

## **Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council**

### **Section 75 Equality and Good Relations Screening**

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

The Citizen Engagement Framework establishes a clear, consistent, and transparent approach to how the Council engages with residents and stakeholders in the development of policies, programmes, and services. It reflects the Council's corporate values and strategic drivers, particularly around inclusivity, collaboration, and openness.

The Framework consolidates existing good practice, such as the Capital Works Consultation Process and incorporates the Council's statutory equality and good relations responsibilities. It also introduces a standardised workflow for planning, delivering, and recording stakeholder engagement activities.

This Citizen Engagement Framework is presented as a guiding document for all community-based engagement activities aligned with the Corporate Plan. Officers will review its application annually, incorporating lessons learned and evolving best practice.

#### **Name of the activity/policy/project**

Citizen Engagement Framework

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

New

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

As part of the Council's commitment to community-centred service delivery and inclusive governance, the Citizen Engagement Framework has been developed to enhance and standardise how we involve residents in shaping local policies, programmes, and services.

#### **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 policy does not target any specific Section 75 group. It provides a corporate-wide framework to ensure inclusive engagement and participation. Benefits are

expected for all communities, including improved transparency, access to information, and opportunities for input, particularly for people with disabilities, carers, and other groups with specific access needs.

**Who initiated or developed the activity/policy/project?**

Innovation Service within the ODI directorate

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

LCCC

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

No

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

Staff and managers responsible for engagement / consultation

All residents of the Council Area

Local community groups / charities

Elected Members as decision makers

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

<b>Name of policy/strategy/plan</b>	<b>Who owns or implements?</b>
Corporate Plan and ambitions 2024/2028	LCCC
Performance Improvement Plan 2025-26	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.**

A wide range of qualitative and quantitative evidence has been considered to inform the development of the Engagement Framework, including:

- Benchmarking and best practice: Review of engagement frameworks and consultation practices across other local councils and regional public sector bodies to identify effective and inclusive engagement approaches.
- Policy and guidance: Equality Commission guidance, local Equality Schemes, Disability Action Plans, and guidance on engaging Section 75 groups.
- Demographic and community data: Census and local population statistics to understand the composition of communities across age, gender, disability, ethnic background, and other Section 75 categories.
- Internal engagement experience: Lessons learned from previous consultations and capital works projects regarding barriers to participation, accessibility issues, and effective methods for different communities.
- Stakeholder feedback: Input from staff, partner organisations, and representative bodies for Section 75 groups, including people with disabilities, minority ethnic communities, and carers.

Most up to date NISRA population data from Census 2021 (published 22/09/22)

[Lisburn and Castlereagh Census Data](#)

Section 75 Category	Details of evidence/information
Religious Belief	<p>According to the 2021 Census data, the population of Lisburn &amp; Castlereagh City brought up in different religious backgrounds is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catholic: 23.5%</li> <li>• Protestant &amp; Other Christian: 65.6%</li> <li>• Other religions: 1.2%</li> <li>• None: 9.7%</li> </ul>
Political Opinion	<p>Local government elections 2023 – Elected members to LCCC: DUP (14); Alliance Party (13); UUP (6); Sinn Fein (4); SDLP (2); Independent (1).</p> <p>Census data 2021 – British only 41%, Irish only 16%, Northern Irish only 21%, British &amp; Irish only &lt;1%, British &amp; Northern Irish only 11%, Irish &amp; Northern Irish only 2%,</p>

	British, Irish & Northern Irish only 2%, Other national identities 6%.
Racial Group	Census data 2021 indicated around 6% of the LCCC population were born outside of the UK and Ireland.  Applications to EU settlement scheme Aug 2018 to March 2021-3940. Applicants from range of nationalities. largest groups Polish, Lithuanian and Romanian. LCCC also has a small population of Syrian refugees. Furthermore, the Asylum Seeker population is increasing across Northern Ireland as a whole.
Age	LCCC population: 0-14 19% 15-39 30% 40-64 33% 65+ 18%
Marital Status	In relation to the council area, the Census indicated the following data for marital and civil partnerships: Single 33% Married or in a civil partnership 52% Separated 3% Divorced or formerly in a civil partnership 6% Widowed or surviving partner from a civil partnership 6%
Sexual Orientation	Straight or heterosexual 91% Gay, lesbian, bisexual or other sexual orientation 2% Prefer not to say or not stated 7%.
Men & Women Generally	The gender breakdown of the LCCC population reflects the national picture – 51% female; 49% male.  Northern Ireland has a small but growing number of people who identify as Trans (based on referrals to gender identity services and support groups) and it is likely that LCCC will have a small number of Trans residents.

Disability	Published data from the 2021 Census indicates that 32% of the population had one or more long term health conditions.
Dependants	People with dependants includes those who care for a child/child, older people and those with disabilities. Limited information on carers is available, however 2021 Census data indicates 14% of the council population reported providing some level of unpaid care and 31% of households have at least one dependant child.

### 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	Culturally sensitive engagement. Avoid scheduling during key religious dates. Neutral venues accessible to all faiths. Clear communication that engagement is impartial.
Political Opinion	Assurance of impartiality and transparency. Clear separation between consultation and decision-making. Information on how feedback will be used.
Racial Group	Language support for limited English proficiency. Culturally appropriate communication methods. Outreach through trusted community organisations.
Age	Young people may prefer digital or interactive engagement. Older people may require non-digital or

	in-person options. Engagement timings suitable for different age groups.
Marital Status	Minimal direct needs specific to marital status.  There is a need to ensure engagement opportunities are flexible and inclusive for all household arrangements. Consideration that caring responsibilities or joint household commitments may affect availability.
Sexual Orientation	Safe, inclusive environments. Use of inclusive and non-discriminatory language. Assurance that participation will not result in discrimination.
Men & Women Generally	Representation in engagement activities. Flexible timings and methods to enable balanced participation. Consideration of gendered caring roles.
Disability	Accessible venues and transport. Information in alternative formats (Easy Read, large print, audio, digital). Reasonable adjustments for sensory, cognitive, or mental health needs.
Dependants	Flexibility to accommodate caring responsibilities.  Timing, format, and location of events may need to be flexible to enable participation.  Provide options such as online surveys, written submissions, or short sessions.

## Part 2. Screening questions

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

The Engagement Framework is enabling and procedural rather than service-specific. Its core purpose is to shape how engagement happens. As such, impacts are largely indirect, but still important, because poor engagement practices can unintentionally exclude certain Section 75 groups.

<b>Section 75 Category</b>	<b>Details of likely impact – will it be positive or negative? If none anticipated, say none</b>	<b>Level of impact - major or minor* - see guidance below</b>
Religious Belief	Inclusive engagement can build trust and social cohesion across communities. Potential negative impact if engagement is perceived as favouring one community or location. Projects should ensure neutral venues and varied engagement methods. Undertake local context checks at project initiation.	Minor
Political Opinion	Transparent and inclusive engagement can improve confidence in decision-making processes. Risk of perceived bias or tokenism if engagement is not impartial. Communication should be neutral and clear about purpose and scope. Projects should follow consistent engagement processes and document feedback.	Minor
Racial Group	Inclusive approaches can increase participation of minority ethnic communities. Potential negative impact if consultation methods are inaccessible or culturally inappropriate. Projects should provide translated or plain English materials where needed, partner with community organisations and use culturally sensitive venues and methods.	Minor

Age	Engagement tailored to different age groups can increase participation. Risk of exclusion if only one method (e.g., digital) is used.	Minor
Marital Status	None anticipated. Engagement is not expected to directly favour or disadvantage people based on marital status.	None
Sexual Orientation	Inclusive engagement supports confidence and trust in participation. Risk of discouragement if inclusivity is not visible.	None
Men & Women Generally	Flexible and accessible engagement supports balanced participation. Risk that traditional consultation methods may favour one gender.	Minor
Disability	Inclusive engagement can enhance participation of disabled people. Risk of exclusion if venues or information are inaccessible. Information should be provided in alternative formats, reasonable adjustments offered, and physical and sensory accessibility prioritised.	Minor
Dependants	Positive if engagement is flexible; risk of exclusion if events are fixed, lengthy, or only in-person.	Minor

**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	While the Engagement Framework provides an enabling structure for inclusive engagement, specific opportunities to promote equality of opportunity are more appropriately identified and addressed at project level, where the needs of relevant Section 75 groups can be considered in context.	
Political Opinion		
Racial Group		
Age		
Marital Status		
Sexual Orientation		
Men & Women Generally		
Disability		
Dependants		

**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?

Yes. The framework supports actions in the Equality Action Plan by ensuring that people can access information from the Council in accessible and inclusive formats.

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

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

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

Yes. The Engagement Framework presents opportunities to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and to encourage their participation in public life by embedding inclusive engagement principles, requiring consideration of accessibility, and supporting the provision of information in alternative formats. These opportunities will be realised primarily at project level, where engagement methods can be tailored to meet specific access needs.

**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?**

<b>Good Relations Category</b>	<b>Details of likely impact. Will it be positive or negative? [if no specific impact identified, say none]</b>	<b>Level of impact – minor/major*</b>
Religious Belief	The Engagement Framework is likely to have a positive impact on good relations by promoting inclusive, transparent and fair engagement with all communities. By providing structured opportunities for participation and ensuring that engagement is open to people of different religious belief, political opinion and racial group, the framework supports trust, mutual understanding and social cohesion. There is no anticipated adverse impact on good relations, and any potential risks will be mitigated through proportionate engagement approaches, neutral communication, and monitoring of engagement activity.	Minor Positive
Political Opinion		
Racial Group		

\*See Appendix 1 for details.

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

<b>Good Relations Category</b>	<b>IF Yes, provide details</b>	<b>If No, provide details</b>
Religious Belief		There are no specific opportunities to further promote good relations identified at the framework level at this time. Opportunities to promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political
Political Opinion		
Racial Group		

		opinion or racial group will be considered, where relevant, at project level as part of individual engagement planning.
--	--	---

## 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.**

No specific data is currently available on the impact of this framework on individuals with multiple identities. However, it is recognised that people may experience compounded barriers to engagement based on a combination of Section 75 characteristics, such as disability and age, race and language, or gender and caring responsibilities. The Engagement Framework is designed to be flexible and inclusive, with mitigation measures in place (including alternative formats, proportionate engagement methods, and monitoring of engagement activity) to reduce barriers and support participation for 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
<p>Option 1</p> <p><b>Screen out</b> – no equality impact assessment and no mitigation required [go to Monitoring section]</p>	
<p>Option 2</p> <p><b>Screen out with mitigation</b> – some potential impacts identified but they can be addressed with appropriate mitigation or some opportunities to better promote equality and/or good relations identified [complete mitigation section below]</p>	<p>This policy is not considered to have a significant adverse impact on any Section 75 group. It provides a strong foundation for inclusive engagement and has the potential for significant positive equality impacts by embedding inclusivity, transparency, and collaboration.</p> <p>Any potential adverse impacts are unintentional and procedural, arising from how engagement is implemented at project level rather than from the framework itself.</p>
<p>Option 3</p> <p><b>Screen in</b> for a full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)</p> <p>[If option 3, complete timetabling and prioritising section below]</p>	

**Mitigation (Only relevant to Option 2) –**

**Can the activity/policy/project plan be amended or an alternative activity/policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?** If so, give the **reasons** to support your decision, together with

the proposed changes/amendments or alternative activity/policy and ensure the mitigations are included in a revised/updated policy or plan.

No, the policy is operational and cannot be fundamentally changed without affecting its purpose. However, the following mitigation measures should better promote equality of opportunity and good relations:

- Ongoing consideration of equality impacts will be required at the project level, where specific engagement methods are determined.
- Mitigation will include the provision of further guidance and training to staff to ensure consistent and proportionate engagement with Section 75 groups.
- Any potential negative impacts can be mitigated through inclusive design, flexibility, and proportional engagement methods tailored to the needs of specific communities.
- Information will be provided in alternative formats to support people with disabilities or other communication needs, with Easy Read developed as standard in a proportionate way, supported by staff guidance.
- Mitigation will include the development of a monitoring matrix to record engagement with Section 75 groups, support reporting, and inform actions to enhance or develop engagement where gaps are identified
- Continue to review the framework and its operation periodically to ensure it remains proportionate, fair, and effective, and that any emerging equality issues are addressed promptly.

#### **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? 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:

Implementation of the Engagement Framework will be monitored by the Portfolio team to ensure that staff are applying the framework consistently and effectively. Engagement activity will be reviewed through the use of a monitoring matrix, enabling oversight of engagement with Section 75 groups and informing any required improvements. The Council’s website will also be monitored to ensure engagement information is transparent, accessible and kept up to date.

**Part 5 - Approval and authorisation**

	<b>Position/Job Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
Screened by: Arlene Barton	Business Development Manager	16.01.26
Reviewed by: Annie Wilson	Equality Officer	22/01/2026
<b>Approved by: Neil Thomspen</b>	Head of Innovation	22/01/2026

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

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

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

**Appendix 1 – Equality Commission guidance on equality impact**

\*Major impact:

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

Minor impact

- a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
- b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
- c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
- d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

No impact (none)

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

Updated Template @ Oct 2022