

## **ANNUAL EQUALITY STATEMENT**

**Year end 31 March 2023**

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

### **Our Commitment**

NILGOSC 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 2022/23 and the equality agenda continues to be promoted and supported by the most senior levels of the organisation.

The NILGOSC Corporate Plan for 2022/23 included objectives relating to equality and good relations. The Senior Management Team has monitored the implementation of these objectives on a quarterly basis.

### **Implementation of the Equality Scheme**

NILGOSC carried out its duties in relation to the Equality Scheme throughout 2022/23 to ensure that its policies and procedures are fair and lawful. A number of the actions set out in the Equality Action Plan 1 April 2022-31 March 2023 were progressed during the year, as set out below:

- NILGOSC completed an Audit of Inequalities exercise in February 2022, which informed the Equality Action Plan dated 1 April 2022-31 March 2025. Both the exercise and Action Plan were issued for consultation in April 2022, which closed in June 2022. No responses were received during the consultation period.
- At 31 March 2023 all Committee members have completed the "Equality and Diversity in the Northern Ireland Workplace" e-learning training. All new staff continue to complete this training within one month of joining. Refresher training was last completed for all staff in March 2022 and next due for issue in March 2024.

- In October 2022, the ECNI issued a new screening video for public authorities for those who have responsibilities for reviewing or developing policies. In January 2023, this was issued to all relevant officers for review.
- There were 74 alternative communications issued between 1 April 2022–31 March 2023. All requests for alternative communications were successfully completed.
- NILGOSC is committed to providing all its digital content in an accessible format. The NILGOSC website was assessed in November 2022 and various actions are required to ensure compliance with the Public Sector Bodies (Website & Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018. Work is ongoing to progress these actions and the website will be reassessed in June 2023.
- NILGOSC has initiated roll out of the reconnection programme by issuing letters to its deferred members in 2023. The programme is linked to a corporate objective to encourage non-registered deferred members to register for Member Self Service (MSS).
- Training for members and pensioners on availability of electronic communications and use of MSS continues to take place and instructional videos have been added to the NILGOSC website.
- A Good Relations Survey was issued to all staff in January 2022 and results were shared with management during the 2022-23 year. No specific concerns were raised.
- The Disability Action Plan was issued for consultation in February 2023 and the consultation will close on 5 May 2023.

In line with its Equality Scheme, NILGOSC continues to carry out screening of any new or revised policies for equality impacts. No policies were screened during 2022/23 and no equality impact assessment was required. No equality complaints were received during the year.

NILGOSC 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 Hollywood Road, Belfast, BT4 2LP

Telephone: 0345 3197 320

Typetalk: 18001 0345 3197 320 (for people using a textphone)

Fax: 0345 3197 321

Email: [equality@nilgosc.org.uk](mailto:equality@nilgosc.org.uk)

Copies of the Equality Scheme and this Annual Equality Statement are also available on the Internet at

<https://nilgosc.org.uk/about-us/equality-scheme-reports/>