

# DEPARTMENT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE (NI)



## Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties Annual Progress Report

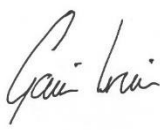
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Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:

<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/department-infrastructures-equality-scheme>

### Signature:



**This report has been prepared using a template circulated by the Equality Commission. It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and good relations duties, and implementing Equality Scheme commitments and Disability Action Plans.**

**This report reflects progress made between April 2021 and March 2022.**

Alternative versions can be sought from the DfI Equality Unit by:

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<b>INDEX</b> <b>(Links are embedded in titles)</b>		<b>Page</b>
<b>PART A</b>	Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Scheme.	<b>3</b>
<b>Section 1</b>	Equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice	<b>5</b>
<b>Section 1 - Q2</b>	Outcomes and/or the impact of equality action plans/ measures.	<b>21</b>
<b>Section 1 - Q3</b>	Application of the Equality Scheme commitments	<b>22</b>
<b>Section 2</b>	Progress on Equality Scheme commitments including action plans/measures	<b>25</b>
<b>PART B</b>	Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and Disability Action Plans.	<b>38</b>
<b>ANNEXES</b>		
<b>Annex 1</b>	Timetable for Measures Proposed to ensure the Equality Scheme is complied with (Appendix 4 of the Draft DfI Equality Scheme).	<b>50</b>
<b>Annex 2</b>	Abbreviations.	<b>52</b>

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

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

- 1 In 2021-22, please provide **examples** of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved.

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

#### **1.1 General Section 75 and Outcomes Delivery Plan**

The Department's overriding purpose is to connect people safely, support opportunities, and create sustainable living places through our infrastructure in order to have a positive impact on the daily lives of everyone living, working and visiting Northern Ireland. Our Business Plan outlines the programme of work and initiatives committed to ensure we deliver our objectives to connect people through our infrastructure.

##### **i. Mainstreaming Equality across the Department**

The DfI Equality Scheme has been in place since February 2021 which includes commitments to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations.

Our Equality Unit promotes DfI's statutory duty to consider equality when carrying out Departmental functions; provides advice / guidance to staff in relation to this; and leads work on equality related exercises, with input from across the Department as required.

To comply with the Equality Scheme, the Equality Unit has ensured that effective internal arrangements are in place so that Section 75 is mainstreamed across the Department. Annex 1 summarises actions taken during this reporting period.

In order to develop staff understanding of Section 75 related issues, and the needs of each Section 75 category, officials throughout the Department attend equality related meetings both externally and internally. At these meetings officials share and receive best practice advice; consider emerging issues; and raise / resolve issues which could present an inequality for any section 75 category.

The Department is represented on the Statutory Forum between the NICS and ECNI to discuss and develop guidance and forms; and promotion of equality across

departments. Participation allows us to discuss issues and obtain advice from the Equality Commission (ECNI).

Following the publication of the Department's Equality Scheme, a Departmental Audit of Inequalities has been completed and an Equality Action Plan has been drafted. The Department intends to consult on it in the latter part of 2022.

'New Decade, New Approach' committed to developing a series of four cross cutting Social Inclusion Strategies – Anti-Poverty; Disability; Gender; and LGBTQI+. The development of the strategies has followed the co-design approach. DfI is a member of the Departmental Working Groups for each strategy, working alongside other departments and the independent Co-Design Groups in developing these strategies. Work on the strategies has continued throughout this reporting period, including Departmental attendance at three workshops during September and October 2021 with the Co-Design Groups.

ii. **Diversity**

The Department is represented on the NICS **Diversity Champions Network (DCN)** which was established in 2015. The DfI Diversity Champion attends quarterly meetings of the DCN to promote and encourage diversity within the Department. The DCN has four thematic leads for Disability, Ethnic Minorities, LGBT and Gender.

The Department's Diversity Action Plan for 2021/22 included a range of actions to support each diversity theme. This included creating a diversity calendar with supporting articles on our Intranet site to promote and support activities and celebrations. For example, support for Pride month; International Women's day; International Male's day; and participation in the International Job Shadow Day with placement opportunities provided across the Department.

The Department has also published a number of personal stories on disability and gender issues on its intranet site during 2021-22.

The Department has contributed to the development of the NICS Diversity Strategic Action Plan being led by The Executive Office (TEO). This covers progress towards

meeting the Executive's commitments to Equality in Public Appointments. The TEO Plan is still to be finalised after being delayed as a result of the pandemic.

iii. **Racial Equality Champion**

The Department's **Racial Equality Champion** continues to represent the Department at the NICS Racial Equality Champions Network, working closely with the Racial Equality Unit in TEO, other NICS champions and the associated sub-group. The sub-group comprises those working with minority ethnic people and migrants to identify and tackle any barriers to addressing racial inequality. Our Racial Equality Champion attended six meetings during 2021-22, one of which a Cross Departmental Working Group established to progress Ethnic Equality Monitoring (EEM).

A particular action for the Department has been preparing model conditions for licences for Traveller's sites. The Department consulted on revised and updated draft Model Licence conditions in 2019 (for all caravan sites including Traveller sites). Further work was paused due to the Covid 19 pandemic and the department's response to that. The intention is to resume work shortly. In the meantime the Model Licence Conditions published in 1992 (for holiday caravan sites) and in 1994 (for residential caravan sites) continue to remain in place.

Dfl has also shared a number of articles and personal stories on our intranet site to promote racial awareness.

iv. **Children's Issues**

The Department's **Children's Champion** acts as the senior point of contact for any issues relating to the impact of the Department's functions on children and young people. This includes input to the Children and Young People's Strategy, and related draft Programme for Government outcomes.

The Department funds a number of concessions which can assist children and young people when using public transport. We also have a number of roads safety

initiatives that specifically target children and young people. Further details are set out below.

v. **Mental Health Charter**

The NICS, including DfI, remains committed to the ECNI Mental Health Charter and its duty to protect the mental health of its staff. Awareness raising and support for mental health, particularly in the context of Covid-19 and working from home in 2021-22. The Department was also committed to adopt the “every customer counts, promoting accessible services” recommendations.

All staff have access to and receive regular updates from the NICS Health and Wellbeing Programme / NICS Well, overseen by the Occupational Health Service (OHS). During the reporting period DfI continued to publish articles in support of Mental Health and general health and wellbeing (i.e. ‘Living with worry and anxiety’, ‘Getting a good night’s sleep’ and ‘Personal Effectiveness’). This also included promoting specific events such as World Mental Health Day and Mental Health Awareness Week.

**1.2 Public Transport (including IMTAC)**

**Access to Transport**

Many of the transport programmes funded by the Department are designed to remove barriers to travel that people, especially those with a disability, older people, and dependants (this includes dependants who may have a disability, and/or are younger or older), may face. It is also worth noting that a fare freeze was announced during the reporting period to the benefit of all users of public transport, including Section 75 groups.

Initiatives and transport related programmes aimed at creating an inclusive / accessible transport system during this period, include:

**a. Improved Station Facilities**

- i. The refurbishment of Coleraine Integrated Station was completed which includes a new internal DDA compliant ramp from the concourse to platform level, as well as two internal platform lifts.
- ii. Trooperslane Park and Ride was completed which provides 10 accessible parking bays and two level access points to the platform.
- iii. Two passenger lifts were replaced in Carrickfergus Train Station.
- iv. Public toilets were refurbished in the following stations which fully comply with Part R of the Building Regulations 'Access to and Use of Buildings':
  - Lanyon Train Station;
  - Carrickfergus Train Station;
  - Armagh Bus Station;
  - Downpatrick Bus Station; and
  - Magherafelt Bus Station.

**b. New Buses**

During 2020/21, the Department provided Translink with funding of £77.6mm towards the purchase new buses/coaches. Throughout this period, a total of 411 vehicles were in procurement, design and production, testing or service introduction across all bus projects, with a value totalling £168m. All of the new buses are compliant with the Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations. These projects include 100 Zero Emission buses for Belfast Metro with full-service introduction due later in 2022 and 43 Zero Emission Buses for Foyle Metro and the North Coast due to enter service in the summer of 2023, providing climate positive, clean air public transport.

In the first year of operation (2018/19) the accessibility of the Belfast Rapid Transit vehicles coincided with a 25% increase in use by older people and people with disabilities along compared to Metro services for the same routes. Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic patronage on public transport has fallen substantially and as such, there is no S75 statistical information of this period.

**c. Additional Train Carriages**

During the calendar years 2021 and 2022, Translink has taken receipt of 21 additional rail carriages extending seven existing three carriage trains to six carriage trains – the last of these was received in the summer of 2022. All of the new carriages, which are now in service, are fully accessible to people with a disability or mobility issues. The funding for these carriages was provided by DfI at a total project value of £63.9m.

**d. Transport Programme for People with Disabilities (TPPD)**

The aim of this Programme is to improve accessibility to transport for those in urban areas with a disability who find it difficult to, or cannot access mainstream services. Users of the programmes associated with the TPPD are either those with a disability or those who are older.

The total amount of funding provided through TPPD in 2021/22 was just over £2.5m.

The programmes included in TPPD, and their respective usage during 2021/22, are shown in the following table:

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Data/usage</b>
<p><b>Disability Action Transport Scheme (DATS)</b> - is a specialised transport service for people living in particular towns or cities who find it difficult to use public transport due to a disability.</p> <p>The COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions impacted on demand for trips. However, operators transitioned their services<sup>1</sup> to support members during this period. Operators fare income was negatively impacted during this period.</p>	<p>17,365</p> <p>Active Users 2,527</p>	<p>Number of trips delivered (includes transitioned trips)</p> <p>53,437</p>



Programme	Members	Data/usage
<p><b>Shopmobility</b> - helps people who consider themselves to have mobility problems (whether through disability, illness or injury) to continue to get around city and town centres independently, with freedom, confidence and dignity by the provision of mobility equipment, e.g. motorised scooters, wheelchairs etc.</p> <p>The COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions impacted on the schemes ability to fund raise in order to raise additional income to support services. In response additional resource of £21k was made available for cover operational costs.</p>	<p>14,647</p> <p>Active Users 2,546</p>	<p>Number of equipment loans to individuals 44,257</p>
<p><b>Easibus</b> - established by Translink to provide accessible local bus services mainly, but not exclusively, for mobility-impaired people who could not avail of existing conventional services.</p>	<p>Membership not required for this scheme</p>	<p>Passenger Journeys/Trips 26,538</p>

#### Transitioned Services - DATS

Due to the continued impact of the pandemic, demand for transport services was low in the early part of 2021/22. Services were temporarily transitioned from solely providing passenger transport to also include non-passenger services. This decision enabled the DATS to provide delivery services including the provision of, for example food boxes, groceries, prescriptions to people in the community most in need of help and support. It also included a telephone contact service with all members, often signposting them to other organisations who could provide help needed.

This telephone contact service was also provided by the Shopmobility Schemes.

Transitioned serviced stopped on 1 October 2021 as demand for transport started to return. The figures provided above for 2021/22 also include the transitioned services provided.

#### e. **Dial-a-Lift (DAL)/Rural Transport Fund**

DAL was originally set up with the primary objective of reducing social isolation for rural dwellers. It provides transport options for individuals living in rural areas who

are unable to access, or have difficulty accessing, public transport. The main users of this scheme are those aged 60 and over and those with a disability.

During 2021/22 funding of almost £2.7m was provided by DfI to Rural Community Transport Partnerships (RCTPs) in 11 operational areas to help deliver DAL services.

#### Transitioned Services DAL & RTF

As a result of COVID-19, and the low demand for transport, DAL services temporarily transitioned from solely providing passenger transport to include non-passenger services. This enabled community transport operators to provide delivery services including the provision of, for example, food boxes, groceries and prescriptions to people in the community who were most in need of help and support. It included a telephone contact service with all members, often signposting them to other organisations who could provide help needed. Transitioned services also provided transport outside of the community transport operator's operational area for the purpose of attending scheduled vaccination appointments. Figures for 2021/22 include transitioned services provided.

Transitioned services stopped on 1 October 2021 as demand for transport started to return.

The total number of trips delivered under the DAL Scheme during this period, are as follows:

<b>Dial-a-Lift Scheme</b>			
Total Number of Trips*	Passenger Trips	Non Passenger Trips (Deliveries)	Food Boxes/Parcels delivered to Individual Households
150,997	141,628	9,369	3,467
Dial-a-Lift services provided for older people		Dial-a-Lift services provided for people with a disability	
75,310		60,363	

#### f. **Concessionary Fares**

The Concessionary Fares Scheme was established to support those most at risk of social isolation to access public transport through discounted bus and rail fares.

The following concessions are provided:

Free travel for:

- everyone aged 60 and over;
- people who are registered blind; and
- war disablement pensioners.

Half fare travel for:

- people with a disability who satisfy the relevant criteria (listed on application form); and
- children up to age 16.

With the exception of children who automatically receive half fare, those who satisfy any of these criteria can apply for the concessionary travel card i.e. a SmartPass, which entitles the holder to the relevant concessionary fare. On Glider Services, Half Fare Smart Pass holders can currently travel for free. This interim measure will remain in place whilst other ticketing options are explored.

The total costs (reimbursed by DfI) and number of journeys (claimed by Translink and other participating operators) taken under this scheme during 2021/22 are detailed in the table below. Again the number of journeys has significantly reduced due to the impact of COVID-19:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Cost £(000)</b>	<b>Journey numbers(k)</b>
60+, Blind & War Disabled (full fare)	21,414	7,235
Half Fare Categories	637	391
Children	7,372	3,329
Administration Costs – overall	633	-
<u>Total</u>	<u>30,056</u>	<u>10,955</u>

The Department also funds a number of concessions to assist children and young people when using public transport:

- YLink is a free travelcard for all 16-23 years olds in Northern Ireland. This offers 1/3 off all Translink bus and rail travel in Northern Ireland and up to 50% off Enterprise journeys. Having a yLink card also provides exclusive discounts and offers from partner businesses;

- the Translink Proof of Age card is a flashcard available for under 16 year olds until 30 June, after their sixteenth birthday. On production of the card the bearer is able to obtain 50% off the full adult fare on local and Cross Border services; and
- the 24+ Student Railcard is available for free to students aged over 24 and in full-time education. The railcard offers 1/3 off cash and mLink single journeys, day return, weekly and monthly tickets and up to 50% off Enterprise fares.

**g. Inclusive Mobility Transport Advisory Committee (IMTAC)**

The role of IMTAC is to advise the Government and other relevant parties in Northern Ireland on issues that may affect the mobility of older people and people with a disability. IMTAC continues to be one of DfI's primary sources for obtaining advice about issues that affect people with disabilities and how they use our infrastructure and services.

Along with the Mobility & Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) and the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC), IMTAC established the Accessibility Four Nations Group designed to share information and discuss common issues affecting the mobility of older people and people with disabilities across all the regions of the UK.

Following the first meeting in Edinburgh in August 2019 initiated by MACS, regular meetings have taken place with the next meeting scheduled for October 2022. IMTAC were included in the pre-consultation by the Executive Office on the COVID Recovery Plan but were disappointed that the final plan failed to incorporate the gaps they identified.

IMTAC has provided advice on number of wider policy issues throughout government, including:

- co-chairing the co-design group charged with assisting the Department for Communities develop the new Social Inclusion Strategy on Disability;
- being an active stakeholder in the Bolder Vision for Belfast project;

## PART A

- participating in a working group to enhance accessibility requirements for future vehicle procurement contracts for Translink; and
- worked with the Department and other organisations to develop the “Think Before You Park” campaign in order to tackle the issues created by pavement parking.

In addition, IMTAC has:

- continued to meet regularly with the Translink Accessibility Working Group, advising on a number of areas such as low floor and zero emission buses, removing the 24 hour notice period for disabled people using buses and coaches and the display of digital information at bus stops;
- sought and were awarded grant funding of £63k for 2022/23; and
- developed its work programme for 2021/22 with a priority to support Government, transport providers and others in the path to recovery from COVID-19.

The actions above made a significant contribution to the development of policy and services making travel more inclusive and accessible, especially for older people and people with a disability.

### **1.3 Policy Area – The management of flood risk and all publicly adopted roads and footways**

The Department is responsible for the management of all publicly adopted roads and footways. Its main responsibilities include ensuring streets are maintained and are safe to use. It also plays an important role in seeing that any new works are completed to the appropriate standards and as far as possible the needs of those with a disability are considered within the design, and development of a project.

*Specific actions taken positively impacting on Section 75 groups during this period were:*

#### **(i) 20 mph Speed Limit Scheme**

During 2021/22 a further 112 schools were added to the part time ‘20 mph speed limit scheme’ bringing the total to 215 over the past two years. The Scheme aims to improve road safety around schools when pupils are arriving in the morning and leaving in the afternoon.

(ii) **Major Road Improvement Projects**

All of the schemes undertaken should have a major positive impact on road safety, accessibility, and connectivity for all road users including those who are vulnerable and socially isolated.

(iii) **Roads Policy and Procedure Guides**

As a result of an Accessibility Audit of its websites, the Department has initiated an exercise to review its roads engineering policy documents with a view to making them more accessible. The new format uses a larger font size, a simpler paragraph numbering system and avoids the use of other barriers to accessibility such as boxes around text blocks. All new Roads Policy & Procedure Guides and Director of Engineering Memorandum have been prepared in the new format and work is underway to redraft the existing documents in the new format.

(iv) **Accessible Parking Bays – On-line Application Process**

The Department has initiated a project to provide an on-line facility to allow people to apply for individual accessible parking bays. The on-line facility will make the process more efficient and secure removing the need to complete and store a paper copy of the application form.

(v) **Flood Risk Management**

The Department has continued to develop a number Flood Alleviation Schemes (FAS) identified in the Northern Ireland Flood Risk Management Plans as being Significant Flood Risk Areas (SFRAs). These include the Belfast Tidal FAS, Shimna River (Newcastle), Newry SFRA and Portadown SFRA FAS.

Reducing flood risk and providing more accessible, safer roads/streets goes some way to address barriers experienced by society in general. These actions have and will have a positive differential impact on those with a disability, older people and dependants.

**1.4 Policy Area – Blue Badge**

The Blue Badge scheme provides a range of parking concessions for people with severe mobility problems. A blue badge must be displayed to avail of the concessions. Use of the concessions associated with the blue badge scheme makes it easier for

those with a severe mobility issue to park closer to their destination, therefore, making it easier to access facilities within the community.

Within this reporting period 46,342 blue badges were issued. A further 106 multiple badges were issued to support organisations.

### **1.5 Policy Area – Driving Theory Test**

For candidates with a hearing/speech/visual impairment, the Department's Driver & Vehicle Agency (DVA) allows for extra time; provides reader/recorder assistance; and/or provides information in accessible formats e.g. British Sign Language on-screen video; Lip Speaker; Sign Language Interpreter.

For candidates where English is not their first language, the questions and answer options can be read through headphones in the following languages: Portuguese, Turkish, Farsi, Cantonese, Arabic and Polish.

Video clips have replaced written scenarios in the car theory test, bringing the test up to date and making it more accessible for everyone. Research involving candidates with reading difficulties and disabilities showed that these learners felt more comfortable and confident with video scenarios as they were better able to process the information on screen.

The theory test online booking system was subject to a comprehensive review and development to increase compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines WCAG 2.1. An Accessibility Statement, in compliance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018, was published on the site in September 2020.

DVA continues to work in partnership with the Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) in GB to engage with groups that represent those with learning difficulties and disabilities to facilitate candidates with a disability when completing their driving theory test.

Liaison with representative groups has resulted in DVA adjusting tests to assist people with certain disabilities to allow them to take their tests in a manner more accessible to them.

## **1.6 Policy Area – Safe and Accessible Travel**

### **(i) Community Interaction**

The Department continues to deliver road safety behavioural change interventions and educational messages through its 'Share the Road to Zero' website and its associated Facebook and Twitter social media channels. Throughout the year these messages regularly address the main causes of road casualties, with drivers continuously reminded to give extra consideration to more vulnerable road users, particularly children, people with mobility issues, and older people.

All campaigns for social media were include subtitling to improve the messaging for those with hearing difficulties. The website 'Share The Road to Zero' has also been updated to comply with the new Accessibility legislation which came into force in 2020. In addition to social media activity, the Department also delivered various road safety campaigns on television, radio and outdoor (bus advertising) that specifically referenced older road users and children; namely in the pedestrian safety, distraction and anti-speeding campaigns.

In July 2021, advice on the use of mobility scooters was promoted via social media. This activity is scheduled to run again during the 2022-23 reporting period. In November 2021, the Department launched a new campaign to raise awareness with drivers on the dangers of parking on the pavement. It aims to show drivers how parking on the pavement can endanger all pavement users forcing them into oncoming traffic, with a specific focus on people with disabilities, older people, children and people pushing prams.

### **(ii) Road Safety Training – Special Schools**

Due to COVID-19, school closures and restriction on external visitors to schools none of the 36 special schools received a road safety visit during 2021/22. The education of road safety to special needs children remains a priority for the Department and visits will resume when it is safe to do so. That said all primary and special schools were provided with tasks and associated worksheets to enable teachers and/or parents to work alongside children during periods of online learning due to COVID-19 restrictions.



The behavioural change activities/initiatives above provided road safety information/advice to/about vulnerable groups to support those groups and drivers, make better more informed decisions when using the roads. This ensured better protection for the most vulnerable road users as well as a reduction in the number of people killed and seriously injured due to road traffic collisions. This work went some way to achieving Programme for Government (PfG) Outcomes in particular Outcome 4 – “we live long, healthy, active lives by contributing to a reduction in preventable deaths”.

### **(iii) Development of Cycling Infrastructure**

DfI's Walking and Cycling Champion has responsibility to take forward and deliver our commitment to increase the percentage of journeys made by walking, wheeling and cycling. An Advisory Group has been established, which includes IMTAC, to advise on strategic issues to assist in imbedding active travel as an integral part of the work of the Department.

The Department continues to work on developing a cycling infrastructure which will be primarily segregated, not only from traffic but also from pedestrians, to provide safe space for all.

During the reporting period, we continued to progress the Belfast Cycling Network Delivery Plan 2022-31. The Belfast Cycling Network demonstrates how the provision of segregated infrastructure can reduce conflict between users as well as accessible infrastructure for disabled and elderly people.

We have also continued to liaise with stakeholders, including IMTAC, in the development of active travel measures through the Walking and Cycling Advisory Group and each scheme developed for delivery.

### **1.7 Policy Area – Communications with the Customer**

DfI has a Guide to Making Information Accessible which assists staff when communicating with the public. The Guide provides information and recommendations on how to communicate effectively with a range of Section 75 groups to ensure all have the opportunity to fully participate in our decision making.

## PART A

The Department is committed to making its website accessible, in accordance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. The DfI website underwent an Accessibility Audit in August 2020. A number of accessibility issues were identified that were highlighted in the Accessibility Statement published on the Department's website on 19 October 2021

Our monitoring activities outline how the Department is working to ensure that its website is accessible to all and that any issues are identified and addressed.

### **DVA Services**

Due to the COVID pandemic, DVA had to change the way in which it delivered many of its services with an increased focus on accessing services online. There were no equality complaints regarding the accessibility of DVA online services in the 2021/22 reporting year. DVA has recently moved to a new reporting system, which will have the ability to provide more accurate information on Section 75 issues raised within complaints.

In partnership with Age NI, DVA has developed arrangements to support older people who wish to engage with DVA on a range of services, for example enabling Age NI to assist those wishing to check their MOT status and get advice on the extension to driving licences and anything else which may be online. The establishment of points of contact with Age NI supports DVA and customers particularly during times when there were high volumes of queries on any specific matter. Age NI also shared DVA's social media messages on its platforms to provide current information for older people who use the internet.

DVA consider all forms of communication, including social media and written formats, to ensure information reaches all citizens.

### **1.8 Policy Area – Public Appointments**

A programme of competitions for DfI public bodies was completed for the 2021/22 year, with five open public competitions being concluded. DfI continued to encourage underrepresented groups to apply for public appointment opportunities advertised by the Department.

For the first time the Department has taken part in the Boardroom Apprentice programme as one of 56 host boards across the public and third sectors. Boardroom Apprentice is a 12-month unique board learning, development and placement programme which enables those who would like to serve on a public or third sector board to learn and gain experience in a safe way before they take that step. Boardroom Apprentice is about delivering diversity, creating change and achieving aspirations and seeks to enable a wider diversity of individuals to play their part within boardrooms across Northern Ireland.

The first DfI Boardroom Apprentice was appointed in September 2021.

All public appointment recruitment is completed in accordance with the Commissioner for Public Appointments NI Code of Practice (2016).

## **1.9 Good Relations**

### **Policy area – ‘Together: Building a United Community Strategy’ (TBUC)**

DfI is not the lead in any of the seven TBUC headline actions. That said, our work supports the Urban Villages Programme and we contribute, through planning policies, to the development of shared spaces for all. Our public transport system is also crucial in helping people and communities connect with each other and with employment and other opportunities.

### **Shared Space and Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) ‘Planning for Sustainable Development’**

The SPPS recognises that the planning system has an important role supporting Government with regards creating and enhancing shared spaces – specifically, through its influence on the type, location, siting and design of developments.

## PART A

Councils are responsible for taking forward the development of local operational policy through new Local Development Plans (LDPs) and for the majority of planning decisions. These Plans contribute to the promotion of physical and social environments that support everyone, including children, older people and people with disabilities to have easy access to open space and the opportunity to participate in sport and outdoor recreational activity, or simply enjoy and have contact with nature. The Department continues to engage, advise and support councils in the delivery of their local planning functions and to seek to ensure the two-tier planning system can operate as efficiently and effectively as possible for all stakeholders. Councils must take account of the Regional Development Strategy 2035, the SPPS and any other policies or advice in guidance issued by the Department.

The Department is also represented on the Good Relations Programme Board (GRPB), the TBUC Engagement Forum, the Inter-Departmental Interface programme Board and the Housing Thematic Subgroup.

PART A

- 2** Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2021-22 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

**N/A**

Following the publication of the Department's Equality Scheme in February 2021, an Audit of Inequalities on Departmental functions and activities was carried out in autumn 2021.

Consultation on the associated draft Equality Action Plan has been postponed due to the uncertainty of the budget position. It is hoped this will take place in latter part of 2022.

- 3** Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2021-22 reporting period?

**Yes.**

Please provide any details and examples:

**Equality Processes:**

The Department's Equality Unit proactively encourages business areas to involve the Unit at an early stage. This seeks to ensure that equality issues are considered early; quality of content is improved; and directing business areas to a wide range of relevant data that contributes to a stronger evidence base to assess possible impacts and provide greater appreciation of the particular needs of the various Section 75 groups within the policy development process.

Every member of staff has access to "NINIS" online statistics and the Equality Unit signposts to specific data where relevant. The Department has also been working with TEO on relevant ethnic data. The Audit of Inequalities found that S75 data in general for DfI was lacking and will be an action within the Equality Action Plan.

The Department's standard submission template includes a section on Section 75 to ensure equality implications are considered and documented.

In line with our Equality Scheme commitment to consider any good practice or guidance issued by ECNI, the Equality Unit shares relevant information and guidance with all staff, for example, information updates from ECNI and the Employers Forum.

**Age and Disability category:**

Application of the duties ensured officials took into account people with learning difficulties, and older people when considering the removal of paper options, and/or removal of telephone numbers from DfI external communications.

PART A

Annual and quarterly audits / reviews on the accessibility of websites led to the Department's Communications Branch making improvements to the DfI website.

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

Please provide any details and examples:

**Disability category:**

Research with Driving Theory Test candidates with reading difficulties and disabilities showed that these learners felt more comfortable and confident with video scenarios as they were better able to process the information on screen. The Driver Theory Test now includes video clips instead of written scenarios making it more accessible for everyone.

The theory test online booking system was subject to a comprehensive review and development to increase compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines WCAG 2.1. An Accessibility Statement, in compliance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018, was published on the site in September 2020.

DfI staff continued to access the JAM ('Just A Minute') Card online training in this period. JAM promotional material is also displayed in the DfI MOT Centres.

**Age and Disability category:**

People with learning difficulties, and older people who are not proficient in IT, have other contact options of either phoning staff for information or advice or receiving communications in paper format ensuring their independence when availing of DfI services. For DVA services Age NI can assist older people (see 1.7 above).

Due to the continued impact of COVID-19, and subsequent government restrictions, demand for transport services has remained low. In response both DATS and DAL

PART A

services continue to be temporarily transitioned from solely passenger transport to include non-passenger services.

This decision enabled community transport operators to provide delivery services whereby food boxes, groceries, prescriptions etc. were provided to people in the community who were most in need of help and support.

Community transport providers and the Shopmobility Schemes also maintained a telephone contact service with their members, often signposting them to other organisations who could provide help needed. The majority of those who have/will benefit from this service would be those are older and those with a disability.

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

iii. As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact (please give details):

In 2020, the Department's website underwent an Accessibility Audit to ensure they met the WCAG 2.1 accessibility regulations (established September 2018).

The Department will continue to carry out the work required as detailed in the Accessibility Statement published on 19 October 2021 – this can be viewed on the DfI website at <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/department-infrastructure-accessibility-statement>



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

### **Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)**

4. Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2021-22 reporting period? *(choose one option only)*

- Yes, some posts.

Please provide any details and examples:

- Paragraph 2.5 of the Department's Equality Scheme sets out that, where relevant, employees' job descriptions and performance plans reflect their contributions to the discharge of the Section 75 statutory duties and implementation of the equality scheme.
- Given its functions in relation to Section 75, relevant staff within the Department's Corporate Policy and Planning Directorate (CPPD) have included Equality duties as part of their job descriptions. This is also reflected, as appropriate, in other business areas across the Department.
- Section 75 duties are also reflected as objectives in the personal performance plans of relevant staff within CPPD, in particular the Equality Unit. These objectives are subject to an annual appraisal. Personal Development actions are developed and reviewed biannually to identify any new training requirements.

5. Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2021-22 reporting period? *(choose one option only)*

- Yes, some posts

Please provide any details and examples:

- As outlined in Question 4.

6. In the 2021-22 reporting period were **objectives/targets/ performance measures** relating to the Section 75 statutory duties **integrated** into corporate plans, strategic planning and/or operational business plans? *(keep in all that apply)*

- Yes.

Please provide any details and examples:

- The Department is committed to complying with its statutory obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the Rural Needs (NI) Act 2016 in all that we do. The Department implemented its Equality Scheme to promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and
- The Department's Annual Report and Accounts 2021-22 included a commitment to section 75.

### **Equality action plans/measures**

7. Within the 2021-22 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

- Actions completed: 0;
- Actions ongoing: 0; and
- Actions to commence: 0.

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

**N/A**

8. Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2021-22 reporting period *(points not identified in an appended plan)*:

- An Audit of Inequalities on Departmental functions and activities was carried out in the autumn of 2021. Consultation on the associated draft Equality Action Plan has been postponed due to the uncertainty of the budget position.
- It is anticipated that an updated draft Action Plan will be considered by the Departmental Board and presented to the Minister at the end of October 2022 prior to a 12 week consultation.

9. In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2021-22 reporting period, the following have been identified: *(keep all that apply)*

- Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the known inequality.

**Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)**

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

- Sometimes.

11. Please provide any **details and examples of good practice** in consultation during the 2021-22 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

- No policies screened in.

12. In the 2021-22 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently used by consultees**: *(keep all that apply)*

- Focus groups (virtual);
- Questionnaires/Surveys;
- Internet discussions; and
- Other: leaflet drops, advertisement in national and/or local newspapers and online publications.

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

- Due to COVID-19 restrictions, methods of consultations were revised with more reliance on digital and virtual forms of communications.

**13.** Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2021-22 reporting period? (*choose one option only*)

- No other than quarterly screening report was circulated and consultations emailed to all those on our Section 75 consultee list.

**14.** Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2021-22 reporting period? (*choose one option only*)

- Yes – It is reviewed annually.

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

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

- 29 screenings were carried out during this period which can be accessed at <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/section-75-consultation-information#toc-114>

**16.** Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2021-22:

- Policy consultations conducted with **screening** assessment presented: 3
- Policy consultations conducted **with an equality impact assessment** (EQIA) presented. 0
- Consultations for an **EQIA** alone. 0

**17.** Please provide details of the **main consultations** conducted on an assessment (as

described above) or other matters relevant to the Section 75 duties:

- Screening of the Department's Draft Budget allocation was carried out as part of the overall NI Budget consultation process.

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

- An equality screening was carried out on the Draft Budget 2022-25 outcome for the Department, which identified the need for an Equality Impact Assessment; this was paused in the absence of an agreed budget (following the pausing of the Draft Budget 2022-25 consultation by DoF).

A further equality screening will need to be carried by business areas on potential impacts to services, in advance of further budget decisions. A draft screening has been completed on the reduction to roads routine maintenance which has identified minor impacts”.

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

**19.** Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2021-22 reporting period? *(choose one option only)*

- Not applicable.

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

**20.** From the Equality Scheme monitoring arrangements, was there an audit of existing information systems during the 2021-22 reporting period? *(choose one option only)*

- Yes.

Please provide any details:

- The Department reviews all aspects of its websites regularly. Websites underwent an Accessibility Audit in 2020 to ensure they met the new WCAG 2.1 accessibility regulations. Work will continue on remediation work identified in the Department’s Accessibility Statement.
- The Department will continue to carry out the work required as detailed in the Accessibility Statement published in 2021. A further audit of the website may be undertaken in 2023.

- The Department's Audit of Inequalities highlighted that whilst the Analysis, Statistics & Research Branch (ASRB) continues to collect data for Section 75 groups with all surveys, currently collecting some S75 type information. ASRB is limited in the analysis that they can undertake for categories such as ethnicity and sexual identity. This is due to the achieved sample size for each DfI survey (CHS, TSNI, etc) which means that a very small proportion of respondents identify as an ethnicity other than 'White' and sexual identity other than 'Heterosexual', which is difficult to determine a valuable analysis.
- The Social Inclusion Strategies recommendations have also highlighted the lack of meaningful Section 75 data and is a potential action emanating from each Strategies' Expert Advisory Panel's reports.

21. In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies?

- The Department will continue to carry out the work required by WCAG 2.1 as detailed in the Accessibility Statement published on 19 October 2021 – this can be viewed on the DfI website at <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/department-infrastructure-accessibility-statement>.

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

- None.

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

**Note:** Due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, data collection for surveys carried out by NISRA during 2020/21 moved from face-to-face interviewing to telephone mode which reduction in the number of questions.

## PART A

- The results from the Continuous Household Survey (CHS) 2020/21 are not directly comparable to previous years due to the significant changes to the survey in terms of methodology and content. The output from the survey, in terms of the range and depth of topics covered, has been reduced from that of previous years, with the subsequent capacity for detailed analysis constrained. More information is available on the [NISRA website](#).
- The Department has carried out various surveys linked to our services all of which has assisted and informed decision making and when carrying out screening analysis:
  - The NI Transport statistics report was published on 30 September 2021. It includes information on Smart Pass use; Blue Badge use; accessibility of public transport for older people and those with a disability; as well as road network, and general public transport statistics. The report is available on the Department's website - <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-transport-statistics-2020-2021>.
  - The delay in receiving the TSNI 2017-2019 datasets and investigating the methodology changes in 2020 due to COVID-19 continues to have a knock on effect on the usual publication timetable of the TSNI reports. Results from 2020 have been treated as a standalone year and the 2020 Headline Report was published in March 2022 - <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/travel-survey-northern-ireland-tсни-headline-report-2020>. The 2020 TSNI In-depth Report is planned for publication in September 2022.
  - DfI currently has a number of question modules included in the Continuous Household Survey (CHS). Between four and five separate reports are published annually on topics such as Attitudes towards Walking, Cycling and Public Transport, Attitudes towards eCars, Travel to/from School, Cycling in NI, Road Safety and Public Transport Journey Planning. Where possible, results for all CHS reports are broken down by gender, age group, urban/rural and by Local Government District (LGD).

PART A

- The results from the CHS 2020/21 are not directly comparable to previous years due to the significant changes to the survey in terms of methodology and content. The output from the survey, in terms of the range and depth of topics covered, has been reduced from that of previous years, with the subsequent capacity for detailed analysis constrained. For 2020/21, only two CHS Reports were published.
- The Active and Sustainable Transport Report for 2020/21 was published on 3 February 2022. It contains information on walking and cycling to work, satisfaction with walking, cycling and public transport facilities and willingness to walk and cycle short journeys, and likelihood of buying an electric vehicle. Where possible results are broken down by gender, age group, urban/rural and by LGD.

This report was produced using new and updated statistical methods and published in a much more accessible format of HTML. The report can be found [here https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/infrastructure/active-and-sustainable-travel-in-northern-ireland-2021.html](https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/infrastructure/active-and-sustainable-travel-in-northern-ireland-2021.html).

- A report on Travel to/from School by Pupils in Northern Ireland 2019/20 was published on 31 March 2022. The report presents data from the Continuous Household Survey in relation to the modes of travel used by children to go to school. The report is available on the Department's website at <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/travel-tofrom-school-by-pupils-ni-202021>.
- The results of the survey into Concessionary Fare Smart Pass Holders which had been delayed due to COVID-19 were published on the Departmental website on the 14 September 2021 and can be found at web address <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-concessionary-fares-survey-2019>.
- In addition, a number of online surveys and public consultations were conducted, including:



- Review of Pop-up cycling lanes in Belfast (<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/mallon-announces-main-findings-report-pop-cycle-lanes> ); and
- Inconsiderate Parking Consultation.
- User Survey's for Community Transport Organisations Passengers and Drivers. Other statistical information can be found at <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/topics/dfi-statistics-and-research>.

### **Staff Training (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 5)**

**24.** Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2021-22, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

- A range of Section 75 training commenced during the period, including: S75: Demonstrating Effective Leadership; Section 75: A focus on Screening; and S75: An Introduction (e-learning) for all staff. ECNI agreed to facilitate the 'Effective Leadership' and the 'Focus on Screening' training. The S75: Effective Leadership training took place on 4 October 2021 with senior management, including the Permanent Secretary attending the training. The S75 – An Introduction rolled out in March 2022. The 'Focus on Screening' training is scheduled to take place during 2022/23.
- Officials registered to attend a number of ECNI courses, which were subsequently postponed due to the pandemic. The Department continues to circulate links to webinars, including those delivered by ECNI and Employers for Disability.
- All staff had access to various e-learning courses on mental health/resilience (personal and of others); disability; ASD awareness; and vulnerable users.
- The DfI Staff Induction package includes a section on Equality and S75, with relevant links to S75 information and training.

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

- DVA staff induction for new staff includes a NICS HR presentation on Diversity and Inclusion;
- ‘Introduction to Human Rights e-learning’ course has benefitted staff by raising awareness and understanding of human rights in the delivery of their duties and the work of the Department generally;
- Unconscious Bias e-learning course has promoted positive attitudes towards people with a disability;
- ASD e-course gives a good foundation to understanding the communication difficulties encountered by people on the spectrum;
- Over 50% of Dfl staff have completed JAM (‘Just A Minute’) Card online training. This training provided useful information for staff, particularly frontline staff to understand the needs of people with as disability when accessing public transport. In addition, the majority of call handlers at NI Direct have received JAM training.

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

**26.** Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 20221-22, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

- See 23 above for surveys carried out during the year;
- The Department’s websites have had an Accessibility Audit to ensure they meet WCAG 2.1 accessibility regulations; and
- As a result of the Accessibility Audit of its websites the Department has initiated an exercise to review its roads engineering policy documents with a view to making them more accessible.

#### **Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)**

**27.** How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2020-21?

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

PART A

- The Department received one equality complaint relating to the accessibility of DVA's forms and systems. This is ongoing.

### Section 3: Looking Forward

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

- The Equality Scheme was published in February 2021 and is therefore not due for review until February 2026.

29. Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements

(screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? *(please provide details)*

i. Issues identified in the draft Audit of Inequalities were in relation to:

- public and rural transport (people with disabilities, older people, women and younger people) - the Department is working with key stakeholders to explore measures to address these issues;
- road safety (younger people aged 16-24) – the draft Road Safety Strategy to 2030 (consultation 15 November 2021 to 10 January 2022) will introduce new measures and targets to reduce the high rate amongst this group;
- pavement parking (people with disabilities, older people and people with dependants) - officials will develop measures to address this issue and an information campaign to raise awareness is underway;
- greater integration of S75 duties into the Department's planning and decision making processes, and the S75 Equality training programme underway will go some way to embedding better equality practices; and
- the Department, like others, has limited equality data and is considering how best to improve this.

ii. Training is one area of focus in response to the ECNI Para 10 Investigation into Taxis in Bus Lanes. An extensive training programme has been developed and rolled out in October 2021 covering three strands:

- **Mandatory Senior Leadership Training** – for DfI staff at Grade 6 and above (and analogous).
- **Section 75 Duties - A Focus on Screening** – for DfI staff at SO, DP and Grade 7 (and analogous). This is partially complete with more training anticipated for Autumn 2022 with some facilitation by ECNI; and

PART A

- **S75 – An Introduction** – for all Dfl staff – this was rolled out in March 2022 and completion is being monitored.

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

- Other:
  - I. Continued advice on the development of the Equality Action Plan plus the review and development of a new Departmental Disability Action Plan.
  - II. We will also continue to seek advice on various issues encountered when screening and developing guidance and policies, as necessary.

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

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

**12**

Fully achieved

**3**

Partially achieved

**0**

Not achieved

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

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

Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs <sup>1</sup>	Outcomes / Impacts <sup>2</sup>
National <sup>3</sup>	To encourage more disabled people to apply for public appointments.	A Guaranteed Interview Scheme is considered in all competitions 2021/22.	Five open public competitions were completed in 2021/22. Eleven applicants applied under the Guaranteed Interview Scheme. Ten proceeded to the interview stages and two were appointed.
Regional <sup>4</sup>	The Department will support IMTAC as a source of independent advice on the transport needs of disabled and older people to secure engagement with disabled	The IMTAC Work Programme for 2021-22 was agreed and published in June 2021. The 2022-23 Programme is currently being developed. It reflects Government priorities and provides funding.	Better informed decisions made by the Department on issues affecting those with a disability and older people when developing Strategies and designing schemes.

PART B

Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs <sup>1</sup>	Outcomes / Impacts <sup>2</sup>
	people in the design and development of policies.		The programmes include tasks relating to emerging from the pandemic, influencing strategy, policy and projects, supporting innovation in policy and service developments, promoting engagement and developing as a Committee.
Local <sup>3</sup>	-	-	-

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

	Training Action Measures	Outputs <sup>1</sup>	Outcome / Impact <sup>2</sup>
1.	Promoting positive attitudes towards people with a disability within the Department.	<p>The e-learning course 'Unconscious Bias' is mandatory for all staff, and new entrants will be asked to complete it by line managers.</p> <p>Introduction to Section 75 e-course is recommended and available to all staff.</p> <p>JAM card awareness e-learning is still available on the NICS Learning and development portal.</p> <p>Training being carried out as a result of the Paragraph 10</p>	<p>Staff have increased awareness of the issues faced by people with a disability in and out of the workplace.</p> <p>Also a greater understanding of disability legislation, disability duties and diversity within the NI Civil Service.</p> <p>This should also go some way to improve attitudes and understanding of</p>

PART B

	Training Action Measures	Outputs <sup>1</sup>	Outcome / Impact <sup>2</sup>
		complaint on Taxis in Bus Lanes should also go some way to improve attitudes.	<p>each member of staff's Section 75 responsibilities.</p> <p>S75 Senior Leadership Training was provided by ECNI to DfI Senior Management on 4 October 2021.</p> <p>S75 – A focus on screening took place in June 2022, with more scheduled for the Autumn 2022.</p> <p>When rolled out the online Section 75 course will be mandatory and progress of of completion will be monitored.</p>
2.	Promoting positive attitudes towards people with a disability within the Department.	Information available on Intranet site which provides staff with a disability, and their line managers, with some practical advice and guidance.	Staff have access to online advice and information to assist colleagues who have, or have dependents with, a disability.
3.	Promoting positive attitudes towards people with a disability within the Department.	The Department continues to investigate training options and sources of guidance on best practice and disseminates these.	<p>Training information/opportunities, from ECNI and Section 75 organisations, are disseminated widely across the Department.</p> <p>Staff are also encouraged to enrol on relevant internal NICS courses to ensure they are up to date on Section 75 guidance.</p> <p>The introduction of a 'Shared Calendar' that includes Diversity and Inclusion and</p>



PART B

	Training Action Measures	Outputs <sup>1</sup>	Outcome / Impact <sup>2</sup>
			Health and Wellbeing events can be accessed on the DfI intranet. This will be promoted on an annual basis.
4.	Increase awareness of the Disability Duties and disability legislation of those who hold a public life position.	<p>Training package shared with all panel members on Boards of Arm’s Length Bodies and specific training arranged as required.</p> <p>Five public appointment competitions were open to the general public during 2021/22.</p> <p>These competitions offered a Guaranteed interview Scheme.</p> <p>Increased promotion of public appointment opportunities across all underrepresented groups.</p> <p>ECNI guidance “Demonstrating Effective Leadership” in relation to duties and obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 is published on the Departments intranet. This guidance and subsequent self-audit checklist will be considered for the training required to action the ECNI findings on the Paragraph 10 complaint on Taxis</p>	<p>Increased awareness and understanding of the disability legislation and disability duties for Board members of Arm’s Length Bodies.</p> <p>Increased awareness of appointment opportunities in this underrepresented group, and others.</p> <p>Five competitions used the Guaranteed Interview Scheme and it is anticipated that the scheme will continue for future competitions.</p> <p>The Departmental Board acknowledge the role of effective leadership in relation to S75 within the Department and support mainstreaming of the Equality duties.</p> <p>All staff and Independent Board Members are aware of their responsibilities.</p>

## PART B

	Training Action Measures	Outputs <sup>1</sup>	Outcome / Impact <sup>2</sup>
		in Bus Lanes Experimental scheme.	

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

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs <sup>1</sup>	Outcome / Impact <sup>2</sup>
1.	To provide road safety and active travel advice and guidance to all special schools in the north of Ireland on a yearly basis.	To provide road safety and active travel advice and guidance to all 36 special schools using show and tell demonstrations and fun activities, in keeping with the pupils' ability to learn.	<p>Due to COVID-19, school closures and restrictions on visits to schools, none of the special schools received a road safety visit this academic year.</p> <p>All primary and special schools were issued with tasks and associated worksheets for teachers to issue to parents to work alongside their pupils during the period of online learning (COVID-19).</p> <p>The education of children with special needs remains a priority to the Department and visits to special schools will resume when it is safe to do so.</p>
2.	The Department will review ways of ensuring that information on services is both inclusive and accessible.	The Department's Guide to Making Information Accessible is available on its internet site. It is reviewed annually and so reflects best practice.	Guidance developed for staff to ensure internal and external communications are accessible.
3.	The Department will review ways of ensuring that information on services is both inclusive and accessible.	Websites underwent an Accessibility Audit in August 2020 to ensure they met the new WCAG 2.1 Accessibility Regulations (2018). The	Accessible information on the functions of the Department is available for all members of the public.

PART B

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs <sup>1</sup>	Outcome / Impact <sup>2</sup>
		<p>Accessibility Statement was published on 19 October 2021. Remediation work will continue to ensure content is formatted correctly, reviewed, and updated as required.</p> <p>As well as the regulatory accessibility audit an independent audit of the DfI website is carried out by Sitemorse INDEX. The INDEX enables organisations to compare digital capability with their peers or competitors. Digital capability is assessed across Experience, Optimisation and Compliance.</p>	
4.	The Department will review ways of ensuring that information on services is both inclusive and accessible.	One complaint was received in this period in relation to access to website information on the Department's services.	This is under investigation to ensure information on the functions/services of the Department is inclusive and accessible to the public.

PART B

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

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs <sup>1</sup>	Outcome / Impact <sup>2</sup>
1.	Promoting positive attitudes towards people with a disability within the Department.	<p>Links to newsletters from Section 75 organisations e.g. ‘E-Male Matters’ and Employers for Disability (EfD) were placed on the staff intranet. Also articles/items such as “Autism Awareness Month” and the Autism Awareness Factsheet; “Mental Health Awareness” week; EfD’s videos / advice; and other news from Section 75 organisations were published on the intranet.</p> <p>Circulated information on equality related events and issues to equality representatives for further dissemination.</p> <p>The in-house newssheet (“InFocus”) includes items relating to disability issues, events and groups.</p>	<p>Staff are kept informed on disability issues.</p> <p>Staff have awareness of issues faced by those with various disabilities and their parents/guardians.</p>
2.	Promote and encourage the planning of well-designed places which are accessible and inclusive places for all.	<p>Identify measures and activities by working together with Strategic Design Group members to promote inclusive, successful, sustainable, well designed places which will have a positive impact on people’s lives.</p> <p>Members include central and local government, professional bodies, and community and voluntary bodies.</p>	<p>The Strategic Design Group (SDG) enables the sharing of knowledge, best practice and making connections etc. with the aim of promoting successful place making and promoting well designed places which are accessible and inclusive to all.</p>

## PART B

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs <sup>1</sup>	Outcome / Impact <sup>2</sup>
3.	To nominate staff to represent the Department on relevant disability representative groups.	Dfl represented on Disability groups.  Feedback provided on best practice to the Department's Equality Unit and other business areas.	Increased awareness and understanding of the disability legislation and disability duties.  Ensures the Department is aware of any Disability related issues.
4.	Demonstrate evidence of monitoring of this Plan [Disability Action Plan] and the Department's ongoing commitment to the Disability Duties.	The Plan was reviewed, the status of the Action Measures updated and included with the Equality Progress reports to the Departmental Board.  Annual Progress Report 2020-21 was sent to Equality Commission in September 2021.  One complaint on disability issues was received during this period. This was regarding a Penalty Charge Notice issued and how it was considered under DDA. The complaint was not upheld.	The Departmental Board and Minister are kept informed of progress of DAP Action Measures in line with requirements of the Equality Scheme.  The complaints process tested.

PART B

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

	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs <sup>1</sup>	Outcomes / Impact <sup>2</sup>
1.	Development of the detailed design and implementation for Belfast Rapid Transit to ensure the system is accessible to all.	<p>Engagement with disability organisations and groups in relation to detailed design and implementation of Belfast Rapid Transit (Phase 1), in particular accessibility issues around the design of the halts and vehicles used.</p> <p>Further engagement with the Belfast Rapid Transit Key Stakeholders Forum will take place as BRT phase 2 is developed.</p>	The introduction of Belfast Rapid Transit Glider services, which are more accessible, has led to an increase in patronage by older people and people with disabilities when compared to previous Metro services for the same routes.
2.	Driver & Vehicle Agency will help improve the mobility of 16 year old applicants who are in receipt of Personal Independence Payments by allowing them to apply for a driving licence up to two months prior to their 16 <sup>th</sup> birthday. Availability of this scheme is advertised on NIDirect and on the DL1 application form.	Annual uptake figures are provided in the Annual report to ECNI which is published on DfI website and the link sent to Section 75 consultees for information.	10 licences issued in the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 to young people under the age of 17 who are in receipt of PIP mobility element.
3.	To consider how to meet the transport needs of disabled people in the future.	<u>Performance Indicator 1:</u> In the period 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022 no complaints were received. Disability	<u>Performance indicator 1:</u> Achieved.

PART B

	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs <sup>1</sup>	Outcomes / Impact <sup>2</sup>
		<p>Action formal complaints procedure is detailed on its website.</p> <p><u>Performance Indicator 2:</u> This has been taken on by the Department of Health</p>	<p><u>Performance Indicator 2:</u> Will no longer be reported on by DfI.</p>

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

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones <sup>6</sup> / Outputs <sup>1</sup>	Outcomes/Impacts <sup>2</sup>	Reasons not fully achieved
1.	Development of a new Accessible Transport Strategy (ATS) Action Plan.	Following the 2015 consultation on the draft ATS, a report detailing the responses to the consultation was published 11 May 2016.	The new ATS and Action Plan will address accessibility issues experienced by older people and people with a disability across the transport system.	Improvements in transport accessibility is being considered under Programme for Government Outcomes.
2.	Implementation of changes identified during the 2013 Review of Blue Badge scheme.	All but one of the recommendations has been implemented. The legislation for the second staged fee increase to achieve full cost recovery remains to be made. Legislation has been made for all other changes identified.	The changes to the Blue Badge Scheme in Northern Ireland are aimed at enhancing the service and ensuring the Scheme's uptake is targeted at those whose everyday lives can be greatly enhanced by the concessions they are entitled to.	<p>All changes recommended are implemented bar the second staged fee increase.</p> <p>This is still under consideration by the Department.</p>

PART B

3.	A review of the Blue Badge Scheme re-application process for citizens with life-long disabilities affecting their mobility.	A report on the findings has been completed.	The Blue Badge Scheme in Northern Ireland enables Badge Holders to access services and facilities, through a range of parking concessions.	The report is under consideration by the Department.
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4. Please outline what action measures **have not been achieved** and the reasons why.

i) Action Measure not met: None.

Reason: N/A

ii) Action Measure not met: None

Reason: N/A

5. What **monitoring tools** have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?

(a) Qualitative: No new monitoring tools have been implemented during this reporting year.

(b) Quantitative: No new monitoring tools have been implemented during this reporting year.

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

- made any **revisions** to your plan during the reporting period: None. **OR**
- taken any **additional steps** to meet the disability duties which were **not outlined in your original** disability action plan / any other changes?

No.

If yes please outline below the Revised/Additional Action Measures and associated Performance Indicator



PART B

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

No.

<sup>1</sup>**Outputs** – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.

<sup>2</sup>**Outcome / Impact** – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action? Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.

<sup>3</sup>**National** - Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments.

<sup>4</sup>**Regional** - Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level.

<sup>5</sup>**Local** - Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora.

<sup>6</sup>**Milestones** - Outline what part progress has been made towards the particular measures; even if full output or outcomes/ impact have not been achieved.

**Timetable for Measures to check compliance with the Dfl Equality Scheme**

<b>Para #</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Lead responsibility</b>	<b>Timetable</b>	<b>Action status</b>
2.7	Objectives and targets relating to the statutory duties will be integrated into the Department's corporate and operational business plans.	Equality Officer, All Directors.	Annually	To date (2022) lines have been provided for the Dfl Plans.
2.9	S75 Annual Progress Report	Equality Officer/ Permanent Secretary	31 August (annually)	Ongoing.
2.13	Biannual progress reports to the Departmental Board, and Minister	Equality Officer	Biannually	Complete.
3.4	Review consultation list of S75 contacts annually	Equality Unit	Annually	Complete.
4.20	Quarterly publication of Screening Reports	Equality Officer	Quarterly	Complete.
4.34	Review of existing information systems to address, where possible, any gaps identified in monitoring.	Equality Officer ASRB	Within one year of Equality Commission approval of scheme.	Dfl Equality Scheme published in 2021.
4.37	Notify consultees of publication of Annual Report.	Equality Officer	Annually by 30 September	Complete.
5.4	Check availability/ suitability of focussed training for key staff	Equality Officer	Annually	EQIA & Section 75 courses. Following the para 10 investigation at Dfl's request ECNI have been facilitating Section 75 training for the Department. (HR function no longer within Dfl.)
5.5/6	Review/ organise /update training	Equality Officer	Annually	
5.10	Evaluation of Training	Equality Officer in conjunction with Human Resources.	Annually	
6.7	Review and update Dfl Guide to Making Information Accessible	Equality Officer	Annually, November	Achieved.
6.14	Assessing access to public information and services	Equality Working Group and Equality Forum	Annually	Ongoing - updates are requested for biannual reports to the Board and this Report.

10.1	Review of Equality Scheme	Equality Officer	Within 5 years of Scheme approval.	Scheme published 2021.
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Note paragraph numbering may not be the same in final Equality Scheme.

**Abbreviations**

ATS	Accessible Transport Strategy
BRT	Belfast Rapid Transit
CAL	Centre for Applied Learning
Cfl	Assembly Committee for Infrastructure
DATS	Disability Action Transport Scheme roster
DfC	Department for Communities
Dfl	Department for Infrastructure
DoH	Department of Health
DE	Department of Education
DoJ	Department of Justice
ECNI	Equality Commission Northern Ireland
EQIA	Equality Impact Assessment
EWG	Equality Working Group
GRPB	Good Relations Programme Board
IMTAC	Inclusive Mobility Transport Advisory Committee
NI	Northern Ireland
NICS	Northern Ireland Civil Service
PSNI	Police Service for NI
RNIB	Royal National Institute for the Blind
RCTP	Rural Community Transport Partnership
SEG	Strategy Equality and Governance
SIB	Strategic Investment Board
SPPS	Strategic Planning Policy Statement
S75	Section 75
TBUC	Together: Building a United Community Strategy
TEO	The Executive Office
TPPD	Transport Programme for People with Disabilities