

## **EQUALITY WORKING GROUP MEETING**

**12 APRIL 2010**

**LONGBRIDGE HOUSE**

### **PRESENT:**

Bob Collins (Chair)- Equality Commission	Jim Jewhurst - DEL
Ken Fraser - OFMDFM	Barry Connolly - DETI
Ian Boden - SEUPB	Mary Maguire – DFP
David Lynch (Sec) - DFP	

### **Apologies**

Pamela Rooney - NISRA	Kevin Doherty - Disability Action
Michael Hughes - RCN	Jim Deery - Ashton Centre
Siobhan O'Donoghue - Mig. Rights	Pamela Dooley - UNISON

It was noted prior to commencement of the meeting there were insufficient members to constitute a quorum. It was agreed the meeting would proceed and the minutes forwarded to all members and written procedure sought for approval.

### **Action: DFP**

#### **1. Previous Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010 were discussed and it was noted these were dated 25<sup>th</sup> September 2009 – DFP Secretariat confirmed this should state 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010 and will be amended.

NISRA have proposed amendment to the Minutes 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010. These amended minutes will be made available to members.

#### **2. Action Points**

Action points 1 and 4 were taken together. The issues raised by a member at the previous meeting were discussed as follows:-

*The Interpretation of point 3 Appendix 2 e.g. a Women's Group project wishing to employ a woman as head of this group & how does this fit with current legislation.*

The chair stated where employment was concerned there is no exemption other than the specific circumstances that the law identifies as constituting a genuine occupational qualification. It was discussed and agreed that a job specification may be targeted and a particular job specification defined. Specific advice may need to be sought by the employer on such an issue.

*Single Identity projects and the relationship with the terminology "build good relations."*

The view presented was that the question of single identity projects has arisen solely in the case of the PEACE III Programme. While PEACE favours cross community projects, it will support single identity actions under particular circumstances--e.g. a single identity project that is preparing its participants for later cross community engagement or a single identity project that is willing to participate in a cross community network.

*The remit of Equality Questionnaire - is Learning Disability included*

The disability (Question 4) question does include learning disability.

*The need for a question concerning transgender*

The current questionnaire was deemed adequate and a transgender question was deemed not necessary.

Action points 1 and 2 were dealt with together.

NISRA had provided written representation to this meeting on the requirements of a viable survey:-

*"The response rate is not the main issue for the viability of the survey, it is more important to consider confidence intervals. This is particularly the case where the proportions are close to 50/50, e.g. religious community background where proportions for Protestant community background and*

*Catholic community background are 49% and 41% respectively resulting in confidence intervals of +/-7. If the questionnaires were sent out again and the number of responses was increased to 175 these intervals would be reduced to +/-3. If the group feel it would be useful, we could add this information to the report produced.”*

It was agreed this information should be included in the report.

The draft audit report will be noted in the update to Monitoring Committee and the issues of the 45% response rate should also be raised. The group agreed a further report should be carried out probably in the spring of next year and more active participation sought.

Agreement should be sought by written procedure to sign off on the Revised Equality Mainstreaming Guide.

The Chair noted if advice is required the Equality Commission can be contacted or queries may be raised through the Equality Working Group.

### **3. Work Programme 2010-11**

Proposals were sought for a work programme for the incoming year and a number of suggestions were made:-

- Sharing and Identifying good practice in projects
- Consideration of the extent to which equality considerations had been a feature of the process to date
- Look at Networking North/South and East/West – how much has been done.

The main issue we need to focus on is how equality is represented, taken into account and the effect it is having.

**Action: Working Group**

#### **4. AOB**

The chair noted the following members have left the working group and thanked them for their work and participation: –

Adrian MacNamee (SEUPB)

Dale Heaney and Michael Black (OFMDFM)

The following will replace these members:-

Christine Markey (SEUPB), Ken Fraser and Alastair James (OFMDFM)

NICVA will have no representation at the Working Group for the foreseeable future - both members have left/are leaving NICVA employment. The group felt it is necessary for the community sector to be fully represented at this group and suggested NICVA be asked to nominate a representative and/or this be highlighted at the Monitoring Committee. DFP secretariat confirmed correspondence had been received from NICVA stating they would not be able to provide a representative at present.

Equality Working Group attendance will need to be highlighted at the Monitoring Committee.

#### **5. Date and venue for next meeting**

It was proposed the next meeting be arranged when clarification has been received from members on the work programme for 2010-11.

**Action: DFP**

## ACTION POINTS

	<b>ACTION POINT</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>
<b>1</b>	Request written approval from Equality Working Group members for the minutes of meetings on 25 <sup>th</sup> September 2009 and 31 <sup>st</sup> March	DFP
<b>2</b>	Request written approval from members on the Revised Mainstreaming Equality Guide	DFP
<b>3</b>	Proposals for the Work Programme to be undertaken in 2010-11	Working Group/DFP (Sec)