

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Six-monthly Update - March 17

Six-monthly update – March 2017

Status Key:

-  Complete for this six-month reporting period
-  In progress/ongoing OR on schedule to be progressed in line with timeline
-  Overdue
-  Action suspended
-  New action
-  Amended action

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Six-monthly Update - March 17

Aim 1: Dialogue and Consultation

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
1.1 Equality and good relations issues are discussed at Secretariat Management Group (SMG) and Assembly Commission meetings.	<p>Issues are progressed in line with the Good Relations Action Plan requirements and timings.</p> <p>Minutes of meetings are published on the Assembly website on a monthly basis.</p>	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit and Corporate Support Unit</p> <p>Timeline: Regularly throughout 2016-2021 with the exception of Assembly recesses.</p> <p>Status: In progress.</p> <p>Language paper presented to SMG in January 2017</p>
1.2 Review of initiatives on how art and exhibitions might be used within Parliament Buildings	Consideration of new art initiatives to allow opportunities to reflect the wider community within Parliament Buildings.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Engagement</p> <p>Timeline: Long-term direction to be revisited by new Speaker and Commission in 2017/18</p> <p>Status: In progress.</p> <p>Revised Exhibition and Arts Engagement Policy approved by the Assembly Commission in October 2016.</p> <p>The project brief has been agreed with UU for 'The People of this Place' project and plans are being developed to commission work from the V&C sector and an artist in residence. The process will ensure that all s75 groups will have an equal opportunity to take part.</p>
1.3 To draft a response to Assembly Commission questions within one week of receipt	To draft answers to Assembly Commission Questions for written and/or oral answer applicable to equality and good relations.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit</p> <p>Timeline: As required during the 2016-2021 period</p> <p>Status: Complete.</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Six-monthly Update - March 17

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			In this six-month reporting period, there was one AQO to the Assembly Commission relating to good relations. The response was drafted within one week of receipt.
<p>1.4 Identification of equality and good relations issues to be addressed</p> <p>Issues arising to be addressed or forwarded to the appropriate Directorate for consideration</p>	<p>Action Plan following on from 2014 staff survey will be reviewed.</p> <p>Use the results of future staff surveys to produce and implement action plans if required.</p> <p>Monitor the progress of the implementation of action plans on an annual basis.</p> <p>Staff surveys to be undertaken regularly between 2016 and 2021 and will include questions regarding equality and good relations issues.</p>	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Corporate Support Unit</p> <p>Timeline: Regularly during the 2016-2021 period</p> <p>Status: Complete</p> <p>The Staff Survey 2014 Action Plan was approved by SMG in September 2015 and reviewed by SMG in December 2015, February 2016, April 2016, September 2016 and January 2017.</p> <p>The next Staff Survey (after 2014) is scheduled to issue in 2017 following the implementation of the revised Internal Communications Strategy.</p>
<p>1.5 Organise three teachers' conferences per year to increase teachers' knowledge of the way the Assembly works and how to participate</p>	<p>All teachers at primary, secondary and A-Level will be invited to participate in conferences.</p> <p>An estimated total of 70 teachers will attend 3 conferences per year</p> <p>Increased understanding in teachers' knowledge of how the Assembly works and how to participate will be measured via questionnaire and other means of feedback.</p>	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Education Team</p> <p>Timeline: Hold three conferences per year over the 2016-2021 period.</p> <p>Status: Complete</p> <p>Three Teacher conferences are held each year in June (Primary), October (A level Politics) and December (Post Primary).</p> <p>In the 6 months ending 31 March 2017, two Teacher's conferences were held October 2016 and December 2016. They were attended by 49 teachers.</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Six-monthly Update - March 17

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1.6 The Assembly delivers its education programme in a format which provides for schools from different backgrounds to learn together	Schools from different backgrounds will have had the opportunity to learn together by attending education programmes together.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Education Team Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan. Status: Complete The Assembly's Education programme is marketed regularly to all schools in Northern Ireland. Opportunities are provided for schools to learn together in dedicated rooms in Parliament Buildings and in school or community settings. In the 6 months ending 31 March 2017 there were 9,695 participants in education programmes.</p>
1.7 The Assembly focuses on engagement with disenfranchised groups	<p>Increased engagement with minority ethnic communities to inform groups how to utilise resources available through Assembly Community Connect & partner organisations.</p> <p>Target members and representative organisations of minority ethnic communities to attend 'How the Assembly Works' sessions to encourage a 5% increase in participation.</p>	Persons of different racial group.	<p>Lead: Engagement Manager Timeline: Annually throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan. Status: In progress. Work is currently being undertaken to split the ACC database by sector. Statistics on the ethnicity of delegates have been collected since September 2016. Recent analysis of statistics shows that 10% of delegates attending ACC training are from a non-white background: 5% from a Black African background, and 5% other. We will aim for a further 5% increase overall during lifetime of action plan. A comparative study will be made in September 2017.</p>
1.8 Hold focus meetings and engage with sectoral and voluntary groups to inform committee business	Hold at least two meetings and engagement activities per month, when the Assembly is sitting, with groups which will inform committee business.	All good relations groups	<p>Lead: Engagement Manager Timeline: At least 24 meetings annually throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan Status: In progress</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Six-monthly Update - March 17

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	<p>Continue to develop a database to register voluntary and community organisations by sector</p> <p>Use database to gather information to inform committee business.</p>		<p>25 engagement events were held between Sept 16 and Dec 16 informing groups of the work of the Assembly and its Committees. Six events were run for Committees which fed into Committee business. This included two events for those with disabilities and two events focused on youth groups.</p> <p>ACC database has doubled to 2978 registered users since Sept 2016. Work has commenced on splitting the database by sector based on the Charity Commission categorisations.</p> <p>The NIABT database has been used to promote Committee activity. However, due to limited enquiries at the start of the new mandate, there was limited opportunity to avail of ACC contacts for Committee business.</p>
1.9 Legal Services continue to provide advice as necessary	The provision of legal advice to the NI Assembly Commission, and to staff, in relation to obligations under S75(2) of the NI Act 1998.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Legal and Governance Services</p> <p>Timeline: As required during 2016-2021</p> <p>Status: Ongoing</p> <p>Legal advice provided upon request within the reporting period. .</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Six-monthly Update - March 17

Aim 2: Promotion of Good Relations

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
2.1 Maintain the display of Speaker's gifts within in the Assembly and Senate Rotundas in Parliament Buildings	Display of Speaker's gifts is accessible to the visiting public and maintained.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	Lead: Speaker's Office Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan. Status: Complete. Contents reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis.
2.2 Participation and inclusion of external groups in identified events held at Parliament Buildings	Speaker's and other Assembly events to be used to include external guests and organisations to highlight issues and work in the wider community. Events will vary each year but will typically include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Christmas event 2. St Patrick's Day event 3. Community Relations Week 4. International Women's Day 5. Chinese New Year 	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	Lead: Speaker's Office/ Outreach Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan. Subject to review on election of a new Speaker. Status: Ongoing. Christmas 2016 event recognised social enterprises.
2.3 To further develop capacity of Assembly Commission Members on issues concerning Good Relations and Equality	Development of a mechanism to enable Members to discuss good relations issues. Invite guest speakers and a facilitator to assist Members to discuss contentious issues through dialogue and understanding. Members' knowledge of good relations and equality issues is increased.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit, Corporate Support Unit and Learning and Development Timeline: Group is established and terms of reference completed - 2016 Training needs are assessed and training developed - 2016 Facilitator and guest speakers are identified - 2016 Programme of issues confirmed - 2016 Training complete - 2016

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Six-monthly Update - March 17

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			<p>Programme timetabled with facilitator and guest speakers on good relations issues 2017 – 2021 Status: Overdue Not considered by Commission in advance of 2017 dissolution due to work priorities. To be considered by new Commission following 2017 elections.</p>
2.4 To agree a Language Policy	<p>Prepare a paper on language policy for the Assembly Commission</p> <p>Development of a clear and concise policy with measurable standards and present to the Assembly Commission for agreement.</p>	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit Timeline: Jan 2017 and 2017 Status: In progress Paper presented to SMG on 18 Jan 2017 proposing development of separate provision for minority ethnic languages and Irish/Ulster Scots. Paper to be presented to Commission at a later date (TBA) after the March 2017 election.</p>
2.5 Implementation and communication of Good Relations Action Plan to staff	<p>Communication of Policy and Action Plan to all staff.</p> <p>Staff training updated to cross-reference with Good Relations Action Plan.</p>	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit Timeline: 2016 Status: Complete. Following approval of action plan, postmaster and link was issued to all staff and MLAs/support staff on 1 November 2016</p> <p>Online section 75 training provided to all staff in 2016. Liaison ongoing with Training and Development to identify further training opportunities. (See also actions 4.3 and 4.4)</p>
2.6 Civic Occasions Protocol <i>Action added March 2017</i>	A draft Protocol was presented to the Assembly Commission in March 2016.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Director of Facilities/Equality and Good Relations Unit Timeline: Following publication of final report by Commission on Flags, Identity, Culture and Tradition</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Six-monthly Update - March 17

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	<p>It was decided that the Protocol would be considered by the Commission after the May 2016 election.</p> <p>The intended outcome is the provision of an agreed Civic Occasion Protocol. .</p>		<p>Status: New Action</p> <p>This is a new action for this reporting period. The draft Protocol arises from a recommendation made by the consultants facilitating the Flag EQIA. In their 'Final Decision Report', they recommended that the Commission consider adopting a civic occasions policy. In light of political developments, the Commission has yet to consider this issue and may wish to take account of the Commission on Flags, Identity, Culture and Tradition's final report once published.</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Six-monthly Update - March 17

Aim 3: Equality of Service Provision

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
3.1 Continue to utilise applicable codes and guidance from the Equality Commission NI as it relates to the recruitment of staff	Commission policies continue to reflect best practice in recruitment and continue to ensure equality of opportunity for all potential job applicants.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: HR Team Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021. Status: Complete Policies on internal and external recruitment are in place. The HR Office continues to seek advice from the ECNI, as required, on recruitment related issues.</p>
3.2 The Assembly focuses on engagement with disenfranchised groups	To work with the National Assembly for Wales and the Flemish Parliament to make a joint application to Erasmus+ to deliver a trans-national youth project.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Education Team Timeline: Project length anticipated 12 months (Estimated Sept 2016 - Sept 2017) Status: Complete An application to Erasmus+ was made in April 2016. The application was not successful. The Education Service continues to explore ways to engage with all young people including disenfranchised and 'hard to reach' groups.</p>
3.3 Continue programme of local events to encourage young people from all backgrounds to meet and discuss issues with their MLAs	To hold 'Let's Talk' events for young people from all constituencies.	Persons of different religious belief or political opinion	<p>Lead: Education Service Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021. Status: Complete Eight Let's Talk events were held across Northern Ireland in 2016. In the 6 months ending 31 March 2017 there were two events attended by over 200 young people in Enniskillen and Derry-Londonderry.</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Six-monthly Update - March 17

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			(NB. Five Let's Talk events scheduled in February and March 2017 are cancelled due to dissolution of the Assembly.)
3.4 Identify best practice from other sources and adopt practice following consultation with section 75 groups and internal stakeholders (Learn and share good practice from other areas)	<p>Work with relevant teams and staff to promote the sharing of learning and outcomes from joint projects.</p> <p>Continue participation on, for example, inter-parliamentary groups and civil service groups to document models of best practice.</p> <p>Increased understanding of the good relations issues affecting the Northern Ireland Assembly.</p> <p>Best practice is implemented and communicated.</p> <p>Increased collaboration on a regional and national basis to discuss good relations issues.</p>	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit</p> <p>Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021.</p> <p>Status: Complete.</p> <p>The Equality and Good Relations Unit attends meetings of the Civil Service Equality Practitioners' Group (EPG) and the Civil Service Steering Group for Provision of Translation, Interpretation and Transcription Services. In September 2016, the Equality Unit also hosted a meeting of the Equality Interparliamentary Group, which comprises equality officers from Westminster, Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly.</p>
3.5 Advertisement of committee stage of Bills in each of the main daily newspapers offering opportunities to all sections of the community to submit evidence	Improved access opportunities for people to contribute to policy development and legislative scrutiny processes.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Clerking and Reporting</p> <p>Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relation</p> <p>Status: Complete.</p> <p>The calls for evidence on all committee stages of Bills are advertised in the Belfast Telegraph, Newsletter and Irish News, as well as on the Assembly website and via social media.</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Six-monthly Update - March 17

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3.6 Plans in place to encourage Committees to actively engage with the community by meeting regularly outside of Parliament Buildings	Improved opportunities for all sections of the community to contribute to policy development and legislative scrutiny processes. Statutory Committees to aim to hold external meetings periodically throughout the mandate.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	Lead: Clerking and Reporting Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021. Status: Complete. Committees regularly hold meetings and engagement events outside of Parliament Buildings.
3.7 Lighting of Building	To light the exterior of Parliament Buildings on days as agreed by the Assembly Commission	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	Lead: Head of Building Services Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021. Status: Complete
3.8 Continued Implementation of the 'Perspective on...' series	To hold inclusive events to mark anniversaries within the 'Decade of Centenaries' as agreed by the Assembly Commission including in 2016 the Easter Rising and the Battle of the Somme.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion.	Lead: Speaker's Office Timeline: Anniversaries to be marked in the 2016-2021 mandate to be agreed by the new Commission following the election. Status: Ongoing Paper was presented to the Assembly Commission in November 16.
3.9 Outreach Parliaments <i>(Action suspended March 2017)</i>	To facilitate 2 BEM Parliaments per year in order to engage people from minority groups.	Persons of different racial group.	Lead: Engagement Manager Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021. Status: Action Suspended. The partner organisation for BEM Parliaments, NICEM, has entered voluntary insolvency. The capacity will need to be re-established within this community to facilitate further BEM Parliaments. It may be a number of years before this action can be revisited. It is therefore recommended that this action is suspended and in the meantime a new

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Six-monthly Update - March 17

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			action is added to the strategy which commits to the delivery of one 'Get Involved' conference per year to BEM groups. (See new action 3.15)
3.10 Assembly Community Connect (ACC)	Increased engagement database of s75 groups by 20%; inform groups how to utilise resources available through Assembly Community Connect & partner organisations.	All S75 groups, including persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	Lead: Engagement Manager Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021. Status: Complete The ACC database has doubled and has been used to inform groups of events, etc, available by ACC. This work will continue.
3.11 Monitoring the outcome of the EQIA on the Flying of the Union Flag at Parliament Buildings	Monitoring includes regular consideration of a range of sources such as complaints, research and related policies etc.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion.	Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit Timeline: Annually Status: Complete. The visitor survey, generally carried out three times a year, contains a question about flags, symbols and emblems in Parliament Buildings. RaISe produced a report on survey findings, annually or as required. The latest report (November 2016) is attached at Annex 1.
3.12 Access to information	The Education Service has an Irish Language Champion and the education programme can now be delivered in Irish. Based on previous years' numbers, the programme will be delivered to approx. 3 Irish medium schools during the academic year.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	Lead: Education Service Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021. Status: Complete The availability of an education programme in Irish is advertised to schools. No Irish Medium schools have visited or received outreach visits in the 6 months ending 31 March 2017. Irish medium schools have been consulted by Education Service on behalf of Committees for inquiries e.g. Shared

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Six-monthly Update - March 17

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			Education, Anti Bullying Bill. The Education Service has a dedicated website, the primary section of which is currently being translated into Irish by CCEA.
3.13 Keep under review the use of Irish in recruitment ads	Review per recruitment competition any feedback received on the use of Irish in advertisements as relating to the recruitment process.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion.	Lead: HR Team Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021. Status: Complete Feedback on the use of Irish in advertisements is monitored on an ongoing basis.
3.14 Continued operation of alternative placement programme to trainee teachers ie Stranmillis College (Final year students)	To allow the Assembly to ensure that its current education programmes continue to be compatible with teacher training best practice. Max 3 places per year lasting 2 weeks each January.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	Lead: Education Team Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021. Status: Complete Two trainee teachers from Stranmillis attended a two week placement with education officers in January 2017.
3.15 Deliver 'Get Involved' conference to BEM groups <i>(Action added March 2017)</i>	Deliver one conference every year to BEM groups.	Persons of different racial group.	Lead: Engagement Manager Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21. Status: New Action This action has been developed to increase engagement with the BEM sector, particularly in light of the suspension of BEM Parliaments as a result of the closure of the partner organisation, NICEM.

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Six-monthly Update - March 17

Aim 4: Training and Development

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
<p>4.1</p> <p>Personal learning records to include details of equality and good relations training undertaken.</p> <p><i>Previous action was: '4.1 Personal Development Plans include equality issues/updates.'</i></p> <p><i>This action has been amended to more accurately reflect the monitoring of staff learning.</i></p>	<p>Ongoing learning in relation to equality takes place.</p> <p><i>Additional outcomes/impacts and measurements:</i></p> <p>Learning and Development Team to update personal learning records on iTrent with mandatory equality and good relations training. Staff can also add additional equality and good relations training to their personal learning plans, and this training will also be monitored by the L&D team.</p>	<p>Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.</p>	<p>Lead: HR Team Timeline: Annually throughout lifespan of the plan Status: Amended action Equality is addressed through mandatory training e.g. Dignity at Work and is also inherent in several of the masterclasses made available to staff.</p>
<p>4.2 Induction training monitored and reported on</p>	<p>Monitoring of mandatory staff training which includes the promotion of good relations as part of the induction process for any external appointments that occur.</p>	<p>Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.</p>	<p>Lead: HR Team Timeline: As required Status: Complete. The L&D Team monitors attendance at all mandatory training including induction and offers a range of dates/times for training to facilitate attendance by all staff.</p> <p>Training figures to be presented to SMG quarterly as part of HR updates.</p>
<p>4.3 To provide good relations support to staff</p>	<p>Good Relations input into training programmes as required.</p>	<p>Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.</p>	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021.</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Six-monthly Update - March 17

<p>To support mainstreaming of good relations at Directorate level</p>	<p>Meet with relevant staff to provide good relations support and information for services within the Assembly secretariat.</p> <p>Increased confidence in tackling good relations issues by staff.</p> <p>Good relations agenda is mainstreamed with Assembly staff.</p>		<p>Status: Complete. Online Section 75 training made available to all staff in April 2016, and to new staff as they join the organisation.</p> <p>Further support and information to be provided to staff as required, including as part of development of language policy. See also action 4.4.</p> <p>The Assembly's L&D team also intend to avail of on-line training for all staff through the new Totara site hosted by the Centre for Applied Learning.</p>
<p>4.4 Develop an e-learning good relations package for staff training</p>	<p>E-learning package is developed to enable staff to better understand good relations and its relevance to their role in the Assembly.</p> <p>Mandatory completion of e-learning takes place by all Assembly staff.</p> <p>Monitoring of mandatory training takes place to ensure all staff complete training and it is complete to a satisfactory standard.</p>	<p>Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.</p>	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit and Learning and Development</p> <p>Timeline: 2018</p> <p>Status: In progress. Online mandatory Section 75 training, which included good relations, was made available to all staff in April 2016, and has been made available to new staff as they join the organisation.</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Six-monthly Update - March 17

Aim 5: Management Information and Data

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
5.1 Direct staff to screening training as required	<p>Screening guidance in place for staff.</p> <p>Training provided as required.</p> <p>Increased knowledge and skills to address good relations issues.</p>	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit and Learning and Development</p> <p>Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021.</p> <p>Status: Complete.</p> <p>Screening form updated following consultation with Equality Commission, and new form circulated to all staff in October 2016.</p> <p>Screening training was provided to Heads of Business and Directors in autumn 2014. Further training for other staff was provided in Feb 2015. Further training will be planned within lifetime of action plan.</p>
5.2 Continued use of 'social media' to engage with people of NI and hear their views on the Assembly and political issues	<p>We will have listened to the people of NI and provided different groups with a democratic understanding and the opportunity to develop mutual positions in a shared (cyber) space.</p> <p>Education Service uses Social Media (Twitter) daily to inform users of its services and initiatives.</p>	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Education Team</p> <p>Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021.</p> <p>Status: Complete</p> <p>Education Service uses Twitter daily to inform users of services and initiatives.</p>
5.3 To monitor user comments collected from feedback processed in place for all engagement activities	Feedback is used, where appropriate, to help inform decisions and build the promotion of equality and good relations into the delivery of services.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Engagement Manager</p> <p>Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021.</p> <p>Status: Complete</p> <p>ACC feedback is reviewed after every event to help to inform decisions on the review of services. However, ACC has adopted the use of Eventbrite</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Six-monthly Update - March 17

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			and SurveyMonkey since September 2016 and will be assessing feedback comparatively over time, including the service delivery to s75 groups.
5.4 Maintain an inventory and monitor the condition of all artefacts belonging to the Assembly	<p>All artefacts belonging to the Assembly are kept and maintained in an appropriate manner.</p> <p>Artefacts will be monitored on an annual basis.</p>	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Head of Building Services</p> <p>Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021.</p> <p>Status: Complete</p> <p>Inventory updated in December 2016.</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Six-monthly Update - March 17

Aim 6: Monitoring

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	Good Relations Category	Progress update
6.1 Good Relations Action Plan is updated to include additional relevant actions that arise during the lifespan of the plan.	<p>Monitoring relevant sources to ensure any additional actions are added as appropriate.</p> <p>Continue engagement with Assembly Directorates to discuss any potential issues for inclusion.</p> <p>Produce a monitoring report of progress and any additional action every six months and table at SMG meetings.</p>	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit/All Directorates</p> <p>Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Action Plan as required.</p> <p>Status: Complete.</p> <p>Input from business areas, including information on additional actions, will be sought every six months for progress update for SMG/Commission. March 17 monitoring report first update since implementation of action plan.</p>
6.2 To provide adequate staff resources to allow the implementation of all programme activities	Directorate budget includes, where relevant, for strategic development, implementation and monitoring.	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: All directorates</p> <p>Timeline: Budgeting as necessary in line with Assembly policies throughout the lifespan of the Action Plan as required.</p> <p>Status: Complete.</p> <p>Actions in action plan were agreed with business areas during development of action plan, and budgets should take account of any planned activity under action plan. Regular budget meetings and six-monthly updates to SMG/Commission give business areas opportunity to review commitments.</p>
6.3 To continue implementation and reporting to SMG of Assembly Visitor's survey	<p>Conduct a Visitor's survey 3 times a year (generally February, June and October).</p> <p>Assembly research collate data and produce a report for Equality and Good</p>	Persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit and RaISe</p> <p>Timeline: Throughout the lifespan of the Action Plan as required.</p> <p>Status: Complete.</p>

Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21: Six-monthly Update - March 17

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	Relations Unit to be submitted to SMG with good relations six-monthly monitoring reports.		<p>The visitor survey is generally carried out three times a year by Events, Outreach and RaSe – February, July and Sept/October. RaSe produce a report on survey findings annually or as required. The latest report (November 2016) is attached at Annex 1.</p> <p>The February survey has been postponed because of the reduction in the number of Events and Outreach activities during dissolution.</p>



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Research and Information Service Briefing Note

Paper 000/00

15 November 2016

NIAR 392-16

Barbara Love

Northern Ireland Assembly Visitor Survey (Good Relations)

1 Introduction

This paper presents the findings of the Northern Ireland Assembly Visitor Survey (Good Relations) which was conducted in Autumn 2016. The purpose of this survey is to inform the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission's Good Relation Strategy by gathering the views of visitors to Parliament Buildings.

The survey was administered by tours and events staff working within Parliament Buildings. The data was analysed by the Assembly's Research and Information Service.

2 Participants

A total of 64 visitors who were taking tours or attending an event or training in Parliament Buildings agreed to complete the survey. For almost three quarters of respondents (73.4%, n = 62), this was the first time they visited Parliament Buildings. One visitor also watched a Committee while another watched a Minister's Question Time whilst visiting Parliament Buildings.

3 Access to and within Parliament Buildings

All but one participant rated physical access to Parliament Buildings as excellent (9 participants) or good (6 participants). One participant rated access to Parliament Buildings as average.

Eleven out of 13 participants rated access within Parliament Buildings as excellent (5 participants) or good (6 participants). Two participants rated access within Parliament Buildings as poor.

4 Welcome in Parliament Buildings

All 62 respondents who answered the question, said that they felt welcome in Parliament Buildings. One respondent commented that they felt 'very' welcome.

Most respondents (86.7%, n =60) said they felt that Parliament Buildings is welcoming to people of different ethnic origin, religion or public opinion. The remaining 13.3% of respondents said they felt that Parliament Buildings is neutral (neither welcoming nor unwelcoming to people from different religious or political backgrounds or ethnic groups). No one said that they felt Parliament Buildings is not welcoming to people of different ethnic origin, religion or public opinion.

5 Flags, symbols and emblems

Almost two thirds of respondents (62.2%, n = 37) said they felt the flags, symbols and emblems in Parliament Buildings make a positive contribution to Good Relations while the remaining 37.8% said they felt the flags, symbols and emblems in Parliament Buildings make a neither a positive or negative contribution. No one said they felt the flags, symbols and emblems in Parliament Buildings make a negative contribution to Good Relations.

Most of those who commented said they didn't notice any flags, symbols or emblems. Two other comments were received regarding the flags, symbols and emblems:

"It gives a sense of belonging."

"I would expect to see some kind of emblems/dressing to demonstrate the history of the building."

6 Artwork and exhibitions

37 respondents said they had viewed the artwork or exhibitions on display. Of these, 23 said they felt the artwork or and exhibitions make a positive contribution to Good Relations while one respondent said they make neither a positive or negative

contribution. No one said they felt the artwork or and exhibitions make a negative contribution to Good Relations.

One respondent commented that the 'Craigavon statue was interesting'. Another respondent said they didn't view the artwork or exhibitions 'in any political context.'

7 Treatment by staff

All 60 participants who responded to the question said they felt as though they were treated with respect by staff working in Parliament Buildings irrespective of their ethnic origin, religion or political opinion.

8 Other comments

Respondents were generally very complimentary about the tour and tour guide and the event they attended. In terms of Good Relations, respondents also commented:

"Beautiful building - every voter in NI should get the chance to visit (if they want)."

"We should be allowed to walk around the building inc. upstairs."

"There should be more reference to the foundation of the Northern Ireland Parliament in the tour."