



May 1st, 2026

Chairperson: Councillor C Kemp

Vice Chairperson: Councillor J Harpur

Aldermen: J Baird, A G Ewart MBE, M Gregg and A McIntyre

Councillors: K Dickson, J Gallen, A Gowan, J Lavery BEM, D Lynch, U Mackin, A Martin, C McCready and T Mitchell

Ex-Officio: The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Alderman A Grehan
Deputy Mayor, Alderman H Legge

Notice Of Meeting

A meeting of the Regeneration and Growth Committee will take place on **Thursday, 7th May 2026** at **6:00 pm** in the **Council Chamber and Remote Locations** for the transaction of business on the undernoted agenda.

A hot buffet will be available in Lighters Restaurant from 5.15 pm for those Members who have confirmed in advance.

DAVID BURNS
Chief Executive
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Agenda

1.0 APOLOGIES

2.0 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

📄 *Disclosure of Interests form Sept 24.pdf*

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3.0 REPORT FROM HEAD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Fleadh 2026 – Opportunities for Lisburn and Castlereagh

For Decision

📄 *1. Fleadh 2026 committee item updated 300426.pdf*

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📄 *Appendix 1a LCCC Fleadh Support Events (updated 1.5.26).pdf*

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3.2 USA 250 – Strategic Engagement Opportunities

For Decision

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📄 *Appendix 2a International Trade Programme 26-27.pdf*

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4.0 CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS

4.1 CONFIDENTIAL REPORT FROM HEAD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

4.1.1 Local Economic Partnership (LEP) Update and Programme Governance

For Decision

CONFIDENTIAL DUE TO:

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information).

4.1.2 Rural Business Development Grant Scheme 2026/27

For Noting

CONFIDENTIAL DUE TO:

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information).

4.2 CONFIDENTIAL REPORT FROM HEAD OF ASSETS

4.2.1 Unit 2B and Unit 9, Omnipark, Dundonald BT16 1YG *For Decision*

CONFIDENTIAL DUE TO:

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information).

5.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

MEMBERS DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

1. Pecuniary Interests

The Northern Ireland Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors under Section 6 requires you to declare at the relevant meeting any pecuniary interest that you may have in any matter coming before any meeting of your Council.

Pecuniary (or financial) interests are those where the decision to be taken could financially benefit or financially disadvantage either you or a member of your close family. A member of your close family is defined as at least your spouse, live-in partner, parent, child, brother, sister and the spouses of any of these. Members may wish to be more prudent by extending that list to include grandparents, uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces or even close friends.

This information will be recorded in a Statutory Register. On such matters **you must not speak or vote**. Subject to the provisions of Sections 6.5 to 6.11 of the Code, if such a matter is to be discussed by your Council, **you must withdraw from the meeting whilst that matter is being discussed**.

2. Private or Personal Non-Pecuniary Interests

In addition you must also declare any significant private or personal non-pecuniary interest in a matter arising at a Council meeting (please see also Sections 5.2 and 5.6 and 5.8 of the Code).

Significant private or personal non-pecuniary (membership) interests are those which do not financially benefit or financially disadvantage you or a member of your close family directly, but nonetheless, so significant that could be considered as being likely to influence your decision.

Subject to the provisions of Sections 6.5 to 6.11 of the Code, you must declare this interest as soon as it becomes apparent and **you must withdraw from any Council meeting (including committee or sub-committee meetings) when this matter is being discussed**.

In respect of each of these, please complete the form below as necessary.

Pecuniary Interests

Meeting (Council or Committee - please specify and name):

Date of Meeting: _____

Item(s) in which you must declare an interest (please specify item number from report):

Nature of Pecuniary Interest:

Private or Personal Non-Pecuniary Interests

Meeting (Council or Committee - please specify and name):

Date of Meeting: _____

Item(s) in which you must declare an interest (please specify item number from report):

Nature of Private or Personal Non-Pecuniary Interest:

Name:

Address:

Signed:

Date:

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*If you have any queries please contact David Burns, Chief Executive,
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council*

Committee:	Regeneration & Growth
Date:	7 May 2026
Report from:	Head of Economic Development

Item for:	Decision
Subject:	Fleadh 2026 – Opportunities for Lisburn and Castlereagh
1.0	<p><u>Background</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2026 will take place in Belfast from Sunday 2 August to Sunday 9 August 2026, marking the first time the event has been hosted in the city. It is recognised as the world’s largest celebration of Irish music and culture and is expected to attract circa 800,000 visitors to the greater Belfast region. 2. The event will feature a comprehensive programme of competitions, concerts, cultural experiences and a significant fringe programme, alongside extended opening hours for attractions, demand for visitor accommodation, enhanced public transport provision, and city-wide animation. 3. Given Lisburn and Castlereagh’s proximity to Belfast and its established tourism offering, there is a clear opportunity to benefit from potential visitor dispersal and increased sub-regional demand. The hospitality and tourism sector will play a central role in delivering the visitor welcome, requiring ongoing co-ordination and collaboration between local government, Visit Belfast, Tourism NI and wider partners. <p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High demand for accommodation within Belfast is expected, creating an opportunity for others, including the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council area, to benefit from visitor dispersal. Evidence from previous Fleadh events indicates that visitors extend their stay beyond peak days, offering potential across the full week. It will be important to position Lisburn and Castlereagh as an accessible, high-quality base, supported by strong messaging around ease of access and distinctive visitor experiences. 2. A complementary programme is proposed for Lisburn and Castlereagh to take advantage of the wider opportunity, as follows <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of the accommodation opportunities to the local hospitality providers, and integration of the programme with the Visit Lisburn and Castlereagh website and social media channels • Lisburn City Centre Fringe Event (7–8 August) designed to promote and co-ordinate the opportunity across the city centre hospitality sector, animate Market Square, Bow Street and Castle Gardens through food, music, cultural activity and family-friendly entertainment. The programme would be delivered in collaboration with the Communities and Parks & Amenities teams as part of their Arts and Culture and Park Life programmes respectively. Attached is a breakdown of planned events (see Appendix).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Royal Hillsborough and Historic Moira cluster of hospitality businesses. This will include encouraging and facilitating businesses to collaborate on a collective Fleadh offering (eg coordinated programming, shared promotions or packaged experiences), enabling a more cohesive and marketable product that can be promoted as part of the wider regional offer. • Promotion of the Lisburn and Castlereagh fringe offering via the existing Integrated Marketing Campaign and leveraging the Council's presence at Grand Central Station through Visit Belfast. <p>3. Industry readiness will be critical to success, and the Tourism team will be supporting businesses in this regard with information, advice and opportunities for marketing and promotion. Businesses will need to prepare for extended trading hours, high visitor volumes, and licensing and operational requirements. Early and targeted engagement will be required to support preparedness and maximise participation.</p> <p>4. Accessibility and good public transport links will also be critical to success. Engagement with Translink will be required to confirm and promote rail and bus options, and officers will connect this messaging with the local hospitality sector.</p>	
2.0	<p><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>It is recommended that the Committee agrees the creation of the Lisburn and Castlereagh Fleadh 2026 Fringe Programme as outlined in this report.</p>	
3.0	<p><u>Finance and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>No additional budget will be required for the proposed programme. The costs will be met from within the existing Economic Development, Parks and Amenities and Community Services budget estimates. The budget has been identified as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development up to £15,000 • Parks and Amenities £5,000 • Community Services £5,000 	
4.0	<p><u>Equality/Good Relations and Rural Needs Impact Assessments</u></p>	
4.1	Has an equality and good relations screening been carried out on the proposal/project/policy?	Yes
4.2	<p>Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions <u>or</u> rationale why the screening was not carried out</p> <p>The proposed programme of activity falls within the Events and Festivals priority of the Council's current Tourism Strategy, supporting the development of an annual programme of community events, which has been screened for Equality Impacts.</p>	
4.3	Has a Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) been completed?	Yes
4.4	Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions <u>or</u> rationale why the screening was not carried out.	

The proposed programme of activity falls within the Events and Festivals priority of the Council's current Tourism Strategy, supporting the development of an annual programme of community events, for which a Rural Needs Impact Assessment has been completed.

Appendices: Appendix 1a - LCCC Fleadh Support Events
Appendix 1b - Equality Screening
Appendix 1c - Rural Needs Impact Assessment

Programme Overview for Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2026

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council has developed a programme to celebrate and complement the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, taking place in Belfast from 2–9 August 2026. The local programme showcases the district's cultural heritage through music, dance, history, and community participation including some of the Park Life Programme events.

To celebrate the Fleadh Cheoil, the Economic Development, Communities and Parks and Amenities teams plan to deliver a programme of outreach talks, hands-on workshops and interactive sessions that explore the deep connections between music, craft, place and community.

The programme will invite residents and visitors to engage with a diverse programme open to all.

Programme overview includes:

Lisburn City Centre

The Lisburn Fleadh will take place across three key city centre locations: Market Square, Bow Street and Castle Gardens.

This event is being delivered as a cross-departmental initiative, led by Regeneration with input from Island Arts, Parks and Amenities, Tourism and Good Relations.

Officers will continue their engagement with local businesses and tourism operators to align opening hours and coordinate special offers and discounts across the weekend, helping to maximise footfall and spend within the city centre.

Lisburn City Centre Management and Parks and Amenities will host an event in the City Centre and Castle Gardens:

- NI Food Kitchen in Market Square, featuring live cookery demonstrations from local chefs from city centre businesses -Saturday 8th August
- An artisan market within a marquee in Market Square
- A licensed bar operating in the Lower Tier of the event space
- A selection of food vans in city centre– subject to consultation with hospitality businesses in relation to opening hours.
- Live music and roaming performers throughout Bow Street and Market Square to create atmosphere and encourage movement across the city centre
- Additional live music beside the bar
- Free face painting alongside family-friendly animation, including stilt walkers
- Dancing and entertainment in Castle Gardens Saturday 8th August

- Interactive arts and crafts workshops for children and families, supporting creative engagement and dwell time in Market Square provided through arts – Saturday 8th August

The Island Arts Centre will host the following:

- Traditional céilí bands
- Family-friendly story telling sessions
- Opportunities for beginners and seasoned dancers alike

The Irish Linen Museum will offer a schedule of interactive sessions.

- Talks exploring Irish music, language, and heritage
- Hands-on workshops
- Exhibitions highlighting local history and craftsmanship
- Opportunities to deepen understanding of cultural traditions

Castlereaugh Area

- **Interactive Textile Sessions**

Public workshops will explore historic links to fabric, weaving and textile craft, drawing parallels between musical traditions and the rhythmic, skilled processes of spinning and weaving. Participants will learn how to spin yarn, handle traditional materials and discover how craft and music have long sat side by side in Celtic life—both passed down through communal learning, storytelling and shared practice.

- **Historical Talk and Discussion**

A special guest talk by Roy Greer will bring history to life through an engaging presentation on Con O'Neill, the Last Irish Chieftain of Castlereaugh. This session will provide valuable historical context to the cultural landscape from which traditional music and community gatherings emerged, followed by an interactive discussion and feedback session, encouraging reflection and shared learning.

- **Park Life Programme**

Officers will promote the Park Life Programme as part of our general events for animating our parks. This will include Lough Moss and other open spaces.

- **Family Fun Day at St Joseph's Hall, Carryduff**

Families will be invited to take part in a family fun day celebrating the meaning and heritage of Fleadh Cheoil through:

- **Creative craft sessions** inspired by traditional materials, symbols and techniques
- **Traditional céilí music and dance**, with live demonstrations and participatory dancing led by the **Carryduff Set Dancing Group**

- **Mummers performances**, showcasing the tradition of folk drama, storytelling, with opportunities for audiences to learn about the history of mumming
- **Shared participation activities**, encouraging families to engage with music, movement and performance together
- **Traditional food and culinary experiences**, highlighting the importance of food in communal celebration, hospitality and cultural exchange

Together, these activities will create a welcoming and inclusive space for residents and visitors to connect with Celtic music, dance, craft and storytelling, celebrating Fleadh Cheoil.

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Section 75 Equality and Good Relations Screening template

Part 1. Information about the activity/policy/project being screened

Name of the activity/policy/project

Strategies and Action Plans within Tourism

Is this activity/policy/project – an existing one, a revised one, a new one?

Revised – the new emerging LCCC Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024 – 2029 is being developed with the last strategy finished in December 2023. An Equality Screening exercise was carried out on this project for the previous Strategy and Action Plan is being reviewed for this next version.

What are the intended aims/outcomes the activity/policy/project is trying to achieve?

The overall aim is to revise and update the 2018-2022 Tourism Strategy and Action Plan for Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council area. The revised Tourism Strategy and Action Plan will attempt to proactively address and support the areas tourism needs. The revised Tourism Strategy and Action Plan should be closely aligned with key existing strategies, policy documents, action plans and draw out opportunities/actions presented for the LCCC area. The subject of sustainable tourism is becoming more of a priority and measures should be taken into consideration when developing the new Tourism Strategy. The revised Tourism Strategy and Action Plan will demonstrate clear links to driving the local economy forward.

Who is the activity/policy/project targeted at and who will benefit? Are there any expected benefits for specific Section 75 categories/groups from this activity/policy/project? If so, please explain.

The new Tourism Strategy and Action Plan is intended to be a road map for delivery of tourism initiatives to ultimately drive visitor trips, overnight stays, and tourism revenue into the Council area. It is anticipated that all nine of the Section 75 categories could potentially benefit from this policy. For example, it is anticipated that it will benefit those of different ages, religion, as well as those with disabilities and those with dependents who use the services of LCCC.

This policy will be open equally across the Council Area. The strategies and plans commissioned will be accessible to all organisations in the participating council area

and LCCC will work to ensure that it is particularly accessible to those considered as marginalised or vulnerable within the participating LCCC.

Who initiated or developed the activity/policy/project?

Tourism Development Unit in LCCC

Who owns and who implements the activity/policy/project?

Owned by LCCC Service Transformation Directorate; implemented by the Tourism Development Unit

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the activity/policy/project?

If yes, give brief details of any significant factors.

Financial - The delivery of the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024 – 2029 will be dependent on the annual budget estimates process. Some activity may require additional budgets.

Legislative: Tourism development is a non-essential service.

Other: Tourism Development supports economic development, generating jobs and economic wealth to the local area.

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the activity/policy/project will impact upon? Delete if not applicable

Staff - all LCCC staff involved in the deliver or Tourism.

Service users - wide range of local and out of state visitors.

Other public sector organisations - Tourism NI, Forest Service, DAERA

Voluntary/community/trade unions

Other – including Elected Members

Other policies/strategies/plans with a bearing on this activity/policy/project

Name of policy/strategy/plan	Who owns or implements?
Lisburn & Castlereagh Community Plan	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Hillsborough Master Plan	LCCC
LCCC Corporate Plan 2024-28	LCCC
Visit Belfast Tourism Strategy 2024-2027	Visit Belfast
Tourism Strategy for NI 10 year plan	Tourism NI
Forest Service NI Business Plan	DAERA
NI Economic Strategy – Vision for 2030	Department for the Economy
LCCC Equality Scheme and associated equality action plans and policies	LCCC

Available Evidence

What evidence/information (qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered or considered to inform this activity/policy? Specify details for each Section 75 category.

In developing the draft LCCC Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029, a wide range of information, research and expert advice was considered.

To support this screening document, it was necessary to look at many aspects of work covered by the Tourism Development. The main stages in tourism development planning include: the analysis of previous tourist development; evaluation of the position of tourism in the area including competition; formulation of relevant tourism policy by Government; the defining of a development strategy and the formation of a programme of action.

Tourism development can be defined as creating strategies and plans to increase/develop/encourage tourism for a destination. The fundamental reason behind planning and implementing strategies for developing the tourism sector is primarily to make money and to subsequently increase the GDP of an area or country. The emerging Tourism Strategy commissioned by LCCC provides a Vision and Action Plan, creating a 'road map' to assist the growth in the local tourism offer, maximising tourism opportunities that will in turn increase bed nights, trips and spend. One way to assist in this growth is to support minor and major events, expansion of accommodation provision and providing visitor information centres in the LCCC area.

Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council work closely with Tourism NI and Visit Belfast to support this objective. Tourism NI's Mission is to build the value of tourism to the local economy, and state, 'Our Vision is to confidently and passionately champion the development and promotion of the Northern Ireland experience'.

Visit Belfast is funded and supported by Belfast City Council, Tourism Northern Ireland (Tourism NI), Tourism Ireland, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, Ards and North Down Borough Council, strategic and corporate partners Translink, Belfast One, Diageo

Northern Ireland, Value Cabs, ICC Belfast, Titanic Belfast, Hastings Hotels and Victoria Square. Visit Belfast is a public-private sector partnership that represents over 500 tourism businesses, operators and services.

In the most recent NISRA, June 2019, Local Government Tourism statistics Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council is highlighted as having the least number of bed-nights and visitor trips of any Council. Whilst tourism revenue is slightly better performing this is partly attributed to the strong shopping and retail offer in the Council area. The new LCCC Tourism Strategy looks at ways to address the undersupply in commercial accommodation alongside other initiatives to attract more visitors and associated spend. The staging of events is one such way to steadily grow visitor numbers, especially the day visitor market. Another benefit from events is the positive PR attached to the same.

Feedback on the emerging Tourism Strategy will occur throughout the eight-week consultation period with a questionnaire directed to stakeholders, community and the public that will provide an opportunity for feedback on Section 75 equality and good relations.

We have also considered the most up to date NISRA population data from Census 2021 (published 22/09/22) [Lisburn and Castlereagh Census Data](#)

Section 75 Category	Details of evidence/information
Religious Belief	It is likely that the Council area will be visited by people from all religions and those with no beliefs. The 8-week consultation should provide an opportunity for any issues to be raised and how best to address these.
Political Opinion	There is no evidence of the political opinion of visitors to the Council area. It is likely that the area will be visited by people with different political opinions.
Racial Group	All proposed plans/initiatives/strategies will endeavour to support all visitors from a tourism perspective from across LCCC and beyond.
Age	<p>The 2021 census showed the population in the Lisburn Castlereagh area totalled 149,106.</p> <p>19% = (0-14 years)</p> <p>30% = (15-39 years)</p> <p>33% = (40-64 years)</p> <p>18% = (65+ years).</p>

	The Council area is visited by people of all ages for leisure and tourism activities, however particularly strong for families, culturally curious, and those interested in food and drink.
Marital Status	We do not have information on the marital status of people who visit the Council area.
Sexual Orientation	We do not have information on the sexual orientation of people who visit the Council area.
Men & Women Generally	We do not have information on the precise gender make up of visitors to the Council area. It is anticipated this will not be an issue raised as part of the feedback from the 8-week consultation.
Disability	Latest Census data (2021) and LGD boundary data (2014) indicates that 18.29% of the population have a disability or long-term health condition. This includes a wide range of disabilities, including physical, sensory and communication disabilities. The childhood disability figure for Northern Ireland is 5.5%, highest in UK (2017 Research Report, Caring More Than Most, Leeds University on behalf of Contact). Observation and feedback to date suggests that the new sculpture trail is being used by school groups of disabled children.
People with and without Dependents	Evidence suggests the Council area is being visited by people with and without dependents. Evidence in the past would suggest the area is visited namely by family groups, culturally curious and those interested in food and drink.

Needs, Experiences, and Priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular activity/policy/decision? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories

Section 75 Category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
Religious Belief	The tourism product is for all religious beliefs with family attractions and things to do for everyone. It would not be

	anticipated that specific needs are required for differing religious beliefs.
Political Opinion	The tourism offering is for all political backgrounds with no anticipated negative feedback expected.
Racial Group	No issues expected about race once the Strategy and Action Plan go out for consultation, but we are aware that BME residents and visitors to the area may be under-represented as visitors to the Council area. We recognise that there is a need to ensure that people know about the free places to visit. There is a need to ensure that information about all the things to do and see in the Council area are available in other languages for those who do not have English as a first language. This has been taken into account when developing the recent Digital Sculpture Trail at Hillsborough Forest. The App is available in 4 different languages these are: Spanish, French, German and Chinese. We also have collateral literature in these 4 different languages for visitors.
Age	Market research would suggest the LCCC tourism product is more aligned to mature audiences looking to experience culture, short walks, and good food and drink. We would anticipate less of the youth market providing feedback on the emerging strategy.
Marital Status	No issues expected during the eight-week consultation period. The programme will be administered to prioritise equality of opportunity across all categories.
Sexual Orientation	No issues expected during the eight-week consultation period. The programme will be administered to prioritise equality of opportunity across all categories.
Men & Women Generally	No issues raised during consultation in relation to gender. However, council staff are aware of the need to ensure that forest facilities are perceived to be safe for lone visitors (especially females, young people, older visitors). No new issues raised since sculptures have been installed. Although only a small proportion of those who have provided feedback to date have provided negative comments, more negative feedback has been received from females.
Disability	All proposed initiatives will be open to all businesses and organisations across the Council.
People with and without Dependants	Parents with buggies or people who care for those with physical disabilities may have accessibility issues. Parents with young children may visit different attractions within the Council area.

Part 2. Screening Questions

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

We await feedback from the eight-week consultation to assess and monitor the impact on equality of the emerging LCCC Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029.

Section 75 Category	Details of likely impact – will it be positive or negative? If none anticipated, say none	Level of impact - major or minor* - see guidance below
Religious Belief	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The emerging Tourism Strategy an Action Plan is striving to be inclusive for all, wherever possible.	None
Political Opinion	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The emerging Tourism Strategy an Action Plan is striving to be inclusive for all, wherever possible.	None
Racial Group	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The emerging Tourism Strategy an Action Plan is striving to be inclusive for all, wherever possible.	None
Age	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The emerging Tourism Strategy an Action Plan is striving to be inclusive for all, wherever possible.	None
Marital Status	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The emerging Tourism Strategy an Action Plan is striving to be inclusive for all, wherever possible.	None

Sexual Orientation	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The emerging Tourism Strategy an Action Plan is striving to be inclusive for all, wherever possible.	None
Men & Women Generally	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The emerging Tourism Strategy an Action Plan is striving to be inclusive for all, wherever possible.	None
Disability	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The emerging Tourism Strategy an Action Plan is striving to be inclusive for all, wherever possible.	None
People with and without Dependants	No impact for majority of visitors coming into Lisburn & Castlereagh. The emerging Tourism Strategy an Action Plan is striving to be inclusive for all, wherever possible.	None

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

As feedback is received, consideration will be given to any issue raised before finalising and approving the new LCCC Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 204 – 2029.

Section 75 Category	IF Yes, provide details	If No, provide details
Religious Belief	Awaiting feedback from eight-week consultation.	
Political Opinion	Awaiting feedback from eight-week consultation.	
Racial Group	Awaiting feedback from eight-week consultation.	
Age	Awaiting feedback from eight-week consultation.	

Marital Status	Awaiting feedback from eight-week consultation.	
Sexual Orientation	Awaiting feedback from eight-week consultation.	
Men & Women Generally	Awaiting feedback from eight-week consultation.	
Disability	Awaiting feedback from eight-week consultation.	
People with and without Dependants	Awaiting feedback from eight-week consultation.	

Equality Action Plan 2021-2025

Does the activity/policy/project being screened relate to an action in the Equality Action Plan 2021-2025? Yes/No If yes, specify which action.

No, however the policy will be kept under review to ensure that requests for information in various formats are monitored and provided across the Council, i.e. to ensure information is accessible to all.

2(b) DDA Disability Duties (see Disability Action Plan 2021-2025)

Does this policy/activity present opportunities to contribute to the actions in our Disability Action Plan:

- to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?
- to encourage the participation of disabled people in public life?

No, activities conducted under this policy are available to all, regardless of Section 75 category. Through the consultation exercises disabled people will be targeted proactively for their feedback.

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

Good Relations Category	Details of likely impact. Will it be positive or negative? [if no specific impact identified, say none]	Level of impact – minor/major*
Religious Belief Political Opinion Racial Group	We anticipate a positive impact for all, with an increased number of visitors to the area from all Section 75 groups.	Minor - positive

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

Good Relations Category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide details
Religious Belief Political Opinion Racial Group		No, there are no further opportunities to better promote good relations between these groups. All opportunities are currently being addressed.

Multiple identity

Provide details of any data on the impact of the activity/policy/project on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

We have taken into account the needs of different multiple identities in the development of the emerging Tourism Strategy and Action Plan. For example, children with disabilities or older people with disabilities will benefit from enhanced accessibility measures.

Part 3. Screening decision/outcome

Equality and good relations screening is used to identify whether there is a need to carry out a **full equality impact assessment** on a proposed policy or project. There are 3 possible outcomes:

- 1) **Screen out** - no need for a full equality impact assessment and no mitigations required because no relevance to equality, no negative impacts identified or only very minor positive impacts for all groups. This may be the case for a purely technical policy for example.
- 2) **Screen out with mitigation** - no need for a full equality impact assessment but some minor potential impacts or opportunities to better promote equality and/or good relations identified, so mitigations appropriate. Much of our activity will probably fall into this category.
- 3) **Screen in for full equality impact assessment** – potential for significant and/or potentially negative impact identified for one or more groups so proposal requires a more detailed impact assessment. [See Equality Commission guidance on justifying a screening decision.]

Choose only one of these and provide reasons for your decision and ensure evidence is noted/referenced for any decision reached.

Screening Decision/Outcome	Reasons/Evidence
Option 1 Screen out – no equality impact assessment and no mitigation required [go to Monitoring section]	
Option 2 Screen out with mitigation – some potential impacts could be identified in the eight-week consultation, and they can be addressed with appropriate mitigation or some opportunities to better promote equality and/or good relations identified [complete mitigation section below]	The screening has not identified any impacts however will be more strenuously tested during the eight-week consultation period.
Option 3 Screen in for a full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)	

[If option 3, complete timetabling and prioritising section below]	
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Mitigation (Only relevant to Option 2)

Can the activity/policy/project plan be amended or an alternative activity/policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

If so, give the **reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative activity/policy and ensure the mitigations are included in a revised/updated policy or plan.

Feedback from the eight-week consultation will be considered once approval is granted from Regeneration and Growth Committee to go out for consultation.

Timetabling and prioritising for full EQIA (only relevant to Option 3)

If the activity/policy has been '**screened in**' for full equality impact assessment, give details of any factors to be considered and the next steps for progressing the EQIA, including a proposed timetable.

Is the activity/policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities? Yes/No. If yes, please provide details.

Not applicable

Part 4. Monitoring

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

Effective monitoring will help a public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the activity/policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and activity/policy development.

What will be monitored and how? What specific equality monitoring will be done? Who will undertake and sign-off the monitoring of this activity/policy and on what frequency? Please give details:

The Tourism team will be responsible for monitoring of this project that will involve logging feedback and concerns from stakeholders, community and the public when required. The Council will proactively seek feedback on the emerging Tourism Strategy and Action Plan by way of consultation questionnaires for an eight-week period following agreement from Committee.

Part 5 - Approval and Authorisation

	Position/Job Title	Date
Screened by:	Andrew Kennedy Tourism Development Manager	8.8.24
Reviewed by:	Annie Wilson Equality Officer	08.08.24
Approved by:	Paul McCormick Head of Economic Development	8.8.24

Note: On completion of the screening exercise, a copy of the completed Screening Report should be:

- approved and 'signed off' by a senior manager responsible for the activity/policy
- included with Committee reports, as appropriate
- sent to the Equality Officer for the quarterly screening report to consultees, internal reporting and publishing on the LCCC website
- shared with relevant colleagues
- made available to the public on request.

Evidence and documents referenced in the screening report should also be available if requested.

Appendix I - Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) Template

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

1A. Name of Public Authority.

Lisburn & Castlereagh City 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.

Marketing and Promotions

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

Developing a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Adopting a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Implementing a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Revising a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Designing a Public Service	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Delivering a Public Service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

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.

Marketing and Promotions

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

The key aim of this campaign is to promote the LCCC area as a visitor destination across N. Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland and also support the promotion of Lisburn City Centre and its commercial offering (mainly retail and hospitality).

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.

N/A

Rationale for using alternative definition of 'rural'.

N/A

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

N/A

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 the response is **NO** GO TO Section **2E**.

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

The Marketing and Promotions (including Integrated Marketing Campaign and Visit Belfast) will impact on people in the rural area and it will promote economic investment by:-

- Increasing tourism footfall
- Increasing spend in rural areas
- Increase visitor dwell time in rural areas
- By offering a holistic “end to end” tourism offering to locals and visitors from further afield

The campaign will impact on people in rural and urban areas. The Council are aware that attracting more visitors to these areas will require mitigating any negative impacts this may have. Negative impacts will be considered as part of the collaborative process and mitigated as early as possible in the programme.

The rural share of the NI population is growing. Over the years 2001-2011 the number of people living in rural areas of NI increased by 15% in comparison to a rise of only 4% in urban areas. According to the Interim Local Rural Development Strategy (2016), just under half of the population (47.2%) in the L&CCC area live in rural areas. In the last decade to 2016, suburban areas have seen the highest growth rate of 22.1% with five wards alone covering over half of the districts growth – Ballymacross (44.3%), Carrowreagh (9.7%), Maghaberry (7%), Glenavy (6.3%) and Derriaghy (6.2%).

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.

Tourism is an expanding area and is being increasingly recognized for its overall contribution to the Northern Ireland economy.

The Marketing and Promotions campaigns will promote all tourism businesses across the whole LCCC area. The campaign will also help build businesses up after the temporary closures due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The sustainability and stability of businesses is very important in a rural context as these businesses sustain the local community.

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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rural Tourism	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rural Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Education or Training in Rural Areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Deprivation in Rural Areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rural Crime or Community Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Agri-Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Please state)	<input type="text"/>

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.

N/A

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 the response is **NO** GO TO Section **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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Published Statistics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consultation with Other Organisations	<input checked="" 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.

- Draft Northern Ireland Programme for Government (2016-2021)
- Northern Ireland Economic Strategy – Vision for 2030
- Tourism NI- Operating Plan
- Tourism NI – Northern Ireland Tourism Priorities for Growth
- Forest Service NI Business Plan 2014-15
- OFMDFM – Together; Building a United Community (TBUC)
- OFMDFM – Lifetime Opportunities – Government’s Anti-Poverty & Social Inclusion Strategy for Northern Ireland 2006-2020
- Section 75 of Northern Ireland Act
- Hillsborough Tourism Master Plan. 2015
- Hillsborough Forest Economic Appraisal. 2017
- Public consultation and survey in Hillsborough Forest. 2016
- Visit Belfast Strategy 2024-2026

The Socio-economic profile and forecast, Lisburn & Castlereagh (2018-2032) identified the LCCC area as showing marked distinctions between the rural and urban populations. According to the Interim Local Rural Development Strategy (2016), just under half of the population (47.2%) in the L&CCC area live in rural areas and the population forecast is set to grow by 8,300 residents between 2018-2032 (0.4% per annum, twice that of the NI equivalent). L&CCC’s population growth outlook between 2018-2032 on average will be 1.65% making it the third highest across NI districts and 0.35 points above the NI rate.

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

The Interim Local Rural Development Strategy (2016) has identified the following as key areas:

- Rural Businesses
- Rural Tourism
- Jobs or employment in rural areas
- Education or training in rural areas
- Poverty in rural areas
- Rural development
- Agri-Environment

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?

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.

The Scheme proposed will have a positive impact on the local rural business community and the Council area as a whole.

According to the Interim Local Rural Development Strategy (2016), just under half of the population (47.2%) in the LCCC area live in rural areas. In the last decade to 2016, suburban areas have seen the highest growth rate of 22.1% with five wards alone covering over half of the districts growth – Ballymacross (44.3%), Carrowreagh (9.7%), Maghaberry (7%), Glenavy (6.3%) and Derriaghy (6.2%).

In Northern Ireland 58% of businesses are based in rural areas. The business base in the region as a whole is predominantly small to medium enterprises with a dominance of micro businesses. In terms of businesses located only in rural areas, 94% are defined as micro (having less than 10 employees). Agriculture plays a more important role in the economy of NI than is the case in the rest of the UK, it generates a higher proportion of total GVA (Gross valued added) in the economy and accounts for a higher proportion of our employment. Furthermore 78% of the total NI land area is in agricultural use. Rural businesses located in NI have particular challenges and need specific solutions. The slow uptake of agriculture and rural enterprises in NI with regards to innovation, the fact that only 67% of rural areas have superfast broadband coverage (98% in urban areas) and 14% of tourism expenditure takes place in rural areas (compared with 86% in urban) are further examples of challenges facing the small rural businesses in Northern Ireland.

In 2018 there were 4,755 VAT/PAYE registered businesses in the L&CCC area (NISRA). The close proximity to Belfast puts the L&CCC area in an advantageous position whereby the population density is a way to generate an increase in sales and revenue.

Considering that almost half of the L&CCC district is rural, the regeneration of the LCCC area, is a key priority for the Council whom over the next 10 years will continue to invest in regeneration initiatives. Economic development initiatives such as the Integrated Marketing Campaign and the marketing carried out by Visit Belfast on the Council's behalf will benefit the local rural population and visitors to the area as well as the urban areas. These projects will contribute towards the Council's overall strategic objective of increasing economic development in the L&CCC area for the benefit of all citizens.

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 No If the response is **NO GO TO Section 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.

The synopsis of the programme has been identified in Section 2B, fully considering the needs of the rural population. There have been no detrimental impacts identified.

If the response to Section **5A** was **YES GO TO Section 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.

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:	Margaret McAvoy
Position/Grade:	Tourism Development Officer
Division/Branch	Economic Development
Signature:	MARGARET MCAVOY
Date:	08/08/2024
Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by:	Andrew Kennedy
Position/Grade:	Tourism Development Manager
Division/Branch:	Economic Development
Signature:	ANDREW KENNEDY
Date:	8/8/24



Committee:	Regeneration and Growth
Date:	7 May 2026
Report from:	Head of Economic Development

Item for:	Decision
Subject:	USA 250 – Strategic Engagement Opportunities

1.0	<p><u>Background</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. USA 250 will mark the 250th anniversary of American independence in 2026 and has the potential to generate significant international interest. This presents an opportunity for Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council to strengthen cultural, tourism and economic links with the United States, including the Northern Irish diaspora. 2. At the October Committee, Members noted that Council was exploring ways to mark USA 250 through activity aligned with Destination Royal Hillsborough, wider Council tourism assets and local businesses. 3. Council activity is being developed in the context of a wider regional approach, with alignment required to Tourism NI’s America 250 objectives, alongside work being progressed by the US Consulate and the Department for Communities. 4. Department for Communities have established a US/NI 250 Funding Programme, with £150,000 available through the Ulster-Scots Agency to support community events, exhibitions and educational initiatives marking the anniversary and highlighting Northern Ireland’s links with the United States. <p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. USA 250 represents a potential opportunity to raise the international profile of the Lisburn & Castlereagh area in the US. Historic Royal Palaces has confirmed a programme of activity at Hillsborough Castle in 2026, including the display of high-profile artefacts linked to Benjamin Franklin and the US Declaration of Independence. 2. The historic links between Royal Hillsborough and several locations in the United States — particularly Hillsborough, North Carolina — present an opportunity to explore the potential for a civic relationship to be developed. 3. Officers have undertaken initial outreach into several locations named Hillsborough in the United States, including Hillsborough, North Carolina, through correspondence, online enquiries and follow-up contact. To date, responses have been limited and further work is ongoing to identify the most appropriate civic and organisational contacts. 4. Officers have established contact with the office of one of the Commissioners of the Town of Hillsborough, North Carolina. They confirmed that the proposal had been shared internally for consideration. No further update has been received in
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the period since this response, and officers will continue to follow up as appropriate. This remains a potential route for developing direct civic dialogue.

5. In addition to engagement with Hillsborough, North Carolina, officers have undertaken outreach to other locations with relevant connections, including Hillsborough, New Jersey, Hillsborough County (Tampa Bay area), and the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, via the Department for Global Affairs. To date, no responses have been received from these contacts and further follow-up will be considered.
6. In parallel, officers have engaged with the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce to seek advice and potential introductions in North Carolina given the NI Chamber's pre-existing relationship. While this has helped identify potential routes for engagement, further work is required to translate this into active contacts and relationships.
7. As part of ongoing engagement with the US, the Council hosted a business breakfast in January 2026 in partnership with the US Consulate, the US Commercial Service and Invest NI. This brought together a small group of internationally active local businesses, including those with an existing presence in the US and those considering future opportunities, to explore prospects and available support for developing bilateral trade. The event represented an early step in strengthening transatlantic links and supported Council priorities around investment, export growth and international collaboration. The event demonstrated that potential exists for Lisburn and Castlereagh businesses to participate in a NI-wide collaborative approach to the US market should this opportunity come forward.
8. Engagement with other Councils indicates that, while there is a shared interest in marking USA 250, activity so far is being progressed largely at an individual Council level. For example, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council has developed a programme of cultural and heritage-based activity running from April to August 2026. A possible sub-regional working group of the Councils in Co Antrim has been discussed but not progressed to date. Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council has asked that it be included in any collaborative discussions.
9. Subject to establishing appropriate contacts and interest, inviting a civic delegation from Hillsborough, North Carolina to Royal Hillsborough during 2026 remains a potential opportunity; however, progress will depend on securing active engagement and appropriate contacts in North Carolina over the coming period, including through engagement opportunities arising from planned North Carolina visits to Northern Ireland.
10. Should engagement progress positively, there may be potential to explore a reciprocal civic and trade-focused visit to North Carolina in the future, subject to further development, clear objectives and Member approval.
11. Alongside this, activity such as the proposed USA-themed exhibition at Lisburn Museum, together with engagement with Tourism NI, the US Consulate and other partners, provides a practical way to link culture, tourism and economic development.
12. Overall, USA 250 continues to present a potential opportunity for the Council; however, engagement with US-based contacts to date has been slower than

initially anticipated and remains at an early stage. Activity will require further development, stronger contact establishment, and alignment with regional partners, before firm proposals can be brought forward. The focus over the coming period will be on securing meaningful engagement, refining the approach and identifying realistic opportunities that can deliver tangible benefits for this area.

13. Further to engagement with the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce, officers have been made aware of a planned North Carolina business delegation visit to Northern Ireland in August 2026, including an event at Hillsborough Castle. Initial discussions have taken place with the Chamber regarding potential Council involvement, including participation in a proposed dinner on 25 August. This presents a timely and practical opportunity to engage directly with North Carolina representatives in a structured setting and may provide an alternative route to developing relationships where direct outreach has been slower than anticipated.

2.0 **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Committee agrees:

1. That officers continue engagement with Tourism NI, Historic Royal Palaces, the US Consulate, NI Chamber and neighbouring Councils to shape potential collaborative opportunities
2. To continue efforts to establish appropriate contacts in North Carolina and other relevant US locations with further reports being provided to the Committee in due course.
3. That officers continue to explore the potential for issuing a formal civic invitation to Hillsborough, North Carolina, subject to establishing appropriate contacts and engagement.
4. To note the progress to date in relation to USA 250 and note the potential for a trade-focused visit to the US by Lisburn and Castlereagh businesses as part of a wider NI initiative.
5. To note the opportunity to engage with a planned North Carolina business delegation visit to Northern Ireland in August 2026 and agree that officers explore potential Council involvement in associated events, including engagement at Hillsborough Castle.

3.0 **Finance and Resource Implications**

Activity to date has been resourced from within existing budget estimates. No dedicated budget is required at this time.

4.0 **Equality/Good Relations and Rural Needs Impact Assessments**

4.1	Has an equality and good relations screening been carried out?	Yes
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4.2	<p>Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions or rationale why the screening was not carried out</p> <p>The trade element of any future engagement is covered by the attached Equality Screening for the 2026 Trade Programme.</p>	
4.3	<p>Has a Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) been completed?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
4.4	<p>Brief summary of the key issues identified and proposed mitigating actions or rationale why the screening was not carried out.</p> <p>The trade element of any future engagement is covered by the attached Rural Needs Impact Assessment for the 2026 Trade Programme.</p>	

<p>Appendices:</p>	<p>Appendix 2a - Equality Screening Appendix 2b - Rural Needs Impact Assessment</p>
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Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Section 75 Equality and Good Relations Screening

Part 1. Information about the activity/policy/project being screened

Name of the activity/policy/project

International Trade Programme 2026-27

Is this activity/policy/project – an existing one, a revised one, a new one?

A new programme for 2026-27

What are the intended aims/outcomes the activity/policy/project is trying to achieve?

A key vision of the International Trade Programme is to develop Lisburn Castlereagh as a prime location for investment and to increase exports and growth through trade and investment.

The International Trade Programme aims to deliver an annual programme of international trade activity as part of an overall strategy to support local businesses to grow through developing new customers and markets outside Northern Ireland.

The programme assists the Council in demonstrating its commitment to the local economy by working to increase exports and growth through trade and targeting/facilitating inward investment as well as supporting businesses to access new export supply chains.

Who is the activity/policy/project targeted at and who will benefit? Are there any expected benefits for specific Section 75 categories/groups from this activity/policy/project? If so, please explain.

The programme is tailored to local businesses across the Council area. It does not target any Section 75 group specifically – it is open to all businesses who wish to export their products to overseas markets and meet eligibility criteria.

Who initiated or developed the activity/policy/project?

Economic Development Unit, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council (LCCC)

Who owns and who implements the activity/policy/project?

Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council own the programme. It is implemented by the Service Transformation Directorate's Economic Development Unit.

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the activity/policy/project? If yes, give brief details of any significant factors.

Financial / Other: Business Solutions Projects and Initiatives are impacted by fixed budgets. Delivery of programmes can be impacted by constraints of finance and working with external organisations, whilst adhering to their timeframes and funding regulations.

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the activity/policy/project will impact upon?**Staff**

The Business Solutions Team within the Economic Development Unit are responsible for delivering the programme on behalf of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council. Senior Management are also responsible for decision-making.

Service users & Delivery Partners

The business community within the Lisburn and Castlereagh Council area
Delivery Agents procured through the Tendering process.
Business Advisors/ mentors facilitating the programmes.
Stakeholders and partners,
Contract Delivery Partners.

Other public sector organisations

Invest NI who have oversight of any EU funded Programme to ensure compliance.

Voluntary/community/trade unions

Business in the Community (BiTC),

Other

Elected Members

Other policies/strategies/plans with a bearing on this activity/policy/project

Name of policy/strategy/plan	Who owns or implements?
LCCC Corporate Plan 2018/2022	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/uploads/general/CORPORATE_PLAN_2018.pdf
LCCC Community Plan 2017 – 2032	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/uploads/general/Community_Plan_2017-2032_EMAIL.pdf
3. LCCC Economic Development Action Plan 2018-2022	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
LCCC Equality Scheme and associated plans	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Equality/Section 75

Available evidence

What evidence/information (qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered or considered to inform this activity/policy? Specify details for each Section 75 category.

NISRA report that in 2021, the Lisburn Castlereagh City Council area has 5,170 registered businesses registered for VAT and/or PAYE. Of these 22% are sole traders, 66% are small businesses with up to 9 employees, 10% are medium enterprises with 10-49 employees and 2% are large business with more than 49 staff.

Lisburn and Castlereagh also has a population of 146,452 residents, of which 62% are of working age 16-64.

There is no publicly available data on the religious or racial background, political opinion, age, marital status or sexual orientation of business owners.

Funding requirements stipulate the conditions of participation on programmes, namely business location, size, turnover etc.

Section 75 Category	Details of evidence/information
Religious Belief	NI Census 2021 data for the Lisburn and Castlereagh area: 58% Protestant (or other Christian) 27% Catholic 2% Other 13% None

	<p>We do not have information on the religious background of businesses or individuals who may access this programme.</p>
<p>Political Opinion</p>	<p>Political party representation on LCCC from local government elections 2023 (40 Members): DUP – 14 UUP – 6 Alliance –13 Sinn Fein – 4 SDLP – 2 Independent - 1</p> <p>National identity is often used as an indicator of political opinion – unionist/nationalist. Analysis of Census 2021 data for LCCC showed:</p> <p>41% identified as British 16% Irish 21% Northern Irish</p> <p>We do not have information on the political opinion of eligible business owners.</p>
<p>Racial Group</p>	<p>2021 Census suggests: 87% of the LCCC population were born in N Ireland. The same data indicates 3.9% of LCCC residents are non-white (slightly higher than NI average) and 96.1% were white (including Irish Traveller).</p> <p>The LCCC area has a small population of Syrian refugees and 3.36% of residents speak languages other than English as their first language. We do not have information on the racial background or nationality of eligible business owners.</p>
<p>Age</p>	<p>NISRA 2021 mid-year population estimates for LCCC area were:</p> <p>0-14 years – 19% 15-39 years – 30% 40-64 years – 33% 65+ years – 18%</p> <p>Applicants must be aged 18 or above in order to be eligible to apply for funding. We do not hold information on the age profile of eligible business owners or individuals.</p>
<p>Marital Status</p>	<p>We do not have information on the marital status of business owners but Census 2021 information for the LCCC area for people over the age of 16 for the LCCC area is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single (never married or never registered a same-sex civil partnership) – 33%

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Married – 52% • Separated (but still legally married or still legally in a same-sex civil partnership) – 3% • Divorced or formerly in a same-sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved – 6% • Widowed or surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership – 6%
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>	<p>From Census 2021 Sexual orientation in LCCC shows:</p> <p>Straight or heterosexual -91%</p> <p>Gay, lesbian, bisexual or other sexual orientation - 2%</p> <p>Prefer not to say or not stated - 7%</p> <p>Generally, no information on sexual orientation of eligible business owners is available, but given that 5-10% of the general population may be LGB, it is likely that business owners will be.</p>
<p>Men & Women Generally</p>	<p>In general, women tend to be underrepresented as entrepreneurs/in business.</p> <p>https://www.nisra.gov.uk/labour-force-survey-women-northern-ireland-2020</p> <p>The 2020 Labour Force Survey reports that just 8% of women in NI are Self Employed and 68% of women aged 16-64 were employed.</p> <p>The estimated population of LCCC local government district at 2021 was 146,002, of which 71,654 (49%) were male and 74,348 (51%) were female.</p> <p>There is no official statistic on the number of people in N Ireland who identify as Transgender or non-binary but referrals to advice services are increasing year on year which suggests a small but growing minority.</p>
<p>Disability</p>	<p>Census data 2021 suggests that 21.7% of the LCCC population have a long-term health problem or disability. This is a 3.4% increase on the Census 2011 figure.</p> <p>Given that over 20% of the population declared a disability, it is likely that some potential and successful applicant business owners and individuals may have a disability.</p>
<p>People with and without Dependants</p>	<p>2021 Census data:</p> <p>14% of people stated that they provided unpaid care to family, friends, neighbours or others.</p> <p>Number of dependent children</p> <p>None - 69%</p>

	<p>One - 12% Two- 13% Three or more - 6%</p> <p>There is no specific information available but eligible business owners will likely reflect the general population.</p>
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Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular activity/policy/decision? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories

Section 75 Category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
Religious Belief	No different needs identified
Political Opinion	No different needs identified.
Racial Group	There could be potential barriers to accessing services for those who do not have English as a first language or who are new to the LCCC district. People who are from a minority ethnic background may face difficulties understanding the programme requirements. The paperwork / forms may need to be translated for someone who does not have English as a first language.
Age	No different needs identified
Marital Status	No different needs identified
Sexual Orientation	No different needs identified
Men & Women Generally	No different needs identified
Disability	Disabled people may face barriers accessing or understanding the programme requirements. The paperwork / forms may need to be provided in alternative formats, for example braille, easy read.
People with and without Dependants	No different needs identified

Part 2. Screening questions

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

The services are available to all current / potential business owners across Lisburn & Castlereagh. They are encouraged to apply if their business is wishing to export to international markets, regardless of their religious belief.

Section 75 Category	Details of likely impact – will it be positive or negative? If none anticipated, say none	Level of impact - major or minor
Religious Belief	No differential impact identified.	None
Political Opinion	No differential impact	None
Racial Group	<p>A minor positive impact has been identified for racial groups. Evidence indicates potential barriers, including language differences, lower awareness of support programmes, and under-representation in uptake of business support.</p> <p>To mitigate these barriers, the programme will utilise accessible communication formats, provide translations into other languages where required, and undertake targeted outreach and engagement with community and voluntary sector networks to promote awareness and encourage participation across all racial groups.</p>	Minor
Age	No differential impact	None
Marital Status	No differential impact	None
Sexual Orientation	No differential impact	None
Men & Women Generally	No differential impact	None
Disability	Reasonable adjustments will be facilitated for disabled people	Minor
People with and without Dependants	No differential impact	None

* See Appendix 1 for details.

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

Equality of opportunity is already built into the Programmes of Support.

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council provides an advisory service to potential participants under the programme. Participants are advised to contact the Business Solutions Team who will provide advice and guidance on recommended programmes of support based on the size, location, type of business.

All participants are treated equally and are advised to contact a member of the Business Solutions Team if they require advice regarding specific programmes or opportunities for support. Contact details are published on promotional material (telephone numbers and email address) to ensure equality of opportunity.

Section 75 Category	IF Yes, provide details	If No, provide details
Religious Belief		None identified through this screening but can be kept under review.
Political Opinion		None identified through this screening but can be kept under review.
Racial Group	<p>A minor positive impact has been identified for racial groups. Evidence indicates potential barriers, such as language differences, lower awareness of support programmes, and under-representation in uptake of business support.</p> <p>To mitigate these barriers, the programme will utilise accessible communication formats, targeted outreach where appropriate, and engagement with community and voluntary sector networks to promote awareness and encourage participation across all racial groups.</p>	No further opportunities other than the mitigation measures
Age	Continuation of promotion of programmes through a range of mediums including social or web based media, plus printed media and materials.	
Marital Status		None identified through this screening but can be kept under review.
Sexual Orientation		None identified through this screening but can be kept under review.
Men & Women Generally	Targeted promotion of programmes through a range of mediums including social or web based media, plus printed media and materials	

Disability	Continuation of promotion of programmes through a range of mediums including social or web based media, plus printed media and materials	
People with and without Dependants	Continuation of promotion of programmes through a range of mediums including social or web based media, plus printed media and materials	

Equality Action Plan 2021-2025

Does the activity/policy/project being screened relate to an action in the Equality Action Plan 2021-2025? No

2(b) DDA Disability Duties (see Disability Action Plan 2021-2025)

Does this policy/activity present opportunities to contribute to the actions in our Disability Action Plan:

- to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?
- to encourage the participation of disabled people in public life?

Yes – the Business Solutions Team could consult with target groups and actively encourage programmes to be inclusive of all including those with disabilities.

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

Good Relations Category	Details of likely impact. Will it be positive or negative? [if no specific impact identified, say none]	Level of impact – minor/major*
Religious Belief	These are programmes of support for eligible businesses wishing to export overseas. It is not relevant to promotion of good relations and no impact identified through this screening exercise	None
Political Opinion		
Racial Group		

*See Appendix 1 for details.

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

Good Relations Category	IF Yes, provide details	If No, provide details
Religious Belief		International Trade programmes are focused on improving capability and facilitating growth of participating businesses and therefore do not directly promote good relations.
Political Opinion		
Racial Group		

Multiple identity

Provide details of any data on the impact of the activity/policy/project on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

LCCC recognises that all individuals are not exclusive to just one designated group and “Multiple identity” has been given consideration within this screening exercise.

Part 3. Screening decision/outcome

Equality and good relations screening is used to identify whether there is a need to carry out a **full equality impact assessment** on a proposed policy or project. There are 3 possible outcomes:

- 1) **Screen out** - no need for a full equality impact assessment and no mitigations required because no relevance to equality, no negative impacts identified or only very minor positive impacts for all groups. This may be the case for a purely technical policy for example.
- 2) **Screen out with mitigation** - no need for a full equality impact assessment but some minor potential impacts or opportunities to better promote equality and/or good relations identified, so mitigations appropriate. Much of our activity will probably fall into this category.
- 3) **Screen in for full equality impact assessment** – potential for significant and/or potentially negative impact identified for one or more groups so

proposal requires a more detailed impact assessment. [See Equality Commission guidance on justifying a screening decision.]

Choose only one of these and provide reasons for your decision and ensure evidence is noted/referenced for any decision reached.

Screening Decision/Outcome	Reasons/Evidence
<p>Option 1</p> <p>Screen out – no equality impact assessment and no mitigation required [go to Monitoring section]</p>	
<p>Option 2</p> <p>Screen out with mitigation – some potential impacts identified but they can be addressed with appropriate mitigation or some opportunities to better promote equality and/or good relations identified [complete mitigation section below]</p>	<p>Section 75 considerations have been embedded in the delivery and strategic development of all Council Business Support programmes to date, as required by European funding and Invest NI compliance.</p> <p>Only minor impacts have been identified during the screening process. Any issues re ensuring accessibility and equal participation in business support programmes can be addressed by the mitigations proposed for the programmes. It is therefore considered that the undertaking of an EQIA is not necessary at this time.</p>
<p>Option 3</p> <p>Screen in for a full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)</p> <p>[If option 3, complete timetabling and prioritising section below]</p>	

Mitigation (Only relevant to Option 2)

Can the activity/policy/project plan be amended or an alternative activity/policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

If so, give the **reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative activity/policy and ensure the mitigations are included in a revised/updated policy or plan.

The Economic Development team offer mitigations to ensure that those who traditionally face barriers genuinely experience equality of opportunity.

These mitigations include targeted promotion of programmes, providing information in other formats or with subtitles and by ensuring people are aware of the opportunities offered by the council's business support programmes and have no barriers to participation.

Timetabling and prioritising for full EQIA (only relevant to Option 3)

If the activity/policy has been '**screened in**' for full equality impact assessment, give details of any factors to be considered and the next steps for progressing the EQIA, including a proposed timetable.

Is the activity/policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities? Yes/No. If yes, please provide details. Not Applicable.

Part 4. Monitoring

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

Effective monitoring will help a public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the activity/policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and activity/policy development.

What will be monitored and how? What specific equality monitoring will be done? Who will undertake and sign-off the monitoring of this activity/policy and on what frequency? Please give details:

The International Trade Programme will be monitored on an ongoing basis through the review of businesses and applications against programme eligibility criteria.

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

2023/ 2024 approval

2023/2024	Position/Job Title	Date
Screened by: Patricia Mallon	Economic Development Manager	23/10/2023
Reviewed by: Liz Milligan	Equality Officer	7/11/2023
Approved by: Paul McCormick	Head of Economic Development	27/11/23

2024/ 2025 approval

2024/2025	Position/Job Title	Date
Screened by: Patricia Mallon	Economic Development Manager	15/05/2024
Reviewed by: Annie Wilson	Equality Officer	10/07/2024
Approved by: Paul McCormick	Head of Economic Development	10/07/2024

2025/ 2026 approval

2024/2025	Position/Job Title	Date
Screened by: Patricia Mallon	Economic Development Manager	07/05/2025
Reviewed by: Annie Wilson	Equality Officer	20/05/2025
Approved by: Paul McCormick	Head of Economic Development	20/05/2025

2026/ 2027 approval

2026/2027	Position/Job Title	Date
Screened by: Patricia Mallon	Economic Development Manager	09/04/26
Reviewed by: Annie Wilson	Equality Officer	09/04/26

Approved by: Paul McCormick	Head of Economic Development	30/04/26
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Note: On completion of the screening exercise, a copy of the completed Screening Report should be:

- approved and 'signed off' by a senior manager responsible for the activity/policy
- included with Committee reports, as appropriate
- sent to the Equality Officer for the quarterly screening report to consultees, internal reporting and publishing on the LCCC website
- shared with relevant colleagues
- made available to the public on request.

Evidence and documents referenced in the screening report should also be available if requested.

Appendix 1 – Equality Commission guidance on equality impact

*Major impact:

- a) The policy/project is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
- b) Potential equality matters are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;
- c) Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;
- d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;
- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

Minor impact

- a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;

- b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
- c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
- d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

No impact (none)

- a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations;
- b) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

Updated Template @ Oct 2022

Appendix I - Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) Template

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

1A. Name of Public Authority.

Lisburn & Castlereagh City 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.

Development of LCCC International Trade Programme 2026-2027

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

Developing a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Adopting a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Implementing a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Revising a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Designing a Public Service	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Delivering a Public Service	<input type="checkbox"/>		

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.

LCCC International Trade Programme 2026-2027

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

The International Trade Programme aims to deliver an annual programme of international trade activity as part of an overall strategy to support local businesses to grow through developing new customers and markets outside Northern Ireland.

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.*

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 the response is **NO** GO TO Section **2E**.

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

Businesses which are located in rural areas that meet the International Trade Programme eligibility requirements will be able to apply to join trade missions and be supported to gain new markets which ultimately will help their business grow or become more sustainable.

Any growth in new markets may contribute to employment and the local economy in the area where the business is located, which may include 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.

It is unlikely that the International Trade Programme will impact differently on businesses in rural areas. Businesses which are eligible may apply for support and benefit regardless of urban or rural location.

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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rural Tourism	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Education or Training in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
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)	<input type="text"/>

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.

N/A

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 the response is **NO** GO TO Section **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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Published Statistics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Consultation with Other Organisations	<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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.

Interim Local Rural Development Strategy (2016)

DAERA website information and publications, including Key Rural Issues 2021

Information and reports on business activity and employment in LCCC and Northern Ireland

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

Rural businesses who want to grow may experience issues with transport links, infrastructure or connectivity – rural businesses do not have access to superfast Broadband in the same way as urban businesses. They may also struggle to recruit staff with the skills they require.

There is a need to create sustainable jobs in rural areas through growing existing businesses and supporting new business start-ups. There is a need to balance the benefits of growing the economy and rural businesses with environmental concerns around maintaining the appeal of rural areas for local residents and to attract tourists.

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?

N/A

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.

The aim of the International Trade programme is to help businesses expand into new markets which may lead to more jobs and sustainability.

The Business Solutions team has considered the need for balanced support for businesses across the district so that businesses in both urban and rural locations benefit equitably. The International Trade Support Programme is designed to provide support for international market development that is relevant and tailored to the needs of the particular business.

The Business Solutions team has considered how their programmes are promoted to ensure that all eligible businesses know about the support available and there are no unreasonable barriers to application.

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 No If the response is **NO GO TO Section 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.

The key activity delivered by the International Trade Programme has not been influenced significantly by consideration of rural needs as the support required to grow businesses in international markets is not specific to an urban or rural location. Location/rurality is not a factor in deciding whether an applicant business will be supported.

However, LCCC staff are aware of the need to ensure the Programme is well promoted to businesses in rural areas and to ensure there are no barriers to access to ensure equitable spread of benefit across rural areas.

Where feasible, support is tailored to the needs of the particular business and will take into account any rural-specific factors that are relevant to the programme.

If the response to Section **5A** was **YES GO TO Section 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.

N/A

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:	Patricia Mallon
Position/Grade:	Economic Development Manager
Division/Branch	Economic Development
Signature:	Patricia Mallon
Date:	09/04/2026
Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by:	Paul McCormick
Position/Grade:	Head of Service
Division/Branch:	Economic Development
Signature:	Paul McCormick
Date:	30/04/2026