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Democracy and diversity are indissolubly linked. There should be no barriers on
grounds of any characteristic protected by equalities legislation, so that our
electoral processes are open and accessible for all those entitled to vote, for those
who choose to stand for election and for those who campaign on their behalf. We are
therefore pleased to present this strategy, which is central to the work of the
Commission in protecting and promoting the electoral processes. We have built the
strategy around three key objectives: ensuring that everyone who is eligible is able
to participate in the electoral processes - whether as a voter, campaigner or
standing for office - by identifying barriers, making recommendations and working
with others to remove them ensuring that we embed equality, diversity and inclusion
in the delivery of all of our work, treating all our stakeholders and partners fairly
and with respect, and being transparent in the decisions we make ensuring equality,
diversity and inclusion for everyone at the Commission and that all our staff are
treated fairly and with respect Like any organisation, we have a range of statutory
obligations to ensure we promote equality, diversity and inclusion in line with our
responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and other relevant legislation such as
the Human Rights Act 1998. We have set out in the strategy what these are and how we
comply with them in our activities. But equality, diversity and inclusion are not
just matters of compliance. We know we have to do more to meet this challenge and
demonstrate our commitment to moving beyond compliance. This strategy sets out our
aspirations to go further and challenge ourselves to reflect fully the diversity of
the electorate in our work to support democracy. This strategy covers the whole of
the UK. We are accountable to the UK Parliament, the Scottish Parliament and the
Senedd, and are sharing this strategy with them. Different legislation applies in
Northern Ireland, and this Strategy includes the Single Equalities Scheme required
under the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The Action Plan sets out what we will do when.
We will monitor progress through our management and reporting system, and hold
ourselves to account through the scrutiny of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
Group and our Race at Work Charter Task Force. Overarching responsibility lies with
the Chief Executive and the Executive Team, and they will report regularly to the
Commission Board on progress. Everyone is entitled to participate in democracy. That
is why equality, diversity and inclusion matter. What we do, the electorate we serve
and who we are What the Commission does The Commission was set up in 2000 and
reports to the UK, Welsh, and Scottish parliaments. : our aim is to ensure that
people trust, value and take part in elections. We are responsible for: Maintaining
the registers of political parties and campaigners Promoting compliance with the
campaign and political finance laws, and enforcing those laws where appropriate
Publishing financial returns from parties and campaigners, including larger donations
and campaign spending Setting the standards for electoral registration and running
elections, and reporting on how well this is done Informing the public about the
democratic process, including making sure they understand it is important to register

to vote, and know how to vote Running any referendums held in accordance with PPERA
Advising Governments and Parliaments on improvements to the electoral system Our
strategic objectives are Accessible registration and voting Free and fair elections
depend on all people who are eligible and want to vote being able to do so. We will
work to ensure: Increased levels of voter registration, especially amongst groups
that currently have difficulty engaging in the process The removal of barriers,
especially those that affect people who currently have difficulty trying to cast
their vote Transparent political campaigning and compliant political finance Parties
and other campaigners should be able to campaign without facing undue actual or
perceived barriers, while we continue to ensure political finance is transparent.
This will support voters to hear a range of campaign voices to help them take
decisions when voting. We will work to ensure: Increased levels of confidence shown
by candidates, parties and other campaigners in their ability to understand, apply
and comply with the law on campaigning and political finance High levels of
compliance with registration, reporting and other political finance laws Resilient
local electoral services Local electoral services need to be able to respond to
increasingly challenging economic, social and environmental pressures; we will
support local authorities and electoral administrators to deliver effective,
sustainable and resilient electoral services, ensuring that voters receive the
service they should be able to expect. We will work to ensure: Sustained and
consistent high performance in the delivery of well-run elections Increased levels of
confidence shown by electoral administrators in the resilience of the electoral
system Fair and effective electoral law It is essential for the electoral system that
the laws which underpin it are fair, effective and well understood. Electoral law
must also keep pace with other developments in our society, harnessing technology and
working on a continual process of modernisation. We will work to: Support governments
and parliaments to reform electoral law to make it less complex Reduce the risks and
inefficiencies associated with electoral law which impact our electoral system A
modern and sustainable electoral system In order to ensure our electoral system is
resilient to the challenges that lie beyond the period of this plan, it is essential
that we work towards increased value for money, transparency, trust and compliance.
It is crucial that the roles and responsibilities of bodies which are part of the
electoral system are clarified. And, it is important that we understand and reduce
the environmental impact of the electoral system. We will work to ensure: Data and
technology are harnessed to meet the needs of voters, campaigners and electoral
administrators The changing risks to the election system from the misuse of data and
technology are understood and acted upon Strong relationships and streamlined working
practices with all bodies that are part of the electoral system are developed
Governments and the wider electoral community are supported to adopt a strategy and
implementation plan which reduces the environmental impact of our electoral system
Serving a diverse electorate Serving a diverse electorate We are here to ensure that
everyone eligible to vote knows how to exercise their vote and have their say, and
that those who want to participate in politics as campaigners or seek election can
get the information they need from us to be able to understand the rules. So
recognising and responding to the needs of a diverse population and electorate is at
the heart of our work and is what we are committed to do. Diversity covers a range of
characteristics such as age, race and ethnicity, sex sexuality, disability, marital
status, pregnancy and beliefs as well as issues around socio-economic disadvantage
and access to opportunities. We illustrate below some of the key characteristics. Age
The age structure of the population is set out below. As well as supporting those

eligible to vote, an important part of the Commission's work is with young people to prepare them for being able to exercise their vote. Age structure of the population according to ONS: Mid year population estimates 2019

Age Group	United Kingdom	Great Britain	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
16-17	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.0%	2.4%
18-24	8.5%	8.5%	8.4%	8.7%	8.5%	8.5%
25-34	13.5%	13.5%	13.5%	12.7%	13.6%	12.3%
35-44	12.6%	12.6%	12.7%	11.2%	12.7%	12.3%
45-54	13.6%	13.6%	13.5%	13.3%	13.6%	12.3%
55-64	12.2%	12.2%	12.7%	13.0%	12.2%	12.3%
65+	18.5%	18.6%	18.4%	21.0%	16.6%	19.1%

We know from a range of research that young people are less likely to vote. We also know that 18-24 year olds are less likely to be correctly registered to vote (76% of 18-24 year olds compared to 86% of the population as a whole), and less likely to be satisfied with the voting process (66% compared to 80% of the population as a whole). Ethnicity

The UK is an increasingly ethnically diverse society. The table shows headline statistics across the UK. Data for England and Wales drawn from 2011 census; for Scotland from Audit Scotland Annual Diversity Report 2018-19; for Northern Ireland from 2011 census. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Ethnicity	England and Wales	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
White	86%	95.6%	96.1%	98.2%
Minority Ethnic	14%	4.4%	3.9%	1.8%
Black	3.3%	0.6%	0.7%	0.2%
Asian	7.5%	0.6%	2.9%	1.1%
Mixed and other	3.2%	0.6%	0.4%	0.5%

Black and minority ethnic voters are considerably more likely than white voters to have issues with satisfaction and confidence around voting. Overall 31% of the population identified barriers to participation by minority groups as a source of concern. Around a quarter of the black and Asian population are not registered to vote compared to 16% of the white population. Disability An estimated 19% of UK working age adults and 22% of all adults in the electorate (14.1 million people) have a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010 or the Disability Discrimination Act 1995). Family Resources Survey 2019-20. Total does not sum to 100 as more than one disability may be selected.

Type of Impairment	% Mobility
Stamina/breathing/fatigue	36
Dexterity	25
Mental health	29
Memory	16
Hearing	13
Vision	12
Learning	14
Social/behavioural	9
Other	17

Our report on the 2019 UK Parliamentary General Election found that 85% of disabled people felt well informed about the election, 92% were satisfied with the voting process and 96% found it easy to get to polling stations. But there remains room for improvement. In the 2020 Winter Tracker survey 30% of respondents were concerned about barriers to participation for disabled people. These cover a wide range of issues such as physical access, availability of information in different formats and the ease of the voting process. It is important to remember that these may affect carers as well as the people they care for. Sex, gender and sexual orientation As of 2019: An estimated 2.7% of the UK population aged 16+ identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) in 2019. In England, 2.7% of those aged 16+ identified as LGB. In Scotland, 2.7% of those aged 16+ identified as LGB. In Wales, 2.9% of those aged 16+ identified as LGB. In Northern Ireland, 1.3% of those aged 16+ identified as LGB. Across the UK, 0.7% of people aged 16+ selected 'Other' to describe their sexuality. Across the UK, 3.0% of people aged 16+ selected 'Do not know' or refused to answer. ONS Annual Population Survey, 2021. The ONS has not previously produced estimates of the number of transgender people living in the UK, but a voluntary question on gender identity for the 2021 census for England and Wales was asked of respondents aged 16+. Diversity of those standing for election The diversity of candidates for office does not reflect the diversity of the general population. At the 2017 Parliamentary and General Election for example 1 : 29% of candidates were women compared to 51% of the population 56% were over 50 compared to 48% of the population 8% were from an ethnic minority compared to 13% of the population 10% considered themselves to have a

disability compared with 18% of the population 11% were lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender Political and religious diversity in Northern Ireland Section 75 (2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 prescribes additional duties in Northern Ireland to promote good community relationships between those of different political and religious backgrounds. 48.4% of the population are Protestant and 45.1% Catholic; 0.9% have another faith and 5.6% have none 2 . 35% consider themselves to be Unionists and 19% Nationalists; 42% consider themselves to be neither and 4% to be other or not sure 3 . Our workforce in April 2022 The Commission has 173 employees. The majority have contractual workbases in London; we also have offices in Belfast, Cardiff and Edinburgh, and a number of permanent home-workers based across England. We illustrate below some of the key characteristics. As at this date our current split is 70 male and 103 female employees. Based on current self-declared data we currently have 21 black and minority ethnic employees. Our senior managers including our Executive Team are evenly split in terms of gender. Two out of 23 are of black and minority ethnic background, which is unrepresentative of the black and minority ethnic population as a whole. Our Board is appointed by the Speaker's Committee and comprises ten Commissioners including the Chair. The Board is equally representative in terms of gender. However there are currently no Commissioners from a black or minority ethnic background. The Commission has a full time EDI senior lead who is responsible for leading the Commission's work on equality, diversity and inclusion. Equality, diversity and inclusion sit at the centre of our People Strategy, embodying our commitment. This is a thread which runs right through the six segments of the Strategy including culture, resource planning, developing our people, getting the best from our people, valuing people and building a new flexible working culture. A number of groups in the Commission provide a forum for discussion, constructive challenge and the ability to hold the organisation to account: The Race at Work Task Force, chaired by the Chief Executive and supported by the Race at Work Champion The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion group The Staff Engagement Group, which includes representatives from every team in the Commission The Dignity, Respect and Empowerment Group, which brings together dignity advisers and works with the senior Anti-Bullying and Harassment champion The Mental Health First Aiders group, which brings together mental health first aiders and ensures that the organisation supports those with mental health issues The Wellbeing group, which focuses on promoting staff wellbeing Our vision for a diverse Commission serving a diverse democracy Our commitment to diversity: beyond compliance Fairness and equal treatment are fundamental to the democratic system which it is our job to protect, and which must reflect the diversity of the society it represents, not just in terms of protected characteristics but in terms of wider socio-economic inclusion. Equality, diversity and inclusion go to the heart of democracy, and hence are central to what we do. This is reflected in how we want to serve our stakeholders, how we want to work with our partners, and how we treat our staff. That means understanding and reflecting the needs of people across all the nations and regions of the UK. And that in turn means a workforce of people with a wide range of backgrounds, perspectives and experiences who feel that those different approaches are valued and treated with respect. We have already taken a number of actions to help us meet this challenge. But we know that there is further to go. Our objectives for promoting equality, diversity and inclusion The Commission's equality, diversity and inclusion objectives are therefore to: ensure that everyone who is eligible is able to participate in the democratic process - whether as a voter, a campaigner or by standing for office – by identifying barriers, making recommendations and working with others to remove them ensure that

we embed equality, diversity and inclusion in all our work, treat all our stakeholders and partners fairly and with respect, and are transparent in the decisions we make ensure equality, diversity and inclusion for everyone at the Commission and ensure that all our staff are treated fairly and with respect How we will deliver against these objectives We will deliver these three objectives by focusing on three sets of activities. Objective 1 This will be delivered through a range of activities seeking to promote equality, diversity and inclusion in the democratic process. Objective 2 This will be delivered by ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded in our processes and decisions. Objective 3 This will be delivered through a range of policies designed to ensure equality, recognition of diversity and inclusion for all those who work and apply to work at the Commission. Promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in the democratic process

Objective 1 Ensure that everyone who is eligible is able to participate in the democratic process - whether as a voter, a campaigner or by standing for office - by identifying barriers, making recommendations and working with others to remove them In this chapter we set out the initiatives we will take to work with stakeholders In this chapter we set out the initiatives we will take to work with stakeholders and partners to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion in the democratic process. Our aim Our aim is to maximise equality, diversity and inclusion and promote public confidence in the democratic process. We want everyone entitled to a vote to register and to be able to exercise it, campaigners to have the right information and feel able to campaign, and those who wish to stand for office to feel confident to do so. We know that some groups are more likely to engage in the process than others. At the 2019 General Election men were more likely to vote than women (63% compared to 59%); younger people were less likely to vote than older people (47% of 18-24 year olds compared to 74% of over-65s); and white people were more likely to vote than black and Asian minority ethnic people (63% compared to 52%) 4 . Our approach is based on three priorities: Gathering evidence: understanding the issues through research and consultation : ensuring we understand the issues faced by voters, campaigners and those standing for office and ensuring we meet best practice in accessibility Communications: ensuring that all voters are aware of their right to vote and know how to exercise it, and targeting demographics we know are least likely to be registered to vote; ensuring that we communicate across all parts of the regulated community What we have already achieved Some examples Gathering evidence through research and consultation We regularly survey representative samples of the UK electorate, often using boosted samples to allow for greater understanding of the views of specific groups and communities. For example: Our research on the accuracy and completeness of electoral registers gives us important information about groups who may be under-represented and need encouragement and support to register Our post-election reports look specifically at issues around accessibility such as the availability of information in a variety of formats about the elections and the candidates standing in them, and the accessibility of polling stations We carried out a post-election accessibility survey after both the 2017 and 2019 UKPGEs to give us a better understanding of the barriers faced in registering and voting, and added an additional sample of self-identified disabled voters to our post-election Public Opinion survey in 2019; we always include a sample of blind and partially sighted people in user testing; Our 2017 survey informed the recommendations in our 2017 Elections for Everyone report which fed into a UK Government consultation on the accessibility of voting. We published a set of feasibility studies in 2019 exploring how reforms could be made to the registration system to make it easier to register We

regularly gather evidence from a range of charities to inform our work and ensure that we are reflecting a wide range of protected characteristics: for example we worked with charities to help us refresh the design of our website. We are members of the Cabinet Office's of Elections Working Group, which brings together government and the third sector to deliver the actions identified in the UK Government's response to their 2017 Call for Evidence on Access to Elections. We ensure our guidance and the information we provide about the regulatory system is easy to use and available in a range of formats to increase its accessibility. We consult a range of charities on our guidance for polling station staff, which covers a range of areas designed to ensure voters are provided with the support they need in the polling station, such as signage, level access and the availability of tactile voting devices. We have completely redesigned our website to comply with Web Content Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1; all our publications, with minor exceptions detailed in our accessibility policy, meet this standard. We worked with accessibility partners – Zoonou and the RNIB – to ensure this new site launched in July 2019 meets the needs of those with a range of accessibility needs. We have a plan to replace all PDFs with HTML content, to make it easier to find, easier to navigate and accessible for screen readers and other assistive technologies. We work hard to ensure that our communications are written in plain /Welsh, and increasingly test content with users to maximise understanding. We have for example in partnership with Mencap published a series of easy read guides for voters. All web content that relates to Wales or the UK as a whole is also available in Welsh, and users can 'toggle' between and Welsh. All HTML content can be easily translated into other languages using online translation tools.

Communications We undertake significant activity to ensure that all voters are aware of their right to vote and how to exercise it. Recent campaigns include the Got 5? campaign encouraging registration, and the Welcome to Your Vote campaign. Our regular research into the accuracy and completeness of the electoral registers shows that a number of groups are particularly likely to be under-registered: young people, those with learning disabilities, those in short term rentals and/or who frequently move home, black and minority ethnic communities and Irish travellers. We have built these insights into the way we target communications and into working with organisations who support these groups. We are developing a Learning Strategy in partnership with a range of organisations to build political literacy in groups who can often feel distanced from the political process. We have been building strategic partnerships with groups and individuals who represent people who are traditionally less likely to be registered to vote. To date we have met with 90 different organisations right across the UK. We have for example: Set up a blog to raise awareness of anonymous registration via Victim Support Scotland. Created resources for voters with no fixed address. Produced resources for 14-18 year olds on voting and campaigning in NI. Taking it further.

What we propose to do next These activities represent a substantial investment of time and resource for the Commission. We will continue to work with our partners to reach communities of those least likely to be registered. We will: Continue to improve our research data to enhance our evidence base, drawing on existing academic research and on the insights we gain through working with stakeholder groups, and sharing outcomes with respondents where it is feasible to do so. Continue to ensure that campaigns to raise public awareness about the electoral system are inclusive and take account of different groups. Continue to ensure that our guidance to the regulated community is accessible and meets the needs of different groups. Take further steps to ensure our website is as accessible as possible. We will continue to update and improve our offer, and ensure that our work

is directed by analytics and informed by user testing with diverse groups Build on the success of the partnership work we have already done in ensuring we continue to identify the needs of diverse groups and respond to them Embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in our processes and decisions Objective 2 Ensure that we embed equality, diversity and inclusion in all our work, treat all our stakeholders and partners fairly and with respect, and are transparent in the decisions we make Our aim As a public regulator we have a duty to treat all customers and partners fairly and impartially. This is not just about compliance with our statutory duties under the Public Sector Equality duty. It means ensuring that all our processes treat stakeholders equally whether they are people we regulate, partners we work with on the administration of elections or businesses we buy services from. That means putting equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of our processes and ensuring that we follow those processes to a high standard. What we have already achieved We have started work on checking our processes to ensure that they fully reflect equality, diversity and inclusion, building on our existing regulatory Quality Management Scheme We carried out a review of our procurement policies to ensure that we were applying them fairly and equally Our performance standards for Returning Officers set out their responsibilities to ensure that all voters are able to vote easily We have commissioned an independent review of our compliance with the Welsh Language standards to help us identify areas for improvement As a regulator we secure compliance with the laws on registration and on political finance proportionately, consistently and impartially. We do so firstly and primarily through the provision of support, so that parties, campaigners and those standing for office can understand the obligations they are under and have the information they need. We want to see an electoral system where candidates, campaigners and parties are confident to participate within the law and supported to do so no matter who they are We have published our Enforcement Policy explaining how we enforce the law and take enforcement decisions. We also have detailed operational protocols that ensure enforcement work is carried out robustly, consistently and fairly, and that we take due account of any relevant equality, diversity or mental well-being issues Taking it further What we propose to do next We will ensure that the guidance, support and challenge we provide for Electoral Registration Officers encourages registration from typically under-registered groups We will ensure that our guidance, support and challenge to Returning Officers promote the provision of equality of access and experience for all at the polls as set out in the Government's Disability Strategy We will consult on and introduce new processes for carrying out and reviewing Equality Impact Assessments We will ensure that the Commission's procurement strategy includes clear EDI outcomes for contractors, and that effective monitoring of these contractors is done to ensure they comply We will ensure through our Quality Assurance initiative that equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded as appropriate in all our processes We will continue to keep our internal regulatory procedures under review to meet best practice and ensure consistency, fairness and quality underpin all our regulatory activities We will ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are included as appropriate in our policies, including our Enforcement Policy, as they are reviewed in line with our normal cycle We will implement a Welsh Language Action Plan to enhance our service to Welsh speakers Ensuring equality, recognition of diversity and inclusion for all those who work at the Commission Objective 3 Ensure equality, recognition of diversity and inclusion for everyone at the Commission and ensure that all our staff are treated fairly and with respect Our aim Working through our People Strategy, our aims include being an

employer of choice and an example of good practice, reflecting the society we serve. Ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion is the responsibility of all leaders, all managers, and all those in the organisation. We will achieve this for our employees with a focus on the following areas: Ensuring equality in compliance with our legal responsibilities Increasing the diversity of our workforce through recruitment and career progression Working with our EDI Lead to look at how we further promote inclusion Our learning and development offering Employee performance, for example, to ensure fair treatment Improving our collection of data What we have done so far We have taken steps in a wide range of areas to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion across the Commission. We use anonymous recruitment to eliminate any potential bias in shortlisting. Unconscious bias training is available and promoted to all in the Commission. We have worked with a specialist consultant to raise awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion, and put in place a range of groups and initiatives: An EDI group which has provided focus on EDI issues since 2019 Our Race at Work task force, chaired by the Chief Executive Actively celebrating diversity through events such as Black History Month Informal briefing sessions with our interim EDI lead Commissioning an external report on perceived bullying and harassment, and appointing an Anti Bullying and Harassment Champion Our network of Mental Health First Aiders Our offering to be an employer of choice including flexible working in a range of forms A Dignity at Work policy backed up by voluntary Dignity and Respect Advisers Our wellbeing offering to the workforce, including an employee assistance programme We have made equality, diversity and inclusion a focus of our learning and development at the Commission through: Using training need analysis techniques to help us target employee learning and development Inclusion of EDI in our corporate induction session Offering unconscious bias training to all In-depth training provided on EQIAs Inclusion of EDI as a key part of our management and leadership development programme Welsh language training and awareness supported by our Welsh Language advisor We have taken the following steps on data: We are having a renewed push to collect data on all Protected Characteristics from our employees so as to minimise missing data fields whilst respecting potential concerns about providing this information We monitor our recruitment and selection data to ensure that we recruit fairly and that employees have fair opportunities to develop their careers Via the data we collect on who receives learning and development, we ensure that all employees have access to opportunities to develop their skills and abilities We monitor turnover and data from completed exit questionnaires We ensure that our performance management systems are fair to all We engage with our EDI group so that they can act as critical friends in challenging what the data are telling us The need for equality, diversity and inclusion has been a central theme The need for equality, diversity and inclusion has been a central theme of our work to modernise our London office. Our redesign complies with guidance from the Centre for Accessible Environments, legislative requirements and BS 8300. Remodelled kitchens and a reduction in fixed desks provide greater space and accessibility for wheelchair users. We have used colour demarcation and even lighting to help those with visual impairments. For those with hearing difficulties, an induction loop is available. And we have created a multi-faith room for quiet reflection. Taking it further What we propose to do next Our People Strategy is central to meeting our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. We set out here some of the key areas we will focus on to deliver this commitment. Equality, Diversity and inclusion at Board level We recognise that the level of diversity around our Commissioner Board table is not as rich as it should be. Appointments to our Board are governed by a Parliamentary

statutory process which limits our ability to rectify this directly ourselves or quickly. Accordingly we will adopt a twin track strategy: To continue to encourage recognition that diversity must be at the heart of all recruitment processes for the appointment of new Board members Appointing one or more expert independent advisors to the Board to facilitate hearing a more diverse range of voices in Board deliberations Increasing workforce diversity We will continue to encourage a diversity of applicants through using anonymous recruiting, considering the design of our posts and encouraging applications from a diverse range of people, and continue to monitor process and outcomes Over time we will move to a new recruitment system which will give us additional capacity to pull and use data and will improve accessibility We will explore and educate ourselves further on ways of supporting a diverse workforce through approaches such as Access to Work and maintaining our commitment to making reasonable adjustments Promoting inclusion We will aim to create an environment where our workforce can be themselves, proud of their identity and diversity; supported by an updated Dignity at Work policy, and to monitor this through our all staff surveys We will all work to deliver on our commitment to 'Zero Tolerance' of bullying and harassment Our workforce have told us how much they value the flexibility the Commission provides. We will build on the learnings from relevant impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic 2020/21 – including hybrid ways of working, dependence on electronic communication and virtual leadership – to help us build further on our flexible and inclusive workplace culture We will continue the work we have begun with our Race at Work Taskforce to give effect to our Race at Work Charter and have appointed an independent adviser to support this work We will continue to seek views from across our workforce and promote inclusion through our EDI group and other means, recognising that staff may not feel comfortable expressing views through the staff survey and/or in exit interviews We will continue to promote and celebrate equality, diversity and inclusion through a calendar of events for our workforce Learning and development We will ensure that training on equality, diversity and inclusion is included in development plans as a matter of course at all levels of the organisation, drawing on externally available expertise We will roll out a module focusing on equality, diversity and inclusion as part of our management and leadership development training for all managers We will raise awareness of the skills of our Welsh Language Advisor and Welsh language translator to support and enhance Welsh language training and awareness of the Welsh language Our induction will ensure that all new employees receive relevant information on the Commission's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. Similarly we will provide appropriate 'welcome' content for any agency temps that we use We will look at how best to support the career progression of staff in groups who are under-represented drawing on the experience of our Race at Work Charter Task Force and working with these groups to examine approaches such as mentoring and secondments Performance We will provide 'EDI objective' examples for use in the individual performance management of employees performance We will ensure any workforce EDI related issues are handled sensitively but appropriately, calling on Commission policies as appropriate Employee engagement We will continue to discuss the results of our regular all staff survey and seek feedback both through teams and through the Commission's staff groups such as the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion group and the Staff Engagement Group and through our work with PCS as our recognised trade union Improving collection of data We will work to encourage employees to feel comfortable to self-declare their diversity in our HR system to improve our baseline whilst ensuring that we mitigate concerns about the sharing of sensitive personal data. High

level data reports will continue to be shared with our EDI group and with our Executive Team. We plan to tender for a new system which will enhance our ability to gather and track data. We will continue to track the diversity of those who apply for Commission jobs and the reasons stated by employees leaving the Commission. This data at high level will continue to be shared with our Executive Team and with our Remuneration and HR Committee. Communicating our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. Communicating with our customers. Working with stakeholders is essential to delivering the aims set out in this strategy. We have therefore consulted with a wide range of partners. Communicating with our people. We have consulted staff widely in the production of this strategy. It has been shared and discussed with staff through a range of Commission groups: Our Staff Engagement Group, Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group, Our Race at Work Taskforce, Our Dignity and Respect group, Our Mental Health First Aiders. We have also consulted Commission PCS representatives. Equality, diversity and inclusion have formed a key part of our management and development leadership programme, ensuring that managers role model the values the Commission supports and embed them in their teams. The Strategy has also been discussed with our Remuneration and Human Resources Committee and our Board. Ensuring that everybody in the Commission knows about the Strategy and the standards it sets is crucial to its success. So an internal communications plan is one of the first priorities identified in the Action Plan. How to give us feedback and how to tell us if you are not content. We welcome feedback on this Strategy. Please send your feedback to our EDI Lead Cindy Williams at edi@electoralcommission.org.uk, or by post to: Cindy Williams, The Electoral Commission, 3 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8YZ. If you are not content with our approach and want to make a complaint, the procedure for doing so is set out on our website. Making it happen. In this chapter we set out how we will assess, monitor and report on progress against the EDI strategy. Our Action Plan. Our Action Plan is attached at Annex A. It sets out equality related activities taking place across the Commission. These actions will be reflected in our Corporate Plan for 2022-27, in our business and operational plans and in the objectives of all staff as appropriate. Progress will be tracked as part of the Commission's performance tracking through monthly and quarterly reporting. We are committed to increasing and improving the collection of data. The plan will be updated regularly as part of our wider planning. Reporting on and sharing progress internally. Objectives for the organisation will be tracked through our internal performance monitoring system, with monthly reports to ET and quarterly reports to the Board. There will be a specific objective on equality, diversity and inclusion: The Commission's Remuneration and HR Committee will track progress on behalf of the Board and offer constructive challenge. The Commission's own internal staff groups will act as critical friends, holding the leadership of the Commission accountable for progress. Reporting and sharing on progress externally. The Commission is accountable to the Speaker's Committee of the UK Parliament, to the Scottish Parliament and to the Senedd. The key mechanism for demonstrating this accountability is through our existing mechanisms. We will set out in our annual Business Plan what actions we propose to take, and will report on progress in our Annual Report. In Wales we will provide an annual report on our compliance with the 168 statutory Welsh Language Standards and what more we can do to enhance the bilingual services provided both internally and externally. Specific requirements apply in Northern Ireland. The Single Equality Scheme setting out how we will meet these requirements forms part of this Strategy. We will provide an annual review of our performance against this strategy and our Disability Action Plan. We will also provide a five yearly summary of our refresh of the strategy. Action Plan

Action Plan This action plan sets out what we will do to deliver against the objectives identified in this Strategy. It reflects the priorities and objectives identified in the Corporate Plan for 2022-27. These will be reviewed annually as part of our Business Planning cycle. We will report on progress as part of our Annual Report.

Objective 1 Equality, diversity and inclusion in the democratic process
 Action When we will do it Measure of success Who is responsible
 Continue to improve our research data to enhance our evidence base, ensuring we carry out screening and if appropriate an EQIA for research proposals Ongoing Evidence base gives us clear data to support our aims for equality, diversity and inclusion Head of Research
 Continue to ensure that campaigns to raise public awareness about the electoral system are inclusive and take account of different groups Ongoing; to form part of each campaign Our messages feature in targeted media; good response from targeted groups Head of Campaigns
 Continue to ensure that our guidance is available in a variety of formats Ongoing Our stakeholders are supported in compliance with the PSED Head of Regulatory Support and Head of Guidance
 Take further steps to ensure our website and our publications are as accessible as possible Ongoing: our website already meets best practice AA standards Best practice maintained and enhanced through regular testing and feedback Head of Digital Communications
 Build on the success of the partnership work we have already done in ensuring we continue to identify the needs of diverse groups and respond to them to ensure that democracy is accessible to all Continue initiatives to identify groups less likely to vote and work to find ways to respond to their needs and remove barriers to voting Good levels of awareness from specific groups; guidance clear on accessibility Head of Campaigns
 working with the Commission's offices in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland; Head of Guidance
Objective 2 Embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in our processes and decision making
 Action When we will do it Measure of success Who is responsible
 Ensure that the guidance, support and challenge we provide for Electoral Registration Officers supports them to encourage registration from typically under-registered groups in their areas (based on their demographics) Ongoing: we have laid the new Standards before Parliament We provide the right guidance and support to EROs and quality assure that we have done so Head of Guidance, Head of Support and Improvement, Heads of Electoral Commission in Wales and Scotland
 Ensure that our guidance, support and challenge to Returning Officers promote the provision of equality of access and experience for all at the polls Ongoing: we constantly update and improve our guidance We provide the right guidance and support to ROs Head of Guidance; Head of Support and Improvement, Heads of Electoral Commission in Wales and Scotland
 Introduce new processes for carrying out, reviewing and publishing Equality Impact Assessments New EQIA process rolled out on trial basis by the end of 2021
 Enhanced ability to assess the impact of proposed changes on equalities Head of Planning and Performance; all staff responsible for areas where screening and if necessary a full EQIA may be required
 Ensure that the Commission's procurement strategy includes clear EDI outcomes for contractors, and that effective monitoring of these contractors is done to ensure they comply Ongoing Contractors have equalities policies in place Head of Finance and
 Ensure through our Quality Assurance initiative that equality is embedded as appropriate in all our processes Ongoing All processes pay due regard to equalities Head of Projects and all managers
 Continue to keep our internal regulatory procedures under review for best practice and to ensure that consistency, fairness and quality underpin all our regulatory activities Ongoing Decisions seen to be made transparently and fairly in a way which treats all stakeholders equally Head of Registration and Reporting; Head of

Monitoring and Enforcement Ensure that equality is included as appropriate in our policies including our Enforcement Policy as they are reviewed in line with our normal cycle Ongoing All policies pay due regard to equalities All Heads responsible for organisational policies Implement a Welsh Language Action Plan to enhance our service to Welsh speakers, building on the appointment of a permanent senior adviser on Welsh language and a permanent translator All parts of the organisation are aware of and meet the Welsh language standards Head of Electoral Commission in Wales; all Heads Objective 3 Ensure equality, recognition of diversity and inclusion for everyone at the Commission Action When we will do it Measure of success Who is responsible Meet the commitments and actions stated in our people strategy Ongoing Progress demonstrated in line with commitment Head of Human Resources and all managers We will continue using anonymous recruiting for employed roles (our e-recruitment system does not share name or other demographic info with recruiting) Ongoing The diversity of whom we recruit Head of Human Resources and all recruiting managers We will consider the design of our roles including through the lens of being open to all Ongoing The diversity of whom we recruit Recruiting managers (with support from Human Resources team) We will tender for an e-recruitment system that meets our data needs By 2022 Diversity data reports on job applicants for employed roles Human Resources Team We will aim to create an environment where all staff can be themselves at work Ongoing Positive findings in all staff surveys and feedback from staff groups; consider ways of encouraging feedback from those not comfortable with these mechanisms Work led by Anti Bullying champion Updated Dignity at Work policy for 2021/2. By 2022 Updated policy reflecting Commission needs and priorities Human Resources team, DARE, EDI Group, Anti Bullying champion, PCS We will work to deliver on our commitment to 'Zero Tolerance' of bullying and harassment. Ongoing with annual review Levels of bullying and harassment experienced and witnessed fall Anti-Bullying Champion working with Dignity and Respect Group; all managers and colleagues We will build on the learnings from relevant impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic 2020/21 – including hybrid ways of working, dependence on electronic communication; virtual leadership – to help us shape a new and inclusive workplace culture Ongoing as the pandemic recedes Continued balance of high staff engagement with delivery of business All managers and staff We will work through our Race at Work Champion and our Race at Work Taskforce to give effect to our Race at Work Charter. Ongoing Actions agreed with Task Force and carried through according to plan. We have set ourselves a target to bring the diversity of our workforce in line with the diversity of the UK. Race at Work Champion working with the Task Force We will work with and support a new permanent EDI Lead for the Commission From Summer 2021 EDI lead delivers against agreed outcomes Head of Strategic Planning and Performance We will continue to seek views and promote EDI through our EDI group Ongoing EDI considered in Commission decisions and processes All Heads Through continuing to provide induction to employees and workers, we will let them know of the EDI agenda and priorities Ongoing All new employees, temporary or permanent, understand the Commission's expectations on EDI Human Resources team, SLG and recruiting managers We will continue to discuss the results of all staff surveys and seek feedback both through teams and through the Commission's groupings such as the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion group, the Staff Engagement Group and with PCS After each full all staff survey Staff feel confident to speak up and share views to enhance the all staff survey process Head of Human Resources working with relevant groups We will encourage employees to self-declare their diversity in our HR system to improve our organisational EDI data Spring 2021 We have set a target of 85% for

2022-23, to be reviewed for the next year Head of Human Resources We will continue to track the diversity of applicants and of leavers Ongoing Levels of diversity rise. We have set ourselves a target to bring the diversity of the workforce in line with the diversity of the UK. Human Resources team and managers Communicating our commitment to diversity Action When we will do it Measure of success Who is responsible We will draw up and implement a strategy for internal communications to make sure all staff are aware of our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion In line with publication of Strategy All staff aware of Strategy and their responsibilities under it EDI lead working with Head of Internal Communications Annexes Annexes Annex A: our legal responsibilities Introduction This chapter sets out the legal requirements which apply to the Commission. There are particular requirements in Northern Ireland, and we have set out where these apply only there. Electoral legislation is a devolved matter and differing provisions apply in Wales and in Scotland, for example extension of the franchise. GB statutory requirements The core EDI framework for public sector organisations is set out in the Equality Act 2010 and the specific Public Sector Duties (also known as the equality duty). The Scottish Parliament and the Senedd have set out some of their own specific commitments. Under the Equality Act 2006, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has a statutory remit to protect, enforce and promote equality across nine protected characteristics that are set out in the Equality Act 2010: Age Disability Gender reassignment Marriage and civil partnership Pregnancy and maternity Race Religion or belief (including the right not to believe) Sex Sexual Orientation This remit includes regulating the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The PSED is a positive duty on public authorities and others carrying out public functions. It requires that public authorities give proper consideration to equality in their day-to-day work in shaping policy, delivering services and in their employment practices. The PSED operates in two linked parts – the General Equality Duty and the Specific Duties. The General Equality Duty is set out in s.149 of the Equality Act 2010 and requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not, and foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not These are sometimes referred to as the three aims or arms of the general equality duty. It is not sufficient to passively comply by trying not to discriminate. Organisations must actively seek to ‘eliminate’ unlawful discrimination, ‘advance’ equality and ‘foster’ good relations. Similarly, the Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves: Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low The Act states that meeting different needs involves taking steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities. It describes fostering good relations as tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups. It states that compliance with the duty may involve treating some people more favourably than others. The Human Rights Act 1998 and the European Convention on Human Rights Under the Human Rights Act it is unlawful for us to act in a way that is incompatible with the rights set out in the European Convention on Human Rights. Article 14 protects against discrimination in enjoying these rights on the basis of any ground including sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or

other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status. Article 3 protocol 1 of the European Convention on Human Rights guarantees the right to free elections. Additional requirements in Wales The same statutory framework applies in Wales with one exception: legislation defining the equal status of the Welsh language. The Commission is not listed as a public body for the purpose of the socio-economic duty in section 1 of the Equalities Act. Welsh Ministers do have the power to amend by regulations those to whom the socio-economic duty applies, however. The Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011 requires us to treat the Welsh and languages equally when providing services to the public in Wales. The Commission is listed in Schedule 6 of the Welsh Language Standards (No. 2) Regulations 2016. By Regulation 2 of the 2016 Regulations the standards set out therein apply to the Commission ("the Standards"). There are 168 standards. These require the Commission to treat the Welsh and languages equally when providing services to the public in Wales (the service delivery standards). There are further standards requiring the Welsh language to be given particular consideration (the policy making standards). There are standards which apply to the day to day work of the Commission (the operational standards). There are a number of supplementary standards which apply, too. Finally, there are the record keeping standards which require a record to be kept of both internal and external Welsh language related matters. The position in Scotland Public authorities must publish equality information by 30 April 2021 under the Scottish specific duties (including a new set of equality outcomes, pay gap information and equal pay statements). They must also publish reports on their progress on achieving their equality outcomes and on mainstreaming equality by this date: a mainstreaming report annualised employee information a report on progress made to achieve the authorities equality outcomes, and a refreshed set of equality outcomes Authorities with 20 (250 plus in the rest of the UK) or more employees also have to publish: • a statement on equal pay (including information on occupational segregation), and gender pay gap information The BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 requires public bodies in Scotland to publish plans every six years, showing how they will promote and support BSL. Our equality duties in Northern Ireland As a public authority the Commission has obligations in accordance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, which requires all government bodies to protect and promote the right to equality, ensuring that equality of opportunity and good relations are principal considerations in the construction of policies, policy implementation and the provision of services. Section 75 (1) stipulates; (1) A public authority shall in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity— (a) between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; (b) between men and women generally; (c) between persons with a disability and persons without; And (d) between persons with dependants and persons without. In addition Irish Travellers are an identified group under the Race Relations Northern Ireland Order 1997, and political opinion is a unique protected characteristic in Northern Ireland. In discharge of their Section 75(1) duties the Commission must give 'due regard' to the nine identified equality areas when carrying out their functions. Section 75 (2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 states that (2) Without prejudice to its obligations under subsection (1), a public authority shall in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. The Commission should promote equality of opportunity and good relations through the development of policies and through

positive action steps taken to reduce the potential impacts of a policy on a particular group. In order to comply with Section 75 the Commission must monitor sensitive personal data in line with monitoring guidance produced by the ECNI. To demonstrate compliance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 the Commission are required under Schedule 9 of the aforementioned Act to provide an Equality Scheme to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI). The Equality Scheme is subject to approval by the ECNI. The Equality Scheme is the Commission's suggestions on how they will comply with Section 75 and sets out the actions (including time scales) the Commission shall undertake to take to ensure the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations. Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 sets out the requirements of an Equality Scheme and I attach the ECNI's draft Equality Scheme Model for your reference. The ECNI have stated that a public authorities Equality Scheme should: assess its compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties assess and consult on the likely impact of policies on the promotion of equality of opportunity monitor any adverse impact of policies on the promotion of equality of opportunity; publish results of such assessments detail training provided to staff ensure and assess public access to information and services provided by the public authority The Equality Scheme should also set out the complaints procedures in respect of the scheme and procedures to assist individual complainants. To competently monitor the likely impact of policies on the promotion of equality of opportunity a two-step equality assessment approach should be adopted by the Commission as below: Screening, through which the Commission undertakes a review of the Policy at the beginning to identify if the policy may have any major equality impact issues, and An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA), which may be considered prudent if the policy affects a large group of people and is central to the principle of equality of opportunity. The Commission should consider how they could reduce this possible impact, which may include the possibility of an alternative policy. The Commission as part of the EQIA should allow for a twelve week consultation period with individuals who may be effected by the policy. Results of the EQIA should be published. Following the initial Equality Scheme the Commission must undertake a five yearly review and provide a summary to the ECNI. Disability Action Plans As with the obligations set out under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Commission are required under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006 to promote positive attitude towards disabled individuals and encourage participation in public life. This must be detailed in a Disability Action Plan submitted to the ECNI by the Commission. The Commission should allow a two month consultation period for the purposes of preparing their Disability Action Plan. Failure by the Commission to submit a Disability Action Plan will result in a referral to the Northern Ireland Assembly by the ECNI. Annual Reviews The Commission must submit an annual review of their Section 75 obligations and Equality Scheme and their S49A obligations and Disability Action Plan to the ECNI on the 31st August each year. Monitoring the composition of our workforce under the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 Under the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 (FETO NI) specified public bodies are required to monitor the composition of their workforce in terms of community background and sex. Whilst this does not apply to the Commission because of the number of staff based in NI, we are committed to ensuring no discrimination on the grounds of religious belief and/or political opinion. Even though we are not required to report, we actively monitor the composition of our NI workforce. Discrimination in the Provision of Goods, Facilities and Services and in

the disposal and management of premises. In Northern Ireland, protection is afforded from discrimination in accessing goods, facilities, services and in the disposal and management of premises under the heads of the following legislation: Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976 (as amended) – SDO Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) – DDA Special Educational Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005 (as amended) - SENDO Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 (as amended) - RRO. Irish Travellers are explicitly covered in the Order which recognises them as a specific racial group Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 (as amended) – FETO Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2006 (as amended) – Sexual Orientation Regulations The Commission ensures that it follows good practice in the service it provides to its stakeholders and to communities. Annex B: the structure of the Electoral Commission Learn about our Executive Team and Senior Leadership team . Annex C: list of consultees England Age UK AKT Alzheimer's Trust Board of Deputies of British Jews British Board of Scholars and Imams British Council of Churches British Youth Council Business in the Community Business Disability Forum Centre for Ageing Better Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development Disability Rights UK Employers Network for Equality and Social Inclusion Equality and Human Rights Commission Friends, Families, Travellers Gender Information, Research and Education Society Homeless Link Institute for Learning Disabilities Leonard Cheshire LGBT Foundation Mencap MIND Mumsnet National Council of Voluntary Organisations Operation Black Vote Opportunity Now Patchwork Foundation Race Equality Foundation RNIB RNID Runnymede Trust Scope Stonewall Travellers' Movement United Response Womens' Aid Young Womens' Trust Wales Chwarae Teg Cymorth Cymru Disability Wales Diverse Cymru Equality and Human Rights Commission (Wales) Learning Disability Wales Muslim Council of Wales Race Council Cymru Race Equality First RNIB Cymru RNID Cymru Stonewall Cymru Welsh Government Equality Branch Welsh Language Commissioner Welsh Womens' Aid Scotland Age Scotland Article 12 BEMIS CEMVO Deaf Scotland Engender Equality Network Homeless Network Scotland Inclusion Scotland LGBT Youth Scotland RNIB Scotland Scottish Government Equalities Unit Scottish Human Rights Commission Stonewall Scotland Transgender Alliance Young Scotland Youth Parliament Northern Ireland Organisations Action on Hearing Loss ADAPT Northern Ireland Advice NI Age NI Age Sector Platform An Munia Tober Association of Talking Newspapers Autism NI Aware Belfast Butterfly Club Belfast Islamic Centre Belfast Jewish Community Bishop of Down and Connor/Catholic Church British Deaf Association NI Bryson Charitable Group Bryson Intercultural Carers NI Cedar Foundation Children in Northern Ireland (CiNI) Children's Law Centre Chinese Welfare Association Church of Ireland Coalition on Sexual Orientation Commissioner for Older People NI Committee on the Administration of Justice Community Development and Health Network (NI) Community Relations Council Council for the Homeless (NI) Diabetes UK NI Disability Action Disability Sport NI Down's Syndrome Association East Belfast Community Development Agency Employers for Disability NI Equality Commission for Northern Ireland First Division Association Human Rights Consortium Indian Community Centre Inspire Marie Curie Mencap Methodist Church Mindwise Motor Neurone Disease Association National Autistic Society Northern Ireland NI Association for Mental Health NI Commissioner for Children & Young People NI Committee, Irish Congress of Trade Unions NI Council for Voluntary Action NI Womens Aid Federation NI Women's European Platform Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NIACRO) Northern Ireland Chest Heart and Stroke Association Northern Ireland Council for Racial equality Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA) Northern Ireland Dyslexia Centre Northern Ireland ME Association Northern Ireland Union of

Supported Employment NOW Group Office of the Commissioner for Children & Young People
Parenting NI Praxis Care Presbyterian Church Rainbow Project Relate NI RNIB RNIB NI
Sense NI Start 360 The National Deaf Children's Society Training for Women Network
Womens Support Network Local Government Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council Ards
and North Down Borough Council Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council
Belfast City Council Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Derry City and Strabane
District Council Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Lisburn and Castlereagh City
Council Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Mid Ulster District Council Newry, Mourne
and Down District Council NI Stakeholder Northern Ireland Office EONI NI Departments
The Executive Office Department for Economy Department for Infrastructure Department
of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs Department for Communities Department of
Education Department of Finance Department of Health Department of Justice NI Parties
Alliance - Alliance Party of Northern Ireland Animal Welfare Party Aontú Conservative
and Unionist Party Cross-Community Labour Alternative Democratic Unionist Party -
D.U.P. Drug Law Reform Party Fianna Fáil - The Republican Party Green Party Humanity
People Before Profit Alliance Progressive Unionist Party of Northern Ireland SDLP
(Social Democratic & Labour Party) Sinn Féin Socialist Party (Northern Ireland) The
Workers Party Traditional Unionist Voice – TUV Ulster Unionist Party Annex D:
glossary and definitions AA Web Content Guidelines 1.0 These guidelines set out how
to make our website accessible to people with disabilities Adverse Impact Where a
group of people protected by equality law has been affected differently by a policy
and the effect is less favourable, it is known as adverse impact CEO Chief Electoral
Officer Commission The Electoral Commission Consultation Our equality consultation
involves asking our stakeholders (i.e., service users, staff, the general public) for
their views on how best to design policies that promote equality Due regard To
properly consider the need to promote equality, taking into account our purpose and
the need to spend public money effectively EAA Equality impact assessment An Equality
Impact Assessment (EQIA) is a tool to ensure we don't exclude anybody from accessing
our services or those that we play a part in delivering. It's also a chance to
explore ways to promote equality ERO Electoral Registration Officer Great Britain
England, Scotland and Wales HR Human resources IER Individual electoral registration
Policy The term policy covers the definition and process of how an organisation
carries out its functions, for example in reaching decisions Protected Groups Refers
to the characteristics of people legally protected from discrimination PPE Act
Political Parties and Elections Act 2009 PPERA Political Parties, Elections and
Referendums Act 2000 RCO Referendum Counting Officer RO Returning Officer Schedule 9
Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 sets out detailed provisions for the
enforcement of the Section 75 statutory duties, including an outline of what should
be included in an equality scheme Screening The procedure for identifying which
policies will be subject to equality impact assessment, and how these equality impact
assessments will be prioritised Definition of the characteristics of people protected
from discrimination in the UK Age: Under Chapter 1 of the Equalities Act 2010 this
refers to persons defined by age group, whether a particular age or a range of ages.
Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act guidance proposes that for most purposes, the
main categories are: those under 18; people aged between 18 and 65; and people over
65. However, the definition of age groups will relate to the policy under
consideration. Disability: Under Chapter 1 of the Equalities Act 2010 a person has a
disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and
long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day
activities. Gender reassignment: Under Chapter 1 of the Equalities Act this refers

to people who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process for the purpose of reassigning their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex. A reference to a transsexual person is a person who has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment. Marriage and Civil Partnership: Under the Equality Act 2010 civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters. 'Status' can refer to whether a person is single, divorced or separated, married or in a civil partnership. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act guidance refers to married people; unmarried people; divorced or separate people; and widowed people. Pregnancy and maternity: Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after birth, and includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding. Race: Race is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. Religion: Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Sex is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as referring to men and women. Sexual Orientation is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as referring to whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes. People with dependants: Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 guidance defines this group as: people with a primary responsibility for: a child; a person with a disability; a dependent elderly person. Political opinion: Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 guidance defines political opinion as: Unionists generally; Nationalists generally; members/supporters of any political party; other. Language: In compliance with the Welsh Language Act 1993 and the Welsh Language Measure 2011, this consideration refers to a group of people defined by the language they speak. In Wales we have a duty to provide services in Welsh and as set out in the Welsh Language Standards. 1. Diversity of candidates and elected officials, EHRC 2019. ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. NISRA 2011 Census ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. 2020 NI Life and Times survey, Political Attitudes module ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. How Britain voted in the 2019 General Election: Ipsos Mori, December 2020. ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Page history First published: 22 September 2022 Last updated: 14 November 2022 Related content Report: Voting in 2017 Read our report about voting at the general election in 2017 Testing the EU referendum question Find out about our testing of the EU referendum question Report: How the 2017 UK general election was run Read our report about how the 2017 general election was run Results and turnout at the 2017 UK general election View the results and turnout at the 2017 general election