**Equality, Diversity & Public Appointments Branch (EDPAB)**

**Equality & Diversity Steering Group (EDSG) meeting – Thursday 03.10.2018 at 10.00am**

**Conference Room F3 Klondyke & Video Conferencing from Ballykelly House**

**Attendance**Denis McMahon Permanent Secretary (Chair)

Norman Fulton Deputy Secretary, Food & Farming Group (FFG)

Colin Lewis Deputy Secretary, Corporate Services Group (CS)

Martin McKendry Director of CAFRE

John Joe O’Boyle Chief Executive Forest Service (FS)

Jackie Robinson Director of Animal Health and Welfare Policy Division (AHWPD)

Brian Doherty Director Corporate Services Division (CSD), (via VC)

**Invited Presenters & Guests**:   
Paul Caskie Head of Statistics and Analytical Services Branch (SASB)

Patricia McDowell Statistics and Analytical Services Branch (SASB)

Angela McAllister Head of Equality, Diversity and Public Appointments Branch (EDPAB), (via VC)

Kathryn Clarke Central Management Branch (CMB)

**Apologies**:

Robert Huey Chief Veterinary Officer, Veterinary Service & Animal Health Group (VSAHG)

Fiona McCandless Deputy Secretary, Central Services and Rural Affairs Group (CSRAG)

David Small Deputy Secretary, Environment, Marine & Fisheries Group (EMFG)

**Notes**: Russell McCurry Equality, Diversity and Public Appointments Branch (EDPAB) (via VC)   
  
**EDSG items noted:**

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| Northern Ireland Farmers’ Equality Indicators Update Project | Paul Caskie led a presentation in relation to the Northern Ireland Farmers’ Equality Indicators Project.   1. A team from Statistics and Analytical Service branch used an Economic and Social Research Council funded programme to develop an innovative approach to updating S75 farmer characteristics in line with census information. . 2. The project was more cost effective and had a more significant outreach than the survey methods used in 2002. 3. Data on the farming population is relatively stable with the new statistics generally comparable to the 2002 data. 4. Members agreed that the updated statistics should now be referenced by staff as evidence for equality screenings and other aspects of policy development. 5. It was suggested that the DfC DIME (Database for Income Modelling & Estimation) might be a source of additional information in terms of poverty and deprivation in rural areas. Statistical and Analytical Services Branch (SASB) agreed to speak to colleagues in DfC. (**AP1 – SASB**). 6. SASB will publish the final report on the dedicated rural statistics page of the DAERA website. **(AP2 – Patricia McDowell)** |
| Update on Equality matters and Equality and Diversity Working Group | 1. Dr Evelyn Collins CBE, CEO of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland will be attending the Departmental Board meeting on 31 October 2018 to discuss the recently published leadership guidance and the implementation of the Section 75 duties in general. 2. A briefing paper will be prepared for Board members. (**AP3 – Angela McAllister**).   Equality and Diversity Working Group (EDWG) Update   1. The inaugural meeting of the EDWG was held on 24 May 2018 co-chaired by Brian Doherty Director of Corporate Services and Jackie Robinson, DAERA Diversity Champion. It was a positive meeting, 20 people attended and 15 sent apologies. 2. Brian Doherty outlined options for restructuring the EDWG in terms of size and ensuring wider representation across the grades. 3. The options are to be further considered outside the EDSG. (**AP4 – Brian Doherty, Jackie Robinson, Angela McAllister**).   DAERA’s Disability Action Plan 2018-23   1. The Group noted the ongoing work to develop a DAERA Disability Action Plan (DAP) 2018-2023 and that volunteers may be required across business areas in the form of a working group to help inform the final draft. |
| Diversity Action Plan Approach paper | 1. Colin Lewis proposed an amendment to the Diversity Action Plan Approach paper to reflect the gender balance on the DAERA Board. 2. The Group agreed the proposed amendment and the Diversity Action Plan Approach paper. (**AP5 – Angela McAllister to amend the Diversity Action Plan Approach paper**). |
| Champion’s Updates | Children’s Champion   1. The Group noted the update by Martin McKendry, DAERA Children’s Champion, on the development of the Children and Young People’s strategy on which the Department of Education and the Department of Health are leading. The final draft is expected to be shared with Departments over the next few months. 2. There was a discussion around DAERA’s approach to safeguarding. The Permanent Secretary asked Martin McKendry and Brian Doherty to consider options for developing an overarching Safeguarding Policy for DAERA. (**AP6 – Martin McKendry and Brian Doherty to update the Permanent Secretary by the end of October 2018**).   Diversity & Inclusion and Racial Equality Champion   1. The Group noted the update by Jackie Robinson, DAERA Diversity and Racial Equality Champion who outlined proposals for a DAERA Diversity calendar of events. 2. In particular, events in relation to autism awareness, LGBT issues and to highlight the International Day of Women in Science were proposed. 3. The Group noted Jackie’s forthcoming attendance at a round table event on 8 October 2018. Racial Equality Champions will have face to face discussions with service users from different racial backgrounds to identify any gaps in and issues with services provided by Departments. |
| AOB | 1. The Group noted the positive feedback from the Equality Commission on DAERA’s Annual Progress Report on compliance with its Equality Scheme commitments for 2017-2018. 2. The Permanent Secretary thanked all business areas for their contribution to the report which demonstrates strong compliance by the Department in relation to its S75 duties. |
| Date of next meeting | Thursday 07 February 2019 |

**EDSG Actions Arising from 03.10.2018**

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|  | **Action** | **Subject Area** | **Date** | **Progress against actions** |
| 1 | Statistics and Analytical Services Branch (SASB) to discuss the DIME database with colleagues in DfC. | Northern Ireland Farmers’ Equality Indicators Update Project | By next EDSG | SASB have approached DfC and been advised that DfC are working on this and will notify Departments when complete.  Completed. |
| 2 | Patricia McDowell to publish final report on S75 equality indicators for farmers’ on the DAERA website. | As above | End October 2018 | The report on S75 equality indicators was published on 29 October.  Completed. |
| 3 | Angela McAllister to prepare briefing on S75 for the October Board meeting. | Equality | By October DB | Briefing sent to Board.  Completed. |
| 4 | Brian Doherty, Jackie Robinson, Angela McAllister to consider options for restructuring the EDWG. | Equality and Diversity Working Group (EDWG) | End October 2018 | Nominations received and meeting arranged for 29 January 2019.  Completed. |
| 5 | Angela McAllister to amend the Diversity Action Plan Approach paper. | Diversity Action Plan Approach | End October 2018. | Paper amended and presented to Departmental Board.  Completed. |
| 6 | Martin McKendry and Brian Doherty to update the Permanent Secretary on options for an over-arching DAERA Safeguarding Policy. | Safeguarding | End October 2018 | Options provided to Permanent Secretary and DAERA Safeguarding Policy is being drafted.  Completed. |