

Policy Screening Form

Policy Scoping

Policy Title: _____ **ABC AGRICULTURE STRATEGY**

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

NEW POLICY

The Agriculture Industry is the underpinning industry in our Borough. The growth of mainstream agriculture, agri-food industry, agri-business subsectors, manufacturing, machinery, veterinary, haulage/transportation of agri-commodities are interdependent on the success of the Agriculture Industry under-pinning the relevance and relationship of agriculture industry as the heart of all businesses.

The purpose of the strategy is to set the direction for agriculture, agri-food, agri business and agri tech in the Borough. A thorough analysis of Agriculture Industry in the Borough at a local level is required and this will inform the development of a plan containing recommendations and innovative approaches established through consultations with leading stakeholder Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) will be required, learning from international best practice and representatives from the Agriculture Industry.

The strategy document will capture a clear picture, analysis and assessment of Agriculture Industry contribution to the local economy. It should include a review of the industry and its sectors to identify any key farming trends, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats which need to be addressed or supported in order to enhance, sustain and grow the industry. The output should include an evidence base for action, providing updates on statistical data, and clearly setting out the socio-economic strength and challenges for this industry and importance of the food supply chain in the Borough. The profile should take into account the health, safety, well-being and education of farming families and workers in the industry, and those availing of social farming.

The Strategy will be built upon findings from research, surveys and engagement with stakeholders, and will contain recommendations to increase productivity, improve resilience, maintain and expand the capabilities of the agricultural industry, contribute positively to the supply chain, agri-food industry, agri tech and agri business in our borough whilst considering the boroughs competitive advantage.

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

The aim is to develop a policy for the Agriculture Industry in the Borough looking ahead to the next 5 years at minimum, implementing recommendations which will address specific challenges, opportunities and needs for the industry.

Supporting Agriculture into the future requires a careful planning, divided into short, medium and long-term development needs. These development needs can also be broken down into three categories, focusing on 1) People or skills development; 2) Technology Development and Update and 3) Structural change.

It is essential that the council does not set up separate structure to duplicate what is already available elsewhere. Much of what is recommended is around facilitation and creation of opportunities for joint working and leveraging of other organizations.

There are many organizations which would be willing to work with the council on development of agriculture and this could best be delivered through an enhanced Food Heartland. We believe that, with investment in well-qualified and skilled staff, Food Heartland could have an outward facing role (towards agriculture and the agri-food sector) and an inward facing educational role within the council.

The draft strategy proposes nine recommendations/interventions which will have a positive impact for the Agriculture industry in the Borough.

1. Expand and Evolve Food Heartland
2. Develop a method of communicating regularly and clearly with all agriculture and agri businesses in the borough.
3. Develop a Plan to Facilitate Skills Development in Agriculture and Agri-Business
4. Appoint an Agriculture Champion (s) for the Borough.
5. Develop an Agriculture Centre for advice, training, demonstration and research.
6. Facilitate Structural Upgrading
7. ABC Rural Strategy
8. Further studies in Agriculture Sectors
9. Agri Food development

An additional Recommendation 10 Promote the health and wellbeing of farmers and rural dwellers, was introduced following feedback from the public consultation.

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?

This policy is being developed through its strategic link to Council priorities;

- The **ABC Recovery and Growth Framework 2021** identifies Agri Food as an area of focus; *'recognising margins are low and need to move up the value chain and operational investments for the future with a key priority to attract investment'*. It refers to action to develop an agri food strategy and continue investment for Agri Food and Agri Tech and seeks to reposition Agri Food in the economy.
- The **Mid South West Regional Economic Strategy (MSWRES)** through growth deal funding has an ambition to *'deliver sustainable food and farming solutions by 1. Developing a centre for Agri Tech Innovation and 2. Development of Agri-Food Incubation space.'*

- One of the nine **Community Plan 2017-2030** priorities is *'A Enterprising Economy: Our borough is the centre of excellence for entrepreneurship, innovation and investment. It references that Agriculture is one of the top three business sectors in the borough contributing to 29%.*
- The **Council's Corporate Plan 2018-2023** under Enterprising Economy sets out a commitment to *'Ensure efficient connections to support enterprise and growth in urban and rural areas'* recognising the importance of the Agri Food as a growth sector.

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

This policy will benefit the wider farming and rural community. The policy will provide improved communication methods and develop delivery plans to support health, wellbeing and safety of our farmers. There is an opportunity to raise awareness of "women in farming" as raised during the consultation survey feedback.

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

Who initiated or wrote policy?	Who is responsible for implementation?
<p>The policy was initiated by Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council's Community and Growth Directorate. This policy has been developed by the appointed consultant team Birnie Consultancy. https://www.birnieconsultancy.com/</p> <p>A range of stakeholders have been identified, attended engagement sessions and surveys between January 2021 and October 2021</p>	<p>Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council - Community and Growth Directorate.</p>

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

Financial – availability of funding/budget.
Stakeholder collaboration and buy in who will be required to help deliver and support some of the recommendations.

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)

- Farming community, in its broadest sense are the farmers and farming families who live in the open countryside.
- Agri related businesses
- Agricultural stakeholders (see below list)
- Government Departments – DAERA, DfE
- Elected Members

Agri Stakeholders - Including but not limited to: ABC Chefs Hospitality Forum, ABC Food Heartland Producers Forum, Agri related businesses, Agricultural contractors, CAFRE, Countryside Services, DAERA, Dept for Economy (DFE), Elected Members, Farmers, Foresters, Fishermen, Food NI, Horticulture Forum NI, HSE NI, Invest NI, Livestock Markets, Livestock Meat Commission (LMC), Logistics UK, Lough Neagh Fisherman's Co-op Society, Members of the public, Neighbouring Councils in the MSW Region, NFU, NI Fruit Growers Association, Northern Ireland Farm Groups (NIAPA, Farmers for Action, National Beef Association), Northern Ireland Food and Drink Association (NIFDA), Queens University, Ulster University, Rural Community Network, Rural Support, Southern Area Health Trust including Protect Life Team, Southern Regional College, Tourism NI and Tourism Ireland, Ulster's Farmers Union (UFU), Yellow Wellies, Young farmers clubs (YFCU)

Are there any other policies with a bearing on this policy? If so, please identify them and how they impact on this policy.

Council Strategies

- ABC Recovery and Growth Framework 2021
- Mid South West Regional Economic Strategy (MSWRES)
- Community Plan 2017-2030
- Council's Corporate Plan 2018-2023
- ABC Climate Change Strategy Draft 2021 – forthcoming

External Strategies

- Programme for Government
- Independent Strategic Review of NI
- DAERA NI Agricultural Policy Framework 2021
- DAERA NI Food Strategy Framework 2021
- DAERA Green Growth Strategy 2021
- A 10X Economy 2021 – NI Decade of Innovation
- EU Green Deal – Farm to Fork Strategy
- NI Climate Change Bill 2021
- KPMG report on Private Members Bill August 2021
- *Sustainability for the Future – DAERA's Plan to 2050'*
- Delivering Our Future, Valuing Our Soils: A Sustainable Agricultural Land Management Strategy for Northern Ireland
- One Health
- Water Framework Directive 2017

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.

Agriculture Statistics

The Agricultural Census in Northern Ireland June 2020, states that the labour force in the borough accounts for the following 2665, full time farmers, 2559 part time farmers, 742 full time other workers, 568 part time other workers, and 961 casual other workers. Collectively there are 7495 people in the borough who work in the agriculture sector which represent 14.6% of the NI Agriculture labour workforce.

The EU Farm Structure Survey 2016, indicated that 30 percent of farmers in Northern Ireland had no spouse, ranging from 32 percent for those with Very Small businesses to 17 percent of those with Large businesses. Approximately half (48 percent) of farmers' spouses contributed to the work of the farms. The median age for farmers in Northern Ireland in 2016 was 58 years, the same as 2013 and one year older than recorded in 2010. The survey showed that there were 6 percent of farmers under 35 years old in 2016 compared with 4 percent in 2013 and 5 percent in 2010. However, it is stressed that these figures refer only to the principal farmer in each business rather than to all farmers.

DAERA Farm Labour Statistics NI updated April 2020, indicated that the in Northern Ireland **total farmers, spouses and other workers (2019)** is represented by 78.4% male and 21.6% female within the Agriculture Industry. The industry remains to be male dominant.

The ABC Farmers Survey Q76 asked “do you believe there are barriers for entry or progression in the industry...?” The responses concluded that 64% felt this was not applicable, 12 % felt that age is a barrier and 9.5% felt that gender is a barrier. Several comments were made under this section in relation to young farmers and women’s representation in the industry.

The ABC Agri Business/Food Survey Q68 asked the same “do you believe there are barriers for entry or progression in the industry...?” The responses concluded that 82% felt this was not applicable, 3% felt that age is a barrier and 5% felt that gender is a barrier.

The draft Agriculture Strategy was open for public consultation between September and October 2021 on the council’s consultation hub, 92% of the respondents agreed with the recommendations and themes.

Consultation and engagement

The project has consulted across the industry at various stages to gather evidence and knowledge transfer in order to identify challenges, opportunities and needs. Refer to the timeline of engagement below;

DATE	Consultation Group
Ongoing	Engagement with DAERA, AFBI, Rural Support, UFU, SRC, Cafre, INVEST NI, Agri-Food Quest at Queens University and Council Sections (see below).

Ongoing	Conversations with Agri Businesses
January 2021	Internal across departmental workshop using menti-meter
February 2021	Individual consultation sessions with key Council Sections throughout February; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOAR • Food Heartland • Mid-South West • Tannaghmore Gardens & Farm, Biodiversity Team and Sustainable Farming Projects • Community Planning, Community Development & Equality Officer • Policing Community and Safety Partnership (PCSP) • Planning officers • Environmental Health
16 February 2021	Elected Members presentation and workshop – evening
16 February 2021	Presentation and discussion with ICBAN
24 February 2021	Elected Members presentation and workshop – morning
11 May 2021	Presentation at EDR committee workshop
11 June to 4 July 2021	Farmers Survey – open to the public with 73 responses Food Heartland/ED update with Consultants – 11 June
5 July to 11 August 2021	Agri Business Food Survey – open to the public with 57 responses
1 September 2021	External Stakeholder engagement and feedback session
7 September 2021	Agri Businesses engagement and feedback session
14 September 2021	Presentation to Economic Development and Regeneration Committee
17 September to 17 October 2021	Policy Screening and Rural Needs Impact Assessment exercise on Consultation Hub. All section 75 groups will be advised of their availability.

ABC Rural Statistics

Results from the 2011 Census show that just over half of the borough's population (51%) lived in urban areas while just under half (49%) lived in rural areas. This is based on the NISRA default urban/rural settlement classification where settlements with a population greater than or equal to 5,000 are classified as urban while those with a population less than 5,000 are classified as rural. This compares to 63% urban and 37% rural for Northern Ireland overall.

Craigavon Urban Area (which includes Central Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown), Banbridge, Armagh and Dromore are the four urban areas within the borough, all other settlements are classified as rural according to the NISRA default classification.

NISRA also provides the classification at Super Output Area (SOA) level¹. Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough is made up of 87 SOAs of which 42 are classified as urban, 36 are classified as rural with a further 9 being mixed urban/rural. The rural areas cover a large part of the borough.

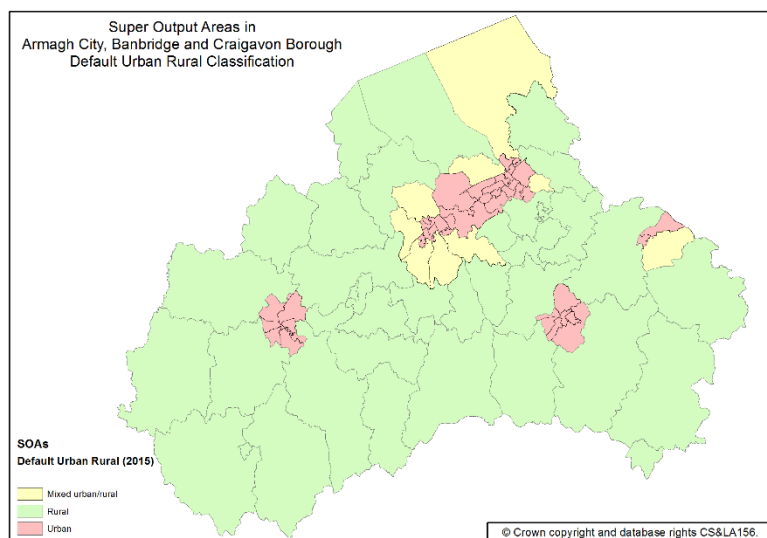


Figure 1: Super Output Areas in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough by NISRA default urban/rural classification.

The NI Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM) 2017 provides information on seven distinct types of deprivation, known as domains, along with an overall multiple deprivation measure (MDM). Results are available for the 890 Super Output Areas in Northern Ireland, ranked from 1, most deprived to 890, least deprived.

The Access to Services Domain which measures the extent to which people have poor physical and online access to key services is particularly relevant to rural areas. The borough has nine SOAs (10% of the total 87 SOAs in the borough) in the top 100 most deprived in Northern Ireland on the Access to Services Domain, each of which are defined as rural on the NISRA default classification.

Twenty SOAs in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough (23% of the total 87 SOAs in the borough) are in the top 20% most deprived SOAs in Northern Ireland in terms of the Access to Services Domain. All twenty are classified as rural.

As well as the overall Access to Services deprivation, results are available for its three indicators:

- Service-weighted fastest travel time by private transport
- Service-weighted fastest travel time by public transport
- Proportion of properties with broadband speed below 10Mb/s

The top ten most deprived SOAs in the borough in terms of the Access to Services Domain are shown below, all of which are rural.

¹ Northern Ireland is split into 890 spatial areas known as Super Output Areas (SOAs), with an average population of around 2,100 people.

Super Output Area	Access to Services Domain Rank	Access to Services Indicators		
		Service-weighted fastest travel time by private transport (rank)	Service-weighted fastest travel time by public transport (rank)	Proportion of properties with broadband speed below 10Mb/s (rank)
Bannside	18	100	57	2
Katesbridge	33	43	53	33
Derrynoose	54	67	41	72
Gransha	64	42	32	178
Derrytrasna 2	73	56	187	30
Killylea	89	38	86	143
The Birches 2	96	19	133	202
Quilly	98	199	34	99
Carrigatuke	100	96	84	94
Poyntz Pass	101	129	116	51

Table 1: Top ten most deprived SOAs in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough in terms of the Access to Services Domain. Source: Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2017, NISRA.

Although not all are shown above, the borough has 11 SOAs in the top 100 most deprived in Northern Ireland for service-weighted fastest travel time by private transport, 10 for service-weighted fastest travel time by public transport and 11 for proportion of properties with broadband speed below 10Mb/s. Each of these SOAs are classified as rural.

The purpose of the Income Deprivation Domain is to identify the proportion of the population on low income. Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough has nine SOAs (10% of the total 87 SOAs in the borough) in the top 100 most deprived in Northern Ireland on the Income Deprivation Domain. Three of these nine are rural areas according to the NISRA default classification.

The Living Environment Domain aims to identify the prevalence of shortcomings in the quality of housing, access to suitable housing and the outdoor physical environment. Figures for the Housing Quality Sub-Domain show the borough has eight of the top 100 most deprived SOAs in Northern Ireland of which four are rural.

Section 75 category	Evidence
Religious belief	There is no official statistical data/information available on this Section 75 group specific to this sector.
Political opinion	There is no official statistical data/information available on this Section 75 group specific to this sector.
Racial group	There is no official statistical data/information available on this Section 75 group specific to this sector.
Age	<i>The EU Farm Structure Survey 2016, indicated that the median age for farmers in Northern Ireland in 2016 was 58 years, the same as 2013 and one year older than recorded in 2010. The survey showed that there were 6 percent of farmers under 35 years old in 2016 compared with 4 percent in 2013 and 5 percent in 2010. However, it is stressed that these figures refer only to the principal farmer in each business rather than to all farmers.</i>

Marital status	<i>The EU Farm Structure Survey 2016, indicated that 30 percent of farmers in Northern Ireland had no spouse, ranging from 32 percent for those with Very Small businesses to 17 percent of those with Large businesses. Approximately half (48 percent) of farmers' spouses contributed to the work of the farms.</i>															
Sexual orientation	There is no official statistical data/information available on this Section 75 group specific to this sector.															
Men and women generally	Totals taken from the Farm Labour Statistics NI updated April 2020, indicates the following representation for male and female in the Agriculture Industry. The industry remains to be male dominant. <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">TOTAL FARMERS, SPOUSES AND OTHER WORKERS - 2019</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;">Numbers</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">MALE</td> <td style="text-align: center;">38,749</td> <td style="text-align: center;">78.40</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">FEMALE</td> <td style="text-align: center;">10,674</td> <td style="text-align: center;">21.60</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">TOTAL</td> <td style="text-align: center;">49,423</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	TOTAL FARMERS, SPOUSES AND OTHER WORKERS - 2019				Numbers	Percentage	MALE	38,749	78.40	FEMALE	10,674	21.60	TOTAL	49,423	
TOTAL FARMERS, SPOUSES AND OTHER WORKERS - 2019																
	Numbers	Percentage														
MALE	38,749	78.40														
FEMALE	10,674	21.60														
TOTAL	49,423															
Disability	<p>According to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Agricultural Workers are 46% more likely than those in other industries to endure illness overall, meaning their risk of physical illness is higher than it is for other workers, which can also contribute to stress and anxiety. Mixed with the solitary nature of the sector, many workers can struggle with depression. A 2019 survey report by Empathy Research and AgriLand reported that 46% and 57% were impacted by anxiety and depression to some degree.</p> <p>The Protect Life 2 Strategy 2019 – 2024, identifies farmers and agricultural workers as an occupation with a higher risk of suicide.</p>															
Dependants	There is no official statistical data/information available on this Section 75 group specific to this sector.															

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	There is no evidence of any different needs, experiences or priorities for this Section 75 group. In fact all groups will benefit directly and/or indirectly from the policy, with greater collaboration across agriculture stakeholders, improved communication with the farming community, Council initiatives/programmes to support the agriculture industry.

Political opinion	There is no evidence of any different needs, experiences or priorities for this Section 75 group. In fact all groups will benefit directly and/or indirectly from the policy, with greater collaboration across agriculture stakeholders, improved communication with the farming community, Council initiatives/programmes to support the agriculture industry
Racial group	There is no evidence of any different needs, experiences or priorities for this Section 75 group. In fact all groups will benefit directly and/or indirectly from the policy, with greater collaboration across agriculture stakeholders, improved communication with the farming community, Council initiatives/programmes to support the agriculture industry
Age	<p>The ABC Farmers Survey Q76 asked “do you believe there are barriers for entry or progression in the industry...?” The responses concluded that 64% felt this was not applicable, 12 % felt that age is a barrier and 9.5% felt that gender is a barrier. Several comments were made under this section in relation to young farmers and women’s representation in the industry.</p> <p>It has been identified there is a need to collaborate with agriculture stakeholders to support the various ages of farmers and farm workers in this industry.</p>
Marital status	There is no evidence of any different needs, experiences or priorities for this Section 75 group. In fact all groups will benefit directly and/or indirectly from the policy.
Sexual orientation	There is no evidence of any different needs, experiences or priorities for this Section 75 group. In fact all groups will benefit directly and/or indirectly from the policy.
Men and women generally	<p>The ABC Farmers Survey Q76 asked “do you believe there are barriers for entry or progression in the industry...?” The responses concluded that 64% felt this was not applicable, 12 % felt that age is a barrier and 9.5% felt that gender is a barrier. Several comments were made under this section in relation to young farmers and women’s representation in the industry.</p> <p>It has been identified there is a need to collaborate with agriculture stakeholders to raise awareness of “women in agriculture” and a recommendation in the strategy to appoint agriculture champion(s)</p>
Disability	The Strategy has identified a need for a culture change in farming which includes recognising the importance of maintaining good mental health. Included within the recommendations as part of skills development is the need to provide discreet mental health and wellbeing support and advice for the agriculture sector.
Dependants	There is no evidence of any different needs, experiences or priorities for this Section 75 group. In fact all groups will benefit directly and/or indirectly from the policy.

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	Proposals to communicate regularly with farming community, sharing information and improved collaboration with stakeholder groups, skills training for the industry.	Positive/Minor
Political opinion		Positive/Minor
Racial group		Positive/Minor
Age	Proposals to communicate regularly with farming community, sharing information and improved collaboration with stakeholder groups, skills training for the industry. Working with Young Farmers Clubs and supporting the use of technology with all age groups in the industry.	Positive/Minor
Marital status	Proposals to communicate regularly with farming community, sharing information and improved collaboration with stakeholder groups, skills training for the industry.	Positive/Minor
Sexual orientation		Positive/Minor
Men and women generally	Proposals to raise awareness of 'women in farming' and appointment of agriculture champions.	Positive/Minor
Disability	Proposals to communicate regularly with farming community, sharing information and improved collaboration with stakeholder groups, skills training for the industry.	Positive/Minor
Dependents		

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	All groups will benefit directly and/or indirectly from the policy. Through a set recommendations within the strategy there will be greater collaboration across stakeholders, improved communication with the farming community, Council initiatives, programmes, skills training to support the agriculture industry and agriculture champions. All of the above will be made available to the entire agriculture industry.	
Political opinion		
Racial group		
Age		
Marital status		
Sexual orientation		
Men and women generally		
Disability		
Dependents		

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	The implementation of recommendations of the Agriculture Strategy and support the industry, will be delivered and available to all regardless of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	Positive/Minor
Political opinion		
Racial group		

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	The implementation of recommendations of the Agriculture Strategy and support the industry, will be delivered and available to all regardless of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.	
Political opinion		
Racial group		

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 information available

Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006

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

With improved communication and engagement with the farming community and agriculture industry going forward, opportunities may present themselves through future engagement. Better collaboration with key stakeholders in the industry can create positive messaging under Health and Wellbeing. The Strategy has identified a need for a culture change in farming, which includes recognising the importance of maintaining good mental health. Included within the recommendations as part of skills development is the need to provide discreet mental health and wellbeing support and advice for the agriculture sector.

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

As above.

Screening Decision

A: NO IMPACT IDENTIFIED ON ANY CATEGORY – EQIA UNNECESSARY

Please identify reasons for this below

n/a

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.

It is recommended that the Agriculture Strategy is not subject to an EQIA

The Agriculture Strategy has been developed following extensive research and engagement as per the methodology outlined in the strategy. Engagement included organised meetings and workshops, two public surveys, 121 conversations with stakeholders.

Recommendations have been incorporated into the strategy to address feedback from stakeholders and the survey results. The recommendation will be council led, and will be delivered on a collaborative basis with stakeholders, therefore the relationship with stakeholders is important. It was identified that the communication between Council, farmers and agribusinesses should be improved and a communications plan put in place in order to engage effectively and make a difference to the rural businesses. Council in the past has had limited engagement with the farming community and the wider agriculture industry. This strategy will have a positive impact on all groups going forward as Council instil greater collaboration with agriculture stakeholders, representatives and as a result from the communication plan.

The Farmers Survey in particular identifies a need to support the various age of farmers and gender inequality, general comments leaned towards the mis-representation of women in the agriculture industry. Both surveys the farmers and agri businesses identified a need for business skills and learning for this industry. These skills will be addressed under recommendation 1 and 3.

Two recommendations in the strategy will support these two groups. Recommendation 2 (focusing on communication with the industry) Recommendation 4 (appointment of agriculture champions, including the consideration of a 'panel of women farmers') other recommendations which focus on skills training, learning and development will provide support.

In the delivery phase of the strategy there will be a focus on improved signposting of current service providers and support such as mental health and well being, and health & safety, and raising awareness of support facilities available in our borough.

The Strategy has identified a need for a culture change in farming, which includes recognising the importance of maintaining good mental health. Included within the recommendations as part of skills development is the need to provide discreet mental health and wellbeing support and advice for the agriculture sector.

The evolution of Food Heartland (recommendation 1) will have a positive impact on the agriculture industry and the broad range of activities/programmes and support Food Heartland will be able to deliver under its new roles and responsibilities.

Following on from the public consultation screening, 92% of respondents agreed with the actions and themes. From the feedback, an additional recommendation 10 was introduced to the strategy "Promote the health and well-being of farmers and rural dwellers".

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.

Priority 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.

Monitoring

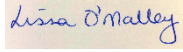

Effective monitoring will help the authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy. It is recommended that where a policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced to mitigate adverse impact, monitoring be undertaken on a broader basis to identify any impact (positive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

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
Lissa O'Malley 	Regeneration Manager	10/11/21
Approved by	Position/Job Title	Date
	Strategic Director: Community and Growth	10/11/21

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

mary.hanna@armaghbanbridgescraigavon.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.