

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

Policy Screening Report

under

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, 1998

April 2025

Equality Scheme Policy Screening Report

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council has developed a number of new policies. In complying with the Council's Equality Scheme Duties, these policies have been screened for any possible adverse impact that they may have under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, 1998. The nine groups are:

Age; Marital status; Women (including girls) and Men (including boys); Persons with a disability and Persons without; Persons with dependants and Persons without; Political Opinion; Racial Group; Religious belief; and Sexual Orientation.

The policies have been screened against the questions below and have been ranked 1,2 or 3

1	'screened in' for equality impact assessment, including date of EQIA
2	'screened out' with mitigation
3	'screened out' without mitigation

Screening Questions

- A 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)
- B Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories?
- C 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)
- D Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

The attached schedule is being published for consultees information. Comments may be submitted in writing, by telephone, e-mail, or in person and should be forwarded to the address below.

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This document is available in alternative formats on request
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Section 75 Northern Ireland Act 1998 – Policy Screening Exercise

Policies have been assessed against the four screening questions and a ranking allocated. For each of the policies detailed below, a more comprehensive ‘screening’ document is available on the Council website or on request. Copies can be found at <https://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/council/policies/> The report includes published screening for the period December 2024 to March 2025.

Policy/Procedure	Policy/Procedure Aims	Ranking/ Screening Decision
Contract Management Policy	<p>The Contract Management Policy is to provide a clear and standardised approach to managing and administering contracts for goods, services and works purchased from suppliers by driving continuous improvement and performance in the delivery of contracted goods and services. Contract Management follows on the commissioning (strategic) and procurement (delivery) phases of the Commissioning and Procurement cycle.</p> <p>Procurement decisions are made solely on the basis of information returned. The Procurement Act 2023 is based on the objectives of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. delivering value for money2. Maximising public benefit3. sharing information4. acting, and being seen to act, with integrity. <p>In compliance with the guidance issued by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and the Central Procurement Directorate, the relevance of the statutory equality duties will be considered by the commissioning department before procurement begins and then, if relevant to the procurement exercise will be included in the planning, scoping, deciding the strategic objectives, the specification, when writing the project documentation and</p>	3

	during the performance of the contract. Questions relating to the statutory equality duties are included in the Tender Request Form.	
Culture in the Park	<p>The Environmental Services Department will set up event infrastructure as part of a cultural event in Solitude Park on Saturday 29th March.</p> <p>It is likely that this event would appeal to a wide range of people within the community.</p>	3
Dignity at Work Policy and Procedure	<p>The aim of this policy is to provide a process that is fair and equitable for all employees to feel they can raise matters that arise in relation to bullying and harassment. The Council provides this policy and procedure as a way of ensuring all people have access to them, and to provide a process that is clear and makes reasonable adjustments on the grounds of disability where and when necessary.</p> <p>We do not foresee any negative impact on any of the Section 75 groups arising out of the implementation of this policy.</p>	3
Disciplinary Policy and Procedure	<p>This Policy & Procedure is designed to support all employees to achieve and maintain appropriate standards of conduct, performance and behaviour.</p> <p>The aim of the Procedure is to ensure that the Council can operate effectively as an organisation, disciplinary action taken is fair, appropriate and consistent, with all involved in the process being treated with dignity and respect and managers, employees and their representatives are aware of their rights and obligations in matters relating to disciplinary and appeals procedures.</p>	3

	<p>We do not foresee that there will be an adverse impact on any of the Section 75 groups. Managers will ensure that reasonable adjustments have been put in place during any Disciplinary Procedures.</p>	
Efficiency Plan 2025/26	<p>A robust programme to drive financial efficiency across the organisation is necessary to support the ongoing management of Council finances.</p> <p>Individual directorates have identified areas where savings can be made, and income can be maximised and as part of this process section 75 impacts have been considered. Equality impacts have not been identified for any of the service areas in the efficiency plan for 2025/26.</p> <p>The efficiency proposals include corporate savings and saving identified across two of the Directorates – Regulatory Services, Facilities & Assets and Development, Community & Wellbeing. Examples of savings in Regulatory Services, Facilities & Assets include a mini service review and disposal of assets. Savings in the Development, Community & Wellbeing directorate include a management restructure, programming costs realignment and the cessation of the Armagh annual craft fair. Corporate savings include staff turnover adjustment, annual price increases, a reduction in subscriptions & memberships and a reduction in postage.</p>	3
Fraud Policy	<p>The purpose of the Fraud Policy is to draw the attention of Members and staff to the importance of ensuring that proper procedures are followed when a suspected fraud is reported.</p>	3

	<p>This is a technical policy with no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.</p>	
Grievance Policy and Procedure	<p>The purpose of this Policy and Procedure is to provide a fair and consistent framework for handling work related grievances raised by Council employees in line with NI employment legislative requirements. The Council provides this Policy and Procedure as a way of ensuring all people have access to the policies and procedures to provide a process that is clear and makes reasonable adjustments on the grounds of disability where and when necessary.</p> <p>We do not foresee any negative impact on any of the section 75 groups in the implementation of this policy.</p>	3
Managing Attendance Policy	<p>This policy outlines the process to manage absence in the organisation. The Council expects the regular and punctual attendance of all employees at work. The Council recognises that staff occasionally will be absent from work due to sickness absence.</p> <p>As an employer the Council has a duty of care to all its employees and commits itself to promoting good employee health throughout the organisation.</p> <p>Council does not foresee a negative impact on the implementation of this policy for any of the Section 75 groups. This policy will be applied fairly and consistently to all staff. Reasonable adjustments and cross referring to other policies will be considered throughout.</p>	3

Pilot Brown Bin Collection (Winter Organic Collection)	<p>Current and future waste management activities are influenced by the legislative and policy framework in Northern Ireland. This includes EU waste policy which amongst other things aims to improve resource efficiency.</p> <p>Council previously provided residents with a 240-litre bin for collecting garden waste and food co-mingled in the same bin, which was collected fortnightly. As part of a pilot scheme brown bin collections will move from fortnightly collections to a new 'One in Four' weeks cycle for households across the ABC Borough from mid-December to the end of March 2025, with residents' collection day of the week remaining the same during this period.</p> <p>We will ensure that the communication programme takes into account the needs of a diverse population and promotes participation from ethnic minority groups. The public consultation and the communication programme will ensure that all groups are provided the opportunity to learn about the changes to the Waste Collection Service.</p>	3
Play Scheme	<p>The Playscheme delivered a programme for children aged between 4 and 13 years living within the 3 specified areas of North Lurgan, Killicomaine and Brownlow Hub. This policy entails the permanent closure of Playschemes effective February 2025, with a strategic repurposing of the associated funding. This reallocation is aimed at supporting a broader community wellbeing activity programme that will be implemented across all community facilities. The policy reflects a shift in focus toward providing more inclusive and diverse opportunities for community engagement, health, and wellness, leveraging existing infrastructure to maximise reach and impact.</p>	2

	<p>This is an amended policy, transitioning from a targeted service delivery model (Playschemes) to a holistic approach that aligns with evolving community needs and priorities. By repurposing funds, the initiative seeks to create a sustainable framework for delivering enhanced and varied services, promoting inclusivity and addressing broader determinants of wellbeing within the community.</p> <p>The introduction of the community and wellbeing programme, replacing the Playscheme, is anticipated to positively impact several Section 75 categories by offering inclusive and accessible activities designed to address diverse needs.</p>	
Procurement Policy	<p>This policy aims to support the delivery of a consistent procurement approach in a consistent manner across all Departments, making efficient and effective use of resources to achieve best 'Value for Money' while enabling Council to respond to an evolving public sector procurement environment.</p> <p>Procurement decisions are made solely on the basis of information returned. The Procurement Act 2023 is based on the objectives of: 1. delivering value for money 2. Maximising public benefit 3. sharing information 4. acting, and being seen to act, with integrity.</p> <p>In compliance with the guidance issued by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and the Central Procurement Directorate, the relevance of the statutory equality duties will be considered by the commissioning department before procurement begins and then, if relevant to the procurement exercise will be included in the planning, scoping, deciding the strategic objectives, the specification, when writing the project documentation and</p>	3

	during the performance of the contract. Questions relating to the statutory equality duties are included in the Tender Request Form.	
Public Consultation Policy	<p>The aim of the policy is to improve the services and operations of the Council by understanding the views of our stakeholders who are affected by our decisions. It sets the context and guiding principles on public consultation for Council.</p> <p>This policy will be available for all our customers. However, it is possible that those of a different race, older and younger people and those with a disability may require assistance. As a mitigation, different consultation methods will be considered, a range of formats will be available on request and assistance from staff will be available where required.</p>	2
Queen Elizabeth II memorial	<p>The proposal to commission a bust of the late Queen Elizabeth II statue in the Armagh Palace Chapel is more likely to be warmly received as the late Queen Elizabeth II conferred City status on Armagh in 1995. It is much less likely to have negative equality and good relations implications for the wider community.</p> <p>Public consultation on the proposed tribute will be required to ensure the public have the opportunity to provide their views on the proposals.</p> <p>The memorial could have a positive effect on equality and good relations if all relevant stakeholders are engaged in the process.</p> <p>Erecting a memorial to the late Queen is an important decision that will require time, thoughtful planning and design.</p>	2

	The design of the memorial will have a major impact on how it will be remembered by the present generation and regarded by future generations.	
Records Management Policy	This policy outlines the Council's commitment to effective and efficient records management ensuring compliance with legislative requirements. There is no impact on any Section 75 category.	3
Relocation of Portrait of Queen Elizabeth II	<p>In February 2024 a report was presented to the Council's Governance, Resources and Strategy Committee ("GRS Committee") about His Majesty the King's Portrait Scheme (the "Scheme"). Under the Scheme public authorities across the UK were given the opportunity to apply, at no charge, for one framed portrait of His Majesty King Charles III to mark his new reign. The deadline for applications to the Scheme was the 28th March 2024. Members of the Committee agreed that an application (to receive a copy of the portrait of His Majesty King Charles III) should be submitted and that the location of the portrait would be a matter for the Emerging Issues Working Group to consider. The decision was ratified at the Full Council meeting in February 2024. A copy of the portrait of King Charles III was received during 2024.</p> <p>It should be noted that a portrait of the late Queen Elizabeth II hung in the Mezzanine area in Craigavon Civic Centre (near to the Lord Mayor's Office) for many years. The location, for the hanging of the portrait of Queen Elizabeth II, was the subject of an Equality Impact Assessment in the former Craigavon Borough Council and this location (the Mezzanine) was agreed. On this basis, it was recommended, on equality and good relations grounds, that the portrait received of King Charles III should also be hung in the Mezzanine area in Craigavon Civic Centre (in place of the portrait</p>	2

	<p>of the late Queen Elizabeth II).</p> <p>Investigations (for locations for the portrait to be relocated to) were carried out. One suggestion was for the portrait to be relocated to the Primates Chapel in Armagh. The rationale for this being that the Chapel was where the late Queen Elizabeth II conferred City status on Armagh in 1995. There is a plaque erected in the entrance to the Chapel which records the event. The portrait could be located above the plaque. Another suggestion was that the portrait could be archived to the County Museum</p> <p>The relocation of the portrait of Queen Elizabeth II to Primates Chapel or the County Museum is likely to be particularly welcomed by persons who identify with the Protestant/Unionist community. It is likely to have a neutral impact on those who have a different political opinion.</p> <p>At the meeting of the Governance, Resources and Strategy Committee on 8 January 2025 the elected members considered the two options and approved the recommendation that the portrait of the late Queen Elizabeth II be relocated to the Primates Chapel in Armagh.</p>	
Uniform & Dress Code Policy	<p>This policy sets out clear guidance in relation to the expectations of Council in relation to Uniform and Dress code for all staff. This policy will provide clear guidance for everyone concerned and is likely to result in a positive impact on equality and good relations.</p> <p>This policy has been developed to ensure that all staff members adhere to the key principle of the policy portraying a corporate and professional image. However, the policy states that a sensitive</p>	2

	<p>approach will be taken when cultural, religious or disability related factors affect dress or corporate clothing requirements. It also acknowledges that the Council will adhere to the Equality Commission's Guide on 'Promoting a Good and Harmonious Working Environment' in determining which emblems, symbols and clothing have the potential to make those of a different identity feel uncomfortable or unwelcome. These are the mitigating factors which will ensure that those with a disability and those of different religion and politics do not experience a negative impact.</p>	
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