1. Jonathan Bell told the Assembly a Strategy would be published by end of 2012. Then it was 2013. Clear sign of lack of commitment / delivery

2. This process may push it into 2015, because it is not consultation on a Strategy, rather about what should be in a strategy. That is 12 weeks, at which point it disappears into the political black hole of OFMDFM

3. The doc is very short of vision

4. What the UUP want / offer the LGB&T community (equal treatment, freedom from threat and harassment and the rest)

Defence Lines, if needed

1. Jim Allister is weak because he attacks the need for special protections for this category, while supportive of a strategy for victims (and others);

2. The Ulster Unionist Party has no questions to answer about our commitment in this area - you are Chair of S Belfast and were on the two-man Haass team

Tuesday 10 December 2013

RELEASE: IMMEDIATE

**We need to see delivery from OFMdFM - Nesbitt**

Ulster Unionist Party leader, Mike Nesbitt MLA, has called for delivery from OFMdFM on the Sexual Orientation Strategy.

Mr Nesbitt, who is also Chair of the OFMdFM Committee, said:

“The Sexual Orientation Strategy is becoming one of the longest running sagas of devolution. We have been waiting seven years for a strategy to be produced, following the consultation process of 2006.

“The Assembly was given a commitment by then Junior Minister Robin Newton in 2010 that a strategy was imminent. Then last year Junior Minister Jonathan Bell said we would see the strategy by the end of 2012; again, it didn’t appear. Then in Together: Building a United Community a commitment was given to publishing a sexual orientation strategy before the end of 2013, and lo and behold it hasn’t appeared.

“So where is it? It's a Programme for Government commitment and after seven years, it's non-appearance is also conclusive proof of the dysfunctionality of the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister.

“The purpose of the strategy is to address issues faced by the LGBT community in Northern Ireland, so it is a very important document. Is it now going to become a yearly event where we mark the non-publication of the Sexual Orientation Strategy? If it weren’t so serious, this debacle would be laughable.

 “If OFMdFM are serious about building a shared future in Northern Ireland, publishing the sexual orientation strategy would send out a strong message. We need to see delivery on this; it cannot and should not be allowed to rumble on any longer.”