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Communities

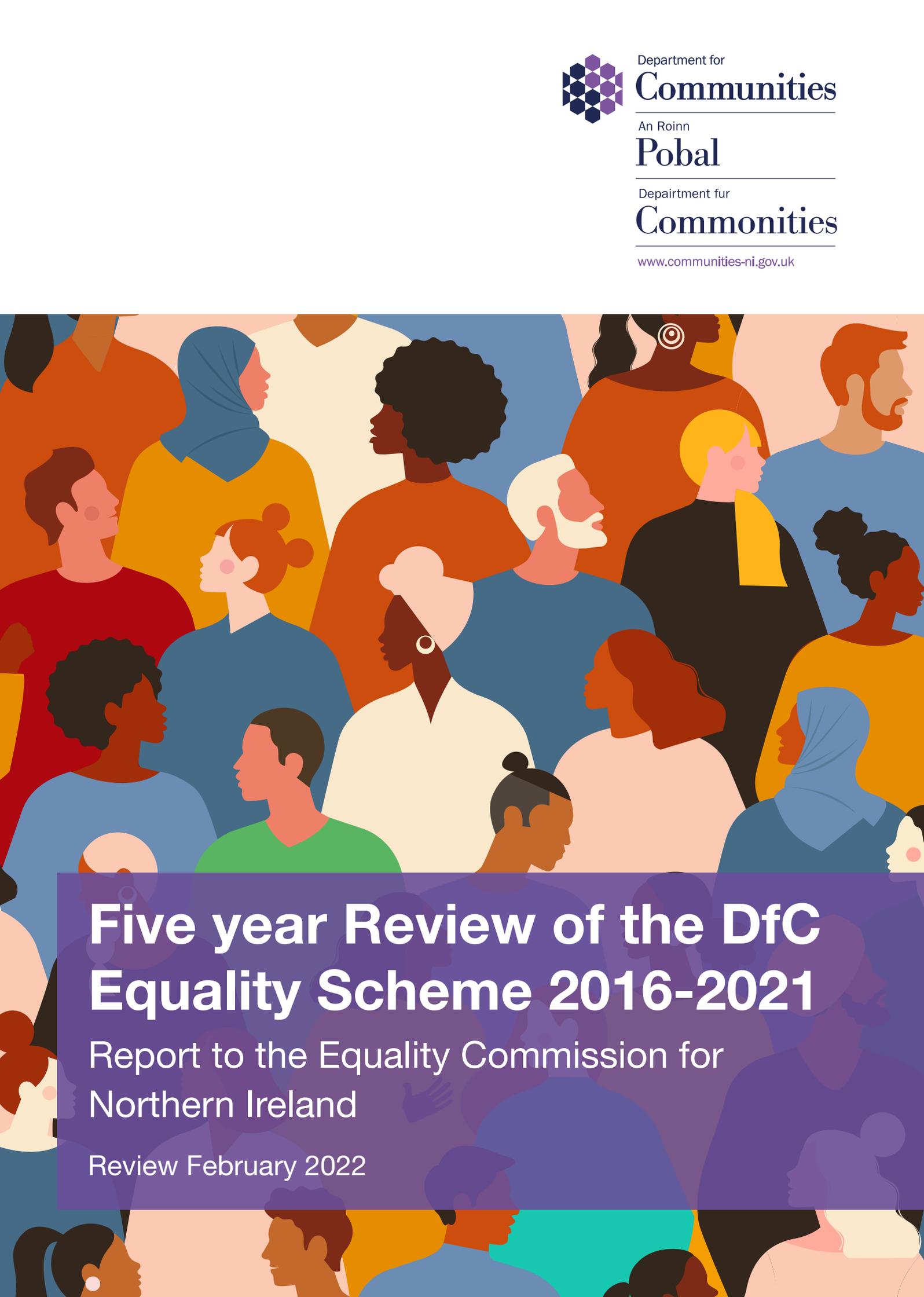
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Five year Review of the DfC Equality Scheme 2016-2021

Report to the Equality Commission for
Northern Ireland

Review February 2022

Name of public authority:

Department for Communities

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Background

An equality scheme describes certain arrangements that a public authority has set-up and which it is obliged to apply and follow as a means of fulfilling the duties imposed on it by

Section 75(1) and (2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 i.e. the duties to have -

- due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity; and
- regard to the desirability of promoting good relations.

This includes arrangements for (a) training staff, (b) assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity, and (c) monitoring any adverse impact of those policies that have been adopted.

Public authorities who have Section 75 equality schemes are obliged to review those schemes periodically-

“A public authority shall, before the end of the period of five years beginning with the submission of its current scheme, or the latest review of that scheme under this subparagraph, whichever is later, review that scheme and inform the [Equality] Commission of the outcome of the review.”

The purpose of a 5 year review (this review covers the period May 2016 to March 2021) is

to examine how the arrangements have been applied and to assess how effective they have been in assisting public authorities to comply with the Section 75 duties.

Based on guidance from the Equality Commission for NI (ECNI), the following questions have been addressed in the Department for Communities’ review:

a) To what extent has your public authority’s approved scheme provided a workable basis for mainstreaming the need to promote equality of opportunity and good relations into policy-making over the past five years?

- The Department for Communities’ Equality Scheme was approved by ECNI in May 2016 and sets out how the Department will provide opportunities for stakeholders to positively influence how the Department carries out its functions in line with the Section 75 statutory duties.
- The Department continues to build on and improve processes to ensure policy makers continue to consider equality of opportunity and good relations from the earliest stages, to the extent that this is now embedded in the process as an essential element of policy formulation.
- Section 75 obligations are set out in the Equality Scheme and mainstreamed

across all directorates with G7s/Head of Branches personally responsible for implementing the Equality Scheme within their area(s) of responsibility and for providing assurance to the Departmental Board.

- The Centre for Applied Learning (CAL) which is the sole provider of generic training to the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS), offers an effective equality training programme for all staff and will ensure that the Department's commitment to Section 75 statutory duties is made clear.
- To complement the CAL training, the Departmental Equality Unit developed bespoke equality awareness training sessions focusing on the specific needs of a particular branch or team.
- Section 75 related issues such as policies screened out for EQIA, completed EQIAs, Equality Action Plan, Disability Action Plan and ECNI progress reports are placed on the Department's Internet site on the Equality page.
- Equality related guidance documents such as the Equality Scheme, equality screening template and guidance on Section 75 and promoting good relations are placed on the Department's Intranet site for staff.
- The Equality Scheme commitments ensure good quality early pre-consultation with Section 75 groups positively assisting the formulation of policies and more detailed screening exercises where Section 75 impacts are mitigated at an early stage.
- The Equality Action Plan and Audit of Inequalities allows the Department to identify and focus on addressing key inequalities and monitoring of progress by the Equality Unit and policy leads.
- To ensure the most effective use of the Department's and consultees' resources, a targeted approach is taken 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.
- The Department produces a quarterly screening report to consultees with a summary list of current and forthcoming consultations. This allows the Section 75 representative groups the opportunity to plan their resources effectively to deal with the most relevant consultations.

b) What key lessons have been learnt over the past five years in terms of effectively implementing the approved equality scheme?

- At a meeting of the Departmental Management Board in December 2016 compliance with the Department's Equality Scheme was discussed with particular focus on how compliance was evidenced and assurance provided within the Department's Governance Framework. It was noted the Department's senior managers sign off the quarterly Certificate of Assurance statements which comprise of a series of statements, grouped into key aspects of work and linked to risks within Corporate or Group Risk Registers, on which managers are asked to confirm compliance or to document exceptions. As the Statutory Equality duties did not feature in the assurance statement it was agreed the relevant section of the Certificate of Assurance be updated to include reference to the legislative requirements detailed in the Department's Equality Scheme.
- In 2018 an ECNI investigation into the Líofo Gaeltacht Bursary Scheme for 2017 and the Community Halls Pilot Programme examined both submissions to Minister and found no evidence of equality considerations and recommended that the Department should ensure that any decision maker, and in these cases the Minister, is presented with appropriate information on the equality implications of the matters under consideration, in order to make a decision that is in compliance with fulfilling the statutory duties in Section 75. In response to the ECNI recommendation, the Department committed to ensuring Equality considerations must be evidenced in all submissions requiring a decision and issued guidance to this effect to all Business Areas in November 2018 and it has had a positive impact.
- In order to ensure that data requirements are considered early in the screening/EQIA process, the Statistics and Research, Professional Services Unit (PSU) is involved in the early stages, as appropriate.
- Equality Commission guidance, such as the Section 75: Using Evidence in Policy Making has proved to be a valuable resource. The guide was developed in partnership with NISRA and aims to be a starting point for those policymakers who are not sure where to look for Section 75 information relevant to the policy/ decision they are equality assessing or monitoring.
- In line with the draft Programme for Government the Department has introduced Outcomes Based Accountability which will have an

increased outcome focus, with clearer and more measurable issues and impacts.

c) What more needs to be done to achieve outcomes for individuals from the nine equality categories?

- Social Inclusion Strategies: DfC Minister Carál Ní Chuilín announced in September 2020 that work would commence on the development of a suite of Social Inclusion Strategies. Anti-Poverty, Disability, Gender Equality and Sexual Orientation (renamed LGBTQI+) strategies will aim to address barriers and inequalities in society and fulfil the commitments in New Decade, New Approach and the Executive's Programme for Government
- Building Inclusive Communities 2020-2025: Launched by the DfC Minister in November 2020, this Strategy sets out a road map for the department over a five year period and incorporates Minister's priorities, Programme for Government outcomes and the

New Decade New Approach commitments that the Department will deliver. In this strategy the Department plans to work across government, our Arm's Length Bodies and with communities to deliver our common purpose of Supporting People, Building Communities, Shaping Places. To successfully deliver the strategy, the work of the Department will focus on our long term outcomes over four cross-cutting themes: Anti-poverty, Wellbeing & Inclusion, Sustainability & Inclusive Growth, Agility & Innovation.

- There is a need to review and evaluate the equality data available to policy makers, identify any gaps and consider how these might be addressed to enable assessment of policy impacts and outcomes across all S75 categories.
- Continued promotion and awareness of the equality duties with internal staff, particularly, for those with a direct role in policy making.

1. A general introductory statement specifying the purpose of the scheme and the public authority's commitment to the statutory duties.

1a) To what extent were senior management involved in ensuring scheme compliance over the 5 year period and what further steps could be undertaken to ensure effective internal arrangements?

- The Permanent Secretary is accountable to the Minister and is responsible for ensuring that the Department complies with Section 75 obligations. The Permanent Secretary and Departmental Management Board approve the issue of the Section 75 annual progress reports to the Equality Commission. These are then copied to the Minister for information purposes.
- The Equality Team continues to submit biannual equality progress reports to the Departmental Management Board for consideration. These reports highlight any slippage in the Equality Scheme Action Plan or Disability Action Plan (DAP) and include details of progress on the Department's EQIA programme. This ensures that senior management throughout the Department are kept aware of progress on S75 issues.
- The Department's Policy & Strategy Sub-Committee, a sub-committee of the Departmental Management Board, which was established in late 2020, provides assurances to the Permanent Secretary in relation to the discharge of the Department's Section 75 duties.
- The Department's Policy Excellence Group has a role in supporting the sharing of good practice in relation to equality and good relations across policy making staff.
- Departmental Directors are responsible for implementing the Equality Scheme within their area(s) of responsibility and for ensuring any papers submitted to the Departmental Management Board and the Minister take account of the equality obligations and, where appropriate, specify the position in relation to the conduct of any Equality Impact Assessment.
- The Director of Central Policy is accountable to the Permanent Secretary, and has general responsibility for implementation of the equality obligations.
- The Central Policy Directorate includes the Equality Unit which is the central point of contact for the Equality Commission, general enquiries and for complaints. The Unit reports to the Director of Central Policy Directorate who will either represent the Department, or if more appropriate assign a

representative of the Department, in inter-departmental structures to co-ordinate the implementation of Section 75 obligations.

- Officials from the Equality Unit offer support and advice and represent the Department at the NICS Equality Practitioners Group which is an interdepartmental working group chaired by The Executive Office. Any issues of concern or interest are reported back to senior management.
- The DfC Risk Management Framework facilitates the management of risks at all levels

across the Department. Appropriate oversight by senior management ensures a risk management process which provides continuous monitoring of risks including a system of internal controls, and assurance processes linked to the timely reporting of key organisational risks. The internal assurance process requires managers to complete a quarterly assurance statement which includes the requirement for managers to confirm compliance with the Department's Equality Scheme commitments.

Year	Full-Time-Equivalent Staff (2 DP & EO1)	£
2016/17	3	107,688
2017/18	3	108,765
2018/19	3	110,125
2019/20	3	112,328

*20/21 pay uplift not included as outside scope of the review timescale

- The Department follows the Northern Ireland Civil Service principles of equality, diversity and inclusion and now has its own Diversity Champion who, in conjunction with representatives from all departments, looks at what the Northern Ireland Civil Service needs to do in overall terms to

advance awareness, knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity issues. Under the leadership of our Diversity Champion, the Department established a Departmental Diversity Working Group which produced a Diversity Action Plan in April 2019 to reflect what staff want

to see happening to address the diversity issues they face whilst working in the Department. The aim is to ensure that diversity and inclusion are firmly embedded within the department in a way that embraces and values difference.

- Equality of opportunity and good relations continue to be key themes underpinning all of the Department's policies and operational programmes giving emphasis to the mainstreaming of equality in policy development throughout the Department.
- The Department is content with this reporting process and is not aware of any further steps which could be undertaken.

1b) Outline annual direct expenditure of resources to ensure that the statutory duties were complied with, in terms of staff and money over the past 5 years, and comment on the extent that all necessary resources were allocated.

- The Director of Central Policy (Senior Civil Service) has overall responsibility for the Equality Unit. 2 full-time Deputy Principals and Executive Officer 1, report to the Principal Equality Officer (Grade 7). The Equality Unit is responsible for ensuring progress on the commitments contained within the Equality Scheme and for disseminating best practice advice and guidance to all business areas throughout the Department.

- During the 5 years of this Equality Scheme, the Centre for Applied Learning (CAL) has successfully provided training on all aspects of equality across the NICS.

In addition to this the Department incurred other costs arising from training activities, such as disability awareness training, autism and sign language which were provided to many of our customer facing staff.

- The Department is satisfied that this allocation of resources has been sufficient to ensure that it has complied with its statutory equality obligations over the period of this review.

2. An outline of how the public authority intends to assess its compliance with the Section 75 duties and for consulting on matters to which a duty under that section is likely to be relevant.

2a) Outline impacts and outcomes (for the public authority and/or individuals from the nine equality categories) over the past five years and what further steps could be undertaken to build on these or address underreporting?

- All new or revised policies are screened for possible equality implications across the nine equality categories using the Department's screening analysis form. The Department encourages publication of equality screening forms with the consultation documents on its website. This promotes transparency and provides a further opportunity for Section 75 groups to challenge any screening decision.
- The Department's screening template was updated in June 2019 to reflect the Equality Scheme, with awareness raising and briefing provided for staff.
- The Department publishes screening reports quarterly. Screening reports detail:

- i) All policies screened by the Department over the relevant period;
 - ii) Screening decisions;
 - iii) Where applicable, a timetable for conducting equality impact assessments; and
 - iv) A link to the completed screening template(s) on the Department's website.
- The Department continues to encourage business areas to give serious consideration to the consultation, and pre-consultation methods, most appropriate to each individual consultation exercise e.g. face-to-face meetings with targeted groups or individuals representing key stakeholders in the sector, small focus group meetings etc.
 - The Department has found that, due to the mainstreaming of equality considerations into the policy development process along with detailed pre-consultation and targeted consultations, most equality issues are taken into account appropriately at screening stage. This has resulted in a reduction in the number of EQIAs required, as more robust screening has ensured that policies are solidly based in respect of promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations.

- DfC's Equality Scheme has helped to ensure that assessment of the equality implications of policies and programmes has become an integral part of the Department's policy development process. As a result, all new and revised policies are screened for possible equality implications across the nine equality categories using the Department's screening analysis form and any negative impacts are addressed accordingly.

Specific equality-related outcomes which have been delivered to date include:

- Access To Work (NI) - is a flexible programme designed to overcome employment related obstacles faced by people with disabilities. It assists people who are in paid employment, or who have a job to commence, through the provision of practical support and by helping to meet the additional costs that are associated with overcoming work related obstacles that may result from having a disability.
- From 01 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, 852 people with disabilities were supported by the programme.
- From 01 April 2019 to 31 March 2020, 864 people with disabilities were supported by the programme.
- From 01 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 914 people with disabilities

were supported by the programme.

- From 01 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 745 people with disabilities were supported by the programme
- From 01 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 738 people with disabilities were supported by the programme
- Steps 2 Success is the Department's main employment programme. It is delivered on a geographical basis by 3 Lead Contractors supported by their supply chain partners. Those with health conditions or disabilities can avail of individually tailored support, either in-house or through specialist support organisations, aimed at helping participants progress towards and into sustained employment. Innovative approaches to address health, wellbeing and employability issues can include: Anxiety Management, Coping with Pain, Depression Management, Exercise and Physical Activity, or Work Life Balance. Participants in Steps to Success are set out below:
 - 2019/20 with a total of 5,286 new participants
 - 2018/19 with a total of 6,632 new participants
 - Make the Call' Benefit Uptake Programme - In 2016, the Department launched Supporting People – Maximising Income

through the Uptake of Benefits (2016-19), a Three Year Strategic Plan to ensure that every individual and household across Northern Ireland is receiving all the social security benefits to which they and their families are entitled.

- In September 2019 the results of the Year 3 Strategy were reported. The outcome was that over the 3 year period Make the Call Wraparound generated £101 million in additional income for almost 22,000 people.

- In 2019/20 the Make the Call Wraparound Service generated £44.1 million in additional annualised benefits for 9,620 people who called the service directly or were referred by a partner organisation. This represents an increase of £900,000 from 2018/2019 year. The average weekly amount that customers are better off by is £88.10 per person per week. The number of people who benefited from using 'Make the Call' is outlined below for the following benefits:

Benefit	People with successful Claims per Benefit
Attendance Allowance	2267
PIP	1545
State Pension Credit	1588
State Pension	49
ESA	1048
Universal Credit	2179
Carers Allowance	624
Disability Living Allowance	478
JSA	209

- Sign Language - British Sign Language (BSL) and Irish Sign Language (ISL) users and their families face many communication barriers that socially exclude them from society. In 2017/18, the Department's Sign Language Partnership Group provided £81,538 to support projects that improve access to public services for deaf sign language users and their families to deliver better life outcomes. This investment increased to £200,000 during 2019/20 providing tailored sign language courses to deaf children, their families and their professional support workers. Positive response from in excess of 100 participating families highlighted the improvements in family communication with the accompanying reduction in their child's frustration at not being understood. During the pandemic up to 31 March 2021, the Department worked with the Deaf community to ensure the support we provide meets their needs. This included an investment of £660k for a range of BSL and ISL initiatives, including:
 - Financial assistance to Deaf organisations, interpreters and tutors to transition their services online and help sustain vital work such as Family Sign Language courses and early years support for families with deaf children. This includes free access to the National Deaf Children's Society online Sign Language Classes for families with Deaf children and the wider community and the British Deaf Association's Sign at Home online course.
 - Grassroots initiatives providing mental health counselling for Deaf people, a support group run by and for Deaf women, a daily COVID news Vlog run by Deaf BSL/ISL users to keep the Deaf community informed, a remote Deaf befriending volunteer service for BSL and ISL residents in care homes and support to complete Census forms online.
- Deaf Awareness and Sign Language courses were delivered in 2019/20 to 23 schools involving 900 school children. Positive feedback from participating schools indicated that courses make hearing children more aware of the deaf children in their school and their needs which can reduce the isolation felt by deaf children in the school environment while also increasing respect for sign language.
- The Department recognised the need for benefit services to be fully accessible to individuals who

communicate using British or Irish Sign Language. The Video Relay Service (VRS) was introduced for Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and Disability and Carers Service (DCS) and has a positive impact in terms of improving access to services for deaf or hard of hearing customers. The availability of the service has been welcomed by the British Deaf Association. Officials are currently exploring how VRS could be made available to other benefit areas.

- Uniting Communities Programme - This is a cross community youth leadership programme which uses sport and creativity activity to:
 - Improve attitudes between young people from different backgrounds;
 - Encourage young people to engage in bringing the community together; and
 - Increase community capacity and capability.
- Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (SVPRS) - The Scheme provided support for the reception and resettlement of Vulnerable Syrian Refugees into Northern Ireland. At 31 March 2020, 1,815 vulnerable refugees from Syria have been resettled in NI. The SVPRS closed after March 2020. The Department has commissioned an independent evaluation of the

SVPRS, as of 31 March 2021 the completion of the evaluation remains ongoing.

- The Welfare Reform Specialist project aims to improve knowledge and awareness of financial capability (money management) debt advice and availability to support services. The project has delivered tailored information and advice sessions to women's groups to include people with mental health problems, addictions and low income families and vulnerable adults. Sessions also delivered to ethnic/migrant communities and families working in Newry Mourne & Down District Council and to the Travelling Community in Fermanagh.
- People & Place: A Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal:
- This, and associated programmes including Small Pockets of Deprivation and Areas at Risk Programmes, have a focus on ensuring that communities and individuals living in the most deprived neighbourhoods have access to the best possible services and opportunities which make for a better quality of life and prospect for themselves and their families.
- During the years 2019/20 and 2020/21, some 300 projects each year were supported in 67 areas promoting and delivering on

community, economic, social and physical renewal. These projects positively impact on many of the Section 75 groups, such as delivery of a speech and language programme for children to raise standards in language and literacy by providing early identification and support for children at risk; and ensuring park play equipment is accessible by children of all abilities by providing opportunities to explore, discover and achieve during play.

- Social Supermarket Pilot Programme: Provision of food, wraparound support and mentoring to help individuals transition out of food insecurity. As of 31 March 2020, in excess of 1,000 individuals had accessed the service across the five pilot sites and the evaluation indicates that access to affordable food produce and wrap-around supports has helped to positively change the life circumstances of members and their families. Alongside evidence of increased financial security the support has increased resilience and self-efficacy. Work on the Social Supermarket Pilot Programme was not progressed during 2020/21, due to resources being diverted to the Covid 19 response. However the pilot

programme that was in place has been extended in the interim. The Department hopes to progress work this financial year coming but awaits budget confirmation before finalising plans.

- Shared Housing Programme: The delivery of shared housing schemes' (2016-2021) Good Relations Plans include projects and events that promote cultural awareness, diversity and good community relations. The draft Programme for Government set the Department's plans to deliver 800 units of shared housing. However, with additional Fresh Start funding the target of 800 units increased to 1,000 units. Up to 31 March 2021, the Shared Housing Programme has supported 45 schemes in total with 1,480 units.
- Supporting People Programme: Operational responsibility for delivering this programme falls to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE), whilst the Department has an oversight and governance role. The programme provides supported living services to over 19,000 people in NI. This programme enables older, younger and homeless people as well as those with a disability live independently in a safe and supported environment.

2b) Outline the number of equality scheme related consultation exercises undertaken by your authority over the past five years. Set out the number and percentage related to screening exercises and to EQIAs and indicate the extent that your scheme helped you to engage with external stakeholders.

- Over the past five years, the Department has carried out 292 policy screening exercises. Twenty four policy consultations where the screenings were included for consultation and three full Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA) were undertaken. The Department has found that the mainstreaming of equality considerations into the policy development process, along with detailed pre consultations, has resulted in most equality issues being resolved at screening stage. This in turn has resulted in a reduction in the number of EQIAs required over the years, as more robust screening has ensured that policies are solidly based in respect of promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations.
- The Department, where possible, includes the full screening exercise as an annex to the corresponding policy consultation document, to promote transparency and provide a further opportunity for the Section 75 groups to challenge the

Department on the screening decision. All consultations and screening exercises undertaken by the Department during this period are available in date order on its website.

- Para 4.17 of the Department's Equality Scheme commits it to publishing quarterly screening reports on the Department's website. Reports from May 2016 onwards are available at:
[DfC Equality | Department for Communities \(communities-ni.gov.uk\)](https://communities-ni.gov.uk)
- Notification of screening reports are also sent directly to all consultees who have indicated an interest, on a quarterly basis. A summary list of current and forthcoming consultations is included with the notification. This provides the Section 75 groups with the opportunity to plan their resources and focus on any consultations which might be relevant to their particular groups.
- The Department has found that its Equality Scheme commitments have continued to help maintain awareness across the Section 75 groups of Departmental policies.

2c) Indicate if your list of consultees was amended during the 5-year period and what further steps could be taken to develop your level of engagement and consultation?

- The Section 75 consultee list is maintained centrally by the Equality Unit and updated as required to ensure that contact details are up-to-date. A review of consultees' details has been carried out annually since 2016. The Section 75 consultee list contains addresses, e-mail addresses and the preferred method of contact for each of the groups (i.e. electronic or hard copy).
- The Department continues to encourage each business area to consider the consultation and pre-consultation methods most appropriate to each individual consultation exercise (e.g. face-to-face meetings with targeted groups or individuals representing key stakeholders in the sector, small focus group meetings etc.).
- Officials from the Department's Equality Unit attend the Departmental Equality Practitioners Group which is an interdepartmental working group chaired by The Executive Office. Issues of concern or interest are reported back to senior management. Any best practice on consultation methods promulgated through these meetings, or directly

from ECNI, is circulated throughout the Department.

2d) To what extent did your authority consult directly with directly affected individuals as well as with representative groups, particularly in relation to young people and those with learning disabilities, and was this sufficient?

- The Department aims to target consultations as appropriate to ensure that directly affected groups are consulted in the most effective manner. Traditionally the majority of consultation exercises focused on written consultation methods, however alternative methods of consulting with customers have also been explored.
- Examples include:
- The Make the Call programme (2016-2019) initially focused on people aged 60+ and was then extended into Make the Call Wraparound Service to target the following groups:
 - i) Children and young people (families) – because by intervening at an early stage of the life cycle we have an opportunity to strengthen families and create a multi-generational impact;
 - ii) Older people – because the older population is growing and,

ensuring that older people remain healthy, connected and active has a hugely beneficial effect. It also helps older people themselves but also helps to reduce pressure on our Health and Social Care Service.

- iii) People with a Disability
 - because disability by its very nature can have a hugely debilitating impact on people’s quality of life. Disability also leads to uniquely complex needs which require a joined-up response. Mental health problems represent a particularly challenging set of issue which can lead to, or exacerbate other problems; and
- iv) Working poor – because we need to do everything we can to help people who are working to help themselves and because we need to try to prevent people who are vulnerable from falling into isolation and poverty.
- Social Inclusion Strategies: In autumn 2020 the Department for Communities began work leading on the development of the suite of four new Executive social inclusion strategies (Anti-Poverty; Disability; Gender Equality; and LGBTQI+). All four are being developed using a co-design approach, centred upon engagement with civic society with involvement from representative groups at all stages of the process. To support and advise the Department in developing and producing each of the social inclusion strategies, a number of groups were established, including:
 - Expert Advisory Panels; four members, two from the Voluntary and Community Sector and at least one academic; tasked with preparing a report setting out key recommendations to the Minister about the themes and key actions each Strategy should include and the gaps in provision that it should seek to address
 - Strategy Co-Design Groups; made up of key stakeholders representing the views of the relevant sector. These groups are made up of key stakeholders from the relevant sector and are responsible for advising on the development of their respective strategy.
 - International Job Shadow Day (IJSJ) 2019-Disability Policy Branch worked with the Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment to design and provide a range of bespoke placements for disabled jobseekers within DfC in April 2019. Feedback received from workplace mentors and disabled jobseekers was universally positive, with a 100% satisfaction rate of those participating. Jobseekers stated that it had removed some of the

fear of entering the workplace and made them more determined to secure employment. Workplace mentors gained an understanding of the barriers disabled people face in accessing the workplace whilst learning the skills and qualities disabled people can bring. DfC social media reports highlighted the positive contribution disabled people can and do make to the workforce. Unfortunately due to Covid-19 restrictions, the event in 2020 had to be held online.

- United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPWD) - DfC has delivered successful IDPWD events since 2019 exploring contemporary disability-related issues of particular interest to the Deaf and disabled community here and delivered to audiences consisting of Deaf and disabled people; relevant stakeholder organisations; civil servants; and members of the public with an interest in disability-related issues. The events are celebratory in nature and designed to maximise participation - for example being held in accessible venues with Changing Places facilities, with media subtitled and with British and Irish Sign Language signers present at all times. IDPWD provides an important opportunity for the Department to recognise and showcase positive stories of

participation, inclusion and diversity from within the Deaf and disabled communities and the valued contribution those communities make to society.

- Engagement on the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy for Northern Ireland- In the period July to November 2020 extensive pre-consultation research was carried out by the Department which included focus group sessions involving sports and physical activity stakeholders, representative community organisations and their members, the education sector, the health sector and both representative organisations and individuals from the Section 75 groups. In addition, an electronic survey was issued, including 80+ community-based organisations identified in association with the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action. It was a key objective of the Department to engage with non-participants in physical activity and understand their concerns and issues. All recognised sport organisations and governing bodies, all Government Departments and public bodies, universities, colleges, local authorities and community planning partnerships were also issued with the survey. The combination of the focus groups and survey responses

provided a comprehensive, rich and up to date evidence to support the development of the strategy.

- UN International Day for the Eradication of Poverty 2019 - In October 2019 Poverty Policy Branch worked in partnership with Voluntary and Community Division and the Belfast Youth Forum to facilitate an event to publicise and raise awareness of UN International Day for the Eradication of Poverty focusing on the theme 'Acting together to empower children, their families and communities to end poverty'. Permanent Secretaries and senior officials from across Government departments listened to the Belfast Youth Forum and discussed wide ranging issues affecting young people in NI. The Belfast Youth Forum presented its campaign 'Poverty: It's not a Choice'. The event was successful as the young people felt it provided them the opportunity to have a meaningful exchange of views with Permanent Secretaries and senior officials and policy makers. Officials gave a commitment to continue the engagement to ensure young people's views are represented as we work to develop new strategies to help tackle poverty.
- International Children's Day 2019 - In November 2019 the Poverty Policy Branch organised an

opportunity to celebrate, recognise and promote International Children's Day which also coincided with the 30th Anniversary of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child. The day was marked by involving pupils from Campbell College Junior School, St Joseph's Primary and Strandtown Primary highlighting Arts Council of NI's funding for culture for young children, by publicising 'Jacks Journey', a project run through Eastside Arts' CS Lewis Festival. This highlighted the goal of International Children's day throughout the Department of Communities which is to improve child welfare worldwide, promote and celebrate children's rights and promote togetherness and awareness amongst all children. The event provided an opportunity to promote the day and raise a greater awareness and understanding.

- Public consultation on the Sign Language Framework. The Framework documents were translated in to BSL and ISL for the Deaf and sign language community, including a version tailored for deaf children and young people to facilitate consultation feedback. A Braille version was also produced following consultation with the Deafblind community. Respondents to the consultation were able to

respond by completing an online survey form. This response form was also downloadable from the Department's website and available in hard copy form on request or through key Deaf organisations. Submissions were also accepted by email and post. In addition, for the first time in a consultation in Northern Ireland, the Department set up a dedicated Facebook page to encourage and collate filmed BSL and ISL contributions reflecting the visual nature of sign languages. In addition to Facebook, BSL and ISL contributions to the consultation were also accepted in filmed formats on DVDs.

- Draft Programme for Government Delivery Plan (2016-2017): A range of consultation events for the associated draft delivery plan were held across NI providing people who had not the capacity to travel the opportunity to participate. Venues were chosen based on the numbers of DLA claimants in the area. Accessible formats of the draft plan (Easy Read, Child Friendly and Braille versions) were provided for participants and sign language interpreters were available on request. Adopting a co-design approach, in which we engaged a sector umbrella body (Disability Action) to support us during consultation, meant we included a sector of the population who are

traditionally hard to reach.

- The Clifton Gateway Public Realm Scheme consultation included a dedicated workshop for people with disabilities and older people, with approximately 30 people attending. These groups were also represented when IMTAC undertook a walking audit of the Clifton Gateway and Belfast Streets Ahead Phase 5 project areas.
- As a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic, Minister Hargey established the Emergencies Leadership Group to co-ordinate a joint Government/3rd Sector response to the Covid-19 crisis. The group made up from representatives from the 3rd Sector and DfC reported to the Minister and onward to the NI Executive Emergency Contingencies Group throughout the crisis.
- The Department considers its approach to consulting with directly affected individuals as well as with representative groups, particularly in relation to young people and those with learning disabilities, to be sufficient.

3. The authority's arrangements for assessing and consulting on the impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted on the promotion of equality of opportunity.

3a) Outline and discuss the number of policies your authority subject to screening over the past five years, setting out the number and percentage of 'policies screened in' on the basis of equality considerations and the percentage 'screened in' on the basis of the good relations duty.

- As set out in 2(b), the Department has carried out 292 screening exercises (May 2016 to March 2021). Appendix 1 lists the Department's policies which have been screened out for EQIA since May 2016). Three policies, were subject to full EQIA during this period.
- The Department has found that the mainstreaming of equality considerations into the policy development process, along with detailed pre-consultation, have resulted in most equality issues being resolved at screening stage. This in turn has resulted in only three EQIAs being required as more robust screening has ensured that policies are solidly based in respect of promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations.

- Copies of all screening exercises carried out are forwarded to the Department's Equality Unit. The Department, where possible, includes the full screening exercise as an annex to the corresponding policy consultation document to promote transparency and provide a further opportunity for the Section 75 groups to challenge the Department on the screening form. Screening exercise undertaken during this period have been published by the Department on its website.

3b) To what extent did your authority's consideration of the screening criteria not identify equal opportunity implications on any of section 75 categories, but for which consultees then highlighted problems?

- In general, Section 75 Screening appropriately identified equality implications. The Department continues to issue lists of all policies screened out for EQIA to Section 75 groups on a quarterly basis, as well as publishing them on its website. Over the period of this review, minimal feedback has been received from the Section 75 groups highlighting problems with the screened out policies. Below are some examples of feedback received by the Department.

- The Inner Walled City Public Realm Scheme was screened in April 2016. Following publication of the screening and issue of the screening report to consultees, stakeholders provided feedback relating to physical aspects of the scheme. The Department revised the original screening in light of comments from stakeholders and made changes to the design of the scheme. The revised screening was published on the Department's website in November 2017 and shared with stakeholders. Engagement continues with stakeholders.
- In relation to the Belfast Streets Ahead Phase 3 project, the application of the interim equality scheme, specifically consultation and engagement with RNIB and Guide Dogs NI has resulted in changes to the project design (e.g. inclusion of spending place for guide dogs at Cathedral Gardens, increase to kerb heights at Library Square.
- The Clifton Gateway Scheme – DfC completed a public consultation on design proposals for the Clifton Gateway scheme in April 2019. Feedback received identified the need to make some changes at key road and pedestrian junctions. DfC has put the project on hold and is liaising with DfI to identify what changes can be made to benefit

people with a disability and older people.

- All responses received from consultees are considered by the Department with a response issued and amendments made to the policy as required.

3c) Outline over the past five years how many EQIAs your authority commenced as a result of i) initial screening and ii) as a result of screening new/revised policies subsequently, and discuss the extent that your authority has become more effective at identifying equality of opportunity dimensions in its policies.

- The Department has carried out three EQIAs over the past five years: the Pensions Scheme Bill; Allocations and the Abolition of Class 2 National Insurance Contributions: New Eligibility Tests for Contributory Benefit and Maternity Allowance; and Draft DfC Budget 2021-2022.
- The EQIA for the Pensions Scheme Bill consultation was carried out from 16 December 2016 to 9 February 2017. Two responses to the consultation were received. Both respondents agreed with the findings of the draft EQIA, that the draft proposals did not have any adverse impact on any of the Section 75 groups. However progress on the proposed Bill was

delayed due to the lack of a sitting NI Assembly from January 2017 to January 2020. Subject to Ministerial and Executive agreement, the Bill was introduced in the Assembly in 2020 and enacted June 2020.

- The EQIA for the Allocations and the Abolition of Class 2 National Insurance Contributions: New Eligibility Tests for Contributory Benefit and Maternity Allowance was carried out from 11 September 2017 to 3 November 2017. The government then delayed the abolition of Class 2 NICs by a year until 6 April 2019.
- The EQIA for the Draft DfC Budget 2021-2022 consultation was carried out from 27 January 2021 to 25 February 2021. Seventy-two responses to the consultation were received. For the most part, respondents agreed with the inequalities identified and the Section 75 categories affected in the draft EQIA. However, some consultation responses received were useful in highlighting three further Section 75 groups potentially impacted by the Department's Draft Budget allocations and the Department's

Draft EQIA was amended. The Department's final EQIA was shared with the Department of Finance and will be taken into consideration by the Executive in determining final budget 2021-2022 allocations to departments.

- Mainstreaming of equality considerations into the policy development process and the increased level of knowledge on equality issues has improved quality assurance of policy development, with direct input from the Equality Unit at an early stage ensuring a consistent approach to screening exercises.

3d) Outline over the past five year period the percentage of your authority's initial EQIA timetable that reached i) stage 6 of the EQIA process i.e. decision making, and ii) stage 7 of the EQIA process i.e. annual monitoring & publication of results, and indicate the extent that your authority has become more effective at progressing EQIAs.

- Of the three policies listed in the Department's EQIA timetable since 2016, all have completed stage 6 of the EQIA process.

4. The authority's arrangements for monitoring any adverse impact of policies adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity.

4a) To what extent were sufficient arrangements put in place to collect data relating to the nine equality categories to monitor the impact of policies and what could your authority do in future to develop monitoring arrangements?

- The Department acknowledges that monitoring and evaluation are key elements of the policy and programme development process. In order to develop a consistent approach to monitoring across the Department, the Equality Unit continued to meet with policymakers, when required, during the screening of policies to discuss data requirements. The Department's statisticians are also available to offer advice and to raise awareness of services available.
- The Department for Communities sponsors the NI Family Resources Survey. The FRS is a continuous household survey which collects information on a representative sample of approximately 2,000 private households in NI. Detailed information is recorded on respondents' income from all sources; housing tenure; caring

needs and responsibilities; disability; expenditure on housing; education; pension participation; childcare; family circumstances and child maintenance. As part of the FRS questionnaire, respondents are asked questions to capture data on all nine Section 75 categories. The analysis produced from the FRS is used by the Department to develop policy interventions and to monitor poverty levels in NI.

- The Continuous Household Survey (CHS) is another survey sponsored by DfC. The CHS is a representative, personal interview survey of adults aged 16 and over; around 4,500 individuals per annum. CHS has been running continuously since 1983, with questions about a variety of subjects including people's engagement with culture, arts and leisure activities; a key source of information for DfC. For these indicators, population level analysis, a breakdown by various sections of society along with some Section 75 categories are published. These results also feed into the NICS Outcomes Delivery Plan.
- With the introduction of Welfare Reform and the development of the mitigation schemes, it was recognised that there were gaps in the data available that would identify the Section 75

characteristics of our service users and who our policies impact upon. Operational processes for collecting Welfare Reform Mitigation Schemes claimant data to comply with the Department's Equality Scheme commitments were developed in the form of a customer survey. The Department's Professional Services Unit (PSU) receive the survey returns monthly with data available from December 2017 to March 2020. In July 2019 PSU provided analysis of the Section 75 questionnaires that were completed by recipients of Welfare Supplementary Payments during the period November 2017 to April 2019. This work resulted in the publication of a report, in October 2019, a Section 75 analysis of the Northern Ireland Supplementary Payment Scheme.

- It is recognised our responsibility to deliver better equality outcomes across all areas in the draft Programme for Government 2016/21, in particular the data for

Section 75 categories. Where gaps in data for equality groups exist, we will address these wherever possible. However it has been recognised the difficulty collecting data on ethnic minority groups and sexual orientation, for example.

- The Department is working with the NI Census Office regarding the collection of data on sexual orientation for the 2021 Census questionnaire.
- In addition to the work of the Departmental statisticians, the Equality Commission have produced a new guide **Section 75: Using Evidence in Policy Making – a signposting guide**[\(external link opens in a new window / tab\)](#). The guide was developed in partnership with NISRA and aims to be a starting point for those policymakers who are not sure where to look for Section 75 information relevant to the policy/ decision they are equality assessing or monitoring.

5. The authority's arrangements for publishing the results of equality impact assessments and of monitoring any adverse impact of policies adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity.

5a) Indicate the number of reports published outlining the results of EQIAs and monitoring over the past five years, and outline what your authority could do in future in relation to improving the publication of EQIA results and monitoring.

- The Department submits an annual progress report to the Equality Commission following the template circulated by the Commission. The report includes details of arrangements for consulting on likely impact of policies, publishing and monitoring of results and actions taken. The annual reports to the Equality Commission, together with screenings and EQIAs are published on the Department's website. Three EQIAs have been completed in the 2016-2021 reporting period and can be accessed at:

DfC Equality | Department for Communities (communities-ni.gov.uk)

6. A commitment that in making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted by it, that the public authority shall take into account any equality impact assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy.

6a) In terms of the number of EQIAs that reached stage 6 i.e. decision making to what extent were mitigation measures and alternative policies adopted?

- Of the three EQIAs reaching stage 6 in the last five years:
- Pensions Scheme Bill – the findings from the 2016/17 consultation exercise whereby two responses were received. Both respondents agreed with the findings of the draft EQIA, that the draft proposals did not have any adverse impact on any of the Section 75 groups.
- Allocations and the Abolition of Class 2 National Insurance Contributions: New Eligibility Tests for Contributory Benefit and Maternity Allowance – the findings of 2016/17 consultation exercise was null and void as the Government then delayed the abolition of Class 2 NICs by a year until 6 April 2019.

- Draft DfC Budget 2021-2022- the findings of the 2021 consultation exercise resulted in the Draft EQIA being amended as a consequence of responses received. Department's Final EQIA has been shared with the Department of Finance.
- While DfC received a number of responses in relation to its EQIAs, some comments received identified potential adverse equality impacts which the Department had overlooked. Steps were subsequently taken by the Department to amend the relevant EQIA.

6b) To what extent did consideration of EQIAs and consultations contribute to a change in policy, as opposed to policy decisions which would probably have been made in any event by your authority?

- Medical Assessments process - An ECNI Paragraph 10 investigation resulted in the withdrawal of the use of a form used for arranging medical assessment appointments for those claimants in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance. All medical assessment appointments are now made by telephone (from third party provider to claimant) which gives claimants more choice and flexibility of appointment days and slots. This improves customer service and

potentially reduces the numbers of claimants who do not attend or are unable to attend medical appointments. Feedback to date has been positive and the removal of the form, as referenced above, potentially reduces the numbers of claimants who do not attend or are unable to attend medical appointments. This impacts people receiving Employment and Support Allowance (who can be classed as people of working age with a disability).

- Belfast Streets Ahead Phase 3 - In relation to the Belfast Streets Ahead Phase 3 project the application of the equality scheme, specifically consultation and engagement with RNIB and Guide Dogs NI has resulted in changes to the project design e.g. inclusion of spending place for guide dogs at Cathedral Gardens, increase to kerb heights at Library Square.
- Syrian Refugees - During engagement with stakeholders in the health sector, schools and sporting clubs, concerns about the legal implications of Syrian refugees settled in Northern Ireland crossing the border were raised. The Department liaised with the Home Office, the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service and voluntary sector partners to develop clear guidance translated into Arabic on

the visa requirements for refugees visiting the Republic of Ireland. In addition, as many of the refugees arrive with serious health conditions and in some cases die after their arrival. As a consequence, following engagement with the representatives of Syrian families, the Department has made special arrangements for the handling of claims for Bereavement Payments and other benefits on the death of a refugee. The Belfast Islamic Centre is able to act for bereaved families as a trusted adviser in dealings with the Department on benefits issues. The Department has produced information on Islamic burial options in all districts in Northern Ireland.

- Syrian Refugees -The last arrival under the scheme was March 2020 with a total of 1,815 vulnerable refugees resettled in Northern Ireland. The Department also commissioned the NI Innovation Lab in the latter part of the year to deliver strategic insights on a challenge question ‘how do we enable refugees and the communities in which they live build a cohesive sustainable future together.’ The outcome of the lab event will assist in setting the strategic direction for future integration of refugees in Northern Ireland.

- Independent Review of PIP - In December 2017, the Department for Communities announced that Walter Rader had been appointed to carry out an Independent Review of PIP Assessment process in NI, the outcome was published on 28 June 2018. One of the recommendations in the Review related to the Department making the PIP process more accessible to customers with particular communication requirements, with specific reference to those with hearing impairments. The Video Relay Service was deployed for PIP and DCS users via a link on NI Direct. The availability of the service was promoted via the Department’s normal methods of communication.
- Women’s Centre Childcare Fund (WCCF) -This was reviewed to allow Universal Credit and Employment Support Allowance claimants to be in the eligibility criteria, therefore allowing more women to participate.
- The Department has found that pre-consultation at screening stage often helps identify any potential adverse impacts and assists with policy development at an early stage.

7. The authority's arrangements for training staff on issues relevant to the duties.

7a) To what extent were sufficient arrangements put in place to develop and deliver a training programme in accordance with scheme commitments?

- The Department has an effective communication and training programme for all staff to ensure that the Department's commitment to the Section 75 statutory duties is made clear in all relevant publications.
- Generic equality training for the Civil Service is provided by the Centre for Applied Learning (CAL). Focused training is provided for key staff directly engaged in taking forward the implementation of the Department's equality scheme commitments. The suite of equality training currently provided by CAL includes:
 - i) **An Introduction to Section 75** - this course aims to familiarise participants with the statutory duties and the associated guidance provided by the Equality Commission.
 - ii) **Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) Workshop** - this course builds on participants' knowledge of Section 75 by giving them the opportunity to consider how to carry out an EQIA, in accordance with statutory guidance, and appropriate monitoring and consultation strategies.
- iii) **Public Consultation and Engagement** - this course aims to develop knowledge and understanding of the consultation process for policymaking in the north of Ireland and to develop skills in carrying out consultations.
- iv) **Disability Awareness for Frontline Staff** - this course aims to increase knowledge of disability and to provide frontline staff with an introduction to disability awareness.
- v) **Racial Equality NICS** - the aim of this course is to ensure all NICS staff are aware of their role and responsibilities in regard to mainstreaming Racial Equality. The course presents key ideas, awareness and practical strategies for racial equality that can be incorporated into your daily actions, policy decisions and communications.
- vi) **Supporting Vulnerable People** - the NICS provides key services to the people of Northern Ireland. This course has been designed to assist DfC in supporting vulnerable people to access the help they need.

- To complement the CAL training, the Departmental Equality Unit developed bespoke Equality Awareness training sessions focusing on the specific needs of a particular branch or team.
- The Department's web pages, and intranet pages, are regularly updated and contain a useful source of information and ECNI guidance for staff on section 75 matters.
- The Department includes elements relating to Equality and Diversity awareness in training courses delivered to staff both in-house and in generic courses delivered on the Department's behalf by the Centre for Applied Learning (CAL).

7b Have all staff received awareness training and what could your authority do in future to deliver an effective training programme?

The following training and awareness raising has taken place within the last five years:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Awareness
- Positive Mental Health Toolkit for All Staff
- Disability Awareness for Frontline Staff
- Unconscious Bias
- Diversity Now Training - Diversity Now e-learning package was rolled

out to all staff in the Department. This training is designed to give participants an overview of NICS policy and procedures in Equal Opportunities and Diversity and to highlight their roles and responsibilities in implementing both NICS policies and procedures.

- The training also covers differentiating stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination and identifying the legislative framework underpinning Diversity and Equality of Opportunity and explains how the north of Ireland's diverse society impacts on the NICS. This will build on staff awareness of the Disability Discrimination legislation and promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability.
- Recruitment and Selection Training - Equality and Diversity awareness is included in the new Recruitment and Selection modular training which is delivered to those staff involved in recruitment and selection processes.
- Induction Training - The Department's online Induction package includes a section outlining the roles and responsibilities that each member of staff has in meeting Section 75 requirements. All new staff receive this information and awareness on their first day in the Department.
- To comply with Equality Scheme

commitments and to enhance staff knowledge, the Equality Unit introduced equality awareness training on the corporate learning and development plan.

- Other Awareness Seminars - DfC staff were encouraged and facilitated in attending lunch-time policy seminars arranged by the Department to help increase knowledge of key policy developments. An equality seminar was held in March 2017 at which a representative from the Equality Commission and a representative from the Department's Languages Branch delivered a presentation to staff on the statutory equality and good relations duties and sign language. The lunchtime policy seminars were further enhanced with a Good Relations seminar delivered in September 2017.
- In March 2018 the Departmental Equality Unit developed Equality Awareness training sessions for staff across the Department to supplement the training that is available from the Centre for Applied Learning. This involved 16 sessions with over 180 members of staff from various business areas across the Department. Of those who completed a satisfaction survey, 87% stated that it helped increase their understanding of Section 75.

- In addition to generic training undertaken by staff in the Department, Equality guidance on the Department's internal intranet is continuously kept under review and updated to include ECNI publications. Relevant equality articles are published in the Corporate Brief for staff which is shared broadly across the Department.

8. The authority's arrangements for ensuring and assessing public access to information and to services provided by the authority.

8a) To what extent were sufficient arrangements put in place to ensure and assess public access to information and to services provided by the authority?

- The Department is committed to ensuring that the information disseminated and the services provided by the Department are fully accessible to the public and recognises that some groups may not have the same access to information as others and that this can have an impact on their subsequent access to services. To ensure equality of opportunity in accessing information, the Department will provide information in alternative formats on request,

where reasonably practicable.

Where the exact request cannot be met, the Department will ensure a reasonable alternative is provided.

- Where appropriate, the Department takes account of relevant existing and developing good practice such as the Equality Commission's "Let's Talk Let's Listen" and guidance issued by the Participation Network etc. The Department is committed to ensuring that the services provided are fully accessible to everyone in the community across the Section 75 categories.
- In locating its public offices, the Department seeks to ensure that no section of the public is deterred from using the service for any reason and takes account of the relevant provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
- The Equality Unit issues a forward look of consultation exercises on a quarterly basis, along with a list of policies screened out for the previous quarter, to the Section 75 groups. This information is also published on the Department's website and allows Section 75 groups the opportunity to plan their resources and focus on the most relevant consultation exercises.
- In addition, each quarter the Department issues an email to Section 75 consultees advising of policies screened and ongoing

consultations. The email notification is translated into Irish and issued to those consultees who wish to receive information from the Department in Irish. Hard copy screening reports are also issued to consultees who prefer to receive information in this format. One consultee, as per their request, receives information via email and hard copy.

- The Equality Unit continues to monitor the Department's Section 75 complaints and a measure of its success has been that, over the past five years, minimal complaints have been received around access to information and services.
- Translation and Interpretation
 - During the reporting period the Department has provided information to customers in a range of alternative formats. During the reporting period interpreting/translation services have been used on 4,559 occasions, in 34 different languages. The five most commonly serviced languages have been Bulgarian, Arabic, Polish, Romanian and Slovak. The majority of demand was in Working Age Services, where the interpreting service is used on a daily basis, assisting with benefit applications/enquiries and interviewing customers applying for a National Insurance Number. The Equality Unit also issues notification

of its quarterly screening report in Irish to relevant consultees.

- Universal Credit - Information videos were produced including Irish Sign Language and British Sign Language and a Plain English review of new Universal Credit online content and literature including 'making and managing your claim' information.
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP) - PIP information videos were produced explaining what to expect at assessment and how DfC assesses your claim including Irish Sign Language and British Sign Language. Easy read versions of PIP guide and review were also produced.
- The JAM Card – The Department began implementing the JAM card initiative in June 2019 to support people with communication difficulties. The JAM Card allows people with a communication difficulty to inform a service provider that they need Just A Minute of patience and understanding. Training was made available to all staff and line managers were asked to ensure that staff in their team were provided with the time needed to complete the awareness training. JAM Card friendly offices will display the JAM Card logo in a prominent position visible to all visitors entering the building.

Any person requiring Just A Minute can then show their JAM Card if necessary.

9. The authority's timetable for measures proposed in the scheme.

9a) Outline the extent to which measures set out in the original timetable have been implemented. Any detailed information should be included as an appendix to the report.

- The timetable included in Appendix 3 of the Equality Scheme includes a timetable for proposed measures. Following the approval of the Department's new Equality Scheme in 2016, a number of actions were taken to raise awareness and deliver implementation, including:
 - i) Briefing of staff through the Department's branch team briefing mechanism;
 - ii) Information through the written team brief bulletin;
 - iii) Production of a summary version of the new Equality Scheme;
 - iv) Consultees advised of the new Equality Scheme;
 - v) An annual exercise to update the consultation list; and

- vi) Roll out of the new Equality Screening Template and Associated guidance.
 - A reminder was issued by e-mail to all policy leads reminding them of the importance of equality considerations in policy development and covered key issues including the definition of policy; the need for robust screenings (and EQIAs if required); consultation/ engagement and guidance, and training courses and sources of support.
 - When appropriate, the internal team briefing system, lunchtime seminars and e-mail articles are used to communicate progress and raise awareness on the delivery of the Section 75 duties to staff.
 - The Department's Intranet pages are regularly updated and contain a useful source of information and ECNI guidance for staff on Section 75 matters.
 - Screening reports and EQIAs are published on the Departmental website.
 - The Department continues to review actions and submit annual reports to the ECNI on progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and good relations duties, implementing Equality Scheme, Equality Action Plan and Disability Action Plan commitments.
 - Senior management are involved in the ongoing review process with the Annual Progress Report approved at Permanent Secretary and Ministerial level.
 - This five year review fulfils the commitment to carry out a review of the Equality Scheme within five years.
- 9b) If your authority was to be reconstituted in the next five years what would be the main scheme actions/equality considerations that an incoming authority should address? Any detailed information should be included as an appendix to the report.**
- The Department's Equality Unit has a full set of procedural documents in place along with timetables detailing Equality Scheme progress requirements over the forthcoming years. All past and current publications are also kept in an easily accessible electronic filing system to enable knowledge management throughout the organisation. All of these measures will ensure sound Equality Scheme knowledge transfer should the need arise in the future.

10. Details of how the scheme will be published.

10a) Were scheme commitments in this section delivered and what evidence supports this view?

- The Department has complied with its commitment to make its Equality Scheme available in print form and alternative formats free on request. In addition, the Scheme is also available on the Department's website and its intranet site for staff.

11. The authority's arrangements for dealing with complaints arising from a failure to comply with the scheme.

11a) Outline the number and nature of complaints received by your authority, and what your authority could do in future to develop its complaints handling process and learn from complaints.

- The Department received eight Section 75 complaints during the period of this review. These are listed below:

Complaint 2016/17

- The complaint was in relation to the failure of the Department to provide on request a copy of the Community Hall's Pilot Programme

equality screening template within the requester's timescale. The complaint was resolved and the complainant was provided with a copy of the screening template.

Complaint(s) 2017/18

- Universal Credit - two child rule (x 2)
 - The complaints related to the allegation that the Department failed to screen or carry out an Equality Impact Assessment in respect of the element of Universal Credit that involved the "two child policy". The outcome was that the responsibility for the discharge of the statutory equality duties did not rest with the Department but with the Department for Work and Pensions who introduced the legislation and regulations.
- Provision of audio equipment for Personal Independence Payment (PIP) assessments – The complaint related to the failure of the Department to screen the current guidance relating to audio recording of assessments for PIP. By not screening, the Department was in breach of its own Equality Scheme. The Department considered this area and advised that a screening exercise on the current policy regarding audio recording of PIP assessments would be carried out as soon as possible.

Complaint 2018/19

- Universal Credit - two child rule
 - The complaint related to the allegation that the Department failed to screen or carry out an Equality Impact Assessment in respect of the element of Universal Credit that involved the “two child policy”. The outcome was that the responsibility for the discharge of the statutory equality duties did not rest with the Department but with the Department for Work and Pensions who introduced the legislation and regulations.

It should be noted that the three complaints received by the Department in relation to UC two child rule over the period 2017-2019 were from three different organisations, each citing the same complaint.

Complaint(s) 19/20

- Review of Welfare Mitigation Schemes - The complaint related to the Review of Welfare Mitigation Schemes which was published by the Department on 25 March 2019 and the Department’s failure to screen and consult on the policy proposals set out in the Review. The Department replied stating there was no requirement for a Section 75 screening exercise to be undertaken as no changes to current policy were under

consideration in the Review. On the 12 September 2019, the Equality Commission received a request from the complainant to investigate an alleged failure by the Department to comply with commitments in its Equality Commission approved Equality Scheme in relation to Review of Welfare Mitigation Scheme. Following initial investigation, the Commission’s Statutory Duty Investigations Committee (SDIC) considered the matter on 20 November 2019 and decided not to authorise an investigation of the complaint.

- DfC Budget 2019/20 -The complaint related to the allegation that the Department failed to properly conduct an Equality Impact Assessment in respect of the Department’s 2019-20 Budget process. The outcome was an explanation from the Department that as there had been no change to policy and our initial equality assessment indicated no adverse impacts, a full Equality Impact Assessment of the Department 2019-20 budget allocations was not required.
- Definition of Affordable Housing
 - On 20 December 2019, the Department received notification from the Equality Commission’s Investigation Team that they had received a request from a

complainant to investigate an alleged failure by the Department to comply with commitments in its approved Equality Scheme in relation to the review of the Definition of the Affordable Housing Policy. The Commission's Statutory Duty Investigations Committee (SDIC) considered this matter on 8 April 2020 and decided not to authorise an investigation of the complaint.

- The arrangements for making and dealing with a complaint are set out in Chapter 8 of the Equality Scheme and clearly referenced on the Department's website.

12. A commitment to conducting a review of the scheme within five years of its submission to the Equality Commission and to forwarding a report of this review to the Equality Commission.

12a) What has been your authority's experience of conducting this review? To what extent has the Commission's guidance been useful in undertaking the review?

- This Review has provided the Department with the opportunity to reflect on the Equality Scheme and has assisted the Department in refining and improving its approach

to its Equality Scheme and in fulfilling its statutory duty.

- The Review has also highlighted the learning curve the Department has experienced regarding Section 75 and fulfilment of its Equality Scheme.
- Equality screening has now become well embedded within the Department's policy development process. The Department has found that, due to the mainstreaming of equality considerations into the policy development process along with detailed pre and targeted consultations, most equality issues are taken into account at screening stage. This in turn has resulted in a low number of EQIAs required over the years, as more robust screening has ensured that policies are solidly based in respect of promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations. A measurement of this is the fact that the Department has had minimal Section 75 complaints over the period of this review.
- The Department has been proactive on training and has ensured that sufficient resources have been allocated.
- Participation in The Executive Office's Equality Practitioners Group and the Departmental Diversity Working Group has proved to be a very useful mechanism for open

discussion, building trust and developing good relationships and in ensuring that examples of good practice are highlighted and shared. Any issues of concern or interest are reported back to senior management.

- The Commission's Guidance on Conducting a 5 Year Review (2016) and previous guidance, including the Five Year Review Reporting Template, have been useful tools for the Department in carrying out this review.

Department for Communities' Policies, Programme and Draft Legislation subject to Equality Screening during 2016- 2021

2016/17

Title of policy subject to screening	Screening decision? e.g. screened in, screened out, mitigation, EQIA
Selection of Additional UC Service Centres	OUT
The Occupational and Personal Pension Schemes (Modification of Schemes and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016	OUT
The Pensions (2015 Act) (Contributions Equivalent Premium) (Consequential Provision) and (Savings) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016	OUT
The Occupational and Personal Pension Schemes (Automatic Enrolment) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016	OUT
Review of the Supporting People Programme - Implementation Plan	OUT
Pension Sharing Regulations	OUT
Occupational Pensions Schemes Charges and Governance	OUT
Pensions Protection Funds and Occupational and Personal Pensions Schemes Miscellaneous Amendments	OUT
Appeals Reforms	OUT
Inner Walled City Public Realm Scheme	OUT
BSC Lower Falls Action Plan	OUT
Digital Modernisation of Inland Fisheries Group using ICT Or Digital Modernisation of Angling Permits and Licences	OUT
2nd Tranch WR Regs - Disability Premium and Carers Allowance and Loss of DLA	OUT
Discretionary Support Regs	OUT

Title of policy subject to screening	Screening decision? e.g. screened in, screened out, mitigation, EQIA
Removal of Family Premium and Reduction in backdating	OUT
Direct Earnings Attachment	OUT
Rent to Own	OUT
SSSC	OUT
VCU Future Support Arrangements	OUT
Employers Duties (Implementation) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016	OUT
The Hybrid Schemes Quality Requirements (Amendment) Rules (Northern Ireland) 2016	OUT
BSC Tigers Bay and Mount Collyer Action Plan	OUT
BSC Lower Shankill and Brown Square	OUT
BSC Lenadoon and Glencolin	OUT
BSC Lower Oldpark and Hillview Action Plan	OUT
Payments to Councillors Regulations	OUT
Finance Support Service Sites	OUT
Cookstown JBO	OUT
Ballynahinch JBO	OUT
Newcastle JBO	OUT
The Pensions (2015 Act) (Consequential Amendments) Order (NI) 2016	OUT
PfG Indicators 17,32,33	OUT
Doury Road Action Plan	OUT
Benefit Cap Welfare Reform	OUT
The Social Security (Great Britain Reciprocal Arrangements) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016.	OUT
The Social Security (Credits, and Crediting and Treatment of Contributions) (Consequential and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016.	OUT

Title of policy subject to screening	Screening decision? e.g. screened in, screened out, mitigation, EQIA
The Occupation Pensions Revaluation Order	OUT
PfG Indicators 19, 28	OUT
Temporary Absence SPC Regs	OUT
Temp absence HB Regs	OUT
St Patricks Barracks	OUT
The Pensions (2015 Act) (Revaluation For Transitional Pensions) Order (NI) 2016	OUT
SSSC Revised Screening (per Equality Coalition Request for Review)	OUT
WR Supplementary Payments	OUT
Housing PfG Indicators 8 & 48	OUT
The Occupation and Personal Pension Schemes (Automatic Enrolment) Regulations	OUT
Pensions Scheme Bill	EQIA
The State Pension Revaluation for Transitional Pensions Order (Northern Ireland) 2016	OUT
Welfare Supplementary Payments SSSC Including Policy Refinement	OUT
Review of the Northern Ireland Code of Conduct for Councillors	OUT
Women's Early Intervention Programme (DFC's 'Early' Fresh Start Initiative)	OUT
Registered Social Housing Providers reclassification by the Office for National Statistics	OUT
Review of the Role and Regulations of the Private Rented Sector - Proposals for Change	OUT
Retirement Provision Digital Service	OUT
Community Hall's Pilot	OUT
The Social Security Revaluation of Earnings Factors Order (Northern Ireland) 2017.	OUT
Levy Ceiling & Compensation Cap Order	OUT
The Social Security (Industrial Injuries)(Prescribed Diseases) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017.	OUT

Title of policy subject to screening	Screening decision? e.g. screened in, screened out, mitigation, EQIA
Decrease in the prescribed fee payable by qualifying lenders	OUT
Social Security (Invalid Care Allowance) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2017	OUT
Inner Walled City Public Realm Scheme (revised in light of RNIB comments)	OUT
Security Benefits Up-rating Order (NI) 2017 - remaking of the legislation	OUT
The Bereavement Support Payment (Consequential Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 2017	OUT
The Pensions Schemes Act 2015 (Judicial Pensions) (Consequential Provision) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017	OUT
The Guaranteed Minimum Pensions Increase Order (Northern Ireland) 2017	OUT
The Automatic Enrolment (Earnings Trigger and Qualifying Earnings Band) Order (Northern Ireland) 2017	OUT
Community Halls (revised screening March 2017)	OUT
The State Pension Debits and Credits (Revaluation) Order (Northern Ireland) 2017	OUT
The Employers' Duties (Implementation) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017	OUT
Programme for Government Indicator 27	OUT
Steps to Success	OUT
Contracted-out Schemes and Graduated Retirement Benefit Regs	OUT
The Pension Protection Fund Modification Regs & Transitional Provision Order	OUT

2017/18

Title of policy subject to screening	Screening decision? e.g. screened in, screened out, mitigation, EQIA
Draft Homelessness Strategy	OUT
UC Staff Selection	OUT
Liofa Intensive Courses	OUT
Rent to Own Rescreening May 2017	OUT
Change to Voluntary Participation Screening Form	OUT
PIP Consultation Centres (3 new sites)	OUT
Early Fresh Start "Women's Programme"	OUT
Amalgamation of Downpatrick SSO and JC	OUT
Skipper Street Project	OUT
T:BUC - Uniting Communities Delivery Framework	OUT
The Social Security (Emergency Funds) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017	OUT
The Employers' Duties (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017	OUT
Annual uprating of pensions and benefits - remaking the legislation	OUT
Social Security (Infected Blood and Thalidomide) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017	OUT
Relocation of Bereavement Benefits	OUT
Bereavement Support Payment Regulations (No 2)	OUT
Affordable Warmth Scheme Review	OUT
Social Supermarkets	OUT
The Electronic Transfer of Appeals Responses to The Appeals Service	OUT
The Occupational Pensions (Revaluation) Order (Northern Ireland) 2017	OUT

Title of policy subject to screening	Screening decision? e.g. screened in, screened out, mitigation, EQIA
The State Pension Revaluation for Transitional Pensions Order (Northern Ireland) 2017	OUT
The State Pension Debits and Credits (Revaluation) (No. 2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2017	OUT
Tax Credit Debt Project (Non-UC)	OUT
Implementation of a replacement for the Simple Payment service - i.movo	OUT
Section 75 mandatory training	OUT
The Social Security (Miscellaneous Amendments No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017	OUT
The Social Security Revaluation Order 2018	OUT
Social Fund Funeral Payments	OUT
The Pension Protection Fund and Occupational Pension Schemes (Levy Ceiling and Compensation Cap) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018	OUT
The Guaranteed Minimum Payment Order	OUT
The Automatic Enrolment (Earnings Trigger and Qualifying Earnings Band) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018	OUT
Housing Benefit Executive Determination (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2018	OUT
The Social Security (Invalid Care Allowance) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018	OUT
Up-rating - Benefits and Pensions	OUT
Up-rating - Benefits and Pensions - remaking the legislation	OUT
Small Grants Programme 17/18	OUT
The Pension Schemes Act 2015 (Transitional Provisions and Appropriate Independent Advice) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018 & The Pension Schemes Act 2015 (Transitional Provisions and Appropriate Independent Advice) (Amendment No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018	OUT
The Occupational Pension Schemes Act 2015 (Preservation of Benefits and Charges and Governance) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018	OUT
Local Government Consequential Amendments Regulations 2018	OUT
The Occupational Pension Schemes (Administration and Disclosure) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018	OUT

Title of policy subject to screening	Screening decision? e.g. screened in, screened out, mitigation, EQIA
ESA Mandation (Steps to Success)	OUT
The Contracting-out (Transfer and Transfer Payment) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018	OUT
The Occupational Pension Schemes (Employer Debt and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018	OUT
Allocations and the Abolition of Class 2 National Insurance Contributions: New Eligibility Tests for Contributory Benefits and Maternity Allowance EQIA.	EQIA

2018/19

Title of policy subject to screening	Screening decision? e.g. screened in, screened out, mitigation, EQIA
ESA Mandation (Steps to Success)	OUT
Housing Development Grant	OUT
Fines Regulations	OUT
PIP Consultation Centres Revised Screening May 2018	OUT
Small Capital Grants programme Revised Screening	OUT
Transformation of Benefit Security Division	OUT
Establishment of an Ulster-Scots Institute	OUT
UC Contingency Fund	OUT
Volunteering Small Grants programme	OUT
Irish Language Joint Pilot Initiatives	OUT
Gaeltacht Quarter	OUT
State Pension Credit (Amendment) (Additional Amount for Child or Qualifying Young Person) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018	OUT
Shankill Road Public Realm & Environmental Improvements (PREI) Scheme	OUT

Title of policy subject to screening	Screening decision? e.g. screened in, screened out, mitigation, EQIA
Indicator 19 Delivery Plan - % Population Living in Absolute and Relative Poverty	OUT
Apply and Maintain Carers Allowance and DRS/CAMLite	OUT
Rates Support Grant	OUT
Audio Recording of PIP Assessments	OUT
Sign Language Budget	OUT
The Social Security (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018	OUT
POCA Conversion for over 80's	OUT
ESA Mandation (Steps to Success) - review of screening October 18	OUT
Greater Clarendon (Sailortown) Delivery Framework	OUT
Prescribed Diseases (Amendment) Regulations	OUT
Turas Irish Language Project - Refurbishment of premises	OUT
Treatment of Arrears of Benefits Regulations	OUT
Uprating - remaking of legislation	OUT
Small Capital Grants programme 2018-19	OUT
Capital investment to refurbish James Street Presbyterian Church (Art and the Great Hunger)	OUT
The Pension Protection Fund (Pensionable Service) and Occupational Pension Schemes (Investment and Disclosure) (Amendment and Modification) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018	OUT
Lawfulness Pilot Programme	OUT
The Social Security (Income-related Benefits) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018	OUT
Relocation of Social Fund Funeral Payments	OUT
The Social Security (Claims and Payments) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018	OUT

Title of policy subject to screening	Screening decision? e.g. screened in, screened out, mitigation, EQIA
The Appeals Service Transformation and Northern Ireland Appeals Processing System Replacement	OUT
The Bereavement Support Payment (No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018	OUT
The State Pension Debits and Credits (Revaluation) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018	OUT
The State Pension Revaluation for Transitional Pensions Order (Northern Ireland) 2018.	OUT
The Occupational Pension Schemes (Cross-border Activities) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018	OUT
The Social Fund and Income-Related Benefits (Miscellaneous Amendments and Savings) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018	OUT
The Child Support (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018	OUT
Retirement Provision Digital Services	OUT
Provision of a grant to purchase Sensory Equipment for the new National Autistic Centre as part of the “Your School Your Club” initiative	OUT
Allocation of £2.1m to Belfast City Council	OUT
The Occupational Pensions (Revaluation) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018	OUT
BSP Claim Manager	OUT
Endorsement of the Sports Grounds Safety Authority’s Green Guide 6th Edition – and recommended use within the NI sports grounds sector	OUT
Re-screening iro Benefit Cap Dec 18	OUT
Capital Project - City of Belfast Boxing Club	OUT
Greenmount Golf and Greenkeeping Academy - Capital Project	OUT
Womens Aid Centre - Capital Project	OUT
DfC Arts Facilities - Glasgowbury - Capital Project	OUT
DfC Access and Inclusion Programme 2018-19	OUT
Vineyard Compassion Linklogs Capital Project	OUT
The Occupational Pensions (Revaluation) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018	OUT

Title of policy subject to screening	Screening decision? e.g. screened in, screened out, mitigation, EQIA
The Social Security Revaluation of Earnings Factors Order (Northern Ireland) 2019	OUT
Líofa Gaeltacht Bursary Scheme	OUT
Temporary threshold uplift for fraud investigations	OUT
The Pension Protection Fund and Occupational Pension Schemes (Levy Ceiling and Compensation Cap) Order (Northern Ireland) 2019	OUT
The Guaranteed Minimum Pensions Increase Order (Northern Ireland) 2019	OUT
The Automatic Enrolment (Earnings Trigger and Qualifying Earnings Band) Order (Northern Ireland) 2019	OUT
Social Fund Recovery from customers in receipt of DLA/AA/PIP only	OUT
Annual up-rating of pensions and benefits	OUT
Definition of Affordable Housing	OUT
Recruitment of Operational Administrative Officers on Fixed Term Contracts	OUT
Budget 2019/20 – Rates Support Grant (RSG)	OUT
Postponement of work capability assessments for customers of Employment and Support Allowance and Universal Credit undertaking programmes of support	OUT
An Culturlann purchase of former Broadway Presbyterian Church at 216 Falls Road	OUT
Special Events - licensing	OUT
Annual up-rating of pensions and benefits – remaking of the legislation	OUT
Make the call Wraparound Service – Effective engagement with people, stakeholders and delivery partners	OUT
The Bereavement Support Payment Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019	OUT

2019/20

Title of policy subject to screening	Screening decision? e.g. screened in, screened out, mitigation, EQIA
Make the Call Wraparound Service – Effective engagement with people, stakeholders and delivery partners	OUT
The Social Security (Income-related Benefits) (Updating and Amendment No. 2) (EU Exit) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019.	OUT
The Employment Equality (Age) (Amendment) Regulations	OUT
Volunteering Small Grants Programme 2018/19	OUT
The Occupational Pension Schemes (Investment and Disclosure) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019	OUT
The Child Support (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019	OUT
Interdepartmental Homelessness Action Plan - Year 2	OUT
Grant payment towards the refurbishment of a new VOYPIC/ Include Youth Shared Youth Facility	OUT
Annual up-rating of pensions and benefits	OUT
Introduction of single exceptions method of payment	OUT

Title of policy subject to screening	Screening decision? e.g. screened in, screened out, mitigation, EQIA
Transforming Debt Project – Implementation of a new Digital Debt Service and improved analytic solutions to enhance service delivery to customers	OUT
The Universal Credit Contingency Fund (UCCF) (change to eligibility criteria effective from January 2020)	OUT
City Centre Connectivity Study – Vision for Belfast City Centre	OUT
Definition of Affordable Housing - Revised Screening	OUT
The State Pension Revaluation for Transitional Pensions Order (Northern Ireland) 2019.	OUT
The State Pension Debits and Credits (Revaluation) Order (Northern Ireland) 2019	OUT
The Occupational Pensions (Revaluation) Order (Northern Ireland) 2019	OUT
Mediation Service for the Private Rented Sector in Northern Ireland	OUT
Support for Philanthropic Giving	OUT
Access to Work (NI)	OUT
Disability and Carer’s Support (DACs) System Deactivation Project	OUT
Líofa Gaeltacht Bursary Scheme 2020	OUT
Grant Administration Guide – Pension Contribution Policy for Funded Posts	OUT
Promotion of Lawfulness – Safer Borrowing Pilot	OUT
The Social Security Revaluation of Earnings Factors Order (Northern Ireland) 2020	OUT
Women’s Centre Childcare Fund (WCCF)	OUT
The Pension Protection Fund and Occupational Pension Schemes	OUT
(Levy Ceiling and Compensation Cap) Order (Northern Ireland) 2020	OUT
The Guaranteed Minimum Pensions Increase Order (Northern Ireland) 2020	OUT
The Automatic Enrolment (Earnings Trigger and Qualifying Earnings Band) Order (Northern Ireland) 2020	OUT
Annual up-rating of social security pensions and benefits	OUT

Title of policy subject to screening	Screening decision? e.g. screened in, screened out, mitigation, EQIA
Discretionary Support (Amendment) (Covid-19) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020	OUT
The Occupational and Personal Pension Schemes (General Levy) (Revocation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020	OUT
Discretionary Support (Amendment No. 2) (Covid-19) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020	OUT

2020/21

Title of policy subject to screening	Screening decision? e.g. screened in, screened out, mitigation, EQIA
Amend notice to quit through the Private Tenancies (Emergency Modifications) Bill 2020	OUT
Pension Schemes Bill 2020	OUT
Contribution to Coronavirus Community Fund	OUT
Covid-19 Hardship Fund – Support to the Sports Sector	OUT
Temporary Secondment of Health Care Professionals to NI Health Trusts	OUT
Covid-19 Work Capability Assessment Strategy	OUT
Flexibility of District Council meetings during Coronavirus	OUT
The Advisor Discretion Fund	OUT
The Travel to Interview Scheme	OUT
Legislative Consent Motion: Amendments to Public Lending Right contained within Section 31 of the Digital Economy Act 2017	OUT
Creative Fund for Organisations	OUT
Covid-19 Charity Support Fund	OUT
The Universal Credit (Great Britain Reciprocal Arrangements) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020	OUT
Introduction of additional hearing options for Appeal Tribunal	OUT
The Social Fund Funeral Expenses Payment (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020	OUT

Title of policy subject to screening	Screening decision? e.g. screened in, screened out, mitigation, EQIA
DfC Access and Inclusion Programme	OUT
The State Pension Credit (Coronavirus) (Electronic Claims) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020	OUT
Future In-Work Support Programme to assist people with disabilities	OUT
The Five Cs Public Realm Project	OUT
Irish FA Foundation - Fresh Start Through Sport	OUT
The Pension Protection Fund (Moratorium and Arrangements for Companies in Financial Difficulty) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020	OUT
Covid 19 Recovery Revitalisation Programme	OUT
The Supporting People Policy Framework	OUT
Active Ageing Strategy 2016-2021 (Refreshed 2020 and extended to 2022)	OUT
Work Ready Employment Service	OUT
Amend notice to quit through the Private Tenancies (Emergency Modifications) Bill 2020 - extension	OUT
Deployment of Video Relay Service across all Benefit Areas of the Department for Communities	OUT
Covid-19 Social Enterprise Fund	OUT
The draft Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 – McCloud Remedy	OUT
Supporting People, Building Communities and Shaping Places	OUT
Department for Communities Strategy 2020 - 2025	OUT
Expansion to the Adviser Discretion Fund	OUT
Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Covid Recovery Fund	OUT
Incentivised Work Experience Programme with Opportunity Guarantee for Young People	OUT
The Occupational Pensions (Revaluation) Order (Northern Ireland) 2020	OUT
Farset Youth & Community Development Ltd – Conflict Resolution Interface Social Programme (CRISP)	OUT

Title of policy subject to screening	Screening decision? e.g. screened in, screened out, mitigation, EQIA
Gambling Policy	OUT
Covid-19 Culture, Language, Arts & Heritage Support Programme 2020-2021 Funding	OUT
Covid-19 Sports Sustainability Fund	OUT
The State Pension Revaluation for Transitional Pensions (No.2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2020.	OUT
The State Pension Debits and Credits (Revaluation) (No.2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2020	OUT
The Personal Independence Payment (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2020	OUT
Warm, Well and Connected Programme	OUT
Budget 2021-24 – Work & Health and Supporting People Groups	OUT
Condition Management Programme	OUT
The Covid-19 Heating Payment Scheme	OUT
Access to Food and Essential Items	OUT
The Pension Protection Fund (State Aid) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020	OUT
Carer's Allowance Online Solution	OUT
The Universal Credit (Earned Income) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020	OUT
The Social Security (Coronavirus) (Prisoners) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020	OUT
The Social Security (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020	OUT
Income Support (IS) and Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) planned on boarding to Document Repository System (DRS)/ Customer Account Management Lite (CAMLite).	OUT
Transforming Finance Support Services	OUT
The Guaranteed Minimum Pensions Increase Order (Northern Ireland) 2021	OUT
The Employment and Support Allowance and Universal Credit (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020	OUT
	OUT

Title of policy subject to screening	Screening decision? e.g. screened in, screened out, mitigation, EQIA
The Statutory Sick Pay (General) (Coronavirus Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020	OUT
Local Government (Capital Finance and Accounting) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2021	OUT
Shantallow Community Residents Association (SCRA) Ballyarnett Community Safety & Development Programme (Galliagh Pilot)	OUT
The Social Security (Income-Related Benefits) (Persons of Northern Ireland - Family Members) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020.	OUT
Workable (NI)	OUT
DFC Business Plan 2020 - 2022	OUT
The Social Fund Funeral Expenses Payment (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2021	OUT
Annual up-rating of social security pensions, benefits and lump sum payments	OUT
The Social Security Revaluation of Earnings Factors Order (Northern Ireland) 2021	OUT
The Pension Protection Fund and Occupational Pension Schemes (Levy Ceiling) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021	OUT
The Universal Credit (Transitional Amendment) (Claimants Previously Entitled To a Severe Disability Premium) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021	OUT
Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity	OUT
The Automatic Enrolment (Earnings Trigger and Qualifying Earnings Band) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021	OUT
The Private Tenancies (Coronavirus Modifications) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021	OUT
Attendance Allowance Online Solution	OUT
The Charity Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 (Amendment Bill) 2021	OUT
Affordable Warmth Scheme	OUT
The Occupational & Pension Scheme (General Levy) Amendment Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021	OUT
Developing Women in the Community	OUT
JobStart Employer Incentive Scheme	OUT
Disposal of Land Adjacent to 425 Springfield Road, Belfast to Education Authority	OUT

Title of policy subject to screening	Screening decision? e.g. screened in, screened out, mitigation, EQIA
Extension of Welfare Supplementary Payments beyond 31st March 2020	OUT
- Welfare Supplementary Payment (Extension) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021	OUT
Welfare Supplementary Payment (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021	OUT
(in respect of Benefit Cap and Social Sector Size Criteria).	OUT
Universal Credit (Extension of Coronavirus Measures) Regulations (NI) 2021	OUT
Development of a Private Sector Leasing scheme for the NI housing market	OUT
Draft DfC Budget 2021-2022	EQIA

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