

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Section 75 Equality and Good Relations Screening template (Oct 2022)

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

Name of the activity/policy/project

Membership structure and appointment process for internal Council working groups

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

This is a new approach, formalising the membership structure and Chairperson appointment process for internal working groups within the Council.

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

The revised approach aims to:

- Ensure fair and proportional representation of political parties on working groups.
- Apply the D'Hondt method for Chairperson appointments to enhance transparency and consistency and in keeping with Council practice for other groups.
- Maintain stability in working group membership while allowing for role-based adjustments as necessary.
- Uphold democratic principles and inclusivity in decision-making processes.

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.

This policy applies to:

- Elected Members of the Council.
- Officers who support and participate in working groups.
- There are no specific benefits aimed at particular Section 75 groups, but the approach ensures equal representation for all political parties.

Who initiated or developed the activity/policy/project?

- Developed by: Finance and Corporate Services Department – Members Services Unit at the request of the Corporate Services Committee

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

- Owned by: Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council.
- Implemented by: Members Services Unit.

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.

- Financial: Minimal impact, as changes relate to procedural governance rather than additional costs.
- Legal: Must align with existing Council governance frameworks and electoral procedures.
- Other: Potential political sensitivities around allocation of positions.

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

- **Internal:** Council Members, Committees, Officers.
- **External:** Partner organisations and external bodies that interact with Council working groups.
- **Elected Representatives:** Those involved in working group activities.

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

Name of policy/strategy/plan	Who owns or implements?
LCCC Equality Scheme	LCCC
LCCC Corporate Plan	LCCC

Civic Events Policy	LCCC
Mayoral Protocol	LCCC
PR & Photographic Policy	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.

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
	<p>The proposed changes are procedural and aim to improve governance. No negative impact on any Section 75 group is anticipated. The structured appointment process enhances transparency and equity.</p> <p>Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council is made up of 40 Elected Members from 6 different political parties.</p>
Religious Belief	Information on religious belief of Elected Members is not available. No negative impact anticipated.
Political Opinion	<p>DUP – 14</p> <p>APNI – 13</p> <p>UUP – 6</p> <p>SF – 4</p> <p>SDLP – 2</p> <p>Independent Member – 1</p>

	Positive impact—ensures balanced representation using an established methodology.
Racial Group	Information relating to Elected Members not available. However, no negative impact anticipated.
Age	Information relating to Elected Members not available. However, no negative impact anticipated.
Marital Status	Information relating to Elected Members not available. However, no negative impact anticipated.
Sexual Orientation	Information relating to Elected Members not available. However, no negative impact anticipated.
Men & Women Generally	Female Elected Members – 9 Male Elected Members – 31 However, no negative impact anticipated.
Disability	Information relating to Elected Members not available. However, no negative impact anticipated.
People with and without Dependents	Information relating to Elected Members not available. However, no negative impact anticipated.

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	Information on religious belief of Elected Members is not held by the Council. No negative impact anticipated.
Political Opinion	DUP – 14 APNI – 13 UUP – 6 SF – 4 SDLP – 2 Independent Member – 1 Positive impact—ensures balanced representation in line with established democratic processes.
Racial Group	Information relating to Elected Members for these groups is not held by the Council. However, no negative impact anticipated.
Age	
Marital Status	
Sexual Orientation	
Men & Women Generally	Female Elected Members – 9 Male Elected Members – 31 However, no negative impact anticipated.
Disability	Information relating to Elected Members is not held by the Council. However, no negative impact anticipated.
People with and without Dependents	

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?

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	None	N/A
Political Opinion	Positive	Minor
Racial Group	None	N/A
Age	None	N/A
Marital Status	None	N/A
Sexual Orientation	None	N/A
Men & Women Generally	None	N/A
Disability	None	N/A
People with and without Dependants	None	N/A

* 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		The policy ensures a fair and structured appointment process using a well established method. No further opportunities to promote equality beyond existing inclusivity measures are identified.
Political Opinion		
Racial Group		
Age		
Marital Status		
Sexual Orientation		
Men & Women Generally		
Disability		

People with and without Dependants		
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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?

No

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?

The policy positively impacts good relations by ensuring proportional representation and reducing potential disputes over membership allocation.

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	None	
Political Opinion	Positive – encourages cross party cooperation.	Minor
Racial 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? Yes

Good Relations Category	IF Yes, provide details	If No, provide details
Religious Belief	The structured approach reduces potential disputes through established democratic processes and fosters cooperative decision-making among political groups.	
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.

The activity/policy will have no anticipated impact on people with multiple identities.

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 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]	The proposed changes enhance democratic fairness and transparency without adversely affecting any Section 75 group. No significant impacts requiring mitigation are identified.
Option 3 Screen in for a full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) [If option 3, complete timetabling and prioritising section below]	

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?

The policy offers a fair and structured appointment process. No further opportunities to promote equality/and or good relations beyond existing inclusivity measures are identified.

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.

N/A

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.

N/A

Is the activity/policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities? No.

No

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 following actions will be monitored by the Acting PCSP/Members Services Manager and signed off by the Head of Corporate Communications and Administration:

- implementation will be reviewed annually as part of the Council's governance oversight.

- Feedback from Council Members and Officers will be monitored to identify any unintended consequences.
- Adjustments will be made as necessary to maintain fairness and effectiveness.

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

	Position/Job Title	Date
Screened by: Cathy Adamson	Acting PCSP/Members Services Manager	18 March 2025
Reviewed by:	Equality Officer	20 March 2025
Approved by:	Head of CC&A	02 April 2025

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.