

Equality Screening

Policy Scoping

Policy Title: Efficiency Plan 2025/26

Brief Description of Policy (please attach copy if available). Please state if it is a new, existing or amended policy.

A robust programme to drive financial efficiency across the organisation is necessary to support the ongoing management of Council finances, in order to continue to meet our corporate requirements in line with the Local Government (Finance) Act and CIPFA guidance. The Council is facing significant cost pressures, most notably in relation to national pay arrangements, continued cuts to central Government funding and other inflationary pressures, for example in relation to a number of contracts. It is therefore necessary to deliver a significant efficiency programme that reduces the impact upon the ratepayer while protecting Council's reserves position for 2025/26.

The programme is seeking to reduce Council spend and maximise income to maintain sustainable Council budgets that reduce the impact on rate payers.

The efficiency proposals include savings across two of the Directorates – Regulatory Services, Facilities & Assets and Development, Community & Wellbeing. Corporate savings have also been identified. 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, Finance Team restructure, a reduction in subscriptions & memberships and a reduction in postage.

Intended aims/outcomes. What is the policy trying to achieve?

The programme is seeking to reduce Council spend and maximise income to maintain sustainable Council budgets that reduce the impact on rate payers

Policy Framework

Has the policy been developed in response to statutory requirements, legal advice or on the basis of any other professional advice? Does this affect the discretion available to Council to amend the policy?

The Council has discretion to amend.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the policy? If so, please outline.

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.

Who initiated or wrote the policy (if Council decision, please state). Who is responsible for implementing the policy?

Who initiated or wrote the policy?	SLT
Who is responsible for implementation?	The Council

Are there any factors which might contribute to or detract from the implementation of the policy (e.g. financial, legislative, other)?

All areas of Council spend are within the scope of the efficiency plan
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Main stakeholders in relation to the policy

Please list main stakeholders affected by the policy (e.g., staff, service users, other statutory bodies, community or voluntary sector, private sector)

All staff in each Directorate, Elected Members, trade unions, ratepayers including community and voluntary sector and businesses within the Borough.
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Are there any other policies with a bearing on this policy? If so, please identify them and how they impact on this policy.

Council Financial Regulations Medium Term Financial Plan Corporate Plan and Business Plans
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Available Evidence

Council should ensure that its screening decisions are informed by relevant data. What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories. For up to date [S75 Borough Statistics](#)

Section category	75	Evidence
Religious belief		The 2021 Census showed that 41% identified as Catholic and 41.7% identified as either belonging to Protestant, other Christian or Christian-related denominations. A further 1.1% belonged to other religions, while 14.7% didn't belong to a religion
Political opinion		<p>Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council has 41 elected members, the breakdown of seats by political party is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democratic Unionist Party – 13 • Ulster Unionist Party - 6 • Sinn Fein - 15 • Social Democratic and Labour Party - 1 • Alliance - 4 • Independent – 1 • TUV-1 <p>This breakdown is taken as an approximate representation of the political opinion of people within the Borough.</p>
Racial group		The 2021 Census showed that:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 96.7% of the usually resident population of the Borough were White and 3.3% were from minority ethnic groups. The main ethnic minorities were Mixed (1,652 individuals), Black African (1,132 individuals) and Chinese (683 individuals). 85.5% of residents in the Borough were born in Northern Ireland. The Borough had 8.6% of residents or 18,836 individuals who were born outside the United Kingdom or Republic of Ireland. <p>6.8% of residents aged 3+ years or (14,376 individuals) spoke a language other than English as their main language. Apart from English, the most common other main languages were Polish (3,551 residents aged 3+ years), Lithuanian (2,611) and Portuguese (1,777).</p>
Age	<p>The population of the Borough was estimated to be 218,656 on 21 March 2021. The profile by age group is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0-15 years – 22.1% 16 – 24 years 10% 25 – 49 years 32.9% 50 – 64 years 19% 65 and over 16% <p>This represented a 26.7% increase in the 65+ age group and a 25.62% increase in the 50-64yr age group since the last census in 2011.</p>
Marital status	<p>The 2021 Census provides information on the marital and civil partnership status of those aged 16 and over. Almost half of residents aged 16+ in the borough were married (49.0%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single (never married or never registered a same-sex civil partnership) – 35.3% Married - 49% In a registered same-sex civil partnership - 0.2% Separated (but still legally married or still legally in a same-sex civil partnership) – 3.4% Divorced or formerly in a same-sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved – 6.0% Widowed or surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership – 6.1%
Sexual orientation	<p>The question on sexual orientation was new for the 2021 Census and was asked of all people aged 16 and over. However, while completing the census is a legal obligation, there was no statutory penalty for those people who failed to provide an answer to the question on sexual orientation.</p> <p>The results from the question on sexual orientation are presented in Table 7. Just 1.5% of the population aged 16 and over in the borough identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual or other (LGB+) while 90.5% identified as straight or heterosexual and 8% did not provide an answer to the question.</p>
Men and women generally	<p>The 2021 Census showed that in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough, 49.5% (108,268) of usual residents were males and 50.5% (110,388) were females.</p>
Disability	<p>2021 Census results identified 22.3% of Borough citizens as having a limiting long term health problem or disability, affecting 36,488 households. Of those citizens in the Borough with a limiting long term health problem or disability, 56.8% are in the 65+ age group.</p> <p>Benefit statistics from the Department for Communities showed as of November 2022 there were:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,510 or 5.2% of under 16 population and 5,030 or 15.2% of 66 and over population claiming Disability Living Allowance • 5,930 or 17.9% of 66 and over population claiming Attendance Allowance <p>18,540 Personal Independence Payment claims in payment (experimental statistics).</p>
Dependants	<p>The 2021 Census showed that 32% or 27,192 households in the borough contained dependent children.</p> <p>Results from the 2021 Census also show that 12% of the borough's population aged 5 years old and over (or 24,741 individuals) provided unpaid care. Of those who provided unpaid support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 46% provided 1 – 19 hours per week • 24% provided 20 – 49 hours per week • 30% provided 50+ hours per week. <p>Benefit statistics from the Department for Communities show that at November 2022 there were 8,120 claimants, or 4.8% of 16 and over population, claiming Carer's Allowance in the borough.</p>

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information gathered above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories in relation to this particular policy/decision?

Section 75 category	Needs, experiences and priorities
Religious belief	No specific needs have been identified for this group during the preparation of the efficiency plan
Political opinion	No specific needs have been identified for this group during the preparation of the efficiency plan
Racial group	No specific needs have been identified for this group during the preparation of the efficiency plan
Age	No specific needs have been identified for this group during the preparation of the efficiency plan
Marital status	No specific needs have been identified for this group during the preparation of the efficiency plan
Sexual orientation	No specific needs have been identified for this group during the preparation of the efficiency plan
Men and women generally	No specific needs have been identified for this group during the preparation of the efficiency plan
Disability	No specific needs have been identified for this group during the preparation of the efficiency plan
Dependants	No specific needs have been identified for this group during the preparation of the efficiency plan

Screening Questions

1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy for each of the Section 75 categories?

Category	Policy Impact	Level of impact (Major/minor/none)
Religious belief	None	None
Political opinion	None	None
Racial group	None	None

Age		None
Marital status	None	None
Sexual orientation	None	None
Men and women generally	None	None
Disability		None
Dependents		None

2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 categories?

Category	If yes, provide details	If no, provide reasons
Religious belief		N/A
Political opinion		N/A
Racial group		N/A
Age		N/A
Marital status		N/A
Sexual orientation		N/A
Men and women generally		N/A
Disability		N/A
Dependents		N/A

3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion, or racial group?

Category	Details of Policy Impact	Level of impact (major/minor/none)
Religious belief		None
Political opinion		None
Racial group		None

4. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Category	If yes, provide details	If no, provide reasons
Religious belief		No
Political opinion		No
Racial group		No

Multiple Identity

Generally speaking, people fall into more than one Section 75 category (for example: disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; young lesbian, gay and bisexual people). Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant s75 categories concerned.

No impact identified

Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006

Is there an opportunity for the policy to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?

N/A

Is there an opportunity for the policy to encourage participation by disabled people in public life?

N/A

Screening Decision

A: NO IMPACT IDENTIFIED ON ANY CATEGORY – EQIA UNNECESSARY

Please identify reasons for this below

A robust programme to drive financial efficiency across the organisation is necessary to support the ongoing management of Council finances.

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.

The efficiency proposals include savings across two of the Directorates – Regulatory Services, Facilities & Assets and Development, Community & Wellbeing. Corporate savings have also been identified. 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, a reduction in subscriptions & memberships and a reduction in postage.

B: MINOR IMPACT IDENTIFIED – EQIA NOT CONSIDERED NECESSARY AS IMPACT CAN BE ELIMINATED OR MITIGATED

Where the impact is likely to be minor, you should consider if the policy can be mitigated or an alternative policy introduced. If so, an EQIA may not be considered necessary. You must indicate the reasons for this decision below, together with details of measures to mitigate the adverse impact or the alternative policy proposed.

N/A

C: MAJOR IMPACT IDENTIFIED – EQIA REQUIRED

If the decision is to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

N/A

Timetabling and Prioritising

If the policy has been screened in for equality impact assessment, please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3 with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Policy Criterion

Rating (1-3)

Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations

Social need

Effect on people's daily lives

The total rating score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the council in timetabling its EQIAs.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities? If yes, please give details.

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Monitoring

Effective monitoring will help the authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy. It is recommended that where a policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced to mitigate adverse impact, monitoring be undertaken on a broader basis to identify any impact (positive or adverse).

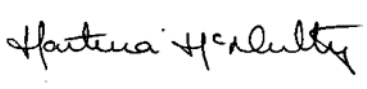
Further information on monitoring is available in the Equality Commission's guidance on monitoring (www.equalityni.org).

Identify how the impact of the policy is to be monitored

As efficiency proposals are implemented any impact information will be obtained by relevant departments. And any additional relevant equality/other screening and consultation required will be undertaken.

Approval and Authorisation

A copy of the screening form for each policy screened should be signed off by the senior manager responsible for that policy. The screening recommendation should be reported to the relevant Committee/Council when the policy is submitted for approval.

Screened by	Position/Job title	Date
Martina McNulty 	Head of Department: Strategy & Performance	02/12/2024
Approved by	Position/Job Title	Date
Charlene Stoops	Deputy Chief Executive	02/12/2024

Please forward a copy of the completed policy and form to:

Equality@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

who will ensure these are made available on the Council's website.

The above officer is also responsible for issuing reports on a quarterly basis on those policies "screened out for EQIA". This allows stakeholders who disagree with this recommendation to submit their views. In the event of any stakeholder disagreeing with the decision to screen out any policy, the screening exercise will be reviewed.

Appendix 2 - Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA)

SECTION 1

Defining the activity subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

1A. Name of Public Authority: Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council

1B. Please provide a short title which describes the activity being undertaken by the Public Authority that is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

Efficiency Plan 2025/26

1C Please indicate which category the activity specified in Section 1B above relates to:

Developing a

Adopting a

Implementing a

Revising a

Designing a Public Service

Delivering a Public Service

Policy

☐☐

1D. Please provide the official title (if any) of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service document or initiative relating to the category indicated in Section 1C above.

Efficiency Plan 2025/26

1E. Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

A robust programme to drive financial efficiency across the organisation is necessary to support the ongoing management of Council finances, in order to continue to meet our corporate requirements in line with the Local Government (Finance) Act and CIPFA guidance. The Council is facing significant cost pressures, most notably in relation to national pay arrangements, continued cuts to central Government funding and other inflationary pressures, for example in relation to a number of contracts. It is therefore necessary to deliver a significant efficiency programme that reduces the impact upon the ratepayer while protecting Council's reserves position for 2025/26.

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1F. What definition of 'rural' is the Public Authority using in respect of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

- Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition) ☐
- Other Definition (Provide details and the rationale below) ☐
- A definition of 'rural' is not applicable ☒

Details of alternative definition of 'rural' used.

Rationale for using alternative definition of 'rural'.

Reasons why a definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

The efficiency plan will not affect rural residents differently from those living in urban areas of the borough.

SECTION 2

Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

2A. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?

Yes ☐ No ☒ If response is No go to 2E

2B. Please explain how the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas.

2C. If the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas *differently* from people in urban areas, please explain how it is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently.

2D. Please indicate which of the following rural policy areas the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to primarily impact on.

- Rural Businesses ☐
- Rural Tourism ☐
- Rural Housing ☐
- Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas ☐
- Education or Training in Rural Areas ☐

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Broadband or Mobile Communications in Rural Areas | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Health or Social Care Services in Rural Areas | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Poverty in Rural Areas | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Deprivation in Rural Areas | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Rural Crime or Community Safety | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Rural Development | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Agri-Environment | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other (Please state) | |

If the response to Section 2A was YES GO TO Section 3A.

2E. Please explain why the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is NOT likely to impact on people in rural areas.

The efficiency proposals have been considered in light of the rural needs' duty, but no impacts have been identified.

SECTION 3

Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

3A. Has the Public Authority taken steps to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas that are relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Yes ☐ No ☒ If response is No go to 3E

3B. Please indicate which of the following methods or information sources were used by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Consultation with Rural Stakeholders | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Consultation with Other organisations | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Published Statistics | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Research Papers | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Surveys or Questionnaires | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other Publications | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other Methods or Information Sources
(include details in Question 3C below) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3C. Please provide details of the methods and information sources used to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas including relevant dates, names of organisations, titles of publications, website references, details of surveys or consultations undertaken etc.

3D. Please provide details of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas which have been identified by the Public Authority?

If the response to Section 3A was YES GO TO Section 4A.

3E. Please explain why no steps were taken by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas?

The efficiency proposals have been considered in light of the rural needs duty, but no impacts have been identified.

SECTION 4

Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

4A. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

N/A

SECTION 5

Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

5A. Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, been influenced by the rural needs identified?

Yes

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No

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If response is No go to 5C

5B. Please explain how the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, has been influenced by the rural needs identified.

If the response to Section 5A was YES go to 6A.

5C. Please explain why the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or the delivery of the Public Service, has NOT been influenced by the rural needs identified.

The efficiency proposals have been considered in light of the rural needs duty but no impacts have been identified.

SECTION 6

Documenting and Recording

6A. Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained by the Public Authority and relevant information on the Section 1 activity compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.

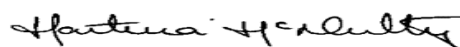
I confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained and relevant information compiled.

Rural Needs Impact Assessment undertaken by: ☒ Martina McNulty ☐

Position: ☒ Head of Department: Strategy & Performance ☐

Department / Directorate: ☒ Strategy & Performance ☐

Signature:



Date: 02/12/2024

Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by: ☒ Charlene Stoops ☐

Position: ☒ Deputy Chief Executive ☐

Department / Directorate: ☒ Chief Executive & Deputy Chief Executives Directorate ☐

Signature: Charlene Stoops

Date: 02/12/2024