

Equality and Social Need Steering Group Meeting

Tuesday, 21 March 2006

2pm, Room E4.02 Castle Buildings

Minutes

Present:

Gerry Mulligan	Equality and Social Need Division (Chair)
Sharon Fitchie	DARD
Victor Douglas	DCAL
John McGuinness	DEL
Irene McAllister	DETI
Sarah Lamont	DFP
Carolyn Barr	DFP
Ann Torrens	DFP
Nigel Carson	DHSSPS
Seamus Camplisson	DHSSPS
Alex Boyle	DOE
Margaret Langhammer	DRD
David Malcolm	DSD
Tom Wilson	DSD
Jim Alford	NIO
Susan Nicholson	NIO
Robert Beatty	NISRA
Stephen Donnelly	NISRA/OFMDFM Research Branch
Claire Archbold	OFMDFM – Equality & Human Rights
Linsey Farrell	OFMDFM – Central Anti-Poverty Unit
Liz McMeekin	OFMDFM – Central Anti-Poverty Unit
Colette Leeson	OFMDFM – RPA
Antoinette McKeown	ECNI
Grainia Long	ECNI

Apologies:

Rosemary Crawford	DETI
Elaine McFeeters	DE

1. Apologies & Introductions

Gerry Mulligan welcomed everyone to the meeting and requested a brief tour de table for the benefit of newcomers to the group. Gerry introduced Nigel Carson from DHSSPS who had replaced Andrew Elliott.

Apologies were received from:

Rosemary Crawford DETI
Elaine McFeeters DE

2. Minutes of 25 January 2006 & Matters Arising

- 2.1 The minutes of 25 January were approved.
- 2.2 Stephen Donnelly's presentation on Equality Indicators had been postponed until the next ESNSG meeting in June.
Action: Stephen Donnelly
- 2.3 The minutes from the meetings in June 2005 and August 2005 had been circulated.
- 2.4 There were no further matters arising.

3. Presentation on Equality Screening

Gerry welcomed Antoinette McKeown and Grainia Long from the Equality Commission (ECNI) and thanked them for taking the time to speak to members on the important issue of Equality Screening. He asked Claire Archbold to introduce the presentation.

- 3.1 Claire highlighted how important it was for departments to be aware of Equality Screening and the ongoing work in terms of the model screening form, currently being developed by departmental equality units co-ordinate by Monica Fitzpatrick. Members were also reminded that Equality Screening was at the heart of many of the complaints brought before ECNI. The whole issue of screening was one that presented both challenges and opportunities to departments for the future.
- 3.2 Grainia Long thanked members for the opportunity to speak to them. The presentation covered the definition of screening, the criteria to be applied and evidence that should be considered in carrying out equality screening. Grainia also pointed to the challenges faced by public authorities as highlighted through complaints received by ECNI and reported on various examples of good practice adopted by some organisations. Members were

