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Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery

Equality Scheme 2024 – 2029

Equality Scheme for the Independent Commission for
Reconciliation and Information Recovery (ICRIR)

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

July 2025

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Foreword

As the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery (the 'Commission'), our remit is to deliver information recovery in order to promote reconciliation for those most affected by the Troubles/Conflict. Over the past year, we have continued to shape this Commission amidst significant legal, societal, and historical considerations, ensuring that our work reflects the highest standards of care, consistency, and credibility.

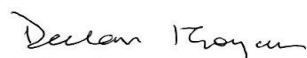
Recent judicial rulings have reaffirmed the critical importance of operating within a framework that ensures compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and aligns with the principles of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. These developments underscore our responsibility to carry out our duties with respect for the law while keeping the needs of victims, survivors, and their families at the core of everything we do.

This Equality Scheme is central to delivering the commitments outlined in the Legacy Act 2023. It is underpinned by the requirements of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, which obligate public authorities to promote equality of opportunity across nine equality categories and foster good relations between individuals of different backgrounds. These duties are integral to how the Commission delivers its mandate and engages with the communities it serves.

Aligned with our values of integrity, impartiality, openness, accountability, and respect, this Equality Scheme provides a structured framework to embed inclusivity and diversity into all aspects of the Commission's work. It demonstrates how we intend to listen to, engage with, and understand the people we serve, ensuring that their experiences inform our approach.

The commitments set out in this Scheme are essential to achieving the objectives outlined in our Work Plan for 2025-26. By integrating care, consistency, and credibility into our actions, we aim to build trust and ensure that the Commission operates in a manner that reflects its purpose and values.

By adhering to the principles outlined in this Equality Scheme, the Commission will continue to deliver on its mandate in a way that is inclusive, equitable, and respectful of all.



Sir Declan Morgan
Chief Commissioner
25 February 2025

Executive Summary

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard to the desirability of fostering good relations across the categories outlined in the Act¹.

This Equality Scheme outlines how the Commission fulfils its statutory obligations. With the Scheme now finalised, the Commission is actively delivering on all commitments made within it and will continue to do so as part of its core responsibilities. The Scheme provides a clear framework for embedding equality, diversity, and inclusion across all aspects of our work and is integrated into our annual Work Plan, with progress systematically monitored and reported.

Internal arrangements are in place to ensure compliance with Section 75, with regular review and monitoring to identify opportunities for refinement and improvement. Equality considerations are embedded in decision-making, service delivery, and all operational processes.

A programme of communication and training is being implemented to ensure that staff and Board members fully understand their responsibilities under the Equality Scheme. The Commission is also working to ensure that individuals and organisations engaging with us are informed of our commitments and have opportunities to contribute to our work.

As Chief Executive, I confirm that the Commission is fully committed to fulfilling its Section 75 duties in all areas, including service provision, employment, and procurement. The active involvement of communities, voluntary organisations, and the public remains vital to our success, and their contributions strengthen our ability to meet our statutory responsibilities.

This Equality Scheme also provides a mechanism for addressing any concerns about compliance. By learning from feedback and addressing challenges, the Commission will continue to improve and adapt its approach to promoting equality of opportunity and fostering good relations.



Louise Warde Hunter
Chief Executive Officer & Commissioner
25 February 2025

¹ See section 1.1 of our Equality Scheme.

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 to comply with two statutory duties:

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 dependents and persons without.

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.

“Functions” include the “powers and duties” of a public authority². This includes our employment and procurement functions.

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 ICRIR

1.2 Paragraph 4(1) of Schedule 9 to the Act requires ICRIR 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 Section 75 statutory duties and our plan for their implementation.

1.3 The Commission are committed to the discharge of our Section 75 obligations in all parts of our organisation and we will commit the necessary 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

1.4 The Commission provides information to victims, survivors and their families about Troubles/Conflict-related deaths and serious injury and promotes reconciliation. We are an independent public authority, set up by statute.

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

1.5 In addition to following our principal objective to promote reconciliation, and our commitment to operate in a trauma and resiliency informed manner, the Commission's Board has agreed three essential principles to our approach:

- compliance with the ECHR;
- respect for the principles of the 1998 Belfast/Good Friday Agreement; and
- focus on providing useful information to those affected by the Troubles/Conflict.

1.6 Further information about how we operate is set out on our website. Our statutory functions are set out in the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023.

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

2.1 The Commission's arrangements for assessing compliance with Section 75 statutory duties are outlined in this Equality Scheme.

2.2 The Commission became designated in December 2023. This is the Commission's Equality Scheme, which it has consulted on.

2.3 We are committed to fulfilling our Section 75 obligations in the discharge of all our functions. Responsibility for the effective implementation of our Equality Scheme lies with everyone in the Commission. The Chief Executive Officer is ultimately accountable, as Accounting Officer, for the development, implementation, maintenance, and review of the Equality Scheme in accordance with Section 75 of, and Schedule 9 to, the Northern Ireland Act 1998, including consideration of any good practice that has been or may be issued by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI).

2.4 The Section 75 Annual Progress Report will be sent to the ECNI by 31 August each year and will follow any guidance on annual reporting issued by the ECNI. This report on delivery of Section 75 statutory duties will also be included in the Commission's statutory annual report.

2.5 Objectives, milestones and targets relating to the statutory duties will, as appropriate, be integrated into our annual Work Plan and reflected in roles and responsibilities for relevant staff.

2.6 The Commission will monitor progress to implement actions we have committed to, including metrics to understand our overall implementation of Section 75 statutory duties.

2.7 As part of our Annual Progress Report, we will set out the progress we have made on implementing the statutory duties and Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006. This will be provided to the ECNI and made public.

2.8 If you have any questions or comments regarding our Equality Scheme or on reporting on progress, please contact us:

Post: Freepost ICRIR

Email: equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk

Telephone: 028 903 26006

2.9 We will liaise closely with the ECNI to ensure that progress on the implementation of our Equality Scheme is maintained.

Action plan/action measures

2.10 We have developed an initial set of measures to implement Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1988 (Appendix 4). These measures include undertaking an audit of inequalities and using that to inform the development of an action plan, relevant to our functions.

2.11 As part of our publishing commitments, we will carry out an audit of inequalities. The audit of inequalities will gather and analyse information across the Section 75 categories³ to identify the inequalities that exist for those who interact with the Commission and those affected by our policies⁴.

2.12 Following this audit, we will develop an action plan to reflect any areas identified by the audit. Action measures will, as appropriate, be specific, measurable, linked to achievable outcomes, realistic and timebound. Action measures will include performance indicators and timescales for their achievement.

2.13 We will develop any action plans for a period of between one and five years in order to align them with our business planning cycles. Implementation of the action measures will be incorporated into our business planning process, and set out in our annual Work Plan.

2.14 We will seek input from our stakeholders and consult on our action plan before we send it to the ECNI and thereafter when reviewing the plan.

2.15 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.

2.16 The Commission will inform the ECNI of any changes or amendments to our action plan and will also include this information in our Annual Progress Report as set out above at paragraph 2.7.

2.17 Once finalised, our action plan will be available at:

icrir.independent-inquiry.uk/

2.18 If you require it in an alternative format, please contact us on:

Post: Freepost ICRIR

Email: equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk

Telephone: 028 903 26006

³ See section 1.1 of this Equality Scheme for a list of these categories.

⁴ See section 4.1 of this Equality Scheme for a definition of policies.

Chapter 3 Our arrangements for consulting

(Schedule 9, paragraph 4(2)(a)) – on matters to which a duty under Section 75(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 We recognise the importance of consultation in all aspects of the implementation of our statutory equality duties. We will consult on action measures, equality impact assessments and other matters relevant to the Section 75 statutory duties.

3.2 We are committed to carrying out such consultation in accordance with the following principles (as contained in the ECNI's guidance *Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for Public Authorities (April 2010)*).

3.2.1 Consultations will seek the views of those directly affected by the matter/policy, the ECNI, representative groups of Section 75 categories, other public authorities, voluntary and community groups, our staff and other groups who have a legitimate interest in the matter, whether or not they have a direct economic or personal interest.

3.2.2 Initially all consultees (see Appendix 3), as a matter of course, will be notified (by email or post) of the matter/policy relating to implementation of our statutory equality duties 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.

3.2.3 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 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;
- social media; or
- telephone consultations.

This list is not exhaustive, and we may develop other additional methods of consultation more appropriate to key stakeholders and the matter being consulted on.

3.2.4 Specific training is provided to those facilitating consultations to ensure that they have the necessary skills to communicate effectively with consultees.

3.2.5 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), disadvantaged communities and minority ethnic groups. We take account of existing and developing good practice, including the ECNI's guidance *Let's Talk Let's Listen – Guidance for public authorities on consulting and involving children and young people (2008)*.

3.2.5 The Commission's approach to consultation on the implementation of our statutory equality duties is aimed at ensuring inclusivity, accessibility, and effectiveness in engaging with all stakeholders. In particular, we need to consider the mechanism and means of communicating with those with disabilities and those living with the impact of trauma.

3.2.6 In line with the guidance issued by the ECNI, the Commission would usually intend to consult for 12 weeks when our respective obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 are engaged to conduct Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs), unless there are exceptional circumstances where necessary countervailing factors must also be considered. In such exceptional circumstances, the precise duration will be determined by the nature and urgency of all the relevant factors, and the Commission will make best endeavours to ensure that no such consultation lasts less than eight weeks.

3.2.7 In line with prevailing good practice for UK-wide public bodies, we recognise that flexibility may be required for other policy consultations that do not fall under the specific statutory requirements of Section 75. As such, the consultation period will be determined on a case-by-case basis, ensuring it is proportionate, meaningful, and appropriate to the subject matter. This may mean that, at times, decisions about consultation periods are affected by considerations of urgency or other countervailing factors⁵.

3.2.8 We are conscious of the fact that affected individuals and representative groups may have different needs. We will take appropriate measures to ensure 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.

⁵ Please see below at 4.27 to 4.31 for details on monitoring.

3.2.9 Information will be made available on request in alternative formats⁶ as quickly as possible. We will ensure that such consultees have appropriate time to respond.

3.2.10 In summary, to ensure effective consultation with consultees⁷ on the Section 75 statutory duties and the commitments in our Equality Scheme, we will raise awareness through the following approach:

Clear communication

- We will provide clear and concise information to consultees about the matter or policy being consulted upon.
- We will ensure information is communicated in accessible language and in alternative formats, when requested, to cater to the diverse needs of consultees.

Notification

- We will ensure that initially all potential consultees are notified of the consultation process by email and through our website.
- We will ensure consultees are informed of the consultation period, deadlines for submission of feedback and how they can participate.

Targeted consultation

- To ensure the most effective use of resources, we will adopt a targeted approach to consultation. This will involve identifying consultees who may have a particular interest in the matter or policy and tailoring consultation approaches accordingly.

Consultation methods

- We will offer multiple methods of consultation to accommodate different preferences and needs of consultees.

3.2.11 The Commission is committed to consultation periods lasting for 12 weeks, where possible. However, in exceptional circumstances when this timescale is not feasible (e.g. including those outlined in the ECNI model scheme), we may conduct a shorter consultation period. In such exceptional instances, while the Commission will make best endeavours to ensure that no consultation lasts less than eight weeks, consultation may nevertheless continue throughout policy implementation and we will review the policy as part of our monitoring commitments⁸.

3.2.12 We will make relevant information available to consultees in appropriate formats to ensure meaningful consultation. This includes detailed information on the policy proposal being consulted on and any relevant quantitative and qualitative data.

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 4.27 to 4.31 for details on monitoring.

3.2.13 In making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted, we will take into account any and consultation carried out in relation to the policy.

3.2.14 We will provide feedback to consultees in a timely manner. A feedback report will be 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. Feedback will be provided in formats suitable for consultees.

3.3 A list of our consultees is included in this Equality Scheme at Appendix 3. It can also be obtained by contacting:

Post: Freepost ICRIR

Email: equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk

Telephone: 028 903 26006

3.4 Our consultation list is not exhaustive and is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it remains relevant to our functions and policies.

3.5 We welcome enquiries from any person/s or organisations who would like to be added to the list of consultees. Please contact equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk to provide your contact details and have your areas of interest noted or to 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, paragraphs 4(2)(b), 4(2)(c), 4(2)(d), 9(1), 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. The term policy is used for any (proposed/amended/existing) strategy, policy initiative or practice and/or decision, whether written or unwritten and irrespective of the label given to it, e.g., 'draft,' 'pilot', 'high level' or 'sectoral'. It covers all of the functions of the Commission in relation to Northern Ireland and any general approach that is set out about how the Commission proposes to exercise its powers and statutory responsibilities.

4.2 The Commission is committed to ensuring that substantive changes to our Equality Scheme will be consulted upon, as well as ensuring that due consideration is given to what other aspects of policy relating to the Commission's functions and powers are subject to consultation or other forms of public and expert input.

4.3 In making decisions to adopt or modify a policy (as above), we will take into account any assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy, as required by paragraph 9(2) of Schedule 9 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

4.4 The Commission 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 the ECNI's guidance:

- on screening, including the screening template, as detailed in the 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 Commission's guidance *Practical guidance on equality impact assessment* (February 2005); and
- *Effective Section 75 Equality Assessments: Screening and Equality Assessments* (2017).

Screening

4.5 The purpose of screening is to identify policies that are likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

4.6 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 stages during implementation.

4.7 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 input, for example from those with equality expertise, those who implement the policy and staff members from other relevant work areas.

4.8 The following questions are 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?

4.9 In order to answer the screening questions, we use existing data sets or, where appropriate and feasible, gather 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.

4.10 Completion of screening, taking into account our consideration of the answers to all four screening questions set out in 4.8 above, will lead to one of the following three outcomes:

1. The policy has been 'screened in' for equality impact assessment.
2. The policy has been 'screened out' with mitigation⁹ or an alternative policy has been proposed for adoption.
3. The policy has been 'screened out' without mitigation or an alternative policy has been proposed for adoption.

4.11 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 not to proceed with an equality impact assessment (EQIA), depending on the policy. If an EQIA is not to be conducted, we will nonetheless consider measures that might mitigate the policy impact as

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.

well as alternative policies that might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity and/or good relations. 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. This screening decision will be signed off by the appropriate policy lead within the Commission.

4.12 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.

4.13 If our screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'none' in respect of all 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.

4.14 As soon as possible following the completion of the screening process, the screening template, signed off and approved by the Executive Leadership Team member responsible for the policy, will be made available on our website:

icrir.independent-inquiry.uk/

and on request:

Post: Freepost ICRIR

Email: equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk

Telephone: 028 903 26006

4.15 If a consultee, including the ECNI, raises a concern about a screening decision based on supporting evidence, we will review the screening decision.

4.16 Our screening reports will be published quarterly.

Equality impact assessment (EQIA)

4.17 An 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 on 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 promote equality of opportunity and good relations more effectively. Once a policy is screened and screening has identified that an equality impact assessment is necessary, we will carry out the EQIA in accordance with ECNI's guidance. The EQIA will be carried out as part of the policy development process before the policy is implemented.

4.18 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, paragraphs 4(2)(d), 9(1))

4.19 We will make publicly available the results of our assessments (screening and EQIA).

What information we publish

- 4.20 Screening reports will be published quarterly. Screening reports detail:
- All policies screened by the Commission 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 has been proposed for adoption;
 - whether the policy has been ‘screened out’ without mitigation or an alternative policy has been proposed for adoption.
 - Where applicable, a timetable for conducting equality impact assessments.
 - A link to the completed screening template(s) on our website.
- 4.21 For details on the availability of our screening templates, please refer to 4.13.
- 4.22 EQIA reports will be published once the impact assessment has been completed. These reports will 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

4.23 We will seek to ensure all information we publish will be accessible and can be made available in alternative formats on request. Please see 6.3 below.

Where we publish the information

4.24 The results of our assessments (screening reports and completed templates, the results of equality impact assessments) will be available on our website:

icrir.independent-inquiry.uk/

and by contacting:

Post: Freepost ICRIIR

Email: equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk

Telephone: 028 903 26006

4.25 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))

4.26 The Commission will have comprehensive arrangements in place to collect and analyse both quantitative and qualitative information to monitor our equality and diversity efforts:

Data collection

We will collect quantitative data on various equality indicators, such as demographic information (age, gender, ethnicity, disability status), employment statistics, and outcomes. Data collection methods may include surveys, administrative records, monitoring forms, and other relevant sources.

Qualitative feedback

In addition to quantitative data, we will gather qualitative feedback from stakeholders, including staff, service users, and community groups. Qualitative information may be collected through interviews, focus groups, feedback forms, and consultation processes.

Monitoring schedule

We will adhere to a monitoring schedule that includes regular reviews of both quantitative and qualitative information. As recommended by the ECNI, we will undertake at least an annual review of EQIA monitoring information to assess any adverse impacts and identify opportunities for improvement. Additionally, all other monitoring information will be reviewed on a regular basis to track progress, identify trends, and inform decision-making.

Action planning

Based on the findings from monitoring and analysis, action plans will be developed to address any identified gaps, challenges, or opportunities. Action plans may include specific strategies, objectives, and timelines for implementing targeted interventions to promote equality of opportunity and good relations.

Continuous improvement

We will adopt a culture of continuous improvement, regularly evaluating the effectiveness of our monitoring arrangements and adjusting as needed. Feedback from stakeholders and lessons learned from monitoring activities will be used to inform enhancements to our monitoring processes over time.

4.27 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 will follow guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office and the ECNI.

4.28 We will monitor any adverse impact on the promotion of equality of opportunity or on good relations 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 ECNI's guidance.

4.29 The systems we have 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 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.
- Gathering or commissioning new data if necessary.

4.30 If 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 or better relations to be promoted, we will ensure that the policy is revised to achieve better outcomes for relevant equality groups.

4.31 We review our EQIA monitoring information on an annual basis.

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

4.32 Paragraph 4(2)(d) of Schedule 9 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. EQIA monitoring information is published as part of our Section 75 annual progress report. All information published will be accessible and can be made available in alternative formats on request, by contacting:

Post: Freepost ICRIR

Email: equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk

Telephone: 028 903 26006

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 Chief Executive Officer will positively communicate the commitment of the Commission to the Section 75 statutory duties, both internally and externally. We are introducing a communication and training programme for all staff, starting with induction into the organisation and then regularly refreshing knowledge and understanding. To this end we will continue to make clear our commitment to the Section 75 statutory duties in all relevant publications.

Training objectives

5.3 We have developed a training plan as part of our Learning and Development strategy for our staff which will 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 staff involved in the assessment of policies (screening and EQIA) with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively.
- To provide 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 staff involved in consultation processes with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively.
- To provide staff involved in the implementation and monitoring of the effective implementation of the Commission's Equality Scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively.

Awareness-raising and training arrangements

5.4 The following arrangements will be 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 and board members.
- We will provide access to copies of the full Equality Scheme for all staff and board members and ensure that any queries or questions of clarification from staff are addressed effectively.
- Commission staff will receive a briefing on this Equality Scheme as part of their induction to the organisation.

- The Section 75 statutory duties will also form part of induction training for new staff and board members.
- Training will be provided for key staff within the Commission 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, communications, engagement, 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.

5.5 Training and awareness raising programmes will, where relevant, be developed in association with the appropriate Section 75 groups and our staff.

Monitoring and evaluation

5.6 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 our annual reporting, which will be sent to the ECNI.

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

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

6.1 We are 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 will 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. For example:

- 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.
- People whose physical location restricts their access e.g. those in rural areas, may not be able to fully access information.
- People without access to a computer will not be able to access internet-based dissemination.

Access to information

6.3 To ensure equality of opportunity in accessing information, we will 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 or large print. We will respond to requests for information in alternative formats as quickly as possible.

6.5 For providing information to children and young people, people with learning disabilities, and minority ethnic communities, we will arrange the following:

Tailored communication

For people with learning disabilities and mental health conditions, we will provide simplified language and clear layouts.

Language access

Translation and interpretation services will be available to overcome language barriers. Materials will be provided in alternative languages, where requested.

6.6 In disseminating information, we will seek to use a range of media channels to reflect the differing needs and preferences of different groups.

Access to services

6.7 We are committed to ensuring that all of our services are fully accessible to everyone in the community across the Section 75 categories. The Commission also adheres to the relevant provisions of current anti-discrimination legislation.

6.8 Specific arrangements we will have in place to ensure public access to our services include the following:

Accessibility assessments

We will conduct regular accessibility assessments of our facilities, including buildings, websites and service delivery points to identify barriers to access.

Physical accessibility

We will ensure that our physical facilities are designed and equipped to accommodate individuals with mobility impairments.

Digital accessibility

Our website and online platforms will be designed to be accessible to individuals with disabilities, including those using screen readers or assistive technologies.

Alternative communication methods

We will provide alternative communication methods for individuals who may have difficulty accessing our services through contemporary channels like email.

Language access

Translation and interpretation services will be available to assist individuals who require language support to access our services.

Feedback mechanisms

Feedback will be actively sought and used to inform continuous improvement efforts and address any identified barriers or challenges.

Assessing public access to information and services

6.9 We monitor as appropriate across our main statutory functions, in relation to access to information and services, to ensure equality of opportunity and good relations are promoted.

6.10 We are committed to monitoring on an ongoing basis across all of our functions, in relation to access to information and services. This is to ensure that equality of opportunity and good relations are promoted. This activity includes:

- Access to interpreting/translation and accessible formatted documents services;
- Monitoring of complaints;

- Consideration and implementation of reasonable adjustments under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995;
- Public polling;
- Voluntary Undertaking Agreement between the Commission and ECNI reporting;
- We monitor the number of visitors to the relevant pages of the Commission's website and the downloads of the scheme, requests for hard copy versions of the scheme and monitor the number of queries about difficulty in accessing information.

6.11 Through the above we continue to seek to enable wide access to information and mitigate the risk that some sections of the public might not enjoy equality of opportunity in accessing information.

Chapter 7 – Timetable for measures we propose in this Equality Scheme

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

- 7.1 Appendix 4 outlines our timetable for all measures proposed within this Equality Scheme. The measures outlined in this timetable will be reported in our annual Work Plan.
- 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 is listed in the timetable of measures at Appendix 4.

Chapter 8 – Our complaints procedure

(s10 of Schedule 9)

8.1 The Commission will listen and be responsive to the views of members of the public. We will endeavour to resolve complaints made to us.

8.2 A person can make a complaint to a public authority if they believe they may have been directly affected by an alleged failure of the authority to comply with its approved Equality Scheme. If the complaint has not been resolved within a reasonable timescale, the complaint can be brought to the ECNI.

8.3 A person wishing to make a complaint that the Commission has failed to comply with its approved Equality Scheme should use the Commission's dedicated complaints process to raise the issue:

- **by email at:** complaints@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk
- **in writing at:** Freepost ICRIR
- **by telephone:** 028 903 26006; or
- **in person:** by making an appointment using the contact details provided above.

8.4 We will handle such a complaint under our wider complaints handling procedures and will respond to acknowledge the complaint and how it is being handled within 3 to 5 working days.

8.5 An internal investigation of the complaint will be carried out by an independent member of staff with the Commission. We will respond substantively to the complainant within one (1) month of the date of receiving the complaint. Under certain circumstances, if the complexity of the matter requires more time, this 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.

8.6 During this process, the complainant will be kept fully informed of the progress of the investigation into the complaint and of any outcomes.

8.7 If a complaint has not been resolved within a reasonable timescale, the complaint can be taken to the ECNI and the Commission will co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation, in line with its legal duties.

8.8 The Commission will make all efforts to implement promptly and in full any recommendations arising out of any ECNI investigation.

Chapter 9 – Publication of our Equality Scheme

(Schedule 9, paragraph 4(3)(c))

9.1 Our Equality Scheme will be available free of charge in print form and alternative formats from:

Post: Freepost ICRIR

Email: equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk

Telephone: 028 903 26006

9.2 Our Equality Scheme will also be available on our website at:

icrir.independent-inquiry.uk/

9.3 The following arrangements will be in place for the publication 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 the media, the internet and direct mailshots to groups representing the various categories in Section 75.
- We will respond to requests for the Equality Scheme in alternative formats in a timely manner, usually within 20 working days.
- Our Equality Scheme will be available on request in alternative formats such as Easy Read, Braille, large print, audio formats and in alternative languages.
- The arrangements we will have in place:
 - **Accessible communication materials** For people with disabilities, we will provide alternative formats such as large print, Braille, or audio recordings to ensure accessibility for those with visual impairments.
 - **Accessible digital platforms** Information about our Equality Scheme will be made available on our website and digital platforms in formats that are accessible to people with disabilities.
 - **Feedback mechanisms** Feedback will be actively sought and used to improve the accessibility and effectiveness of our communication efforts.

9.4 For a list of our stakeholders and consultees, please see Appendix 3 of the Equality Scheme, visit our website at icrir.independent-inquiry.uk/ or contact:

Post: Freepost ICRIR

Email: equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk

Telephone: 028 903 26006

Chapter 10 – Review of our Equality Scheme

(Schedule 9, paragraph 8(3))

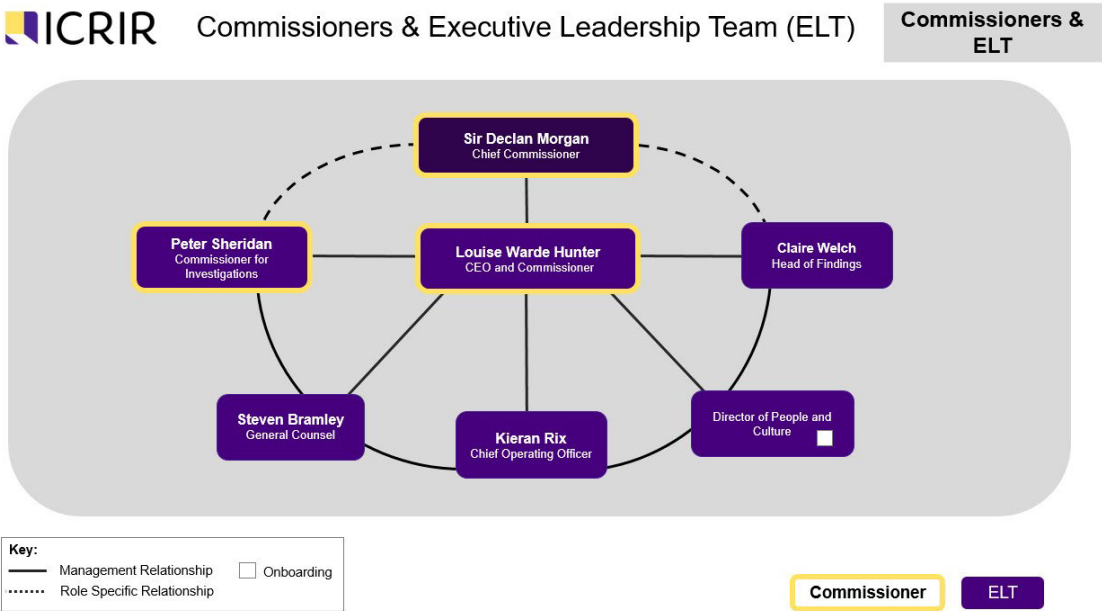
10.1 We will conduct a review of this Equality Scheme within five years of submitting the Scheme to the ECNI or within a shorter timescale to allow alignment with the review of other planning cycles.

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 ECNI. A report of this review will be made public on our website: icrir.independent-inquiry.uk/ and sent to the ECNI.

Appendix 1 – Organisation chart

More information about the Commission’s Executive Leadership Team can be found on our website.



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; Muslim; people of no religious belief; Protestant; Sikh; other faiths.</p> <p>For the purposes of Section 75, the term “religious belief” is the same definition as that used in the Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order¹⁰. Therefore, “religious belief” also includes any perceived religious belief (or perceived lack of belief) and, in employment situations only, it also covers any “similar philosophical belief”.</p>
Political opinion ¹¹	Nationalist generally; Unionist generally; members/supporters of other political parties.
Racial group	Black people; Chinese; Indian; Pakistani; people of mixed ethnic background; Polish; Roma; Member of the Traveller Community; White people.
Men and women generally	Men (including boys); Transgender 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	LGBTQIA+

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

(s2(a) of Schedule 9)

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

4 Corners Festival
A Safe Space to Be Me
Abbeyfield Belfast Society
Action Trauma
African And Caribbean Support Organisation Northern Ireland (ACSONI)
Age Concern Causeway
Age NI
AGE North Down Ards
Age Sector Platform
All MLA's
All Saints Youth Club
Alliance
Altnaveigh House
Amnesty
Angel Eyes NI
Ardaluin Regeneration Trust
Ardmonagh Family & Community Group
Ardoyne Association
Ardoyne Women's Group
Ardoyne Youth Enterprise
Ark Kingdom Ministries Charity
Armagh Traveller Support Group
Army Operational Legacy (MOD)
Arts Care
Ashton Centre Development
Association For Real Change NI
Attorney General NI
Autism NI
AvilaMedia
Ballybeen Men's Motivational Group
Ballymena South Community Cluster
Ballynafeigh Community Development Association
Ballysillan Community Forum
Bangor Alternatives
Befrienders For Disability
Belfast Activity Centre
Belfast and Lisburn Community Project

Belfast Bible College
Belfast Butterfly Club
Belfast HSC Trust
Belfast Interface Project
Belfast Recovery College
Belfast South Network Company
Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre
Belfast Works LEMIS+ Project
Belfast YMCA
Belleek Community Carers Group
Belvoir Parish Church of Ireland
Benview Community Centre
Beyond Skin
Big Ideas
Bloody Sunday Trust
Bluebird Counselling NI
Body Focused Repetitive Behaviour (BFRB) Network Northern Ireland
Bogside & Brandywell Health Forum
Bogside And Brandywell Initiative Limited
Bolster Community
Bout Yeh
Brain Injury Matters
Bric Programme
Brooke House Health and Wellbeing Centre
Broughshane & District Community Association Limited
BTRC by Transgender
Building Communities Resource Centre
CALMS - Community Action for Locally Managing Stress
CamLough Community Association Ltd
Campaign For a Fair Society
CAN - Compass Advocacy Network Ltd
Canice Consulting Ltd
Cara-Friend LGBT Youth
CARE (Christian Action Research & Education)
Carnlough Community Association

Castle Hill Foundation
Catholic Church in Ireland - St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh (Roman Catholic)
Causeway Initiative for Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution International
Causeway Older Active Strategic Team (COAST)
Causeway Rural & Urban Network
Centre For Global Education
Centre For Independent Living NI
Centred Soul
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
Children's Research Network for Ireland and Northern Ireland (CRNINI)
Christian Aid Ireland
Church Leaders Group
Church Mission Society Ireland - CMSI
Church of Ireland
City Church Belfast
City Life Projects
Claire Hanna MP
Clan Mor Sure Start
Clare CIC
Clonoe Community Centre
Coalisland Residents & Community Forum
COBSEO (The Confederation of Service Charities)
Coiste Na Niarchimí
Coleraine SureStart Partnership
Colin Glen
Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland
Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ)
Community Development Networks Forum
Community Faiths' Forum
Community Relations Council
Community Relations Forum
Community Relations in Schools (CRIS)
Community Sports Network
Connect Christian Counselling Service
Connect2Counselling
Connected Community Care
Cookstown & District Women's Group
Co-operation Ireland

CoP - College of Policing
Coroners' Service for Northern Ireland
Corpus Christi Services
Counselling All Nations Services (CANS)
CRAICNI
Craigavon Travellers Support Committee
Cromac Regeneration Initiative
Crossfire Trust
Crossmaglen Community Association
Cruse Bereavement Care North Down & Ards Area
Dads 'Do' Matter NI
Davina's Ark - Non-Residential Aftercare Addiction Centre
Decorum NI
Dementia Friendly East Belfast
Dementia NI
Democratic Unionist Party
Derry Adventist
Developing Healthy Communities
Devenish Partnership Forum
Dialogue For Diversity
Disability Action
Disability Sport NI
Disabled Police Officers' Association N. I
Diverse Church
Diversity Challenges
Diversity NI
Donegal Community Workers Co-Operative
Donegal Youth Service
Doury Road Development Group
Down Community Arts
Drumbeg North and South Resident Association
Drumgor Detached Youth Work Project
Dungannon Presbyterian Church
Dunmurry Community Association
East Belfast Historical and Cultural Society
East Belfast Mission
Eastern GP Federation Support Unit
Eating Disorders Association (N.I.)
Edgarstown Residents Association
Eilis O'Hanlon
Ely Centre
EMBRACE NI

Emerge Counselling Services
Empowering Communities
Ending the Harm
Equality & Involvement Office Tyrone and Fermanagh
Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
Erne East Community Partnership Ltd
Every Life Matters
Extern
FAIR (Families Acting for Innocent Relatives)
Families Beyond
Families Beyond Conflict
Families Moving On
Family Caring Centre
Familyworks & Imagine If
Farranshane Community Trust
Farset Development Ltd
Fermanagh Positive Youth Outlooks
Fermanagh Trust
Fibromyalgia Awareness Northern Ireland
Fighting Words NI
Firinne
First Steps Women's Centre
Focus: The Identity Trust
Footprints Women's Centre
Forthspring Inter Community Group
Forward South Partnership
Foyle Women's Information Network
Fresh Minds Education
Friends Forever International - Europe
GamCare
GenderJam NI
Gifted Project
Glenbank Community Association
GROW in North of Ireland
Growing Together
Guide Dogs Northern Ireland
Harmoni
Harmony Community Trust / Glebe House
Head Injury Support
Headway - The Brain Injury Association
Headway Newry
Healing The Land
Healing Through Remembering
Hearing Dogs for Deaf People

Hearing Link
Here NI
Hillcrest Trust
Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry (Secretariat)
HMIC - HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
Holy Trinity Youth Centre
Hope 4 ME & Fibro Northern Ireland
Hope4LifeNI
Hourglass (Formerly Action on Elder Abuse Northern Ireland)
House of Lords
Human Rights Watch - Europe
Imagine Belfast Ltd
INCORE
Inishowen Development Partnership
International Expert Panel on State Impunity and the NI Conflict
Involve
Irish Advocacy Network CLG
Irish Council for Civil Liberties
Irish Council of Churches
Irish School of Ecumenics
Jennymount Methodist Church
John and Pat Hume Foundation
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
Justice4the21
Kabosh
Kilbride Presbyterian Church
Kilcreggan Homes
Kilkeel Parish Bridge Association Limited - The JIMS Project
Knockmore Community Association
L.A.M. P
Lady Chief Justice NI
Lagan Dragons Dragon Boat Club
Lagan Valley Rural Transport
Larne Community Care Centre
Law Society of Northern Ireland
LCC Community Trust
Leafair Community Association
Learning Disability Pride
Learning Works
Lenadoon Community Forum / Community Counselling Service

Lenadoon Women's Group
Leonard Cheshire
Limavady Community Development Initiative (LCDI)
Links Counselling Service
Lisburn Downtown Centre
Lislea Community Association
Lost Lives - prison officers support group
Lough Neagh Development Trust
Loughgilly Parish Trust
Lower Shankill Community Association
Magnet Young Adult Centre
Malone House Group
Mediation Northern Ireland
Mencap
Men's Action Network (MAN)
Mental Health Champion Northern Ireland
Mermaids UK
Metal For Life NI
Mid & East Antrim Agewell Partnership
Migrant Centre NI
Migrant Help
Migrant Rights Centre Ireland
Military and Police Support West Tyrone (MAPS)
Millbrook Church Of the Nazarene
Millisle Youth Forum
Mind Matter Counselling
Monkstown Boxing Club
Monkstown Village Initiatives
Moville And District Family Resource Centre
MYMY - Mind Your Mate and Yourself
National Crime Agency
New Lodge Housing Forum
Newington Residents Group
Newpin Northern Ireland
Newtownards Road Women's Group Ltd
Nexus
NI Children's Commissioner
NI Muslim Family Association (NIMFA)
NI Veterans Commissioner's Office
NI Veterans' Movement
NI Veterans' Support Office
NI Veterans' Welfare Service (part of MoD)
NI Women's European Platform

NIHACT
North Belfast Interface Network
North Coast Community Transport
North Connor Youth Project
North Down & Ards Women's Aid
North Leitrim Women's Centre
North South Ministerial Council
Northern Area Community Network
Northern Ireland Alcohol and Drug Alliance
Northern Ireland Alternatives
Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NIVCA)
Northern Ireland Foundation
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC)
Northern Ireland Phoenix Organisation
Northern Ireland Psychoanalytic Society
Northern Ireland Retired Police Officers Association (NIRPOA)
Omagh Bombing Inquiry
Omagh Police Wives
Omeath District Development CLG
Op Courage
Open Arts
Operation Kenova
Orchardville
Orla McDade Life Therapy & Coaching
Out And About Community Transport
PAPYRUS Prevention of Young Suicide
Parent Action CIC
Pat Finucane Centre
PIPS Suicide Prevention Ireland
Police Ombudsman Northern Ireland (PONI)
Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI)
Portadown YMCA
Positive Futures
Presbyterian Church in Ireland
PRRT
Public Prosecution Service Northern Ireland
Pure Mental NI
PVN
Queens Park Women's Group
Queer Space
Rathcoole Churches Community Group
REACT

Redbird Counselling and Training Service
Regenerate
Regimental Associations
Regional Trauma Network
Relatives For Justice
Richmount Rural Community Association
Rights and Security International
RNID
Robert Carr Fund for civil society networks
Roe Valley Residents Association
Rosemount House Limited
Rowallane Community Hub
Rowan Centre (SARC)
Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB NI)
RUC GC Association County Armagh
RUC George Cross Foundation
RUCGC /PSNI Benevolent Fund
Rural Community Development Support Service
Rural Community Network
Rural Support
Sailortown Regeneration
Sandy Row Methodist Church
Schomberg Society
Scotch Street Youth & Community Centre
Sense Northern Ireland
Servite Trust (NI)
Seymour Hill And Conway Youth Council
Shankill Women's Centre
Shared History Interpretive Project
Shared Island Initiative
Short Strand Community Forum
Sinn Fein
Sisters Of St Louis
Skegoneill Glandore Common Purpose
Social Democratic Labour Party (SDLP)
Social Farming Across Borders
Society Of St Vincent De Paul (SVP)
Sólás Charity
South & East Tyrone Welfare Support
South and East Tyrone Welfare Support Group
South Antrim Community Network (SACN)
South East Fermanagh Foundation (SEFF)

South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust
Southern HSC Trust
Springboard Opportunities Limited
Stand To
Stratagem
Strathfoyle Women's Activity Group Ltd
Strathroy Community Enterprise Ltd
Stroke Association
Stronger Together
TAMHI
Tar Anall
Tara Centre
Templepatrick Action Community Association
The Churches Trust Ltd
The Commission for Victims and Survivors
The Commissioner for Older people
The Compassionate Friends
The Croft Community
The Ely Centre
The Falls Residents Association
The Falls Women's Centre
The Heart of Belfast Project
The Hope Centre
The Hummingbird Project
The Law Society of Northern Ireland
The Link Family & Community Centre
The Men's Advisory Project (MAP)
The Parent Rooms
The Parole Commissioners for Northern Ireland
The PILS Project
The Rainbow Project
The Skainos Centre
The Speedwell Trust
The Union of Students in Ireland
The United Parish, Of Ballynure & Ballyeaston (Ballyclare)
The University of Atypical for Arts and Disability
The Villages Together
The WELL Project
The Wellcome Trust
The Wider Circle
The Women's Centre, Derry
Therapy NI

Thompson House
Traditional Unionist Voice (TUV)
Training For Women Network
Trans Pride NI
TransgenderNI
Trinity Methodist Church and Community Venue, Lisburn
Truth Recovery Process
Turas, Belfast
Twaddell Woodvale Residents Association
UDR Association Coleraine Branch
Ulster Human Rights Watch
Ulster Unionist Party (UUP)
Ulster-Scots Community Network
UV Arts C.I.C
Veteran mental health support in Wales
Victims and Survivors Service
Victims' Payment Board
Victims Support Welfare Group
Vineyard Compassion

WAVE Trauma Centre
West Armagh Consortium
Willowbank Ltd
Windsor Women's Centre
Women's Aid Antrim, Ballymena, Carrickfergus, Larne, Newtownabbey
Women's Aid Armagh Down Ltd
Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland
Women's Resource and Development Agency
Women's Support Network
WOMEN'STEC
World Peace Initiative
Wounded Police & Families Association
YMCA Ireland
YMCA Lurgan
Youth Education Health Advice
Youth Initiatives NI
Youthlife
Zachary Geddis Break the Silence Trust

Appendix 4 – Timetable for measures proposed (s4(3)(b) to Schedule 9)

Measure	Lead responsibility	Timetable
Section 75 Annual Progress report	Director of Corporate Services	As part of main Annual Report timetable by 31 August (annually)
Inequality audit	Director of People and Culture	By 15 August 2025
Launch Consultation on draft action plan	Director of People and Culture	By 1 October 2025
Finalised action plan published	Director of People and Culture	15 January 2026
Arrangements for monitoring progress in place	Director of People and Culture	Within 3 months of approval
Consultation list reviewed and updated	Head of Engagement	August (annually)
Screening reports	Director of People and Culture	Quarterly from 15 July 2024
EQIA timetable	Director of People and Culture	Annually as part of Section 75 Annual Progress report above
Review and publication of monitoring information	Director of People and Culture	Annually as part of preparation of Section 75 Annual Progress report
Development of induction materials	Director of People and Culture	By 1 May 2024 and ongoing as required
Development of ongoing skills and training requirements	Director of People and Culture	By 1 October 2024 and annually
Assessing access to information and services	Head of Engagement	Ongoing
Communication of equality scheme to staff	Chief Executive Officer	At 15 March; 1 May; 30 June 2025 to raise awareness, and then as necessary to communicate new or revised scheme

Communication of equality scheme to consultees	Head of Engagement	By 30 June 2025 and as necessary either to communicate new or revised scheme
Review of equality scheme	Director of People and Culture	Every 5 years per the Equality Scheme (or earlier if requested)

Appendix 5 – Glossary of terms

Equality Scheme: A document outlining our organisation's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and fostering good relations, as required by Schedule 9 of relevant legislation.

Section 75: Refers to the section of the legislation that mandates public authorities in Northern Ireland to promote equality of opportunity and good relations across nine equality categories.

Statutory duties: Legal obligations imposed on public authorities to comply with the requirements outlined in relevant legislation, including promoting equality and good relations.

Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA): A systematic process used to assess the potential impact of policies, practices, or decisions on different equality groups and identify measures to mitigate any adverse effects.

Consultation: The process of seeking input and feedback from stakeholders, including staff, service users, community groups, and other relevant parties, on matters that may impact equality and diversity.

Stakeholders: Individuals or groups with a vested interest in or affected by the decisions, policies, or activities of an organisation, including staff, service users, community organisations, and advocacy groups.

Accessibility: Ensuring that information, services, and facilities are available and usable by all individuals, including those with disabilities or diverse needs, without encountering barriers.

Inclusivity: Creating an environment or process that is welcoming and accommodating to all individuals, regardless of their background, characteristics, or circumstances.

Diversity: The presence of differences among individuals or groups, including but not limited to differences in age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status.

Training and development: Activities aimed at enhancing the knowledge, skills, and awareness of staff members on equality and diversity issues, including effective communication, understanding of statutory duties, and awareness of diverse needs.

Communication: The process of conveying information, ideas, or messages between individuals or groups through various channels and methods, including written, verbal, visual, and digital communication.

Outreach: Initiatives or activities aimed at reaching out to underserved or marginalised communities to provide information, support, or services and promote inclusion and consultation.

Feedback mechanisms: Systems or processes established to solicit input, comments, or suggestions from stakeholders, including staff, service users, and community members, to inform decision-making and improve organisational practices.

Partnership working: Collaborative efforts between organisations, agencies, or stakeholders to address common goals, share resources, and achieve mutual benefits, particularly in promoting equality and diversity.

Adverse impact: Negative consequences or effects that policies, practices, or decisions may have on individuals or groups, particularly in relation to equality and diversity.

Induction training: Initial training provided to new staff members to introduce them to our organisation, its policies, procedures, and expectations, including information on equality and diversity.

Accessibility standards: Guidelines or criteria established to ensure that services, facilities, and digital content are accessible to individuals with disabilities, such as the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).

Cultural sensitivity: Awareness, understanding, and respect for cultural differences and diversity, including consideration of cultural norms, values, and beliefs in interactions and decision-making processes.

Participatory methods: Approaches or techniques used to actively involve individuals or groups in decision-making processes, consultations, or activities, ensuring their voices are heard and valued.

Inclusive language: Language that avoids discriminatory or exclusionary terms and instead promotes inclusivity, respect, and recognition of diverse identities and experiences.

Stakeholder consultation: The process of involving stakeholders in organisational activities, decision-making, or consultations to gather input, build relationships, and foster collaboration.

Community outreach: Efforts to connect with and engage members of the community, including underserved or marginalised groups, to raise awareness, provide information, and promote participation.

Assistive technologies: Devices, tools, or software designed to assist individuals with disabilities in accessing information, communication, or services, such as screen readers, magnifiers, or alternative input devices.

Social media campaigns: Strategic efforts to raise awareness, promote consultation, or advocate for causes through social media platforms, utilising targeted messaging, visuals, and interactive features.

Continuous improvement: A systematic approach to enhancing our organisational performance and effectiveness through ongoing evaluation, learning, and adaptation of practices and processes.

Appendix 6 – Measures in Detail

In addition to the internal arrangements outlined previously, there will be several further arrangements implemented to drive forward the implementation of our organisation's Equality Scheme. These arrangements will aim to ensure that equality and diversity considerations are embedded throughout the organisation's operations and culture.

Dedicated diversity champions:

- We will designate individuals in our teams within the organisation as EDI Champions to champion equality and diversity initiatives.
- These champions will serve as advocates for diversity and inclusion within their respective departments and teams and work to promote awareness and understanding of equality issues.

Stakeholder consultation forums:

- We may, as appropriate, establish stakeholder consultation forums and advisory groups comprised of representatives from diverse backgrounds, including staff, service users, and community organisations.
- These forums will provide a platform for stakeholders to contribute feedback, share perspectives, and collaborate on initiatives to promote equality and diversity.

Training:

- We will provide ongoing diversity training and development opportunities for staff at all levels of the organisation.
- We will offer specialised training on topics such as inclusive leadership, unconscious bias awareness, and accommodating diverse needs.

Public reporting and transparency:

- We will publish annual reports on the organisation's progress in implementing the Equality Scheme and meeting its equality objectives.
- We will enhance transparency by making information about equality and diversity initiatives readily available to stakeholders through our website.