Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

Policy Screening Report

under

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, 1998

December 2020

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 & Diversity Officer
Armagh City, Banbridge and
Craigavon Borough Council
Armagh Office
The Palace Demesne
Armagh City
BT60 4EL

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. Copies can be found at https://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/council/policies/ The report includes published screening for the period September 2020 to November 2020.

Policy/Procedure	Policy/Procedure Aims	Ranking/ Screening Decision
Disciplinary Policy and Procedure	The purpose of this procedure is to provide a fair, equitable and consistent framework for the handling of situations where disciplinary action against an employee of the Council is considered necessary. The procedure was written in conjunction with the Local Government Reform Joint Forum (LGRJF) and Local Government Staff Commission and is compliant with current legislation. It also reflects Labour Relations Agency guidelines on best practice.	3
Get Moving ABC Framework	Get Moving ABC is a new Borough-wide targeted and collective plan, designed to positively impact on the health and wellbeing of people living in the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough 2020 – 2030. Under 'Healthy Community' within the Community Plan for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough, a Thematic Action Planning Team was formed to deliver the following strategic action: *'to develop a collaborative strategy to engage everyone in physical activity that focuses on communities, workplaces and schools'.* A partnership was formed to realise the vision of 'Get Everyone Moving'	3

	through their mission of 'working together to enable everyone to get moving more'

The proposed project will have a positive impact on all section 75 categories.

It offers the potential to make a positive contribution to the strategic imperatives established by the Northern Ireland Government, its non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) and Council.

The project also has the potential to increase participation in physical activity, particularly in the underrepresented groups of women and girls, people with disabilities, older people, families, children and young people and areas of social need.

The European Commission, White Paper on Sport, (2007), identified the importance of the 'societal role of sport' in terms of;
- Utilising the potential for sport for social inclusion, integration and equal opportunities
- Enhancing the role of sport in education and training
- Promoting volunteering and active citizenship

The proposed project will, through its development, programming and operation, contribute to each of these identified societal benefits. | |
| Grievance Procedure | The purpose of this procedure is to provide a fair, equitable and consistent framework for handling work related grievances raised by Council employees.

The procedure was written in conjunction with the Local Government Reform Joint Forum (LGRJF) and Local Government Staff Commission | 3 |

	and is compliant with current legislation. It also reflects Labour Relations Agency guidelines on best practice.	
ICT Acceptable Use Policy	The purpose of this policy is to identify proper usage and behaviour when using Council's ICT systems. It is designed with the overall aim of protecting the integrity of the ICT resources, information systems and data. It is a technical policy and has no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations.	3
Implement a Participatory Budgeting Pilot	The implementation of a Participatory Budgeting (PB) Pilot is an action of the action plan in the Community Engagement Strategy. Participatory Budgeting is a process that directly involves local people in making decisions on the spending of a defined public budget. This is either through groups pitching for small pots of money to deliver projects or through mainstream investments taken by a public body. The proposed PB project will allocate small pots of money to promote the Take 5 Ways to Wellbeing public health message. All Section 75 categories are expected to benefit from this PB Pilot. Through its Community Engagement Strategy the Community Planning Partnership has adopted the Scottish Community Engagement Standards which include a standard on inclusion. These standards will be applied to the PB project. The PB pilot will be open to children and young people from 8 years and above who will be able to apply for funding and/or be given a vote on projects.	2

	The project will require an intensive promotion exercise to reach small groups from across each DEA. 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.	
Leave Entitlement Policy	The policy aims to: • Provide employees with clear and consistent information on leave they may be entitled to, within and outside the normal annual leave provision. • Ensure a fair approach to the support of employees in balancing domestic and work responsibilities. • Assist managers with information and guidance in dealing with requests for leave. • Ensure the Council is aware of its obligations within the relevant employment legislation. The policy will affect all employees regardless of what equality category they fall within.	3
Managing Attendance Policy and Procedure	The Council expects the regular and punctual attendance of all employees at work. It recognises that staff occasionally will be absent from work due to sickness absence. 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. Each employee will be treated fairly, sympathetically and confidentially, all	2

	cases of absence in consultation with the employee concerned, having regard to individual circumstances and in accordance with procedures. All absences are recorded to ensure an accurate record of an individual's absence record. Where confirmed as such, as disabled the related absences will be identified on the individuals absence record. This will permit the Council to fulfil its role under the DDA (1995).	
Covid-19 Response and Recovery Plan	COVID-19 has had an unprecedented impact on the community and economy locally. This screening document is in relation to the Covid-19 Response & Recovery Plan, which will replace the existing six community planning thematic action plans. The partnership had developed six thematic action plans to implement the community plan. To ensure that the partnerships' actions were addressing the impact of COVID-19, the Community Planning Strategic Partnership agreed that one collaborative action plan should be developed and consideration was to be given to the existing thematic action plans. Some of the original actions have remained in this Covid-19 Response and Recovery plan; some have changed their focus; some have been amalgamated. The actions in the plan have been devised through collaborative working with community, voluntary, statutory and business partners and sharing of information which has resulted in new ways of thinking and working. The Covid-19 Response and Recovery Plan has been developed following an extensive research exercise. This included an online survey with Community Planning Partners and the Community and Voluntary Sector Panel. The CVSP also undertook a survey on Food Assistance during	2

	Covid which contributed to the partners identifying the key themes for action. Desktop research of the available evidence from NISRA and Statutory Partners was compiled to support development of the Covid-19 Response and Recovery Plan. This was further enhanced by 3 Focus Group Sessions with groups who work with Women, Children and Young People and BAME communities. The research showed that children and young people; older people; BAME communities, people with a disability and carers have been affected by the pandemic and require support. Common themes identified were: • Digital inclusion, • Access to services, • Poverty and hardship • Access to information • Loneliness • Skills and employment • Mental health • Domestic abuse • Caring responsibilities These are reflected in the actions in the plan and the plan commits the partnership to ongoing dialogue with S75 groups to ensure that their needs are addressed in its implementation	
Severance and Redundancy Policy	This policy is applicable to all staff and outlines the principles and rules that will apply to severance and both voluntary and compulsory redundancy situations. The Council will ensure that when it applies selection criteria for compulsory redundancy it does not discriminate against any employee because of their age, race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy or	2

	maternity, religion or political opinion. In compulsory redundancy situations, consideration will be given to reasonable adjustments that can be made to posts, where appropriate in line with the Disability Discrimination legislation.	
Street Naming Policy	This is an amendment to an existing policy. This policy provides guidelines as to how Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council will provide the District with adequate street naming and numbering of buildings. The Policy has been amended to outline the process for Council consideration in dealing with requests for dual language street names as well as the processes for renaming and re-numbering a street. The procedure for dealing with requests for dual language street signs ensures that anyone regardless of section 75 category can avail of the process. The policy permits Council consideration of any secondary sign in a language other than English. The Equality Commission advises on equality and anti-discrimination legislation, which presently does not cover the grounds of language. In relation to the use of minority languages the Equality Commission guidance on harmonious workplace states: The use of languages other than English, for example in corporate logos and communications, will not, in general, constitute an infringement of a good and harmonious working environment. The Committee of Experts or (COMEX) which monitors compliance with the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, emphasises that the adoption of special measures in favour of regional or minority languages aimed at promoting equality between the users of these	3

	languages and the rest of the population or which take due account of their specific conditions is not to be considered an act of discrimination against the users of more widely used languages.	