

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

Policy Screening Report

under

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, 1998

May 2026

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.

Mary Hanna
Policy, Equality & Diversity Manager
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon
Borough Council
Old Armagh City Hospital
39 Abbey Street
Armagh
BT61 4DL

Tel: 028 3752 9600

E-mail: mary.hanna@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

This document is available in alternative formats on request

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. The report includes published screening for the period December 2025 to April 2026.

Policy/Procedure	Policy/Procedure Aims	Ranking/ Screening Decision
Community Plan Action Plan – 2026-2029	<p>The review of the action plan began in 2025 following completion of the mid-point review of Connected, the borough Community Plan 2017-2030 and completed in Spring 2026. The actions in the plan have been devised through collaborative working with community planning partners from statutory and voluntary sector partners.</p> <p>The reviewed Connected action plan’s priorities for action remain as follows-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting Good Mental Health & Wellbeing • Tackling Poverty & Social Exclusion • Place • Shared Leadership & Community Engagement <p>Where impacts are identified, they are minor positive impacts on equality of opportunity for people from different racial backgrounds, older/younger people and carers. A minor positive impact on good relations between people of different racial groups has also been identified.</p> <p>This is a high level action plan and each action lead will be</p>	3

	<p>responsible for ensuring equality and good relations duties are met for individual actions.</p> <p>The Community Planning Team in council has a role in identifying opportunities for partners to increase equality of opportunity for S75 groups throughout the delivery of the action plan.</p>	
Conflict of Interest Policy	<p>The main aim of this policy is to promote high standards in public life and especially to follow the key characteristics of propriety as defined in the ‘Seven Principles of Public Life’ known as the Nolan Principles. These seven principles underpinning public life are: Selflessness; Integrity; Objectivity; Accountability; Honesty and Leadership.</p> <p>This policy is aligned to the Code of Conduct guidelines for Local Government (revised in 2020/2021). It is to ensure that conflicts of interest are identified and managed in a way that safeguards the integrity of staff and maximises public confidence in the Council’s ability to deliver public services properly.</p> <p>This policy has 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>	3
Efficiency Plan	<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. No equality impacts</p>	3

have been identified for any of the service areas in the efficiency plan for 2026/27.

Approach to Review of Budgets

At a corporate level, the focus of our review has been on:

- Robust control and management of budgets
- Reducing controllable discretionary spend
- Reducing staffing costs through vacancy control and other measures
- Management of consultancy spend
- Improving procurement practices, e.g., standardisation and re-negotiation of contracts
- Improving utilisation of facilities and assets to conserve and manage heat, light and power and other estates costs
- Investment of capital/reserves to deliver recurrent revenue efficiencies (Invest to Save)
- Maximising income generation and external funding opportunities

In addition, efficiencies in service delivery can be achieved through proposals which:

- Reduce level of service provision
- Restructure/Remodel services
- Close/withdraw services
- Move to alternative operating models
- Reduce payments to third parties

<p>Financial Reserves Policy</p>	<p>This policy sets out the principles, procedures, and governance arrangements for the control, use and management of the Council's reserves. It is designed to ensure compliance with the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, relevant CIPFA guidance, and best practice across the sector. By maintaining appropriate reserves, the Council aims to safeguard its financial stability, support strategic priorities, and provide resilience against unforeseen events and liabilities.</p> <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>	<p>3</p>
<p>Menopause Policy</p>	<p>The Council is committed to supporting employees who are affected in any way by the menopause and to support and inform managers so that employees reporting issues are treated fairly and given appropriate support.</p> <p>The policy aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support employees to remain at work • Raise awareness of menopause, the related issues and how this can affect employees. • Break the stigma and taboo surrounding the menopause at work and to promote an environment in which employees feel confident in discussing menopausal issues and ask for support and adjustments, if required. • Provide guidance and direction on how to support employees who raise menopausal issues. • Inform managers of the potential symptoms of menopause, how this can affect employees and what can be done to 	<p>3</p>

	<p>support individuals including reasonable adjustments.</p> <p>There are no adverse impacts on any of the equality categories. Instead, the policy will have a positive impact on equality of opportunity for women in the workplace. It will support both female staff and inform managers on what can be done to support individuals including when to apply adjustments.</p>	
Paint Scheme – ABC Borough	<p>The aim of this project is to assist commercial property owners to improve the aesthetic quality of the building stock and respective streetscape within urban and rural town centres.</p> <p>Property owners wishing to undertake external painting works to enhance the lettability, functionality and appearance of their property will be able to apply for grant assistance through the scheme to encourage vacant commercial property owners to invest in their buildings, attract tenants and reduce long term vacancy, thereby improving the vitality and vibrancy of our towns and villages for all users.</p> <p>The scheme will not have an adverse impact on any of the Section 75 groups.</p>	3
Tak£500 Participatory Budgeting	<p>The Tak£500+ project aims to ensure that all Section 75 groups are able to contribute to decisions that will benefit the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough and the people who live in it. The 2026/27 Tak£500+ Project will be the fifth Participatory Budegeting grant initiative delivered by the Community Planning Partnership and led by the council.</p> <p>The process is collaborative, it builds relationships and connections and will help foster links between groups.</p>	2

The project will require an intensive promotion exercise to reach small groups from across the borough. It will be required to draw on the reach of all our community planning partners including our Community and Voluntary Sector Panel and Elected Members to encourage groups to take part.

The application form is short and straightforward with applicants providing details on their proposal and it will be checked against a predetermined criteria eg: Safe, legal, feasible, deliverable.

Advice and clarification on applications will be provided to help groups to move through the next stage.

Mitigations include:

Age

- Children and young people aged 8 years and over can propose projects and vote
- Information sent to schools and youth services
- Age Friendly Officer is a member of the PB WG, the project is promoted through the Age Friendly Alliance and ABC Seniors Network
- EA Youth Services are a member of the PB Working Group
- Linking Generations NI is a member of the PB Working Group
- Targeted bespoke information session with youth services

Disability

- Online information event as well as in room events
- Guide to Accessible events will be used to plan events

- Cedar Foundation have joined the PB Working Group for the 2026/27 process

Dependents

- Online information event during school hours
- Voting events will be child friendly and on Saturdays

Racial Group

- Bespoke targeted information sessions will be developed and delivered to support groups to apply
- Interpretation services will be made available if required.

Additional support

The PB WG members' phone numbers have been included on promotional material so that they can provide additional support with applications if necessary.

Community Engagement Standards – Inclusion & Support

The community planning partnership has adopted the Scottish Community Engagement Standards which include standards on inclusion and support. The PB WG will evaluate how inclusive the project is and whether adequate support was provided for everyone to be able to take part. The PB WG assessed themselves as scoring 5/6 for inclusion and 5/6 for support for the previous PB project Tak£500+.

PB Charter for Northern Ireland – Inclusive and Supported

The community planning partnership has adopted the PB Charter for Northern Ireland the PB working group will evaluate how inclusive and supported the project was. For the previous Project the PB working group assessed themselves as scoring 4/5 for

	being inclusive and 5/5 for supported.	
--	--	--