

Chapters 1&2 Northern Ireland Social Care Council



Public Authority Statutory Equality, Good Relations and Disability Duties - Annual Progress Report 2024-25

Contact:

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Action Plan	As above <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:
(ECNI Q28):

<https://niscc.info/equality-and-diversity/>

The report on our most recent Five Year Review of Equality Scheme can also be found at the above link.

Our Equality Scheme is due to be reviewed again by 30th June 2026.

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Declan McAllister". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

This report has been prepared adapting a template circulated by the Equality Commission. It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and disability duties. This report reflects progress made between April 2024 and March 2025

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Chapter 1 Summary Quantitative Report

(ECNI Q15,16,19)

Screening, EQIAs and Consultation

1. Number of policies screened (as recorded in screening reports). (see also Chapter 6)	Screened in	Screened out with mitigation	Screened out without mitigation	Screening decision reviewed following concerns raised by consultees
2	0	2		No concerns were raised by consultees on screening published in 2024-25
2. Number of policies subjected to Equality Impact Assessment.	0			
3. Indicate the stage of progress of each EQIA.	Title and Stage N/A			

4. Number of policy consultations conducted	0
5. Number of policy consultations conducted with screening presented. (See also Chapter 2, Table 2)	0

(ECNI Q24)
Training

6. Staff training undertaken during 2024-25. (See also Chapter 2, Q6)

Course	No of Staff Trained	No of Board Members Trained
Equality Screening Training	4	
Equality Impact Assessment Training		
Total	4	

eLearning: Making a Difference

Part 1 – All Staff	21
Part 2 – Line Managers	10

(ECNI Q27)
Complaints

7. Number of complaints in relation to the Equality Scheme received during 2024-25

0

Please provide detail of any complaints:

(ECNI Q7)
Equality Action Plan (see also Chapter 3)

8. Within the 2024-25 reporting period, please indicate the number of:

Actions completed:	4	Actions ongoing:	0	Actions to commence:	1
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(ECNI Part B Q1)

Disability Action Plan (see also Chapter 4)

9. Within the 2024-25 reporting period, please indicate the number of:

Actions completed:	<div>3</div>	Actions ongoing:	<div>1</div>	Actions to commence:	<div>1</div>
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Chapter 2 Section 75 Progress Report (ECNI Q1,2,3,3a,3b,23)

1. In 2024-25, 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.

We invited staff to join an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group to help us understand the diversity of our workforce, those we provide services to and the challenges in inclusion and good relations.

As part of this work we held two workshops – one with staff and one with our Board Members and Participation Partnership members.

We heard lots of positive experiences, and ideas but we also heard about what we can do better in terms of how we engage, provide services and train/support staff.

We will continue to build on this during 2025/26 as we develop an action plan and keep our internal group engaged on this programme of work.

Table 1 below outlines progress to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations¹.

¹ This includes as a result of

- screening / Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs)
- monitoring
- staff training
- engagement and consultation
- improvements in access to information and services
- implementation of Equality and Disability Action Plans.

In most cases, it is not possible to ascribe developments and changes to one single factor. New initiatives, such as the Gender Identity Employment Policy, for instance are not necessarily an outcome of screenings or Equality and Disability Action Plan implementation.

As mainstreaming progresses and the promotion of equality becomes part of the organisational culture and way of working, the more difficult it becomes to ascribe activities and outcomes to the application of a specific element of Equality Scheme implementation.

Table 1:

	Outline new developments or changes in policies or practices and the difference they have made for specific equality groupings.
Persons of different religious belief	None
Persons of different political opinion	None
Persons of different racial groups	Ensuring that the diversity of our workforce are represented and that there are no barriers to inclusion. We also work with the wider regional network to actively condemn racism in all forms
Persons of different age	None
Persons with different marital status	None
Persons of different sexual orientation	None
Persons of different genders and gender identities	None

Persons with and without a disability	None
Persons with and without dependants	None

Equality Portal

This year saw the launch of a new Equality Portal, which is a Microsoft Sharepoint site, providing our staff with comprehensive access to a range of equality services provided by the Equality Unit in BSO. The Equality Portal was co-designed with clients, to feature what staff need to know as they consider and mainstream equality in their work and in the workplace, including detailed guidance and resources for use when undertaking equality screenings.

Where changes resulted from screenings, these will be listed in Chapter 6, the mitigation report.

The following changes resulted from EQIAs: **N/A**

(ECNI Q4,5,6)

2. During the 2024-25 reporting period

(a) were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within...?

	Yes/No	Details
Job descriptions	Yes	For all new posts, the Job Description includes the following: “Assist the organisation in fulfilling its statutory duties under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 to promote equality of opportunity and good relations and under the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006. Staff are also required to support the organisation in complying with its obligations under Human Rights Legislation.”
Performance objectives for staff	Yes	This has been included in specific individuals objectives including managers.

(b) were objectives and targets relating to Section 75 integrated into...?

	Yes/No	Details
Corporate/strategic plans	Yes	This is included in the new Strategic Plan including work to support Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
Annual business plans	Yes	This is included in the Business Plan for 2024/25 including work to support Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

(ECNI Q11,12,17)

3. Please provide any details and examples of good practice in consultation during the 2024-25 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:

Table 2

Policy publicly consulted on	What equality document did you issue alongside the policy consultation document?	Which Section 75 groups did you consult with?	What consultation methods did you use? AND Which of these drew the greatest number of responses from consultees?	Please tell us about anything you feel worked particularly well / not so well in this consultation.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Screening template <input type="checkbox"/> EQIA report <input type="checkbox"/> none			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Screening template <input type="checkbox"/> EQIA report <input type="checkbox"/> none			

(ECNI Q21, 26)

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

Not applicable

(ECNI Q22)

5. Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2024-25 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

Not applicable

(ECNI Q25)

6. 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:

The organisation avails of the joint Section 75 training programme that is coordinated and delivered by the BSO Equality Unit for staff across all 11 partner organisations. The following statistics thus relate to the evaluations undertaken by all participants for the training:

Screening Training Evaluations

The figures in bold below represent the percentage of participants who selected 'Very Well' or 'Well'. Participants were asked: "Overall how well do you think the course met its aims":

- To develop an understanding of the statutory requirements for screening: **100%**
- To develop an understanding of the benefits of screening: **96%**
- To develop an understanding of the screening process: **96%**
- To develop skills in practically carrying out screening: **86%**

(ECNI Q29)

7. 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)

During 2025-26 we will focus on:

- We will undertake a Five Year Review of our Equality Scheme. The Review will commence during the 2025-2026 reporting period.
- Promoting our work in relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Encouraging uptake of screening training for relevant staff

Appendix – Further Explanatory Notes

1 Consultation and Engagement

(ECNI Q10)

targeting –

We did not undertake any public consultations or pre-consultation exercises during the year.

(ECNI Q13)

awareness raising for consultees on Equality Scheme commitments –

During the year, in our quarterly screening reports we raised awareness as to our commitments relating to equality screenings and their publication. In any EQIA reports we explained our commitments relating to Equality Impact Assessments.

(ECNI Q14)

consultation list – During the year, we reviewed our consultation list every quarter.

2 Audit of Information Systems

(ECNI Q20)

We completed an audit of information systems at an early stage of our Equality Scheme implementation, in line with our Scheme commitments.