

ANNUAL EQUALITY STATEMENT Year end 31 March 2015

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 2014/15 and the equality agenda continues to be promoted and supported by the most senior levels of the organisation.

The NILGOSC Corporate Plan for 2014/15 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

NILGOSC's Equality Scheme was last approved by the Equality Commission on 25 July 2012. NILGOSC carried out its duties in relation to the Equality Scheme throughout 2014/15 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:

- An Audit of Inequalities was carried out between November 2014 and March 2015 to identify any inequalities that exist for those affected by the functions and policies of the pension scheme. The results were used to inform NILGOSC's draft Equality Scheme Action Plan 2015 to 2018. The draft Action Plan will be issued for consultation and, after consultation, will be submitted to the Equality Commission for approval.
- NILGOSC has continued to record the key reasons for members leaving the Scheme to try and identify any patterns which may indicate potential inequalities. This data was also incorporated into the Audit of Inequalities.
- Monitoring data had been collected in January 2014 in respect of NILGOSC staff and Committee members. The Department of the Environment was

advised on 30 April 2014 of the Committee composition and the underrepresentation of certain Section 75 groups.

- Following on from the review of staff monitoring data collected in January 2014, recruitment advertising continues to target underrepresented groups by welcoming applications from those in the 41-60 year old age group, males and Roman Catholics.
- An Alternative Communications leaflet is included with all retirement claim forms issued. The leaflet includes headline information in alternative formats and languages. As at 31 March 2015, there are 49 individuals to whom NILGOSC sends information in an alternative format.
- Equality awareness training is provided for new members of staff through the induction process.
- Equality and Good Relations training was provided to the Committee at its annual training event on 9 April 2014.
- NILGOSC is preparing a document outlining the inequalities inherent in the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014 with a view to sending this document to the Department of the Environment in early 2015/16 for consideration.
- A staff survey has been drafted and will be issued during the 2015/16 financial year. The results of the survey will be used to help identify any actions that could promote improved good relations among staff.

In line with its Equality Scheme, NILGOSC carried out screening of any new or revised policies for equality impacts during 2014/15 and published quarterly screening reports on the website.

NILGOSC did not receive any complaints relating to equality issues in the 2014/15 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-scheme.