



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

# The Northern Ireland Assembly Commission Corporate Strategy 2012-2017 (Revised 2015)





# Corporate Strategy for the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission 2012-17 (Revised 2015)

The final two years of ‘Corporate Strategy 2012-17’ will span two Assembly mandates – 2011-16 and 2016-21. The final year of the current Assembly mandate will bring with it the challenges of a substantial legislative programme, as well as making preparations for the 2016 Assembly elections.

This Strategy also establishes the priorities for the Assembly Commission (and through it the Commission Secretariat) during the first year of the next Assembly (2016-21), a mandate that is likely to see the implementation of institutional reforms arising from the Stormont House Agreement. These reforms, including a reduction in the number of Executive Departments and a commitment to make changes to Assembly procedures to facilitate an opposition, will impact on the operation of the Assembly in its plenary business and in committees.

The Assembly Commission has significant experience of responding effectively to the challenge of providing high quality services whilst seeking to reform and improve the institution. However, in coming years the Commission will be required to respond to such challenges whilst implementing significant organisational changes arising from budget reductions and the resultant changes in service standards.

## A Vision of providing progressive, effective and efficient parliamentary services

The vision in the Corporate Strategy 2012-16 was to be “at the forefront of providing outstanding and progressive parliamentary services”. Given the scale of budget reductions in 2015-16, and likely further reductions in future years, the focus for the final two years

of Corporate Strategy 2012-17 will be on providing parliamentary services to the Assembly that are:

### **Progressive**

- Supporting change and reform; continuously improving and embracing innovation. This applies equally to the Assembly as a legislature as it does to the Commission Secretariat as an organisation.

### **Effective**

- Supporting Members in their roles of representing the interests of the electorate; making effective legislation and influencing the Executive and holding it to account.

### **Efficient**

- Ensuring that the services provided to the Assembly by the Commission and its Secretariat demonstrate value for money, as benchmarked with appropriate comparators.

## **Delivery during change and transition**

To deliver effective and progressive parliamentary services in such an organisational context, it will be essential to ensure that the commendably high levels of commitment and motivation shown by Commission Secretariat staff over recent years are sustained. This will be achieved by addressing gender equality issues and by creating new, focused opportunities for staff learning and development, as well as staff well-being.

During this period of reductions in staffing, organisational restructuring and institutional reform, we will need to design and implement significant changes in the services that we deliver, and how we deliver them. In particular, with fewer staff and constrained financial resources, it will only be possible to provide high-quality services if we continue to prioritise the overall range of services provided by the Commission, focusing our efforts at sustaining and developing priority activities.

The Commission's strategic planning initiative, 'SP15+', will require the implementation of an accompanying change management programme. This will assist in enhancing operational and management delegations to capable and competent managers, as plans are introduced to reduce senior management costs, streamline decision-making and reduce unnecessary complexities in systems and processes.

Delivery of progressive parliamentary services in a period of reducing resources will require Members and staff to embrace fully new ways of working, supported by new technologies. In so doing, it will be critical to ensure that systems are fit for purpose and accompanied by effective training, guidance and support, as it will no longer be possible to run dual services for Members, staff and other users who find the use of new technologies more challenging.

Developing new ways of working will play a key role in the delivery of progressive and effective services during this period of resource reduction. In particular, working in partnership across the Commission Secretariat, and with external organisations with common objectives, has the potential to enable and support innovation and excellence.

## Conclusion

The next two years are likely to be the most challenging for the Assembly Commission since the Assembly was restored in 2007. Against a backdrop of reducing staffing and financial resources, we will be faced with delivering high-quality and progressive services in the final year of the current mandate, and ensuring a smooth transition to the 2016-21 mandate.

More than ever, the Assembly's values will be critical to ensuring that, in delivering this Corporate Strategy, all staff continue to ensure that **Public Service, Professionalism** and **One Team** remain at the core of everything we do.

## Corporate Strategy for the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission 2012-17 (Revised 2015)

<b>Purpose</b>	The purpose of the Assembly Commission and its Secretariat is to serve and support the Assembly in its role of representing the interests of the electorate; making effective legislation; and influencing the Executive and holding it to account		
<b>Vision</b>	Our vision is of an Assembly which builds a better future for the people of Northern Ireland through fostering a peaceful, stable and prosperous society Our vision is to best serve the Assembly in that task by being at the forefront of providing progressive, effective and efficient parliamentary services		
<b>Strategic Goals</b>	Providing effective and high quality support to the Assembly	Enabling and delivering change	Being a progressive and efficient Commission
<b>Aims of the Northern Ireland Assembly Secretariat</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure the effectiveness of the Assembly in passing legislation and in holding the Executive to account.</li> <li>2. Provide the Speaker, Committees, Members and office holders with the support, services and professional development needed to fulfil their roles.</li> <li>3. Ensure the Assembly and its work is accessible to all and communicated widely.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Manage change arising from the Commission's strategic planning programme "SP15+".</li> <li>2. Plan for, and manage the implementation of, agreed institutional reforms.</li> <li>3. Prepare for, and ensure a smooth transition to, the 2016-21 mandate.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure that the Commission has a dedicated, professional and motivated group of staff, who have clearly defined delegated responsibility.</li> <li>2. Deliver service standards against a reducing budget whilst driving income generation through innovative partnerships.</li> <li>3. Have equality and corporate governance arrangements in place which command confidence and which facilitate compliance with statutory responsibilities.</li> </ol>
<b>Measures of success</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 100% of Plenary and Committee meetings facilitated.</li> <li>2. Member satisfaction rate above 80%.</li> <li>3. Engagement Strategy fully implemented on schedule.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. SP15+ Programme fully implemented by 31 March 2017.</li> <li>2. Institutional reforms implemented within agreed timescales.</li> <li>3. End of mandate and election plans developed and implemented by 30 June 2016.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Staff to undertake an average of 2.5 learning and development days per year.</li> <li>2. Annual Resource expenditure within 1.5% underspend on total budget.</li> <li>3. Revenue Generation Plan in place by 31 December 2015.</li> <li>4. Annual level of overall audit assurance at least "satisfactory".</li> </ol>
<b>Values:</b> To fulfil our vision and achieve our aims we will work in a way which demonstrates the following values:			
<b>Public Service</b> – which is demonstrated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ An attitude of service to the Assembly, its Members and visitors</li> <li>■ Behaving with impartiality and integrity at all times</li> <li>■ Being open and transparent</li> </ul>	<b>Professionalism</b> – which is demonstrated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Commitment to excellence</li> <li>■ Commitment to good governance</li> <li>■ Appropriate confidentiality and discretion</li> <li>■ Personal responsibility and accountability</li> </ul>	<b>One Team</b> – which is demonstrated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Team working</li> <li>■ Respect for others</li> <li>■ Working to the common purpose</li> </ul>	



