is broadly similar to the eligible workforce, with a slight under-representation in the scheme of single persons (7.3%) and overrepresentation of persons married or in a civil partnership (9.6%). The underrepresentation in single persons is however not considered significant.</p> <p>It was further noted on analysis of the age profile of single persons in the electronic member survey, a larger proportion of respondents aged under 60 were single (22%) than those over 60 (8%). 91% of members who opted out of the scheme in 2016/17 were aged under 60, therefore this may have some correlation to the slight underrepresentation of single persons.</p> <p>Overall, there is no significant inequality identified in respect of marital status.</p>
Sexual Orientation	<p>The sexual orientation profile of members responding to the survey was compared to that of the eligible local government workforce.</p> <p>There is a marginally lower percentage of members who are heterosexual joining the pension scheme (3.9%) when compared to the results of the employer survey. This is not considered significant.</p> <p>No sexual orientation related inequality identified.</p>
Dependants	<p>The ratio of members responding to the survey with/without dependants is broadly similar to the eligible workforce, with a slight under-representation in the scheme of persons with dependants (6.5%). It was also noted that based on information provided by employers on 6,302 scheme members, the percentage of members with dependants was actually 8.7% higher than the overall eligible workforce.</p> <p>Overall, there is no significant inequality identified in respect of persons with or without dependants.</p>