

<b>TITLE/ORGANISATION</b>	Traveller Thematic Group Meeting
<b>VENUE:</b>	Online MS Teams
<b>DATE/TIME:</b>	Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> April 2025, 2pm
<b>List of Attendees:</b>	<p><b><u>Attendees – In Person</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Martin McDonagh (Chair)</li> <li>• Lisa Hogg (Craigavon Travellers Support Committee)</li> <li>• Paul Noonan (Equality Commission for Northern Ireland)</li> <li>• Karen Turner (Deputy - Education Authority NI)</li> <li>• Deirdre McAliskey (STEP NI)</li> <li>• Paddy McEldowney (Public Health Agency)</li> <li>• Judith Thompson (Toybox Project – Early Years Organisation)</li> <li>• Fidelma Fearon (Armagh Roma Traveller Support)</li> <li>• Jill Neill (Deputy - NI Housing Executive)</li> <li>• Marie McLaughlin (Western Trust Traveller Health &amp; Wellbeing Programme)</li> <li>• Natasha McDonagh (Start 360)</li> <li>• Laura Euler - (Belfast Health &amp; Social Care Trust)</li> <li>• Judith Searle (Barnardo's)</li> <li>• Dr Hannah Russell (Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission)</li> </ul> <p><b><u>TEO</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paul Naylor</li> <li>• TEO Official</li> </ul>
<b>Apologies:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John Boyle (Minceirs Whiden)</li> <li>• David Glasgow (NIHE)</li> <li>• Kieran Shields (Education Authority NI)</li> </ul>
<b>1. <u>Welcome and Apologies</u></b>	

Members were welcomed, apologies stated and no conflicts of interest raised.

## **2. New Chair Introduction**

New Chair Martin McDonagh provided a brief introduction and his background.

## **3. Approval of minutes and action updates from 16th October 2024**

No issues raised on minutes or action points. Minutes approved.

## **4. Irish Traveller Workshop**

Chair outlined their expectations from the workshop including opportunity to learn from the three organisations speaking at the event and highlighting of potential areas to adapt and adopt into the new strategic approach to racial equality.

TEO provided outline of the day itself and how the information garnered would feed into the considerations for the new approach post 2025.

Points discussed included:

- Clarification that those with lived experience can attend.
- Whether list of issues to be discussed is too wide, lacks specificity – confirmation that TTG members can shape this list as they see fit.
- STEP NI suggested the format of the workshop discussions could be based on The 3 Pillars rights based model and provided link to this for more information - [Child Rights - The Three Pillars](#)
- The success of ROI state funded community development in Traveller Communities, creating Traveller leadership.
- Importance of drawing out from ROI policy how they got to the stage they are at – draw out what drove the change i.e. the specific policies and strategies, and how far ahead they are in comparison to here.
- TEO explained difference in flexibility in the new strategic approach in comparison to the current Racial Equality Strategy. Actions can be updated as and when, with opportunity for amendments and the ability to adapt throughout its lifetime.

- TEO confirmed that the department has ministerial agreement on the new strategic approach, not a standalone Irish Traveller Strategy. Members stated that asking for a standalone strategy remains their standing point.
- Concerns on how resource intensive it is to see effective change and the downside of bringing people together to share expertise with no commitment to funding.
- Importance of having the conversation and work out how best to proceed regardless, coming up with better ways to work across government and the Community and Voluntary sector.
- NIHRC suggested that another element for the workshop discussion should be Monitoring and Evaluation.
- Inviting Racial Equality Champions (REC) raised as important. TEO clarified that although RECs will be invited, it's important that the specific policy leads within departments are included to ensure they right people are taking part.
- Draft agenda for the workshop to be circulated **[AP1]**.

#### **5. Any other business**

Mark Donaghue has left Bryson so should be removed as a representative for this group. TEO to contact Bryson for alternative representation **[AP2]**.

An Tearmann and CTSC are co-hosting a Traveller Pride event on 29<sup>th</sup> May and have asked members to save the date. Date to be confirmed in the coming weeks.

#### **6. Date, time and venue of next meeting**

To be confirmed. TEO will issue details **[AP3]**.

#### **ACTION POINTS:**

**AP1:** TEO to circulate the draft agenda for the workshop.

**AP2:** TEO to liaise with Bryson regarding new representative.

**AP3:** TEO to issue date of next meeting once confirmed.

**Minutes written by:**

TEO Secretariat

**Date:**

14/04/2025