

CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER FOR NI



SUMMARY EQUALITY SCHEME

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

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

In addition, in carrying out our functions, we are required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

In our equality scheme we set out how the office of the Chief Electoral Officer proposes to fulfil the Section 75 statutory duties.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

The Chief Electoral Officer manages elections and compiles the Register of Electors in Northern Ireland. She is independent of Government and is assisted by the staff of the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland (EONI) which supports her in carrying out her statutory responsibilities. EONI consists of a Headquarters based in Belfast and Area Electoral Office locations across Northern Ireland.

Chapter 2 - Our arrangements for assessing our compliance with the Section 75 Duties

EONI has internal arrangements in place including responsibilities of staff, integration of equality into our strategic and operational business plans, monitoring and reporting on the effective implementation of our statutory duties. We have developed an equality action plan to promote equality of opportunity and good relations, which includes performance indicators and timescales for achievement.

Chapter 3 - Our arrangements for consulting

EONI is committed to consultation on matters relevant to Section 75 statutory duties and the process for engagement with representative groups and individuals, including methods and alternative accessible formats to ensure full participation.

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

EONI has in place arrangements for assessing the impact of policies and carries out a screening process to assess whether a policy should be subject to an equality impact assessment (EQIA). Any EQIA will be carried out in accordance with Equality Commission guidance. Arrangements are in place to monitor any adverse impact of policies including how and where we publicise the results of our assessments.

Chapter 5 – Staff Training

EONI is committed to ensuring staff receive the appropriate training through the performance management system to ensure awareness and effective implementation of our equality obligations. We monitor and evaluate our training.

Chapter 6 - Arrangements for ensuring and assessing public access to information and services we provide

EONI is committed to ensuring our information and services, across all our functions, are fully accessible and provide equality of opportunity.

Chapter 7 – Timetable of Measures we propose in the Equality Scheme

A number of measures have been identified by EONI which need to be taken to fully implement our Equality Scheme. These measures are separate from our action plan.

Chapter 8 - Our complaints procedure

EONI will investigate and monitor complaints. A person can make a complaint if he or she believes they have been directly affected by an alleged failure of EONI to comply with our approved Equality Scheme.

Chapter 9 - Publication of our equality scheme

EONI will ensure that our Equality Scheme is available in alternative formats, published and circulated in a timely manner ensuring equality of access.

Chapter 10 - Review of our equality scheme

EONI will conduct a review to evaluate the effectiveness of our Equality Scheme every five years.

Equality Contact:

If you have any questions or comments regarding our equality scheme, please contact in the first instance the Head of Business Support at the address given below and we will respond to you as soon as possible:

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