

Fourth Quarterly Report (2017/2018) on the Implementation of the Equality Scheme

1.0 Compliance Issues

1.1 Equality Screening/Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA)

Screening

From 1st January – 31st March 2018 the following policies have been screened:

- Travel & Subsistence Policy (Revised)
- Grievance Policy (Revised)

Screening reports are available on request.

EQIA

There were no EQIAs completed during this quarter.

1.2 Training

Safeguarding Training

Since 2010 over 200 training sessions have been completed with over 2,500 members of staff attending child safeguarding courses, adult safeguarding courses or both. In addition Equality Unit staff have facilitated safeguarding policy awareness sessions with 10 contractor firms, Supporting Communities N.I. (SCNI) and the House Conditions Survey Team.

A new programme of safeguarding training began in September 2017 and 11 courses have been held up to 31st March 2018.

Equality Awareness Training

A new programme of Equality Awareness training began in September 2017 and 16 training sessions have been held up to 31st March 2018.

1.3 Access to Information and Services

Communication Support (Translation & Interpreter Services)

A total of 770 telephone based interpreting sessions were held from 1st January to 31st March 2018. The top 3 most requested languages are listed below:

- Polish
- Arabic
- Romanian

Translation tasks totalled 64 and face to face interpreter sessions (including Sign Language) totalled 24. There were 6 requests for alternative formats including Braille, audio and large print.

1.4 Monitoring

Equality Monitoring waiting list and allocations data is available up to the 31st March 2018.

1.5 Consultation

The NIHE's Consultative Forum on Equality Steering Group met on 7th March 2018.

2.0 Key Equality/Good Relations Programme

2.1 Traveller Project Team:

The following update provides a brief synopsis of the Housing Executive's accommodation strategy for Traveller families across Northern Ireland.

Group Housing:

- FOLD Housing Association, Omagh (8 units) and Magherafelt (6 units).
- Clanmil Housing Association, Glen Road, Belfast (6 units) and Father Cullen Park, Bessbrook (6 Units).
- APEX Housing Association, Monagh Road Belfast (21 Units) and Labre Park, L'Derry (10 units).

Serviced Sites

The NIHE currently operate 4 serviced sites situated at:

- Acorn Grove, Craigavon

- The Glen, Coalisland
- Daisyfield, L'Derry (currently closed on health and safety grounds)
- Glen Road Heights, Belfast (currently closed on health and safety grounds)

Health and safety inspections were completed on all NIHE managed Traveller sites in June 2017. All works identified were completed by September 2017.

NIHRC Investigation

The NI Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) has completed an investigation into Traveller Accommodation in Northern Ireland and recently published a final report entitled "Out of Sight; Out of Mind". This investigation examined the right to adequate accommodation measured against standards as set out in international human rights law.

At the March 2018 Board meeting the Director of Regional Services tabled a report giving an overview of the NIHRC report. The report set out 45 recommendations, 26 of which fall to the Housing Executive.

Priority Actions and Timeframes

The NIHRC report recommendations fall into 2 categories. For those that fall to the Housing Executive there are five priority actions which the NIHRC have requested to be addressed immediately. The remaining 21 recommendations to the Housing Executive are to be addressed by the end of March 2019. There are a further 3 recommendations which apply to all public authorities which therefore also need to be considered.

The NIHRC intends to track progress against these recommendations after 6 months in relation to the urgent recommendations and after 12 months in relation to the other recommendations. They also plan to hold a number of events to discuss the report and its recommendations

with key stakeholders. An initial informal meeting between NIHRC and the Chief Executive is due to take place on 10th May 2018. This meeting seeks to clarify the respective issues and responsibilities of the Housing Executive and some of the more challenging aspects of the report recommendations this will be followed by a number of round table events, the first of which between the NIHRC and the Housing Executive has been scheduled for 22 May 2018.

Current Situation

More recently NIHE appointed a consultant to review all sites with regard to fire safety, health and safety while ensuring minimum site guidelines are enforced. This report was presented to NIHE in April 2018 and the findings are to be discussed at an inter divisional meeting scheduled for 21 May 2018. This report will help form a 5 year action plan, pending DfC funding and onsite consultation, to meet site guideline requirements to help enable applications for site licence's as per the 1963 Caravans Act.

The NIHE has been granted planning approval for an additional 12 unit serviced site at Burnside, Craigavon which will be subject to additional consultation at a more local level involving all key stakeholders.

Transit Sites/Emergency Halting Site

An application to extend the planning approval at Legahory Close, Craigavon has been submitted to ABC Council offices. NIHE currently await the outcome of this application. Existing transit sites include Glen Road Heights, Belfast, The Glen Coalisland and Ballyarnett, Derry.

4th Comprehensive Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment

Traveller Policy Unit has also met with NIHE Research to commence the fieldwork for the 4th Comprehensive Traveller Needs Assessment. An initial meeting was held in February 2018 to begin the process of formulating a Research Group and associated workshops to help lead out the assessment with a projected on site date of September 2018. The findings of the 4th Needs Assessment will help form a new

Traveller accommodation programme to meet the new and existing needs of the Irish Traveller population in N Ireland.

2.2 Community Cohesion

The next update from the Community Cohesion Team will be in the 1st Quarterly Report 2018/19.

2.3 Key Documents

The following documents can be viewed and downloaded by accessing the links below:

NIHE Equality Scheme

http://www.nihe.gov.uk/equality_scheme.pdf

17th Annual Report to the Equality Commission

https://www.nihe.gov.uk/seventeenth_annual_progress_report_to_the_equality_commission.pdf

Black Minority and Ethnic (BME) and Migrant Worker Report

https://www.nihe.gov.uk/bme_migrant_worker_mapping_report_2016.pdf

NIHE Traveller Accommodation needs Assessment

http://www.nihe.gov.uk/traveller_accommodation_needs_assessment_2014_published_march_2015.pdf

If you require any further information on any of topics discussed in this report or if you require the report in an alternative format please contact:

Tony Steed

Equality Unit Manager

5th Floor, Housing Centre

2 Adelaide Street

Belfast

BT2 8BP

Tel: 028 9031 8556

Next Generation Text (NGT) (formerly Text Relay): 18001 03448 920 900

Email: tony.steed@nihe.gov.uk