

# Audit of Inequalities 2019

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# **Libraries NI Audit of Inequalities 2019**

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

The Libraries NI Equality Scheme (the Scheme) contains a commitment to carry out an Audit of Inequalities and to review this in line with its Equality Scheme schedules. The current Scheme was approved by the Equality Commission Northern Ireland in January 2019.

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires Libraries NI to comply with two statutory duties. The first is the Equality of Opportunity Duty:

In carrying out our functions<sup>1</sup> we are required to 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
- men and women generally
- persons with a disability and persons without
- persons with dependents and persons without.

The second is the Good Relations Duty:

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

<sup>1</sup> "Functions" include the "powers and duties" of a public authority and includes our employment and procurement functions.

## **2 LIBRARIES NI**

Libraries NI was established on 1 April 2009 under the Libraries Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 to provide a comprehensive and efficient public library service for persons living, working or studying in Northern Ireland.

Libraries NI delivers services and operates in the wider context of the Northern Ireland Programme for Government under the direction of the Department for Communities (DfC) Corporate Strategy and our vision is - a visible, accessible and inclusive library service at the heart of communities, changing lives and valued by all.

Libraries NI has a network of 96 public libraries, two specialist libraries (The Mellon Centre for Migration Studies, Omagh and The Irish and Local Studies Library, Armagh), 16 public mobile libraries, nine Homecall Service vehicles and a 24/7 online library service. In addition, an Out of Hours library service is provided at six libraries across Northern Ireland.

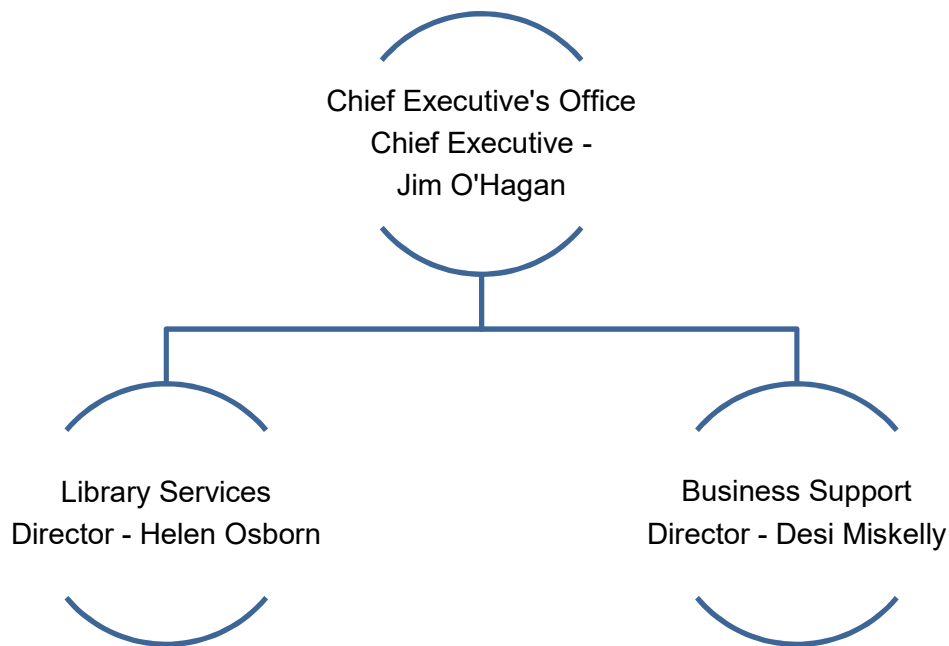
A range of programmes, events, activities and exhibitions is provided, including:

- books, audio books, newspapers, periodicals and magazines
- eBooks, eMagazines and other online resources
- Public Access Terminals (computers) for use by the general public with free internet access for library members
- support for the development of ICT skills, through e.g. GOT IT?, Go ON
- free Wi-Fi, enabling library members to use their own devices
- learning opportunities
- school class visits
- family history, heritage and local studies material
- access to information from a range of sources and organisations
- access to cultural and creative experiences, e.g. Creative Writing Workshops
- Storytimes, Rhythm and Rhyme sessions and other activities for children
- reading groups for children, teenagers and adults
- study, meeting and shared social spaces.

in order to support the following Service Priorities:

- Reading and Reader Development
- Children and Young People's Services
- Digital Inclusion
- Community Relations and Cultural Diversity
- Cultural Heritage
- Support for Health and Wellbeing.

Libraries NI is organised as follows:



The Chief Executive's Office:

- Board Secretariat, providing administrative and secretarial support for the Board and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee
- Internal Audit.

The Library Services Directorate:

- the public library network, including branch, mobile, Homecall and heritage libraries
- Key Service Priorities teams
- Marketing and Communications.

The Business Support Directorate:

- Assets Management Unit
- Finance Unit
- Human Resources Unit
- Intelligent Customer Unit (ICU)/Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Unit.

Overall responsibility for equality rests with the Chief Executive and the Directors and day-to-day operational responsibility has been delegated to a Service Development Manager and an Equality Working Group.

### **3 AUDIT OF INEQUALITIES**

#### **3.1 Gathering Information**

An audit of inequalities is described as '*a systematic review and analysis of inequalities, which exist for service users and those affected by a public authority's policies*'. This audit of inequalities will gather and analyse information across the Section 75 categories to identify any inequalities that exist for our service users and those affected by our policies.

The Guide for Public Authorities on the implementation of the Section 75 duties recommends that "In order to effectively demonstrate that a public authority has paid due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations through the implementation of its equality scheme, a public authority should develop action measures/action plans to promote equality of opportunity and good relations".

In conducting this Audit of Inequalities, Libraries NI has examined an extensive range of internal and external information sources. In particular, internal and external data relating to the functions of the Public Authority was compiled and assessed to identify those activities which most directly targeted the Section 75 groups and any relevant formal or informal partnerships and targets or objectives in relation to Section 75 groups. Research was also carried out to identify examples of best practice and gain awareness of key publications from the Equality Commission.

Sources of statistical and other information, both internal and external, to inform the audit included:

- Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)
- Continuous Household Survey 2018/19: Experience of the Public Library Service in Northern Ireland
- Meeting the Demands of a Modern Public Library Service Strategic Reviews
- Library Management System membership database
- Workforce database
- Customer Feedback information
- Internal reviews, customer surveys, consultations, Equality Impact Assessments and Rural Impact Assessment
- Libraries NI Business Plans and Service Plans
- Participation in Core and Regular Library Activities in Northern Ireland 2017/18
- Equality Commission for Northern Ireland: Statement on key inequalities in Northern Ireland, 2007.

Data and key findings/observations were then analysed to identify any existing or potential inequalities. Opportunities to promote equal opportunities and/or good community relations were identified and recorded. Possible solutions or mitigation with regard to any identified inequality were identified and recorded.

Section 3.3 details the significant findings under each Section 75 category.

## 3.2 Engagement

Since 2011/12 Libraries NI has engaged, formally and informally, with a wide variety of groups, including:

- Consultation on a draft Opening Hours Policy and Proposals was carried out in 2015/16. The screening process identified that the Policy may have a differential impact on people in some Section 75 groups and on some staff. An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out and was subjected to consultation in parallel with the consultation process on the draft Policy and Proposals. A Rural Impact Assessment was also carried out
- Consultation on Library Opening Hours continued during 2015/16 with further local public consultation to develop patterns of Library opening hours which meet customer need and are sustainable. New opening hours came into effect from 1 November 2015
- The Mobile Library Service Strategic review was implemented in January 2014 and the routes and schedules of Mobile Libraries and Homecall vehicles were reviewed during 2014/15 to ensure efficient and effective service delivery
- Engagement with regional and locally based organisations (Health Trusts, Councils, Community Planning Partners, Cancer Focus, Macmillan Cancer Support, Cedar Foundation, Autism Awareness, Action on Hearing Loss, Macular Society, Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB), Carers Matter, Suicide Awareness, Citizens Advice Bureau, Alzheimer's Society) to promote health and wellbeing and provide support and signposting for those with specific needs
- Engagement, as part of the out-workings of Strategic Reviews one and two, with local partners and community groups in relation to library provision e.g. Workspace Group, South West Action for Rural Development, Village Renewal Grant Scheme, Larne Borough Council, Armagh City Council, Kells and Connor Library Action Group, Friends of the Library Killyleagh (FOLK), Fintona Library Educational Awareness and Training Association (FLEAT) in Fintona
- Consultation with local action groups regarding planning for new library buildings in Fintona, Lisnaskea and Carnlough
- Meeting with Action Ability to form a group response to the questionnaire regarding Opening Hours Policy.
- Partnership working with the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) resulted in funding to provide Health in Mind activities in rural areas
- Libraries NI became and remains a statutory partner in the Community Planning Process and has engaged actively with each new Council and other Community Planning partners to identify long term objectives for their respective areas and to develop a collaborative approach to issues for the benefit of people and communities

- A public consultation on potential cuts to opening hours in 14 libraries in 2016. (Note - Libraries NI received additional funding from the Minister in post at that time, which allowed the opening hours to remain unchanged)
- Consultation with local Carers Pathway Steering Group and Carers NI when applying for the Carnegie Engaging Libraries project
- Quarterly policy screening reports issued to consultees and published on the Libraries NI website.

This approach has enabled Libraries NI to engage with existing and potential users of its services to understand their needs, put measures in place to meet those needs and to maintain, develop and where necessary cease services and activities in order to best fulfil its obligations.

### **3.3 Statistical Analysis**

Statistical analysis was carried out across the nine Section 75 categories in relation to the functions of Libraries NI and the services it delivers.

The audit also examined inequalities that may exist internally for staff at recruitment and throughout employment. Whilst these have been considered on the basis of the Section 75 categories, for the purposes of this document, they have been reported on collectively.

#### **3.3.1 Religious Belief**

Libraries NI does not collect data for this category. However, the 2018/19 Continuous Household Survey indicates no significant disparity in the percentage of Catholics and Protestants who visited a library at least once a year: 25% and 24% respectively.

#### **3.3.2 Political Opinion**

Libraries NI does not collect data for this category.

#### **3.3.3 Race**

Libraries NI provides the option for members on joining to indicate “to which ethnic group do they belong?”. Groups listed are in line with those used in the Northern Ireland Census. In relation to ethnicity these show that the percentage of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) active members in 2017/18 is higher than in the 2011 Census (3.93% BME active members compared to 1.79% in Census). White members (96.07%) was less than the Census percentage (98.21%). The use of Public Access Terminals (PATs) and Wi-Fi also demonstrated that BME users was higher (5.87% and 6.73% respectively) than the Census percentage (1.79%). Similarly, use of eBooks shows a higher percentage of users from the BME community (2.03%) than is represented in the Census (1.79%).

With regards to language, the 2017/18 figures show that 2.16% of active members have indicated a first language that is not English. This compares to 3.70% of active



members in 2011/12 and to 3.1% of Northern Ireland residents aged 3 or over who indicated a first language that is not English. Libraries NI's 2017/18 figures show that 1.21% of Stock held is in a language that is not English.

### **3.3.4 Age**

The age profile of active members remains in line with that reported in 2012/13. 2017/18 active membership shows a small increase in the percentage of children (0 – 11 years), from 30.41% to 32.53%, the percentage of teenagers (12 – 17 years) remaining the same at 8.74%, but the percentage of adults (18 – 59 years) falling from 46.33% to 44.97% and senior citizens falling from 14.53% to 13.76%.

Active membership compared to the 2018 mid-year Northern Ireland population estimate shows that whilst children (aged 0-16 years) represented 20.9%% of the population, active membership stood at 32.53%. However, in contrast, whilst the adult population estimate stood at 62.7%, active membership in this group was 44.97% and whilst the senior citizen (over 65 years) estimate was 16.4% active membership represented 13.76%.

However, it is also worth noting, by age profile, the percentage of book loans compared to active membership and the 2018 mid-year Northern Ireland population estimate: children (42.06% [percentage of total book loans] – 32.53 [active membership] – 16% [population estimate]); teenagers (4.07% - 8.74% - 7%); adults (25.42% - 44.97% - 55%) and; senior citizens (26.93% – 13.76% - 22%).

Conversely, an examination, by age profile, of the use of Public Access Terminals shows that adult users accounted for 70.73% of sessions (adults represented 44.97% of active users and 55% of the population), children 10.68% (32.53% and 16%), teenagers 9.21% (8.74% and 7%) and senior citizens 8.75% (13.76% and 22%).

The Continuous Household Survey 2018/19 data indicates that over 50% of children have used a public library in the past 12 months, whilst the figure is lower for adults ranging from 34% of 35 – 44 year olds to 19% of 55 – 64 year olds.

### **3.3.5 Marital Status**

Libraries NI does not collect data for this category. However, the 2018/19 Continuous Household Survey indicates that 25% of married people, 25% of single people, 20% of widowed people and 24% of separated or divorced people said they had used a library in the previous year.

### **3.3.6 Sexual Orientation**

Libraries NI does not collect data for this category.

### **3.3.7 Gender**

The 2017/18 gender profile of active members remains largely unchanged since 2011/12: 40.38% male and 59.62% female in 2017/18 compared to 40.34% and 59.66% respectively in 2011/12. However, the significant contrast to the 2018 mid-year Northern Ireland population estimate remains: 49% male and 51% female, highlighting again an under-representation of males in the active membership.

When the gender profile is examined in more detail by age group it highlights that whilst for children, teenagers and senior citizens who are active members there is no significant difference in the percentage membership, the percentage of adults by gender who are active members is 15.69 for males and 28.30 for females. This confirms again that the group most under-represented amongst active members is adult males.

### **3.3.8 Disability**

Libraries NI offers the opportunity for members on joining to indicate whether they have a disability under the following categories: hearing; sight; mobility; or other.

In 2017/18 3.15% of active members indicated that they considered themselves to have a disability. This represents a significant increase from users indicating a disability in 2011/12 (0.50%). However, loans by disabled users fell from 0.89% in 2011/12 to 0.83% in 2017/18 but PAT users increased from 0.40% in 2011/12 to 0.63% in 2017/18.

The 2011 Census indicates that 20.6 of the population consider themselves to have day-to-day activities limited by long-standing health problems and/or disabilities.

### **3.3.9 Dependants**

Libraries NI does not collect data for this category. However, the 2018/19 Continuous Household Survey indicates that adults with dependants (31%) were more likely to have used the library in the past year than those who have no dependants (21%).

In carrying out this statistical analysis it was noted that inequalities may exist that cut across the Section 75 categories and that individuals and group have the potential to experience inequality as members of more than one category. In addition, it was recognised that inequalities exist that are beyond the reach of Libraries NI. As such this audit has sought to identify where multi-layered and far-reaching inequalities exist and identify a number of actions to help alleviate and address these.

## **4. ACTIONS TO ADDRESS INEQUALITIES**

Since 2011/12 Libraries NI has participated in a wide range of activities aimed at increasing and improving service delivery to the public, including those with particular needs and from many of the Section 75 categories. These actions include:

- To address the Department for Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) key priority “To promote equality and tackle poverty and social exclusion” (PETPSE) Libraries NI set aside £265,000 from its resource budget to continue to release a number of experienced front-line staff from their substantive posts to undertake outreach work in areas of social need and to work on community engagement. Libraries NI targeted resources at 28 libraries which serve people in the 10% most deprived Super Output Areas with a view to addressing inequalities and barriers to use through targeted programmes and activities. Specific targets in relation to this work were incorporated in Service, Area and Branch plans and in individual staff appraisals
- Libraries NI implemented systems to support digital inclusion through fast and reliable Internet and free Wi-Fi in 98 libraries, assisting people to develop the necessary skills to access, evaluate and use appropriate information and increase the use of social media
- Free access to Public Access Terminals (computers)
- Investment in online resources to make library services and information accessible 24/7
- Additional funding from the Strategic Investment Board (SIB) enabled an enhanced level of programming to be delivered during Creativity Month in March 2016 to libraries in Greater Belfast and Derry which serve Urban Villages. These events contributed to the Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) strategy and included Irish storytelling, Irish traditional music and talks on Irish culture, Fab Lab demonstrations, author talks and workshops, puppet-making and a range of Heritage events
- Systems were implemented to support digital inclusion through fast and reliable Internet and free Wi-Fi in 98 libraries, assisting people to develop the necessary skills to access, evaluate and use appropriate information and increase the use of social media
- Continued investment in eBooks and eMagazines
- Libraries NI was invited to contribute to research on a project on Ethnic Minority Communities, Museums, Libraries and Galleries. The research was conducted by a lecturer in Sociology at Ulster University. Library staff attended an event entitled ‘Inclusion Belonging and Diversity: Ethnic Minority Participation and the Cultural Sector’ which provided useful networking opportunities and increased awareness of barriers to accessing public services
- Libraries NI Hidden Disabilities initiative was established to carry out a review of Libraries NI processes for registering people with disabilities, including hidden disabilities, to improve service delivery, reduce barriers to use and improve communication
- Service Plan targets in 2016/17 included focussing on refugees, homeless people, people with Autism and people with Dementia. Action Plans were implemented for all four target groups during 2016/17 and second year implementation continued during 2017/18

- Department for Communities (DfC) funding enabled an enhanced level of programming to be delivered across Northern Ireland during Creativity Month in March 2017. These events contributed to the Together: Building a United Community (T: BUC) strategy and included creative residencies in Storytelling, Animation and Creative Writing. The programme of events for all ages aimed to celebrate cultural diversity and creativity, improve understanding of other traditions and promote tolerance and respect for other cultures
- Browsealoud software was provided to help website browsing with easy speech, reading and translation tools
- Libraries NI signed up to the Every Customer Counts: Promoting Accessible Services initiative in 2017
- An “Out of Hours” pilot project part-funded by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) was launched. This service offers adults additional access to a range of library facilities outside of normal library opening hours and supports computer access in rural areas. Customers can access a limited but important range of services including broadband/Wi-Fi access, printing facilities, study space and book borrowing on a self-service basis
- A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the Northern Ireland Prison Service supporting library and information services to prisoners
- Autism Action Plan developed and implemented to improve communication with people with Autism and Autism support groups and identifies measures to be taken to create Autism Friendly libraries and library activities
- Dementia Action Plan developed and implemented to improve communication with people with Dementia and Dementia support groups and identifies measures to be taken to create Dementia Friendly libraries and library activities.

Libraries NI continues to deliver inclusive activities, programmes and services to increase understanding and respect for other cultures, traditions and beliefs. Libraries are ideally placed in communities offering neutral, welcoming spaces accessible to all whether for social interaction, learning a new skill or exploring different cultural traditions.

## **5. EMPLOYMENT**

Libraries NI complies with its equality obligations under the various anti-discrimination legislation and its Equal Opportunities Policy applies to all applicants and employees. The Employment Monitoring Questionnaire in use is as recommended by the Equality Commission and information gathered from applicants is used to measure the effectiveness of its policies and practices.

Libraries NI provides a range of opportunities to assist staff coming back to work after prolonged absence and to remain in work. Libraries NI is also committed to providing staff with Work Life Balance and a range of initiatives are in place. Libraries NI also has a proactive approach to Health and Wellbeing and offers support, advice and guidance to staff in a variety of formats.

## **6. EQUALITY AWARENESS RAISING AND STAFF TRAINING**

Libraries NI has a range of training and awareness measures in place to make sure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and obligations in relation to Equality and compliance with the Libraries NI Equality Scheme. These measures include:

- Libraries NI Equality Scheme and Summary available to all staff on the staff intranet
- Awareness raising of the Libraries NI Equality Scheme as part of local and corporate induction.

In addition, Libraries NI has engaged in a range of training activities for all staff aimed not only at improving awareness of equality issues but also at improving service delivery to the public, including Section 75 categories. This includes:

- Equality Awareness training, using CAL e-learning modules (Diversity Now)
- Safeguarding (Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults) training.

Other training has been targeted at first-line, middle and/or senior managers:

- Managing Customer Service training
- Community Development training
- Goods, Facilities, Services: An Overview of Equality Law and How it Applies to the Library Service
- Equality Screening training
- Target Group Awareness including input from Autism NI, Alzheimer's Society, Combatting Homelessness as well as information on Refugees
- Designated Officer (Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults) training.

Some training, aimed at improving service provision, has been delivered to various numbers of front-line staff:

- Macular training
- Dementia Awareness
- Vision Awareness
- Alzheimer's Awareness
- Calming and Defusing training
- First Aid at Work training
- Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) training

- storytelling workshops were delivered to promote techniques for engaging with those with Alzheimer's through reminiscence storytelling sessions
- Irish Traveller and Romany Gypsy Awareness training was provided to staff based in libraries where there is a known local traveller and gypsy presence in the area. The training increased understanding of the issues facing travellers and gypsies and identified ways in which library services could better meet their needs
- training to frontline staff to increase their knowledge of the Browsealoud software and to promote its use
- storytelling training workshops focusing on the four target groups (refugees, homeless people, people with Autism and people with Dementia) facilitated by Libraries NI Storyteller-in-Residence to 91 frontline staff.

Libraries NI has also provided opportunity for designated staff to attend a variety of workshops, external training events and conference in order to improve their understanding of the needs of a range of Section 75 category members. This includes:

- Supporting Looked After Children Conference
- Association of Senior Children's and Education Librarians Conference
- attendance by HR staff at a range of seminars and workshops facilitated by the Equality Commission
- Disability Employment, Shared Parental Leave and Flexible Working attended by Human Resources staff
- Connected Baby training
- Parent and Guardian Engagement Sessions (PaGES) training
- Irish Language classes.

## **7. PHYSICAL ESTATE AND ACCESSIBILITY**

Library venues are neutral environments and as such are community places accessed by people of all ages and backgrounds for information and leisure as well as meeting and sharing ideas through reading groups, family, community activities and road shows.

As is required by Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)1995, Libraries NI gives due regard to

- the need to promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities and
- the need to encourage participation by people with disabilities in public life ('the disability duties').

A Disability Action Plan showing how we propose to fulfil these duties has been drafted, is reviewed annually, submitted to the Equality Commission (Section 49B of the DDA 1995) and made available to staff and customers.

Within this context Libraries NI recognises that many barriers to access can exist within the physical environment and that these can prevent or inhibit the ability of library customers to avail of a full range of services provided. Consequently, Libraries NI works to ensure the properties from which public library services are delivered are easily accessible to as wide a range of users as possible.

In managing our estate (including vehicles), planning developments and upgrading of buildings we take cognisance of the requirement to accommodate customers with a wide range of needs and aim to incorporate measures which ensure:

- easy access to our buildings (ramps, automatic doors, lifts etc.)
- clear circulation routes – providing visual contrast, signage in appropriate mediums/heights and adequate lighting
- facilities for the hearing impaired (induction loops)
- accessible and sufficient toilet facilities
- easy interaction with staff (reception desks at appropriate heights etc.).

Where appropriate we consult with our customers in planning our developments and utilise information provided by organisations representing specific user groups, such as RNIB, to ensure our facilities meet the needs of all. Libraries NI also works in partnership with other organisations in providing information to prospective users.

Audits of our accommodation are undertaken and where deficiencies are identified, remedial actions are incorporated in our estates planning cycle.

## **8. CUSTOMER FEEDBACK**

Libraries NI welcomes feedback, including complaints, from our customers about their experiences of our services. Feedback allows Libraries NI to identify and repeat what is good, attempt to correct any problems with our service and helps us improve what we do and how we do it. Feedback which includes a comment, compliment and/or complaint on an equality matter is brought to the attention of the Equality Working Group as well as senior Services managers.

## **9. CONCLUSIONS**

Libraries NI does much to meet its obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Staff are made aware of their duties and responsibilities with regard to equality and equality considerations are embedded into planning and delivery processes. Libraries NI consults extensively with a wide variety of Section 75 representative groups and responds positively to information gathered. Positive action is taken to ensure that all sections of the community, including Section 75 categories, can access a wide variety of services. Libraries NI partners extensively with a large number of other statutory bodies, charities, other service providers and Section 75 representative bodies and community groups in facilitating and delivering services to the public.





## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

This Report recommends that action should be taken to make sure that the inclusive approach to service delivery within Libraries NI is maintained and strengthened. In particular, Libraries NI should:

- 10.1 Review and where necessary identify new membership of the Equality Working Group
- 10.2 Review its list of consultees to ensure maximum coverage of Section 75 categories representation
- 10.3 Ensure that robust processes are in place to facilitate meaningful consultation with as wide a cross-section of the public, including Section 75 categories, as possible
- 10.4 Ensure that robust processes remain in place to facilitate community-wide engagement in order to make sure that its Policies, process and services meet the needs of the public in as far as is possible whilst continuing to meeting its duties as directed by the Department for Communities and remaining within budget
- 10.5 Continue to gather and analyse statistical and other evidence about usage, particularly in relation to Section 75 categories, and establish suitable actions to address all identified inequalities
- 10.6 Keep its recruitment, selection and employment process, including equality awareness raising and training, under review to ensure continued compliance with all relevant statutory requirements and best practice
- 10.7 Keep its Disability Action Plan under review and take action to address all identified barriers to access and participation.

## 11. LIBRARIES NI EQUALITY SCHEME ACTION PLAN

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Action required to implement recommendation</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Owner / Lead Officer</b>
1 –Lead Officer with responsibility for Equality to appoint new members to the Equality Working Group	Review membership of the Equality Working Group.	December. 2019	Director, Business Support
2 – Review the list of Consultees	Review Libraries NI’s list of Consultees to ensure maximum coverage of Section 75 categories representation.	Major review in line with Equality Scheme review, annually thereafter	Director, Business Support
3 – Undertake appropriate consultation on all relevant equality matters	Maintain robust processes to facilitate meaningful consultation with as wide a cross-section of the public, including Section 75 categories, as possible.	As required by business actions	Equality Working Group
4 – Engagement with stakeholders	Ensure that robust processes remain in place to facilitate community-wide engagement in order to make sure that Libraries NI’s Policies, processes and services meet the needs of the public in as far as is possible whilst continuing to meet its duties as directed by the Department for Communities and remaining within budget.	As required in line with policy and strategy development or reviews	Equality Working Group
5 – Collect, analyse and make effective use of data	Continue to gather and analyse statistical and other evidence about usage, particularly in relation to Section 75 categories, and establish suitable actions to address all identified inequalities.	Ongoing	Equality Working Group
7 – Maintain compliant employment practices	Keep Libraries NI recruitment, selection and employment processes, including equality awareness raising and training, under review to ensure continued compliance with all relevant statutory requirements and best practice.	Annually	HR Manager

8 – Review Libraries NI's Disability Action Plan	Keep Libraries NI's Disability Action Plan under review and take action to address all identified barriers to access and participation.	March 2020	Equality Working Group
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