

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

Performance Improvement Policy

Appendix I provides a copy of the reviewed Performance Improvement Policy

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

A reviewed policy.

The Council has a statutory duty under Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 to have a Performance Improvement Policy.

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

This Policy sets out the Council's approach to performance improvement in accordance with the Local Government (NI) Act 2014 (Part 12), and requirements of the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO). It supports the annual Performance Improvement Plan which sets out the Council's annual objectives for performance management.

The Council also pays regard to statutory guidance for local government performance improvement; section III of the Act, as issued by the Department of Communities (Guidance for Local Government Performance Improvement 2016).

The aim of this policy is to detail how performance activities contribute to the Performance Culture of the Council in order to drive organisational excellence and provide stakeholder satisfaction. It also describes how the Council will implement its responsibilities under the Performance Duty as set out in Part 12 of the Act.

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 PI policy is not targeted at any specific Section 75 group. Performance Improvement is intended to benefit all ratepayers and service users. Some

Performance Improvement projects or actions that are implemented may however be targeted at or benefit specific groups and they will be subject to impact assessment at the relevant time.

Who initiated or developed the activity/policy/project?

Performance Improvement is a requirement of the Local Government Act. The review of the policy was prompted by an audit recommendation and the policy was reviewed by the Council’s Performance Improvement Officer, it was approved by the Corporate Management Team on 30th March 2023 and it will be presented to the Governance & Audit Committee for approval in June 2023 and eventually adopted by full Council by the end of June 2023.

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

The Performance Improvement Policy is an internal policy that sets out a framework for Performance within LCCC. Progress against the council’s annual Performance Improvement Plan is monitored, co-ordinated and reported on by the Performance Improvement Officer to CMT and the Governance & Audit Committee.

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

Yes

If yes, give brief details of any significant factors.

Legislative

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

Staff - applies to all staff

Service users – as eventual beneficiaries

Other public sector organisations eg NIAO and DfC

Voluntary/community/trade unions- community groups as beneficiaries; trade unions as staff representatives and consultees

Other Elected Members, delivery partners, contractors

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

Name of document/activity/policy	Who owns or implements
1. The Council’s DRAFT INTERIM Corporate Plan 2021 – 2024 – Response and Recovery to the COVID-19 Pandemic. https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/uploads/general/ICP_2021_Final.pdf	Chief Executive’s Office/all services
2. Annual Performance Improvement Plans and Reports https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/council/performance-improvement	All services
3. Communications activity	Corporate Communications
4. HR policies and activity	HR & OD
5. Equality Scheme and associated equality policies and plans	Equality Officer
6. Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2014/8/part/12/enacted	Department for Communities (DfC)

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 reviewing the policy, we have considered guidance from DfC and Audit Office; our previous PIPs and reports; feedback from consultation; what other councils do etc.

Performance Improvement applies to all activities of council and ultimately to all residents/ratepayers and users of our services.

However, as this is an over-arching policy that sets a framework for the Council’s approach to Performance Improvement, detailed analysis of demographic and other data by equality category is not considered relevant to this screening.

Information and evidence for Section 75 categories will however be considered in equality screening of annual PI plans and improvement actions or projects that flow from the annual plan.

Sec 75 Category	Details of evidence/information
Religious Belief	<p>NI Census 2021 data for the Lisburn and Castlereagh area:</p> <p>49% Protestant (or other Christian) 24% Catholic 1.5 Other religion 24% No religion 1.4% Not stated</p>
Political Opinion	<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 22% Other</p> <p>Political party representation on LCCC from local government elections 2019 (40 Members): DUP – 15 UUP – 11 Alliance – 9 Sinn Fein – 2 SDLP – 2 Green Party NI – 1 (later moved to SDLP) Total – at least 64% unionist</p>
Racial Group	<p>Census 2021 suggests 87% of the LCCC population were born in N Ireland. The same data indicates almost 4% were from an ethnic minority (up from 96% were white (including Irish Traveller).</p> <p>The LCCC area has small populations of various nationalities, including Syrian refugees, and a minority of residents will speak languages other than English as their first language.</p>

Age	<p>Census 2021:</p> <p>0-14 years – 19%</p> <p>15-39 years – 30%</p> <p>40-64 years – 33%</p> <p>65+ years – 18%</p>
Marital Status	<p>The 2021 census records for people over the age of 16 for the LCCC area:</p> <p>Single - 33%</p> <p>Married or in civil partnership - 52%</p> <p>Separated – 3%</p> <p>Divorced or formerly in civil partnership - 6%</p> <p>Widowed or surviving partner from civil partnership – 6%</p>
Sexual Orientation	<p>Census 2021:</p> <p>Straight/heterosexual – 91%</p> <p>Gay, lesbian or other sexual orientation – 2%</p> <p>Prefer not to say or not stated – 7%</p>
Men & Women Generally	<p>The estimated population of LCCC local government district in 2021 census was 149,100, of which 73,059 (49%) were male and 76,041 (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 data from the 2021 Census for England and Wales suggests that 0.5% do not identify with the sex they were attributed at birth.</p>
Disability	<p>Census 2021 found that 21.7% of LCCC residents reported they had a long-term health problem or disability that limited their day-to-day activities a little or a lot (12.4% and 9.3% respectively). This is a 3.4% increase on the Census 2011 figures.</p>
People with and without Dependants	<p>People with dependants includes parents of young children, parents of older dependant or disabled people, carers of elderly family members and others.</p> <p>Census 2021 found that 31% of households in LCCC had one or more dependent children.</p> <p>Census 2021 also found that 12.8% of residents aged over 5 years reported that they carried out unpaid care for family members or others.</p>

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

Sec 75 Category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
Religious Belief Political Opinion Racial Group Age Marital Status Sexual Orientation Men & Women Generally Disability Dependants	As this is an over-arching policy that sets a framework for the Council's approach to Performance Improvement, detailed analysis of demographic and other data by equality category is not considered relevant to this screening. Information and evidence for Section 75 categories will be considered in equality screening of annual PI plans and improvement actions or projects that flow from the annual plan.

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?

Sec 75 Category	Details of activity/policy impact	Level of impact (minor/major/none*)
Religious Belief Political Opinion Racial Group Age Marital Status Sexual Orientation Men & Women Generally Disability Dependants	The application of the Performance Improvement Policy is intended to benefit all council ratepayers and service users and will not directly impact on equality of opportunity. It is not anticipated that there would be any negative impacts associated with implementation of this policy.	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?

Section 75 Category	IF Yes, provide details	If No, provide details
Religious Belief Political Opinion Racial Group Age Marital Status Sexual Orientation Men & Women Generally Disability People with and without Dependants		Opportunities to better promote equality and/or good relations will be considered in relation to the detailed improvement objectives in annual plans

2 (b) 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(c) DDA Disability Duties (see Disability Action Plan 2021-2025) [new]

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, however disabled people will be specifically consulted about proposed improvement objectives in the public consultation on annual Performance Improvement Plans and, as appropriate, in relation to certain improvement projects.

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	This policy will not specifically impact on the promotion of good relations for any group.	None

*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 Political Opinion Racial Group		Not in relation to this policy. However, any improvement projects that flow from the annual performance improvement plan will be considered for opportunities as appropriate.

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 are aware that people have more than one identify and may experience additional disadvantage accordingly. Multiple identity is not directly relevant to this particular policy but will be taken into account in any screening of individual improvement projects as appropriate.

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>This is a policy that sets a framework for our approach to Performance Improvement. It is intended to benefit everyone the council serves and no negative impacts should result. However, it is recognised that there is a need to screen the annual Performance Improvement Plan and its specific objectives and actions/projects for equality and good relations impacts.</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</p>	

better promote equality and/or good relations identified [complete mitigation section below]	
<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) N/A

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.

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

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.

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 policy will be kept under review and updated or amended at least every 3 years or when necessary based on future guidance from DfC or the NI Audit Office.

There will be ongoing review of annual Performance Improvement Plans which are reported to council’s senior management team and the Governance & Audit Committee on a quarterly basis.

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

	Position/Job Title	Date
Screened by: Kerrie-Anne McKibbin	Performance Improvement Officer	30/03/23
Mary McSorley	Equality Officer	06/04/23
Approved by: Caroline Magee	Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development	

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.

Add Policy as Appendix 2