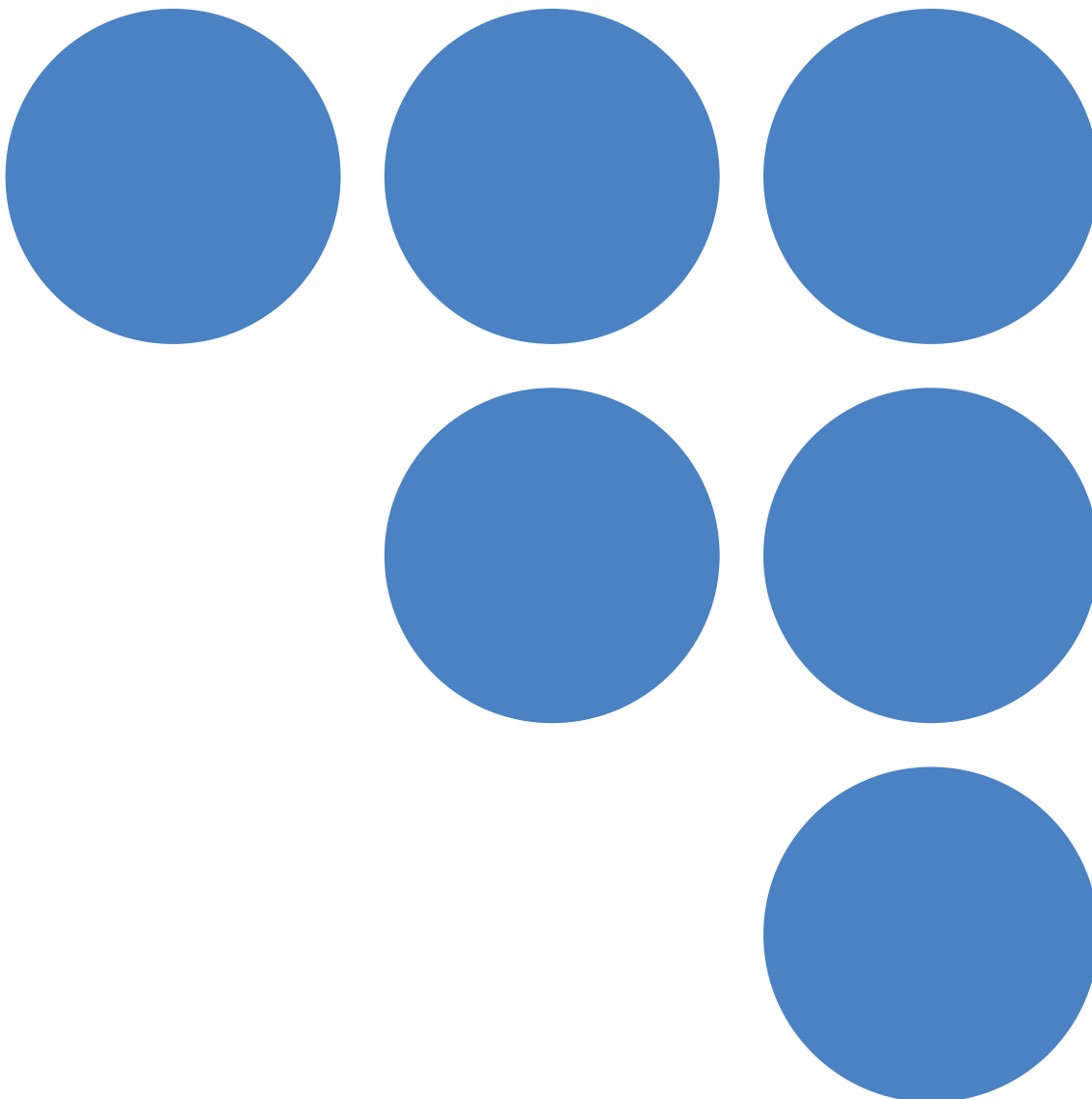




Northern Ireland
Assembly

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission Results of the Consultation on the Good Relations Action Plan 2010-2011

September 2010



Working for You

**This document can be made available
in a range of formats. To request an
alternative format, please contact:**

**Northern Ireland Assembly Commission
Support and Compliance Unit
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw, Stormont,
Belfast
BT4 3XX**

**Telephone: (028) 9041 8377
Text phone: (028) 9052 1209
Email: equality@niassembly.gov.uk
Web: www.niassembly.gov.uk**

This document is printed on:

**100% recycled paper, which is made
from 100% de-inked waste fibre and
bleached using an elemental chlorine-
free agent.**



Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Background to the Policy	5
3. Consultation Methods	8
4. Consultation Responses	9
5. Conclusions	31
Appendix 1 Revised Good Relations Action Plan	32
Appendix 2 List of Organisations Consulted	43
Appendix 3 Organisations Responding to the Consultation Exercise	49

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Northern Ireland Assembly Commission's (hereafter referred to as the 'Commission') purpose is to support the Assembly and its Members in their role as elected representatives and legislators and to facilitate engagement between the Assembly and the public.
- 1.2 The Commission's vision is of an Assembly that strengthens democracy and engages the people of Northern Ireland in creating a better future for all.
- 1.3 The Northern Ireland Act 1998 states, "there shall be a body corporate known as the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission ("the Commission") to perform:
- (a) the functions conferred on the Commission by virtue of any enactment;
 - and
 - (b) any functions conferred on the Commission by resolution of the Assembly."
- 1.4 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.
- 1.5 The Commission may delegate any of its functions to the Speaker or a member of staff of the Assembly and may determine its own procedures.
- 1.6 The Commission is chaired by the Speaker and consists of five other Assembly Members.

CHAIRPERSON, Speaker: Mr William Hay

Mr Peter Weir DUP¹

Mr Pat Doherty SF²

Rev Dr Robert Coulter UUP

Mr Pat Ramsey SDLP³

Mr Sean Neeson ALLIANCE

1 With effect from 28 June 2010 Mr Peter Weir replaced Mr Stephen Moutray.

2 With effect from 14 September 2009 Mr Pat Doherty replaced Mr Paul Butler.

3 With effect from 29 June 2009 Mrs Carmel Hanna replaced Mr Alban Maginness.

With effect from 25 January 2010 Mr Alex Attwood replaced Mrs Carmel Hanna. With effect from 24 May 2010 Mr Pat Ramsey replaced Mr Alex Attwood.

1.7 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires the Commission, when carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between nine categories of persons namely:-

- 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 dependants and persons without

and, without prejudice to the obligations above, to also have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

1.8 The Commission, in its Equality Scheme, sets out how it will fulfill its statutory obligation in this regard and how it will promote equality of opportunity and good relations.

2. Background to the Policy

- 2.1 The Commission is committed, through its Equality Scheme, to the principle of equality of opportunity and good relations. In that context the Commission will aim to ensure that the entire community can have full and fair access to, and participate in, the operations of the Northern Ireland Assembly.
- 2.2 To assist in achieving its vision, as stated at 1.2 above, the Commission, at its meeting of 10 December 2009, reiterated and formalised its commitment to Good Relations, it stated:

“The Northern Ireland Assembly Commission is committed to the promotion of good relations between persons of differing religious belief, political opinion or racial group and is committed to challenging sectarianism and racism.”⁴

- 2.3 In order to take forward this area of work, the Commission approved a Draft Good Relations Action Plan, for public consultation, at its meeting of 21 January 2010⁵. This draft plan also contributes to the corporate objective ‘to promote good relations’ as stated in the Commission’s 2008-2011 (Revised 2009) Secretariat Corporate Plan⁶.
- 2.4 In March 2005, the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) published ‘A Shared Future’: The policy and strategic framework for good relations in Northern Ireland’. The overall aim of this policy is:

“The establishment over time of a normal, civic society, in which all individuals are considered equals, where differences are resolved through dialogue in the public sphere, and where all people are treated impartially. A society where there is equity, respect for diversity and a recognition of our interdependence.”⁷

The Commission support this aim and wish, through its final approved Plan, to do its part in supporting the achievement of a shared future for the benefit of all the internal and external users of the Northern Ireland Assembly.

4 <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/commission/2007mandate/minutes/2009/091210.htm>

5 <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/commission/2007mandate/minutes/2009/100121.htm>

6 The Northern Ireland Assembly Secretariat Corporate Plan 2008-2011 (Revised 2009), p.14

7 A Shared Future: Policy and Framework for Good Relations in Northern Ireland, Office of the First and Deputy First Minister, March 2005, p.7

- 2.5 The Draft Good Relations Plan is also linked to the value-based concepts⁸ of equality, diversity and interdependence⁹ and to the objectives and priorities of A Shared Future and the Racial Equality Strategy.¹⁰ Through this the Commission, when delivering its services and policies, will integrate these values into daily practice.
- 2.6 The Commission also demonstrates its commitment to Good Relations in line with public statements contained in its Corporate and Business Plans, leadership at Management level and devolving responsibility throughout the organisation by encouraging each Directorate and related business area to promote equality and good relations as part of their routine work. The Draft Action Plan, therefore, has captured good relations devolvement at Directorate level.
- 2.7 The Commission in approving the Draft Good Relations Action Plan for consultation has broken down the plan into Six Shared Aims. These are:
- **Promotion of Good Relations:** The Commission will promote equality of opportunity and good relations in all aspects of its work by ensuring that all its services are delivered impartially and effectively.
 - **Equal protection:** The Commission will provide equal protection to its staff and service-users by tackling any incident of racial harassment or sectarianism. The recent publication of our “Dignity at Work” policy outlines how the Commission proposes to create and sustain an environment where everyone is treated with respect and dignity. Equity, diversity and interdependence, within the workforce, will be recognised with the aim of making the most of everyone’s potential.
 - **Equality of service provision:** The Commission will ensure equality of opportunity for all people in accessing and benefiting from its services and facilities. It will shape its policies, practices and work with other organisations, individuals and groups to enable trust and good relations to grow.
 - **Participation:** The Commission, through its Engagement Strategy, and other relevant policies, will develop partnerships with public bodies, agencies, schools and others to foster a sense of belonging to an integrated and mutually supportive society in which diversity is valued and welcomed. Parliament Buildings hosts a large number of events and visitors each year and has a significant opportunity to play a leading role in the encouragement of dialogue, shared learning and mutual respect for different faiths and cultural backgrounds.

8 Equity is about ensuring that all sections of society have equal opportunities to participate in economic, political and social life through redressing inequalities arising independently from people’s choices. Diversity is about acknowledging how our differences as individual human beings and as members of groups can improve the quality of our lives. Interdependence is about recognizing that we are shaped by our relationships, and that our potential as human beings and as a society is dependent on the quality of our interactions with one another.

9 The Equity, Diversity and Interdependence Framework: a Framework for Organisational Learning and Change, 2002, Future Ways Programme, University of Ulster and International Fund for Ireland Community Bridges Programme

10 A Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005-2010, Office of the First and Deputy First Minister

- **Dialogue:** The Commission will encourage dialogue, mutual understanding and shared learning on issues related to good relations to ensure tolerance and understanding are promoted and appropriate initiatives/activities which promote equality of opportunity are fostered.
- **Capacity Building:** The Commission will aim to further build capacity internally and externally, with appropriate groups, to ensure suitable partnerships can be developed to address the Commission's commitment to Section 75(1) and (2).

2.8 The approved Good Relations Action Plan will be reviewed six-monthly by the Commission and the Secretariat Management Group. A Good Relations Action Plan will be devised for each subsequent year. The Equality Unit will support the Commission on matters relating to its commitment to promoting and improving good relations both among staff and with external stakeholders. It is also anticipated that the Good Relations Action Plan will be subject to normal internal audit scrutiny.

3. Consultation Methods

- 3.1 A Good Relations consultation document was prepared and made available for distribution to the public on Monday 29 March 2010. The consultation period lasted for 11 weeks until 4th June 2010 and was later extended by 4 weeks to allow organisations making a written submission to have their comments approved by their respective Boards of Directors.

The consultation document made clear that the Commission wished to consult as widely as possible on the Draft Good relations Action Plan and, with this objective in mind, the following actions were taken:

- 3.2 On 29 March 2010 a postmaster email was issued to all 400 Commission staff detailing information about the consultation document, signposting staff to the document and detailing how to respond. Copies of the consultation document were distributed directly to the Commission's Section 75 consultees (see consultee list at appendix 2) and made readily available to the general public.
- 3.3 Advertisements were placed in the three main regional newspapers inviting the public to comment on the consultation report. These advertisements indicated that the consultation document was available on the Assembly website. It also indicated that the consultation document could be made available in alternative formats on request.
- 3.4 A series of consultation meetings were held. Six meetings were held with groups representing a range of the categories of persons specified in Section 75. A full list of organisations responding to the consultation exercise can be found at appendix 3. Consultations were also held with a number of political parties.

4. Consultation Responses

4.1 The aim of this section is to summarise the feedback from consultees as part of the consultation process.

4.2 In total 10 consultation responses were received by the Commission. Written submissions to the consultation document were received from eight organisations and two responses arose from meetings with representatives from the Community and Voluntary Sector.

4.3 Consultation Responses

a. General Comments/Recommendations

The following specific points were received:

	Organisation	Comment	Response
1	Mediation Northern Ireland	Mediation Northern Ireland believes that the Action Plan is timely in light of the Hillsborough Agreement, and the ongoing development of the Cohesion, Sharing and Integration Policy (CSI). We further welcome the continued planning of the strategy to promote good relations at the heart of the Assembly and consider that the vision, aims, and action points in the plan seem to be both wide-ranging and practical, with appropriate designation of responsibilities.	Noted.
		Mediation Northern Ireland believes within the Action Plan there is both a balance in recognition of the statutory duty, and attention paid to the complicated nature of the work of building trust relations.	Noted.

	Organisation	Comment	Response
		Mediation Northern Ireland further believes that facilitated dialogue can contribute to societal stability by strengthening relationships between individuals with strategic significance or potential in society; by stimulating their curiosity about significant others; by supporting their creativity and helping them take risks for positive change. We call this work: 'Stimulating the Civic Imagination.'	Noted.
		With regard to 'relations' in any context, it is commonly understood that they are not static. Put simply, relationships tend to be either developing constructively or withering. Thus, we consider that dialogue on good relations should not be viewed solely as an issue-focused, problem-solving action. Dialogue can in itself also be a relationship-building process. The following are some key concepts to consider in creating a dialogue on contentious issues that aims to build good relations:	The Commission notes the key concepts for consideration and will work with Mediation NI as appropriate to the stage of Action Plan progression.
		It is clear from the Action Plan that the Commission recognises the importance of facilitated dialogue. An effective facilitator can help constructive communication, enhance understanding, and support creative thinking. The facilitator can, at appropriate times help participants to attend to relationship as well as issues. Thus, it is important that those entering the dialogue consciously enter the process.	Noted

	Organisation	Comment	Response
		Commitment to process is in itself an initial confidence-building measure that enhances relationship. The nature of the commitment needs to be agreed.	Noted
		Any process, and especially a facilitated dialogue process, must have clear purpose. In building commitment to a dialogue it is important to spend time achieving consensus on the vision, aims, and objectives.	Noted
		It is our experience that the space for dialogue must provide safety for participants. Thus, the ground rules, protocols, confidentiality and “privacy” of the dialogue can determine the outcomes. In short, the more safety, the more constructive risk-taking.	Noted
2	Cara Friend and The Rainbow Project	Cara Friend and The Rainbow Project state there is a need for the Good Relations Action Plan to cover other minority groups such as disability and sexual orientation and should be extended, however in lieu of this they recommend the need for continued meetings between the Commission, the Rainbow Project and Cara Friend in relation to sexual orientation strategies.	It is the intention of the Commission to ensure further meetings take place with The Rainbow Project and Cara Friend in order to inform appropriate Commission strategies and policies.

	Organisation	Comment	Response
3	Belfast City Council	<p>Belfast City Council state that at the introductory and background sections of the consultation document the following issues should be addressed:</p> <p>Generally there is no link up or mention of linking with the CSI document which will be out for consultation shortly.</p>	<p>At the time of writing the CSI document had not been approved by the NI Executive. The 'Shared Future' document was referenced under point 2 of the introduction within the consultation document where the Commission reiterated it's support of the overall aim of Shared Future and wished, "... through this [Good Relations] Plan, to do its part in supporting the achievement of a shared future for the benefit of all the internal and external users of the Northern Ireland Assembly."</p>
		<p>Point 4. COMMITMENT</p> <p>"Equity is about ensuring.....through redressing inequalities arising independently from people's choices."</p> <p>We would question the use of the word choices - inequalities arise from people's circumstances rather than choices, for example a disabled person is not disabled through choice.</p>	<p>Noted and recommendation accepted. The term 'choices' will be replaced by 'circumstances'.</p>
		<p>Point 5. PRINCIPLES</p> <p>5.4 "Support those with whom we come into contact (with) in an open and tolerant manner"</p> <p>Would the word inclusive not be better then tolerant? - i.e. we should have moved beyond tolerance</p>	<p>Noted and recommendation accepted. The term 'tolerant' will be replaced by 'inclusive'.</p>
		<p>5.5 "Accept that we might not always share the same views as others but we are comfortable with that acceptance"</p> <p>This is poor wording – e.g. we would not be comfortable or accept violent extremism, racism, sectarianism etc.</p>	<p>Noted. Change of wording to "The Commission will work to obtain a consensus in all issues related to good relations where possible."</p>

	Organisation	Comment	Response
		<p>Point 6. CURRENT POSITION/ ACTION PLAN</p> <p>Dialogue “The Commission will.....to ensure tolerance and understanding.....” – same as above, could tolerance be replaced by inclusivity?</p>	<p>Noted and recommendation accepted. The term ‘tolerant’ will be replaced by ‘inclusive’.</p>
4	Ulster Teachers’ Union	<p>The Ulster Teachers’ Union (UTU) expressed concerns that the plan going forward could be curtailed, delayed or even cancelled over budgetary considerations. The UTU wishes to see the proposals implemented within the identified timescale otherwise the good intentions of the plan would be largely inspirational. Raising enthusiasm and expectation without delivery at this time in education would be damaging in terms of goodwill and the time and effort expended in the formation of this plan would be wasted.</p>	<p>The Commission is committed to raising awareness and understanding of the work of the Assembly. This commitment includes the provision of support for teachers, the establishment of a Youth Assembly, and a range of other initiatives. These commitments are set out in the Commission’s Corporate Plan.</p>
5	The Conflicts of Interest Programme	<p>The Conflicts of Interest Programme state it is important that the promotion of good relations receives adequate recognition in Northern Ireland as a vital service and not something that can be viewed as an optional extra. This also means that delivery of this work is carried out in a structured and planned process.</p>	<p>The Good Relations Action Plan has been structured to ensure that work takes place at a strategic and directorate level and as such is mainstreamed into the current Corporate Plan and Business Area Plans. The Commission believes this will achieve mainstreaming within and throughout the organisation.</p>
		<p>They further state that in the absence of an agreed narrative dealing with the history of Northern Ireland, it is important that there is a clear understanding of what the alternative and often-diverging ‘understandings’ were/are and that these viewpoints are widely and accurately disseminated.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

	Organisation	Comment	Response
		It is strategically important that opinion formers, especially leaders in the fields of community development, education and public services are trained in analyzing the underlying causes of conflict in Northern Ireland. It is also necessary to also inform these individuals on what efforts are being made to address this problem and what further work is required in this field.	Noted.
		In order to acquire a proper perspective on our own conflict and to assist with the promotion of good relations in its aftermath that there is a wider understanding of social and political violence (and its ramifications) as a universal phenomenon.	Noted.
		It is important that a programme is put in place to facilitate; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of effective communication skills • Development of networks and linkages • Development of negotiation and dialogue skills • Promotion of management and leadership skills • Tutoring policy analysis and development 	The NIA's newly appointed training provider will be designing and delivering programmes to meet organizational, directorate, teams and individual training needs in areas of essential skills development.
6	Sinn Féin	Sinn Féin states the following actions and outcomes which are contained with the Draft Good Relations Action Plan which would have relevance for Irish speakers and the Irish language community in general. We recommend that reference should be made to these aspects of the Good Relations Action Plan in formulating a language policy:	The draft language policy will be updated to include the consultation comments noted. This policy will be tabled at the Commission's September 2010 meeting.

	Organisation	Comment	Response
		<p>Equality of Service Provision</p> <p>3.1 Develop approaches to target unrepresented groups to ensure equal access to services and employment – to be mainstreamed into service provision</p> <p>3.4 Identify, through an external good relations audit and consultation with relevant groups, if barriers exist or have been encountered in accessing services – Approaches identified to actively remove or reduce barriers</p> <p>Participation</p> <p>The Commission through its Engagement Strategy will develop partnerships with public bodies, agencies, schools, and others to foster a sense of belonging to an integrated and mutually supportive society in which diversity is valued and welcomed. Parliament Buildings hosts a large number of events and visitors each and has a significant opportunity to play a leading role in the encouragement of dialogue, shared learning and mutual respect for different faiths and cultural backgrounds.</p>	
		<p>4.19 Review welcome and signage displays to reflect an increasingly diverse population and range of visitors</p> <p>4.20 Simultaneous interpreting service from Irish and Ulster Scots to Speaker and Clerks – should be available to all members</p> <p>4.21 Parliamentary reporting in Irish and Ulster Scots</p> <p>4.22 Miscellaneous translation and editorial services in respect of Irish</p>	<p>Included at point 9 of the draft language policy.</p> <p>Previously noted as a consultation comment in draft language policy.</p> <p>The draft language policy will be updated to include the consultation comments noted. This policy will be tabled at the Commission meeting in September 2010</p>

	Organisation	Comment	Response
7	Community Relations Council	CRC believes that the fundamental challenge facing political life in Northern Ireland is to move from antagonism, with all of its associated fears, threats, violence, exclusion and discrimination to a peace based on real justice for all, recognition of the value of diversity and the contribution to be made by people from different backgrounds and trust. Above all, CRC is committed to a shared and better future for all.	Noted.
		The promotion of good relations in Northern Ireland is complex, but necessary. It is proactive and preventative work that is required of public bodies by legislation and it works to build reconciliation, equality and appreciation of diversity at an organisational level.	Noted.
		CRC is pleased to see strong recognition and commitment given to the principles of Equity, Diversity and Interdependence (EDI) in the introduction of the action plan. It is important to embed values such as these within a framework for delivering good relations, and it will be critical to measure progress against the interconnected principles of EDI, along with the six shared aims of the action plan.	Noted.

	Organisation	Comment	Response
		<p>CRC has supported a range of public sector bodies and organisations in the development and delivery of good relations, both through practical input, as well as an advisory capacity. Furthermore, CRC has developed and published <u>A Good Relations Framework: an approach to the development of Good Relations</u> (Appendix A), and it is within this context that we make the following observations:</p>	<p>Noted. The Commission paid cognizance to CRC's <u>A Good Relations Framework: an approach to the development of Good Relations</u> publication in the development of the current good relations action plan and welcome the opportunity to work with the CRC in the implementation of the plan.</p>
		<p>From its inception in 1990 CRC has supported and funded local communities to address issues such as sectarianism, segregation and social exclusion. Local government too has been heavily involved in the promotion of good relations, with Peace III monies focusing on partnership developments within and across local government boundaries. It is therefore disappointing that despite the designation of the Assembly as a public authority and the approval of the Commission's equality scheme in 2008, the Assembly Commission is now only developing its Good Relations Action Plan. According to Guidance issued by the Equality Commission of Northern Ireland (ECNI) it recommends the development of a good relations action plan¹¹, and whilst this is only a recommendation and not bound within a specific timeframe, CRC would have expected a body as prominent and prestigious as the Assembly to lead by example.</p>	<p>The Commission's Equality Scheme was approved in 2008 and since that time discussions have been ongoing with key players in the development of a Good Relations Action Plan. This included discussions with local Government. Due to the nature of the actions contained within the plan it took the Commission time to gain consensus and agreement.</p>

	Organisation	Comment	Response
		<p>Furthermore there are a number of actions within the draft action plan which do not seem specifically relevant to good relations, but rather fall under the wider heading of engagement and participation e.g. subsidised travel and participation at the Balmoral Show. Whilst it is important to examine chill factors in relation to cost, and to use external events to interface with the public and promote the work of the Assembly, it is crucial that a Good Relations Action Plan clearly focuses on barriers based on religious, race and political grounds. Unfortunately, there are many actions that seem irrelevant to section 75 (2).</p>	<p>It is important for the Commission to ensure that all sections of our community have an awareness of the work of the Assembly. The Commission is seeking to achieve this by encouraging those groups, who would not normally do so, to visit the Assembly at Parliament Buildings. The Commission is also seeking to engage with people in their own communities by participating in notable events such as the Balmoral Show - an event which sees a large attendance from the rural west. In summary, a coordinated effort is required.</p>
		<p>Finally, the action plan refers to the A Shared Future Strategy (ASF) and the Racial Equality Strategy (RES), as well as the Triennial Action Plan. CRC welcomes references to these policies and is pleased these policy frameworks & strategies are held in high esteem by the Assembly Commission.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

b. Action Plan Responses

Aim 1: Promotion of Good Relations		Response
Mediation NI	We believe that it is important that all staff are supported in the promotion of good relations through meaningful developmental opportunity. This is true both in terms of statutory compliance and effective change in the delivery of services.	Noted.
	‘Development of a revised staff training programme to promote good relations and provide for the tackling of various forms of discriminations.’	Our current programme is being redesigned by our training provider and the new programme will be delivered to all new staff from July 2010.
	‘Appropriate policies reviewed to ensure good relations is mainstreamed.’	Good Relations has been prioritised as a policy area for Equality Impact Assessment. This will commence in August 2010.
	We recommend that the Commission consider how positive activity or behaviour by staff might be noted, recognised and rewarded.	Noted.
Community Relations Council (CRC)	Audits CRC supports the undertaking of an internal good relations audit, as well as the establishment of a forum to address issues arising for the internal audit.	Noted.

Aim 1: Promotion of Good Relations	Response
<p>CRC is pleased that the Commission will also carry out an external audit, thereby enabling a wider trawl of good relations issues. It is important to view the Assembly as both a working institution and a service delivery agent, providing space for parliamentary business and discussion, but also providing a link to our historical and cultural past. Engaging and assessing the views of a wide range of individuals and groups is essential. It is therefore crucial to examine the workings of the Assembly from many different perspectives e.g. staff, elected representatives, suppliers, schools, tourists, community organisations and stakeholders etc.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>In relation to the audits themselves, CRC is of the opinion that ideally they should be conducted prior to the development of an action plan, therefore ensuring the development and implementation a current and up-to-date action plan. However, CRC acknowledges that the internal audit is currently underway and that plans are being made for an external audit and for these reasons CRC recommends the adoption of a flexible approach that enables updates and revisions over the lifetime of this action plan.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

Aim 1: Promotion of Good Relations	Response
<p>Furthermore, and in line with comparable local government audits, CRC would expect to see outcomes and recommendations that will seek to address chill factors and barriers to engagement and isolation. It will important to explore issues such as current users/visitors to Stormont, whether it is a welcoming place to our diverse communities – both individuals and organisations, and whether it is a space that can be accessed and used by everyone regardless of race, religion or political affiliations. These are critical in relation to promoting and developing good relations.</p>	<p>Noted. We are currently gathering data through an internal Good Relations Audit, which includes Members and this, will be followed by an external Good Relations Audit as stated. An Engagement EQIA is also ongoing which will also provide information as will a planned ‘Audit of Inequalities’ which is due to be initiated in October 2010.</p>
<p>It will be important to examine how staff, MLAs and suppliers relate to the Assembly, as a structure and in terms of its practices and procedures.</p>	<p>Noted. See above.</p>
<p>These discussions are not easy, and it is very likely that this discourse will raise difficult issues, issues that some would rather ignore and push aside. However, it is important to take the lead from other institutions and carry out this work. The vision should be to create a civic institution that represents, respects and reflects the diversity that makes this region.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

Aim 1: Promotion of Good Relations	Response
<p>Northern Ireland and its political institutions have a strong history of contested space and segregation, as well as extended periods of direct rule. However, the current devolved administration offers a real chance to move the peace process forward further. We have secured the peace and must now advance the conflict transformation process. In order to develop this phase the Assembly must embark on difficult conversations and develop and implement actions that will promote and deliver an inclusive and shared Assembly-for everyone.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>This process of dialogue must engage a wide range of stakeholders, and the audit will provide an opportunity for stocktaking. As previously recommended an external assessment should compliment this process.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

Aim 1: Promotion of Good Relations	Response
<p>The consultation document has indicated that a <u>forum</u> will be set up to address the issues and co-ordinate and implement audit outcomes, and will be managed by a cross-directorate. As well as forming a cross-party good relations panel to facilitate dialogue on key good relations issues (5.3), it is imperative that elected representatives form part of the forward planning mechanism as set out in 1.2, and CRC seeks clarification on the role and participation of elected representatives on this forum . Current practices in local government reveal the need to have political buy-in and participation from the outset of this process e.g. working groups exist within Councils to address audit issues. Ultimately this cross-directorate forum will have to engage with elected representatives and it would therefore be advisable to have agreed support and membership from the outset of the process. CRC recommends further engagement with local government counterparts who are designing and implementing good relations actions.</p>	<p>Further discussion in relation to content, make-up and nature of the forum and cross-party structures will be developed over the period of recess.</p>
<p>Training</p> <p>CRC is pleased the Commission intends to revise its mandatory staff training and include the promotion of good relations.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>CRC would also like to see this extended to training or personal development initiatives with MLAs.</p>	<p>Any MLA development initiatives or training in relation to Good Relations will be a matter for consideration by the Commission.</p>

Aim 1: Promotion of Good Relations	Response
<p>CRC is aware that many barriers exist when trying to promote training initiatives and many local councils have commented that since there is no legal obligation for elected representatives to undertake training, this can impact negatively to uptake and commitment. CRC therefore recommends the development of a Voluntary Code which would include the undertaking of training encompassing good relations. This could be embedded in the Statement of Commitment.</p>	<p>As above.</p>
<p>Another important aspect of training is to make sure it is relevant. CRC recommends learning from existing good relations training. It would be particularly important to talk to those who have delivered training to political structures and institutions.</p>	<p>The Commission has recently appointed a new training provider, who will ensure that good relations elements are inserted into appropriate programmes. All training will be constantly monitored and updated in line with good practice.</p>
<p>It is also important to consider single identity training as part of a process that leads on to more challenging conversations i.e. the Epilogues training programme¹².</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>An additional element that creates interest in training is selling personal benefit. Developing relationships with colleagues and constituents is one gain, but an accredited scheme such as the one recently delivered in Coleraine Borough Council, whereby attendees received an accredited award certificate from ILM in Leadership and Good Relations, is another way to promote training.</p>	<p>The Commission provides all staff with the ability to identify specific training requirements through the Personal Development Planning process. Staff can also apply for accredited programmes through the “Assistance to Study Scheme” The new training provider is currently assessing the need to deliver an accredited management/leadership programme.</p>

Aim 1: Promotion of Good Relations	Response
<p>CRC is not naive and is well aware of the complexities of political institutions and power-sharing. However, this plan whilst in an embryonic stage must not assume it is starting from scratch. The majority of MLAs started their political careers as local government councillors and are well aware of good relations issues, audits and training. It is therefore advisable to undertake an audit of previous training to ascertain the different capacities, thereby assisting in the development of tailored training packages.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>It would also be useful to liaise with local government good relations officers and community relations officers to explore current training models, particularly those involved in Peace III partnerships who are engaging on a cluster basis¹³.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

13 Recognising a the various levels of understanding and competencies around addressing sectarianism and racism and local communities a number of peace partnerships have implemented programmes as part of their PRAP to deal with this issue. Some have specifically funded Partnership Development Programmes.

Donegal Peace 3 Partnership - Engaged both elected members and social partners in study visits to Messines and have delivered Epilogues programme.

Louth - Engaged members in a overnight residential to Glencree.

Carrickfergus, Antrim and Newtownabbey - Delivering a Partnership Development Programme for all members of the partnership.

North East - Delivering a Partnership Development Programme. In addition their Programme 1 is a civic and community leadership programme involving councillors and community leaders from all 6 councils that are part of this, the largest cluster.

Aim 4: Participation			
The Office of the Speaker (NI Assembly Commission) recommends the insertion of the action:			
Action	Directorate	Timescale	Anticipated Outcome
Speakers Art Initiative	Office of the Speaker	December 2010	Establishment of an Arts Advisory Group on the Display of Art in Parliament Buildings
Response:	Agreed for inclusion within the Plan		

Aim 4: Participation			
The Director General's Office recommends the insertion of the action:			
Action	Directorate	Timescale	Anticipated Outcome
Parliament Buildings Admissions Policy	Director General's Office	January 2011	Development of a clear and concise policy with measureable standards
Response:	Agreed for inclusion within the Plan		

Organisation	Comment	Response
Ulster Teachers' Union (UTU)	UTU noted the aims as laid out in section 4: Participation, to develop partnerships with public bodies, agencies, schools and others to foster a sense of belonging to an integrated and mutually supportive society in which diversity is welcomed and valued.	Noted.
	UTU noted the intention in paragraph 4.5 to organise a teacher's 2 day awareness conference in line with the citizenship educational programme which will provide a forum for teachers from all sectors to work together on educational activities. The intention in paragraph 4.10 to implement a Youth Assembly for young people from diverse backgrounds to engage in dialogue and work together is also welcomed.	Noted.

Organisation	Comment	Response
Community Relations Council	<p>Education</p> <p>CRC is interested in the Education Programme of the Assembly Commission and how it can contribute to the development of good relations.</p>	<p>We would welcome the opportunity to discuss the Assembly's Education Programme with CRC.</p>
	<p>The education team interacts with a range of groups and individuals and it is crucial they feel confident and competent to deal with difficult issues, particularly as many visitors are interested in the historical nature of the Assembly. Recently the Good Relations Forum, of which CRC and the Equality Commission provide its secretariat, published a challenge paper entitled 'Ensuring the Good Relations Work in Our Schools Counts'¹⁴. It made a number of recommendations in relation to the mainstreaming of good relations within school and CRC would welcome the opportunity to discuss this publication and its recommendations in more detail with the Equality Unit of the Assembly Commission.</p>	<p>As noted above.</p>

Organisation	Comment	Response
	<p>Exhibitions/Conferences</p> <p>Firstly, CRC would like to congratulate the Assembly on the range of activities they have held in the Long Gallery and illustrates the variety of issues which are relevant to society and the legislative assembly.</p> <p>Exhibitions provide space to explore various elements of our past and our present. There are numerous examples of exhibitions that have informed, challenged and altered perceptions and again CRC would advise engagement and learning from external stakeholders in relation to exhibitions, particularly in relation to legacy issues.</p> <p>As part of the Assembly's engagement and participation strategy it would be interesting to explore opportunities for community exhibitions.</p> <p>There is potential for tension in all exhibitions, specifically in relation to differing perspectives. It is therefore important to have a mechanism in place which enables opens dialogue and representation of various views and opinions. Good relations will play a key role in these debates.</p>	As noted above.
	<p>CRC has been involved in preliminary discussions regarding a future conference on Good Relations. We look forward to engaging with the Commission on this issue over the coming months.</p>	Noted.

Aim 5: Dialogue		
Organisation	Comment	Response
Mediation NI	<p>5.3 ‘Establish a cross party good relations panel’.</p> <p>We commend this action and consider that it is a significant opportunity to contribute to a culture of collaborative problem-solving, which will benefit external and internal users of the Assembly.</p> <p>We recommend that Commission examine carefully the nature, purpose, and remit of a cross party good relations panel at this early stage of its development.</p> <p>5.1 Actively encourage internal and external dialogue to promote equality of opportunity and good relations and 5.3 ‘Establish a cross party good relations panel’.</p> <p>We welcome the planning to actively encourage facilitated dialogue on key good relations issues, both across Directorates and across parties.</p>	Noted. This will be considered over the period of recess.
Community Relations Council	<p>We recommend that senior staff responsible for encouraging and supporting participation in the dialogue, are themselves supported in;</p> <p>a) exploring the concept of good relations and its relevance to the Commission</p> <p>b) consider best practice, learning from similar contexts (to that end we commend Action 6.2 Identify best practice from other sources)</p> <p>c) continued envisioning and planning.</p>	Noted.

Aim 5: Dialogue		
Organisation	Comment	Response
	<p>The draft action plan intends to set up a cross-party good relations panel to facilitate dialogue on good relations issues e.g. display of memorabilia etc. Belfast City Council set up a similar working group during its recent refurbishment programme, and other councils have set up cross party groups to undertake audits of artefacts etc. The Assembly Commission should liaise closely with these councils.</p>	<p>Noted. The Commission has held preliminary discussions with Councils and a range of other organizations concerning this area of work.</p>
	<p>In addition to this working group CRC would like to see the development of a safe and inclusive space, whereby long-term engagement can be facilitated and developed for all MLAs. This should be managed by the Assembly Commission, but driven by an external facilitator. This will require significant leadership from senior management and elected representatives, and its success will depend on the desire to make it happen.</p> <p>CRC is aware of similar instruments in local government and strongly believes this can be of huge benefit to relationships, and can help create an inclusive environment.</p>	<p>Noted. This will be considered over the period of recess.</p>

Aim 6: Capacity Building		
Organisation	Comment	Response
Community Relations Council	<p>CRC is pleased with the commitment to build relationships and learn from external best practice. CRC is available for further discussions on this aspect of the plan.</p>	<p>Noted. The Commission welcomes further discussions with CRC on building relationships and best practice.</p>

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The Commission has carefully considered the findings of the consultation exercise. The Commission believes the additional actions and revisions suggested by consultees will have a beneficial effect in terms of the three equality categories as falling under Section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. In light of the consultation comments received the Commission has revised its Good Relations Action Plan which can be found at Appendix 1.

Appendix 1: Revised Good Relations Action Plan

Aim 1: Promotion of Good Relations

The Commission will promote equality of opportunity and good relations in all aspects of its work by ensuring that all its services are delivered impartially and effectively.

Action	Directorate	Timescale ¹⁵	Anticipated Outcome
1.1 Conduct an internal good relations audit with staff and members	Clerk/Director General	April 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of all issues to be addressed • Provision of a framework in keeping with the NIAC structures for the implementation and mainstreaming of good relations
1.2 Establish a forum to address issues arising from internal audit	Cross-directorate	June 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordination and implementation of audit outcomes into updated good relations action plan
1.3 Develop a Language Policy	Cross-directorate	March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a clear and concise policy with measureable standards
1.4 Develop a Good Relations Policy	Cross-directorate	August 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a clear and concise policy with measureable standards
1.5 Provide advice and guidance to the NI Assembly Commission, and to staff, on how to incorporate equality and good relations into directorate business plans	Clerk/Director General	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of good relations into secretariat Directorates
1.6 Revision of mandatory staff training to include the promotion of good relations as part of the induction and review processes	Resources	June 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a revised staff training programme to promote good relations and provide for the tackling of various forms of discrimination • Appropriate policies reviewed to ensure good relations is mainstreamed

1 Timescales refer to commencement dates

Action	Directorate	Timescale ¹⁵	Anticipated Outcome
1.7 Continue to utilise applicable Code(s) and Guidance from the Equality Commission NI as it relates to the recruitment of staff	Resources	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission policies continue to reflect best practice in recruitment and continue to ensure equality of opportunity for all potential job candidates
1.8 Continue to hold meetings with representatives from the LGBT sector.	Clerk/Director General	As appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information is provided to the Commission in order to inform appropriate strategies and policies

Aim 2: Equal Protection

The Commission will provide equal protection to its staff and service-users by tackling any incident of racial harassment or sectarianism. The recent publication of our “Dignity at Work” policy outlines how the Commission proposes to create and sustain an environment where everyone is treated with respect and dignity. Equity, Diversity and Interdependence¹⁶ within the workforce will be recognised with the aim of making the most of everyone’s potential.

Action	Directorate	Timescale	Anticipated Outcome
2.1 Develop a Section 75 complaints policy	Clerk/DG/ Resources	June 2010	• Development of a clear and concise policy with measureable standards
2.2 Establish a system to monitor complaints against Section 75 categories to ensure preventative action can be taken	Clerk/DG/ Resources	July 2010	• Development of clear and measurable standards
2.3 Secretariat Management will, through its Induction Training Plan, promote positive attitudes, behaviour and actions in all aspects of its business	Resources	Ongoing	• Improved understanding across secretariat employees
2.4 Provide legal advice to the NI Assembly Commission, and to staff, in relation to obligations under section 75 (2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998	Clerk/Director General	Ongoing	• Compliance with section 75 (2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

¹⁶ **Equity** is about ensuring that all sections of society have equal opportunities to participate in economic, political and social life through redressing inequalities arising independently from people’s choices.

Diversity is about acknowledging how our differences as individual human beings and as members of groups can improve the quality of our lives.

Interdependence is about recognizing that we are shaped by our relationships, and that our potential as human beings and as a society is dependent on the quality of our interactions with one another.

The Equity, Diversity and Interdependence Framework: a Framework for Organisational Learning and Change, 2002, Future Ways Programme, University of Ulster and International Fund for Ireland Community Bridges Programme

Aim 3: Equality of Service Provision

The Commission will ensure equality of opportunity for all people in accessing and benefiting from its services and facilities. It will shape its policies, practices and work with other organisations, individuals and groups to enable trust and good relations to grow.

Action	Directorate	Timescale	Anticipated Outcome
3.1 Develop approaches to target unrepresented groups to ensure equal access to services and employment	Cross-directorate	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainstreamed into service provision
3.2 Develop opportunities for shared learning and space e.g. exhibitions/displays/education/youth assembly	Cross-directorate	August 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to promote good relations as part of public engagement
3.3 Explore the scope to review and develop the approach to data collection, assessment and monitoring of the good relations duty across the NIAC	Resources	June 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A structured and common approach to data collection, assessment and monitoring developed • A central data collection and monitoring framework implemented
3.4 Identify, through an external good relations audit, and consultation with relevant groups if barriers exist, or have been encountered, in accessing services	Clerk/Director General	August 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approaches identified to actively remove or reduce barriers
3.5 To review employee relations policies and procedures to ensure fair and consistent application	Resources	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate policies reviewed to ensure good relations is mainstreamed
3.6 To continue implementation of the NIAC equality scheme to ensure employees understand their obligations concerning equality and good relations	Clerk/Director General	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with Section 75 of NI Act, 1998
3.7 Public display of Speaker's gifts	Speakers Office	August 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display of Speaker's gifts within public areas in Parliament Buildings

Aim 4: Participation

The Commission, through its Engagement Strategy, will develop partnerships with public bodies, agencies, schools and others to foster a sense of belonging to an integrated and mutually supportive society in which diversity is valued and welcomed. Parliament Buildings hosts a large number of events and visitors each year and has a significant opportunity to play a leading role in the encouragement of dialogue, shared learning and mutual respect for different faiths and cultural backgrounds.

Action- Engagement Directorate	Directorate / Business Area	Timescale	Anticipated Outcome
Listening			
4.1 Consult stakeholders on their requirements by having feedback processes in place for all Engagement activities; conducting a Members Survey; and a programme of constituency visits	Director's Office	December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will have listened to the full range of responses, views and expectations of our stakeholders and this will have informed our decisions and helped us to build the promotion of good relations into the delivery of our services
4.2 Use 'new social media' to engage with the people of NI and hear their views on the Assembly and political issues	Communications	April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will have listened to the people of NI and provided different groups with a platform for greater democratic understanding and the opportunity to develop mutual positions in a 'shared (cyber) space
Thinking			
4.3 Consider opportunities for the Assembly Bursary Programme to assist in the development of Assembly policies	Director's Office	September 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The in-house resource of university students will have been used in a way which can provide closer stakeholder input to shape and inform Assembly policies and the delivery of our services
4.4 Consider a subsidised inward travel scheme	Education	April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a policy is presented, the promotion of Good Relations will have been considered and factored in as a qualifying / high priority criterion
4.5 A teacher's 2 day awareness conference in line with the citizenship educational programme	Education	November 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This conference will have provided a forum for teachers from all sectors to work together on educational activities

Action- Engagement Directorate	Directorate / Business Area	Timescale	Anticipated Outcome
4.6 Development of the Commission's Events policy	Events Office	September 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy will have built the promotion of good relations into the delivery of our services and factored this as a qualifying / high priority criterion.
4.7 Voluntary and community sector engagement policy	External Liaison Unit	September 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy will have built the promotion of good relations into the delivery of our services and factored this as a qualifying / high priority criterion
Doing			
4.8 The Assembly delivers its education programme in a format which provides for schools from different backgrounds to learn together	Education	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools from different backgrounds will have had the opportunity to learn together and about each other
4.9 Provide more space within Parliament Buildings to provide a wider range of programmes for more schools and for more schoolchildren, as well as teachers and adult learners	Education	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Assembly will have increased its capacity to deliver its education programme in a format which provides for schools from different backgrounds to learn together
4.10 Implement a Youth Assembly.	Education	Youth Panel by March 2010 Youth Assembly by 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Assembly will have provided the opportunity for young people from diverse backgrounds to engage in dialogue and work together. This will have helped the Assembly to achieve its corporate aim of strengthening democracy through the engagement of the next generation of voters
4.11 Reviewing and updating resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website Hard copy DVD 	Education	Early 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Assembly will have produced a range of educational material which is aimed at explaining the work of the Assembly and highlights ways that everyone can actively engage with democracy.

Action- Engagement Directorate	Directorate / Business Area	Timescale	Anticipated Outcome
4.12 Develop an Assembly Exhibition	External Liaison Unit	December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People from different backgrounds will have had the opportunity to learn together and about different political perspectives
4.13 Hold Assembly Road Shows	External Liaison Unit	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People from different backgrounds and sectors will have had the opportunity to discuss political issues
4.14 Participate in the Balmoral Show	External Liaison Unit	May 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People from different rural backgrounds and the agricultural sector will have had the opportunity to discuss political issues
4.15 Northern Ireland Assembly & Business Trust (NIABT)	External Liaison Unit	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People from different backgrounds in the business sector will have had the opportunity to learn together and share opinion on issues of mutual interest. The promotion of Good Relations will have been considered and factored in as a qualifying / high priority criterion for membership
4.16 Focus groups with lobby and voluntary groups to inform committee business	Research Service	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will have provided different groups with opportunities to work together to inform Committee decisions/ deliberations

Aim 4 - Participation Action – Facilities Directorate	Directorate	Timescale	Anticipated Outcome
4.17 Develop a gift shop policy for the sale of goods under the auspice of 'crafters'	Facilities	May 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a clear and concise policy with measureable standards
4.18 Review access policy regarding the main entrance to Parliament Buildings	Facilities	March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring ongoing compliance with DDA legislation. Draught protocol for access arrangements for Parliament Buildings. Offer training for Members with regard to access arrangements
4.19 Review welcome and signage displays to reflect an increasingly diverse population and range of visitors	Facilities/ Engagement	March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Welcome' sign provided at reception area in a number of languages, including Irish, Ulster-Scots and other languages e.g. Filipino/ Polish etc to reflect multi-cultural composition of visiting public. This could be displayed on the existing Assembly electronic information screen in the great hall.

Aim 4 - Participation Action –Clerking and Reporting Directorate	Directorate	Timescale	Anticipated Outcome
4.20 Provision of simultaneous interpreting service from Irish and Ulster Scots to English to the Speaker and Clerks at Table	Office of the Official Report	At every sitting of the Assembly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate and timely provision of service as and when required
4.21 Provision of a parliamentary reporting service in Irish and Ulster Scots	Office of the Official Report	As and when Irish/Ulster Scots is used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate and timely provision of service as and when required and in line with Hansard service standards
4.22 Miscellaneous translation and editorial services in respect of Irish	Office of the Official Report	As and when required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate and timely provision of service as and when required

Aim 4 - Participation Action –Clerking and Reporting Directorate	Directorate	Timescale	Anticipated Outcome
4.23 Advertisement of Committee inquiries and the Committee stage of Bills in each of the main daily newspapers offering opportunities to all sections of the community to submit evidence	Central Committee	Ongoing	• Opportunity provided to all sections of the community to contribute to policy development and legislative scrutiny processes
4.24 Guidance for witnesses attending committee meetings reviewed to take account of the needs of people with a disability and language barriers	Central Committee	Ongoing	• Improved opportunities for people with a disability to contribute to policy development and legislative scrutiny processes
4.25 Plans in place to encourage committees to actively engage with the community, including by meeting regularly outside Parliament Buildings	Central Committee	Ongoing	• Improved opportunities for all sections of the community to contribute to policy development and legislative scrutiny processes

Aim 4 - Participation Action –Resources Directorate	Directorate	Timescale	Anticipated Outcome
4.26 Continued implementation of fully compliant procurement policies and practices	Procurement Office	30 June 2010	• Installation of Assembly access to the Sourcing NI portal (giving greater access to procurement opportunities for SMEs)
	Procurement Office	Ongoing	• Commission policies continue to reflect best practice in public procurement and, in doing so, provides opportunities for economic and social well-being for the community

Aim 4 - Participation Action –Director General's Office	Directorate	Timescale	Anticipated Outcome
4.27 Develop an Admissions Policy for Parliament Buildings	DG Office	January 2011	• Development of a clear and concise policy with measureable standards

Aim 4: Participation**Action – Office of the Speaker**

Action	Directorate	Timescale	Anticipated Outcome
4.28 Speakers Art Initiative	Office of the Speaker	December 2010	• Establishment of an Arts Advisory Group on the Display of Art in Parliament Buildings
4.29 Identify external groups to participate in Speaker's events within Parliament Buildings	Office of the Speaker	Ongoing	• Participation and inclusion of external groups in identified events held at Parliament Buildings

Aim 5: Dialogue

The Commission will encourage dialogue, mutual understanding and shared learning on issues related to good relations to ensure tolerance and understanding are promoted and appropriate initiatives/activities which promote equality of opportunity are fostered.

Action	Directorate	Timescale	Anticipated Outcome
5.1 Actively encourage internal and external dialogue to promote equality of opportunity and good relations	Cross Directorate	Ongoing	• Facilitated dialogue on key good relations issues relevant to the Commission
5.2 Organise a good relations conference with external stakeholders to establish opportunities for learning and actions for the removal or minimising of barriers	Clerk/Director General	August 2010	• Qualitative participant feedback is included in the development of a Good Relations Strategy in 2011 and updated Good Relations Action Plan
5.3 Establish a cross party good relations panel	Clerk/Director General	August 2010	• Facilitated dialogue on key good relations issues relevant to the Commission e.g. the display of artefacts and memorabilia within public areas of Parliament Buildings

Aim 6: Capacity Building

The Commission will aim to further build capacity internally and externally, with appropriate groups, to ensure suitable partnerships can be developed to address the Commission's commitment to Section 75(1) and (2).

Action	Directorate	Timescale	Anticipated Outcome
6.1 Work with the community and voluntary sector in order to inform the NIAC on issues to improve the delivery of services	Cross Directorate	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of services offered by the Commission and applicable suggested initiatives implemented
6.2 Identify best practice from other sources and adopt practice following consultation with Section 75 groups and internal stakeholders	Clerk/Director General	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practice implemented and communicated

Appendix 2: List of Organisations Consulted

Equality Contacts
Organisation Name
A
ACOVO
Age Concern Northern Ireland
Alliance Party
Al-Nisa Association NI
Association for Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus
An Munia Tober
Autism NI
B
Bahai Council for NI
Ballymena Inter-Ethnic Forum
Baha’I Council for NI
Baha’I Community of Belfast
Barnardos
Belfast Hebrew Congregation
Belfast City Council Youth Forum
Belfast City Council
Belfast Islamic Centre
British Deaf Association
Belfast Chinese Christian Church
Belfast Jewish Community
Bulgarian Association NI
C
Carers Northern Ireland
Care in NI
Cara-Friend
CCMS
Children in Need NI

Equality Contacts
Organisation Name
Childrens Law Centre
Chinese Chamber of Commerce
Chinese Welfare Association
Church of Ireland
Community Development & Health Network NI
Craigavon Traveller Support Committee
D
Derry Well Woman
Down's Syndrome Association
Derry Travellers Support Group
DUP
DARD
DCAL
DEL
DETI
DFP
DHSSPS
DOE
DRD
DSD
Disability Action
E
East Belfast Community Development Agency
Employers Forum on Disability
Equality Forum NI
Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
F
Falls Community Council
FPA
G
Green Party
Gingerbread Northern Ireland

Equality Contacts
Organisation Name
GMB
Guru Nanak Dev Ji Sikh Community Association
H
Hare Krishna Community
Help the Aged NI
Hungarian Community Association
I
Include Youth
Independent Health Coaliton
Indian Community Centre
J
K
L
Latino America Unida
Lasi (Lesbian Advocacy Services Initiative)
Lesbian Line
M
Mandarin Speakers Association
MENCAP
Methodist Church in Ireland
Mid Ulster International Cultural Group
Multi-Cultural Resource Centre
N
NIACRO
NIPSA
NIPPA
NICEM
NI Council for Intergrated Schools
NICVA

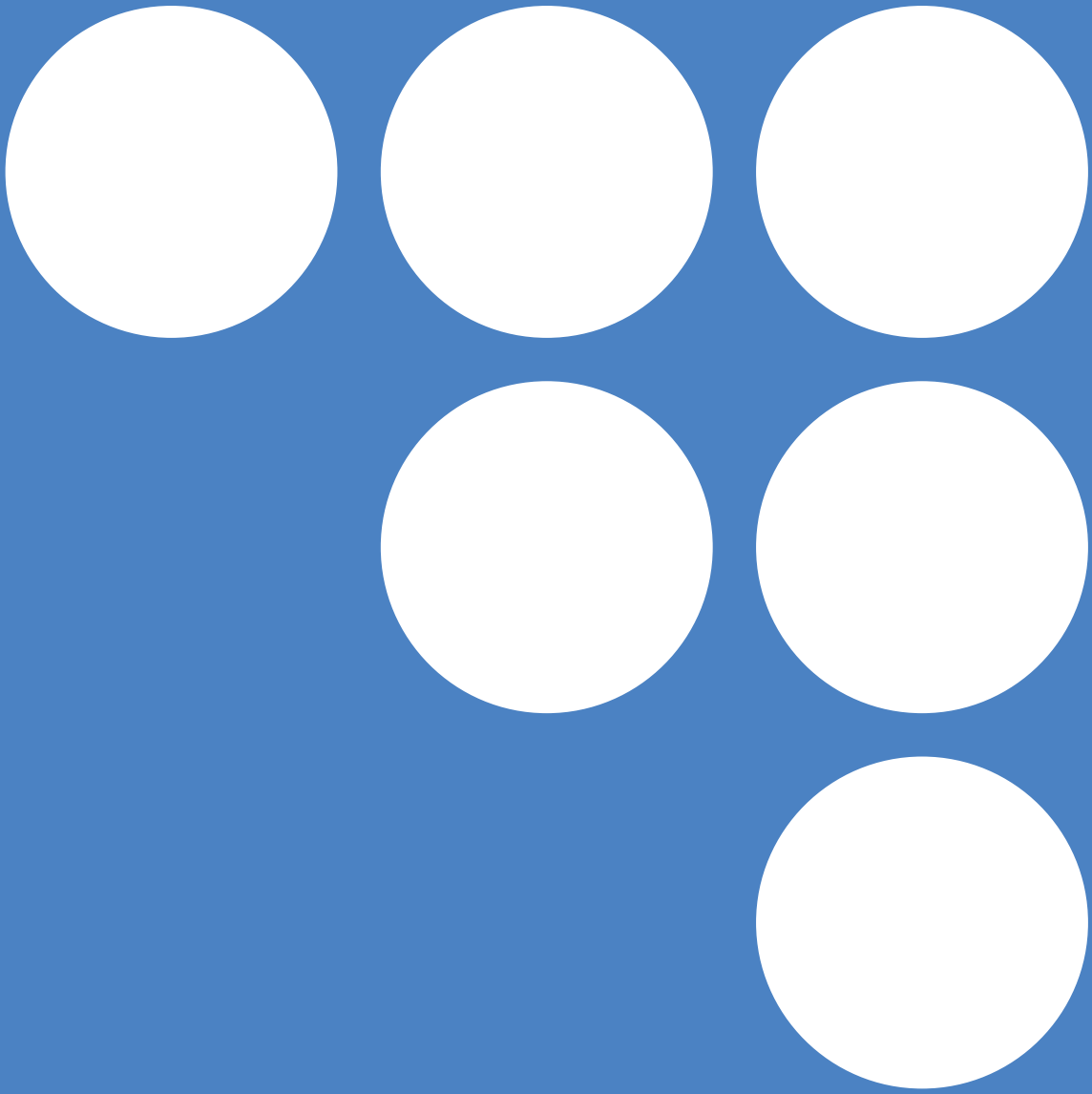
Equality Contacts
Organisation Name
NI Filipino Community in Action
NI Human Rights Commission
NI Mediation Service
NI Women's Aid Federation
NI Youth Forum
NSPCC
NI Anti-Poverty Network
NI Multicultural Association
NI Muslim Family Association
NI Somali Community Association
Newtownabbey Senior Citizens Forum
Newry & Mourne Senior Citizens Consortium
Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health
North West Community Network
NISRA
NIC-ICTU
NUS USI
O
OFMDFM
Oi Kwan Chinese Women Group
Oi Yin Women's Group
Oi Wah Chinese Women's Group
Omagh Ethnic Minorities Community Association
Opportunity Youth
P
Pakistani Community Association
PHAB Northern Ireland
Polish Association NI
Presbyterian Church in Ireland
Probation Board for Northern Ireland
Progressive Unionist Party
Public Achievement

Equality Contacts
Organisation Name
Q
R
Roman Catholic Church
Romanian Community Group
RNID
RNIB
Rural Community Network
S
Save the Children
Sai Pak Chinese Community Project
Sikh Cultural Centre
Sikh Women & Children's Association
Sense NI
Sinn Fein
Skill Northern Ireland
SDLP
Staff Commission for Local Government
Strabane Ethnic Community Association
Staff Commission for Education & Library Boards
T
The Cedar Foundation
The Community Relations Council
The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association
The Egyptian Society of NI
The Rainbow Project
Trademark
Tuar/Barnardos
Tuar Ceatha
U
Ulster Scots Agency
Ulster Teachers Union

Equality Contacts
Organisation Name
Ulster Unionist Party
UNISON
V
VOYPIC
W
Wah-Hip Chinese Community Association
Women's Forum NI
Women's Resource & Development Agency
Women of the World
Women's Support Network
Women's Information Group
X
Y
Youth Action NI
Youth Council for Northern Ireland
Youth Link Northern Ireland
Youthnet
The Youth Justice Agency NI
Z

Appendix 3: Organisations Responding to the Consultation Exercise

Mediation Northern Ireland
NI Community Relations Council
Cara Friend
The Rainbow Project
Conflicts of Interest Programme
Belfast City Council
Ulster Teachers' Union (UTU)
Sinn Féin
Northern Ireland Assembly Speaker's Office
Northern Ireland Assembly Secretariat



Working for You