

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

Policy Screening Report

under

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, 1998

April 2022

Equality Scheme Policy Screening Report

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council has developed a number of new policies. In complying with the Council's Equality Scheme Duties, these policies have been screened for any possible adverse impact that they may have under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, 1998. The nine groups are:

Age; Marital status; Women (including girls) and Men (including boys); Persons with a disability and Persons without; Persons with dependants and Persons without; Political Opinion; Racial Group; Religious belief; and Sexual Orientation.

The policies have been screened against the questions below and have been ranked 1,2 or 3

1	'screened in' for equality impact assessment, including date of EQIA
2	'screened out' with mitigation
3	'screened out' without mitigation

Screening Questions

- A What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? (minor/major/none)
- B Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories?
- C To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? (minor/major/none)
- D Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

The attached schedule is being published for consultees information. Comments may be submitted in writing, by telephone, e-mail, or in person and should be forwarded to the address below.

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This document is available in alternative formats on request

Section 75 Northern Ireland Act 1998 – Policy Screening Exercise

Policies have been assessed against the four screening questions and a ranking allocated. For each of the policies detailed below, a more comprehensive ‘screening’ document is available on the Council website or on request. Copies can be found at <https://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/council/policies/> The report includes published screening for the period December 2021 to March 2022.

Policy/Procedure	Policy/Procedure Aims	Ranking/ Screening Decision
Acquisition and Disposal Policy for Land and Property	<p>The Council owns a significant amount of land and property across the Borough. These assets need to be actively and effectively managed in order to ensure that the Council’s objectives are realised and that value for money is achieved from their use.</p> <p>The purpose of the Council’s Acquisition and Disposal policy is to set out the principles and processes by which the Council will acquire and dispose of land and property to inform Officers, Members and other interested parties. For the purposes of the policy, property is deemed to be all freehold and leasehold land and buildings in the ownership or control of the Council.</p> <p>It has no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.</p>	3
Agriculture Strategy	The Agriculture Strategy has been developed following extensive research and engagement as per the methodology outlined in the strategy. Engagement included organised meetings and workshops, two public surveys, 121 conversations with stakeholders.	2

Recommendations have been incorporated into the strategy to address feedback from stakeholders and the survey results. The recommendations will be council led, and will be delivered on a collaborative basis with stakeholders.

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

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

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

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

	<p>Following on from the public consultation on the equality screening exercise, 92% of respondents agreed with the actions and themes. From the feedback, an additional recommendation 10 was introduced to the strategy “Promote the health and well-being of farmers and rural dwellers”.</p>	
<p>Armagh Place Plan</p>	<p>The Armagh Place Plan is a new locality/community plan for the city. There are four outcomes for the Plan.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A Connected City: Armagh is a connected city: physically, digitally and socially 2. A Green City: Armagh is leading the way in sustainable and green thinking; including reducing its air pollution 3. An Engaging City: Armagh engages those who live, work and visit it. 4. A Healthy City: Armagh is an inclusive city and a healthy city. <p>These priorities were identified through research and community engagement from December 2020 to July 2021 and are strategically aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the Programme for Government and <i>Connected</i>, a community plan for Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon, 2017-2030.</p> <p>The Armagh Place Plan has been developed following an extensive research exercise. This included an online survey, engagement with young people and older people, online and live engagement exercises with community planning partners and the Community and Voluntary Sector Panel.</p> <p>Desktop research of the available evidence from NISRA and Statutory Partners was compiled to support the development of the Plan.</p>	<p>2</p>

	<p>The research showed that children and young people; older people; BAME communities, people with a disability and carers are affected by the current urban form layout and engagement that happens in the city. Common themes identified were;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills and employment • Accessibility of the City Centre • Territorial markings, flags and emblems • Safety of the City Centre <p>These are reflected in the actions in the plan and the plan commits the partnership to ongoing dialogue with section 75 groups to ensure that their needs are addressed in its implementation.</p>	
Banbridge Painting Scheme	<p>The Banbridge Painting Scheme is a grant scheme which aims to assist commercial property owners to improve the aesthetic quality of the building stock and respective streetscape within Banbridge Town Centre boundary which are not within the Banbridge Public Realm Scheme boundary.</p> <p>Property owners wishing to undertake external painting works to enhance the lettability, functionality and appearance of their property will be able to apply for grant assistance through the Scheme to encourage vacant commercial property owners to invest in their buildings, attract tenants and reduce long term vacancy, thereby improving the vitality and vibrancy of our towns and villages for all users.</p> <p>Banbridge paint Scheme aims to improve the physical environment for all its users. It is considered that the scheme will not have an adverse impact on any of the Section 75 groups.</p> <p>The Council will not consider applications from Applicants that discriminate</p>	3

	against Section 75 groupings.	
Millennium Way Off-Street Carparking	<p>This is a weekly Sunday service event that is held by Mourneview Assembly. The event consists of a number of vehicles parked in the Council-owned Off-Street Car Park at Millennium Way, Lurgan who gather to listen to their Sunday Service via radios in their vehicles. Whilst it is Mourneview Assembly that complete the application form it is not solely for their parishioners to attend. It is seen as an outreach initiative also.</p> <p>Equality Commission Guidance states that public authorities must consider how the policies it makes and implements affect relationships amongst the people it serves and employs. Promoting Good Relations: a Guide for Public Authorities, October 2007 – The Council-owned Off-Street Car Park at Millennium Way, Lurgan is a shared space.</p> <p>The following measures will mitigate any potential impact on equality and good relations:</p> <p>Previous ad-hoc services have previously received Council approval;</p> <p>The event only takes place for a short period on Sunday evenings. No previous negative comments have been received and no complaints have been made. Service is not broadcast through a loud speaker and it is only those participants in their vehicles who tune in via their radios who have access to the service content. The Church has confirmed that it has the appropriate Licence in place from OFCOM to broadcast.</p> <p>Local PSNI are continually kept informed and no issues have been raised.</p>	2

<p>Queens Platinum Jubilee Programme</p>	<p>Following a Notice of Motion in August 2021 Council took the decision to mark the occasion of The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee. The Notice of Motion stated:</p> <p>c236/2021 8/2021 – queen’s platinum jubilee</p> <p><i>“In 2022, Her Majesty the Queen will become the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee, 70 years of service, having acceded to the throne on 6 February 1952 at just 25 years old.</i></p> <p><i>This is a remarkable achievement and will provide a wonderful opportunity for all communities to come together to celebrate this historic milestone.</i></p> <p><i>We would ask that this Council, in preparation for Her Majesty The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee, puts the appropriate plans and budget in place, with the input of a Working Group, to prepare to suitably mark and celebrate this very significant occasion.”</i></p> <p>A member working group was set up to develop a programme of events and activity to be delivered in 2021 which would commemorate 100 years of Northern Ireland, the work of this working group was extended to include the Queens Platinum Jubilee.</p> <p>Officers took cognisance in relation to this programme and work which had already been progressed by this working group around the toolkit produced by the Community Relations Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund (CRC/HLF) titled ‘Decade of Anniversaries Tool kit: Understanding Our Past, Shaping Our Future’. Commemorations and Events can be a mixed bag. On the one hand they can be an enjoyable experience that opens up historical events in a way that makes a personal impact but on the other hand they can be difficult and divisive. Events such as the</p>	<p>3</p>
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	<p>Celebration of the Queens Platinum Jubilee in Northern Ireland is more likely to be welcomed by the Protestant/Unionist Community but is less likely to be celebrated by the Catholic/Nationalist Community.</p> <p>However, one of the objectives of the member working group was to develop an accessible and inclusive programme; this reflects the principles of the CRC/HLF document ‘Decade of Anniversaries Tool kit: Understanding Our Past, Shaping our Future’. This has been achieved in this programme as it has many activities and events which will enable people to participate from all sections of the community and also enable people to broaden their understanding of the Queens 70 years as a Monarch.</p> <p>The Decade of Anniversaries Toolkit also states “being sensitive to this relationship between culture, society and commemoration creates space for thinking about the ways we can commemorate in a positive way. Marking the importance of certain events, movements, or people allows us to remember those who have gone before, as well as giving us the opportunity to imagine ways to consider the past and shape society for a better future.” This has been adopted in the development of the Queens Platinum Jubilee as the activities and events have been designed to appeal to a range of people and are suitable for all ages. Events are being held in a range of locations and venues so that residents from all backgrounds/section 75 groups can attend. In order to ensure access to outdoor events, reasonable adjustments will be made where necessary to accommodate those with disabilities and their carers.</p>	
Raising Concerns Policy	Workers in N.I now enjoy the protection of the Public Interest Disclosure (NI) Order 1998. The policy describes the protection that individuals have if they make certain disclosures in the public interest. The policy seeks to	3

	<p>promote better accountability and more efficient regulatory oversight.</p> <p>This is a technical policy with no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.</p>	
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