

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission



Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties Annual Progress Report 2017-18

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Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/about-the-assembly/corporate-information/policies/equality-policies/>

Signature:

Maria Bannon.

This report has been prepared using a template circulated by the Equality Commission.

It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and good relations duties, and implementing Equality Scheme commitments and Disability Action Plans.

This report reflects progress made between April 2017 and March 2018

PART A – Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Scheme

Section 1: Equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice

1

In 2017-18, please provide **examples** of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved.

Please relate these to the implementation of your statutory equality and good relations duties and Equality Scheme where appropriate.

**1 (a)
Corporate
Strategy**

The current political situation, and the fact that the Assembly is not currently conducting normal business, has created a difficult environment for a number of Assembly Commission (the “Commission”) activities aimed at planning for the future. A new Corporate Strategy for 2018-23 is in the process of being developed, including a comprehensive engagement process with staff. The timing and nature of the Commission’s consideration and approval of this strategy will be influenced by the continuing uncertainty.

The 2012-17 (revised 2015) Corporate Strategy includes equality and corporate governance arrangements in the aims of the organisation and it is expected that this importance will again be reflected in the Commission’s objectives.

The 2012-17 (revised 2015) Corporate Strategy has equality at its core of corporate governance, *“Have equality and corporate governance arrangements in place which command confidence and which facilitate compliance with statutory responsibilities.”*

The 2012-2017 (revised 2015) Corporate Strategy is available at the link below:

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/about-the-assembly/corporate-information/policies/the-northern-ireland-assembly-commission-corporate-strategy-2012-2016/>

In order to command confidence and facilitate compliance with statutory duties, a number of measures are in place:

- All equality plans and monitoring reports are tabled at Secretariat Management Group (SMG) meetings and/or Commission meetings;
- The Equality Scheme, the Disability Action Plan and the Good Relations Action Plan are published on the Assembly website;
- Policy screening arrangements are in place, including a protocol for sign off of screening forms;
- The screening template is kept under continuous review and was updated in November 2017;
- All policies submitted (new and revised) to SMG and Commission must include a screening form (this is built in to the SMG/Commission cover paper template);
- Policy screening forms are published on the Assembly website quarterly and stakeholders are sent a notification email: <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/about-the-assembly/corporate-information/publications/equality-screening-and-equality-impact-assessments-eqias/>;
- Public consultations are held on action plans, equality impact assessments (EQIAs), etc., in order to engage with the public and seek their views; and
- Training on equality issues is incorporated into the staff training schedule.

1(b) Five Year Review of Disability Action Plans

The Five Year Review of Disability Action Plans was completed during the reporting period and submitted to the SMG on 16 March 2018. This review report was considered and approved by the Commission at its meeting on 30 May 2018 and will be submitted to the Equality Commission for NI (ECNI).

The purpose of this review is to report on whether the Commission, through the two Disability Action Plans (DAPs) covering the reporting period 1 April 2013 - 31 March 2018, has met its statutory requirements i.e. to encourage persons with a disability to participate in public life and to promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities.

The current 5-year review covers the period 1 April 2013 - 31 March 2018. This timeframe takes account of the actions contained within two DAPs which cover the periods 1 July 2012 - 30 June 2016 and 1 July 2016 – 30 June 2021 respectively.

In the 2012 - 2016 DAP, the relevant time period was 1 April 2013 – 30 June 2016. There were 13 action measures (and 42 associated performance indicators) relevant to the review period. Of these 13 action measures, 12 were achieved. Of the 42 performance indicators, 35 were achieved, 3 were partially achieved and 4 were not achieved. One action measure – ‘Provide briefing guides for staff on the practical day to day implementation of the DDA’ – was carried over to the 2016-21 DAP and expanded to take account of different business needs.

Within the 2016 - 2021 DAP, the relevant time period for review was 1 July 2016 - 31 March 2018. There were 37 action measures and 86 associated performance indicators relevant to the review period. Of these, 33 action measures and 76 performance indicators were achieved, 3 action measures were partially

achieved and had 9 related performance indicators and 1 unachieved action measure had 1 related performance indicator.

The 5-year review report will be posted on the Assembly website at <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/about-the-assembly/corporate-information/equality-and-good-relations/disability-action-plan-2016-21/>

**1 (c)
Disability
Action
Plan 2016-
2021**

The Disability Action Plan confirms the Commission's commitment to fulfilling the statutory obligations in compliance with Section 49A and 49B of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006). This Act places duties on public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities; and encourage participation by people with disabilities in public life.

Following a full public consultation, the Disability Action Plan was approved by the Commission in September 2016 for submission to ECNI. It spans a five-year period and can be added to during its lifetime. The full plan is available at this link:

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/about-the-assembly/corporate-information/equality-and-good-relations/disability-action-plan-2016-21/>

Examples of work undertaken in this reporting period include:

a. **Accreditations and Access Information**

The Commission has continued to maintain accreditation awards for the 'Louder than Words' and the Access Award (National Autistic Society) Standards. Accreditation standards can be accessed at the following link,

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/globalassets/documents/accessing-parliament-buildings/louder-than-words.pdf>. Staff received a range of training including autism awareness and autism champions are in place.

An accessibility webpage has been developed containing accessibility information for visitors with a visual impairment, visitors who are deaf or hard of hearing, visitors with autism, information on public tours, wheelchair access arrangements, the Assembly's Inclusive Customer Service Policy and other sources of additional help.

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/visit-and-learning/accessing-parliament-buildings/> .

The web page entitled 'Autism and the Assembly' continues to be updated and maintained to provide information to the public on access arrangements when visiting the Assembly. <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/visit-and-learning/autism-and-the-assembly/> .

In addition, a further web based video has been produced showing how to access Parliament Buildings. This details what is involved in the security check process and what to expect whilst visiting Parliament Buildings. This video was created for visitors on the autism spectrum, but others wishing to plan their visit have also found this useful. A subtitled version of the video is also available as is a printable version to download.

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/visit-and-learning/accessing-parliament-buildings/> .

b. **Physical works**

Following on from previous physical access works, in September 2017, the Commission completed a programme

of work to further improve access in Parliament Buildings, in particular for the floors that are open to the public. This work involved relocating the existing shop and café, constructing an access ramp from the entrance lobby to the ground floor and the automation of corridor doors in the basement, ground and first floors.

In addition, the south lift was upgraded to fire evacuation standard to facilitate the evacuation of persons with a disability in the event of a fire.

All of the work was designed to complement the existing decor of the listed building and to comply with all relevant legislation.

c. **Signage and Maintenance of Access Items used by the public.**

The Commission continues to maintain the quality of access items/facilities used by the public. This has included maintenance of the Assembly quiet room, changing places facility, tactile 'tour map' of Parliament Buildings, iPad with subtitled version of the Assembly tour, Braille signage and other signage in Parliament Buildings including pictorial signage images.

For further details on all actions taken, see Part B of the Annual Report at page 43.

(d) Good Relations Action Plan 2016-2021

Under section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Commission is required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. The Good Relations Action

Plan sets out how the Commission proposes to fulfil this duty in relation to the functions for which it is responsible.

Following a public consultation which ended in June 2016, the Good Relations Action Plan for the period 2016-21 was approved by the Commission in October 2016. The full action plan and information on the consultation can found at this link:

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/about-the-assembly/corporate-information/policies/good-relations-action-plan/>

A progress update on all actions is provided to SMG/Commission every six months. The latest good relations update (March 2018) can be found by accessing the link above.

**1 (e)
Gender
Action
Plan 2016
– 2018**

The Gender Action Plan is a cross-directorate plan which sets out actions and measures to promote gender equality within the Northern Ireland Assembly Secretariat. The actions fall under three themes: leadership and development; communication and engagement; life balance/health and well-being.

A key action in the plan is the Commission's participation in the Business in the Community (BITC) Gender Project. The key outcome of the Project is to *"increase gender diversity to create enabling workplaces for men and women"*. PWC assisted the Project by developing the Baseline Gender Audit Tool and conducting initial baseline exercise. The purpose of the Audit Tool was to measure current performance (and future improvement) against Business in the Community's CORE Standard for Equality, covering nine areas:

- Workplace Culture;
- Recruitment and Selection;
- Monitoring, Evaluation and Response;
- Policy and Strategy
- Flexibility and Life-balance Initiatives
- Career Paths, Training and Development;

- Communication;
- Working Environment; and
- Company Brand and Reputation.

The Audit Tool collated information on the make-up of Commission staff and its policies and procedures. In order to better understand the approach to and commitment of senior management to gender issues, Business in the Community also engaged with the Chief Executives/Board Members of participating organisations. To this end, a meeting took place between Business in the Community, the Clerk/Chief Executive and the Director of Corporate Services in November 2016.

The Baseline Gender Audit Tool was completed by Project participants between October 2016 and April 2017, with final results issued in this reporting period, May 2017.

The Commission's results were considered to be amongst the top performing organisations participating in the Gender Project, scoring 86 out of a total available "best practice" score of 100. The average score across all Project participants was 69.

During the reporting period, Business in the Community reviewed the audit tool results and held discussions with the Clerk/Chief Executive on the survey results in order to develop an appropriate improvement plan. This was done in consultation with the Human Resources Office and the Equality Unit. As the Commission already has a Gender Action Plan, it was agreed that additional actions would be best captured in that document, with implementation monitored by the Gender Action Plan Implementation Group. The Gender Action Plan, including additional actions is at Annex 4.

Other actions undertaken during this reporting period included the following:

Capture gender information on the Assembly staff experience of working in the Assembly. The staff survey was launched on 14 June 2017 and closed on 7 July 2017. A response rate of 90% was achieved. Following this a further piece of research was completed in 14 February 2018 which examined the gender breakdown of the staff survey. This report will be tabled at SMG for discussion in due course.

Domestic violence policy. This policy is currently under development and is with Trade Union Side for comment.

Utilise Existing Assembly Networks. Assembly staff will be provided with an opportunity to attend a 'Train the Trainer' session to develop their capacity to deliver Engagement Programmes. An Assembly Trainers Network paper was agreed by SMG on 25th August 2017. The project will be rolled out when the political situation is resolved.

Supporting Women in the Workplace – Models of Good Practice. Research Paper, 31 March 2017.

This research paper looked at the gender breakdown of the Northern Ireland Assembly workforce and considered UK research concerning gender inequality. The research paper provided examples of measures taken to promote gender equality by UK organisations.

Under monitoring arrangements, a progress update is presented to SMG and Commission every six months. The most recent progress updates (October 2017 and February 2018) are available at Annex 4.

**1 (f)
External
Lighting
Policy at
Parliament
Buildings**

Under the external lighting policy, the façade of Parliament Buildings is “colour washed” to recognise a set number of days agreed by the Commission.

The policy is available on the Assembly website at the link below.

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/about-the-assembly/corporate-information/policies/northern-ireland-assembly-use-of-external-lighting-policy-at-parliament-buildings-2014/>

During this reporting period, the building was lit on the following days:

8 March 2018	International Women’s Day	Purple
17 March 2018	St Patricks Day	Green
12 July 2017	12 July	Orange
11 Nov 2017	Remembrance Sunday	Red
6 April 2017	Cedar Foundation (charity of the year)	Blue
8 September 2017	Cedar	Blue
10 October 2017	World Mental Health Day	Purple
6 February 2018	Centenary Representation of the People Act 1918	Green/White/Purple

**1 (g)
Events
and Tours**

Events and public tours play an important part in ensuring that Parliament Buildings is a welcoming space and that the Assembly and its work is accessible to all. Tours and events are fully accessible.

Data collection during this reporting period is available below:

Functions held:	452
Function guests:	26,490
Tours held - sponsored and public:	764
Tour guests:	16,845

In addition, Parliament Buildings now hosts wedding ceremonies and civil partnerships as agreed by the Commission in January 2017.

**1 (h) KESS
(Knowledge
Exchange
Seminars)**

The Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series (KESS) was the first of its kind in the UK, formally partnering a legislative arm of government – the Assembly – with academia. Since 2012 the series has been delivered by the Assembly’s Research and Information Service (RaISe), in partnership with all three universities located in Northern Ireland: Queen’s University Belfast, Ulster University and the Open University. KESS aims to promote evidence-led policy and law-making within Northern Ireland and to encourage debate and improve understanding, providing a forum to present and disseminate academic research findings in a straightforward format on issues that are relevant to governance in Northern Ireland.

Seminars held during this reporting period covered issues such as, Women in the Workplace, Mental Health and Parents/Mothers and Children, as noted in the below table:

Series No	Seminar Title	Date	Web Link
Series 6	Women in the Workplace	5 April 2017	https://kess.org.uk/women-in-the-workplace/
Series 6	Preventative Health: New Developments	10 May 2017	https://kess.org.uk/2017/05/10/diabetes-education-adults-learning-disabilities-addressing-inequalities/
Series 7	Language in Education	29 November 2017	https://kess.org.uk/29-november-2017-language-education/

Series 7	Mental Health: Understanding & Supporting People	7 February 2018	https://kess.org.uk/7-february-2018-mental-health-understanding-supporting-people/
Series 7	Using Technology in Social Care	14 March 2018	https://kess.org.uk/14-march-2018-using-technology-social-care/
Series 7	Parents/Mothers & Children	21 March 2018	https://kess.org.uk/21-march-2018-parentsmothers-children/

More information on KESS is available here:

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/assembly-business/research-and-information-service-raise/knowledge-exchange/>

1 (i) Speakers Events

During this reporting period, the Speaker hosted the following events:

18 May 2017 - The Speaker welcomed the John Brown University Cathedral Choir from the USA to Parliament Buildings who gave a performance for all building users in the Great Hall.

26 October 2017 – The Speaker made welcoming remarks at the launch of the Pensioners’ Parliament at the Europa Hotel, Belfast. The Assembly has an established link with the group organising this event and each year the Speaker invites the Pensioners’ Parliament to hold its final debating session at Parliament Buildings, Stormont.

29 November 2017 – The Speaker hosted his annual Christmas Reception to recognise the work of the Cedar Trust, the Assembly Charity of the Year.

1 March 2018 – The Speaker welcomed the Little Flower Dance Troupe from China to Parliament Buildings who gave a performance to all buildings users in the Great Hall.

8 March 2018 – The Speaker hosted a play and a panel debate in the Long Gallery to mark International Women’s Day, women’s groups from across Northern Ireland attended.

22 March 2018 – The Speaker, on behalf of the Commission, hosted the unveiling of a portrait of Martin McGuinness in the Great Hall to mark his tenure as deputy First Minister.

**1 (j)
Education
Service**

The role of the Assembly’s Education Service is to support young people’s understanding of the Northern Ireland Assembly and democracy. The Education Service delivered a programme of activities during the reporting period to a wide range of groups, including schools from all sectors, universities, general youth groups and teachers. All areas of delivery are designed to raise awareness of the work of the Assembly through various educational curriculum streams and to encourage young people to participate in the democratic process. The Education Service promotes its activities widely. It tailors programmes to individual groups, working with teachers’/youth leaders to ensure the best possible experience for participants. The service is free.

During this reporting period, the Education Service continued to deliver programmes that have a cross-community aspect. Examples included groups collaborating as members of School Learning Communities and Shared Education Partnerships (new in 2017-18); and groups participating in the National Citizen Service programme, which brings together young people from a variety of backgrounds in summer school residential settings. In November 2017, an education officer presented to a cross-community group in Derry/Londonderry working towards the establishment of a youth council for the Derry City and Strabane Council area.

Awareness raising

- To raise awareness of its role over this reporting period, the Education Service continued to market its services to all schools via mailshot, social media and its dedicated website (<http://education.niassembly.gov.uk/>). Issues relevant to young people can be found on the website. The Education Service worked with the school network provider C2K to advertise opportunities for young people generally. A newsletter was sent to subscribers with news of initiatives and events of interest to teachers and schools.

In June 2017, Education Officers attended an Education Training Inspectorate event to publicise the Education Service to post-primary principals.

Resources

- In this reporting period, work was carried out with the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) to update and create new resources for the Education Service website. These included a number of short films, with subtitled versions, which aim to explain the work of the Assembly to young people and encourage them to get involved. The films cover topics such as representation, voting in the chamber and how the Assembly scrutinises the work of the Executive:

<http://education.niassembly.gov.uk/video-gallery>

Engagement

- In addition to its inward and outreach visits programmes, the Education organises special events. It worked with the Northern Ireland Youth Forum to facilitate a youth debate in the Assembly Chamber on 22 February 2018, chaired by the Speaker, Mr Robin Newton MLA. This involved over 180 young people from different backgrounds. On 13 March 2018, the Education Service worked with the YMCA on a 'Youth in Government' programme for 20

young people from different backgrounds, which included meeting with MLAs and participating in an Assembly-style debate.

- Education Officers worked in partnership with Geological Survey NI to organise a science festival in Parliament Buildings in March 2018, providing an opportunity to promote the Education Service and the work of the Assembly to the eight participating schools.
- Among the adult groups that participated in the education programme were members of UNISON (May 2017) and elected student representatives from the National Union of Students/Union of Students Ireland (NUSUSI) (October 2017). The Education Service presented to 2 groups of undergraduate students of nursing, at Queen's University, Belfast. A special paper on health issues was prepared by the Assembly's Research and Information Service (RaISe) to enhance the relevance of the programme for the audience. The Education Service also set up a special programme for University of Ulster (UU) law students, focusing on the legislative process.
- A youth engagement event was held in collaboration with the Ulster Wildlife Trust. The event was attended by young people from 3 Special Schools.
- The Education Service worked in partnership with the Anti-Bullying Forum on an initiative highlighting Anti-Bullying Week 2017. More details about the initiative can be found here: <http://www.endbullying.org.uk/anti-bullying-week/pr-media/>
- Three teacher conferences were held during this period and 85 teachers attended the events.

- Over 100 teachers and young people participated in an education programme organised in conjunction with the TBUC initiative (Together: Building a United Community).
- In September 2017, 50 young people attended a cross-community engagement event in partnership with Northern Ireland Environment Link.
- The Education Service ran events for schools to commemorate the Representation of the People Act 1918.
- The Education Service is a member of the NICCY (NI Commission for children and young people) Participation Forum, which meets twice-yearly to encourage communication and co-operation on youth participation initiatives. Chaired by the Children's Commissioner, the Forum also includes Departmental Children's Champions and representatives from youth organisations.
- During this reporting period, Education Officers attended meetings of the Assembly Engagement Forum, which also includes representatives from Committees, RaISe, and Outreach. The aim of the forum is to raise awareness of engagement activities across the organisation and to encourage co-operation for the benefit of groups participating in programmes or events.
- During July 2017, Education Officers attended the Parliamentary Engagement Conference to share good practice with colleagues in other legislatures. An education officer attended the Teachers' Institute course at Westminster in January 2018, to learn from the work of Parliament's Education Service.

- In January 2018, the Education Service hosted two final-year students from a local teacher training institution for a two-week alternative placement.
- Education Officers took part in social media training during this reporting period.

Focus groups

- The Education Service conducts focus groups on behalf of Assembly Committees, and the Assembly's RalSe has developed a framework for selecting a broad cross-section of the youth populations, thereby ensuring that children from all sectors, including those attending special schools and in Irish-medium education, can take part in these consultations. No consultations took place during this reporting period, as the Assembly was not meeting.

Disability

- One of the Education Officers is an 'autism champion'. Visitor information for people with autism is available on the Education Service website. The Education Officer undertook refresher training during the reporting period. The Education Service is promoted all schools (see annex 2 which details Education Service figures from 1 April 2017-31 March 2018. Figures are broken down by school type).

Irish Language

- One of the Education Officers is an 'Irish language champion' who can deliver a tour and presentation in Irish to visiting groups. Groups can also meet with MLAs who speak Irish.

- The Education Service worked with the CCEA to translate the primary school section of the Education Service’s website into Irish which will be published at a later date.

Education programme figures 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018.

14,652 young people participated in Education Service programmes, 10,818 of whom were from schools in Northern Ireland. The Education Service continued to offer an outreach service to schools for groups that are unable to visit Parliament Buildings. 51 groups participated in the outreach education programme, equating to 3,568 young people or 24% of all participants for the year. The Education Service figures broken down by school type can be found at Annex 2.

**1 (k)
Engagement
Services**

The Engagement Office is responsible for advancing and encouraging the public’s understanding of the Assembly and the political process in Northern Ireland. It provides the business community, voluntary sector and delegations from across the world with the opportunity to engage and learn more about the legislature.

An update for this reporting period is detailed below:

Assembly Community Connect (ACC) Programme

Assembly Community Connect works to enhance connections between the Assembly and the community through education and outreach, and it provides free training, information and support for the local community.

Due to the political situation activity was reduced and ACC held 6 events during the period. A list of events and attendee numbers is at Annex 6 of this report. The ACC activities included training events, a Speaker’s event for International Women’s Day and the

Northern Ireland Assembly's first family friendly educational event. Some examples are set out below:

Healthy Aging Network Derry

RAPID (the Rural Area Partnership in Derry) established the Healthy Ageing Network in Derry in partnership with 6 rural community groups: - Claudy, Learmount, Lettershandoney, Eglinton, Newbuildings and Strathfoyle. This Lottery funded project aims to reduce the isolation and loneliness experienced by older rural people and help them feel more connected to their community. This event brought 60 older people to Parliament Buildings where they learned about the background and structures of the Northern Ireland Assembly and met with local MLAs.

International Women's Day 2018

On Thursday 8 March, the Northern Ireland Assembly hosted 150 women from across Northern Ireland at an event to celebrate International Women's Day. The theme centred around the history of female suffrage as well as modern day issues around equality.

The event began with a performance of "Shrieking Sisters", a play by Maggie Cronin and Carol Moore which tells the story of Ulster and Irish suffragettes in the early years of the 20th century. The play portrayed a host of significant characters in the early women's movement and used a variety of media to tell the story.

Following the play, a networking reception was held in the Members' Dining Room where the invited guests discussed the issues around women's equality.

The event ended with a lively panel debate, hosted by the radio and television presenter Marie-Louise Muir, which included contributions from Paula Bradley MLA, Chair of the Northern Ireland Assembly Women's Caucus; the playwright and actress Maggie Cronin; leading feminist historians' Dr Margaret Ward and Dr Myrtle Hill and Young Women's Development Worker Emma Johnston.

Women and Children Takeover Parliament Buildings for International Women's Day

On Wednesday 14 March 2018, as part of the International Women's Day festival, the Women's Resource and Development Agency (WRDA) worked with the Northern Ireland Assembly Engagement Service to bring local women and children to Parliament Buildings for the day.

Women from the WRDA had noted that they felt disconnected from the Northern Ireland Assembly as an institution. Most had never visited the building, didn't know how to get here and had expressed concerns that they thought it was somewhere children wouldn't be welcome.

Recent research has also noted that childcare responsibilities are often a key barrier to women's participation not only in formal politics but also in leadership roles within their communities. To try to alleviate some of these barriers the Engagement Service, in partnership with the WRDA, devised this event for women, including those with children who would not normally be able to attend traditional education programmes due to child care responsibilities. Almost 80 attended including groups from the Shankill, Falls and Windsor Women's Centres.

The Northern Ireland Assembly Art Exhibition - Stormont: A sense of place

In March 2016, a successful collaboration between the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Belfast School of Art produced 16 pieces of artwork exploring aspects of Northern Ireland's history and future. Artists were asked to create an illustration in response to an aspect of a shared history and future through a visual exploration of Parliament Buildings and Stormont Estate. The pictures were displayed in Parliament Buildings during the summer of 2016 and from October 2016 to July 2017 are being displayed in various locations throughout Northern Ireland.

The artwork has been extremely well received to date and is proving to be a massive success. The first venue for the touring exhibition was EastSide Visitor Centre in east Belfast, where the exhibition was launched by the Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly, Robin Newton MLA.



A total of 1,125 people viewed the exhibition at EastSide before it moved on to Down Arts Centre in Downpatrick. The exhibition attracted greater attention in this second venue with 3,899 people visiting during December. In January the exhibition moved to Fermanagh House in Enniskillen where approximately 500 people saw the exhibition.

The final three exhibition venues were the Tower Museum in Derry/Londonderry, the Braid Arts Centre in Ballymena and the Museum and Civic Centre in Carrickfergus. Visitor numbers at those venues totalled 4,596 with the Tower Museum being particularly popular with 2,474 visitors. The total number of people who viewed the exhibition over the year was approximately 10,100.

The exhibition was a unique and extremely effective way of promoting the Assembly to people throughout the province who may not have engaged with it previously and proved to be a successful new engagement platform that should be used again in the future.

Engagement Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

Consideration of a new Engagement Strategy is currently under way and a EQIA will be conducted on the new Strategy in due course.

Inward international delegation visits to the Northern Ireland Assembly

A number of inward international delegation visits to the Northern Ireland Assembly took place during the reporting period. Details are included at Annex 1.

**1(I)
Research
and
Informatio
n Service
(RaISe)**

During this period the Commission's Research and Information Service (RaISe) carried out research relevant to equality which included:

Visitors Survey (Good Relations) November 2017 and February 2018

The purpose of this survey is to inform the Commission's Good Relation Strategy by gathering the views of visitors to Parliament Buildings. The survey is carried out a number of times a year. The November 2017 and February 2018 survey reports are available at the following link <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/about-the-assembly/corporate-information/policies/good-relations-action-plan/>

Staff Survey 2017 Gender Report

The Assembly Secretariat carries out a survey of its staff approximately every two years. This research paper presents the findings of the 2017 staff survey disaggregated by gender. These findings will inform the work of the Gender Action Plan Implementation Group in progressing the Commission's Gender Action Plan.

Supporting Women in the Workplace – Models of Good Practice March 2017

This paper explores models for supporting women in employment.

Gender balance of staff presenting at SMG and Commission meetings and at Assembly Community Connect Sessions June 2017.

This briefing note presents the latest available statistics on the gender balance of staff presenting at SMG, Commission meetings and at Assembly Community Connect sessions. This information will inform the work of the Northern Ireland Assembly Secretariat's

Gender Action Implementation Group. This information is collected and analysed on an annual basis.

RaISe has also published a number of papers in the reporting period in its role of supporting Assembly Business. These included:

‘What is the gender pay gap in Northern Ireland’

<http://www.assemblyresearchmatters.org/2018/03/08/gender-pay-gap-northern-ireland/> and

‘Women’s economic transition to retirement’

<http://www.assemblyresearchmatters.org/2017/10/05/womens-economic-transition-retirement/>

**1(m) Audit
of
Inequalities**

An audit of inequalities is a systematic approach to identify inequalities across the nine Section 75 categories which are relevant to a public authority’s functions and which will inform the development of an action plan to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. The audit of inequalities is additional and complementary to the development of an equality scheme.

An audit of inequalities was carried out in 2016 by the Assembly’s RaISe with input from directorates. This audit updated a review carried out in 2015 of the 2011 Audit of Inequalities. The 2016 audit is available at this link:

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/about-the-assembly/corporate-information/policies/equality-policies/>

Information on the 2011 audit of inequalities and the 2015 review can be found here:

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/about-the-assembly/corporate-information/policies/equality-scheme-2016---2021/equality-scheme-2012-2016/>

The 2016 audit examined a range of areas, including access to Parliament Building, outreach and gender issues. The audit of inequalities action plan is included in the 2016-21 Equality Scheme, and a progress update on actions is included at Annex 3 of this report.

1(n) During the reporting period equality screening guidance for staff
Equality was updated and will be issued to all staff in September 2018. The
Screening update includes steps that staff can now take under the
Guidance 'Consideration of available data/research' section of the screening form and when to seek assistance from RaISe.

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- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2017-18 *(or append the plan with progress/examples identified)*.
- a) A progress report on the Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21 is prepared every six months. The March 2018 update is available on the Assembly website at <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/about-the-assembly/corporate-information/policies/good-relations-action-plan/>
 - b) An update on the Disability Action Plan 2016-21 is available at Part B of this Annual Progress Report at page 42.
 - c) An update on the Audit of Inequalities Action Plan is at Annex 3 of this Annual Progress Report.
 - d) A progress report on the Gender Action Plan is prepared every six months. The October 2017 update can be found at Annex 4.
 - e) The five-year review of Disability Action Plans is available on the Assembly website at <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/about-the-assembly/corporate-information/equality-and-good-relations/disability-action-plan-2016-21/> and is discussed at 1b of this report.

3 Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2017-18 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

x Yes No (go to Q.4) Not applicable (go to Q.4)

Please provide any details and examples:

See section 1 above. The Commission's Equality Scheme sets out our commitments with regard to the screening of policies. During this reporting period, screening guidance was updated and will be circulated to Assembly staff.

Our Equality Scheme also sets out our arrangements for assessing and monitoring the impact of policies. During this reporting period we have continued to monitor policy impact and where appropriate revise, or add additional measures, to action plans. Additional actions are noted on action plans where appropriate and are annexed to this report.

3a With regard to the change(s) made to policies, practices or procedures and/or service delivery areas, what **difference was made, or will be made, for individuals**, i.e. the impact on those according to Section 75 category?

Please provide any details and examples:

Further mainstreaming equality and good relations through a range of activities and through corporate planning processes is discussed at question 1. This mainstreaming will make a difference to individuals through policy provision and service delivery. For example, with regard to the Gender Action Plan, further research was conducted during the reporting, as detailed at question 1 above. In the gender audit carried out by BiTC, the Commission achieved a score of 86% against an average of 69%. New actions were identified through the audit, and have been added to the Secretariat Gender Action Plan. Examples include actions around raising awareness among staff of existing policies and providing unconscious bias training to staff. These actions will help to fulfil the aim of the action plan to promote gender equality within the Secretariat.

PART A

3b What aspect of the Equality Scheme prompted or led to the change(s)? *(tick all that apply)*

As a result of the organisation's screening of a policy *(please give details):*

As a result of what was identified through the EQIA and consultation exercise *(please give details):*

x As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact *(please give details):*

As a result of monitoring and analysis of existing policies through the gender balance audit outlined in 3 and 3a above, changes have been made to the Secretariat Gender Action Plan 2016-18.

x As a result of changes to access to information and services *(please specify and give details):*

Our Equality Scheme sets out our arrangements for ensuring public access to the information and services we provide, and it takes account of the different needs of user groups. An accessibility webpage has been developed containing accessibility information and we continue to maintain the Action on Hearing Loss and Autism Standards Awards. In addition, during this reporting period, we have begun to develop guidance for Secretariat staff on holding inclusive and accessible events. Internal pre-consultations have taken place across all Assembly Directorates with relevant staff.

Other *(please specify and give details):*

Section 2: Progress on Equality Scheme commitments and action plans/measures

Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)

4 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2017-18 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- Yes, organisation wide
- Yes, some departments/jobs
- No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Job descriptions within the Assembly Secretariat are generic in nature and may not make specific reference to Section 75. However, the list of duties reflects compliance with Commission policies which inherently include Section 75 duties.

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2017-18 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- Yes, organisation wide
- Yes, some departments/jobs
- No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The Performance Management System assesses compliance with the corporate values. The corporate value of "One team" makes reference to showing mutual respect for all and valuing diversity and being fair and consistent in the treatment of the team and other colleagues.

6 In the 2017-18 reporting period were **objectives/ targets/ performance measures** relating to the Section 75 statutory duties **integrated** into corporate plans, strategic planning and/or operational business plans? *(tick all that apply)*

- Yes, through the work to prepare or develop the new corporate plan
- Yes, through organisation wide annual business planning
- Yes, in some departments/jobs
- No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation’s ongoing corporate plan
- No, the organisation’s planning cycle does not coincide with this 2016-17 report
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The Corporate Strategy for the Commission covers the time period 2012-2017 and was revised in 2015. The Corporate Strategy has nine aims, including having equality and corporate governance arrangements in place which command confidence and which facilitate compliance with statutory responsibilities. As described at 1a above, a new Corporate Strategy for 2018-23 is in the process of being developed.

Equality action plans/measures

7 Within the 2017-18 reporting period, please indicate the **number of: 26 Actions in total**

Actions completed:	16	Actions ongoing:	4	Actions to commence:	0
Actions suspended:	6				

Please provide any details and examples *(in addition to question 2)*:

An update on the audit of inequalities action plan is attached at Annex 3 of this report which includes status updates for the reporting period.

PART A

- 8 Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2017-18 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

Not applicable

- 9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2017-18 reporting period, the following have been identified: (*tick all that apply*)

- Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the known inequality
- Action(s) to address the known inequality in a different way
- Action(s) to address newly identified inequalities/recently prioritised inequalities
- Measures to address a prioritised inequality have been completed

Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)

- 10 Following the initial notification of consultations, a targeted approach was taken – and consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance: (*tick one box only*)

- All the time x Sometimes Never

- 11 Please provide any **details and examples of good practice** in consultation during the 2017-18 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

Not applicable.

- 12 In the 2017-18 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently used by consultees**: (*tick all that apply*)

- Face to face meetings
- Focus groups
- Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing
- Questionnaires
- Information/notification by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation
- Internet discussions

PART A

Telephone consultations

Other (*please specify*):

Please provide any details or examples of the uptake of these methods of consultation in relation to the consultees' membership of particular Section 75 categories:

One internal consultation was carried out during the reporting period on the Mandatory Temporary Redeployment Policy: Consultation took place with the Commission, SMG and Trade Union Side (TUS).

13 Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2017-18 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

Yes

x No

Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

14 Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2017-18 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

x Yes

No

Not applicable – no commitment to review

Arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/about-the-assembly/corporate-information/publications/equality-screening-and-equality-impact-assessments-eqias/>

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/about-the-assembly/corporate-information/policies/equality-policies/>

15 Please provide the **number** of policies screened during the year (*as recorded in screening reports*):

1

16 Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2017-18:

PART A

1	Policy consultations conducted with screening assessment presented.
	Policy consultations conducted with an equality impact assessment (EQIA) presented.
	Consultations for an EQIA alone.

17 Please provide details of the **main consultations** conducted on an assessment (as described above) or other matters relevant to the Section 75 duties:

Mandatory Temporary Redeployment Policy: Consultation with the Commission, SMG and TUS.

18 Were any screening decisions (or equivalent initial assessments of relevance) reviewed following concerns raised by consultees? (*tick one box only*)

- Yes
 No concerns were raised
 No
 Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Not applicable

Arrangements for publishing the results of assessments (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

19 Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2017-18 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- Yes
 No
 Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Not applicable

Arrangements for monitoring and publishing the results of monitoring (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

20 From the Equality Scheme monitoring arrangements, was there an audit of existing information systems during the 2016-17 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- Yes
 No, already taken place
 Not applicable
- No, scheduled to take place at a later date

Please provide any details:

Not applicable

21 In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies? (*tick one box only*)

Yes

No

Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Additional actions were added to the Gender Action Plan (see Annex 4) and some revisions were made to the Good Relations Action Plan in order to better implement the action measures.

22 Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2017-18 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

Not applicable

23 Please provide any details or examples of monitoring that has contributed to the availability of equality and good relations information/data for service delivery planning or policy development:

Monitoring arrangements are built into our action plans. For example, six-monthly progress updates on both the Gender Action Plan and the Good Relations Action Plan are provided to SMG and the Commission. Monitoring is also carried out informally on an on-going basis. Research carried out during the reporting period (see question 1) has also contributed in helping to analyse monitoring data further, for example, the NI Staff Survey 2017 Gender Report. Information arising from monitoring is considered when reviewing service delivery and existing action plans, and when developing policies.

Staff Training (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 5)

24 Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2017-18, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

Staff Training (Annual Review)

The Learning & Development (L&D) team facilitated a range of learning activities which met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme during 2017/18. For example, eight staff who were supported in obtaining British Sign Language Level 1 progressed to BSL Level 2 beginning on 9 June 2017 and running for 35 weeks. Two staff also completed their BSL Level 2 qualification with Queen's University during this year. In addition, a total of eighteen staff completed Mental Health First Aid training with Action Mental Health in October 2017 to become the Assembly's Mental Health First Aiders. The L&D team also supported a senior HR manager to participate in a course in 'Mediation Theory and Practice' with Mediation NI. The L&D team also organised a range of learning activities including an information fair, the release of daily factsheets and Masterclasses which were held during the week of World Mental Health Day in October 2017.

In addition to formal training courses, a range of relevant Masterclasses/short courses for staff were delivered in 2017/18:

Masterclass/ Course Title	Date	Number in attendance
Mental Health Awareness Masterclass	Sept 2017	11
Building Confidence	Sept 2017	8
Parenting NI	Sept 2017	17
Carer Awareness	Sept 2017	11
Addiction NI: Interactive Sessions on Drugs and Alcohol	Throughout 2017-18	309
Yoga	Oct 2017	15
Mental Health Awareness	Oct 2017	8
Mindfulness	Oct 2017	18
Suicide Awareness	Oct 2017	22
Meditation	March 2018	24

Staff attended the following relevant conferences:

Conference Title	Event Start Date	Number of Staff Attending
CIPD Wellbeing & Resilience Conference 2017	Nov 2017	1
Building Resilience for improved performance	Nov 2017	1
Improving Workplace Wellbeing	Nov 2017	1
Annual Review of Employment Law	Nov 2017	6
Delivering on Diversity: NICS People Strategy	March 2018	1

An e-learning platform created by the Centre for Applied Learning (CAL) is used to deliver a range of short e-learning packages to staff. During this reporting period, the following relevant courses were released:

Course Title	Mandatory	Release date
Autism Awareness	No	Sept 2017
Line Managers role in Managing Stress	No	Feb 2018
Managing Personal Stress & Resilience	No	Feb 2018
Positive Mental Health Toolkit for all staff	No	Feb 2018
Positive Mental Health Toolkit for Line-managers	No	Feb 2018
Unconscious Bias	Yes	March 18

It is intended to release the following mandatory e-learning courses in 2018/19:

- Disability Awareness
- Understanding Section 75

- 25** Please provide any examples of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives:

Positive feedback was received on Masterclasses delivered within Parliament Buildings. It appears that the sessions are of an appropriate length and the topics are of interest to staff. All learning activities delivered both internally and externally are evaluated using the e-learning Moodle platform.

A selection of qualitative responses was provided by staff who attended learning events.

Mental Health First Aiders

- I particularly enjoyed the mediation and relaxation tips at the end.
- Understanding how to start conversations about mental health.

Mental Health Awareness Session

- Techniques for quick relaxation - these can be fitted into busy working days when things get overwhelming.

Mindfulness Session

- Understanding what mindfulness is and the benefits that it has for wellbeing.
- Techniques for short mindfulness breaks that can reduce stress and be used in the working environment.

Meditation Session

- I thought the whole session was very good and I certainly learnt a lot and will be putting mediation into practice.
- The chance to try the techniques discussed and see that they can be applied even in a work environment.
- Would like to see meditation classes offered to staff.

Suicide Awareness

- What to say and what not to say to someone with suicidal thoughts.
- Understanding the facets of suicidal thoughts. Good overview of the Samaritans organisation.

Seminar on Reasonable Adjustments

- All of the information provided was very up to date.
- Practical application and examples of reasonable adjustments.

Further Masterclasses/short courses have been scheduled for 2018/19 relating to equality matters. Staff support groups including Mental Health First Aiders, Autism Champions and Harassment Officers have been developed.

Public Access to Information and Services (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 6)

- 26** Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2017-18, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

In 2017, the Commission developed a new Complaints Policy and Procedure to streamline the complaints process and to make it easier for members of the public to notify the Assembly regarding any complaint relating to the delivery of services by Assembly staff and/or perceived failures in complying with the Assembly's Equality Scheme. The Commission has also identified and put in place a dedicated Complaints Officer to deal with issues raised by the public and to log complaints on a Complaints Register.

SMG will receive regular reports from the Complaints Officer on the implementation of the complaints procedures, including data on the nature and volume of complaints received. These reports will normally be published on the Assembly website, in line with our Publication Scheme.

The Commission will also receive an annual summary report detailing the numbers and categories of complaints received in the previous year. The report will include any improvements made to the policy or procedures.

The Complaints Policy and Procedure is published on the Assembly's website.

As discussed at Section 1(c) above, examples are provided which aim to further improve public access to information and services, these include:

1. Maintenance of accreditations and the provision of access information
2. An accessibility webpage
3. 'Autism and the Assembly' webpage
4. Continuation of physical works to Parliament Buildings
5. Maintenance of signage and access items used by the public, for example, the changing places room.

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

- 27** How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2017-18?

Insert number here:

0

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

Section 3: Looking Forward

- 28** Please indicate when the Equality Scheme is due for review:

March 2021

- 29** Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements (screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? (*please provide details*)

During the next reporting period, we will continue to implement the actions in our Equality Scheme, Audit of Inequalities, Disability Action Plan, the Good Relations Action Plan and the Gender Action Plan. Examples of areas on which we will focus include the development of a 'Accessibility Guide: an Inclusive Events Checklist for staff and the publishing of 'Caring Responsibilities Guidance' for managers and staff. In addition, we will develop a Transgender Policy to address both managing and supporting staff and dealing with visitors to Parliament Buildings. It is also anticipated that work will be undertaken on a new Engagement Strategy EQIA and an equality questionnaire will be developed and issued to Secretariat staff.

30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next (2016-17) reporting period? *(please tick any that apply)*

- Employment
- Goods, facilities and services
- Legislative changes
- Organisational changes/ new functions
- X Nothing specific, more of the same
- Other (please state):

PART B - Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and Disability Action Plans

1. Number of action measures for this reporting period that have been: 50 overall

40

Fully achieved

9

Partially achieved

1

Not achieved

2. Please outline below details on all actions that have been fully achieved in the reporting period.

2 (a) Please highlight what **public life measures** have been achieved to encourage disabled people to participate in public life at National, Regional and Local levels:

	Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs ⁱ	Outcomes / Impact ⁱⁱ
	National ⁱⁱⁱ	n/a		
1	Regional ^{iv}	<p>Continue to hold meetings twice a year, or as agreed by the group.</p> <p>Review current membership with a view to developing a list of additional representatives to be invited to participate on the group.</p>	<p>Meetings have not taken place in this reporting period due to limited agendas, however the Equality Unit continues to engage with members as and when required.</p>	<p>Partially Achieved for reporting period.</p>

PART B

	Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs ⁱ	Outcomes / Impact ⁱⁱ
	National ⁱⁱⁱ	n/a		
2		Erasmus+ Application for future youth engagement project	<p>Apply to Erasmus+ for funding for a second youth engagement project.</p> <p>If successful in securing funding, design recruitment process to promote the opportunity to people with a disability.</p> <p>If successful in securing funding, set target for number of participants with disabilities</p>	<p>Achieved for reporting period. Unfortunately, due to the limited availability of funds, this application was unsuccessful.</p>

2(b) What **training action measures** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
3	Ensure staff receive training and guidance on disability equality legislation and disability awareness	Design or acquire online e-disability training for staff through the Assembly's Moodle system	<p>Complete for period</p> <p>The Assembly has purchased annual membership of the Centre for Applied Learning's (CAL) e-learning platform called Totara, which has several courses of interest.</p>

PART B

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
4		Monitoring of records to ensure that each member of staff receives training	Achieved and ongoing for period Statistics on successful completion are provided by CAL to the L&D team on a monthly basis.
5		All staff made aware of the revised Equality Scheme and Disability Action Plan through e-learning training and direct communication to staff via intranet and email. Key awareness messages delivered through a range of information materials, eg, leaflets, flyers and posters	Achieved for reporting period The Assembly's Equality and Good Relations team issued notification to staff on revised Equality Scheme and Disability Action Plan. When completing CAL e-learning packages, L&D will ask that CAL amend the course so that staff are directed to the appropriate policies on the Assembly intranet site.
6		Quality assurance of equality training packages and provision of feedback on any equality training courses	Achieved for reporting period The Assembly's Equality team 'quality proof' all learning materials. L&D are exploring options to evaluate CAL e-learning packages as this is not currently available. Evaluations are conducted with all other disability courses as required utilizing the Moodle platform.
7		Provide specific training sessions for staff on mental health issues. Examples of training programmes include:	Achieved for reporting period The L&D team ran a full week of events addressing Mental Health during Mental Health Week in October 2017. Sessions included an information fair and Masterclasses in yoga, mental health awareness, mindfulness, meditation. Factsheets

PART B

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
		Mental Health 1 st Aiders	were also issued on a daily basis and a resource created on the AssiSt site. During this reporting period, the L&D team supported 18 staff to train as Mental Health 1 st Aiders. This facility will increase awareness of critical intervention when dealing with a colleague's mental health and wellbeing issue. The L&D team are currently devising a training programme for all MHFAs to keep their skills live and up to date.
8		Provide auditory and visual awareness programmes to front-line staff. Provide opportunities for staff to obtain Level 1 sign language training Consider scope for provision of level 2 sign language training	Achieved for reporting period. 8 staff achieved BSL Level 1 certification. 2 staff completed BSL Level 2 in 2017. 6 staff are currently undertaking BSL Level 2 to complete May 2018.
9		Deaf awareness training to be provided to all frontline staff as required.	Achieved for reporting period. Makaton training will also be delivered in 2018.
10		Autism awareness training to be provided to relevant staff, including refresher training for the Assembly's	Achieved and ongoing for period. An e-Learning course is now available for all staff through the CAL LiNKS site. The L&D team are

PART B

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
		appointed Autism Champions as required.	developing a training support programme for the Assembly's Autism Champions.
11		Provide relevant Masterclasses to staff to update their understanding of working with individuals with communication difficulties.	Achieved for reporting period.

2(c) What Positive attitudes **action measures** in the area of **Communications** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
12	Provide guidance for visitors and staff on further disability access arrangements in relation to participation in Assembly business and events, e.g. Committees, Plenary Session, seminars.	<p>Incorporate familiarisation of Parliament Buildings access arrangements</p> <p>Develop Q&A guide for disability arrangements for visitors to Parliament Buildings, covering events, Committee meetings, Plenary sittings, Gallery rules, etc.</p>	<p>Achieved for reporting period. Inclusive Customer Service Policy in place since March 2017.</p> <p>The Inclusive Customer Service Policy, which was developed in consultation with the Equality Commission, was approved by SMG in December 2016. The policy highlights the facilities available at Parliament Buildings for customers with a disability and includes a Q&A section on how they can engage with the work of the Assembly,</p>

PART B

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
		<p>Issue guidance to Disability Advisory Group for feedback</p> <p>Develop guidance for staff organising events, including Committee stakeholder events, seminars, receptions, etc.</p> <p>Include checklist of issues to consider, including signage, accessibility, presentation, etc.</p> <p>Issue guidance to Disability Advisory Group for feedback</p>	<p>including Committees, Plenary sessions, etc.: http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/about-the-assembly/corporate-information/policies/inclusive-customer-service-policy/</p> <p>A more detailed checklist and guidance for staff organising events is currently being developed in consultation with relevant business areas, and is expected to be completed in 2018.</p>
13	Sign language Policy	<p>Develop proposals to progress a sign language policy, and include consideration of DCAL's work on sign language</p> <p>Work with relevant agencies in the development of this policy and stakeholders</p> <p>Present proposals to the Commission</p>	<p>Achieved for reporting period. Sign Language Policy in place, which includes details of how to book a sign language interpreter.</p>

PART B

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
		<p>Gather information on practice in other legislatures as regards sign language provision for Plenary debates and Committee meetings</p> <p>Continue to arrange, where appropriate and by prior arrangement, for a sign language interpreter to be in the Public Gallery to provide service during a relevant debate</p> <p>Continue to arrange, where appropriate and by prior arrangement, for a sign language interpreter to attend relevant Committee meetings</p> <p>Develop guidance on when it is appropriate to arrange the services of a sign language interpreter for use in the Public Gallery (in line with the scheduled development of a sign language policy)</p>	
14	Provision of Braille business cards	Provide the Speaker and Deputy Speakers with Braille business cards.	Achieved for reporting period. Braille business cards provided.

PART B

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
15	Committee Gallery Rules	<p>In January 2016, rules for visitors to Committee Galleries were amended to enable building users with a disability to use electrical devices if required.</p> <p>Keep rules under review</p>	<p>Achieved for reporting period.</p>
16	Continue Assembly Community Connect training to people with disabilities	<p>Deliver bespoke 'How the Assembly Works' sessions to disability groups on request</p> <p>Deliver training regionally on request</p>	<p>Achieved for reporting period.</p> <p>ACC activities have been curtailed due to the political situation and the fact that the Assembly is not sitting. However, six ACC events have been delivered and have been accessible for those with disabilities. An example is the fact that a signer was provided for an International Women's Day event.</p>
17	Continue to use web-based material to promote positive attitudes towards disability	<p>Continue to provide web-based videos showing how to access Parliament Buildings</p> <p>Monitor/respond to any customer complaints/compliments in relation to access to information about services</p>	<p>Achieved for reporting period.</p> <p>Dedicated accessibility web page available at 'Visit and Learning' section of Assembly website, which includes video showing what to expect when visiting Parliament Buildings.</p>

PART B

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
18	Employer-supported volunteering	Continue to work with Business in the Community to identify and offer volunteering opportunities to staff	Achieved for reporting period. Opportunities made available to staff.
19	Conduct annual exercise to encourage staff to provide anonymous information to assist with monitoring and reporting on disabilities in the workplace	Annual disability survey issued each year to collect statistical data in order to calculate numbers and percentages of staff who have a disability	Achieved for reporting period. Completed in April 2017.
20	Increase the level of accessible/inclusive information so that users with a disability can access digital services and information as independently as possible and make informed choices	<p><u>Outcome:</u> Users with a disability are aware of the availability of accessible information and services and can make use of them</p> <p>Develop and implement an accessible information guidance to improve access to information for users who have a disability. The guidance will accompany the Digital First Strategy.</p> <p><u>Measurement:</u> Feedback from users via website feedback mechanisms,</p>	<p>Achieved for reporting period. Although the Digital First Strategy is likely to be superseded by other developments, accessibility guidance has been provided via the website and is reviewed regularly to ensure its relevance and accuracy.</p> <p>We will continue to take feedback from users via website feedback mechanisms, surveys, and feedback from other partnerships and informal networks on all aspects of our information and digital services in the future.</p> <p><u>Measurement:</u> Feedback from users via website feedback mechanisms (complaints and</p>

PART B

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
		surveys, and feedback from other partnerships and networks.	compliments), surveys, and feedback from other partnerships and networks.
21	Digital First EQIA	<p><u>Outcome:</u> Improve our understanding of any issues and needs that may impact Digital First</p> <p><u>Measurement:</u> Regular consultation with and feedback from partnerships, formal and informal networks that will assist us in assessing and monitoring products and services in relation to equality issues and their impact.</p> <p>Compliments and complaints received about services will also be used to help identify the impact of good practices and any adverse impact of existing practices.</p>	<p>Achieved for reporting period. However, the Digital First Strategy is likely to be reviewed and superseded by other developments for example the ongoing development of AIMS, ePetitions and other digital services.</p> <p>We will continue to consult and take feedback from partnerships and informal networks on all aspects of our information and digital services as well as compliments and complaints received.</p> <p>As part of the monitoring of the strategy we have talked to and worked with various partners and networks to understand issues and needs that may impact on the introduction of any digital products, services and information. We have conducted a usability report on the Assembly website which will be used when considering any future changes.</p> <p>We also monitor any complaints or compliments that we receive to help identify the impact the good practices and the adverse impact of existing practices. In the period of this report we have not</p>

PART B

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
			received any complaints and received one compliment.

2 (d) What action measures were achieved to ‘encourage others’ to promote the two duties:

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
22	Education for Special Needs Schools	<p>The Education Service conducts focus groups on behalf of Assembly Committees. The Research and Information Service (RaISe) has developed a framework for selecting a broad cross-section of the youth population. The framework will continue to ensure that children who attend special schools are invited to participate in every focus group.</p> <p>Continue to engage with special schools through focus</p>	<p>Achieved for reporting period.</p> <p>No consultations took place between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018 because Committees did not sit due to the political situation.</p> <p>The Education Service continued to advertise its services to special schools, and there were seven visits from special schools (137 participants).</p> <p>Five teachers from special schools attended the Education Service teacher training event.</p>

PART B

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
		<p>groups. (At least one special school will always be included in the focus group sample)</p> <p>The Education Service has a continued engagement with special schools, several of which make repeat bookings to visit the Assembly. Staff from the service also conduct outreach visits to several of these schools. Services are advertised to every special school in Northern Ireland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to engage with special schools • Continue to advertise Education Service to every special school in Northern Ireland and encourage an increase in the number of special schools 	

PART B

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
		<p>participating in the Education programme each year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the number of outreach and inward visits involving special schools. 	
23	Youth Congress	Explore possibility of hosting another Youth Congress at Parliament Buildings (subject to necessary approvals).	<p>Achieved for reporting period.</p> <p>The Education Service worked with the Northern Ireland Youth Forum to facilitate a youth debate in the Assembly Chamber on 22 February 2018. This involved about 180 young people from different backgrounds. On 13 March 2018, the Education Service worked with the YMCA on a programme for 20 young people from different backgrounds, which included meeting with MLAs and participating in a debate.</p>
24	Films	The Education Service has created a number of short films which aim to explain the work of the Assembly to	<p>Achieved for reporting period.</p> <p>Four short films have been produced and published. These cover topics such as representation, voting in the chamber and how the</p>

PART B

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
		<p>young people and encourage them to engage with its work. Videos have been subtitled to broaden the appeal of the resources to young people who have hearing impairments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to make available subtitled short films <p>Subtitle any future short films</p>	<p>Assembly checks the work of the Executive. They were subtitled to enhance accessibility.</p>
25	<p>Continue to provide support to Assembly Charity of the Year</p>	<p>The Assembly's Charity Policy notes the charitable purposes listed in the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, which include relief of those in need by reason of disability.</p>	<p>Achieved for reporting period.</p> <p>The Cedar Foundation was the Assembly's charity of the year during 2017/18, and the Assembly's fundraising group facilitated a number of events, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast Baps and Afternoon Tea in Members Coffee Lounge. • Christmas Quiz and Jumper Day. • Cedar Cake-off. • Cedar Fashion Show. • A Soft Ball tournament.

PART B

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
		<p>The Cedar Foundation is the chosen charity for the 2017-2018 period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate regular meetings of Charity Fundraising Group • Facilitate regular meetings with Charity of the Year • Host minimum of two events per year involving Assembly and Charity of the Year. <p>Facilitate year-round collection points to raise money for charity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spinning in Tesco. • 300-mile cycle run throughout Northern Ireland. • Sponsored Walks <p>Assembly staff raised a total of £13,712.14.</p>
26	Continue to work with disability organisations through Assembly Community Connect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver accessible training within Parliament Buildings and around NI (Monthly 'How the Assembly Works' and 'Insight into' training 	<p>Achieved for reporting period.</p> <p>ACC activities have been curtailed due to the political situation and the fact that the Assembly is not sitting. However, six ACC events were delivered and were accessible for those with disabilities. An example is the fact that a signer was provided for an International Women's Day event.</p>

PART B

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
		<p>during session, and four regional 'Get Involved' conferences across NI)</p> <p>Develop bespoke programmes and projects for disability groups by working with disability groups to tailor training and resources to make them more accessible</p>	
27	Review of access audits as per standards 4, 5 and 8 of Access Award (NAS) Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review access audits as per standards 4, 5 and 8 of Access Award (NAS) Standards Continue to follow and review health and safety procedure 	<p>Achieved for reporting period. Accreditation retained and actions in place to make Parliament Buildings accessible for users. More information on standards is available at this link: http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/visit-and-learning/accessing-parliament-buildings/</p>
28	Fire Evacuation - explore potential options to provide or upgrade lift(s).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial meetings with Architect and Fire Officer have taken place to explore options. 	<p>Achieved for reporting period. We have successfully upgraded one of the passenger lifts on the South side of the building.</p>

PART B

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
		Alternative proposals will be provided for consideration at a future meeting of the Commission.	
29	Maintain signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain quality of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pictorial signage images; ○ Braille signage and other signage in Parliament Buildings ○ Tactile 'tour map' of Parliament Buildings; <p>Add additional signage as required (including at reception)</p>	Achieved for reporting period.
30	Web publishing training for staff - Training is provided to Assembly Staff on the use of the content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Outcome:</u> Improved accessibility of information/content on 	Achieved for reporting period.

PART B

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
	management system used to publish to the Assembly website. Part of this training includes accessibility issues.	<p>the Assembly website for all users.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Measurement:</u> Monitor and assess accessibility of information/content on the Assembly website. <p>The above will be published in the Commission's annual Section 75 report to the Equality Commission.</p>	
31	Monitor and assess accessibility of our website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Outcome:</u> Improved accessibility • <u>Measurement:</u> Website accessibility 	Achieved for reporting period.

PART B

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
	Undertake assessment exercise and address issues of inaccessibility	<p>of recognised standard. (level AA of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and assess accessibility on our website. <p>The above will be published in the Commission’s annual Section 75 report to the Equality Commission</p>	
32	Increase the number of disabled parking bays in upper car parks.	Increase the number of upper car park disabled parking bays above the required minimum under DDA. Extra spaces were provided in December 2015.	Achieved for reporting period. Additional car parking to the East of the building.
33	Consideration of options for provision of	Investigate options and clarify the requirements in relation to escape routes, potential for	Achieved for reporting period. Automatic opening doors in place in basement area, ground and first floors.

PART B

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
	automatic opening of corridor doors	access control, etc. Option study to be provided for consideration by the Commission	
34	Consideration of alterations to counter in Members' Bar to provide serving area for wheelchair users	Potential layout with provision for wheelchair users at low level to be provided for the Commission	Achieved for reporting period. Bar counter area has been altered.
35	Maintenance of access items for members of the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular checks throughout the year on items, including iPad, Braille tour map and changing places facility. <p>Continue to promote accessible tours and facilities (including at reception)</p>	Achieved for reporting period.
36/ 37	Continue to participate in Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS), which offers a guaranteed interview to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to offer scheme for internal and external recruitment exercises. 	Achieved for reporting period. The procedures for internal and external recruitment have been reviewed to ensure compliance with good practice. The policies were used for recruitment exercises carried out in the period 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018.

PART B

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
	applicants with a disability who meet the essential criteria for the post.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued provision of disability section in application form whereby an applicant can indicate whether they wish to apply under the Guaranteed Interview Scheme for that particular role and the basis on which they qualify for the scheme. (NB, the scheme will only apply if there are shortlisting criteria for the post.) 	<p>Achieved for reporting period. The Guaranteed Interview Scheme has been used for internal and external recruitment exercises carried out in the period 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018.</p>
38	Maintain Action on Hearing Loss Award	Undergo assessment as required to indicate that standards have been met (See standards attached at annexe 2)	<p>Achieved for reporting period. Accreditation retained and actions in place to make Parliament Buildings accessible for users. Recertification is due to take place in June 2018.</p>
39	Maintain Autism Award	Continue to meet standards as outlined at annexe 3)	<p>Achieved for reporting period. Accreditation retained and actions in place to make Parliament Buildings accessible for users.</p>

PART B

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
40	Continue to proactively raise awareness of work of the Assembly through Equality Commission	Continued participation in speaking events, and contribution to any relevant articles/activity by Equality Commission	Achieved for reporting period. During the reporting period, staff from the Equality and Good Relations Unit attended Equality Commission events, and there was continued engagement and consultation with the Equality Commission during the period.
41	Consideration of access/egress requirements from ground floor to lower ground floor	Investigate potential options to provide ramped access from ground floor to lower ground floor level and removal of current lift.	Achieved for reporting period. Permanent ramped access is provided to improve accessibility

2 (e) Please outline **any additional action measures** that were fully achieved other than those listed in the tables above.

No additional actions in this reporting period.

3. Please outline what action measures have been **partly achieved** as follows:

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestonesv / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
42	Explore concept of Parliament for People with Disabilities	Develop concept with Disability Groups Hold regional Parliaments Submit Paper to Speaker Final Parliament to be held in Assembly Senate Chamber Consider hosting yearly event	Parliament for People with Disabilities established	Partly achieved. The Northern Ireland Assembly embarked on developing a specific training programme to encourage greater participation of those with a disability. The Northern Ireland Assembly consulted with a number of disability charities from June to September 2017, including Disability Action, MENCAP, Autism NI, Cedar Foundation and the Equality Commission. The concept of a Disability Parliament was discussed during these meetings. The consensus was that the disability groups themselves should manage the development of a Disability Parliament, which would be hosted by the Assembly (similar to the Pensioners Parliament run by Age Sector Platform or the BME Parliament run by NICEM). However, work on the

PART B

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestonesv / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
				Parliament has been have been curtailed due to the current political situation.
43	Provide guidance for visitors and staff on further disability access arrangements in relation to participation in Assembly business and events, e.g. Committees, Plenary Session, seminars.	Deliver regular Committee Witness Training (4 per year)	Users are aware of Committee witness training and how to participate	Partly Achieved. Committee witness sessions are an element of the Assembly Community Connect programme of events. Committee witness training has not taken place due to the political situation and the fact that Committees have not been established.
44	Ensure that customer satisfaction surveys are carried out that allow for a review of findings by disability	Visitor survey to include an additional question on access Survey to be issued three times a year Monitor survey responses for compliments/complaints	Action is taken concerning any issues raised	Partly achieved. During this reporting period, two surveys were completed, in November 2017 and February 2018. The visitor survey was designed to provide a snapshot of the visitor experience across a range of Assembly business: events, tours, engagement initiatives, Plenary sessions and Committee meetings. However,

PART B

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestonesv / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
		Identify action points as required		<p>due to the ongoing political situation, no Plenary sessions or Committee meetings have been held, and the number of events and activities has reduced significantly. There has also been a reduction in the number of visitors available to participate. Consequently, SMG agreed at its March 2018 meeting that the survey will now be carried out once a year until full Assembly business resumes, at which time a review of the survey (and the number of times it is conducted) will be carried out. The next survey will likely be conducted in autumn 2018.</p> <p>This action will now be amended to show that the survey will be carried out once a year until resumption of full Assembly business.</p>
45	Accessibility web publishing guidance for staff	<u>Outcome:</u> Improved accessibility of information/content on		<p>Partly achieved. Due to the ongoing redeployment of staff including those in the Web Team we</p>

PART B

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestonesv / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
		<p>the Assembly website for all users.</p> <p>Formal guidance will be developed by the Web Manager</p> <p>Measurement: Monitor and assess accessibility on our website.</p> <p>The above will be published in the Commission’s annual Section 75 report to the Equality Commission.</p>		<p>have been unable to roll out formal guidance.</p> <p>Accessibility is always considered when implementing any new content or design.</p>
46	Review existing layout of Assembly Chamber and previous options to improve accessibility	Potential options provided for consideration by the Commission	Accessibility of Assembly Chamber improved	<p>Partly achieved.</p> <p>Minor alterations have been carried out to facilitate a MLA who is a wheelchair-user. Further improvements will</p>

PART B

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestonesv / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
				<p>require extensive re-modelling of the chamber.</p> <p>If required (and approved), such works will be included in future Business Plans. A review will be undertaken in light of the reduction of MLAs.</p>
47	Ensure staff receive training and guidance on disability equality legislation and disability awareness	Mandatory training provided to all staff following establishment of e-disability training programme		<p>Partly Achieved.</p> <p>The L&D team intend to launch Disability Awareness training as an e-learning course to all staff in June 2018. This mandatory course will then be run every 3 years.</p>
48	Ensure staff receive training and guidance on disability equality legislation and disability awareness	Evaluate training to determine if course objectives were met and staff knowledge of the disability duties has increased through the staff iTrent system, through for example, completed questionnaires.		<p>Partly Achieved.</p> <p>This will be built into the on-line evaluation form on Moodle in relation to these courses.</p>

PART B

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestonesv / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
49	Regular meetings with Section 75 groups to inform reviews of Engagement	Engagement Strategy reviewed with external Disability Advisory Group		Partly Achieved. Initial work on the development of a new engagement strategy is being undertaken. The external Disability Advisory Group will be involved at appropriate times.

4. Please outline what action measures **have not been achieved** and the reasons why.

50	Mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (3 December)	Host an event at Parliament Buildings to mark International Day of Persons with Disabilities	Not achieved. Due to the ongoing redeployment of staff including those in the Assembly Community Connect (ACC) Team we were unable to mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.
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5. What **monitoring tools** have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?

(a) Qualitative

Use of questionnaires, interviews, action plan review and feedback systems.

PART B

(b) Quantitative

Screening and EQIA processes.

6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions has your organisation either:

- made any **revisions** to your plan during the reporting period or
- taken any **additional steps** to meet the disability duties which were **not outlined in your original** disability action plan / any other changes?

No

7. Do you intend to make any further **revisions to your plan** in light of your organisation's annual review of the plan? If so, please outline proposed changes?

No

-
- ⁱ **Outputs** – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.
 - ⁱⁱ **Outcome / Impact** – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action? Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.
 - ⁱⁱⁱ **National** : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments
 - ^{iv} **Regional**: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level
 - ^v **Milestones** – Please outline what part progress has been made towards the particular measures; even if full output or outcomes/ impact have not been achieved

- Annex 1** Inward international delegation visits to the Northern Ireland Assembly
1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018
- Annex 2** Education Service Figures 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018
- Annex 3** Annual monitoring update of Audit of Inequalities Action Plan 2016-
2021
- Annex 4** Gender Action Plan 2016 -2018 6-monthly Update (October 2017)
- Annex 5** NI Assembly Secretariat Organisational Chart
- Annex 6** Assembly Community Connect Figures 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018

Annex 1 Inward international delegation visits to the Northern Ireland Assembly 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018

April 2017	None
09/05/17	Swedish Deputy Head of Mission
10/05/17	Ambassador of Finland
11/05/17	Kosovo Assembly
17/05/17	Speaker of the Sri Lankan Parliament
18/05/17	NIO Private Office Team
18/05/17	US General Consul
24/05/17	Ohio University
30/05/17	East Illinois University
01/06/17	NIO Tour
05/06/17	Cornelia Parker, Official Election Artist
19/06/17	De Paul University
21/06/17	Malaysian Deputy Minister
22/06/17	US Students/Belfast Met
26/06/17	Somalian MP
28/06/17	Netherlands Defence Academy
04/07/17	Chinese Delegation
04/07/17	Tim Smith MP
05/07/17	University of Wisconsin
07/07/17	Japanese Delegation
10/07/17	Moroccan House of Councillors
14/07/17	Roma Britnell MP
20/07/17	Deputy Heads of Mission from the Netherlands and Luxembourg
25/07/17	Israeli Delegation
10/08/17	Californian Irish Legislative Caucus
17/08/17	Executive Office Tour

06/09/17	Czech Ambassador
08/09/17	Confucius Institute
11/09/17	South African Group/Belfast Met
12/09/17	Danish MPs
13/09/17	Chinese Delegation
20/09/17	Belgium MEP
21/09/17	Saferworld Visit
27/09/17	Bombardier Tour
12/10/17	CANI meeting
12/10/17	European Economic & Social Committee
12/10/17	Speaker's Lunch for Visiting Ambassadors
18/10/17	QUB International Students
19/10/17	US Congressional Delegation
27/10/17	Swedish Ambassador
01/11/17	Jordanian Minister
08/11/17	UU Students
09/11/17	UU Company Law Students
09/11/17	Deputy Ambassador of Israel
14/11/17	Nigerian Delegation/WFD
17/11/17	QUB Students
20/11/17	Ghana Delegation/WFD
27/11/17	Palestine group/Forward Thinking
29/11/17	Columbian Officials
30/11/17	NI Affairs Committee
01/12/17	UK China Regional Leader's Summit
07/12/17	Oxford University FSP
04/01/18	Australian MP

08/01/18	US Students
23/01/18	Tour for Education Services
30/01/18	Chevening Scholars
31/01/18	Shades Group
08/02/18	Bosnian Ambassador
15/02/18	Estonian Ambassador
15/02/18	NI-CO Delegation
20/02/18	Palestine Delegation
23/02/18	Slovenian Ambassador
27/02/18	Quebec National Assembly
28/02/18	Norwegian Ambassador
08/03/18	Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
12/03/18	Israeli Ambassador
16/03/18	Kenyan Select Committee
21/03/18	Research Officers from the Kenyan Senate/WFD
21/03/18	Malaysian Delegation/WFD
22/03/18	Deputy Heads of Mission from Sweden, Denmark & Finland







Annex 2 Education Service Figures 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018

Groups by School Type

Type	Groups	Participants
Controlled Grammar	20	666
Controlled Secondary	34	1,691
Controlled Primary	85	2,893
Integrated Primary	1	49
Integrated Secondary	9	363
Maintained Primary	42	1,646
Maintained Secondary	20	899
Special Primary	1	8
Special Secondary	6	129
Voluntary Grammar	50	2,343
Voluntary Primary	5	131
Total	273	10,818

Annex 3 Annual Monitoring Update on Audit of Inequalities Action Plan 2016-2021

Status Key:

-  Complete for period (1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018)
-  In progress/ongoing for period (1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018) OR on schedule to be progressed in line with timeline
-  Overdue
-  Action suspended
-  New action
-  Amended action

Annual Monitoring Update on Audit of Inequalities Action Plan 2016-2021

Function 1: The acquisition and maintenance of premises and equipment to provide suitable accommodation, facilities and support services in which a fully functioning Assembly can operate.

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/ good relations	Inequality Identified and Outcome Area(s)	S75 Category	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	In the current service Business Plan (Yes/No)	Lead	Timescale and Status Update 1 April 2017-31 March 2018
Improve accessibility to the Chamber and Official's Boxes within the Chamber	Access to Parliament Buildings (Theme 1a of Audit of Inequalities)	Persons with a disability and persons without	Improved accessibility to Chamber for all Members. Increased capacity for Official's with mobility issues.	No. Minor alterations have been carried out to facilitate a MLA who is a wheelchair-user. Further improvements will require extensive re-modelling of the chamber. If required (and approved), such works will be included in future Business Plans.	Head of Building Services	Complete for reporting period
Implementation of access audits completed by RNIB, Disability Action and Action on Hearing	Access to Parliament Buildings (Theme 1a of	Persons with a disability and	Improved accessibility to Parliament Buildings for	No. All work items within our remit relating to the audits have	Head of Building Services	Complete for reporting period

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/ good relations	Inequality Identified and Outcome Area(s)	S75 Category	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	In the current service Business Plan (Yes/No)	Lead	Timescale and Status Update 1 April 2017-31 March 2018
Loss regarding a programme of works	<p>Audit of Inequalities)</p> <p>Access to Services (Theme 1b of Audit of Inequalities)</p>	persons without	persons with a disability. All works projects are designed and constructed in accordance with Building Regulations and other relevant legislation.	been completed. Other wider 'estate' issues have been passed to DFP. Further agreed improvements will be included in relevant Business Plan.		
Investigate options to further improve facilities for wheelchair users	<p>Access to Parliament Buildings (Theme 1a of Audit of Inequalities)</p> <p>Access to Services (Theme 1b of Audit of Inequalities)</p>	Persons with a disability and persons without	Improved accessibility to Parliament Buildings for all building users and specifically for wheelchair users. Improvements to means of escape in the event of an emergency for wheelchair users.	No. This work has been completed	Head of Building Services	<p>Complete for reporting period</p> <p>As approved by the Assembly Commission, the following physical alterations and improvements have been completed in Parliament Buildings in the period of this report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relocation of the retail outlet on the Ground Floor and a ramped access has been installed between the Lower Ground Floor (entrance area) and the Ground Floor; Alterations have taken place to counters in the Members' Bar, Business Office and Stationery Office

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/ good relations	Inequality Identified and Outcome Area(s)	S75 Category	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	In the current service Business Plan (Yes/No)	Lead	Timescale and Status Update 1 April 2017-31 March 2018
						<p>to facilitate wheelchair access;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbishment and upgrade of a passenger lift to fire evacuation standard and creation of refuge areas, meaning that the lift can be used in the event of an emergency evacuation, and; • Automatic-opening of all corridor doors at Basement, Ground Floor and 1st Floor Levels in the building.
Maintain Action on Hearing Loss Award	Access to Parliament Buildings (Theme 1a of Audit of Inequalities)	Persons with a disability and persons without	Work towards maintaining Action on Hearing Loss 'Louder than Words' accreditation.	Yes	Environmental Services Manager	Complete for reporting period Award maintained
Maintain National Autistic Society Autism Award	Access to Parliament Buildings (Theme 1a of Audit of Inequalities)	Persons with a disability and persons without	Work towards maintaining Autism accreditation.	Yes	Environmental Services Manager	Complete for reporting period Award maintained

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/ good relations	Inequality Identified and Outcome Area(s)	S75 Category	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	In the current service Business Plan (Yes/No)	Lead	Timescale and Status Update 1 April 2017-31 March 2018
Provision of translation from Irish (and Ulster Scots on request) to English to the Speaker and Clerks at the table	Good Relations (Theme 1c of Audit of Inequalities)	Persons of different religious belief Persons of different political opinion Persons of different racial group	That the Speaker/Clerks at Table receive and understand what is being said. Without such a service there could potentially be a breach of Assembly Standing Orders. Measured by exception i.e. Speaker/Clerks at Table advise that no such service is provided and by recording translation audio channel on SLIQ system.	Yes	Editor of Debates	Action Suspended There were no sittings of the Assembly and thus no requirement for this service.
Ensure Parliament Buildings is welcoming to all sections of society and cultures by reviewing art, artefacts and exhibitions	Good Relations (Theme 1c of Audit of Inequalities)	Persons of different religious belief Persons of different political opinion Persons of different	Review of initiatives on how art and exhibitions might be used in Parliament Buildings	Consideration of new art initiatives to allow opportunities to reflect the wider community within	Engagement	In progress Consultation with the Arts Council and the College of Art took place to look at proposals for a series of new art initiatives for 2018. However, a decision was made not to progress matters with the commissioning of art given the political situation and the associated potential for reputational risk.

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/ good relations	Inequality Identified and Outcome Area(s)	S75 Category	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	In the current service Business Plan (Yes/No)	Lead	Timescale and Status Update 1 April 2017-31 March 2018
		racial group		Parliament Buildings.		
Language Policy	Good Relations (Theme 1c of Audit of Inequalities)	Persons of different religious belief Persons of different political opinion Persons of different racial group	The Education Service now provides a programme in Irish to primary and post primary pupils. In 2015, plans were put in place to translate the primary section of the website – this will be available in February 2016. Some video resources are also available in Irish. Development of Language Policy for the Assembly Commission.	Yes	Education Officer Equality Manager	Complete for reporting period Irish-medium schools were made aware in September 2017 that the education programme is available in Irish. No Irish-medium schools requested a visit during this reporting period. In progress A paper dealing with Irish, Ulster Scots and minority ethnic languages was considered by SMG at its January 2017 and March 2017 meetings. Following consideration, it was agreed that the paper should be ready for consideration by an incoming Commission.

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/ good relations	Inequality Identified and Outcome Area(s)	S75 Category	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	In the current service Business Plan (Yes/No)	Lead	Timescale and Status Update 1 April 2017-31 March 2018
Monitoring the outcome of the EQIA on the Flying of the Union Flag at Parliament Buildings	Good Relations (Theme 1c of Audit of Inequalities)	Persons of different religious belief Persons of different political opinion Persons of different racial group	Monitoring includes regular consideration of: complaints and other forms of feedback through current complaints mechanisms; the results of research/surveys relating to the promotion of good relations. A visitor survey is conducted three times a year in October, February and June. A question relating to the monitoring of this EQIA has been added. The current policy sits within the area of Good Relations which is monitored on an ongoing basis. A good relations monitoring report is issued to SMG every 6 months	Yes	Equality Manager	<p>Complete for reporting period. The Commission considered the EQIA final decision report in June 2015, and it agreed by majority that the Union Flag would fly from Parliament Buildings on designated days as defined by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, an increase of three days on the then policy. Since June 2015, the outcome of the EQIA has been monitored through consideration of any complaints received, related research and EQIAs and through a question on flags in the visitor survey. This monitoring has been provided to SMG/Commission in the annual reports to the Equality Commission and in the six-monthly progress reports on the Good Relations Action Plan.</p> <p>The Equality Commission advises that, if the monitoring and analysis of results of EQIAs over a two-year period show that the policy results in greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be</p>

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/ good relations	Inequality Identified and Outcome Area(s)	S75 Category	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	In the current service Business Plan (Yes/No)	Lead	Timescale and Status Update 1 April 2017-31 March 2018
			detailing the updated policy position and progress. Any EQIAs of related policies carried out by the Commission or other public authorities are reviewed, and any research carried out by public authorities or independent bodies is considered in relation to the impacts of the display of flags and emblems.			<p>promoted, the public authority must ensure that the policy is revised to achieve better outcomes for the relevant equality groups. Monitoring of the flag EQIA in the two years since June 2015 has not identified a greater adverse impact or opportunities to promote greater equality of opportunity.</p> <p>Beyond the two-year period, monitoring will continue through the methods noted above.</p>
Monitoring of revised Engagement Strategy	Participation (Theme 1d of Audit of Inequalities)	All groups	Monitoring by July 2016 in line with directorate wide business plan reviews	Yes	Outreach Manager	Complete for reporting period A new Engagement Strategy is under development.
Engaging with women, people with disabilities and ethnic minorities	Participation (Theme 1d of Audit of Inequalities)	Men and women generally	Increased engagement with women, people with disabilities and	Yes	Outreach Manager	Complete for reporting period Due to the political situation activity was reduced and ACC held 6 events during the period. The

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/ good relations	Inequality Identified and Outcome Area(s)	S75 Category	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	In the current service Business Plan (Yes/No)	Lead	Timescale and Status Update 1 April 2017-31 March 2018
under-represented in public life through Assembly Community Connect		Persons with a disability and persons without Persons of different racial group	ethnic minorities; inform groups how to utilise resources available through Assembly Community Connect & partner organisations			activities included training events targeted at women's groups, a Speaker's event for International Women's Day and the Northern Ireland Assembly's first family friendly educational event.
Engagement with young people through Education Service visits programme	Participation (Theme 1d of Audit of Inequalities)	Persons of different age	Education Programmes provided for young people from Key Stage 2 (age 8) to Key Stage 5 (Post 16)	Yes	Education Officer	Complete for reporting period. Education Service programmes were delivered to groups with a broad age range; from Key Stage 1 to university students.
Engagement with young people	Access to Services (Theme 1b of the 2011 Audit of	Young people	In 2016, the Education Service will apply for Erasmus+ to fund a youth partnership programme. This project will aim to recruit young people who face social and economic barriers to participation	Yes	Education Manager	Complete for reporting period. The application was unsuccessful in 2016.

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/ good relations	Inequality Identified and Outcome Area(s)	S75 Category	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	In the current service Business Plan (Yes/No)	Lead	Timescale and Status Update 1 April 2017-31 March 2018
Development of appropriate resources to support learning about the Assembly	Access to Services (Theme 1b of the 2011 Audit of Inequalities)	Young people	Develop and update a variety of educational resources across all Key stages (all ages) this will include new website activities and video resources	Yes	Education Team	<p>Complete for reporting period The Education Service's website partner, CCEA, continues to convert web activities/resources to HTML to make them accessible on all platforms.</p> <p>The Assembly partnership with CCEA is in place until 2022, ensuring that education service online resources will continue to be up to date in terms of both technology and curriculum support.</p>
Implementation of Secretariat Gender Action Plan	Recruitment and Selection (Theme 2a of Audit of Inequalities) Equality issues for existing staff	Men and women generally	The removal of any actual or perceived barriers to gender equality within the secretariat through the implementation of a gender action plan.	Yes	Equality Manager	<p>Complete for reporting period</p>
Provision of an Irish Language champion	Participation (Theme 1d of Audit of Inequalities)	Young People	Translation of the primary section of the Education website will complete in February 2016. Delivery of	yes	Education Team	<p>In progress An Irish language champion has been appointed. Work is ongoing on the development of an Irish language version of the Education Service website.</p>

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/ good relations	Inequality Identified and Outcome Area(s)	S75 Category	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	In the current service Business Plan (Yes/No)	Lead	Timescale and Status Update 1 April 2017-31 March 2018
			programmes in Irish continues.			
Continued facilitation of the Pensioners' Parliament	Participation (Theme 1d of Audit of Inequalities)	Persons of different age	To facilitate one Parliament per year	Yes	Outreach Manager	Action suspended during reporting period The Pensioners Parliament was not held because, due to the political situation, no Ministers were in place to respond to the debates/questions.
Additional Minority Parliaments	Participation (Theme 1d of Audit of Inequalities) Good Relations (Theme 1c of Audit of Inequalities)	Persons of different racial group/people with a disability	To facilitate one BME Parliament per year	Yes	Outreach Manager	Action suspended during reporting period Interim action put in place. The partner organisation for BME Parliaments, NICEM, has entered voluntary insolvency. The capacity will need to be re-established within this community to facilitate further BME 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 action is added to the strategy which commits to the delivery of one 'Get Involved' conference per year to BME groups. Assembly Community Connect (ACC) will deliver one 'Get Involved'

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/ good relations	Inequality Identified and Outcome Area(s)	S75 Category	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	In the current service Business Plan (Yes/No)	Lead	Timescale and Status Update 1 April 2017-31 March 2018
						conference to BME groups per year.
Continued Implementation of the 'Perspective on...' series	Good Relations (Theme 1c of Audit of Inequalities)	Promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	To hold events as agreed by the Assembly Commission	Following the March 2017 election, the Assembly Commission agreed that the historic anniversaries policy would not be initiated for the 2017-2022 mandate until the Assembly resumes normal business subject, to review by summer 2018.	Speaker's Office	Action suspended during reporting period Following the March 2017 election, the Assembly Commission agreed in November 2017, that the historic anniversaries policy would not be initiated for the 2017-2022 mandate until the Assembly resumes normal business subject, to review by summer 2018.
Continued lighting of the exterior Parliament Buildings	Good Relations (Theme 1c of Audit of Inequalities)	Promoting good relations between persons of different religious	To light the exterior of Parliament Buildings as agreed by the Assembly Commission.	Yes	Facilities	Complete for reporting period Interim policy operational since 2014. http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/about-the-assembly/corporate-information/policies/northern-

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/ good relations	Inequality Identified and Outcome Area(s)	S75 Category	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	In the current service Business Plan (Yes/No)	Lead	Timescale and Status Update 1 April 2017-31 March 2018
		belief, political opinion or racial group.	<p>The Commission will schedule up to 4 days (consecutive or not) during a calendar year for event(s) of its choice in line with the policy.</p> <p>b) The Northern Ireland Charity of the year will have access to the system for up to 5 days (consecutive or not) during its 12 months term.</p> <p>c) The Assembly Commission will grant up to another 8 days for events during a calendar year when requests are made (paragraphs g) in</p>			ireland-assembly-use-of-external-lighting-policy-at-parliament-buildings-2014/

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/ good relations	Inequality Identified and Outcome Area(s)	S75 Category	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	In the current service Business Plan (Yes/No)	Lead	Timescale and Status Update 1 April 2017-31 March 2018
			<p>line with the policy (1 day per event).</p> <p>Altogether there will be up to 17 days scheduled per year in line with the policy with potential extraordinary ad-hoc requests as specified at paragraphs h) & i).</p>			
Continue annual series of 'Let's Talk' events across constituencies	Participation (Theme 1d of Audit of Inequalities)	Young People	Hold events in school venues which will involve all constituencies	Yes	Education Team	<p>Action Suspended for reporting period</p> <p>'Let's Talk' events will be resumed when the Assembly returns to full business. However, young people from all constituencies continue to meet and engage with MLAs during Education Service events in Parliament Buildings and in schools.</p>
Speaker to host 'Assembly Women's Week' in 2016 which will focus on	Participation (Theme 1d of Audit of Inequalities)	Gender	The week will host a range of different events including discussion with female role	Yes	Speaker's Office and Communications and Outreach	<p>Complete for reporting period</p> <p>On Thursday 8 March 2018, the Assembly hosted 150 women from across Northern Ireland at an event to celebrate International Women's</p>

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/ good relations	Inequality Identified and Outcome Area(s)	S75 Category	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	In the current service Business Plan (Yes/No)	Lead	Timescale and Status Update 1 April 2017-31 March 2018
encouraging women to participate and increasing female representation			models, increasing female representation on public and private boards, increasing female presence in the media.			Day. The theme centred around the history of female suffrage and modern-day issues around equality.
Develop a business outreach plan by delivering targeted training to businesses to raise awareness of the Northern Ireland Assembly Business Trust (NIABT) in the private sector.	Participation (Theme 1d of Audit of Inequalities)	Men and Women generally	Increase NIABT members by 5% year on year and improve wider understanding of how businesses can engage with the Assembly. The NIABT will specifically run events to encourage the involvement of women.	Yes	Outreach	<p>Action suspended during reporting period.</p> <p>NIABT Board of Trustees held a strategic planning day in June 2016 to discuss the ongoing work and future goals of the NIABT. One outcome from the planning day was to review the efficiency of the work being undertaken by the Trust with a view to increasing its impact on members as well as the wider business community in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Following the review, reform proposals were presented to the NIABT Board outlining how the Trust's aims and objectives could be better served and better delivered. At its meeting on 13th November 2017 the Board of Trustees agreed a proposal that the NIABT be dissolved and noted that</p>

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/ good relations	Inequality Identified and Outcome Area(s)	S75 Category	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	In the current service Business Plan (Yes/No)	Lead	Timescale and Status Update 1 April 2017-31 March 2018
						<p>the Assembly Commission proposed to initiate a new programme of work, once the Assembly resumes normal business, to further strengthen engagement of the business sector with the business of the Assembly.</p> <p>The proposal was put to the membership at the NIABT AGM on 13th December 2017 and the wider NIABT membership voted to dissolve the Trust. At the AGM members also voted on how the funds should be disbursed in line with the articles of the Trust.</p> <p>The Board of Trustees discussed in greater detail the three proposed options for the disbursement of funds at its Board Meeting on Wednesday 19th February 2018. Following a lengthy discussion, the Board unanimously voted that any decision of how the funds should be disbursed would be put on hold until the political situation is clearer.</p> <p>The Board agreed to meet again in six months (unless the political</p>

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/ good relations	Inequality Identified and Outcome Area(s)	S75 Category	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	In the current service Business Plan (Yes/No)	Lead	Timescale and Status Update 1 April 2017-31 March 2018
						situation is resolved sooner) to assess the situation.
Regular meetings with Section 75 groups to inform reviews of Engagement Strategy.	Participation (Theme 1d of Audit of Inequalities)	All s75 Groups	Annual meetings with appropriate groups to inform reviews of Strategy.	Yes	Outreach	In progress A new Engagement Strategy is under development and s75 groups will be consulted at an appropriate time.

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

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/ good relations	Inequality Identified and Outcome area(s)	Section 75 Categories	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	In the current service plan (Yes/No)	Lead Responsibility	Timescale
Continue to implement fair and inclusive recruitment practices	Recruitment and Selection (Theme 2a of Audit of Inequalities)	All	<p>Ensuring that all recruitment competitions are fully accessible</p> <p>Apply welcome statements or affirmative action if appropriate in consultation with the Equality Commission for NI.</p>		Head of HR	<p>Complete for reporting period Completed. The procedures for internal and external recruitment have been reviewed to ensure compliance with good practice. The policies were used for recruitment exercises carried out in the period 1.4.17 – 31.3.18</p> <p>Completed. The Guaranteed Interview Scheme has been used for internal and external recruitment exercises carried out in the period 1.4.17 – 31.3.18</p>

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/ good relations	Inequality Identified and Outcome area(s)	Section 75 Categories	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	In the current service plan (Yes/No)	Lead Responsibility	Timescale
Continue to implement staff surveys	Recruitment and Selection (Theme 2b of Audit of Inequalities)	All	<p>Use the results of the staff survey to produce and implement an action plan if required</p> <p>Monitor the progress of the implementation of this action plan</p>		Corporate Support	<p>Complete for reporting period</p> <p>2017 Staff Survey launched on 14 June 2017 and closed on 7 July 2017.</p> <p>Key Findings, Recommendations and final Staff Survey Report published on Assembly's Intranet in October 2017.</p> <p>The Secretariat Management Group developed and issued a Staff Survey Report Action Plan along with a status update to Secretariat staff in December 2017 and the Action</p>

Action taken to better promote equality of opportunity/good relations	Inequality Identified and Outcome area(s)	Section 75 Categories	Intended outcome/impact and how this will be measured	In the current service plan (Yes/No)	Lead Responsibility	Timescale
						Plan will continue to be monitored.

Annex 4

GENDER ACTION PLAN - TABLE OF ACTIONS 2016-18

October 2017 6 monthly update

Theme 1 – Leadership and Development				
Issue Identified	Action	Planned outcome/measurement	Lead	Timeline
Mentoring and Coaching	1 Seek access to NICS Mentoring Programme aimed at all NIA grades.	Assembly Commission staff are afforded opportunity to participate in the NICS Mentoring Programme. Target uptake five staff.	Human Resources Office	Complete Launch October 2015 – programme duration 9 months.
	2 Seek access to CO3 (Chief Executive Office Third Generation) mentoring project.	Assembly Commission staff are afforded opportunity to participate in the CO3 Mentoring Programme. Target uptake of five staff.	Human Resources Office	Complete Launch May 2015 – programme duration 12 months.
	3 Join Business in the Community's Gender Project, which supports organisations to increase	Full participation in the Gender Project over its three-year duration, leading to the development of a bespoke action plan as part of a collaborative approach	Human Resources Office and Equality and	Ongoing Project commenced

Theme 1 – Leadership and Development				
Issue Identified	Action	Planned outcome/measurement	Lead	Timeline
	gender diversity, shift workplace behaviours and create enabling workplaces for men and women.	to address unconscious bias and create a truly inclusive workplace.	Good Relations Unit	October 2015, for 3 years.
	4 Commission staff participation in Women in Public Life Programme.	Assembly Commission staff are afforded the opportunity to participate in programme (five places available).	Politics Plus	Complete 2015/16 and 2016/17
Gender balance in presenting to SMG and Commission	5 Collect data at SMG and Commission level and produce yearly report on findings.	One year of complete data available at reporting year end detailing gender balancing.	Commission and Clerk/Chief Executive's Office (CCEO)	Complete 31 March 2017
SMG and Commission Deputising Guides	6 Develop briefing guides/procedures for deputising at SMG and Commission to ensure that deputies have a full understanding of how SMG works.	Revised submission guide along with revised templates to be published on AsslSt.	CCEO	Complete 1 April 2016
Tabling of Papers at SMG and Commission	7 Introduce process to enable authors of SMG/Commission papers to present them at meetings.	Revised SMG guidance and communication to include note to Directors on increasing number and range of staff attending and presenting to SMG/Commission	CCEO	Complete 1 April 2016
	8 Make provision for HoBs to attend SMG at least once a year.	Revised SMG guidance and communication to include note to Directors on increasing number and	CCEO	Complete 1 April 2016

Theme 1 – Leadership and Development				
Issue Identified	Action	Planned outcome/measurement	Lead	Timeline
		range of staff attending and presenting to SMG/Commission		
Gender Balancing on Groups	9 Develop guidance for HoBs and Directors on staff volunteering and representation on groups/panels.	Guidance presented to SMG following liaison with directors and feedback from Gender Action Implementation Group.	Equality and Good Relations Unit	Complete December 2016
Training	10 Explore opportunities to partner with organisations where the potential uptake of courses is low.	HR Office will continue to liaise with partner organisations as appropriate.	Human Resources Office	Complete and ongoing
	11 Continue practice of offering, as far as possible, a range of dates/times for learning events and ensure that this is reflected in learning and development written procedures.	Learning and development written procedures reviewed to reflect practice, which will be applied consistently.	Human Resources Office	Complete and ongoing Monitor over lifetime of action plan
	12 Ensure as far as possible that training events are arranged in Northern Ireland	Learning and development written procedures reviewed to reflect practice, which will be applied consistently. 95% of training events will be offered within Northern Ireland.	Human Resources Office	Review of procedures complete. Annual measurement at 31 March each year.

Theme 1 – Leadership and Development				
Issue Identified	Action	Planned outcome/measurement	Lead	Timeline
	13 Explore option, where possible, of sharing training materials with all secretariat staff so that staff who are unable to attend training courses can access materials.	Procurement process for learning activities will be developed to include clause consenting to sharing of training materials internally via Moodle (Virtual Learning Environment)	Human Resources Office	Complete March 2016
	14 Dignity at Work Policy and Equal Opportunities Policy will continue to be kept under review to ensure compliance with legislation and that the interests of all categories, including gender, are addressed.	Policies will be kept under review on an ongoing basis in light of developments in legislation. Policies will be subject to full review by 31 March 2018, if not required before that date.	Human Resources Office	Ongoing Full review by 31 March 2018
Continued focus on equal pay	15 The Assembly Commission will continue to conduct an equal pay review every two years and address issues arising.	Equal pay reviews will be conducted every two years and gender-related statistically significant differences in pay (as determined by NISRA) will be considered by SMG.	Human Resources Office	Complete/ ongoing December 2015 and 2017
Implementation of relevant AERC Review Recommendations	16 Bring AERC recommendations to Women in Politics Working Group and advise Gender Action Implementation Group of any potential impact on Secretariat.	Relevant impact from AERC recommendations is planned for and managed within Assembly Secretariat.	Clerking/Gender Action Implementation Group	Complete March 2016

Theme 2 – Communication and Engagement				
Issue Identified	Action	Planned outcome/measurement	Lead	Timeline
Gender Leadership Network	17 Consider models for a Gender Leadership Network, including model of Assembly Leadership Forum (ALF).	Research paper; identify models of good practice to promote the position of women in the workplace	RaISe	Complete March 2017
Awards	18 Explore the area of awards as discussed in the Working Paper from the European Commission's Network to Promote Women in Decision-Making in Politics and the Economy (copy circulated).	Research paper; identify models of good practice to promote the position of women in the workplace	RaISe	Complete March 2017
Utilise Existing Assembly Networks	19 Explore potential for coaching and mentoring opportunities.	Staff will be provided with an opportunity to attend a 'Train the Trainer' session to develop their capacity to deliver Engagement Programmes.	Outreach with assistance from Human Resources Office	In progress Assembly Trainers Network paper was agreed by SMG on 25 th August 2017. The project will be rolled out when the political

Theme 2 – Communication and Engagement				
Issue Identified	Action	Planned outcome/measurement	Lead	Timeline
				situation is resolved.

Theme 3 – Life Balance/Health and Well-being				
Issue Identified	Action	Planned outcome/measurement	Lead	Timeline
Job Share Register	20 Implement Job Share register	Job Share register and associated guidance issued to staff enabling them to register interest in job sharing arrangements.	Human Resources Office	Complete March 2016
Caring Responsibilities Guidance	21 Develop caring responsibilities guidance for managers and staff (subject to formal consultation) and include in staff handbook. Guidance should promote holding of meetings between 10am-4pm as far as possible	Caring Responsibilities Guidance is developed and issued to staff.	Human Resources Office	In progress Complete by June 2018
Job sampling	22 Address job sampling through implementation of Job Shadowing Policy	Job Shadowing Policy is developed and issued to staff.	Human Resources Office	Complete Introduced in October 2015 and will be kept under review throughout lifetime of plan

Theme 3 – Life Balance/Health and Well-being				
Issue Identified	Action	Planned outcome/measurement	Lead	Timeline
Childcare Scheme	23 Consider issues arising from review of childcare scheme	Issues identified and information provided to SMG and Commission as appropriate.	Human Resources Office	Complete June 2016
Gather staff views on life balance	24 Continue to conduct staff surveys and review questions to ensure that gender aspects are included	Continued measurement of staff opinion and survey outcomes published on AsslSt	Secretariat Management Group (SMG)/Internal Communications Group (ICG)	Complete/ ongoing
Domestic violence policy	25 Development of policy for Secretariat staff	Domestic Violence Policy is developed and issued to staff	Human Resources Office	Policy under development and with TUS for comment
Development of a Transgender Policy	26 Develop a Transgender Policy to address both managing and supporting staff and dealing with visitors to Parliament Buildings	Transgender Policy is developed and issued to staff	Human Resources Office	On target in reporting period March 2018
Raise awareness around	27 Provide training to staff on transgender issues once policy developed.	Staff are trained and equipped with knowledge to manage transgender	Human Resources Office	On target in reporting period

Theme 3 – Life Balance/Health and Well-being				
Issue Identified	Action	Planned outcome/measurement	Lead	Timeline
transgender issues		issues in the workplace in accordance with Commission Policy.		

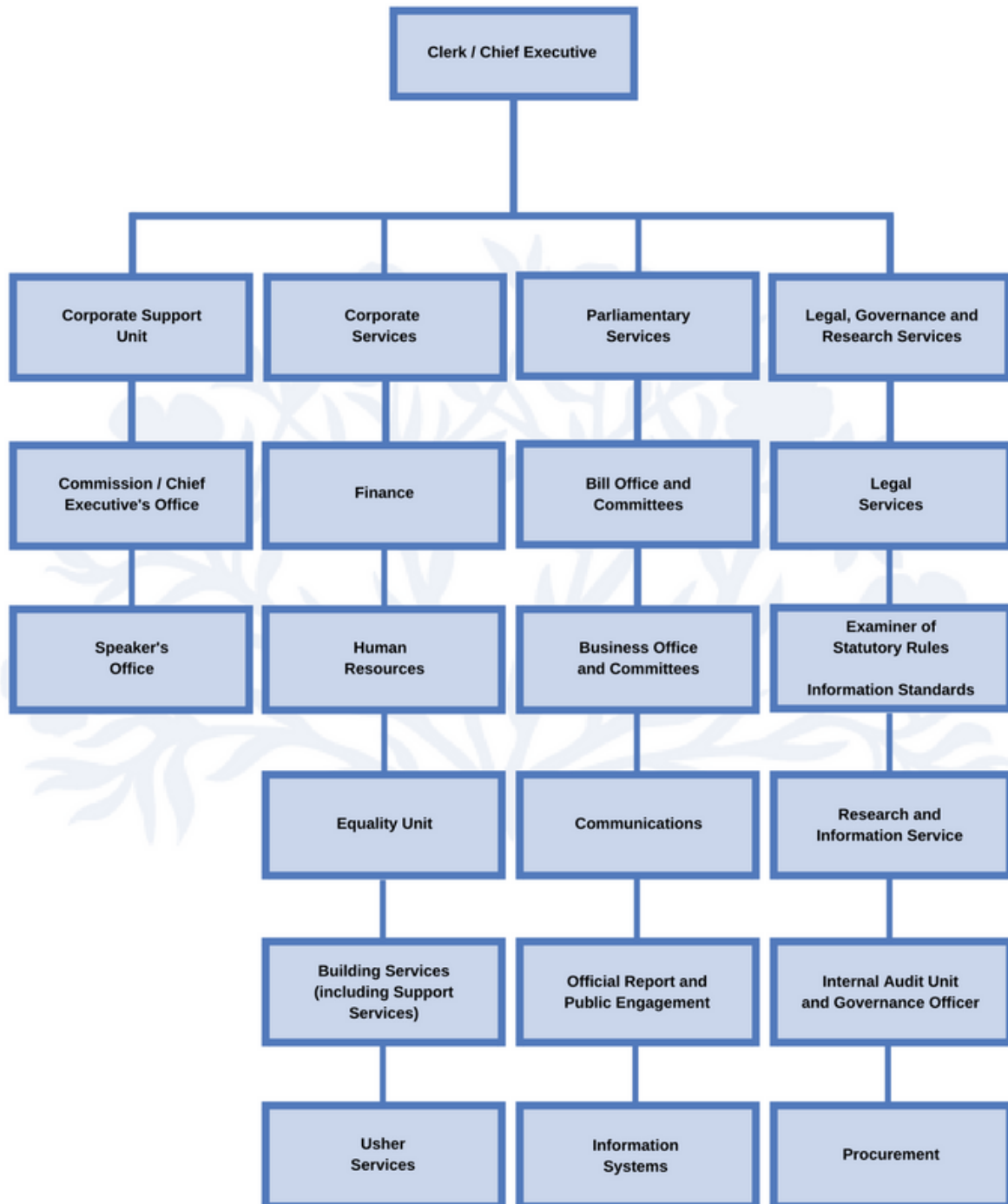
Reporting and Monitoring				
Issue Identified	Action	Planned outcome/measurement	Lead	Timeline
Regular monitoring of progress against identified actions	28 Provide progress update to SMG and the Assembly Commission every six months	Every six months, following liaison with business areas, provide summary of directorate activity to SMG/Commission, charting progress against targets and including any additional actions.	Equality and Good Relations Unit	Complete/ongoing Every six months from Commission approval of final plan
	29 Report to the Equality Commission annually on progress	As part of annual report to the Equality Commission, provide full update of directorate activity against action plan targets.	Equality and Good Relations Unit	Complete/ongoing 31 August every year
Central administration and co-ordination of work of Gender Action Implementation Group	30 Co-ordinate and oversee the roll-out of implementation of the action plan	Co-ordination of meetings and work of the Implementation Group once established; Support provided to business areas where necessary; Progress of business areas tracked against targets; and written updates to SMG/Commission on progress against specific actions every six months.	Equality and Good Relations Unit	Complete/ongoing until 2018

Additional Actions Identified Through Business in the Community (BiTC) Gender Project Audit				
Issue Identified	Action	Planned outcome/measurement	Lead	Timeline
Capture gender information on staff experience of working in the Assembly	31 Monitor future staff survey results on the basis of gender	Evidence will exist which will show staff experience of working in the Assembly, broken down by gender. This evidence will be captured through the bi-annual staff survey.	RaISe	Implementation September 2017, ongoing over lifetime of plan
Encourage employment applications from under-represented groups	32 Continue to use welcome statements as part of external recruitment, as appropriate	Increase in the number of applications by under- represented groups where a welcome statement has been used. Monitoring will be undertaken by the Human Resources Office.	Human Resources Office	Ongoing over lifetime of action plan
Encourage employment applications from those with caring responsibilities	33 Proactively discuss flexible working options with panels as part of the recruitment planning process	Where post has been identified as suitable, an increase in the number of applicants expressing an interest in flexible working. Monitoring will be undertaken by the Human Resources Office.	Human Resources Office	Implementation September 2017, ongoing over lifetime of plan
Increased awareness of HR policies that	34 To increase awareness of HR policies and the links across equality policies through: promotion of relevant policies to staff; learning activities and regular policy	Increased awareness of policies will be monitored by Human Resources Office through the evaluation of learning activities	Human Resources Office	Ongoing over lifetime of action plan

Additional Actions Identified Through Business in the Community (BiTC) Gender Project Audit				
Issue Identified	Action	Planned outcome/measurement	Lead	Timeline
promote equality and diversity	reminders; and refresher training at least every two years			
Exchange of information and ideas	35 To use networking to facilitate exchange of information and ideas (eg KESS seminars, subject-specific working groups and focus groups for policy development)	Positive impact of networking activities to be monitored by individual business areas	All business areas	Ongoing over lifetime of action plan
Increased awareness of corporate issues	36 Through publication of articles on AsslSt and interaction with senior managers, to provide information to staff on corporate matters	Increased awareness of staff on the work of SMG to be measured in future staff surveys	ICG	December 2017 and ongoing
Unconscious bias training	37 To provide training to staff on unconscious bias	Improved understanding of unconscious bias will be monitored by Human Resources Office through evaluation of training activity	Human Resources Office	March 2018
Promotion of Women in the Workplace	38 To consider the research papers on models for a Gender Leadership Network and Awards for promoting women in the workplace	Actions agreed to progress issues identified in research papers	Gender Action Plan Implementation Group	June 2018

Annex 5

The Northern Ireland Assembly Secretariat



Annex 6

Assembly Community Connect Figures 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018

MONTH	EVENT	NUMBERS ATTENDED
June 2017	Soroptimists Workshop	18
	Equality Commission	6
January 2018	Community Campaigners	12
February 2017	HAND Group	60
June 2017	International Women's Day	153
	Women and Children Takeover Parliament Buildings for International Women's Day	80