



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Post Consultation Report
Equality Impact Assessment

Northern Ireland Assembly
Engagement Strategy

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Executive Summary

1. The EQIA consultation report identified a number of mitigating measures to address the differential impact Section 75 groups currently face.

2. The EQIA consultation report found no evidence to suggest there would be a negative differential impact on the equality of opportunity or good relations for the following Section 75 categories as a result of this strategy:
 - Religious belief
 - Political opinion
 - Gender (Men and Women generally)
 - Marital status
 - Sexual Orientation
 - Dependants

3. The EQIA ran from 18th December 14 to 16th March 2015. During the period of the consultation five responses to the consultation were received.

4. The lack of responses cannot be taken to mean that the current mitigating measures will be sufficient. The Engagement Strategy

will continue to evolve and as services are developed. Further consultation with stakeholders may need to take place in the future.

5. As required, the final stage in the EQIA process is the establishment of a system to monitor any on-going impact. This information will be published in the NI Assembly Commission's (the Commission) annual Section 75 report to the Equality Commission.

6. Should the monitoring and analysis of results over a two year period show that there has been a greater adverse impact than anticipated, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, the Commission will take steps to achieve better outcomes for the relevant equality groups.

Introduction

1. At its June 2013 meeting, the Assembly Commission approved a proposal to develop a new Engagement Strategy.
2. The draft Engagement Strategy was agreed by the Commission in October 2014 (Attached at Annex A).
3. During the development of the Northern Ireland Assembly Engagement Strategy, the strategy was equality screened.
4. When undertaking an EQIA, the Commission follows the guidance issued by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland in February 2005¹ which recommends that there should be seven stages in the EQIA process:
 - Stage 1: Definition of the aims of the policy
 - Stage 2: Consideration of available data and research
 - Stage 3: Assessment of potential and actual impacts
 - Stage 4: Consideration of measures
 - Stage 5: Formal consultation
 - Stage 6: Decision and publication of the results of the EQIA
 - Stage 7: Monitoring for adverse impact.
5. Although only minor impacts were found, the Assembly decided to carry out a full EQIA because of the following five issues:

¹ Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment, Equality Commission for NI, 2005 (pp.3-4)

- The policy has been classed as having “major” relevance to the promotion of equality of opportunity;
- A public consultation exercise is needed, or is going to be undertaken anyway (for example, as a result of some other statutory duty to do so, or because the public, or people affected by the policy, have a legitimate expectation that a consultation exercise will be conducted);
- Potential adverse equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an EQIA in order to better assess them;
- The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance; and
- It is a high level policy and is likely to generate further policies or actions that are relevant to the promotion of equality of opportunity.

6. The EQIA was carried out in accordance with the Assembly Commission's² statutory duties under Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 ('the 1998 Act'). Section 75 requires the Commission, in carrying out its functions in Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:

- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without;
and
- between persons with dependents and persons without.

7. The consultation report covered the first four stages and this report covers the final three stages of the EQIA process, stage 5, 6 and 7.

Background to the Engagement Strategy

8. The vision of the Engagement Strategy is to make a significant contribution to how the Assembly Commission will achieve its wider corporate vision to ensure that the Assembly and its work are accessible to all and communicated widely.

² The Commission is the body corporate of the Northern Ireland Assembly. It has the responsibility, under section 40(4) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, to provide the Assembly, or ensure that the Assembly is provided with the property, staff and services required for the Assembly to carry out its work.

9. This Strategy will help to achieve the Assembly Commission's three corporate aims to:

- *Provide outstanding parliamentary services by -*
Using new and emerging digital and other technology and initiatives to ensure that information on Assembly business is available in a timely way and in a range of appropriate formats that meet the needs of stakeholders.

- *Influence, enable and deliver change by -*
Developing partnerships to increase and enhance education, business, community and parliamentary outreach programmes to help stakeholders understand, engage and participate in the democratic process.

- *Be an efficient and progressive organisation by -*
Seeking to continuously deliver value for money programmes, review and improve our services and make the Assembly accessible to all.

Objectives

10. This strategy proposes that the Assembly Commission will focus on achieving three key engagement objectives (detailed below). This activity covers current activity and new initiatives planned for 2014-2016.

- i. To use traditional, social and emerging digital media to raise awareness, understanding and participation with the Assembly, its Members, Committees and the wider democratic process.*

- ii. *To build partnerships with relevant stakeholders to create and improve engagement opportunities with citizens and under-represented groups, build synergies and improve the effectiveness of our engagement.*

- iii. *To increase visitor numbers to Parliament Buildings and deliver an excellent visitor experience.*

Data Collection and Consultation

11. The EQIA used a mix of qualitative and quantitative data from a number of sources.

12. In brief, the following sources were employed:

Qualitative information

- Assembly Questions (both Oral and Written) asked to the Assembly Commission
- Feedback from Education and Outreach Service users
- Meetings and research into UK parliamentary engagement strategies
- Meetings with other bodies e.g. NI Tourist Board, Visit Belfast, festival organisers
- Consultation with senior Assembly staff, Outreach Manager and Equality Manager
- Feedback from External Disability Advisory Group and secret shopper feedback from Disability Action, RNIB, RNID and Autism NI
- External Relations Strategy
- Good Relations Strategy Consultation Results Report

- Youth Assembly Research Papers
- Review of the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission's Audit of Inequalities and Equality Scheme.
- 5 year review of the Disability Action Plans
- Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body - Equality Monitoring Report 2012/13

Quantitative Information

- Census information
- Data held on the Visitor Experience
- Public Attitude Survey
- Social media statistics for the NIA, Northern Ireland Assembly and Business Trust (NIABT) and Assembly Community Connect (ACC) and website statistics including audio boo and video downloads
- Education and Outreach engagement level statistics

13. This data and research was analysed to provide an insight into the potential impacts of the strategy on people in the various Section 75 categories.

Key Findings

14. The EQIA consultation report identified a number of mitigating measures to address the differential impact Section 75 groups currently face (**Annex B**).

15. The consultation period ran for 13 weeks and as stated five responses were received and these are addressed below:

- It was suggested that by using more digital communication some groups would be disadvantaged; the strategy states that NIA will continue using paper and that communication will be considered in all forms. Alternative formats for all Assembly correspondence is available upon request.
- The Assembly is required to meet the AA standard for WC3 web accessibility; the Disability Advisory Group is informed of any significant changes and feedback is requested. The Assembly can be contacted by text phone and details are available on the website, this will be included in future consultation as a means to respond.
- The Assembly advertises access to the public and general engagement, in national newspapers, periodically during the year. In addition posters and leaflets are distributed to voluntary organisations, community groups and constituency offices in relation to appropriate initiatives and events.

Conclusions

16. The lack of responses cannot be taken to mean that the current mitigating measures will be sufficient. The Engagement Strategy will continue to develop and evolve and as services are developed. Further consultation with stakeholders may need to take place in the future.

Monitoring

17. As required, the final stage in the EQIA process is the establishment of a system to monitor any on-going impact. This information will be published in the NI Assembly Commission's (the Commission) annual Section 75 report to the Equality Commission. The monitoring will include:

- Partnerships and Networks - Through active participation in partnerships and networks, the Assembly will seek to improve its understanding of any issues and needs that may impact the Engagement Strategy. We will look for opportunities to draw upon the expertise and knowledge held by stakeholders and stakeholder groups and share experiences. Regular consultation with and feedback from these partnerships, formal and informal networks will assist the Assembly in assessing and monitoring products and services in relation to equality issues and their impact.
- Compliments and Complaints - Compliments and complaints received about services will also help to identify the impact of good practices and any adverse impact of existing practices. The Assembly is committed to providing excellent service to all of its stakeholders and wants to know if any aspect of its service, procedures, products or performance is unsatisfactory. It responds to complaints from customers as quickly and as efficiently as possible and considers their suggestions for improvements. The formal complaints procedure is detailed on the Assembly web site.

18. Should the monitoring and analysis of results over a two year period show that there has been a greater adverse impact than anticipated, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, the Commission will take steps to achieve better outcomes for the relevant equality groups.

ANNEX A - Implementation Plan

Objective 1 To use traditional, social and emerging digital media to raise awareness, understanding and participation with the Assembly, its Members, Committees and the wider democratic process.

Tactics	Target	Financial Implications	Priority and completion date	Responsible
Develop a more co-ordinated approach to web and other content creation and management	New Information Officer to be in post by 1 January 2015	Existing resources	1 January 2015	Head of Communications and Outreach
Develop new communications plan to include greater social media interaction and support Committee communication	A co-ordinated and engaging approach to traditional and social media and improved understanding of Committee role and work	Existing resources	High - 31 March 2015	Head of Communications and Outreach

<p>Undertake audit of existing video and audio materials to ensure that we are maximising the benefits of existing audio, video and printed materials</p>	<p>A suite of professional audio and video materials</p>	<p>£10,000</p>	<p>High – 31 May 2015</p>	<p>Head of Communications and Outreach</p>
<p>Develop new audio/video production plan to enhance existing archive, better inform and target specialist video/web based media and growing presence on web based video forums</p>	<p>An enhanced suite of professional audio and video materials</p>	<p>Existing resources</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Head of Communications and Outreach</p>

Tactics	Target	Financial Implications	Priority and completion date	Responsible
Commission professional support to enhance the website and guide AIMS development	More stable site available on multiple platforms, improved search facility and more engaging and accessible content	£34,000	High - Immediate	Head of Communications and Outreach and Head of Information Systems Office
Provide a professional media support service inside and outside Parliament Buildings	Informed, engaged and supported media	Existing resources	High - Immediate	Head of Communications and Outreach
To launch the 2015-16 Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series (KESS) Programme to facilitate communication of academic research to assist the Assembly's scrutiny and	Deliver 16 KESS initiatives	£1,000	High – start January 2015	Head of Research and Information Service

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legislative responsibilities				
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Objectives 2: To build partnerships to create and improve engagement opportunities with under-represented and / or hard-to-reach groups, build synergies and improve effectiveness of our engagement.

Tactics	Target	Financial Implications	Priority and completion date	Responsible
Develop a business outreach plan by delivering targeted training to businesses to raise awareness of the Northern Ireland Assembly Business Trust (NIABT) in the private sector	Increase NIABT members by 5% year on year and improve wider understanding of how businesses can engage with the Assembly. Increase MLA participation by 20%	Existing resources	High - Immediate	NIABT Co-ordinator
Develop work of Assembly Community Connect to identify and target Strategic Partners to deliver programmes to priority and	Develop formal business plan to set membership targets, develop programmes and increase participation	£8,000	High – immediate	Head of Communications and Outreach

<p>umbrella groups to create awareness of the Assembly and build confidence in interacting with it</p>				
<p>Increase awareness of and participation in the work of Committees by supporting engagement outside Parliament Buildings and arranging complementary education and outreach activity</p>	<p>Hold Democracy/Assembly Week</p> <p>To arrange a week of representative proceedings/events/receptions covering legislative, outreach and</p>	<p>£40,000 (over two years)</p>	<p>30 November 2015</p>	<p>Head of Communications and Outreach and Clerk Assistants</p>

Tactics	Target	Financial Implications	Priority and completion dates	Responsible
	education activity to highlight the full range of legislative and outreach work undertaken by the Assembly and provide media opportunities to raise awareness			
Increase accessibility and reach of the Education website and encourage participation in online activities	Translate Education website into the Irish language	Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment covering cost	1 February 2016	Head of Research and Information Services
Develop targeted Education Programme and initiatives to increase wider young people's engagement with	Identify partner(s) and develop programme to improve youth engagement with the	Existing resources	High - 1 January 2015	Head of Research and Information Services and Head of Communications

the Assembly	Assembly (including NEETs)			and Outreach
Allocate outreach resource to Committees to help co-ordinate joint approach to Committee engagement	Engagement is co-ordinated, effective and targeted in areas of need	Existing resources	High – 1 January 2015	Head of Communications and Outreach and Clerk Assistants

Tactics	Target	Financial Implications	Priority and completion date	Responsible
Develop outreach plan to target constituencies and maximise the number of schools participating in the Education Programme	Schools in all 18 constituencies participate in the Education Programme	Existing resources	High – 31 March 2015	Head of Research and Information Service
Review and update current work experience programme	Improved satisfaction and better informed participants of the programme	Existing resources	High – 31 March 2015	Head of Research and Information Service
Regular meetings with Section 75 groups to inform reviews of Engagement Strategy	Annual meetings with appropriate groups to inform reviews of Strategy	Existing resources	Throughout 2015-2016	Head of Communications and Outreach
Consider establishing an Engagement Strategy Advisory Group	Regular meetings with external stakeholders to inform reviews of Strategy	Existing resources	1 February 2015	Engagement Strategy Steering Group

Objective 3 To increase visitor numbers to Parliament Buildings and deliver an excellent visitor experience.

Tactics	Target	Financial Implications	Priority and completion date	Responsible
To provide a first class visitor experience to guests in PB by undertaking accredited training to become “World Host Status”	Greater visitor numbers and an excellent visitor experience	£2,500	Complete	Head of Support Services
Audit external tourism/visitor websites like Trip Advisor to ensure consistent and appropriate digital presence	Accurate visitor information available, better informed visitors and increased positive feedback	Existing resources	Complete and with continuous update and refresh	Head of Support Services and Head of Communications and Outreach
Undertake feasibility study of extending/relocating the gift shop to provide improved catering and retail	Greater footfall and retail takings as a result of increased space and capacity		31 March 2015	Head of Support Services and Head of Building Services

space for visitors				
Review visitor signage and materials in line with draft Language Policy	Visitors feel welcome and information and services are available to them in an appropriate format		In line with the approval of the draft language policy	Head of Support Services and Head of Communications
Develop relationships with tourism, event and visitor bodies to facilitate the use of Parliament Buildings as a venue for appropriate events	Assembly/Parliament Buildings participation in major tourism events, greater visitor numbers	Depends on individual events	Immediate and ongoing in line with individual events	Head of Support Services and Head of Communications

Possible Future Projects

Like all public sector organisations, the Assembly is mindful of the current financial climate in which we operate. The result of this is that the Assembly's need to undertake its core business of legislating and its wider remit to engage with the population to encourage awareness and participation needs to be prioritised and balanced.

In reality, this means that there are engagement projects that we would like to undertake at this time, but the money to fund them is not currently available. However, they remain important and will be considered if the financial situation changes.

Objective	Tactics	Target	Estimated funding required
To increase the Assembly's engagement with the Community and Voluntary sector (Head of Communications)	Appoint an additional member of staff to the Community Outreach Team	Greater numbers participating in programmes to enhance connections through training, information and support	£41,000

Develop a Youth Assembly (Head of Research and Information Services)	To increase the Assembly's engagement with young people	Better informed and engaged young people and a forum to participate on issues of particular importance to them	£417,000 (2.5 years)
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ANNEX B

1. MITIGATION AND ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

- 1.1 The EQIA process requires that, if it is decided that the policy may have an adverse impact on people in one or more of the Section 75 groups, then the authority must consider alternative policies and measures which might mitigate the adverse impact.³ This section of the report therefore sets out the alternative policies under consideration and looks at whether additional measures need to be put in place to minimise the negative impact of any changes to the current policies and to better promote good relations in the Assembly.
- 1.2 EQIA has identified a number of enhancements and mitigation measures to address the differential impact Section 75 groups currently face, and these are set out in more detail in this section. In general, the proposed Engagement Strategy is designed to enhance the effectiveness of existing activities and focuses on developing programmes and initiatives designed to promote equality of opportunity for all groups which will help to ensure that all citizens have equal access to the Assembly and the tools and confidence to engage with it.
- 1.3 The Commission recognises that none of the Section 75 categories operates as a silo and that people have multiple identities. It is also recognised that the Engagement Strategy is a living document and can and will be monitored and amended if and when issues are raised.

³ Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment, Equality Commission for NI, 2004 (pp.30-31)

- 1.4 Subject to the findings of the consultation, it is the conclusion of this EQIA that, with the adoption of these proposals, the risk of an adverse impact arising from the Engagement Strategy falling into one or more of the Section 75 categories would be mitigated adequately.
- 1.5 As well as these specific mitigations, when the Engagement Strategy is initiated, we plan to continue monitoring based on the section 75 categories in order to develop further our understanding of the impacts.
- 1.6 **As noted earlier this EQIA is based on a high level strategy and individual projects/activities will be subject to equality screening.**

Religious Belief

- 1.7 Section 5 identified that although Parliament Buildings was generally a welcoming place for people of different religions, some religions identify and engage less with the Assembly than others. It was also identified that Parliament Buildings and its services should be welcoming to all persons regardless of their religious beliefs.
- 1.8 As all tactics within the strategic objectives do not exclude any section of the community, therefore it is deemed that the Engagement Strategy will not have an adverse impact on people of different religious beliefs.
- 1.9 The following tactics will positively encourage people of different religious beliefs to engage with the strategy:

Tactic: Develop outreach plan to target constituencies and maximise the number of schools participating in the Education Programme.

Mitigating measure: This tactic will ensure schools in all 18 constituencies participate in the Education Programme. This will include schools of different religious backgrounds.

Tactic: Develop work of Assembly Community Connect to identify and target Strategic Partners to deliver programmes to priority and umbrella groups to create awareness of the Assembly and build confidence in interacting with it.

Mitigating measure: All events will seek to be cross community.

Tactic: To provide a first class visitor experience to guests in PB by undertaking accredited training to become “World Host Status”.

Mitigating measure: Greater visitor numbers and an excellent visitor experience, ensuring the visitor experience is suitable for all.

Tactic: Develop relationships with tourism, event and visitor bodies to facilitate the use of Parliament Buildings as a venue for appropriate events.

Mitigating measure: Assembly/Parliament Buildings participation in major tourism events, greater visitor numbers, ensuring the building is accessible to all.

Tactic: Regular meetings with Section 75 groups to inform reviews of Engagement Strategy.

Mitigating measure: Annual meetings with appropriate groups to inform reviews of Strategy.

Political Opinion

- 1.10 Section 5 identified that although Parliament Buildings receives a high number of visitors, visits by members of the Nationalist/Republican community could be improved and that considerations should be given to the implementation of the language policy, particularly in relations to services provided in Irish.
- 1.11 As all tactics within the strategic objectives do not exclude any section of the community, therefore it is deemed that the Engagement Strategy will not have an adverse impact on people of different political opinion.
- 1.12 The following tactics will positively encourage people of different political opinions to engage with the strategy:

Tactic: Develop outreach plan to target constituencies and maximise the number of schools participating in the Education Programme.

Mitigating measure: This tactic will ensure schools in all 18 constituencies participate in the Education Programme. This will include schools of different religious backgrounds.

Tactic: Develop work of Assembly Community Connect to identify and target Strategic Partners to deliver programmes to priority and umbrella groups to create awareness of the Assembly and build confidence in interacting with it.

Mitigating measure: All events will seek to be cross community and take place in all constituencies.

Tactic: Increase accessibility and reach of the Education website and encourage participation in online activities.

Mitigating measure: Translate Education website into the Irish language.

Tactic: To provide a first class visitor experience to guests in PB by undertaking accredited training to become “World Host Status”.

Mitigating measure: Greater visitor numbers and an excellent visitor experience, ensuring the visitor experience is suitable for all.

Tactic: Review visitor signage and materials in line with draft Language Policy.

Mitigating measure: Visitors feel welcome and information and services are available to them in an appropriate format.

Tactic: Develop relationships with tourism, event and visitor bodies to facilitate the use of Parliament Buildings as a venue for appropriate events.

Mitigating measure: Assembly/Parliament Buildings participation in major tourism events, greater visitor numbers, ensuring the building is accessible to all.

Tactic: Regular meetings with Section 75 groups to inform reviews of Engagement Strategy.

Mitigating measure: Annual meetings with appropriate groups to inform reviews of Strategy.

Racial Group

1.13 Section 5 identified that ethnic minorities are underrepresented in public life and that Parliament Buildings is welcoming to and should engage with all racial groups.

1.14 As all tactics within the strategic objectives do not exclude any section of the community, therefore it is deemed that the Engagement Strategy will not have an adverse impact on people of different racial groups.

1.15 The following tactics will positively encourage people of different racial groups to engage with the strategy:

Tactic: Develop work of Assembly Community Connect to identify and target Strategic Partners to deliver programmes to priority and umbrella groups to create awareness of the Assembly and build confidence in interacting with it.

Mitigating measure: ACC will seek to encourage the involvement of ethnic minority groups through targeted events.

Tactic: To provide a first class visitor experience to guests in PB by undertaking accredited training to become “World Host Status”.

Mitigating measure: Greater visitor numbers and an excellent visitor experience, ensuring the visitor experience is suitable for all.

Tactic: Review visitor signage and materials in line with draft Language Policy.

Mitigating measure: Visitors feel welcome and information and services are available to them in an appropriate format.

Tactic: Develop relationships with tourism, event and visitor bodies to facilitate the use of Parliament Buildings as a venue for appropriate events.

Mitigating measure: Assembly/Parliament Buildings participation in major tourism events, greater visitor numbers, ensuring the building is accessible to all.

Tactic: Regular meetings with Section 75 groups to inform reviews of Engagement Strategy.

Mitigating measure: Annual meetings with appropriate groups to inform reviews of Strategy.

Age

1.16 Section 5 identified that 16-34 year olds are less likely to engage with politics. The education services delivers an extensive service to schools across Northern Ireland at both primary and secondary level, however it was identified that more could be done to connect with young people through social media and the potential development of a Youth Assembly. It also identified that the Assembly needs to ensure participation of our older and aging population.

1.17 As all tactics within the strategic objectives do not exclude any section of the community, therefore it is deemed that the Engagement Strategy will not have an adverse impact on people of different ages.

1.18 The following tactics will positively encourage people of different ages to engage with the strategy:

Tactic: Develop new communications plan to include greater social media interaction and support Committee communication.

Mitigating measure: A co-ordinated and engaging approach to traditional and social media and improved understanding of Committee role and work.

Tactic: Undertake audit of existing video and audio materials to ensure that we are maximising the benefits of existing audio, video and printed materials. **Mitigating measure:** An enhanced suite of professional audio and video materials. This will ensure that it is accessible to all ages.

Tactic: Develop outreach plan to target constituencies and maximise the number of schools participating in the Education Programme.

Mitigating measure: This tactic will ensure that schools in all 18 constituencies participate in the Education Programme.

Tactic: Develop targeted Education Programme and initiatives to increase wider young people's engagement with the Assembly.

Mitigating measure: Identify partner(s) and develop programme to improve youth engagement with the Assembly (including NEETs).

Tactic: Review and update current work experience programme.

Mitigating measure: Improved satisfaction and better informed participants of the programme.

Tactic: Develop work of Assembly Community Connect to identify and target Strategic Partners to deliver programmes to priority and umbrella groups to create awareness of the Assembly and build confidence in interacting with it.

Mitigating measure: ACC will aim to partner with organisations to support engagement with our older and aging population.

Tactic: To provide a first class visitor experience to guests in PB by undertaking accredited training to become "World Host Status".

Mitigating measure: Greater visitor numbers and an excellent visitor experience, ensuring the visitor experience is suitable for all ages.

Tactic: Develop relationships with tourism, event and visitor bodies to facilitate the use of Parliament Buildings as a venue for appropriate events.

Mitigating measure: Assembly/Parliament Buildings participation in major tourism events, greater visitor numbers, ensuring the building is accessible to all ages.

Tactic: Regular meetings with Section 75 groups to inform reviews of Engagement Strategy.

Mitigating measure: Annual meetings with appropriate groups to inform reviews of Strategy.

Marital Status

1.19 Data collected for Section 5 identified that there were no issues to mitigate for those of different marital status.

1.20 As all tactics within the strategic objectives do not exclude any section of the community, therefore it is deemed that the Engagement Strategy will not have an adverse impact on people of different marital status.

1.21 As a live document, the Engagement Strategy will be monitored and amended as necessary.

Sexual orientation

1.22 Data collected for Section 5 identified that there were no issues to mitigate for those of different sexual orientation.

- 1.23 As all tactics within the strategic objectives do not exclude any section of the community, therefore it is deemed that the Engagement Strategy will not have an adverse impact on people of different sexual orientation.
- 1.24 As a live document, the Engagement Strategy will be monitored and amended as necessary.

Men and women generally

- 1.25 Section 5 identified that women are underrepresented in public life and consideration should be given to encouraging participation of women in politics and public life.
- 1.26 As all tactics within the strategic objectives do not exclude any section of the community, therefore it is deemed that the Engagement Strategy will not have an adverse impact on men and women generally.
- 1.27 The following tactics will positively encourage men and women generally to engage with the strategy:

Tactic: Develop work of Assembly Community Connect to identify and target Strategic Partners to deliver programmes to priority and umbrella groups to create awareness of the Assembly and build confidence in interacting with it. **Mitigating measure:** ACC will aim to partner with organisations to support engagement with women.

Tactic: To launch the 2015-16 Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series (KESS) Programme to facilitate communication of academic research to assist the Assembly's scrutiny and legislative responsibilities.

Mitigating measure: Deliver 16 KESS initiatives.

Tactic: Develop a business outreach plan by delivering targeted training to businesses to raise awareness of the Northern Ireland Assembly Business Trust (NIABT) in the private sector.

Mitigating measure: Increase NIABT members by 5% year on year and improve wider understanding of how businesses can engage with the Assembly. The NIABT will specifically run events to encourage the involvement of women.

Tactic: Regular meetings with Section 75 groups to inform reviews of Engagement Strategy.

Mitigating measure: Annual meetings with appropriate groups to inform reviews of Strategy.

Disability

1.28 Section 5 identified that the majority of people with a disability felt that access to Parliament Buildings was good or excellent. It also identified that the Assembly currently provides a wide range of facilities and has trained staff to ensure the building and its services are

accessible for people with a disability. However, the Assembly is still committed to continue to optimise access in Parliament Buildings and its services.

1.29 As all tactics within the strategic objectives do not exclude any section of the community, therefore it is deemed that the Engagement Strategy will not have an adverse impact on people of different gender.

1.30 The following tactics will positively encourage people of different abilities to engage with the strategy:

Tactic: Undertake audit of existing video and audio materials to ensure that we are maximising the benefits of existing audio, video and printed materials. **Mitigating measure:** An enhanced suite of professional audio and video materials. This will ensure that it is accessible to all.

Tactic: Review and update current work experience programme.

Mitigating measure: Improved satisfaction and better informed participants of the programme.

Tactic: Develop work of Assembly Community Connect to identify and target Strategic Partners to deliver programmes to priority and umbrella groups to create awareness of the Assembly and build confidence in interacting with it.

Mitigating measure: ACC will aim to partner with organisations to support engagement with those with a disability.

Tactic: To provide a first class visitor experience to guests in PB by undertaking accredited training to become “World Host Status”.

Mitigating measure: Greater visitor numbers and an excellent visitor experience, ensuring the visitor experience is suitable for all.

Tactic: Develop relationships with tourism, event and visitor bodies to facilitate the use of Parliament Buildings as a venue for appropriate events.

Mitigating measure: Assembly/Parliament Buildings participation in major tourism events, greater visitor numbers, ensuring the building is accessible to all.

Tactic: Regular meetings with Section 75 groups to inform reviews of Engagement Strategy.

Mitigating measure: Annual meetings with appropriate groups to inform reviews of Strategy.

Dependants

1.31 Data collected for Section 5 identified that there were no issues to mitigate for dependants.

1.32 As all tactics within the strategic objectives do not exclude any section of the community, therefore it is deemed that the Engagement Strategy will not have an adverse impact dependants.

1.33 As a live document, the Engagement Strategy will be monitored and amended as necessary.

All Section 75 Groups

1.34 All additional tactics found in the implementation plan at **Annex A** do not exclude any Section 75 group.