

Equality Scheme for



***Drawn up in accordance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern
Ireland Act 1998***

This document is available in a range of formats on request.

Please contact us with your requirements

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Equality House
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Belfast
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Approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland on _____

Foreword

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations across a range of categories outlined in the Act¹.

In our Equality Scheme we set out how the Commission for Victims and Survivors proposes to fulfill the Section 75 statutory duties.

We will commit the necessary resources in terms of people, time and money to make sure that the Section 75 statutory duties are complied with and that the Equality Scheme is implemented effectively, and on time.

We commit to having effective internal arrangements in place for ensuring our effective compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties and for monitoring and reviewing our progress.

We will develop and deliver a programme of communication and training with the aim of ensuring that all our staff and board members are made fully aware of our Equality Scheme and understand the commitments and obligations within it. We will develop a programme of awareness raising for our consultees on the Section 75 statutory duties and our commitments in our Equality Scheme.

The Commission for Victims and Survivors, is fully committed to effectively fulfilling our Section 75 statutory duties across all its functions (including employment and procurement) through the effective implementation of our Equality Scheme.

We realise the important role that the community and voluntary sector and the general public have to play to ensure the Section 75 statutory duties are effectively implemented. Our Equality Scheme demonstrates how determined we are to ensure there are opportunities, for people affected by our work, to positively influence how we carry out our functions in line with our Section 75 statutory duties. It also offers the means whereby persons directly affected by what they consider to be a failure, on our part, to comply with our Equality Scheme, can make complaints.

On behalf of the Commission for Victims and Survivors and our staff we are pleased to support and endorse this Equality Scheme which has been drawn up in accordance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Commission guidelines.

Signed

Commissioner

Date

Signed

Secretary to the Commission

Date

¹ See section 1.1 of our Equality Scheme.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

- 1.1. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires the Commission for Victims and Survivors to comply with two statutory duties when carrying out its functions in relation to Northern Ireland:
- 1.2. Section 75 (1)
In carrying out our functions relating to Northern Ireland we are required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between;
 - persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation
 - men and women generally
 - persons with a disability and persons without
 - persons with dependants and persons without.
- 1.3. Section 75 (2)
In addition, without prejudice to the obligations above, in carrying out our functions in relation to Northern Ireland we are required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.
- 1.4. “Functions” include the “powers and duties” of a public authority². This includes our employment and procurement functions.
- 1.5. Please see below under “Who we are and what we do” for a detailed explanation of our functions.

How we propose to fulfil the Section 75 duties in relation to the relevant functions of the Commission for Victims and Survivors

- 1.6. Schedule 9, Paragraph 4 (1) of the Act requires the Commission for Victims and Survivors as a designated public authority to set out in an Equality Scheme how it proposes to fulfil the duties imposed by Section 75 in relation to its relevant functions. This Equality Scheme is intended to fulfil that statutory requirement. It is both a statement of our arrangements for fulfilling the Section 75 statutory duties and our plan for their implementation.
- 1.7. The Commission for Victims and Survivors is committed to the discharge of its Section 75 obligations in all parts of the organisation and we will commit the necessary available resources in terms of people, time and money to ensure that the Section 75 statutory duties are complied with and that our Equality Scheme can be implemented effectively.

Who we are and what we do

- 1.8. Anticipated by the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement in 1998, formulated in legislation in 2006, established by Ministers in 2008 and given a policy framework by the Northern Ireland Executive in 2009, the Commission’s principal aim is to promote the interests of victims and survivors.

² Section 98 (1) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

- 1.9. This aim is the central reference point for all of the Commission's work.
- 1.10. The Commissioner for Victims and Survivors is appointed by Ministers for an initial period of four years. The post of Commissioner is currently held by Judith Thompson. The Commissioner also fulfils the role of the Board to the Commission
- 1.11. The functions of the Commission for Victims and Survivors for the purposes of the Act include its powers and duties. In this Scheme the following are to be regarded as the functions:
- 1.12. The Commission for Victims and Survivors has six statutory duties;
- (i) To promote awareness of matters relating to the interests of victims and survivors and the need to safeguard those interests
 - (ii) To keep under review the adequacy and effectiveness of law and practice affecting the interests of victims and survivors
 - (iii) To keep under review the adequacy and effectiveness of services provided for victims and survivors
 - (iv) To provide advice to government on matters affecting victims and survivors
 - (v) To ensure that the views of victims and survivors are sought by the Commission for Victims and Survivors in carrying out its work
 - (vi) To make arrangements for a forum for consultation with victims and survivors.

Secretary to the Commission

- 1.13. The Secretary to the Commission is responsible for the management of the Senior Management Team (SMT).

Senior Management Team (SMT)

- 1.14. The Commission for Victims and Survivors' Senior Management Team includes the following officers:
- Head of Communications and Engagement
 - Head of Corporate Services
 - Head of Research and Policy Development

Chapter 2 Our arrangements for assessing our compliance with the Section 75 duties (Schedule 9, Paragraph 4 (2) (a))

Some of our arrangements for assessing our compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties are outlined in other relevant parts of this Equality Scheme. Details on monitoring arrangements and assessment of the likely impact of policies are included in Chapter 4. Details on consultation are outlined in Chapter 3, publications in Chapter 9 and complaints procedure etc in Chapter 8.

In addition we have the following arrangements in place for assessing our compliance:

Responsibilities and reporting

- 2.1. We are committed to the fulfilment of our Section 75 obligations in all parts of our work. The Commission for Victims and Survivors will ensure that there are effective internal arrangements in place to ensure that statutory duties are effectively complied with and the progress on policies is monitored and reviewed. The Commission for Victims and Survivors will allocate resources in terms of people, time and finance in order to draw up and implement an effective Equality Scheme. The implementation of the Scheme will be monitored and reviewed following the existing reporting mechanisms through a monthly meeting of the Senior Management Team.
- 2.2. Responsibility for the effective implementation of our Equality Scheme lies with the Secretary to the Commission. The Secretary to the Commission is accountable to the Board of the Commission for Victims and Survivors for the development, implementation, maintenance and review of the Equality Scheme in accordance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998, including any good practice or guidance that has been or may be issued by the Equality Commission.
- 2.3. If you have any questions or comments regarding our Equality Scheme, please contact in the first instance the Secretary to the Commission at the address given below and we will respond to you as soon as possible.

Commission for Victims and Survivors
4th Floor
Equality House
7-9 Shaftesbury Square
Belfast
BT2 7DP

(T) 02890 311 000
(F) 02890 607 424
(E) commission@cvsni.org

The Head of Corporate Services will have specific responsibility for all equality issues, including the drafting of policies, conducting Equality Impact Assessments, consultation process, monitoring and review, reporting on progress and handling complaints.

- 2.4. Objectives and targets relating to the statutory duties will be integrated into our strategic and operational business plans³.

³ See Appendix 4 'Timetable for measures proposed' and section 2.11 of this equality scheme.

- 2.5. Employees' job descriptions and performance plans reflect their contributions to the discharge of the Section 75 statutory duties and implementation of the Equality Scheme, where relevant. The Personal Performance Plans are subject to appraisal in the Annual Performance Review.
- 2.6. The Commission for Victims and Survivors prepare an annual report on the progress we have made on implementing the arrangements set out in this Equality Scheme to discharge our Section 75 statutory duties (Section 75 annual progress report).
- 2.7. The Section 75 annual progress report will be sent to the Equality Commission by 31 August each year and will follow any guidance on annual reporting issued by the Equality Commission.
- 2.8. Progress on the delivery of Section 75 statutory duties will also be included in our (organisational) annual report.
- 2.9. The Section 75 annual progress report will be available on our website

www.cvsni.org

or by contacting:

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- 2.10. The Commission for Victims and Survivors liaises closely with the Equality Commission to ensure that progress on the implementation of our Equality Scheme is maintained.

Action plan/action measures

- 2.11. The Commission for Victims and Survivors is developing an action plan to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. The Action Plan does not form part of the approved Equality Scheme. Please see Appendix 6 to this Equality Scheme.
- 2.12. The action measures that will make up our action plan will be relevant to our functions. They will be developed and prioritised on the basis of an audit of inequalities. The audit of inequalities will gather and analyse information across the Section 75 categories⁴ to identify the inequalities that exist for our service users and those affected by our policies⁵.
- 2.13. Action measures will be specific, measurable, linked to achievable outcomes, realistic and time bound. Action measures will include performance indicators and timescales for their achievement.

⁴ See section 1.1 – 1.3 of this Equality Scheme for a list of these categories.

⁵ See section 4.1 of this Equality Scheme for a definition of policies.

- 2.14. We will develop any action plans for a period of between one and five years in order to align them with our corporate and business planning cycles. Implementation of the action measures will be incorporated into our business planning process.
- 2.15. We will seek input from our stakeholders and consult on our action plan before we send it to the Equality Commission and thereafter when reviewing the plan as indicated below.
- 2.16. We will monitor our progress on the delivery of our action measures annually and update the action plan as necessary to ensure that it remains effective and relevant to our functions and work.
- 2.17. The Commission for Victims and Survivors will inform the Equality Commission of any changes or amendments to our action plan and will also include this information in our Section 75 annual progress report to the Equality Commission. Our Section 75 annual progress report will incorporate information on progress we have made in implementing our action plans/action measures.
- 2.18. Once finalised, our action plan will be available on our website at www.cvsni.org or by contacting:

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(W) www.cvsni.org

If you require it in an alternative format please contact us on the details provided.

Chapter 3 Our arrangements for consulting

(Schedule 9, Paragraph 4 (2) (a)) - on matters to which a duty (S75 (1) or (2)) is likely to be relevant (including details of the persons to be consulted).

(Schedule 9, Paragraph 4 (2) (b)) on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by us on the promotion of equality of opportunity.

- 3.1. The Commission for Victims and Survivors recognises the importance of consultation in all aspects of the implementation of our statutory equality duties. We will consult on our Equality Scheme, action measures, equality impact assessments and other matters relevant to the Section 75 statutory duties.
- 3.2. We are committed to carrying out consultation in accordance with the following principles (as contained in the Equality Commission's guidance '*Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for Public Authorities (April 2010)*')
- 3.3. All consultations will seek the views of those directly affected by the matter/policy, the Equality Commission, representative groups of Section 75 categories, other public authorities, voluntary and community groups, our staff and their trades union and such other groups who have a legitimate interest in the matter, whether or not they have a direct economic or personal interest.
- 3.4. Initially all consultees (see Appendix 3), as a matter of course, will be notified (by email or post) of the matter/policy being consulted upon to ensure they are aware of all consultations. Thereafter, to ensure the most effective use of our and our consultees' resources, we will take a targeted approach to consultation for those consultees that may have a particular interest in the matter/policy being consulted upon and to whom the matter/policy is of particular relevance. This may include for example regional or local consultations, sectoral or thematic consultation etc.
- 3.5. Consultation with all stakeholders will begin as early as possible. We will engage with affected individuals and representative groups to identify how best to consult or engage with them. We will ask our consultees what their preferred consultation methods are and will give consideration to these. Methods of consultation could include:
 - 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/opt out of the consultation
 - Internet discussions or
 - Telephone consultations.
- 3.6. This list is not exhaustive and we may develop other additional methods of consultation more appropriate to key stakeholders and the matter being consulted upon.
- 3.7. We will consider the accessibility and format of every method of consultation we use in order to remove barriers to the consultation process. Specific consideration will be given as to how best to communicate with children and young people, people with disabilities (in particular people with learning disabilities) and minority ethnic communities. We will take

account of existing and developing good practice, including the Equality Commission's guidance *Let's Talk Let's Listen – Guidance for public authorities on consulting and involving children and young people (2008)*.

- 3.8. Information will be made available, on request, in alternative formats⁶, in a timely manner, usually within 10 working days. We will ensure that such consultees have equal time to respond and recognise the need for information to be produced in a style and format that is easy to understand and accessible, and that promotes alternative formats to make sure information provided is as equitable as possible – for example producing “easy read”, leaflet or summarised versions of publications
- 3.9. Specific training is provided to those facilitating consultations to ensure that they have the necessary skills to communicate effectively with consultees.
- 3.10. To ensure effective consultation with consultees⁷ on Section 75 matters, we will develop a programme of awareness raising on the Section 75 statutory duties and the commitments in our Equality Scheme by undertaking the following:
 - Ensuring that staff involved in consulting have the necessary skills
 - Ensuring that those engaged on the Commission's behalf to facilitate consultation are skilled in interacting with specific groups
 - Ensuring that consultees are aware of specific consultation exercises
- 3.11. The consultation period lasts for a minimum of twelve weeks to allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves as part of the process of forming a view. However, in exceptional circumstances when this timescale is not feasible (for example implementing EU Directives or UK wide legislation, meeting Health and Safety requirements, addressing urgent public health matters or complying with Court judgements), we may shorten timescales to eight weeks or less before the policy is implemented. We may continue consultation thereafter and will review the policy as part of our monitoring commitments⁸.
- 3.12. Where, under these exceptional circumstances, we must implement a policy immediately, as it is beyond our authority's control, we may consult after implementation of the policy, in order to ensure that any impacts of the policy are considered.
- 3.13. If a consultation exercise is to take place over a period when consultees are less able to respond, for example, over the summer or Christmas break, or if the policy under consideration is particularly complex, we will give consideration to the feasibility of allowing a longer period for the consultation.
- 3.14. We are conscious of the fact that affected individuals and representative groups may have different needs. We will take appropriate measures to ensure full participation in any meetings that are held. We will consider for example the time of day, the appropriateness of the venue, in particular whether it can be accessed by those with disabilities, how the meeting is to be conducted, the use of appropriate language, whether a signer and/or interpreter is necessary, and whether the provision of childcare and support for other carers is required.

⁶ See Chapter 6 of our Equality Scheme for further information on alternative formats of information we provide.

⁷ Please see Appendix 3 for a list of our consultees.

⁸ Please see below at 4.29 to 4.33 for details on monitoring.

- 3.15. We make all relevant information available to consultees in appropriate formats to ensure meaningful consultation. This includes detailed information on the policy proposal being consulted upon and any relevant quantitative and qualitative data.
- 3.16. In making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted, we take into account any assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy.
- 3.17. We provide feedback to consultees in a timely manner. A feedback report is prepared which includes summary information on the policy consulted upon, a summary of consultees' comments and a summary of our consideration of and response to consultees' input. The feedback is provided in formats suitable to consultees. (Please see also 6.3)
- 3.18. A list of our consultees is included in this Equality Scheme at Appendix 3. It can also be obtained from our website at www.cvsni.org

or by contacting

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- 3.19. Our consultation list is not exhaustive and is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it remains relevant to our functions and policies.
- 3.20. We welcome enquiries from any person/s or organisations wishing to be added to the list of consultees. Please contact the Commission for Victims and Survivors to provide your contact details and have your areas of interest noted or have your name/details removed or amended. Please also inform us at this stage if you would like information sent to you in a particular format or language.

Chapter 4 Our arrangements for assessing, monitoring and publishing the impact of policies

(Schedule 9, Paragraph 4 (2) (b); Schedule 9, Paragraph 4 (2) (c); Schedule 9, Paragraph 4 (2) (d); Schedule 9, Paragraph 9 (1); Schedule 9, Paragraph 9 (2))

Our arrangements for assessing the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted on the promotion of equality of opportunity (Schedule 9, Paragraph 4 (2) (b))

- 4.1. In the context of Section 75, 'policy' is very broadly defined and it covers all the ways in which we carry out or propose to carry out our functions in relation to Northern Ireland. In respect of this Equality Scheme, the term policy is used for any (proposed, amended or existing) strategy, policy initiative or practice and/or decision, whether written or unwritten and irrespective of the label given to it, eg, 'draft', 'pilot', 'high level' or 'sectoral'.
- 4.2. In making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted, we take into account any assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy, as required by Schedule 9, Paragraph 9 (2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.
- 4.3. The Commission for Victims and Survivors uses the tools of **screening** and **equality impact assessment** to assess the likely impact of a policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations. In carrying out these assessments we will relate them to the intended outcomes of the policy in question and will also follow Equality Commission guidance:
 - the guidance on screening, including the screening template, as detailed in the Equality Commission's guidance '*Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for Public Authorities (April 2010)*' and
 - on undertaking an equality impact assessment as detailed in the Equality Commission's guidance '*Practical guidance on equality impact assessment (February 2005)*'.

Screening

- 4.4. The purpose of screening is to identify those policies that are likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations.
- 4.5. Screening is completed at the earliest opportunity in the policy development/review process. Policies which we propose to adopt will be subject to screening prior to implementation. For more detailed strategies or policies that are to be put in place through a series of stages, we will screen at various stages during implementation.
- 4.6. The lead role in the screening of a policy is taken by the policy decision maker who has the authority to make changes to that policy. However, screening will also involve other relevant team members, for example, = those who implement the policy and staff members from other relevant work areas. Where possible we will include key stakeholders in the screening process.
- 4.7. The following questions will be applied to all our policies as part of the screening process:
 - What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? (minor/major/none)

- Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories?
 - To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? (minor/major/none)
 - Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?
- 4.8. In order to answer the screening questions, we gather all relevant information and data, both qualitative and quantitative. In taking this evidence into account we consider the different needs, experiences and priorities for each of the Section 75 equality categories. Any screening decision will be informed by this evidence.
- 4.9. Completion of screening, taking into account our consideration of the answers to all four screening questions set out in 4.7 above, will lead to one of the following three outcomes:
- The policy has been ‘screened in’ for equality impact assessment
 - The policy has been ‘screened out’ with mitigation⁹ or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted
 - The policy has been ‘screened out’ without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.
- 4.10. If our screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is ‘minor’ in respect of one, or more, of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, we may on occasion decide to proceed with an equality impact assessment, depending on the policy. If an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is not to be conducted we will nonetheless consider measures that might mitigate the policy impact as well as alternative policies that might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity and/or good relations.
- 4.11. Where we mitigate we will outline in our screening template the reasons to support this decision together with the proposed changes, amendments or alternative policy.
- 4.12. This screening decision will be ‘signed off’ by the appropriate policy lead within the Commission for Victims and Survivors.
- 4.13. If our screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is ‘major’ in respect of one, or more, of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, we will normally subject the policy to an equality impact assessment. This screening decision will be ‘signed off’ by the appropriate policy lead within the Commission for Victims and Survivors.
- 4.14. If our screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is ‘none’, in respect of all of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, we may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is ‘screened out’ as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, we will give details of the reasons for the decision taken. This screening decision will be ‘signed off’ by the appropriate policy lead within the Commission for Victims and Survivors.

⁹ Mitigation – Where an assessment (screening in this case) reveals that a particular policy has an adverse impact on equality of opportunity and / or good relations, a public authority must consider ways of delivering the policy outcomes which have a less adverse effect on the relevant Section 75 categories.

- 4.15. As soon as possible following the completion of the screening process, the screening template, signed off and approved by the senior manager responsible for the policy, will be made available on our website at www.cvsni.org or on request from

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- 4.16. Consultees will be informed of screening outcomes once they are completed or posted on the Commission's website at www.cvsni.org
- 4.17. If a consultee, including the Equality Commission, raises a concern about a screening decision based on supporting evidence, we will review the screening decision.
- 4.18. Our screening reports will be published quarterly (See below at 4.22 - 4.24 and 4.25 for details).

Equality Impact Assessment

- 4.19. An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is a thorough and systematic analysis of a policy, whether that policy is formal or informal, and irrespective of the scope of that policy. The primary function of an EQIA is to determine the extent of any impact of a policy upon the Section 75 categories and to determine if the impact is an adverse one. It is also an opportunity to demonstrate the likely positive outcomes of a policy and to seek ways to more effectively promote equality of opportunity and good relations.
- 4.20. Once a policy is screened and screening has identified that an EQIA is necessary, we will carry out the EQIA in accordance with Equality Commission guidance. The EQIA will be carried out as part of the policy development process, before the policy is implemented.
- 4.21. Any EQIA will be subject to consultation at the appropriate stage(s). (For details see above Chapter 3 "Our Arrangements for Consulting").

Our arrangements for publishing the results of the assessments of the likely impact of policies we have adopted or propose to adopt on the promotion of equality of opportunity (Schedule 9, Paragraph 4 (2) (d); Schedule 9, Paragraph 9 (1))

- 4.22. We make publicly available the results of our assessments (screening and EQIA) of the likely impact of our policies on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations.

What we publish

Screening reports

4.23. These will be published quarterly. Screening reports detail:

- All policies screened by the Commission for Victims and Survivors over the three month period
- A statement of the aim(s) of the policy/policies to which the assessment relates
- Consideration given to measures which might mitigate any adverse impact
- Consideration given to alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity;
- Screening decisions, i.e.:
 - whether the policy has been 'screened in' for equality impact assessment.
 - whether the policy has been 'screened out' with mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.
 - whether the policy has been 'screened out' without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.
- Where applicable, a timetable for conducting equality impact assessments
- A link to the completed screening template(s) on our website.

Screening templates

4.24. For details on the availability of our screening templates please refer to 4.15.

Equality impact assessments

4.25. EQIA reports are published once the impact assessment has been completed. These reports include:

- A statement of the aim of the policy assessed
- Information and data collected
- Details of the assessment of impact(s)
- Consideration given to measures which might mitigate any adverse impact
- Consideration given to alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity
- Consultation responses
- The decision taken
- Future monitoring plans.

How we publish the information

4.26. All information we publish is accessible and can be made available in alternative formats on request. Please see 6.3 below.

Where we publish the information

4.27. The results of our assessments (screening reports and completed templates, the results of equality impact assessments) are available on our website at www.cvsni.org

or by contacting

Commission for Victims and Survivors
4th Floor
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- 4.28. In addition to the above, screening reports (electronic link or hard copy on request if more suitable for recipients) which include all policies screened over a 3 month period will also be sent directly to all consultees on a quarterly basis.
- 4.29. We will inform the general public about the availability of this material through communications such as press releases where appropriate.

Our arrangements for monitoring any adverse impact of policies we have adopted on equality of opportunity (Schedule 9, Paragraph 4 (2) (c))

- 4.30. Monitoring can assist us to deliver better public services and continuous improvements. Monitoring Section 75 information involves the processing of sensitive personal data (data relating to the racial or ethnic origin of individuals, sexual orientation, political opinion, religious belief, etc). In order to carry out monitoring in a confidential and effective manner, the Commission for Victims and Survivors will follow guidance from the Office of the Information Commissioner and the Equality Commission.
- 4.31. We will monitor any adverse impact on the promotion of equality of opportunity of policies we have adopted. We are also committed to monitoring more broadly to identify opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations in line with Equality Commission guidance.
- 4.32. The systems will be established to monitor the impact of policies and identify opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations are:
- The collection, collation and analysis of existing relevant primary quantitative and qualitative data across all nine equality categories on an ongoing basis
 - The collection, collation and analysis of existing relevant secondary sources of quantitative and qualitative data across all nine equality categories on an ongoing basis
 - An audit of existing information systems within one year of approval of this Equality Scheme, to identify the extent of current monitoring and take action to address any gaps in order to have the necessary information on which to base decisions
 - Undertaking or commissioning new data if necessary.
- 4.33. If over a two year period monitoring and evaluation show that a policy results in greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, we will ensure that the policy is revised to achieve better outcomes for relevant equality groups.
- 4.34. We will review our EQIA monitoring information on an annual basis.

Our arrangements for publishing the results of our monitoring (Schedule 9, Paragraph 4 (2) (d))

4.35. Schedule 9, Paragraph 4 (2) (d) requires us to publish the results of the monitoring of adverse impacts of policies we have adopted. However, we are committed to monitoring more broadly and the results of our policy monitoring will be published as follows:

4.36. EQIA monitoring information will be published as part of our Section 75 annual progress report (See 2.6) It will be available on our website at www.cvsni.org

or by contacting

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(F) 02890 607 424

(E) commission@cvsni.org

4.37. All information published is accessible and can be made available in alternative formats on request (Please see below at 6.3 for details).

Chapter 5 Staff training

(Schedule 9, Paragraph 4 (2) (e))

Commitment to staff training

- 5.1. We recognise that awareness raising and training play a crucial role in the effective implementation of our Section 75 duties.
- 5.2. The Secretary to the Commission wishes to positively communicate the commitment of the Commission for Victims and Survivors to the Section 75 statutory duties, both internally and externally.
- 5.3. To this end the Commission for Victims and Survivors will introduce an effective communication and training programme for all staff and will ensure that our commitment to the Section 75 statutory duties is made clear in all relevant publications.

Training objectives

- 5.4. The Commission for Victims and Survivors will draw up a detailed training plan for its staff which will aim to achieve the following objectives:
 - To raise awareness of the provisions of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, our Equality Scheme commitments and the particular issues likely to affect people across the range of Section 75 categories, to ensure that our staff fully understand their role in implementing the scheme
 - To provide those staff involved in the assessment of policies (screening and EQIA) with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively
 - To provide those staff who deal with complaints in relation to compliance with our Equality Scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to investigate and monitor complaints effectively
 - To provide those staff involved in consultation processes with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively
 - To provide those staff involved in the implementation and monitoring of the effective implementation of the Commission for Victims and Survivors Equality Scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively.

Awareness raising and training arrangements

- 5.5. The following arrangements will be put in place to ensure all our staff and Board Members are aware of and understand our equality obligations.
 - We will develop a summary of this Equality Scheme and make it available to all staff.
 - We will provide access to copies of the full Equality Scheme for all staff and ensure that any queries or questions of clarification from staff are addressed effectively.
 - Staff in the Commission for Victims and Survivors will receive a briefing on this Equality Scheme within 6 months of its approval.
 - The Section 75 statutory duties will form part of induction training for new staff.
 - Focused training will be provided for key staff within the Commission for Victims and Survivors who are directly engaged in taking forward the implementation of our Equality Scheme commitments (for example those involved in research and data collection, policy development, service design, conducting equality impact assessments, consultation, monitoring and evaluation).

- Where appropriate, training will be provided to ensure staff are aware of the issues experienced by the range of Section 75 groups.
 - When appropriate and on an ongoing basis, arrangements will be made to ensure staff are kept up to date with Section 75 developments.
- 5.6. Training and awareness raising programmes will, where relevant, be developed in association with the appropriate Section 75 groups and our staff.
- 5.7. In order to share resources and expertise, the Commission for Victims and Survivors will, where possible, work closely with other bodies and agencies in the development and delivery of training.

Monitoring and evaluation

- 5.8. Our training programme will be subject to the following monitoring and evaluation arrangements:
- We will evaluate the extent to which all participants in this training programme have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve each of the above objectives.
 - The extent to which training objectives have been met will be reported on as part of the Section 75 annual progress report, which will be sent to the Equality Commission.
- 5.9. All staff will receive training on Section 75 and, if necessary, on the specific skills they need during the tenure of this Equality Scheme.

Chapter 6 Our arrangements for ensuring and assessing public access to information and services we provide

(Schedule 9, Paragraph 4 (2) (f))

- 6.1. The Commission for Victims and Survivors is committed to ensuring that the information we disseminate and the services we provide are fully accessible to all parts of the community in Northern Ireland. We keep our arrangements under review to ensure that this remains the case.
- 6.2. We are aware that some groups will not have the same access to information as others. In particular:
- People with sensory, learning, communication and mobility disabilities may require printed information in other formats
 - Members of ethnic minority groups, whose first language is not English, may have difficulties with information provided only in English
 - Children and young people may not be able to fully access or understand information.

Access to information

- 6.3. To ensure equality of opportunity in accessing information, we provide information in alternative formats on request, where reasonably practicable. Where the exact request cannot be met we will ensure a reasonable alternative is provided.
- 6.4. Alternative formats may include Easy Read, Braille, audio formats (CD, mp3 or DAISY), large print or minority languages to meet the needs of those for whom English is not their first language.
- 6.5. The Commission for Victims and Survivors liaises with representatives of young people and disability and minority ethnic organisations and takes account of existing and developing good practice.
- 6.6. We will respond to requests for information in alternative formats in a timely manner, usually within 10 working days.
- 6.7. Where we provide information to children and young people, people with learning disabilities and minority ethnic communities we will contact representative groups or experts to establish the most effective and practicable approaches for contact.
- 6.8. In disseminating information through the media we will seek to use different methods of communication i.e. radio, press, social media, leaflets etc as appropriate.

Access to services

- 6.9. The Commission for Victims and Survivors is committed to ensuring that all of our services are fully accessible to everyone in the community across the Section 75 categories.
- 6.10. The Commission for Victims and Survivors also adheres to the relevant provisions of current anti-discrimination legislation.

6.11. The Commission for Victims and Survivors maintains an up-to-date website which complies with all relevant advice regarding accessibility. It includes all details on how to contact the Commission and all its publications.

Assessing public access to information and services

6.12. We will monitor annually across all our functions, in relation to access to information and services, to ensure equality of opportunity and good relations are promoted. The Commission for Victims and Survivors will also have due regard to its duties on the promotion and encouragement of good relations between people of different racial groups, religious beliefs and political opinions. The Commission for Victims and Survivors will ensure, where possible, that all literature promoting the Commission for Victims and Survivors will display role models from different ethnic backgrounds.

6.13. Information will be available on our website at www.cvsni.org

or by contacting

Commission for Victims and Survivors
4th Floor
Equality House
7-9 Shaftesbury Square
Belfast
BT2 7DP

(T) 02890 311 000

(F) 02890 607 424

(E) commission@cvsni.org

6.14. **Chapter 7 Timetable for measures we propose in this Equality Scheme**
(Schedule 9, Paragraph 4 (3) (b))

- 7.1. Appendix 4 outlines the Commission for Victims and Survivors timetable for all measures proposed within this Equality Scheme. The measures outlined in this timetable will be incorporated into our business planning processes.
- 7.2. This timetable is different from and in addition to our commitment to developing action plans/action measures to specifically address inequalities and further promote equality of opportunity and good relations. We have included in our Equality Scheme a commitment to develop an action plan. Accordingly, this commitment it is listed in the timetable of measures at Appendix 4. For information on these action measures please see above at 2.11 – 2.18.

Chapter 8 **Our complaints procedure** (Schedule 9, Paragraph 10)

- 8.1. The Commission for Victims and Survivors is responsive to the views of members of the public. We will endeavour to resolve all complaints made to us.
- 8.2. Paragraph 10 of Schedule 9 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998 refers to complaints. A person can make a complaint to a public authority if the complainant believes he or she may have been directly affected by an alleged failure of the authority to comply with its approved Equality Scheme.
- 8.3. If the complaint has not been resolved within a reasonable timescale, the complaint can be brought to the Equality Commission.
- 8.4. A person wishing to make a complaint that the Commission for Victims and Survivors has failed to comply with its approved Equality Scheme should contact:

The Secretary to the Commission
Commission for Victims and Survivors
4th Floor
Equality House
7-9 Shaftesbury Square
Belfast
BT2 7DP

(T) 02890 311 000
(F) 02890 607 424
(E) commission@cvsni.org

- 8.5. We will in the first instance acknowledge receipt of each complaint within 10 working days.
- 8.6. The Commission for Victims and Survivors will carry out an internal investigation of the complaint and will respond substantively to the complainant within one (1) month of the date of receiving the letter of complaint. Under certain circumstances, if the complexity of the matter requires a longer period, the period for response to the complainant may be extended to two (2) months. In those circumstances, the complainant will be advised of the extended period within one month of making the complaint.
- 8.7. During this process the complainant will be kept fully informed of the progress of the investigation into the complaint and of any outcomes.
- 8.8. In any subsequent investigation by the Equality Commission, the Commission for Victims and Survivors will co-operate fully, providing access in a timely manner to any relevant documentation that the Equality Commission may require.
- 8.9. Similarly, the Commission for Victims and Survivors will co-operate fully with any investigation by the Equality Commission under sub-paragraph 11 (1) (b) of Schedule 9 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998.
- 8.10. The Commission for Victims and Survivors will make all efforts to implement promptly and in full any recommendations arising out of any Equality Commission investigation.

Chapter 9 Publication of our Equality Scheme (Schedule 9, Paragraph 4 (3) (c))

9.1. The Commission for Victims and Survivors Equality Scheme is available free of charge in print form and alternative formats from

Commission for Victims and Survivors
4th Floor
Equality House
7-9 Shaftesbury Square
Belfast
BT2 7DP

(T) 02890 311 000
(F) 02890 607 424
(E) commission@cvsni.org

9.2. Our Equality Scheme is also available on our website at www.cvsni.org

9.3. The following arrangements are in place for the publication in a timely manner of our Equality Scheme to ensure equality of access:

- We will make every effort to communicate widely the existence and content of our Equality Scheme. This may include press releases, prominent advertisements in the press, the internet and direct mail shots to groups representing the various categories in Section 75.
- We will email a link to our approved Equality Scheme to our consultees on our consultation lists. Other consultees without e-mail will be notified by letter that the scheme is available on request. We will respond to requests for the Equality Scheme in alternative formats in a timely manner, usually within 10 working days.
- Our Equality Scheme is available on request in alternative formats such as Easy Read, Braille, large print, audio formats (CD, mp3, DAISY) and in minority languages to meet the needs of those not fluent in English.
- The Commission for Victims and Survivors will liaise with representative groups and experts in response to specific requests for special communication of the Equality Scheme to children and young people and people with disabilities.

9.4. For a list of our stakeholders and consultees please see Appendix 3 of the Equality Scheme, visit our website at www.cvsni.org

or by contacting

Commission for Victims and Survivors
4th Floor
Equality House
7-9 Shaftesbury Square
Belfast
BT2 7DP

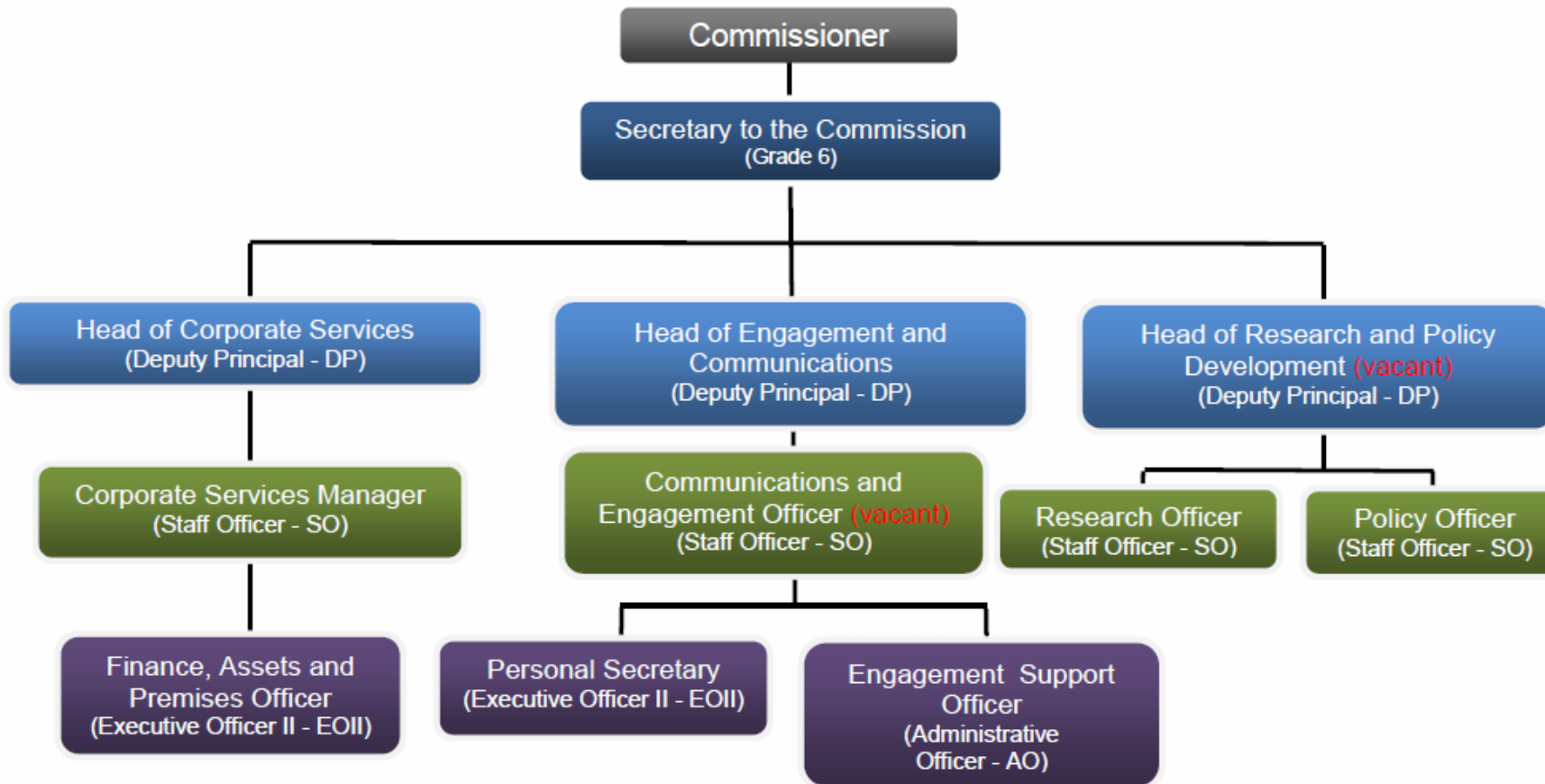
(T) 02890 311 000
(F) 02890 607 424
(E) commission@cvsni.org

Chapter 10 Review of our Equality Scheme

(Schedule 9, Paragraph 8 (3))

- 10.1. As required by Paragraph 8 (3) of Schedule 9 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998 we will conduct a thorough review of this Equality Scheme. This review will take place either within five years of submission of this Equality Scheme to the Equality Commission or within a shorter timescale to allow alignment with the review of other planning cycles.
- 10.2. The review will evaluate the effectiveness of our scheme in relation to the implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties relevant to our functions in Northern Ireland.
- 10.3. In undertaking this review we will follow any guidance issued by the Equality Commission. A report of this review will be made public through our website at www.cvsni.org and sent to the Equality Commission.

Appendix 1 Organisational chart



Appendix 2 Example groups relevant to the Section 75 categories for Northern Ireland purposes

Please note, this list is for illustration purposes only, it is not exhaustive.

Category	Example groups
Religious belief	<p>Buddhist; Catholic; Hindu; Jewish; Muslims, people of no religious belief; Protestants; Sikh; other faiths.</p> <p>For the purposes of Section 75, the term “religious belief” is the same definition as that used in the <i>Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order</i>¹⁰. Therefore, “religious belief” also includes any <i>perceived</i> religious belief (or perceived lack of belief) and, in employment situations only, it also covers any “<i>similar philosophical belief</i>”.</p>
Political opinion ¹¹	Nationalist generally; Unionists generally; members/supporters of other political parties.
Racial group	Black people; Chinese; Indians; Pakistanis; people of mixed ethnic background; Polish; Roma; Travellers; White people.
Men and women generally	Men (including boys); Trans-gendered people; Transsexual people; women (including girls).
Marital status	Civil partners or people in civil partnerships; divorced people; married people; separated people; single people; widowed people.
Age	Children and young people; older people.
Persons with a disability	Persons with disabilities as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
Persons with dependants	Persons with personal responsibility for the care of a child; for the care of a person with a disability; or the care of a dependant older person.
Sexual orientation	Bisexual people; heterosexual people; gay or lesbian people.

¹⁰ See Section 98 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, which states: “*In this Act...*”*political opinion*” and “*religious belief*” shall be construed in accordance with Article 2(3) and (4) of the *Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order 1998*.”

¹¹ *ibid*

Appendix 3 List of consultees – TO BE UPDATED

(Schedule 9, Paragraph 4 (2) (a))

Please note this list is not exhaustive. It is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it remains relevant to the Commission for Victims and Survivors functions and policies.

1. Age Concern Northern Ireland
2. Aisling Centre
3. Alliance Party
4. Alternatives
5. Altnaveigh House
6. Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union
7. Antrim Borough Council
8. Ardmonagh Family & Community Group
9. Ards Borough Council
10. Armagh City and District Council
11. Ashton Community Trust
12. Baha'i Office for Northern Ireland
13. Ballymena Borough Council
14. Ballymoney Borough Council
15. Banbridge District Council
16. Barnardos (Nova Project)
17. Belfast Butterfly Club
18. Belfast City Council
19. Belfast Cognitive Therapy Centre
20. Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium (BCRC)
21. Belfast Hebrew Congregation
22. Belfast Interface Project
23. Belfast Islamic Centre
24. Belfast Traveller Education & Development Group
25. Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre (BURC)
26. Black & Ethnic Minority Group c/o NICEM
27. Bloody Sunday Trust
28. Bridge Of Hope and Droichead an Dochais
29. British Deaf Association (NI)
30. C.A.L.M.S Stress Centre
31. Carafriend
32. Care In Crisis
33. Carers Northern Ireland
34. Carrickfergus Borough Council
35. Castlereagh Borough Council
36. Centre for Health and Wellbeing
37. Centre of Creative Energy
38. Chief Officers Third Sector
39. Children in NI
40. Children's Law Centre
41. Chinese Welfare Association (NI) Ltd
42. Chrysalis Women's Centre
43. Church of Ireland
44. Coalition on Sexual Orientation (CoSO)
45. Coiste Na N-larchimí

46. Coleraine Borough Council
47. Colin Community Counselling Project
48. Columba Community
49. Combat Stress (Ex Services Mental Welfare Society)
50. Committee for the Office of First Minister and Deputy Minister
51. Committee on the Administration of Justice
52. Community Relations Council (CRC)
53. Comrades Support Group
54. Confederation of British Industry
55. Conflict Trauma Resource Centre
56. Contact Youth Counselling (Derry)
57. Contact Youth Counselling HQ (Belfast)
58. Cookstown District Council
59. Corpus Christi Services
60. Corrymeela Community
61. Craigavon Borough Council
62. Creggan Neighbourhood Partnership
63. Cruse Bereavement Care
64. Cúnamh
65. Democratic Left
66. Democratic Unionist Party
67. Derry City Council
68. Derry Well Woman
69. Disability Action
70. Disabled Police Officers' Association (DPOA)
71. Diversity Challenges Ltd
72. Donegal Youth Service/Tyrone Donegal Partnership
73. Down District Council
74. Down's Syndrome Association
75. Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council
76. Employers Forum on Disability
77. EXPAC's Conflicts of Interest
78. Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
79. Fair (Families Acting For Innocent Relatives)
80. Falls Community Council
81. Fall's Women's Centre
82. Families Beyond Conflict
83. Families Moving On
84. Family Trauma Centre
85. Fermanagh District Council
86. Fermanagh Trust
87. Fermanagh Women's Network
88. Finaghy Crossroads Ltd
89. Fírinne
90. Forthspring Inter Community Group
91. Foyle Friend
92. Foyle Women's Information Network
93. Gay and Lesbian Youth Northern Ireland
94. General Consumer Council for NI
95. Green Party
96. H.U.R.T. Group
97. Haven
98. Healing Through Remembering

99. Help the Aged, Northern Ireland
100. Holy Trinity Centre
101. Holy Well Trust
102. INCORE, UU Magee Campus
103. Indian Community Centre
104. Institute for Conflict Research
105. Institute For Counselling & Personal Development
106. Institute of Directors (NI Division)
107. Irish Peace Centres
108. Justice for the Forgotten
109. Kilcranny House
110. Koram Centre
111. Labour Party
112. Larne Borough Council
113. Law Centre (NI)
114. Lenadoon Community Forum
115. Lesbian Line
116. Lifespring Health and Healing
117. Limavady Borough Council
118. Lisburn City Council
119. Local Government Staff Commission
120. Magherafelt District Council
121. Magherafelt Women's Group
122. Mast (Mourne Action For Survivors Of Terrorism)
123. Members of the Legislative Assembly (108)
124. MENCAP(Royal Society for Mentally Handicapped Children and Adults)
125. Methodist Church in Ireland
126. Mid-Ulster Women's Network
127. Moyle District Council
128. Multi-Cultural Resource Centre
129. New Life Counselling
130. Newry & Mourne Women
131. Newry and Mourne District Council
132. Newtownabbey Borough Council
133. Nexus Institute
134. NI Anti-Poverty Network
135. NI Human Rights Commission (NIHRC)
136. NI Music Therapy Trust
137. NI Retired Police Officers Association
138. NI Retired Police Officers Fund
139. NI Women's Aid Federation
140. NIACRO
141. NIPSA
142. North Down Borough Council
143. Northern Ireland African Cultural Centre
144. Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health
145. Northern Ireland Centre For Trauma & Transformation
146. Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People
147. Northern Ireland Committee, Irish Congress of Trade Unions(NIC/ICTU)
148. Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM)
149. Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA)
150. Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association (NIGRA)
151. Northern Ireland Memorial Fund

152. Northern Ireland Police Fund
153. Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust (NIVT)
154. Northern Ireland Women's European Platform (NIWEP)
155. NSPCC
156. NUS USI Northern Ireland Student Centre
157. Office of First Minister and Deputy Minister
158. Omagh District Council
159. Omagh Support And Self Help Group
160. Omagh Women's Area Network
161. PAIN (Positive Action for Innocent Victims of North Down)
162. Parents Advice Centre
163. Peace and Reconciliation Group
164. Peace Players International
165. Phoenix Group
166. POBAL
167. Police Rehabilitation & Retraining Trust (PRRT)
168. Presbyterian Church in Ireland
169. Press for Change
170. Progressive Unionist Party
171. Public Achievement
172. Queer Space
173. REACT
174. Regimental Association of the Ulster Defence Regiment
175. Relate
176. Relatives For Justice
177. Restorative Action Following The Troubles (RAFT)
178. Roman Catholic Church
179. Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID)
180. Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB)
181. RUC George Cross Widows' Association
182. Rural Community Network(NI)
183. Save the Children
184. Saver/Naver
185. SDLP
186. Sense NI
187. Shankill Stress And Trauma Centre
188. Sikh Cultural Centre
189. Simon Community NI
190. Sinn Fein
191. South Down Action For Healing Wounds
192. South East Fermanagh Foundation
193. South Tyrone Empowerment Programme
194. Special EU Programmes Body
195. St Columb's Park House
196. Staff Commission for Education & Library Boards
197. Strabane District Council
198. Streetbeat Youth Project
199. Survivors Of Trauma
200. Tara Centre
201. The 174 Trust
202. The Blind Centre (NI)
203. The Bytes Project
204. The Cedar Foundation (Formerly NICOD)

205. The Ely Centre
206. The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association
207. The Pat Finucane Centre (Armagh)
208. The Peace Factory
209. The Playhouse Theatre
210. The Rainbow Project
211. The Tim Parry / Johnathan Ball Foundation for Peace
212. The Women's Centre
213. The Workers Party
214. TIDES Training
215. Together Encouraging And Remembering (TEAR)
216. Top of the Rock Healthy Living Centre
217. Towards Understanding And Healing
218. Trademark
219. Training for Women Network
220. Trauma Counselling Service
221. Trauma Recovery Network
222. Trauma Resource Centre
223. Traveller Movement NI
224. UDR/RIR Aftercare Service
225. Ulster Democratic Party
226. Ulster Scots Heritage Council
227. Ulster Unionist Party
228. UNISON
229. United Services Club
230. Victim And Survivor Matters Programme
231. Victim Support Northern Ireland
232. Victims And Survivors Trust (VAST)
233. Wave Trauma Centre
234. West Tyrone Voice
235. Women Together for Peace
236. Women's Forum
237. Women's Information Group
238. Women's Support Network
239. Wounded Police Officer and Families Association
240. Youth Action NI
241. Youth Council for NI
242. Youth Initiatives

Appendix 4 Timetable for measures proposed

(Schedule 9, Paragraph 4 (3) (b))

The following table lists some examples for illustration purposes

Measure (example)	Lead responsibility (example)	Timetable (example)
<u>Section 75 Annual Progress Report</u> Including - Monitoring results - Disability Action plan results	Secretary to the Commission	31 August (annually)
<u>Action plan</u> Consultation on draft action plan Finalised action plan published Implementation/Delivery of Action Plan Arrangements for monitoring progress in place	Head of Corporate Services Secretary to the Commission/ Head of Corporate Services Head of Corporate Services Head of Corporate Services	June – July August Ongoing September
<u>Consultation list reviewed and updated</u>	Head of Corporate Services	April (annually)
<u>Screening timetable</u>	Head of Corporate Services	On-going – Reported on in Annual Progress Report annually on 31 August
<u>Publication of Screening Reports</u>	Head of Corporate Services	On-going on quarterly basis – Reported on in Annual Progress Report annually on 31 August

<u><i>EQIA timetable</i></u>	<i>Head of Corporate Services</i>	<i>On-going – Reported on in Annual Progress Report annually on 31 August</i>
<u><i>Monitoring</i></u> <i>Review of monitoring information</i> <i>Publication of monitoring information</i>	<i>Secretary to the Commission/ Head of Corporate Services</i> <i>Secretary to the Commission/ Head of Corporate Services</i>	<i>Reported on in Annual Progress Report annually on 31 August and on website</i>
<u><i>Training</i></u> <i>Development of summary scheme</i> <i>Development of overall training programme</i> <i>Focused training</i> <i>Update training</i> <i>Evaluation of training</i>	<i>Head of Corporate Services</i> <i>Head of Corporate Services</i> <i>Head of Corporate Services</i> <i>Head of Corporate Services</i> <i>Head of Corporate Services</i>	<i>October</i> <i>October – November</i> <i>As required</i> <i>As required</i> <i>Reported annually to Board</i>
<u><i>Assessing access to information and services</i></u>	<i>Head of Corporate Services</i>	<i>On-going – Reported on in Annual Progress Report annually on 31 August</i>
<u><i>Communication of Equality Scheme</i></u> <u><i>Notification of consultees</i></u>	<i>Head of Corporate Services</i> <i>Head of Corporate Services</i>	<i>Within 1 month of Equality Scheme approval by ECNI</i> <i>Within 1 month of Equality Scheme approval by ECNI</i>
<u><i>Review of Equality Scheme</i></u>	<i>Secretary to the Commission</i>	<i>Before end of Spring 2022</i>

Appendix 5 Glossary of terms

Action plan

A plan which sets out actions a public authority will take to implement its Section 75 statutory duties. It is a mechanism for the realisation of measures to achieve equality outcomes for the Section 75 equality and good relations categories.

Action measures and outcomes

Specific measures to promote equality and good relations for the relevant Section 75 and good relations categories, linked to achievable outcomes, which should be realistic and timely.

Adverse impact

Where a Section 75 category has been affected differently by a policy and the effect is less favourable, it is known as adverse impact. If a policy has an adverse impact on a Section 75 category, a public authority must consider whether or not the adverse impact is unlawfully discriminatory. In either case a public authority must take measures to redress the adverse impact, by considering mitigating measures and/or alternative ways of delivering the policy.

Affirmative action

In general terms, affirmative action can be defined as being anything consistent with the legislation which is necessary to bring about positive change. It is a phrase used in the Fair Employment and Treatment Order (NI) 1998 to describe lawful action that is aimed at promoting equality of opportunity and fair participation in employment between members of the Protestant and Roman Catholic communities in Northern Ireland.

Article 55 Review

Under the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998, all registered employers must conduct periodic reviews of the composition of their workforces and of their employment practices for the purposes of determining whether members of the Protestant and Roman Catholic communities are enjoying, and are likely to continue to enjoy, fair participation in employment in each employer's concern. These reviews, which are commonly known as Article 55 Reviews, must be conducted at least once every three years.

Audit of inequalities

An audit of inequalities is a systematic review and analysis of inequalities which exist for service users and those affected by a public authority's policies. An audit can be used by a public authority to inform its work in relation to the Section 75 equality and good relations duties. It can also enable public authorities to assess progress on the implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties, as it provides baseline information on existing inequalities relevant to a public authority's functions.

Consultation

In the context of Section 75, consultation is the process of asking those affected by a policy (i.e. service users, staff, the general public) for their views on how the policy could be implemented more effectively to promote equality of opportunity across the 9 categories. Different circumstances will call for different types of consultation. Consultations could, for example, include meetings, focus groups, surveys and questionnaires.

Differential impact

Differential impact occurs where a Section 75 group has been affected differently by a policy. This effect could either be positive, neutral or negative. A public authority must make a judgement as to whether a policy has a differential impact and then it must determine whether the impact is adverse, based on a systematic appraisal of the accumulated information.

Economic appraisal

An economic appraisal is a systematic process for examining alternative uses of resources, focusing on assessment of needs, objectives, options, costs benefits, risks, funding and affordability and other factors relevant to decisions.

Equality impact assessment

The mechanism underpinning Section 75, where existing and proposed policies are assessed, in order to determine whether they have an adverse impact on equality of opportunity for the relevant Section 75 categories. Equality impact assessments require the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data.

Equality Scheme

A document which outlines a public authority's arrangements for complying with its Section 75 obligations. An Equality Scheme must include an outline of the public authority's arrangements for carrying out consultations, screening, equality impact assessments, monitoring, training and arrangements for ensuring access to information and services.

Good relations

Although not defined in the legislation, the Commission has agreed the following working definition of good relations: 'the growth of relations and structures for Northern Ireland that acknowledge the religious, political and racial context of this society, and that seek to promote respect, equity and trust, and embrace diversity in all its forms'.

Mainstreaming equality

The integration of equal opportunities principles, strategies and practices into the everyday work of public authorities from the outset. In other words, mainstreaming is the process of ensuring that equality considerations are built into the policy development process from the beginning, rather than being bolted on at the end. Mainstreaming can help improve methods of working by increasing a public authority's accountability, responsiveness to need and relations with the public. It can bring added value at many levels.

Mitigation of adverse impact

Where an equality impact assessment reveals that a particular policy has an adverse impact on equality of opportunity, a public authority must consider ways of delivering the policy outcomes which have a less adverse effect on the relevant Section 75 categories; this is known as mitigating adverse impact.

Monitoring

Monitoring consists of continuously scrutinising and evaluating a policy to assess its impact on the Section 75 categories. Monitoring must be sensitive to the issues associated with human rights and privacy. Public authorities should seek advice from consultees and Section 75 representative groups when setting up monitoring systems. Monitoring consists of the collection of relevant information and evaluation of policies. It is not solely about the collection of data, it can also take the form of regular meetings and reporting of research undertaken. Monitoring is not an end in itself but provides the data for the next cycle of policy screening.

Northern Ireland Act

The Northern Ireland Act, implementing the Good Friday Agreement, received Royal Assent on 19 November 1998. Section 75 of the Act created the statutory equality duties.

Policy

The formal and informal decisions a public authority makes in relation to carrying out its duties. Defined in the New Oxford English Dictionary as 'a course or principle of action adopted or proposed by a government party, business or individual'. In the context of Section 75, the term **policies** covers all the ways in which a public authority carries out or proposes to carry out its functions relating to Northern Ireland. Policies include unwritten as well as written policies.

Screening

The procedure for identifying which policies will be subject to equality impact assessment, and how these equality impact assessments will be prioritised. The purpose of screening is to identify the policies which are likely to have a minor/major impact on equality of opportunity so that greatest resources can be devoted to improving these policies. Screening requires a systematic review of existing and proposed policies.

Schedule 9

Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 sets out detailed provisions for the enforcement of the Section 75 statutory duties, including an outline of what should be included in an Equality Scheme.

Section 75

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act provides that each public authority is required, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:-

- persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status and sexual orientation;
- men and women generally;
- persons with a disability and persons without; and
- persons with dependants and persons without.

Without prejudice to these obligations, each public authority in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland must also have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

Section 75 investigation

An investigation carried out by the Equality Commission, under Schedule 9 of the NI Act 1998, arising from the failure of a public authority to comply with the commitments set out in its approved Equality Scheme. There are two types of Equality Commission investigation, these are as follows:

1. An investigation of a complaint by an individual who claims to have been directly affected by the failure of a public authority to comply with its approved Equality Scheme;
2. An investigation initiated by the Equality Commission, where it believes that a public authority may have failed to comply with its approved Equality Scheme.

Appendix 6 Action plan/action measures

Communication and Accessibility

INEQUALITY IDENTIFIED	EVIDENCE / RESEARCH	SECTION 75 CATEGORIES	ACTION MEASURES	OUTCOME	TIMESCALE
Need for relevant information to be provided in accessible formats for people with sensory impairment or learning disability.	Experience at public meetings and through engagement with the sector indicates people with sensory impairment or learning disabilities require access to Commission work and information	Disabled people	<p>Provide information in accessible formats – website and hard copy</p> <p>Consider using tv or radio as a communication tool when working with people with limited or restricted literacy</p> <p>Review CVSNI corporate communications to provide Easy read versions in print and on website</p>	Improved access to information and awareness of the Commission and it's work	Review communications strategy by Sep 2014, evidenced by evaluation and monitored annually.
Need for relevant information to		Children and young people	Review CVSNI corporate communications	Improved access to information and	Review communications strategy by Sep

<p>be provided in accessible formats for children and young people</p>			<p>to provide relevant Easy read versions in print and on website</p> <p>Engage with appropriate external agencies (e.g. NICCY /PlayBoard) to develop and promulgate information in formats appropriate to children and young people</p>	<p>awareness of the Commission and it's work</p>	<p>2014, evidenced by evaluation and monitored annually.</p>
<p>Possible inequality of physical access to CVSNI office or external venues as arranged by CVSNI</p>		<p>Disabled people</p>	<p>Engage with disabled stakeholders to develop guidance for the management of disabled access.</p> <p>Provide details of public transport and car parking</p>	<p>Improved accessibility and arrangements for visitors.</p> <p>Improved outreach of Commission and staff in local or regional areas.</p>	<p>Develop guidance by Sep 2014, evidenced by evaluation and monitored annually</p>

			<p>on website and in appropriate literature and forms of communication</p> <p>Increased presence of relevant Commission staff at relevant events, conferences, information days throughout Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Use venues which are fully compliant with DDA.</p> <p>Provide details of public transport and car parking.</p>		
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2. Human Resources

INEQUALITY IDENTIFIED	EVIDENCE / RESEARCH	SECTION 75 CATEGORIES	ACTION MEASURES	OUTCOME	TIMESCALE
Need for continued delivery of equality, diversity and disability equality training amongst staff			<p>All staff to receive equality, good relations and disability equality training as part of induction process</p> <p>Programme of refresher training to be incorporated into training programme</p> <p>Summary of Equality Scheme produced for staff</p>	Increased awareness of equality, good relations and disability equality amongst staff	<p>Lifetime of the Equality Scheme</p> <p>Annual refresher training</p> <p>Monitored annually</p>
Support for Board and Forum Members in demonstrating full commitment to the strategic direction for promoting equality, including access to learning			Programme of planned Section 75 training and evaluation for Board and Forum Members	Mainstreaming of Section 75 cascading from the strategic lead of the organisation	<p>Lifetime of the Equality Scheme</p> <p>Monitored annually</p>

and development opportunities					
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3. Effective Governance

INEQUALITY IDENTIFIED	EVIDENCE / RESEARCH	SECTION 75 CATEGORIES	ACTION MEASURES	OUTCOME	TIMESCALE
Data gaps for measuring equality impacts in Commission work	During research Commission has become aware of the gaps in data of equality groups in the victims sector	Political opinion Sexual orientation people with dependants	Assess gaps and report to OFMDFM Review equality data available in own Annual Report Positively support best practice in other organisations whose data the Commissions uses.	Improved compliance by external contractors with Section 75 duties	Review by Dec 2014 Monitored annually
Need to update the audit of inequalities and equality action plan on a regular basis	As above	All categories	Review audit of inequalities and equality action plan on an annual basis Consult on any significant changes to the	Better information on the needs of victims and survivors	Review annually

			action plan		
Need to reference equality legislation in the risk management register			Senior Management Team and Audit and Risk Committee should be made aware of equality aspects of risk management	Improved compliance with Section 75 duties and legislation included in policy and procedures	Action by Dec 2014 Monitored annually

4. Engagement

INEQUALITY IDENTIFIED	EVIDENCE / RESEARCH	SECTION 75 CATEGORIES	ACTION MEASURES	OUTCOME	TIMESCALE
Need to engage with victims and survivors across all equality categories to enhance information on their needs and priorities		All categories	Introduce equality monitoring of Forum members to ensure that key categories are represented Communicate the role of the Commission in engaging with victims and survivors in	Improved information on needs of victims and survivors will enhance the advice given by the Commission	On appointment of new Forum Members (every 2 years)

			relation to major public consultations initiated by other public authorities		
Need for sensitivity in terms of language used to describe the Conflict/Troubles	Experience at public meetings and through engagement with the sector indicates that language can be divisive	Religious belief/political opinion	Develop guidance on the use of language and make it available to all relevant public authorities	Consistency of approach and sensitivity to language issues will better promote good relations and increase support for the Commission's work	Develop guidance by Mar 2015