

ANNUAL EQUALITY STATEMENT Year end 31 March 2013

The Committee's Equality Scheme states that the Committee will report on the progress it has made in the delivery of its Section 75 statutory duties.

Our Commitment

The Committee re-affirms its commitment to the fulfilment of its duties under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 in that it will have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:

- Between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- Between men and women generally;
- Between persons with a disability and persons without; and,
- Between persons with dependants and persons without.

In addition, without prejudice to its obligations above, NILGOSC shall, in carrying out its functions, have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

Promotion of Equality of Opportunity

NILGOSC has demonstrated its commitment to the promotion of equality of opportunity during 2012/13 and the equality agenda continues to be promoted and supported by the most senior levels of the organisation.

The NILGOSC Corporate Plan for 2012/13 included objectives relating to equality and community relations. The Senior Management Team has monitored the implementation of these objectives on a quarterly basis.

Implementation of the Equality Scheme

In accordance with guidance issued from the Equality Commission, NILGOSC reviewed its Equality Scheme in 2011 and submitted the revised Equality Scheme 2012 to 2015 to the Equality Commission on 25 January 2012. The revised Equality Scheme was subsequently approved on 25 July 2012. NILGOSC published the revised Scheme and communicated its approval and publication to all consultees and the wider public, both through the NILGOSC website and local press.

NILGOSC carried out its duties in relation to the Equality Scheme throughout 2012/13 to ensure that its policies and procedures are fair and lawful and implemented a number of the actions set out in the Action Plan for 2012 to 2015. Some of the actions that have been taken or that are in progress include:

- The NILGOSC website is currently being re-designed to AA accessibility standards and will include an alternative languages section
- An Alternative Communications leaflet is now included with all retirement claim forms being issued

- The form issued to members opting to leave the Scheme was expanded to record the key reasons for leaving to try and identify any potential inequalities
- Recruitment advertising now targets under-represented groups by welcoming applications from those in the 41-60 year old age group and Roman Catholics
- All staff and Committee members received Equality and Disability Awareness training during 2012/13 and training on the requirements of the revised Equality Scheme. Awareness training is provided for new members of staff through the induction procedure.

In line with the revised Equality Scheme, NILGOSC carried out screening of any new or revised policies for equality impacts during 2012/13 and published quarterly screening reports on the website.

NILGOSC did not receive any complaints relating to equality issues in the 2012/13 year and continues to provide its publications in alternative formats on request.

Those who require further information about the NILGOSC Equality Scheme or would prefer to receive this document in an alternative format (such as in large print, in Braille, on audio cassette or on computer disc) and/or language, please contact the Equality Officer at:

Address: NILGOSC, Templeton House, 411 Holywood Road, Belfast, BT4 2LP
Telephone: 0845 308 7345
Typetalk: 18001 0845 308 7345 (for people using a textphone)
Fax: 0845 308 7344
Email: info@nilgosc.org.uk

Copies of the Equality Scheme and this Annual Equality Statement are also available on the Internet at www.nilgosc.org.uk/equality.htm