



Equality Scheme 2021 - 2026

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

This document is available in a range of formats on request.

Any enquiries about the scheme should be submitted to:

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Belfast BT9 5LA
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*If you would like an opportunity to meet with a member of Sport NI to
discuss any aspect of our scheme then please contact Colm Jennings
on (028) 90383 844 or via email to info@sportni.net*

Foreword

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 Act.

In our revised equality scheme for 2021 – 2026 we set out how Sport NI will continue to fulfil its Section 75 statutory duties. We will continue to commit necessary resources in terms of people, time and money to make sure that the Section 75 statutory duties are complied with and that our equality scheme is implemented effectively, efficiently and on time.

We commit to having effective internal arrangements in place for ensuring our compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties and for monitoring and reviewing our progress. Sport NI will also continue to deliver 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.

The Chair and Chief Executive are fully committed to fulfilling Section 75 statutory duties across all our functions (including service provision, employment and procurement) through the implementation of our equality scheme.

We realise the important role that the community and voluntary sector and the general public have to play to ensure Section 75 statutory duties are effectively implemented. Our equality scheme demonstrates that we are determined 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.

On behalf of Sport 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.



Antoinette McKeown
Chief Executive, Sport NI



George Lucas
Sport NI Chair

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires Sport 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 authority¹. This includes our employment and procurement functions.

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

Schedule 9 4. (1) of the Act requires Sport 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.

Sport NI is committed to the discharge of its Section 75 obligations in all parts of our organisation. We will continue to commit necessary resources in terms of people, time and money to ensure that the Section 75 statutory duties are complied with and that our revised equality scheme can be implemented effectively.

Who we are and what we do

Sport NI is the lead public body for the development of sport in Northern Ireland and is an Arm's Length Body of the Department for Communities (DfC). Sport NI provides a range of functions and services, including:

- Sports expertise, primarily to DfC, but also to other government departments to support policy development and delivery through our key activities and partnerships;

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

- Leading, supporting and coordinating the efforts of key partners to promote equality, tackle poverty and social exclusion and contribute to the achievement of the high level targets within the Department for Communities led Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity 2020 - 2030;
- Investing in and supporting key delivery partners to increase sports participation with a specific focus on those groups in society less likely to participate;
- Delivering tailored performance sport programmes and providing expert support services to our high performance athletes through the Sports Institute;
- Quality training opportunities to a wide range of sports participants and people working in sport;
- Conducting high quality research which contributes towards evidence-based decision making in sport;
- Advocating the contribution sport makes to wider health, social and economic outcomes; and
- Maximising the impact of sport in Northern Ireland following key sporting events and partners' investment.

Sport NI remains committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations through its work.

Sport NI's Mission Statement is:

We are passionate about maximising the power of sport to change lives. By 2025, we want the power of sport to be recognised and valued by all.

To achieve Sport NI's vision the following strategic priorities have been identified:

Outcome 1

People in Northern Ireland adopting and sustaining participation in sport and physical recreation.

Outcome 2

NI Athletes among the best in the world.

Sport NI recognises that the needs of all people must be addressed from the outset in all policy development in order to deliver against strategic objectives.

Our Corporate Plan seeks to build on the success of previous Sport NI corporate plans, on 'Sport Matters, the Executive Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation 2009-2019', and is firmly aligned to the Draft Programme for Government 2016-2021.

The Community Planning Partnerships provide a strategic opportunity to enable a more accessible and connected approach to delivery of the sporting system

locally; to improved sustained participation in sport and recreation generally, and specifically from under-represented groups.

While Sport NI IS more successful than ever in terms of sustaining participation in sport and physical recreation, there are barriers that still exist for many in our society. Challenges remain for people with a disability, women and girls, older people, carers, black and minority ethnic communities and our LGBTQ+ communities. Whilst Sport NI has seen an increase in the support for, and the profile of, women in sport, there is much still to do which we aim to address within the next period. Consequently, the participation rates for these groups remain significantly below the general rates of participation. Sport NI knows that there are critical points in people's lives when, for a range of reasons, they are at risk of dropping out of participation and Sport NI aims to take actions to mitigate this.

A strong sports system is a widely used and understood concept in sport development across the world and it enables nations and regions to develop an effective set of standards that define what is "good". It also enables bench learning with other sporting bodies. A sports system for Northern Ireland will reflect the fact that we operate across two sporting jurisdictions (UK and Ireland) and as such, we will wish to capitalise on the strengths of both systems and give them due regard.

The sporting system is comprised of many different elements that operate interdependently and require the support of multiple partners in order to thrive. Sport NI will work with our partners to implement an inclusive and supportive sporting culture that ensures that the sporting system is accessible to all and specifically to people with a disability, women and girls, older people, carers, black and minority ethnic communities and our LGBTQ+ communities.

To support our strategic sporting outcomes and to respond to what our stakeholders asked of us, Sport NI have identified the following areas and actions:

Children and Young People

1. Improve the early experiences of sport and physical recreation for school-aged children.
2. Promote and support the development of an 'all-island' Physical Literacy Consensus Statement, in partnership with Sport Ireland.
3. Embed a systematic and formal approach to physical literacy.
4. Support the strengthening (quality and quantity) of physical education and school sport for school-aged children, by advocating and partnering with education and governing bodies of sport.
5. Strengthen pathways and partnerships between afterschool sport, local sports clubs and local communities, by working with education and governing bodies of sport.

Connected Communities

6. Create a 'level playing field' so that accessibility and inclusion is felt and experienced in a real 'lived' way by those who have traditionally been excluded from sport.
7. Embed a life course model for participation in sport and physical recreation that provides interventions at the points when they are most needed and one which is reflective of changing patterns of participation.
8. Meet local need and maximise local sports impacts by supporting and leveraging regional partnerships; through community planning.

People Development

9. Develop, promote, support and celebrate volunteering across the sports sector.
10. Develop, promote, support and celebrate people development opportunities for sports clubs.

Quality Clubs and Effective Governing Bodies

11. Advance and advocate agreed definitions of what a modern, fit for purpose sports club looks like.
12. Support governing bodies of sport to embed a positive and inclusive culture in their clubs.
13. Empower governing bodies of sport to make improved use of data management to meet the needs of sports clubs and their members.

Accessible, Quality Infrastructure and Safety

14. Advocate for and support the delivery of a modern, fit for purpose physical sports infrastructure to meet the local and regional needs of communities, and sports clubs in delivering increased, inclusive and safe sustained participation in sport and physical recreation.

High Performance

15. Develop and implement a high performance sports framework aligned to GB and Ireland systems that seeks to leverage benefits, through investment in key strategic partners, to impact on the performance of NI athletes.
16. Encourage National Governing Bodies to develop business models that underpin the performance programme and operate to a sustainable balance of public versus self-generated funding.
17. Support performance directors, coaches and athletes to improve performance by finding solutions to their identified performance limiting problems.

18. Provide focused athletes services that maximise the training gains needed to enhance performance and minimise days lost from training and competition.
19. Enhance the operational practices of sporting organisations operating at performance level, adding value through shared learning on culture, governance, anti-doping, sport pathways, transition management and people development.
20. Work with partners to develop a new regional training centre that supports the development of high performance sport.

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

(Schedule 9 4. (2) (a))

Some of our arrangements for assessing compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties are outlined in other relevant parts of this equality scheme, for example, arrangements for monitoring; publication; complaints and access to information and services and review.

In addition we have the following arrangements in place for assessing our compliance:

Responsibilities and reporting

We are committed to the fulfilment of our Section 75 obligations in all parts of our work. Sport NI will ensure that appropriate systems are maintained to fulfil the commitments in this scheme, including training, consultation, monitoring and reporting, the meaningful assessments of the impact of policies and an effective complaints procedure.

Responsibility for the effective implementation of our equality scheme continues to lie at senior management level with the Executive Leadership Team. The Executive Leadership Team is responsible 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.

If you have any questions or comments regarding our equality scheme, please contact the Executive Support Unit at the address given below and we will respond to you as soon as possible:

Sport NI
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House of Sport

**2A Upper Malone Road
Belfast BT9 5LA
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Objectives and targets relating to the statutory duties will continue to be integrated into our strategic and operational business plans².

Employees' job descriptions and performance plans reflect their contributions to the discharge of Section 75 statutory duties and implementation of the equality scheme, where relevant. Performance plans are subject to appraisal through annual performance review.

Sport NI will continue to prepare an annual report on the progress made in implementing the arrangements set out in this equality scheme to discharge our Section 75 statutory duties (Section 75 annual progress report). The Section 75 annual progress report will be sent to the Equality Commission each year and will follow any guidance on annual reporting issued by the Equality Commission.

The Section 75 annual progress report will be available upon request as well as on the Sport NI website (see contact details above)

Section 75 is mainstreamed across all of our business areas. Directors are responsible for ensuring that Section 75 obligations are taken into account in developing and implementing policy.

The Executive Leadership Team is designated as the Section 75 Steering Committee under the chairmanship of the Chief Executive.

Action plan/action measures

Sport NI has developed successive action plans to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. The current action plan is set out in Appendix 5. It should be noted that the action plan does not form part of the approved equality scheme.

The action measures that make up our action plan are relevant to our functions and form an integral part of our annual operational business plan. The action measures are specific, measurable, linked to achievable outcomes, realistic and time bound. Action measures include performance indicators and timescales for their achievement.

The action plan will operate for a period of one year and will be updated annually in line with our operational business plan.

² See Appendix 3 'Timetable for measures proposed' and Section 2.11 of this equality scheme.

Sport NI will seek input from our stakeholders when developing our strategic corporate plan and operational business plan and thus our equality action plan.

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 throughout the year. Action plan progress will be reviewed in the quarterly progress reports to the Executive Leadership Team.

Sport NI will inform the Commission of any changes or amendments to our action plan and our Section 75 annual progress report will incorporate information on progress we have made in implementing our action plans/action measures.

When finalised, our action plan will be available on the Sport NI website at www.sportni.net or by contacting the Executive Support Team directly using the details provided above.

If you require information in an alternative format please contact us using the details provided above.

Chapter 3 Our arrangements for consulting

(Schedule 9 4. (2) (a)) - on matters to which a duty (S75 (1) or (2)) is likely to be relevant (including details of the persons to be consulted).

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

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.

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)*')

All consultations will seek the views of those directly affected by the policy, the Equality Commission, representative groups of Section 75 categories, other public authorities, voluntary and community groups, our staff and their trades 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 2), as a matter of course, will be notified (by email or post) of the matter/policy being consulted upon to ensure they are aware of all consultations. Thereafter, to ensure the most effective use of consultees' resources, we will take a targeted approach to consultation for those consultees that may have a particular interest in the matter/policy being consulted upon and to whom the matter/policy is of particular relevance. This may include for example regional or local consultations, sectoral or thematic consultation etc.

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 consider these.

We may develop other additional methods of consultation more appropriate to key stakeholders and the matter being consulted upon as the list outlined below is not exhaustive.

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 (working in partnership with the NSPCC), people with disabilities (in particular people with learning disabilities; through working with DSNi and other disability representative groups) and minority ethnic communities.

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; or
- telephone consultations.

Information will be made available, on request, in alternative formats³, within 20 working days. We will ensure that such consultees have sufficient time to respond.

Sport NI regards linguistic diversity as a common cultural wealth. Everyone is entitled to respect and courtesy, which extends to their language. Every effort should be made to convey this respect even if it is not possible to deal with the person in the language of their choice.

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

The consultation period lasts for a minimum of twelve weeks to allow adequate time for groups to consult among themselves as part of the process of forming a view. However, in exceptional circumstances when this timescale is not feasible (for example implementing EU Directives or 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 a policy is implemented. We may continue consultation thereafter and will review the policy as part of our monitoring commitments⁴. 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.

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.

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.

We will 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.

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

We will provide feedback to consultees within 6 weeks. A feedback report will be prepared to include 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 will be provided in formats suitable to consultees.⁵

A list of our consultees is included in this equality scheme at Appendix 2. It can also be obtained upon request by contacting:

⁴ Please see Chapter 4 for details on monitoring.

⁵ See Chapter 6 of our equality scheme for further information on alternative formats of information we provide.

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Our consultation list is not exhaustive and is regularly reviewed to ensure it remains relevant to our functions and policies.

We welcome enquiries from any person/s or organisations wishing to be added to the list of consultees. Please contact the Executive Support Unit to provide your contact details and 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 4. (2) (b); Schedule 9 4. (2) (c); Schedule 9 4. (2) (d); Schedule 9 9. (1); Schedule 9 9.(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 4. (2) (b))

In the context of Section 75, 'policy' is very broadly defined and 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, written or unwritten and irrespective of the label given to it, e.g. 'draft', 'pilot', 'high level' or 'sectoral'.

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 Schedule 9 9. (2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Sport 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)*' and
- on undertaking an equality impact assessment as detailed in the Commission's guidance '*Practical guidance on equality impact assessment (February 2005)*'.

Screening

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

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 appropriate stages during implementation.

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.

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)
- Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion or racial/ethnic group?

In order to answer the screening questions, we gather 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.

Completion of screening, taking into account our consideration of the answers to all four screening questions set out 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 mitigation⁶ or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.
3. The policy has been 'screened out' without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.

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 EQIA, depending on the policy. If an EQIA is not to be conducted we will nonetheless consider measures that may mitigate the policy impact as well as alternative policies that may better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

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 Sport NI.

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 EQIA. This screening decision will be 'signed off' by the appropriate policy lead within the Sport NI.

If our screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'none', in respect of all of 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 Sport NI.

Following completion of the screening process, the screening template, will be signed off and approved by the senior manager responsible for the policy, and will be published on our website and on request as part of our quarterly screening report.

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

⁶ Mitigation – Where an assessment (screening in this case) reveals that a particular policy has an adverse impact on equality of opportunity and / or good relations, a public authority must consider ways of delivering the policy outcomes which have a less adverse effect on the relevant Section 75 categories.

Equality Impact Assessment

An equality impact assessment (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 any of 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 more effectively promote equality of opportunity and good relations.

When a policy is screened and screening has identified that an EQIA is necessary, we will carry out the EQIA in accordance with Equality Commission guidance. The EQIA will be carried out as a part of the policy development process and before the policy is implemented.

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 4. (2) (d); Schedule 9 9. (1))

We make publicly available the results of our assessments (screening and EQIA) of the likely impact of our policies on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations.

What we publish

Screening reports are published quarterly and will detail:

- All policies screened by the Sport NI over the three month period;
- A statement of the aim(s) of the policy/policies to which the assessment relates;
- 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;
- 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
- A link to the completed screening template(s) on our website

Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA) Reports

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;
- Future monitoring plans.

How we publish the information

All information we publish is accessible and can be made available in alternative formats on request.

Where we publish the information

The results of our assessments (screening reports and completed templates, the results of EQIAs) are available on our website and also by contacting the Executive Support Unit

In addition to the above, screening reports (electronic link or hard copy on request if more suitable for recipients) which include all policies screened over a three month period will be sent to all consultees.

We will inform the general public about the availability of this material through communications such as press releases where appropriate.

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

(Schedule 9 4. (2) (c))

Monitoring can assist us to deliver better public services and continuous improvements. Section 75 monitoring information involves processing 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, Sport NI follows guidance from the Office of the Information Commissioner and the Equality Commission.

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.

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

- The collection, collation and analysis of existing relevant primary quantitative and qualitative data across the equality categories on an ongoing basis;
- The collection, collation and analysis of existing relevant secondary sources of quantitative and qualitative data across the equality categories on an ongoing basis;
- An audit of existing information systems within one year of approval of this equality scheme, 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.

If, over a two year period, monitoring and evaluation show that a policy has resulted 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.

Sport NI collates and analyses monitoring information on both a quarterly and annual basis; dependent upon programme arrangements. Results from monitoring will be considered against progress of the action plan.

Our arrangements for publishing the results of our monitoring

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 and the results of our policy monitoring are published as follows:

- EQIA monitoring information is published as part of our Section 75 annual progress report and can also be found on the Equality Section of our website or by contacting the Executive Support Unit.
- The Section 75 annual progress report will be made available on our website and hard copies will be provided on request; and
- All information published is accessible and can be made available in alternative formats on request⁷.

⁷ See Chapter 6 of our equality scheme for further information on alternative formats of information we provide.

Chapter 5 Staff training

(Schedule 9 4. (2) (e))

Commitment to staff training

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

Our Chief Executive wishes to positively communicate the commitment of Sport NI to the Section 75 statutory duties, both internally and externally.

Training objectives

Sport NI aims to achieve the following objectives:

- To raise awareness of the provisions of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, 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 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.
- To provide those staff involved in the implementation and monitoring of the effective implementation of the scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively.

Awareness raising and training arrangements

The following arrangements will be put in place to ensure all staff and Board Members are aware of and understand our equality obligations.

- Where appropriate, training will be provided by or sourced externally to ensure staff are aware of the issues experienced by the range of Section 75 groups. This will include:
 1. Delivery of NI CAL 'Introduction to Section 75 (e-Learning)' with the following learning objectives: -
 - Know what Section 75 is and who it applies to;
 - Know how equality fits into your work;
 - Know what your responsibilities are in respect of equality;
 - Know the process for screening policies according to best practice principles; and
 - Know the importance of continuous monitoring.
 2. 'Disability Awareness for Frontline Staff (e-Learning)' will be delivered through NI CAL with the following learning objectives: -

- Define disability in relation to the Disability Discrimination Act;
 - Understand how disability discrimination can occur;
 - Identify barriers for people with disabilities accessing service;
 - Explain appropriate positive language and etiquette to be used when providing services to people with disabilities.
- All staff will be made aware of Section 75 obligations, the requirements of this equality scheme and the arrangements for equality impact assessment;
 - We will provide access to copies of the full equality scheme for all staff and ensure that any queries or questions of clarification from staff are addressed;
 - Staff will receive a briefing on this equality scheme as soon as possible after approval of the scheme;
 - Section 75 statutory duties will be part of induction training for new staff;
 - Sport NI will assess the need for specialised training in communicating with, and understanding the needs of, traditionally marginalised groups and young people. Any such training will initially be targeted at staff dealing with marginalised groups and young people, for example staff developing policy and considering the views of consultees on those policies;
 - Arrangements will be made to ensure staff are kept up to date with Section 75 developments when and where appropriate; and
 - Sport NI will ensure that staff are advised of changes to the equality scheme by dissemination of information to staff via team briefs.

Training and awareness raising programmes will, where relevant, be developed in association with appropriate Section 75 groups and staff. Sport NI will also, where possible, work closely with other bodies and agencies in the development and delivery of training in order to share resources and expertise.

Monitoring and evaluation

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;
- 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;
- Participants attending training are required to complete a post course evaluation questionnaire. The post course evaluation will inform the regular course reviews and that courses are revised accordingly.
- As part of the Performance Management framework, it is a requirement that line managers discuss training course objectives with their staff – both in terms of setting these objectives before the event, and the extent to which the

objectives have been met once the training has been delivered. Line managers are also responsible for ensuring opportunities to put the training into practice.

- Annual Personal Development Plans (PDPs) are discussed, agreed and monitored by line managers and the staff for whom they are responsible. These PDPs are collated within each business area to produce organisational training plans.

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

(Schedule 9 4. (2) (f))

Sport 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.

We are aware that some groups will not have the same access to information as others. 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;
- Children and young people may not be able to fully access or understand information.

Access to information

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.

- 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;
- Sport NI will liaise with representatives of young people, people with disabilities and minority ethnic organisations and take account of existing and developing good practice.

We will respond to requests for information in alternative formats within 20 working days.

In disseminating information through the media we will seek to advertise in the press where appropriate.

Sport NI will continue to monitor its website content to ensure the widest possible access to information online as set out within the Sport NI Publication Scheme.

Sport NI is committed to achieving effective communication with the public. In recognising the growing range of communications channels and the differing needs and preferences of different groups, we will regularly review internal guidance on making information accessible.

Access to services

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

Assessing public access to information and services

Sport NI is committed to achieving effective communication and recognises a growing range of communication channels with differing needs and preferences of different groups. Some sections of the public may 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. They may also require access to information in different formats, perhaps due to a visual impairment or that their first language is not English. Sport NI will consider a range of communication methods to ensure wide access to its information. We will 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 4. (3) (b))**

Appendix 3 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.

This timetable is 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 an action plan. Accordingly, this commitment is listed in the timetable of measures at Appendix 3. For information on these action measures please see Chapter 2.

Chapter 8 Our complaints procedure

(Schedule 9 10.)

Sport NI is responsive to the views of members of the public. We will endeavour to resolve all complaints made to us.

Schedule 9 paragraph 10 of the Act refers to complaints. A person can make a complaint to a public authority if the complainant believes he or she may have been directly affected by an alleged failure of the authority 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.

A person wishing to make a complaint that Sport NI has failed to comply with its approved equality scheme should contact:

Sport NI
Director of Finance & Governance
House of Sport
2a Upper Malone Road
Belfast
BT9 5LA
T: 02890 381 222
E: adriandoherty@sportni.net

We will first acknowledge receipt of each complaint within 5 working days.

The Director of Finance and Governance will carry out an internal investigation of the complaint and will respond to the complainant within one month 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 two months. In those circumstances, the complainant will be advised of the extended period within one month of making the complaint.

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

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

Sport 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 4. (3) (c))

The Sport NI equality scheme is available free of charge in print form and alternative formats from:

Sport NI
Executive Unit
House of Sport
2A Upper Malone Road
Belfast BT9 5LA
t: 028 9038 1222
e: info@sportni.net

Our equality scheme is also available on our website at www.sportni.net

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 of our approved equality scheme to our Section 75 consultees. 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 within 20 working days.
- Our equality scheme is 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.
- A summary our scheme will be prepared and circulated to groups and representatives of children and young people, people with disabilities and minority ethnic groups.

For a list of our Section 75 consultees please see Appendix 2 of the equality scheme or contact

Sport NI
Executive Unit
House of Sport
2A Upper Malone Road
Belfast BT9 5LA
t: 028 9038 1222

e: info@sportni.net
w: www.sportni.net

Chapter 10 Review of our equality scheme

(Schedule 9 8. (3))

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 other corporate planning cycles. 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.

In undertaking this review we will follow any guidance issued by the Equality Commission. A report of this review will be sent to the Equality Commission and made available on our website

Appendix 1 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	<p>Buddhist; Catholic; Hindu; Jewish; Muslims, people of no religious belief; Protestants; Sikh; other faiths.</p> <p>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>⁸. 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>”.</p>
Political opinion ⁹	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.

⁸ 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*.”

⁹ *ibid*

Appendix 2 List of consultees

(Schedule 9 4. (2) (a))

(Note that this list is not exhaustive and is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains relevant).

The following are the Section 75 representative groups identified for public consultation:

Women:

- Women's Resource & Development Agency
- Women's Support Network
- NI Rural Women's Network
- Training for Women Network
- Women's TEC

Men:

- North Belfast Mens Shed
- Mens Advisory Project
- Irish Men's Sheds Association

Disability:

- Disability Action
- Action Mental Health
- Action on Hearing Loss
- RNIB
- Brain Injury Matters
- Aware Defeat Depression
- Inspire
- Mencap
- National Deaf Children Society
- Autism Initiatives
- Now Group
- Action MS
- Centre for Independent Living NI
- Special Olympics Ulster
- Disability Sport NI
- NI Deaf Sports

Age – youth:

- Voice of Young People in Care (VOYPIC)
- Youth Action
- Include Youth
- Start 360
- NICCY
- Youthwork Alliance
- Department of Education
- Youth Initiatives NI
- Youth Link

Age – children:

- Early Years
- NICCY
- Children in NI
- Barnardos

Age – older:

- Age NI
- COPNI
- Age Sector Platform
- U3A

Faith – minority faith:

- NICVA
- Northern Ireland Interfaith Forum

Sexual Orientation:

- The Rainbow Project
- Cara Friend
- Transgender NI
- Stonewall

Race – ethnicity:

- North West Migrants Forum
- Arts Ekta
- African & Caribbean Community
- Romanian Community Association
- South Belfast Roundtable
- Craic NI
- Polish Educational and Cultural Association
- Ballynafeigh Community Development Association
- Inter-Ethnic Forum
- Step NI
- Horn of Africa People's Aid
- Chinese Welfare Association
- Bryson Intercultural
- Ethnic Minority Sports Organisation NI (EMSONI)

Marital status:

- Relate NI
- Persons with dependants:
 - Parenting NI
 - Children in NI
 - Barnardos
- Early Years

Carers:

- Positive Futures
- Caring Breaks
- Carers NI

- Cause

Urban networks:

- Causeway Rural& Urban Network
- Ards
- Omagh
- Falls Council
- EBCDA
- Ballynafeigh Comm Dev Agency
- Confed of Community Groups Newry
- North West Community Network

Rural Networks:

- Fermanagh Rural Community Network
- North Antrim Community Network
- Cookstown Western Shores Area Network
- COSTA
- Omagh Forum
- County Down Rural Community Network
- RAPID (Derry)
- TADA
- Impact Network NI (Formerly South Antrim Rural Network)
- Dennett Interchange, Strabane

Homeless:

- Simon Community
- Council for the Homeless

Health:

- Healthy Living Centre Alliance
- PHA

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

Measure	Lead responsibility	Timetable
Section 75 Annual Progress Report	Director of Finance & Governance	Annually (August)
Deliver equality action plan	Executive Leadership Team	Annually (March)
Finalise equality action plan	Executive Support Unit	Annually (July)
Arrangements for monitoring progress on action plan delivery	Executive Support Unit	Annually (August)
Consultation list reviewed and updated	Executive Support Unit	Annually (February)
Screening Reports	Executive Support Unit	Quarterly
Review of monitoring information	Executive Support Unit	Annually
Publication of monitoring information	Executive Support Unit	Annually
Communication of Equality Scheme	Executive Support Unit	Ongoing
Notification of approved scheme to consultees	Executive Support Unit	Within 3 months of scheme approval
Review of equality scheme	Executive Leadership Team	Within 5 years of submission

Appendix 4 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.

Audit of Inequalities

An audit of inequalities is a systematic review and analysis of inequalities which exist for service users and those affected by a public authority's policies. An audit can be used by a public authority to inform its work in relation to the Section 75 equality and good relations duties. It can also enable public authorities to assess progress on the implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties, as it provides baseline information on existing inequalities relevant to a public authority's functions.

Consultation

In the context of Section 75, consultation is the process of asking those affected by a policy (i.e. service users, staff, the general public) for their views on how the policy could be implemented more effectively to promote equality of opportunity across the 9 categories. Different circumstances will call for different types of consultation. Consultations could, for example, include meetings, focus groups, surveys and questionnaires.

Differential impact

Differential impact occurs where a Section 75 group has been affected differently by a policy. This effect could either be positive, neutral or negative. A public authority must make a judgement as to whether a policy has a differential impact and then it must determine whether the impact is adverse, based on a systematic appraisal of the accumulated information.

Equality impact assessment

The mechanism underpinning Section 75, where existing and proposed policies are assessed in order to determine whether they have an adverse impact on equality of opportunity for the relevant Section 75 categories. Equality impact assessments require the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data.

Equality of opportunity

The prevention, elimination or regulation of discrimination between people on grounds of characteristics including sex, marital status, age, disability, religious belief, political opinion, dependants, race and sexual orientation.

The promotion of equality of opportunity entails more than the elimination of discrimination. It requires proactive measures to be taken to secure equality of opportunity between the categories identified under Section 75.

Equality Scheme

A document which outlines a public authority's arrangements for complying with its Section 75 obligations. An equality scheme must include an outline of the public authority's arrangements for carrying out consultations, screening, equality impact assessments, monitoring, training and arrangements for ensuring access to information and services.

Good Relations

Although not defined in the legislation, the Commission has agreed the following working definition of good relations: "the growth of relations and structures for Northern Ireland that acknowledge the religious, political and racial context of this society, and that seek to promote respect, equity and trust, and embrace diversity in all its forms."

Mitigation of adverse impact

Where an equality impact assessment reveals that a particular policy has an adverse impact on equality of opportunity, a public authority must consider ways of delivering the policy outcomes which have a less adverse effect on the relevant Section 75 categories; this is known as mitigating adverse impact.

Monitoring

Monitoring consists of continuously scrutinising and evaluating a policy to assess its impact on the Section 75 categories. Monitoring must be sensitive to the issues associated with human rights and privacy. Public authorities should seek advice from consultees and Section 75 representative groups when setting up monitoring systems.

Monitoring consists of the collection of relevant information and evaluation of policies. It is not solely about the collection of data, it can also take the form of regular meetings and reporting of research undertaken. Monitoring is not an end in itself but provides the data for the next cycle of policy screening.

Policy

The formal and informal decisions a public authority makes in relation to carrying out its duties. Defined in the New Oxford English Dictionary as ‘a course or principle of action adopted or proposed by a government party, business or individual.’ In the context of Section 75, the term policies covers all the ways in which a public authority carries out or proposes to carry out its functions relating to Northern Ireland. Policies include unwritten as well as written policies.

Qualitative data

Qualitative data refers to the experiences of individuals from their perspective, most often with less emphasis on numbers or statistical analysis. Consultations are more likely to yield qualitative than quantitative data.

Quantitative data

Quantitative data refers to numbers, typically derived from either a population in general or samples of that population. This information is often analysed by either using descriptive statistics, which consider general profiles, distributions and trends in the data, or inferential statistics, which are used to determine ‘significance’ either in relationships or differences in the data.

Screening

The procedure for identifying which policies will be subject to equality impact assessment, and how these equality impact assessments will be prioritised. The purpose of screening is to identify the policies which are likely to have a minor/major impact on equality of opportunity so that greatest resources can be devoted to improving these policies. Screening requires a systematic review of existing and proposed policies.

Section 75

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act provides that each public authority is required, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, 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 and sexual orientation;
- men and women generally;
- persons with a disability and persons without; and
- persons with dependants and persons without

Without prejudice to these obligations, each public authority in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland must also have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

Section 75 investigation

An investigation carried out by the Equality Commission, under Schedule 9 of the NI Act 1998, arising from the failure of a public authority to comply with the commitments set out in its approved equality scheme.

There are two types of Equality Commission investigation, these are as follows:

1. An investigation of a complaint by an individual who claims to have been directly affected by the failure of a public authority to comply with its approved equality scheme;
2. An investigation initiated by the Equality Commission, where it believes that a public authority may have failed to comply with its approved equality scheme.



Section 75

ACTION PLAN

2021-2022

SPORT NI EQUALITY ACTION PLAN 2021-2022

The Action Plan will be monitored annually and is embedded within Sport NI's annual operational business plan. This year's strategic objectives have had to be moderated due to Covid-19.

Responsibility for monitoring and review of the Action Plan will rest with the Executive Support Unit in association with business areas.

Strategic Objective	Inequalities Identified	S75 Categories Affected	Indicators	Action Measure with timescale ¹⁰	Monitoring mechanism
People in NI adopting and sustaining participation in sport & physical recreation	Lower participation rates in sport by women, older people, people with disabilities, those from minority ethnic communities and people living in areas of high social need	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gender 2. Disability 3. Age 4. Religious Belief/ Political Opinion 5. Race/Ethnic Origin 6. Sexual Orientation 7. All of the above 	<p>% of adults participating in sport and physical recreation¹¹</p> <p>% of women participating in sport and physical recreation</p> <p>% of people with a disability participating in sport and physical recreation</p> <p>% of over 50s participating in sport and physical recreation</p> <p>% of ethnic minorities participating in sport and physical recreation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People participating in sport directly through our service delivery. The target is reduced from 2019-20 because of the COVID-19 lockdown. • Through the sporting clubs investment, support 21 National Governing Bodies during the COVID-19 pandemic to sustain club membership within NI. • Provide skills and leadership learning opportunities for coaches, officials and volunteers. • Embed and support a culture of safety at sports venues through collaborative working with governing bodies of sport, venue operators, district councils, SGSA and DfC 	Annual & Quarterly monitoring returns from funded bodies.

¹⁰ All policies and programmes are subject to appropriate levels of support being secured through the budget process.

¹¹ At least once in the last 12 months

Strategic Objective	Inequalities Identified	S75 Categories Affected	Indicators	Action Measure with timescale ¹²	Monitoring mechanism
<i>Northern Ireland athletes among the best in the world.</i>	Lower representation of women/ethnic origin in GB/Irish teams	1. Gender 2. Disability 3. Age 4. Religious Belief/ Political Opinion 5. Race/Ethnic Origin 6. Sexual Orientation 7. All of the above	Relative ranking of high performance athletes Number of Medals won by NI athletes at major games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support sport high performance programmes to deliver targeted performances major international competition subject to Covid-19 disruption. 	Annual and Quarterly returns from funded bodies.

¹² All policies and programmes are subject to appropriate levels of support being secured through the budget process.