**EQUALITY and DIVERSITY STEERING GROUP (EDSG)**

**AGENDA**

**Tuesday 15 October 2019 at 2.00 pm**

**Ballykelly House – Sperrin View, Ballykelly House**

**Tea & coffee on arrival**

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| 1. 2.00pm Welcome 2. Action points from Equality and Diversity Steering Group meeting on 12 March 2019 3. Equality and Diversity Working Group Update 4. Equality Update | Brian Doherty  Brian Doherty  Sean McGrade  Russell McCurry |
| 1. Champions Updates –  * Diversity & Inclusion Champion * Racial Equality Champion * Children’s Champion | Paul Donnelly  Paul Donnelly  Martin McKendry |
| 1. AOB 2. Next meeting – March 2020 |  |

**DAERA Minutes/Notes of Equality & Diversity Steering Group (EDSG)**

**Ref:**

**Date & time: 15 October 2019 2.00pm**

**Location: Sperrin View, Ballykelly and Video Conferencing from Dundonald House &**

**In attendance:**

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| **DAERA** | **(NAME OF ORGANISATION)** |
| Brian Doherty , Deputy Secretary | (Names of attendees) (include title)  Robert Huey Chief Veterinary Officer, Veterinary Service & Animal Health Group (VSAHG)  John Joe O’Boyle Chief Executive, Forest Service (FS)  Norman Fulton Deputy Secretary, Food & Farming Group (FFG), (via VC)  Fiona McCandless Deputy Secretary, Rural Affairs, Forest Service & Estates Management Group (RAFSEMG)  David Small Deputy Secretary, Environment, Marine & Fisheries Group (EMFG), (via VC)  Martin McKendry Director of CAFRE, (via VC)  Colm Morgan, NI Public Service Alliance (NIPSA) |
| (Name of Officials, include Title/Business Area)  Sean McGrade Director, Corporate Services Division  Russell McCurry, Head of Equality, Diversity and Public Appointments Branch (EDPAB – Acting)  Paul Donnelly, Director, Rural Affairs |
| Minutes:  Cindy Fowler, Staff Officer, Equality, Diversity and Public Appointments Branch (EDPAB) |
| Apologies:  Dr Denis McMahon, Permanent Secretary |  |

**Summary of Meeting:**

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| **Item** | **Description** | **Action Owner (where appropriate)** |
| **1.0** | **Welcome** |  |
|  | Brian welcomed all members and apologised on behalf of Denis McMahon. Brian welcomed Paul Donnelly as the new Diversity & Inclusion Champion and Racial Equality Champion. He also welcomed Colm Morgan from NIPSA. Thanks for both Jackie Robinson and Angela McAllister’s input was officially noted. |  |
| **2.0** | **Action Points from EDSG meeting held on 12 March 2019** |  |
|  | No outstanding actions carried forward from previous meeting, all actions completed. |  |
| **3.0** | **Equality and Diversity Working Group Update** |  |
|  | Sean McGrade informed members that the EDWG meeting was held on 02 September 2019. This was the second meeting of the re-structured group which represents more diversity across grades.  The meeting was positive and a number of members agreed to assist with encouraging staff to attend the Diversity events to be held in Dungannon and Enniskillen. Sean confirmed that the working group had requested key speakers to be arranged and this was being progressed.  Sean confirmed that he attended Newry Pride, at which Jackie Robinson was also present, as well as three permanent secretaries. Sean confirmed that although Newry Pride is smaller than Belfast Pride the numbers compared favourably and the crowd was enthusiastic.  Sean McGrade advised that Jackie Robinson and he attended a meeting with Pam Cameron MLA and Autism NI. Sean confirmed that whilst Autism NI were impressed with some of the things the Department is doing, they highlighted that we needed to pay more attention to training frontline staff and managers. They are to write to the Dept. formally and we await this request.  Brian Doherty reminded the group of the commitments agreed in the TOR and queried if these were being met. He requested that the Equality and Diversity Working Group (EDWG) would address the Diversity side and confirm how well this is being measured/considered within DAERA. Brian Doherty requested that Sean McGrade and Paul Donnelly meet to progress. | **AP1** Sean McGrade and Paul Donnelly. |
| **4.0** | **Equality Update.** |  |
|  | Annual Progress Report (APR)  Russell McCurry informed members that he and Cindy Fowler had met with ECNI to obtain feedback on the Annual Progress Report. ECNI focus on the screenings completed and confirmed they were pleased to note the Dept. had completed 47 policies in the reporting period. They also noted that CAFRE had completed monitoring of student composition and highlighted this as good practice. They further highlighted the different methods of collecting monitoring data obtained through the Rural Development Programme and acknowledged this was pleasing to note. In general they gave positive feedback in relation to the APR.  Russell McCurry also drew the group’s attention to the possibility of having a DAERA database to hold the Section 75 data which in turn could be matched to each application for grants. He was aware that Maire Brolly may be working on this but advised this covered multiple business areas. Brian Doherty advised this needed to be scoped out in narrative terms. Norman Fulton advised there would be a data strategy for the Dept. Norman advised that Seamus McErlean would advise on this in conjunction with Paul McGurnaghan who has ownership. Russell McCurry to contact Maire Brolly in the first instance.  Disability Action Plan (DAP)  Russell McCurry confirmed that a draft DAP had been produced and ECNI had given preliminary feedback. This has been taken on board and re-submitted to ECNI for further comment. Brian Doherty queried next action. Sean McGrade confirmed that a timeline for consultation and launch would be produced and supplied to SDMF.  Human Rights Manual (HRM) and Training Course  Russell McCurry explained that the HRM and slide show had been reviewed by EDWG. It has also been shared with the Human Rights Commission (HRC) but it should be noted that the HRC supplied guidance only at this point. Russell McCurry further advised that the HRC were willing to supply general training or if requested, DAERA specific training. Brian Doherty stated he thought the booklet was a good starting point. Norman Fulton agreed that the detail was adequate. Russell McCurry to prepare memo to Denis McMahon to update him on progress and confirm next steps.  CAL Section 75 Training  Russell McCurry confirmed that Nicola O’Boyle is part of a working group reviewing CAL online e-learning.  Training the Trainer  Russell McCurry advised that ECNI were prepared to supply 4 screening training sessions for DAERA policy makers. EDPA staff would also work along ECNI to produce and deliver Awareness Training. A proposal detailing this is currently being prepared for ECNI.  Conclusion  Brian Doherty thanked Russell McCurry for the detail and suggested a report be produced in advance of future meetings and supplied with the other papers. Further discussion took place regarding how to update and inform staff of the content and outcomes. Norman Fulton suggested via Team Brief articles and Martin McKendry suggested a quarterly comms piece. Sean McGrade and Russell McCurry to take forward. | **AP2** Russell McCurry  **AP3** Sean McGrade Russell McCurry  **AP4** Russell McCurry  **AP5** Russell McCurry  **AP6** Russell McCurry  **AP7** Sean McGrade Russell McCurry |
| **5.0** | **Champions Updates** |  |
|  | Diversity & Inclusion and Racial Equality Champion:  Paul Donnelly updated the group on DAERA’s Diversity Workshops. He confirmed that 3 have now taken place and the final event at CAFRE Enniskillen would take place on Thursday 17th October. Feedback would then be collated and a Diversity Action Plan produced. This will be provided to the EDWG and EDSG for comment.  It was noted that JAM (Just-A-Minute) card training has been rolled out within DAERA and 49% of staff have completed the on-line training. Paul Donnelly requested that managers encourage their staff to complete this training.  Paul Donnelly also advised that a “Diversity Light Box” designed by young people was now available and he would request this box be in place in the 3 headquarters.  Paul Donnelly advised as the new Diversity & Inclusion and Racial Equality Champion he has not yet had any involvement in relation to Racial matters.  Conclusion  Brian Doherty told the group he was encouraged by both the participation and openness of staff taking part in the Diversity Events. It highlighted the creativity and encapsulated diversity in its broadest sense.  Brian Doherty further advised that a Safeguarding sub-group has been set up and met on 11/07/19. Draft guidance will be issued to this group.  Fiona McCandless agreed and drew the group’s attention to the 4 key focus areas (gender; disability; LGBT & BEM) and added that as the D & I agenda develops it should also consider the Social Economic perspective. She agreed that it was indeed encouraging and showed a maturity in both diversity and inclusion matters by DAERA and its staff.  Children’s Champion:  Martin McKendry confirmed that a sub group had been set up and meetings had taken place on 10/04/19 and 09/10/19.  Martin McKendry advised the group that an Action Plan had been produced. He explained that the DfE leads on a lot of the work going on throughout the Department and advised that a NICS Group (lead by DfE) had highlighted 8 outcomes and that DAERA fits into 5 of these. Martin McKendry agreed to share papers with the group detailing the actions etc.  Paul Donnelly drew the group’s attention to the current Parenting Strategy and advised that Denis McMahon was keen to open up the DAERA estate and would work with DfE to enable this. | **AP8 –** Paul Donnelly  **AP9 –** Martin McKendry |
| **6.0** | **AOB** |  |
|  | Fiona McCandless advised that at the recent Top Leadership Forum an issue had arisen regarding attitude towards older members of staff. DAERA in particular has an older workforce when compared to the NICS average and they make a very significant contribution to the workforce with extensive corporate knowledge and experience. Brian Doherty reminded the group that circa 7.0% of DAERA staff were over 60.  The group agreed the next meeting for March 2020. |  |