ARMAGH CITY, BANBRIDGE AND CRAIGAVON BOROUGH COUNCIL

Equality Screening Form

Policy Title: Tak£500 & Participatory Budgeting Project 2023

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

Implementing a PB pilot was an action in the partnership's Community Engagement Strategy. The pilot was implemented in 2020/21 and after a learning report and PB Roundtable process the partnership has committed to delivering an annual PB grants programme. A second PB project was delivered during 2022/23 and this will be the partnership's third PB grants project: Tak£500+. PB is also an action in the partnership's action plan.

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

The project contributes to two outcomes in Connected, the community plan: Confident Community: Everyone has opportunities to engage in community life and shape decisions – we have a strong sense of community belonging and take pride in our area. Healthy Community: People are making positive lifestyle choices. They are more resilient and better equipped to cope with life's challenges. Confident Community includes a population indicator around the percentage of people who feel they have an influence when it comes to any of the decisions made in their neighbourhood. In the last Statement of Progress in 2023 this figure stood at 19% and had been decreasing over the past six years. This action also builds upon the commitments set out in "Our Community Engagement Strategy, Armagh Banbridge Craigavon Community Planning Partnership June 2019, which sets out how the partners will achieve the following aims: • To enhance our community engagement through agreed standards, defined roles and clear actions • To maximise opportunities for people to be more involved and have a meaningful say in decisions which affect their lives The implementation of a Participatory Budgeting (PB) Pilot was an action of the action plan in the Community Engagement Strategy. Following a learning report and round table process the partnership has committed to running a PB grants programme every year and exploring options for mainstreaming PB. Participatory Budgeting is a process that directly involves local people in making decisions on the spending of a defined public budget. This is either through groups pitching for small pots of money to deliver projects or through mainstream investments taken by a public body.

The proposed PB project will allocate small pots of money to promote the Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing public health message.

The community planning partnership has established a working group to take forward the PB project and the group has expressed the following Shared Purpose for the project:

- To empower all communities and support a sense of ownership for investment and decision-making
- To better meet needs – as defined by the local community
- To strengthen partnership working
- To promote innovation, inclusion and community connections
- To promote the Take 5 public health message

Constituted and non-constituted groups will be able to put forward proposals for small projects of up to a maximum £1,000 to contribute to the Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing public health message. The 5 Steps to Wellbeing public health message includes: Give, Be active, Connect, Keep Learning and Take Notice.

Tak£500+ is the name the working group have selected for the PB project.

Policy Framework

Has the policy been developed in response to statutory requirements, legal advice or on the basis of any other professional advice? Does this affect the discretion available to The Council to amend the policy?

Statutory Guidance for community planning states that community planning partnerships should: "seek the views of the community, encourage them to express their views, and take their views into account in the community planning process."

Community is defined in its broadest sense and includes:

- our residents;
- our service users;
- voluntary body representatives whose activities benefit our district;
- our businesses; and
- other persons interested in the social, economic or environmental wellbeing of the area.

Participatory Budgeting will help the community planning partnership to meet this duty, but there is no requirement for partnerships to implement or develop a specific Participatory Budgeting Project.

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

All Section 75 categories are expected to benefit from this PB Project

Through its Community Engagement Strategy the Community Planning Partnership has adopted the Scottish Community Engagement Standards which include a standard on inclusion. These standards will be applied to the PB project.

The PB project will be open to children and young people from 8 years and above who will be able to apply for funding and/or be given a vote on projects.

In the last PB project nearly a quarter of voters (24%) were aged between 8 and 24 years.

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

Who initiated or wrote the policy?	The Community Planning Partnership initiated the Community Engagement Strategy in which this action has been agreed. The Community Planning Team in Council developed the strategy with support from Community Places as part of the Carnegie UK Trust Embedding Wellbeing in Northern Ireland Project. The partnership's PB Working Group has designed the PB process.
Who is responsible for implementation?	The Community Planning Strategic Partnership is responsible for the PB project through its Shared Leadership & Community Engagement Sub-Committee. A Participatory Budgeting Working Group has been formed to design and implement the process. As the project lead, Council is responsible to delivery of the process.

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

The strategy is dependent on buy in and commitment of all community planning partners across the partnership.

To date partners have pledged a total of £82,000 for the PB Funding pool.

The project will require an intensive promotion exercise to reach small groups from across the Borough. It will be required to draw on the reach of all our community planning partners including our Community and Voluntary Sector Panel and Elected Members to encourage groups to take part.

Main stakeholders in relation to the policy

Please list main stakeholders affected by the policy (e.g. staff, customers, other statutory bodies, community or voluntary sector, private sector)

The community, which is defined in its broadest sense in the community planning statutory guidance includes:
- residents;
- service users;
- voluntary body representatives whose activities benefit our district;

- businesses; and
- other persons interested in the social, economic or environmental wellbeing of the area, including statutory community planning partners.

Members of the community planning partnership's PB Working Group include:
Housing Executive, Southern Health and Social Care Trust, Department for Communities, PSNI, CYPSP, Ark Housing Association, PCSP, and CVS Panel members: West Armagh Consortium, Craigavon Area Food Bank, Portadown Rugby Club, Clanmil Housing Association, Triangle Housing, Linking Generations, Craigavon Banbridge Volunteer Bureau and Volunteer Now.

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

• Our Community Engagement Strategy: Armagh Banbridge Craigavon Community Planning Partnership June 2019 – action in the strategy
• Connected Community Plan for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough 2017-2030 – delivery mechanism for the plan and contributing to the realisation of two outcomes, see above
• Connected Recovery Plan – Armagh Banbridge Craigavon Community Planning Partnership March 2022 (refreshed version) – action in the plan

Available Evidence

The Council should ensure that its screening decisions are informed by relevant data. What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories. For up to date S75 Borough Statistics

Section 75 category	Evidence
Religious belief	43.8% of residents in the borough on Census Day 2021 belong to or were brought up in the Catholic religion and 46.7% belong to or were brought up in a Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related) religion. A further 1.2% belonged to or had been brought up in other religions while 8.2% neither belonged to, nor had been brought up in a religion.
Political opinion	Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council has 41 elected members. A breakdown of results of the Local Government Election in May 2023 for the borough are as follows: • Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) – 13 • Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) – 6 • Sinn Fein – 15 • Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) – 1 • Alliance – 4 • Independent – 1 • Traditional Unionist Voice (TUV) - 1 A total of 87,684 votes were polled in the borough from an eligible electorate of 155,625 giving a turnout of 56.34%.

	This breakdown is taken as an approximate representation of the political opinion of people within the borough.
Racial group	Ethnicity Results from the 2021 Census showed that 96.7% of the usually resident population of the borough were white and 3.3% were from minority ethnic groups. The main ethnic minorities were Mixed (1,652 individuals), Black African (1,132 individuals) and Chinese (683 individuals). Country of Birth Results from the 2021 Census show that 85.5% of residents in the borough were born in Northern Ireland. The borough had 8.6% of residents, or 18,836 individuals, who were born outside the United Kingdom or Republic of Ireland. Main Language Results from Census 2021 show that 6.8% of residents in the borough aged 3+ years (14,376 individuals) spoke a language other than English as their main language. In Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon borough in 2021, the most prevalent main languages other than English were Polish (1.7%) and Lithuanian (1.2%).
Age	The population of the borough was estimated to be 218,656 on Census Day 2021, the profile of which is shown in Table 5: Age profile of Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council. Table MS-A06 Age Structure, Census 2021 22.06% 0 – 15 years 9.96% 16 – 24 years 32.94% 25 – 49 years 19.04% 50 – 64 years 16.0% 65 and over Total 100.0% The age profile of the borough is projected to change between 2020 and 2043 with an ageing population. It is projected that in 2033, the proportion of older people in the borough (those aged 65 and over) will be higher than the proportion of children (those aged 15 and under). The proportion of those aged 65 and over is projected to increase from 15.7% in 2020 to 22.1% in 2043. The proportion of those aged under 16 is projected to decrease from 22.5% in 2020 to 18.9% in 2043.
Marital status	The 2021 Census provides information on the marital and civil partnership status of those aged 16 and over. Almost half of residents aged 16+ in the borough were married (49.0%).
Sexual orientation	The question on sexual orientation was new for the 2021 Census and was asked of all people aged 16 and over. However, while completing the census is a legal obligation, there was no statutory penalty for those people who failed to provide an answer to the question on sexual orientation.

	Just 1.5% of the population aged 16 and over in the borough identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual or other (LGB+) while 90.5% identified as straight or heterosexual and 8% did not provide an answer to the question.
Men and women generally	The 2021 Census showed that in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough 49.5% (108,268) of usual residents were male and 50.5% (110,388) were female.
Disability	According to the 2021 Census, more than one in five people in the borough (22% or 48,726 individuals) had a limiting long-term health problem or disability. Census 2021 results are disaggregated by broad age bands and the results show the prevalence of a limiting long-term health problem or disability is related to age . Almost 57% of the population aged 65+ in the borough had a limiting long-term health problem or disability compared to 6% of those aged between 0-14. Benefit statistics from the Department for Communities showed that as of May 2023 there were: • 2,560 or 5.3% of under 16 population and 4,840 or 14.6% of pension age eligible population claiming Disability Living Allowance. • 6,010 or 18.1% of 66+ population claiming Attendance Allowance. • 19,410 Personal Independent Payment claims in payment (experimental statistics).
Dependants	The 2021 Census showed that 32% or 27,192 households in the borough contained dependent children. Results from the 2021 Census also show that 12% of the borough's population aged 5 years old and over (or 24,741 individuals) provided unpaid care. Of those who provided unpaid support: ☐ 46% provided 1 – 19 hours per week ☐ 24% provided 20 – 49 hours per week ☐ 30% provided 50+ hours per week. Benefit statistics from the Department for Communities show that at May 2023 there were 8,140 claimants, or 4.8% of 16 and over population, claiming Carer's Allowance in the borough.

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information gathered above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories in relation to this particular policy/decision?

Section 75 category	Needs, experiences and priorities
Religious belief	Building on the statistical evidence of needs developed to date, the purpose of this project is to ensure that all Section 75 groups are able to decide on how funding is allocated in the borough through the Tak£500+ PB Scheme.
Political opinion	Building on the statistical evidence of needs developed to date, the purpose of this project is to ensure that all Section 75 groups are able to decide on how funding is allocated in the borough through the Tak£500+ PB Scheme.

Racial group	Building on the statistical evidence of needs developed to date, the purpose of this project is to ensure that all Section 75 groups are able to decide on how funding is allocated in the borough through the Tak£500+ PB Scheme.
Age	Building on the statistical evidence of needs developed to date, the purpose of this project is to ensure that all Section 75 groups are able to decide on how funding is allocated in the borough through the Tak£500+ PB Scheme.
Marital status	Building on the statistical evidence of needs developed to date, the purpose of this project is to ensure that all Section 75 groups are able to decide on how funding is allocated in the borough through the Tak£500+ PB Scheme.
Sexual orientation	Building on the statistical evidence of needs developed to date, the purpose of this project is to ensure that all Section 75 groups are able to decide on how funding is allocated in the borough through the Tak£500+ PB Scheme.
Men and women generally	Building on the statistical evidence of needs developed to date, the purpose of this project is to ensure that all Section 75 groups are able to decide on how funding is allocated in the borough through the Tak£500+ PB Scheme.
Disability	Building on the statistical evidence of needs developed to date, the purpose of this project is to ensure that all Section 75 groups are able to decide on how funding is allocated in the borough through the Tak£500+ PB Scheme.
Dependants	Building on the statistical evidence of needs developed to date, the purpose of this project is to ensure that all Section 75 groups are able to decide on how funding is allocated in the borough through the Tak£500+ PB Scheme.

Screening Questions

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

Category	Policy Impact	Level of impact (Major/minor/none)
Religious belief	Greater numbers of Protestants than people from other religious backgrounds reside in the borough However, the PB Project will not have a detrimental impact upon those with other religious beliefs, nor does it adversely affect the ability and/or opportunities for people from other religious backgrounds to participate within the project programme.	Potential differential impact, but will be actively promoted across the borough.

	The project will require an intensive promotion exercise to reach small groups from across the Borough. It will be required to draw on the reach of all our community planning partners including our Community and Voluntary Sector Panel and Elected Members to encourage groups to take part to ensure participation from everyone irrespective of religious belief and political opinion	
Political opinion	Results from the 2011 Census showed that 98.5% of the usually resident population of the borough were white and 1.5% were from minority ethnic groups.

However, the PB Project will not have a detrimental impact upon those from minority ethnic groups nor does it adversely affect the ability and/or opportunities for people from minority ethnic groups to participate within the project programme.

The project will require an intensive promotion exercise to reach small groups from across the Borough. It will be required to draw on the reach of all our community planning partners including our Community and Voluntary Sector Panel and Elected Members to encourage groups to take part to ensure participation from everyone. | Potential differential impact, but will be actively promoted across the borough. |
| Racial group | Positive opportunities for children and young people to apply for funding and to be involved in public decision making. Children and young people aged 8 | Major positive |

	years and above will be given the opportunity to put forward ideas and vote on projects that will benefit their area. There may be opportunities for intergenerational working and intergenerational projects may be identified. According to NINIS, in 2020 49% of people aged 65+ in ABC had never accessed the internet. The PB Working Group are working with Council's Environmental Health department to provide support for older people to access PB online and the in room events.	Potential differential impact, but will be actively promoted across the borough.
Age		No negative impact.
Marital status		No negative impact.
Sexual orientation		No negative impact.
Men and women generally	Information and voting events will occur in room this time, instead of online as happened in the first project. Potential for barriers to accessing events. Consequently there will be an online information event, the phone numbers of all PB WG members have been promoted so that people can call for information and support and the Guide to Accessible events will be used to plan events.	Potential negative impact.
Disability	Information events are in the evening during the week in council venues. To ensure those who may not have childcare can access the events, there is an online event during school hours.	Potential negative impact.

	Voting events are on Saturdays and will be child friendly.	
Dependents	Information events are in the evening during the week in council venues. To ensure those who may not have childcare can access the events, there is an online event during school hours. Voting events are on Saturdays and will be child friendly.	Potential negative impact.

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

Category	If yes, provide details	If no, provide reasons
Religious belief	Yes, opportunities to be more involved and have a meaningful say in decisions which affect their lives. All applicants will have a say on how funding is allocated in their area.	
Political opinion	Yes, opportunities to be more involved and have a meaningful say in decisions which affect their lives. All applicants will have a say on how funding is allocated in their area.	
Racial group	Yes, opportunities to be more involved and have a meaningful say in decisions which affect their lives. All applicants will have a say on how funding is allocated in their area.	
Age	Yes, opportunities to be more involved and have a meaningful say in decisions which affect their lives. All applicants will have a say on how funding is allocated in their area.	
Marital status	Yes, opportunities to be more involved and have a meaningful say in decisions which affect their lives. All applicants will have a say on how funding is allocated in their area.	

Sexual orientation	Yes, opportunities to be more involved and have a meaningful say in decisions which affect their lives. All applicants will have a say on how funding is allocated in their area.	
Men and women generally	Yes, opportunities to be more involved and have a meaningful say in decisions which affect their lives. All applicants will have a say on how funding is allocated in their area.	
Disability	Yes, opportunities to be more involved and have a meaningful say in decisions which affect their lives. All applicants will have a say on how funding is allocated in their area.	
Dependants	Yes, opportunities to be more involved and have a meaningful say in decisions which affect their lives. All applicants will have a say on how funding is allocated in their area.	

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

Category	Details of Policy Impact	Level of impact (major/minor/none)
Religious belief	The process is designed to be collaborative and to build cross-community relationships and connections. Voters are required to talk to all applicants in their area at the voting events before casting their votes. It is anticipated that community connections will be made in this way during the voting process. Celebration events will be held to bring together all successful groups to reflect on their projects and these events will also provide opportunity for connections and collaboration.	
Political opinion		
Racial group		

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

Category	If yes, provide details	If no, provide reasons
Religious belief	The process is designed to be collaborative and to build cross-community relationships and connections. Voters are required to talk to all applicants in their area at the voting events before casting their votes. It is anticipated that community connections will be made in this way during the voting process. Celebration events will be held to bring together all successful groups to reflect on their projects and these events will also provide opportunity for connections and collaboration.	
Political opinion	The process is designed to be collaborative and to build cross-community relationships and connections. Voters are required to talk to all applicants in their area at the voting events before casting their votes. It is anticipated that community connections will be made in this way during the voting process. Celebration events will be held to bring together all successful groups to reflect on their projects and these events will also provide opportunity for connections and collaboration.	
Racial group	The process is designed to be collaborative and to build cross-community relationships and connections. Voters are required to talk to all applicants in their area at the	

| | voting events before casting their votes. It is anticipated that community connections will be made in this way during the voting process.

Celebration events will be held to bring together all successful groups to reflect on their projects and these events will also provide opportunity for connections and collaboration. | |
|---|---|---|

Multiple Identity

Generally speaking, people fall into more than one Section 75 category (for example: disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; young lesbian, gay and bisexual people).   Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant s75 categories concerned.

A comprehensive promotional campaign which taps into the reach of the community planning partnership will promote participation in the project by people with multiple identities.

Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006

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

If applications are received by groups which include people with a disability and/or for projects to benefit people with a disability, voters will have the opportunity to learn about the projects by talking to the group as a requirement to vote in the process.

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

Yes, the Community Planning Partnership includes a Community, Voluntary and Social Enterprise Panel. Currently there is participation by disability service providers. We will ensure to use their reach when promoting the PB funding opportunity and events. The project will provide opportunities for people with disabilities to be actively involved in public life through community action and being involved in public decisions about budget allocation.

A: NO IMPACT IDENTIFIED ON ANY CATEGORY – EQIA UNNECESSARY

Please identify reasons for this below

B: MINOR IMPACT IDENTIFIED – EQIA NOT CONSIDERED NECESSARY AS IMPACT CAN BE ELIMINATED OR MITIGATED

Where the impact is likely to be minor, you should consider if the policy can be mitigated, or an alternative policy introduced. If so, an EQIA may not be considered necessary. You must indicate the reasons for this decision below, together with details of measures to mitigate the adverse impact or the alternative policy proposed.

The Tak£500+ project aims to ensure that all Section 75 groups are able to contribute to decisions that will benefit the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough and the people who live in it.

The process is collaborative, it builds relationships and connections and will help foster links between groups.

The project will require an intensive promotion exercise to reach small groups from across the borough. It will be required to draw on the reach of all our community planning partners including our Community and Voluntary Sector Panel and Elected Members to encourage groups to take part.

The application form is short and straightforward with applicants providing details on their proposal and it will be checked against a predetermined criteria eg: Safe, legal, feasible, deliverable

Advice and clarification on applications will be provided to help groups to move through the next stage.

Mitigations include:

Age
•	Children and young people aged 8 years and over can propose projects and vote
•	Information sent to schools and youth services
•	Age Friendly Officer is a member of the PB WG, the project is promoted through the Age Friendly Alliance and ABC Seniors Network
•	Linking Generations NI is a member of the PB Working Group
•	Play Development Worker also a member of the working group
•	Targeted bespoke information session with minority ethnic communities and with older people.

Disability
•	Online information event as well as in room events
•	Guide to Accessible events will be used to plan events

Dependents
•   Online information event during school hours
•   Voting events will be child friendly and on Saturdays

Racial Group
•   Bespoke targeted information sessions will be developed and delivered to support groups to apply
•   Interpretation services will be made available if required.

Additional support
The PB WG members' phone numbers have been included on promotional material so that they can provide additional support with applications if necessary.

Community Engagement Standards – Inclusion & Support
The community planning partnership has adopted the Scottish Community Engagement Standards which include standards on inclusion and support. The PB WG will evaluate how inclusive the project is and whether adequate support was provided for everyone to be able to take part. The PB WG assessed themselves as scoring 5/5 for inclusion and 5/5 for support for the previous PB project Tak£500+.

PB Charter for Northern Ireland – Inclusive and Supported
The community planning partnership has adopted the PB Charter for Northern Ireland the PB working group will evaluate how inclusive and supported the project was. For the previous Project the PB working group assessed themselves as scoring 4/5 for being inclusive and 4.5/5 for supported.

C: MAJOR IMPACT IDENTIFIED – EQIA REQUIRED

If the decision is to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

Timetabling and Prioritising

If the policy has been screened in for equality impact assessment, please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3 with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Policy Criterion   **Rating (1-3)**
Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations
Social need
Effect on people's daily lives

The total rating score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the Council in timetabling its EQIAs.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities? If yes, please give details.

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

Further information on monitoring is available in the Equality Commission's guidance on monitoring (www.equalityni.org).

Identify how the impact of the policy is to be monitored

The action will subject to ongoing monitoring. The successful applicants will take part in a Celebration Event to share how their projects has benefitted the borough area.

Evaluation of the project programme will be completed by the working group and will inform and refine a repeat PB process.

Approval and Authorisation

A copy of the screening form for each policy screened should be signed off by the senior manager responsible for that policy. The screening recommendation should be reported to the relevant Committee/The Council when the policy is submitted for approval.

Screened by	Position/Job title	Date
Michelle Markey	Community Planning and Engagement Officer	08/11/2023
Approved by	Position/Job Title	Date
Jennie Dunlop	Community and Strategic Planning Manager	08/11/2023

A copy of the completed screening form should be signed off and approved by the senior manager responsible for that policy. The completed screening form should be attached to the relevant Committee paper when the policy is submitted for approval.

Following approval by Council please forward a copy of the completed approved policy and screening form to:

Equality@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

The policy and completed screening form will be made available on the Council's website.

Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA)

1A. Name of Public Authority: Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough The 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.

Tak£500+ Participatory Budgeting Project 2023/24, an action from the Armagh Banbridge & Craigavon Community Planning Partnership's Community Engagement Strategy and Covid-19 Response & Recovery Plan.

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

Developing a	
Adopting a	
Implementing a	Strategy
Revising a	
Designing a Public Service	☐
Delivering a Public Service	☐

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

Our Community Engagement Strategy, Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon Community Planning Partnership.
https://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/resident/involving-our-communities/

Connected Covid-19 Response & Recovery Plan, Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon Community Planning Partnership.
https://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/resident/covid-19-response-and-recovery-plan/

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

The project contributes to two outcomes in Connected, the community plan:

Confident Community: Everyone has opportunities to engage in community life and shape decisions – we have a strong sense of community belonging and take pride in our area.

Healthy Community: People are making positive lifestyle choices. They are more resilient and better equipped to cope with life's challenges.

Confident Community includes a population indicator around the percentage of people who feel they have an influence when it comes to any of the decisions made in their neighbourhood. In the last Statement of Progress in 2023 this figure stood at 19% and had been decreasing over the past six years.

This action also builds upon the commitments set out in "Our Community Engagement Strategy, Armagh Banbridge Craigavon Community Planning Partnership June 2019, which sets out how the partners will achieve the following aims:

•   To enhance our community engagement through agreed standards, defined roles and clear actions
•   To maximise opportunities for people to be more involved and have a meaningful say in decisions which affect their lives

The implementation of a Participatory Budgeting (PB) Pilot was an action of the action plan in the Community Engagement Strategy. Following a learning report and round table process the partnership has committed to running a PB grants programme every year and exploring options for mainstreaming PB. This will be the partnerships third PB project.

Participatory Budgeting is a process that directly involves local people in making decisions on the spending of a defined public budget. This is either through groups pitching for small pots of money to deliver projects or through mainstream investments taken by a public body. The proposed PB project will allocated small pots of money to promote the Take 5 Ways to Wellbeing public health message.

The community planning partnership has established a working group to take forward the PB project and the group has expressed the following aims for the project:

•   To empower all communities and support a sense of ownership for investment and decision-making
•   To better meet needs – as defined by the local community
•   To strengthen partnership working
•   To promote innovation, inclusion and community connections
•   To promote the Take 5 public health message

Constituted and non-constituted groups will be able to put forward proposals for small projects of up to a maximum £1,000 to contribute to the Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing public health message. The 5 Steps to Wellbeing public health message is includes: Give, Be active, Connect, Keep Learning and Take Notice.

Tak£500+ is the name the working group have selected for the PB project.

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 response is No go to 2E

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

It is anticipated that people and groups from rural areas will be impacted by the project in the following ways:

•   They will be involved in decisions about investment in their areas
•   Their needs will be better met through innovative ideas that come from them
•   They will learn about the Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing public health message and will have opportunities to put it into action
•   They will build connections and partnerships with community groups in their areas and with statutory agencies involved in the project

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.

The project involves information events, submitting an application form (grant applicants), attending voting marketplace events (applicants and voters) and celebration events (successful applicants).

People in rural areas may have issues with accessing public transport and/or broadband to apply or attend the events.

The project evaluation for the last Tak£500+ process in 2022-23 mapped the addresses of voters and project applications. The definition of rural used was anywhere outside the main urban centres of Craigavon, Portadown, Lurgan, Banbridge, Armagh and Dromore. The report highlighted that the overall Urban/Rural Split of Voters was 36% Urban and 64% Rural.

Across all applications (successful, unsuccessful and withdrawn) there was a slightly higher percentage from urban areas (55%) than rural (45%).

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	☐
Rural Tourism	☐
Rural Housing	☐
Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas	☐
Education or Training in Rural Areas	☐
Broadband or Mobile Communications in Rural Areas	☐
Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas	☐
Health or Social Care Services in Rural Areas	☒
Poverty in Rural Areas	☐
Deprivation in Rural Areas	☐
Rural Crime or Community Safety	☐
Rural Development	☐
Agri-Environment	☐

Other (Please state)

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.

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 response is No go to 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	☒
Consultation with Other organisations	☒
Published Statistics	☒
Research Papers	☐
Surveys or Questionnaires	☒
Other Publications	☐
Other Methods or Information Sources (include details in Question 3C below)	☐

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.

•   Census 2011 – NISRA
•   Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2017 – NISRA
•   Community and Voluntary Sector Panel: Food Initiatives – Covid -19 response Survey, Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon Community Planning Partnership
        https://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/resident/covid-impact/
•   Statements of Progress 2019-2021 & 2023-2023, Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon Community Planning Partnership
https://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/resident/our-progress-towards-outcomes/

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

Results from the 2011 Census show that just over half of the borough's population (51%) lived in urban areas while just under half (49%) lived in rural areas. This is based on the NISRA default urban/rural settlement classification where settlements with a population greater than or equal to 5,000 are classified as urban while those with a population less than 5,000 are classified as rural. This compares to 63% urban and 37% rural for Northern Ireland overall. Craigavon Urban Area (which includes Central Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown), Banbridge, Armagh and Dromore are the four urban areas within the borough, all other settlements are classified as rural according to the NISRA default classification.

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

Northern Ireland, ranked from 1 most deprived to 890 least deprived.

The Access to Services Domain which measures the extent to which people have poor physical and online access to key services is particularly relevant to rural areas. The borough has nine SOAs (10% of the total 87 SOAs in the borough) in the top 100 most deprived in Northern Ireland on the Access to Services Domain, each of which are defined as rural on the NISRA default classification. Twenty SOAs in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough (23% of the total 87 SOAs in the borough) are in the top 20% most deprived SOAs in Northern Ireland in terms of Access to Services. All twenty are classified as rural. The purpose of the Income Deprivation Domain is to identify the proportion of the population on low income. Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough has nine SOAs (10% of the total 87 SOAs in the borough) in the top 100 most deprived in Northern Ireland on the Income Deprivation Domain. Three of these nine are rural areas according to the NISRA default classification.

One of the population indicators in Connected, the community plan, is the percentage of people who feel they have an influence when it comes to any of the decisions made in their neighbourhood. This figure is only available for the borough as a whole, and in the last Statement of Progress in 2023 it stood at 19% and had been decreasing over the past seven to eight years.

Anecdotally, at community planning partnership meetings and in surveys, mental health is raised as the biggest issue in the borough. During the lockdown voluntary organisations who were delivering food parcels to rural areas in the borough came across people experiencing mental health crises and developed new referral pathways.

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?

4A. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

Access to digital infrastructure (may be a bigger need in rural areas)
Access to public transport (may be a bigger need in rural areas)
Mental health and wellbeing (borough-wide)
Influence over local decision making (borough wide)

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 response is No go to 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 Community Engagement Strategy where the PB project is an action from states:

"We acknowledge that good community engagement is at the heart of addressing inequality. Therefore, we will strive to enable and empower the full participation of all our community. We will make extra efforts to actively engage with those who are traditionally underrepresented or face barriers to inclusion including women, children and young people, people with disabilities and rural dwellers."

The Community Planning Partnership includes a Community, Voluntary and Social Enterprise Panel to facilitate wider community engagement and to ensure that all communities have the opportunity to make their needs known to the community planning partnership. The 60 organisations on the panel include rural organisations, such as TADA, the rural network for the Borough and the two volunteer bureaus: Craigavon and Banbridge Volunteer Bureau and Volunteer Now.

The Tak£500+ working group have links across the whole borough. Officers have committed to ensuring that groups constituted and non constituted groups are supported to apply for this funding.

The project provides opportunities for communities to implement an evidence based public health message around wellbeing.

Access to Digital Infrastructure and Public Transport
Applications can be posted, emailed or submitted on the council website
Information events are in three urban centres in the borough and include an online event for those who may not be able to travel to the in person events

The names and phone numbers of the PB Working Group are published in all promotional documents for anyone to contact them and receive information about applying and support

Two of the three voting events are in urban centres and one is in a rural setting. The duration of the events is four hours.

If the response to Section 5A was YES go to 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: (Michelle Markey)

Position: (Community Planning & Engagement Officer)

Department / Directorate: (Community Planning)

Signature: Michelle Markey

Date: 08/11/2023

Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by: (Jennie Dunlop)

Position: (Community and Strategic Planning Manager)

Department / Directorate: (Community Planning)

Signature: Jennie Dunlop

Date: 08/11/2023