



***Equality Scheme for Tourism Northern Ireland
2025-2030***

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

If you have any questions or comments on this scheme or if you require it in an alternative format e.g. large print, Braille, audio format, easy read or another language, please contact:

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Approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland on 4 March 2019.

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Foreword:

1. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations across a range of categories outlined in the Act¹.
2. In our Equality Scheme we set out how Tourism Northern Ireland (Tourism NI) proposes to fulfil the Section 75 statutory duties.
3. We will commit the necessary resources in terms of people, time, and money to make sure that the Section 75 statutory duties are complied with and that the Equality Scheme is implemented effectively, and on time.
4. We commit to having effective internal arrangements in place for ensuring our effective compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties and for monitoring and reviewing our progress.
5. We will develop and deliver a programme of communication and training with the aim of ensuring that all our staff and board members are made fully aware of our Equality Scheme and understand the commitments and obligations within it.
6. We, the Chair and Chief Executive of Tourism NI, are fully committed to effectively fulfilling our Section 75 statutory duties across all our functions through the effective implementation of our Equality Scheme.
7. We realise the important role that the community and voluntary sector and the general public have to play to ensure the Section 75 statutory duties are effectively implemented. Our Equality Scheme demonstrates how determined we are to ensure there are opportunities, for people affected by our work, to positively influence how we carry out our functions in line with our Section 75 statutory duties. It also offers the means whereby persons directly affected by what they consider to be a failure, on our part, to comply with our Equality Scheme, can make complaints.

¹ See section 1.1 of our Equality Scheme.

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

Signed

Ellvena Graham
Chair
Tourism NI

Signed

John McGrillen
Chief Executive
Tourism NI

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Note: Foreword and Appendices 3 and 4 form part of this Equality Scheme

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998:

1.1 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires Tourism NI to comply with two statutory duties:

Section 75 (1)

In carrying out our functions relating to Northern Ireland we are required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:

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

Section 75 (2)

In addition, without prejudice to the obligations above, in carrying out our functions in relation to Northern Ireland we are required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

“Functions” include the “powers and duties” of a public authority². This includes our employment and procurement functions. Please see below under “Who we are and what we do” for a detailed explanation of our functions.

How we propose to fulfil the Section 75 duties in relation to the relevant functions of Tourism NI:

1.2 Schedule 9, Paragraph 4(1) of the Act requires Tourism NI as a designated public authority to set out in an Equality Scheme how it proposes to fulfil the duties imposed by Section 75 in relation to its relevant functions. This Equality Scheme is intended to fulfil that statutory requirement. It is both a statement of our arrangements for fulfilling the Section 75 statutory duties and our plan for their implementation.

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

1.3 Tourism NI is committed to the discharge of its Section 75 obligations in all parts of our organisation, and we will commit the necessary available resources in terms of people, time and money to ensure that the Section 75 statutory duties are complied with and that our Equality Scheme can be implemented effectively.

Tourism NI - Who we are and what we do:

Tourism NI is responsible for the development of tourism and the marketing of Northern Ireland as a tourist destination to domestic tourists, from within Northern Ireland, and to visitors from the Republic of Ireland.

We are a Delivery Partner of the Department for the Economy (DfE) and we work closely with other tourism bodies to help develop the visitor economy here and to market Northern Ireland to incoming visitors.

Our Mission:

Our mission is to support the development of a productive, regionally balanced and sustainable tourism industry for all people and places in Northern Ireland which provides workers with good jobs and enriches its people, its economy and its guests.

We will do this through:

- Supporting our industry to raise productivity and grow sustainably.
- Promoting Northern Ireland as a must-see destination to markets which offer the greatest potential for growth.
- Developing a tourism ecosystem that presents opportunities for all, bringing economic and community benefit through good jobs and regional balance across Northern Ireland.
- Supporting the tourism sector to become greener, working towards net zero and contributing to the sustainable development of our built and natural environment.

- Supporting the development of authentic tourism experiences which bring our unique heritage to life in an invigorating, responsible and sustainable way.
- Looking after our people, ensuring they have good jobs and that we engage good management practices.
- Transforming the way we work.

Chapter 2 Our arrangements for assessing our compliance with the section 75 duties

Schedule 9, Paragraph 4 (2)(a)

2.1 Some of our arrangements for assessing our compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties are outlined in other relevant parts of this Equality Scheme – see chapters 3, 4 and 8. In addition, we have the following arrangements in place for assessing our compliance:

Responsibilities and reporting:

2.2 We are committed to the fulfilment of our Section 75 obligations in all aspects of our work.

2.3 Responsibility for the effective implementation of our Equality Scheme lies with everyone in Tourism NI. The Chief Executive Officer is accountable for the development, implementation, maintenance and review of the Equality Scheme in accordance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, including any good practice or guidance that has been or may be issued by the Equality Commission.

2.4 If you have any questions or comments regarding our Equality Scheme, please contact Tourism NI at the address below and we will respond to you as soon as possible:

**Business Planning & Improvement
Tourism Northern Ireland
Linum Chambers
Bedford Square, Bedford Street
BELFAST, BT2 7ES**

Telephone: 028 9023 1221 E-mail: bpi@tourismni.com

2.5 Objectives and targets relating to the statutory duties will be integrated into our organisational plans, as appropriate.

2.6 Employees' job descriptions and performance plans reflect their contributions to the discharge of the Section 75 statutory duties and implementation of the Equality Scheme, where relevant. The personal performance plans are subject to appraisal in the annual performance review.

2.7 Tourism NI will submit an annual report to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland on the progress we have made on the implementation of Section 75 and Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 statutory duties.

The latest annual progress report is available on our website:

<https://www.tourismni.com/equality/>

2.8 Tourism NI will liaise closely with the Equality Commission to ensure that progress on the implementation of our Equality Scheme is maintained.

2.9 Tourism NI's Executive Leadership Team has a personal responsibility for the implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties within their Divisions.

Tourism NI's Business Planning & Improvement Team will continue to provide advice on Tourism NI's Section 75 obligations as necessary and seek guidance from the Equality Commission where appropriate.

Action plan/action measures:

2.10 Tourism NI has developed an action plan to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. This action plan is set out in Appendix 6 to this Equality Scheme.

2.11 The action measures that will make up our action plan will be relevant to our functions. They will be developed and prioritised on

the basis of an audit of inequalities. The audit of inequalities will gather and analyse information across the Section 75 categories to identify the inequalities that exist for our service users and those affected by our policies.

2.12 Action measures are intended to be specific, measurable, linked to achievable outcomes, realistic and time bound. Action measures will include performance indicators and timescales for their achievement.

2.13 We will develop an action plan annually in order to align with our corporate and business planning cycles. Implementation of the action measures will be incorporated into our business planning process.

2.14 We will monitor our progress on the delivery of our action measures annually and update the action plan as necessary to ensure that it remains effective and relevant to our functions and work.

2.15 Tourism NI will inform the Commission of any changes or amendments to our action plan and will also include this information in our Section 75 annual progress report to the Equality Commission. The report will also provide information on progress we have made in implementing our action plans/action measures.

2.16 Our action plan will be available on our website: <https://www.tourismni.com/equality/>. If you require it in an alternative format, please contact us using the details provided on the front cover of this Equality Scheme.

Chapter 3 Our arrangements for consulting

Schedule 9, Paragraph 4(2)(a) - on matters to which a duty (Section 75 (1) or (2) is likely to be relevant (including details of the persons to be consulted).

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

3.1 We recognise the importance of consultation in all aspects of the implementation of our statutory equality duties. We will consult on our Equality Scheme, action measures, equality impact assessments and other matters relevant to the Section 75 statutory duties.

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

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

Initially all consultees (see Appendix 3), will be notified of the matter/policy being consulted upon to ensure they are aware of all consultations. Thereafter, we will adopt a more targeted approach to consultation to ensure the most effective use of our resources and those of our consultees. This might involve consultation with stakeholders with a particular interest in the matter/policy being consulted upon and to whom the matter/policy is of particular relevance; for example, this might take the form of regional or local consultations, sectoral or thematic consultations.

3.2.2 Consultation with all stakeholders will begin as early as possible. We will engage with affected individuals and representative groups to identify how best to consult or engage with them. We will ask our consultees what their preferred consultation methods are and will give consideration to these. Methods of consultation could include:

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

- Telephone consultations.

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

3.2.3 We will consider the accessibility and format of every method of consultation we use in order to remove barriers to the consultation process. Specific consideration will be given as to how best to communicate with children and young people, people with disabilities (in particular people with learning disabilities) and minority ethnic communities. We take account of existing and developing good practice, including the Equality Commission's guidance *Let's Talk Let's Listen – Guidance for public authorities on consulting and involving children and young people (2008)*.

Information will be made available, on request, in alternative formats³, in a timely manner, usually within 10 working days. We will ensure that such consultees have equal time to respond.

3.2.4 Where necessary, specific training may be provided to those facilitating consultations to ensure that they have the necessary skills to communicate effectively with consultees.

3.2.5 To ensure effective consultation with consultees⁴ on Section 75 matters, we may develop a programme of awareness raising on the Section 75 statutory duties and the commitments in our Equality Scheme.

3.2.6 The consultation period lasts for a minimum of twelve weeks to allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves as part of the process of forming a view. However, in exceptional circumstances when this timescale is not feasible (for example implementing UK wide legislation, meeting Health and Safety requirements, addressing urgent public health matters or complying with Court judgements), we may shorten timescales to eight weeks or less before the policy is implemented. We may continue consultation thereafter and will review the policy as part of our monitoring commitments⁵.

³ See Chapter 6 of our equality scheme for further information on alternative formats of information we provide.

⁴ Please see Appendix 3 for a list of our consultees.

⁵ Please see below at 4.28 to 4.32 for details on monitoring.

Where, under these exceptional circumstances, we must implement a policy immediately, as it is beyond our authority's control, we may consult after implementation of the policy, in order to ensure that any impacts of the policy are considered.

3.2.7 If a consultation exercise is to take place over a period when consultees are less able to respond, for example, over the summer or Christmas break, or if the policy under consideration is particularly complex, we will give consideration to the feasibility of allowing a longer period for the consultation.

3.2.8 We are conscious of the fact that affected individuals, and representative groups may have different needs. We will take appropriate measures to ensure full participation in any meetings that are held. We will consider for example the time of day, the appropriateness of the venue, in particular whether it can be accessed by those with disabilities, how the meeting is to be conducted, the use of appropriate language, whether a signer and/or interpreter is necessary, and whether the provision of childcare and support for other carers is required.

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

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

3.2.11 We provide feedback to consultees in a timely manner. A feedback report is prepared which includes summary information on the policy consulted upon, a summary of consultees' comments and a summary of our consideration of and response to consultees' input. The feedback is provided in formats suitable to consultees. (Please see also 6.3)

3.3 A list of our consultees is included in this Equality Scheme at Appendix 3. It can be obtained by contacting Tourism NI using the details provided on the front cover.

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

3.5 We welcome enquiries from any person/s or organisations wishing to be added to the list of consultees. Please contact us using the details provided on the front cover of this Equality Scheme, to provide your contact details, have your areas of interest noted, or have your name/details removed or amended. Please also inform us at this stage if you would like information sent to you in a particular format or language.

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

Schedule 9, Paragraphs 4(2)(b); 4(2)(c); 4(2)(d); and 9(1) & (2)

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

4.1 In the context of Section 75, 'policy' is very broadly defined, and it covers all the ways in which we carry out or propose to carry out our functions in relation to Northern Ireland. In respect of this Equality Scheme, the term policy is used for any (proposed / amended / existing) strategy, policy initiative or practice and/or decision, whether written or unwritten and irrespective of the label given to it, e.g., 'draft', 'pilot', 'high level' or 'sectoral'.

4.2 In making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted, we take into account any assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy, as required by paragraph 9(2) of Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

4.3 Tourism NI uses the tools of screening and equality impact assessment to assess the likely impact of a policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations. In carrying out these assessments we will relate them to the intended outcomes of the policy in question and will also follow Equality Commission guidance:

- The guidance on screening, including the screening template, as detailed in the Commission’s guidance ‘Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for Public Authorities (April 2010)’
- On undertaking an equality impact assessment as detailed in the Commission’s guidance ‘Practical guidance on equality impact assessment (February 2005)’
- “Effective Section 75 Equality Assessments: Screening and Equality Assessments” (July 2017).

Screening:

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

4.5 Screening is completed at the earliest opportunity in the policy development/review process. Policies which we propose to adopt will be subject to screening prior to implementation. For more detailed strategies or policies that are to be put in place through a series of stages, we will screen at various stages during implementation.

4.6 The lead role in the screening of a policy is taken by the policy decision maker who has the authority to make changes to that policy. However, screening will also involve other relevant team members, for example, equality specialists, those who implement the policy and staff members from other relevant work areas. Where possible we will include key stakeholders in the screening process.

4.7 The following questions are applied to all our policies as part of the screening process:

- What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? (**minor/major/none**);
- Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories?

- To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion, or racial group? (**minor/major/none**); and
- Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion, or racial group?

4.8 In order to answer the screening questions, we gather all relevant information and data, both qualitative and quantitative. In taking this evidence into account we consider the different needs, experiences, and priorities for each of the Section 75 equality categories. Any screening decision will be informed by this evidence.

4.9 Completion of screening, taking into account our consideration of the answers to all four screening questions set out in 4.7 above, will lead to one of the following three outcomes:

1. The policy has been 'screened in' for equality impact assessment;
2. The policy has been 'screened out' with mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted; or
3. The policy has been 'screened out' without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.

4.10 If our screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'minor' in respect of one, or more, of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, we may on occasion decide to proceed with an equality impact assessment, depending on the policy. If an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is not to be conducted, we will nonetheless consider measures that might mitigate the policy impact as well as alternative policies that might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

4.11 Where we mitigate, we will outline in our screening template the reasons to support this decision together with the proposed changes, amendments, or alternative policy. This screening decision will be 'signed off' by the appropriate policy lead within Tourism NI.

4.12 If our screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'major' in respect of one, or more, of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, we will normally subject the policy to an equality impact assessment. This screening decision will be 'signed off' by the appropriate policy lead within Tourism NI. In instances where screening has identified a likely impact, and potential for clearly identified mitigating action, the decision may be to 'screen out, with mitigation'.

4.13 If our screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'none', in respect of all the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, we may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, we will give details of the reasons for the decision taken. This screening decision will be 'signed off' by the appropriate policy lead within Tourism NI.

4.14 Details of screening exercises conducted will be made available on our website:

[Equality - Our Plans, Schemes & Progress | Tourism NI](#)

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

4.16 Our screening report will be published bi-annually [see below at 4.20 – 4.22 and 4.23 for details].

Equality impact assessment:

4.17 An EQIA is a thorough and systematic analysis of a policy, whether that policy is formal or informal, and irrespective of the scope of that policy. The primary function of an EQIA is to determine the extent of any impact of a policy upon the Section 75 categories and to determine if the impact is an adverse one. It is also an opportunity to demonstrate the likely positive outcomes of a policy and to seek ways to promote equality of opportunity and good relations more effectively.

4.18 Once a policy is screened and screening has identified that an equality impact assessment is necessary, we will carry out the

EQIA in accordance with Equality Commission guidance. The EQIA will be carried out as part of the policy development process before the policy is implemented.

4.19 Any EQIA will be subject to consultation at the appropriate stage(s). (For details see above Chapter 3 “Our Arrangements for Consulting”).

Our arrangements for publishing the results of the assessments of the likely impact of policies we have adopted or propose to adopt on the promotion of equality of opportunity.

Schedule 9, Paragraphs 4(2)(d) and 9(1)

4.20 We make publicly available the results of our screening and EQIA assessments.

What will be published:

4.21 Screening reports: These will be published bi-annually.

Screening reports detail:

- All policies screened by Tourism NI in quarter 1&2 and quarter 3&4.
- A statement of the aim(s) of the policy/policies to which the assessment relates;
- Screening decisions, i.e.
 - whether the policy has been ‘screened in’ for equality impact assessment.
 - whether the policy has been ‘screened out’ with mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.
 - whether the policy has been ‘screened out’ without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.
- Where applicable, a timetable for conducting equality impact assessments.

4.22 Screening templates: For details on the availability of our screening templates please refer to 4.14.

4.23 Equality impact assessments: EQIA reports are published once the impact assessment has been completed. These reports include:

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

How the information will be published:

4.24 All information we publish can be made available in alternative formats on request. Please see 6.3 below.

Where the information will be published:

4.25 The results of our assessments (screening reports, and the results of EQIAs) will be published on our website:

<https://www.tourismni.com/equality/>

4.26 Details on specific screening exercises (electronic copy or hard copy on request if more suitable for recipients) are available on request.

4.27 We will inform the general public about the availability of any relevant additional equality information via the Tourism NI website, where appropriate.

Our arrangements for monitoring any adverse impact of policies we have adopted on equality of opportunity:

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

4.28 Monitoring can assist us to deliver better public services and continuous improvements. Monitoring Section 75 information involves the processing of sensitive personal data (data relating to the racial or ethnic origin of individuals, sexual orientation, political opinion, religious belief, etc.). In order to carry out monitoring in a confidential and effective manner, Tourism NI follows guidance from the Office of the Information Commissioner and the Equality Commission.

4.29 We monitor any adverse impact on the promotion of equality of opportunity of policies we have adopted. We are also committed to monitoring more broadly to identify opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations in line with Equality Commission guidance.

4.30 The systems we have established to monitor the impact of policies and identify opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations include:

- The collection, collation, and analysis of existing relevant primary quantitative and qualitative data across all nine equality categories;
- The collection, collation, and analysis of existing relevant secondary sources of quantitative and qualitative data across all nine equality categories.
- A regular audit of existing information systems, to identify the extent of current monitoring and take action to address any gaps in order to have the necessary information on which to base decisions; and
- Undertaking or commissioning new data if necessary.

4.31 If, over a two-year period, monitoring and evaluation show that a policy results in greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, we will ensure that the policy is revised to achieve better outcomes for relevant equality groups.

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

Our arrangements for publishing the results of our monitoring:

(Schedule 9 Paragraph 4(2) (d))

4.33 Schedule 9 4. (2) (d) requires us to publish the results of the monitoring of adverse impacts of policies we have adopted. However, we are committed to monitoring more broadly. EQIA monitoring information is published as part of our Section 75 annual progress report [see 2.7]. It is also published on our website www.tourismni.com.

4.34 All information published can be made available in alternative formats on request. Please see below at 6.3 for details.

Chapter 5 Staff training

Schedule 9, Paragraph 4(2)(e)

Commitment to staff training:

5.1 We recognise that awareness raising, and training play a crucial role in the effective implementation of our Section 75 duties.

5.2 We wish to positively communicate Tourism NI's commitment to the Section 75 statutory duties, both internally and externally. To this end we have introduced a training programme for all staff and will ensure that our commitment to the Section 75 statutory duties is made clear in all relevant publications.

Training objectives:

5.3 Tourism NI will draw up a training plan for its staff which will aim to achieve the following objectives:

- To raise awareness of the provisions of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, our Equality Scheme commitments and the particular issues likely to affect people across the range of Section 75 categories, to ensure that our staff fully understand their role in implementing the scheme;

- To provide those staff involved in the assessment of policies (screening and EQIA) with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively;
- To provide those staff who deal with complaints in relation to compliance with our Equality Scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to investigate and monitor complaints effectively;
- To provide those staff involved in consultation processes with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively; and
- To provide those staff involved in the implementation and monitoring of the effective implementation of Tourism NI's Equality Scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively.

Awareness raising and training arrangements:

5.4 The following arrangements are in place to ensure that our staff and Board members are aware and understand our equality obligations:

- We will provide access to the Equality Scheme for all staff; ensure that any queries or questions of clarification from staff are addressed effectively;
- The Section 75 statutory duties form part of induction training for new staff;
- Focused training is provided for key staff within Tourism NI who are directly engaged in taking forward the implementation of our Equality Scheme commitments (for example those involved in research and data collection, policy development, service design, conducting equality impact assessments, consultation, monitoring, and evaluation);
- Where appropriate, training will be provided to ensure staff are aware of the issues experienced by the range of Section 75 groups; and

- When appropriate and on an ongoing basis, arrangements will be made to ensure staff are kept up to date with Section 75 developments.

5.5 In order to share resources and expertise, Tourism NI will, where possible, work closely with other bodies and agencies in the development and delivery of any necessary training. Tourism NI will avail of monitoring, screening and EQIA training provided by the Equality Commission. Section 75 training courses are provided centrally via NICS Centre for Applied Learning and includes Introduction to Section 75 (e-learning) and Disability Awareness Training for Frontline Staff (e-learning).

Monitoring and evaluation:

5.6 Our training programme is subject to the following monitoring and evaluation arrangements:

- We evaluate the extent to which all participants in this training programme have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve each of the above objectives; and
- The extent to which training objectives have been met will be reported on as part of the Section 75 annual progress report, which will be sent to the Equality Commission.

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

Schedule 9 Paragraph 4(2)(f)

6.1 Tourism NI is committed to ensuring that the information we disseminate and the services we provide are fully accessible to all parts of the community in Northern Ireland. We keep our arrangements under review to ensure that this remains the case.

6.2 We are aware that some groups will not have the same access to information as others and that this can have an impact on their subsequent access to services. In particular:

- People with sensory, learning, communication and mobility disabilities may require printed information in other formats;
- Members of ethnic minority groups, whose first language is not English, may have difficulties with information provided only in English; and/or
- Children and young people may not be able to fully access or understand information.
- People whose physical location may restrict their access e.g. those in rural area; and
- People without access to a computer / tablet will not be able to avail of internet-based dissemination.

Access to information:

6.3 To ensure equality of opportunity in accessing information, we provide information in alternative formats on request, where reasonably practicable. Where the exact request cannot be met, we will ensure a reasonable alternative is provided.

6.4 Alternative formats may include Easy Read, Braille, audio formats (CD, mp3 or DAISY), large print or minority languages to meet the needs of those for whom English is not their first language.

6.5 Tourism NI will liaise as appropriate with representatives of young people and disability and minority ethnic organisations taking into account existing and developing good practice. We will respond to requests for information in alternative formats in a timely manner.

6.6 Tourism NI is committed to effective communication with the public. Recognising the growing range of communications channels and the differing needs and preferences of different groups, Tourism NI will ensure the evidence-based evaluation and use of a range of communications channels to enable wide access to information, to mitigate the risk that some sections of the public might not enjoy equality of opportunity in accessing information provided by Tourism NI.

Access to services:

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

6.8 Tourism NI is committed to ensuring that our facilities are designed to the requirements of all our customers. We also clearly state on our website that all documents can be provided in an alternative format on request.

Assessing public access to information and services:

6.9 Tourism NI will monitor annually across all our functions, in relation to access to information and services, to ensure equality of opportunity and good relations are promoted.

6.10 Tourism NI will monitor access to information and services through such things as the monitoring of complaints and satisfaction surveys.

6.11 Tourism NI is committed to achieving effective communication and recognises that some sections of the public might not enjoy equality of opportunity in accessing information provided by public authorities. For example, some members of the public may not have access to a computer to obtain information from websites. They may require access to information in different formats due to a visual impairment or their first language. Tourism NI will consider a range of communication methods to ensure wide access to its information. We will make every effort to respond positively to requests for access to information to meet user needs.

Chapter 7 Timetable for measures we propose in this Equality Scheme

Schedule 9, Paragraph 4(3)(b)

7.1 Appendix 4 outlines our timetable for all measures proposed within this Equality Scheme. The measures outlined in this timetable will be incorporated into our business planning processes.

7.2 This timetable is different from and in addition to our commitment to developing action plans/action measures to specifically address inequalities and further promote equality of opportunity and good relations. We have included in our Equality Scheme a commitment to develop and implement an action plan. Accordingly, this commitment is listed in the timetable of measures at Appendix 4. For information on these action measures please see above at 2.10 – 2.16.

Chapter 8 Our complaints procedure

Schedule 9 Paragraph 10

8.1 Schedule 9 paragraph 10 of the Act refers to complaints. Tourism NI is responsive to the views of members of the public. We will endeavour to resolve all complaints made to us.

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

8.3 A person wishing to make a complaint that Tourism NI has failed to comply with its approved Equality Scheme should contact us using the details provided on the front cover of this Equality Scheme.

8.4 Tourism NI will, in the first instance, acknowledge receipt of each complaint within 3 working days. Tourism NI will carry out an internal investigation of the complaint and will respond substantively to the complainant within 10 working days of the date of receiving the letter of complaint. Under certain circumstances, if the complexity of the matter requires a longer period, the period for response to the complainant may be extended to 20 working days. In those circumstances, the complainant will be advised of the extended period within 10 working days of making the complaint.

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

8.6 In any subsequent investigation by the Equality Commission, Tourism NI will co-operate fully, providing access in a timely manner to any relevant documentation that the Equality Commission may require.

Similarly, Tourism NI will co-operate fully with any investigation by the Equality Commission under sub-paragraph 11 (1) (b) of Schedule 9 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

8.7 Tourism NI will make all efforts to implement promptly and in full any recommendations arising out of any Commission investigation.

Chapter 9 Publication of our Equality Scheme

Schedule 9, Paragraph 4(3)

9.1 Our Equality Scheme is available free of charge in print form and alternative formats. If you require it in an alternative format, please contact us using the details provided on the front cover of this Equality Scheme.

9.2 Our Equality Scheme is also available on our website at:

www.tourismni.com/equality

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

- We will make every effort to communicate widely the existence and content of our Equality Scheme. This may include press releases, prominent advertisements in the press, the internet and direct mail shots to groups representing the various categories in Section 75.
- We will email a link to our approved Equality Scheme to all Section 75 consultees on our consultation lists. Other consultees without e-mail will be notified by letter that the scheme is available on request. We will respond to requests for the Equality Scheme in alternative formats in a timely manner.

- Our Equality Scheme will be made available on request, in alternative formats such as Easy Read, Braille, large print, audio formats (CD, mp3, DAISY) and in minority languages to meet the needs of those not fluent in English.

9.4 For a list of our stakeholders and consultees please see Appendix 3 of the Equality Scheme, visit our website at www.tourismni.com/equality or contact us using the details provided on the front cover of this Equality Scheme.

Chapter 10 Review of our Equality Scheme:

Schedule 9, Paragraph 8(3)

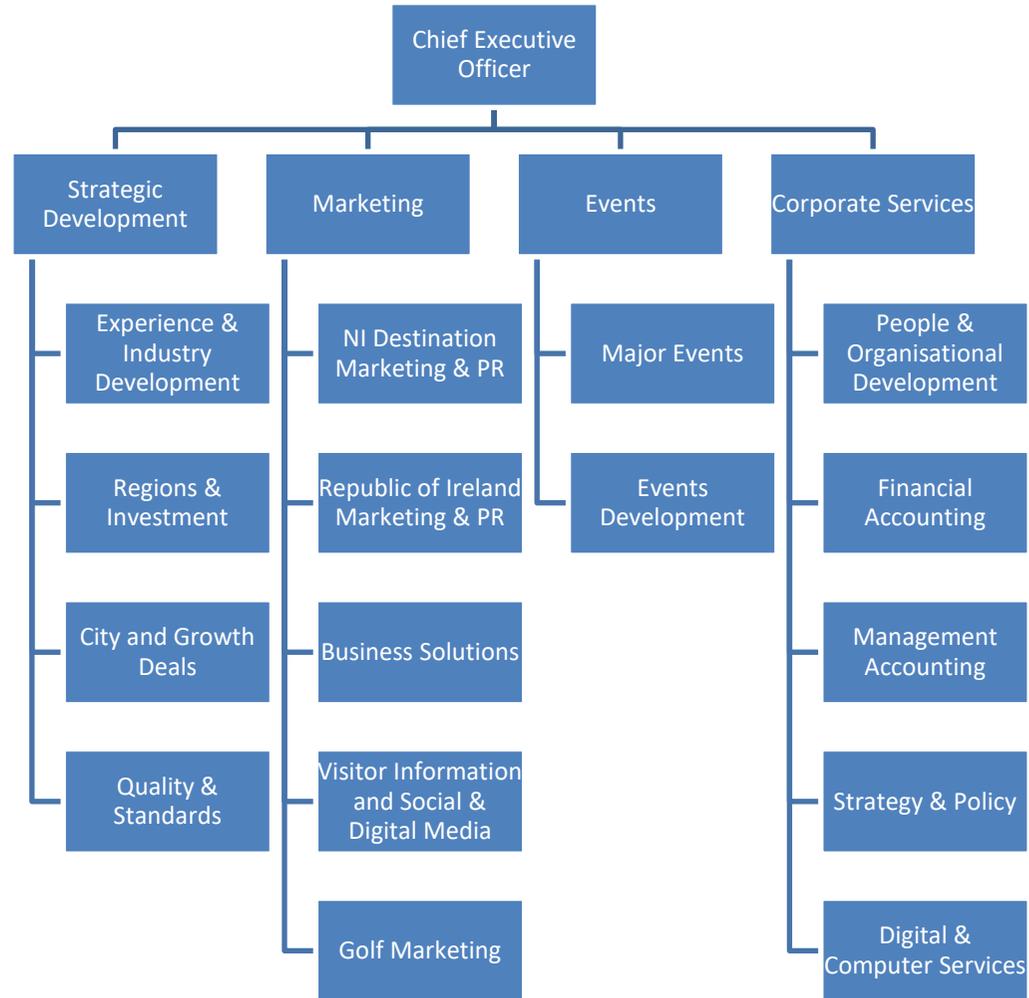
10.1 As required by Schedule 9 paragraph 8 (3) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 we will conduct a thorough review of this Equality Scheme. This review will take place either within five years of submission of this Equality Scheme to the Equality Commission or within a shorter timescale to allow alignment with the review of other planning cycles.

10.2 The review will evaluate the effectiveness of our scheme in relation to the implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties relevant to our functions in Northern Ireland.

10.3 In undertaking this review we will follow any guidance issued by the Equality Commission. A report of this review will be made public on our website www.tourismni.com/equality and sent to the Equality Commission.

Appendix 1

TOURISM NI – ORGANISATION CHART



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

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

Category	Example groups
Religious belief	Buddhist; Catholic; Hindu; Jewish; Muslims, people of no religious belief; Protestants; Sikh; other faiths. For the purposes of Section 75, the term “religious belief” is the same definition as that used in the <i>Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order</i> ⁶ . Therefore, “religious belief” also includes any <i>perceived</i> religious belief (or perceived lack of belief) and, in employment situations only, it also covers any “ <i>similar philosophical belief</i> ”.
Political opinion ⁷	Nationalist generally; Unionists generally; members/supporters of other political parties.
Racial group	Black people; Chinese; Indians; Pakistanis; people of mixed ethnic background; Polish; Roma; Travellers; White people.
Men and women generally	Men (including boys); Trans-gendered people; Transsexual people; women (including girls).
Marital status	Civil partners or people in civil partnerships; divorced people; married people; separated people; single people; widowed people.
Age	Children and young people; older people.
Persons with a disability	Persons with disabilities as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
Persons with dependants	Persons with personal responsibility for the care of a child; for the care of a person with a disability; or the care of a dependant older person.
Sexual orientation	Bisexual people; heterosexual people; gay or lesbian people.

⁶ See Section 98 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, which states: “*In this Act...*” *political opinion*” and “*religious belief*” shall be construed in accordance with Article 2(3) and (4) of the *Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order 1998*.”

⁷ Ibid

Appendix 3 List of Section 75 consultees

Schedule 9, Paragraph 4(2)(a)

Advice NI
Age NI
Age Sector Platform
Alliance Party of Northern Ireland
Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union (AEEU)
Antrim Enterprise Agency
An Munia Tober
Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council
Archbishop of Armagh & Primate of all Ireland
Ards and North Down Borough Council
Ards Business Centre Ltd
Argyle Business Centre Ltd
Armagh Business Centre Ltd
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council
Asperger / Autism Network (AANE)
Autism NI
Banbridge Enterprise Centre
Bar of Northern Ireland
Belfast City Council
Belfast City Centre Management
Belfast Hebrew Congregation
Belfast Islamic Centre
Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre (BURC)
British Deaf Association (NI)
Bryson House
Business in the Community
Cara-Friend
Carers NI
Carrickfergus Enterprise
Castlereagh Enterprises
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council
Causeway Enterprise Agency
Cedar Foundation
Centre for Competitiveness NI
Chief Executives Forum
Chief Officers 3rd Sector
Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership NI
Children's Law Centre

Chinese Chamber of Commerce
Chinese Welfare Association Ltd
Committee on the Administration of Justice
Communication Workers Union
Community Foundation for NI
Community Relations Council
Confederation of British Industry
Cookstown Enterprise Centre Ltd
Co-operation Ireland
Consumer Council for Northern Ireland
Craigavon Industrial Development Organisation Ltd
Creggan Enterprises Ltd
Diocese of Down and Connor
Diocese of Dromore
Democratic Unionist Party
Department for Communities
Department for Infrastructure
Department for the Economy
Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs
Department of Education
Department of Finance
Department of Health
Department of Justice
Derry City and Strabane District Council
Disability Action NI
Dungannon Enterprise Centre
East Belfast Community Development Agency
East Belfast Enterprise Park Ltd
East Side Partnership Board
Education Authority (EA)
Employer's Forum on Disability NI
Equality Coalition
Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
Falls Community Council
Federation of Small Businesses
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council
Fermanagh Enterprise Ltd
Foyle Women's Info Network
GMB Union
Greater Shankill Partnership
Green Party in Northern Ireland
Inclusive Mobility Transport Advisory Committee (IMTAC)

INCORE International Conflict Research Institute
Indian Community Centre
Inspire NI
Institute of Directors (Northern Ireland)
Kesh Development Association
Law Centre (NI)
Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council
Lisburn Enterprise Organisation Ltd
Mallusk Enterprise Park
MENCAP Northern Ireland
Methodist Church in Ireland
Mid and East Antrim Borough Council
Mid Ulster District Council
Mindwise
National Autistic Society
National Energy Action (NEA)
National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
NI Anti-Poverty Network
NI Chamber of Commerce & Industry
NI Commissioner for Children & Young People (Niccy)
NI Committee of Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU)
NI Human Rights Commission
NI Women's European Platform
NIACRO
Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association (NIGRA)
Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance (NIPSA)
North Antrim Business Agency
North Belfast Partnership
North City Business Centre Ltd
North Down Development Organisation Ltd
North West Community Network (NWCN)
Omagh Enterprise Co Ltd
Ormeau Enterprises Ltd
People Before Profit Alliance
Presbyterian Church in Ireland
Press for Change
Prince's Trust
PROSPECT
Queen's University Belfast
Roe Valley Enterprises Ltd
Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) NI

Royal National Institute of Deaf People (RNID) NI
Rural Community Network
Rural Support
Sinn Fein
Social Democratic and Labour Party
Strabane Enterprise Agency
The Executive Office
The William Keown Trust
Townsend Enterprise Park Ltd
Traditional Unionist Voice
Ulster Unionist Party
Ulster University
Union of Shop, Distributive & Allied Workers
Visual Access NI
Volunteer Now
West Belfast Partnership Board
Women's Resource & Development Agency
Women's Support Network
Workspace

The consultation list is indicative and not exhaustive and is reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant to Tourism NI's functions and policies.

Appendix 4 Timetable for measures proposed
(Schedule 9 4. (3) (b))

Measure:	Lead responsibility:	Timetable:
Section 75 Annual Progress Report [2.7]	Business Planning & Improvement	By 31 August (Annually)
<u>Action plan:</u>		
Consultation on draft action plan [2.15]	Business Planning & Improvement	Annually (with ECNI) / Every five years (in line with 5-year review of scheme).
Finalised action plan published [2.18]	Business Planning & Improvement	Annually
Arrangements for monitoring progress of Action Plan [2.16]	Business Planning & Improvement	Annually
Consultation list reviewed and updated [3.4]	Business Planning & Improvement	Annually
Screening timetable [4.4]	Business Planning & Improvement	Annually
Screening Reports [4.15]	Business Planning & Improvement	Bi-annually
EQIA timetable [4.16]	Business Planning & Improvement	As required – dependent on outcome of screening exercises

<u>Monitoring:</u>		
Review of monitoring information [4.31]	Business Planning & Improvement	Annually
Publication of monitoring information [4.33; 4.34]	Business Planning & Improvement	Annually
<u>Training:</u>		
Development of overall training programme [5.5]	People & Organisational Development/ Business Planning & Improvement	Annually
Focussed training [5.4]		As required
Evaluation of training [5.6]	Business Planning & Improvement People & Organisational Development / Business Planning & Improvement	Annually
Assessing access to information and services [6.9]	Business Planning & Improvement	Annually via review of progress against action plan objectives
Communication of Equality Scheme [9.3]	Business Planning & Improvement	Ongoing via publication on website, and in-year communications with all staff
Full review of current Equality Scheme [10.1]	Business Planning & Improvement	By 31 March 2030

Appendix 5 Glossary of terms:

Action plan:

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

Action measures and outcomes:

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

Adverse impact:

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

Affirmative action:

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

Article 55 Review:

Under the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998, all registered employers must conduct periodic reviews of the composition of their workforces and of their employment practices for the purposes of determining whether members of the

Protestant and Roman Catholic communities are enjoying, and are likely to continue to enjoy, fair participation in employment in each employer's concern.

These reviews, which are commonly known as Article 55 Reviews, must be conducted at least once every three years.

Appendix 6 Equality Action Plan (2025/2026):

Division	Objective	Initiative(s)	PI(s)	Team
All	Information will be made available in accessible formats on request e.g. language translations and face-to-face translation services on request.	Accessible Information Requests will be acknowledged within 3 working days.	# of requests.	All
			% that met target for acknowledgement.	
		Information will be made available in accessible formats where possible within 10 working days (or asap thereafter).	% that met target for response.	All
Division	Objective	Initiative(s)	PI(s)	Team
Strategic Development	Tourism NI's Investment Funding Programme Guidelines and Letters of Offer specify the need for	Every Letter of Offer to include Equality of Opportunity in the terms & conditions.	# of projects supported.	Investment Programmes
			Good Practice identified, logged, and shared where appropriate.	

	project promoters to consider equality legislation when delivering tourism capital projects.	100% of supported projects confirm that they will fulfil their requirements (where applicable) in relation to Equality of Opportunity and Accessibility.	All successful applications to funding schemes must demonstrate how they will promote good relations and ensure inclusivity.	Investment Programmes
Strategic Development	Raise awareness with the NI Tourism Industry of issues in relation to inclusive and accessible tourism.	Develop and implement the Inclusive Tourism & Accessibility Working Group Action Plan.	Quarterly meetings to monitor progress.	Industry Development
Strategic Development	Tourism NI industry website (tourismni.com) subject to ongoing review to ensure compliance with accessibility standards.	Tourism NI's industry website maintained to best practice coding conventions listed in the ATAG guidelines from the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI).	Compliance checks undertaken as required.	Industry Development

Division	Objective	Initiative(s)	PI(s)	Team
Marketing	Tourism NI consumer website (discoverni.com) subject to ongoing review to ensure compliance with accessibility standards.	Tourism NI's consumer website maintained to best practice coding conventions listed in the ATAG guidelines from the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI).	Compliance checks undertaken as required.	Visitor Information / Social & Digital Media
	Development Roadmap for the updated consumer website to include accessibility objectives.	Identify and deliver accessibility priorities.	Objectives delivered.	Visitor Information / Social & Digital Media
	Provide Visitor Information on accessible Tourist accommodation and attractions.	Provide a selection of attributes relating to accessible facilities for business owners when listing a property / attraction in line with access & inclusion UK	# of accessible listings on www.discoverni.com	Visitor Information / Social & Digital Media

		review procured by Visit Britain.		
Division	Objective	Initiative(s)	PI(s)	Team
Events	Tourism Event Funding Programme Letters of Offer / Sponsorship Agreements specify the need for event promoters to consider equality legislation when delivering tourism events.	Every Letter of Offer / Sponsorship Agreement to include in the terms & conditions a reference to the need to consider accessibility and inclusivity.	<p>All projects supported have conditions included in Letters of Offer/ Sponsorship Agreements</p> <p>Good practice identified, logged, and shared where appropriate.</p> <p>Events Industry Development Programme re Accessibility and Inclusivity delivered, resource dependent.</p>	Events Development

		Applications to the International Tourism Events Fund and National Tourism Events Sponsorship Scheme to include an accessibility plan within their business plan or explain in the application how their event is accessible and inclusive to all.	All successful applications must meet these criteria.	Events Development
		% of supported events confirm that they are fully accessible and inclusive.	All events to be fully accessible outwith any restrictions of the venue or nature of the event.	Events Development / Major Events
		Every Letter of Offer / Sponsorship Agreement to include reference to the need for promoting	All successful applications to funding schemes must demonstrate how they will promote good	Events Development

		good relations in the terms & conditions.	relations and ensure inclusivity.	
Division	Objective	Initiative(s)	PI(s)	Team
All / Corporate Services	Completion of timely and thorough Equality Screening and, if necessary, Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA).	Ensure all relevant staff are aware of responsibilities with regards equality screening and EQIAs.	# of staff trained.	BPI / People and Organisational Development
		Development of clear processes and guidance.	Developed and communicated.	BPI
		Screening exercises published on equality page of www.tourismni.com .	# of timely screening exercises completed and published.	BPI

Division	Objective	Initiative(s)	PI(s)	Team
Corporate Services	Where possible, and in line with central government policy, increase female representation in the Honours process including at the higher level of Awards.	Raise awareness of government targets to increase female representation through communication, at the beginning of each Honours round, clearly outlining the government's policy and targets to Tourism NI staff.	35% of females in Tourism NI Honours bank.	BPI
		Nominations come from various areas of Tourism NI and, where possible, female nominations should be prioritised by ELT within the Tourism NI Honours bank in line with government targets.	% of successful awards to female nominees in each Honours round.	BPI

Corporate Services	Ensure that new and revised staff policies are screened in line with Section 75.	Ongoing review of staff policies & procedures, with alignment as appropriate.	# of policies reviewed and aligned.	People and Organisational Development
Corporate Services	Ensure relevant Tourism NI staff are trained in relation to Section 75, so staff are better equipped to undertake screen exercises.	All staff to undertake annual mandatory training on Section 75 equality duties.	# of staff trained.	People and Organisational Development

