**Annex 1**

**Northern Ireland Assembly Audit of Inequalities Action Plan**

**2012-2016 (ongoing actions)**

| **Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations** | **Outcome Area(s)** | **S75 Category** | **Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured** | **In the current service Business Plan (Yes/No)** | **Lead** | **Timescale** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Improve accessibility to the Chamber and Official’s Boxes within the Chamber | Access to Parliament Buildings | Persons with a disability and persons without | Improved accessibility to Chamber for all Members. Increased capacity for Official’s with mobility issues. | No. Further improvements will require extensive re-modelling of the chamber.If required (and approved), such works will be included in future Business Plans. | Head of Building Services | To be agreed. |
| Implementation of access audits completed by RNIB, Disability Action and Action on Hearing Loss regarding a programme of works | Access to Parliament BuildingsAccess to Services | Persons with a disability and persons without | Improved accessibility to Parliament Buildings for persons with a disability. All works projects are designed and constructed in accordance with Building Regulations and other relevant legislation. | No. All work items within our remit relating to the audits have been completed. Other wider ‘estate’ issues have been passed to DFP. Further agreed improvements will be included in relevant Business Plan. | Head of Building Services | To be agreed. |
| Provision of translation from Irish and Ulster Scots to English to the Speaker and Clerks at the table | Good Relations | Persons of different religious beliefPersons of different political opinionPersons of different racial group | That the Speaker/Clerks at Table receive and understand what is being said. Without such a service there could potentially be a breach of Assembly Standing Orders. Measured by exception i.e. Speaker/Clerks at Table advise that no such service is provided and by recording translation audio channel on SLIQ system. | Yes | Editor of Debates | Ongoing |
| Ensure Parliament Buildings is welcoming to all sections of society and cultures by reviewing art, artefacts and exhibitions | Good Relations | Persons of different religious beliefPersons of different political opinionPersons of different racial group | Exhibitions policy being reviewed to consider how exhibitions can be better used in Great Hall to enhance the visitor experience. | Yes but expected to change. | Advisor to the Speaker | October 2015 |
| Language Policy | Good Relations | Persons of different religious beliefPersons of different political opinionPersons of different racial group | The Education Service now provides a programme in Irish, and is also currently working on translating the primary section of the website and some video resources into Irish. | Yes | Education Manager/ Equality Manager | Ongoing |
| EQIA on the Flying of the Union Flag at Parliament Buildings | Good Relations | Persons of different religious beliefPersons of different political opinionPersons of different racial group | The completion of an EQIA on the policy review will assist the Commission in making a decision on the policy.  | Yes | Equality Manager | May 2015 (further report and monitoring to be timetabled). |
| Develop revised Engagement Strategy | Participation | All groups | Inform the public of how NIA engages with stakeholders and how it will seek to improve this. | Yes | Outreach Manager | May 2015 |
| Support for Members and staff with child care responsibilities | ParticipationEquality Issues for Existing Staff | Men and women generallyPersons with dependents and persons without | The Assembly Commission will continue to provide support to staff with childcare responsibilities. Provision of support to Members is now a matter for Independent Financial Review Panel (IFRP) and not the Commission. | The way in which support is provided is currently under review by the Commission. | Head of HR | Review completed and changes to arrangements, if any, to be implemented by 31 March 2016. |
| Engaging with women, people with disabilities and ethnic minorities under-represented in public life through Assembly Community Connect | Participation | Men and women generallyPersons with a disability and persons withoutPersons of different racial group | Increased engagement with women, people with disabilities and ethnic minorities; inform groups how to utilise resources available through Assembly Community Connect & partner organisations | Yes | Outreach Manager | Ongoing |
| Engagement with young people through Education Service school visits programme | Participation | Persons of different age | Education Programme and resources provided for young people from Key Stage 1 (age 8) to Key Stage 5 (Post 16) | Yes | Education Manager | Ongoing |
| Engagement with young people through a youth panel | Participation | Persons of different age | To involve 30 young people aged 16-18 in a year long, youth driven project to develop proposals for a youth assembly – March 2010 -March 2011. | No | Education Manager  | Substantial engagement completed by end December 2012. Since then, occasional correspondence to update on Assembly’s Youth Assembly project. |
| Development of Secretariat Gender Action Plan | Recruitment and SelectionEquality issues for existing staff | Men and women generally | The removal of any actual or perceived barriers to gender equality within the secretariat through the production and implementation of a gender action plan. | Yes | Equality Manager | January 2016 |

**Revised/additional actions recorded within the monitoring period**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Action** | **Directorate** | **Outcome** | **Date** | **Updated position as at March 2015** |
| The Assembly focuses on engagement with young people, including disenfranchised groups | Information and Outreach | ‘Structured Dialogue’ Project – a report will be produced by 36 young people about an issue concerning young people. The inquiry process will involve participants consulting young people, MLAs and other stakeholders and reporting their findings to an assembly committee. The opportunity to get involved will be advertised widely.  |  | The project, called ‘Connections’ is being funded by Erasmus+. Participants will be recruited in April 2015 and training will take place in May and June 2015, with inquiry activities planned from August onwards. The report will be presented to an Assembly Committee by end January 2016. The aim is that half of the young people involved will be from backgrounds which may traditionally have made their participation difficult e.g.  Due to socio-economic background or disability. |

**Northern Ireland Assembly Equality Action Plan**

**Completed Actions (2012-2014)**

Function One: The acquisition and maintenance of premises and equipment to provide suitable accommodation, facilities and support services in which a fully functioning Assembly can operate.

| **Inequality Identified** | **Section 75 Categories** | **Performance Indicators** | **Action Measures** | **Lead Responsibility**  | **Timescale** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Access to Parliament Buildings (Theme 1a of the 2011 Audit of Inequalities) | People with disabilities | Improved facilities for partially sighted visitors  | Colour contrast materials in toilet facilities  | Facilities Manager  | 2012 Complete |
|  | People with disabilities | Access through the front door for all persons | Install an electronic opening device at the front door to allow for disabled access | Facilities Manager  | 2012 complete |
|  | People with disabilities  | A Changing Places facility to be installed at the ground floor level | A fully equipped Changing Places facility to be installed for people with severe physical disabilities  | Facilities manager  | Complete |
|  | People with disabilities | Improved facilities for partially sighted visitors | Improved blistered and corduroy paving | Facilities Manager | 2012 Complete  |
|  |  | Improved facilities for partially sighted visitors | To provide a braille tour of the building for any visitors  | Facilities manager  | Complete |
|  | People with disabilities  | Improved facilities for people who are hearing impaired  | To work towards Action on Hearing Loss ‘Louder than Words’ accreditation  | Facilities manager  | Complete – accreditation has been received and is renewed each year  |
|  | People with disabilities  | Improved facilities for people who are hearing impaired  | To provide a signed tour of Parliament Buildings in British and Irish Sign language.  | Facilities manager  | Complete – tour can be accessed via the external website prior to visiting or visitors to the building can use a tablet provided by Events. |
| Access to Services (Theme 1b of the 2011 Audit of Inequalities) | People with disabilities  | Improved environment for those with autism or on the autistic spectrum  | Mystery shop and feedback session with representative groups and their users to be held | Facilities Manager  | 2012 Complete  |
| Access to Services (Theme 1b of the 2011 Audit of Inequalities) | People with disabilities | Improved environment for those with autism or on the autistic spectrum | Creation of a quiet room, signage and review internal policies. All front line staff to be trained and Autism Champions to be identified.  | Facilities Manager | Complete. Autism accreditation award received in 2012 and reassessed every year thereafter.  |
|  | People with disabilities | Improved exhibition space | Picture hanging system for ground floor | Facilities Manager | Complete. In place in Great Hall of Parliament Buildings |
|  | People with disabilities | Improved exhibition access | Braille descriptors for Speaker’s gifts | Facilities Manager | Partially complete. Braille signage erected in Great Hall for toilets. |
| Access to Services (Theme 1b of the 2011 Audit of Inequalities) | Young People  | Increased access to the political process | Produce 5 videos to explain (1) the importance of voting (2) Council elections (3) Northern Ireland Assembly elections (4) UK Parliament elections (5) European Parliament elections | Education Manager | 2014 Complete |
| Access to Services (Theme 1b of the 2011 Audit of Inequalities) | Young People | Increased access to the political process | Develop NI Assembly educational material for iBook | Education Manager | 2014 Complete  |
|  | Young People  | Increased access to the political process | ‘Making a Law’ animation with subtitles  | Education Team | Complete |
|  | Young People  | Increased access to the political process | Develop a bespoke visitor programme for Key Stage 1 users | Education Team | Complete |

| **Inequality Identified** | **Section 75 Categories** | **Performance Indicators** | **Action Measures** | **Lead Responsibility** | **Timescale** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Good Relations (Theme 1c of the 2011 Audit of Inequalities) | Religious belief, Political opinion and/or race | Encourage joint participation | Invite post Primary schools to take part in panel Q&As and in small group discussions with MLAs. These ‘Let’s Talk’ style events will take place in different constituencies  | Education Manager | West Tyrone/Mid Ulster. Complete November 2014Belfast Complete November 2014Other constituencies ongoing |
|  | Religious belief, Political opinion and/or raceReligious belief, Political opinion and/or race | EQIA on the Review of the Policy of the Union Flag flying on Parliament Buildings. Completed EQIA report delivered on time and within budget | Procurement exercise undertaken for steps 2-5 of the EQIA process Risk registry and risk group established Project initiated document approvedConsultation strategy developedInterim report developed | Equality ManagerEquality Manager | Complete. Contract commenced on 16 July 2014. |
|  | Religious belief, Political opinion and/or race | Consultation, to include public engagement, comments returned within agreed deadline | Pre-consultation exercise conductedFormal public consultation exercise conducted | Equality Manager | Complete. Pre-consultation ran from 1 October to 14 October 2014 |
|  | Religious belief, Political opinion and/or race | Assembly Commission report on EQIA findings published and decision taken on policy position | Agreement by Assembly Commission of findings and consultee report formulated | Equality Manager |  |

| **Inequality Identified** | **Section 75 Categories** | **Performance Indicators** | **Action Measures** | **Lead Responsibility** | **Timescale** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Participation(Theme 1d of the 2011 Audit of Inequalities) | Young people | To encourage increased participation in politics amongst young people (Involving young people in the work of the Assembly) | Specific schools from all sectors to be targeted to take part in the Education Committee Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry | Education Manager  | Sept-Nov 2014. Complete |
| Access to Services (Theme 1d of the 2011 Audit of Inequalities) | Young People  | To encourage increased participation in politics amongst young people (Involving young people in the work of the Assembly) | To assist the Environment Committee in seeking views of young people on the Road Traffic (Amendment) Bill  | Education Manager  | Oct-Nov 2014. Complete |
|  | Ethnic minority groups (note Assembly Community Connect (ACC) is currently targeting the S75 groups of Women, people with disabilities and minority ethnic groups as per the Audit of Inequalities findings).  | To encourage increased participation in politics amongst Northern Ireland’s ethnic minority communities  | BEM Parliament |  | Complete |
|  |  |  | ‘Get Involved’ campaign and participation at Mela Festival  | Outreach Manager | Complete |
|  |  |  | Commonwealth Day event at Parliament Buildings | Outreach Manager | Complete |
|  |  | To encourage increased participation in politics amongst women | To complete the Cinemagic ‘Reel Politics’ project. Young participants will be tasked with the challenge of creating short original films within five days about the benefits of young women in politics. | Outreach Manager  | Complete. |
|  |  | To encourage increased participation in politics amongst women | Assembly Community Connect (ACC) to target women’s groups and provide relevant training  | Outreach Manager | 6 groups received training in 2014.  |

Function Two: The recruitment and ongoing development of suitably qualified and experienced staff to support the Assembly.

| **Inequality Identified** | **Section 75 Categories** | **Performance Indicators** | **Action Measures** | **Lead Responsibility**  | **Timescale** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Recruitment and Selection (Theme 2a of Audit of Inequalities)  | All  | Ensuring that all recruitment competitions are fully accessible | Apply welcome statements or affirmative action if appropriate in consultation with the Equality Commission for NI.  | Head of HR | Ongoing. The procedures for internal and external recruitment have been reviewed to ensure compliance with good practice. A guaranteed interview scheme has been implemented for both internal and external recruitment |
| Recruitment and Selection (Theme 2b of Audit of Inequalities) | All  | To work to continue improving workplace relations | Compare the results of the 2010 and 2012 staff surveys  | Head of HR/ Head of Corporate Support Unit | Complete. An action plan was established to take forward issues arising from the staff survey, including a targeted initiative to address problematic workplace relations |
| Recruitment and Selection (Theme 2b of Audit of Inequalities) | All  | Use the results of the staff survey 2010 and the Carecall report 2011 to produce and implement an action plan | Monitor the progress of the implementation of this action plan | Head of HR/ Head of Corporate Support Unit | Complete. A further comparison from 2012 with the results from the impending 2014 survey will be made, and required actions identified |