

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

Policy Screening Report

under

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, 1998

June 2015

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 one of the addresses below.

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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 April 2015 to June 2015.

Policy/Procedure	Policy/Procedure Aims	Ranking/ Screening Decision
<p>Anti-Fraud Policy & Fraud Response Plan</p>	<p>This policy provides guidance on matters that should be considered when investigating suspected frauds or impropriety to ensure a consistent approach is taken that will not prejudice subsequent investigations or corrupt evidence.</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>Access to Information Policy</p>	<p>The Access to Information policy provides guidance on how to answer Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulation requests. The aim of the policy is to outline the procedures to be followed when dealing with requests for information. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 are adhered to and in particular that:</p>	<p>3</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant amount of routinely published information about the Council is made available to the public as a matter of course through the Publication Scheme; • Other information not included in the Publication Scheme is readily available on request and such a request is dealt with in a timely manner; and • In cases where information is covered by an exemption or exception, consideration is given as to whether or not the information should be released. <p>This policy will affect all customers and employees equally regardless of what equality category they fall within.</p>	
<p>Clean Neighbourhoods Enforcement Policy</p>	<p>This policy deals specifically with enforcement of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (NI) 2011 and associated legislation amended by the Act and underpins the Council's General Enforcement Policy. The policy covers areas such as litter, fly-posting and graffiti, dogs, noise, statutory nuisance, nuisance alleyways, abandoned and nuisance vehicles as well as abandoned shopping trolleys. This is a technical policy which sets out the principles of enforcement which will be followed.</p> <p>It 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>	<p>3</p>
<p>Concession Policy – Leisure Services</p>	<p>This policy sets out the rationale for concession prices for the Council leisure activities, the groups that will be included and the recommended discount that is proposed. The policy aims to achieve a fair and transparent approach to concessions. Concessionary rates should be in place to better assist and encourage those groups of people who are less likely to use the leisure facilities provided by the Council as a result of having less disposable income or as a group who are at risk of poorer health outcomes.</p>	<p>3</p>

	<p>No adverse impact has been identified on any category- rather the policy will have a positive impact particularly with regard to the categories of disability and age.</p>	
Data Protection Policy	<p>This policy will ensure Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon District Council's compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998(as amended). The Act is designed to safeguard the personal data held by the Council regarding individuals and to protect them from the processing of incorrect data or the inappropriate processing of correct data held by the Council. This policy outlines steps being taken by the Council to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 (as amended).</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>	3
Dog Control Enforcement Policy	<p>This is an enforcement policy for dog control. The aim of the policy is to promote efficient and effective approaches to regulatory inspection and enforcement undertaken in regard to the Dogs (NI) Order 1983 (as amended), the Litter Order 1994 (as revised), Dog Control Orders designated under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (NI) 2011 and the Welfare of Animals (Dog Breeding Establishments & Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (NI) 2013 without imposing unnecessary burdens on those subject to regulation.</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>	3

<p>Fees Policy</p>	<p>Councils are responsible for administering a range of licences and approvals resulting from national legislation and many of the fees that are charged are already set within statute. Some legislation however permits Councils to determine their own fees. This policy advises on the legislative and guiding principles to be applied in relation to the setting of discretionary fees.</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>Financial Assistance Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant Guidance Manual • Officer Guidance Manual 	<p>This is a new policy and there are two manuals. The purpose of the manual for Officers is to provide guidance for Officers in operating the new Financial Assistance Policy for the Armagh Banbridge and Craigavon District Council. Foremost in the minds of those operating the policy should be a desire to address the Council's primary purposes and objectives in the most efficient and effective manner.</p> <p>Typically this will involve providing financial assistance to a range of external organisations which can do things that the Council may not be able to do, may be able to do them better than the Council, and in some cases, at lower cost.</p> <p>The purpose of the manual for Organisations is to set out the new funding programmes and describes the process for making applications.</p> <p>The Financial Assistance Policy guidance manuals will operate as a pilot project for six months and the policy will be reviewed again following this period. This policy has been developed as a result of a wide community consultation and comments were received from organisations that</p>	<p>2</p>

	<p>represent a broad cross section of section 75 consultees. The organisations that participated in the online questionnaire deal with issues which include disability, youth, early years, school children, older people, women, good relations, ethnic minorities and faith.</p> <p>These comments have influenced the final policy.</p> <p>During the consultation, transport needs for older and younger people in rural areas was raised as an issue. The mitigating factor was to introduce a rural linkages fund.</p>	
<p>Fixed Penalty Enforcement and Fees Policy</p>	<p>The Council adopts a responsive approach when dealing with the various offences which can be dealt with by the fixed penalty regime. This approach is influenced by service requests received, concerns expressed at the Council meetings, resident and community forums, Anti-Social Behaviour meetings with Partners and also by information gathered from Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (formerly TIDY Northern Ireland) (the regional performance indicator that measures the cleanliness of the local environment).</p> <p>Specific operational procedures are currently in place to ensure that targeted, proportional and intelligence lead enforcement takes place in relation to these offences particularly dog fouling and litter.</p> <p>Fixed penalty notices are a means by which the perpetrator of relatively minor crime can discharge their liability to prosecution for the offence.</p> <p>It 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>	<p>3</p>

<p>Food Sampling Policy</p>	<p>It is a requirement of the Food Standards Agency Food Law Code of Practice to prepare a Food sampling Policy. The policy aims to provide a template for a consistent and effective approach to food sampling within the Council. The policy is reflective of a number of relevant guidance documents issued by the Food Standards Agency.</p> <p>This is a technical policy which provides guidance on development of sampling programmes as part of the Council food service plan. It 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>	<p>3</p>
<p>General Enforcement Policy</p>	<p>This is a general enforcement policy for service areas including: Building Control, Environmental Health, Licensing, Tobacco Control, Animal Welfare, Planning and Byelaws & Control Orders. The aim of the policy is to promote efficient and effective approaches to regulatory inspection and enforcement, which improve regulatory outcomes without imposing unnecessary burdens on business and others subject to regulation.</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>Land and Property Acquisition and Disposal Policy</p>	<p>The purpose of the Council's Acquisition & Disposal Policy is to set out and inform Members, Officers and other interested parties as to the principles and procedures by which the Council will acquire and/or dispose of land and property. The objective of this policy is to ensure that procedures are in place so that due process is followed in the decision making of any acquisition or disposal.</p> <p>This technical policy has no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality</p>	<p>3</p>

	of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.	
Land and Property Inspection Policy	<p>The N.I Audit Office Report has recommended that the Council should have a formal policy to periodically check its lands for illegal encroachments. The objective of this policy is to ensure that regular inspections of Council-owned land are carried out to prevent illegal encroachments.</p> <p>This is a technical policy that 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
Procurement Policy	<p>This policy was developed in accordance with relevant EU and UK legislation. The main objective of the procurement policy is to obtain best value for money spent on goods and services having due regard to the needs of the organisation/service ie, to procure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The right quality of goods and services • In the right quantity • At the right time • In the right place • From the right supplier • At the right price <p>Procurement exercises conducted in the legacy Councils have not revealed any adverse impacts on individual equality categories. However, there is a commitment within the policy to promote the integration of equality considerations into procurement in compliance with the guidance issued by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and the Central Procurement Directorate.</p>	3

<p>Risk Management Policy and Framework</p>	<p>This policy defines the Council's Risk Management Framework and describes the process for identifying and managing risk within the Council. The aim of the policy is to embed risk management within the Council and to provide the basis of an assurance framework to give the Chief Executive assurance that risk is being properly managed throughout the Council.</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>Smoking Policy</p>	<p>The Council wishes to ensure that smokers and non-smokers have a clear understanding of their rights and obligations and comply with the Smoking (Northern Ireland) Order 2006, which came into effect on 30 April 2007.</p> <p>The smoking policy also provides clarity in relation to the use of nicotine containing products in Council premises and vehicles. It 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>	<p>3</p>
<p>Street Naming Policy</p>	<p>This policy provides guidelines as to how Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council will provide the Borough with adequate street naming and numbering of buildings. This is a technical policy which sets out the principles of Street Naming and Numbering. It 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>	<p>3</p>
<p>Street Trading Fee Setting Policy</p>	<p>The aim of this document is to ensure that the setting of discretionary fees for street trading licences under The Street Trading Act (NI) 2001 is carried out in a consistent manner and includes all relevant factors. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on matters that should be considered when deciding fees for street trading licences.</p> <p>This is a technical policy with no bearing in terms of its likely impact on</p>	<p>3</p>

	equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.	
Test Purchasing Policy	<p>The Council has a statutory duty to enforce a range of legislation, including some which relates to the sale of age restricted products. Specific statutes also require Councils to carry out a programme of enforcement action. As part of this enforcement action the Council includes test purchasing as a measure, to reduce the incidence of offences of the sale of harmful or nuisance products to children and young people.</p> <p>This policy sets out how the Council will use test purchasing to ensure compliance with legislation controlling the sale of age-restricted products, reduce the level of offending in relation to the sale of age restricted products and fulfil the Council's statutory duty.</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>	3