

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

Policy Screening Report

under

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, 1998

September 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.

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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. The report includes published screening for the period May 2026 to August 2026.

Policy/Procedure	Policy/Procedure Aims	Ranking/ Screening Decision
<u>Cemetery Management Rules and Regulations</u>	This is a revision of the cemetery management rules and regulations which is based on industry best practice and procedures to ensure compliance with burial laws, Council’s rules and regulations, industry standards and Health and Safety law, whilst taking cognisance of the religious, cultural and ethnic beliefs of service-users. Accessibility is factored into the design process for new cemeteries and extensions to existing cemeteries. Lawn cemeteries are typically more accessible than traditional surround cemeteries.	3
<u>Cemetery Strategy</u>	The Cemetery Strategy outlines all aspects of cemetery provision within the Council area including the Council Rules and Regulations for Cemeteries. It includes details of the legal requirements the Council must comply with relating to Cemetery provision. It outlines the administration and operational aspects of cemetery provision across the Council. It also identifies the short, medium and longer term needs in terms of cemetery space. The strategy is aligned with the Corporate and Community Plan.	2

	This cemetery service is provided for all borough residents from all section 75 groups and considers the different cultural and religious needs of the deceased and their families. Accessibility is factored into the design process for new cemeteries and extensions to existing cemeteries. The plan recognises the need to continually review and monitor the Council and regional demographics which may have an impact on future cemetery provision. The equality screening exercise was included in the formal consultation	
Crematorium Feasibility Study	A study was undertaken by a third party into the feasibility of developing and operating a crematorium in the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council area. Provision of a crematorium has the potential to open up wider choice and better serve those whose religious beliefs favour cremation by offering a value for money service closer to home. If approved, a crematorium will have minor positive impacts for those whose religious beliefs favour cremation.	3
Digital Transformation Strategy	The Digital Transformation Strategy sets out the Council's vision, ambitions and delivery programme for the use of digital technology, data and innovation to improve services, modernise operations and enhance customer experience across the borough over the next three years. The strategy includes initiatives relating to digital service delivery, automation, data analytics, AI, workforce	2

	development, digital inclusion and collaboration. The Digital Transformation Strategy has the potential to create minor positive impacts for a number of Section 75 categories, particularly older people, people with disabilities, people with dependants and caring responsibilities, minority ethnic residents with lower levels of digital literacy and groups at risk of digital exclusion. Older people may experience barriers to digital services if unsupported. However, the strategy contains explicit commitments to accessibility, digital inclusion and alternative service delivery channels, including ensuring that no customer is excluded or left behind by digital transformation and maintaining access through telephone and face-to-face channels where appropriate. Any potential adverse impacts can therefore be effectively mitigated through accessible design standards, equality considerations within project delivery and ongoing monitoring.	
Funding of Edenvilla 2G Pitch & Lighting	At the 2nd April 2026 meeting of the Environmental Services Committee, Members agreed to contribute 50% funding to replace the Education Authority-owned 2G playing surface at Edenvilla,	3

	Portadown. Furthermore, as part of the preferred option, Members have agreed to fund 90% of the cost of replacing lighting columns at the site, to facilitate community use outside of school hours. This is a new funding arrangement for this site. This investment will ensure that a 2G facility is available for community use outside of school hours. The primary user will be Edenvilla Ltd/Portadown Hockey but the facility is available for hire by other community groups and sporting organisations. The pitch is available to use by those from a range of section 75 groups.	
Heritage Strategy	The Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Heritage Strategy is a new strategy for the Borough. Its aim is to have joined-up leadership for heritage, with communities, partners and the Council working together. The Heritage Strategy identifies a series of strategically aligned objectives and actions for taking forward in the Borough to support heritage in all its forms; Built, Natural and Cultural. It will mean better places, with buildings parks and landscapes maintained, reused, and brought back to life. It will also mean wider participation, where volunteers are supported, young people are engaged, and a broader range of inclusive stories is shared. The Strategy has been developed following an extensive engagement and research phase. This included online surveys,	2

	engagement with young people and older people, live engagement exercises, and engagement with local community groups, key stakeholders and partners. Desktop research of the available evidence from NISRA and Statutory Partners was compiled to support the development of the Heritage Strategy. The equality screening exercise was included in the formal consultation. Common themes identified were: • Promoting a shared history, where “everyone is in the story” • Heritage cannot be inclusive to one community, it must be of all communities in our borough • Intergenerational learning should be a core aspect of heritage • Younger generations need to develop a deeper understanding of their local history and traditions These are reflected in the actions in the strategy, and the strategy commits to the development of a partnership to engage in ongoing dialogue with section 75 groups to ensure that their needs are addressed in its implementation	
Loughbrickland Park – Sunday Praise Service	The Council was approached by Loughbrickland Mission Hall seeking permission to hold a Sunday praise service in Loughbrickland Park on Sunday 21st June 2026 from 7.30-9.00pm. The purpose was to conduct a short church service with singing, bible readings and praise. The service was open to the general public. It is likely that this event would appeal to a wide range of people within the community.	3

<u>Lurgan Community Centres Project</u>	This is a new capital investment policy proposal to (i) Demolish and rebuild Mourneview Community Centre with an upgraded, co-located play park. (ii) Refurbish, reconfigure and extend North Lurgan Community Centre; and (iii) Dispose of the Avenue Road Community Centre asset It will have benefits for a range of section 75 categories, including age, disability, men and women generally, people with dependants, racial group, those of different religious belief and political opinion. Service continuity will be maintained during works by transferring bookings (e.g. to Avenue Road prior to disposal) and offering transport support for priority groups. • We will liaise with disability groups to finalise layouts (incl. accessible WCs, parking, hearing loops). • We will develop an Inclusive Use Policy covering neutrality, hate speech, safeguarding and reasonable adjustments. • There will be targeted, affordable programmes for children/young people and lone parents to offset any cessation of the playscheme. • Voluntary equality monitoring will be undertaken at	2
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	booking/registration; which will be reviewed quarterly to address gaps in reach. Communications will be in plain English with alternative formats and translation made available on request.	
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