**Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council**

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

**Part 1. Activity/Policy Scoping**

**Information about the activity/policy**

# Name of the activity/policy

|  |
| --- |
| **Draft Equality Action Plan 2021-2025** |

Please attach copy of the activity/policy to this document.

# Is this activity/policy

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| An existing policy? |  | A revised policy? |  | A new policy? | **X** |

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

|  |
| --- |
| 1 Enhanced equality of opportunity for LCCC citizens and service users |
| 2 Implementation of measures to address identified inequalities |
| 3 Compliance with Section 75 equality and good relations duties |
| 4 |
| 5 |

Are there any expected benefits to the Section 75 categories/groups from this activity/policy? If so, please explain

|  |
| --- |
| The Equality Action Plan sets out specific measures designed to address identified inequalities and potential inequalities across the range of equality grounds. All Section 75 categories will potentially benefit but there are measures to address the particular inequality experienced by some groups, for example, people with disabilities, racial minorities, and older people. |

Who initiated or wrote the activity/policy?

|  |
| --- |
| The development of an equality action plan is recommended as good practice by the Equality Commission and committed to in the Council’s Equality Scheme. It was drafted by the Equality Officer in conjunction with senior staff for approval by the CMT, CS Committee and ultimately full Council. |

Who owns and who implements the activity/policy?

|  |
| --- |
| Ultimate responsibility for compliance with Council’s equality and good relations responsibilities under Section 75 and other equality legislation lies with the Chief Executive. Implementation of the measures in this plan lies with service departments in relation to their functions. The plan will be co-ordinated and reported on by the Equality Officer. |

**Implementation factors**

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

If yes, are they

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Financial? | **X** | Legislative? | **X** | Other? | **X** |

If other, please detail below

|  |
| --- |
| Although there is a statutory obligation to ensure equality of opportunity and to comply with the commitments in the Council’s Equality Scheme, it can be a challenge to ensure that equality considerations are built into service planning and development on an ongoing and timely basis. Successful implementation of the plan and compliance requires awareness and training to ensure staff are skilled and resourced to deliver the outcomes the plan is designed to achieve. |

**Main stakeholders affected**

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the activity/policy will impact upon?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Staff | X |
| Service Users | X |
| Other Public Sector Organisations – please list | Equality Commission |
| Voluntary/Community/Trade Unions – please list | Groups representative of the equality categories  Trade unions in relation to staff issues |
| Other, eg, Elected Members – please list | Elected Members |

**Other documents/activities/polices with a bearing on this activity/policy**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of document/activity/policy | Who owns or implements document/activity/policy? |
| 1 Equality Scheme | LCCC |
| 2 Disability Action Plan 2021-2025 | “ |
| 3 Equal Opportunities Policy | “ |
| 4 Service Improvement Plans | “ |
|  |  |

The above would include both internal and external documents/activities/policies.

If there is a web-link/link to any of the above please provide details.

**Available evidence**

**What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this activity/policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.**

A range of information was reviewed to inform the development of the plan, including: the previous Equality Action Plan 2015-2020, previous Disability Action Plan 2015-2020, Annual Section 75 Progress Reports, five year review of Equality Scheme, guidance from Equality Commission, research and policy papers relevant to equality, feedback from staff and from equality training. Operational teams reviewed their own service areas in relation to proposed actions.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Sec 75 Category** | **Details of evidence/information** |
| Religious Belief | NI Census 2011 data for the Lisburn and Castlereagh area:  67% Protestant (or other Christian)  24% Catholic  8% Other  1% None |
| Political Opinion | National identity is often used as an indicator of or proxy for political opinion – unionist/nationalist. Analysis of Census 2011 data for LCCC showed:  65.39% identified as British  14.83% Irish  30.46% Northern Irish  Political party representation on LCCC from local government elections 2019 (40 Members):  DUP – 15  UUP – 11  Alliance – 9  Sinn Fein – 2  SDLP – 2  Green Party NI – 1  Majority (64%) are therefore unionist |
| Racial Group (includes nationality) | NINIS statistics (2011 census) suggest 88.72% of the LCCC population were born in N Ireland. The same data indicates 2.36%were from an ethnic minority 97.64%were White (including Irish Traveller).  The LCCC area has a small population of Syrian refugees and a small percentage of residents/service users will not have English as their first language. |
| Age | NISRA mid-year estimates 2019:  0-15 years – 20.3%  16-64 years – 62.3%  65+ years – 17.4% (2% are 85+) |
| Marital Status | For the 16+ population in relation to marital and civil partnerships:  30.65% single  53.78% married  0.10% same sex partnership  3.27% separated  5.52% divorced  6.68% widowed |
| Sexual Orientation | Census – no data available for sexual orientation. However, UK government statistics estimate around 2% of the population identify as lesbian, gay or bi-sexual. Feedback from LGB support groups and from surveys suggests the percentage who identify as something other than 100% heterosexual may be much higher, with the 18-25 year age group significantly more likely to be confident about identifying as LGB. |
| Men & Women Generally | The LCCC population (2017) was 51% female and 49% male. This reflects the overall NI position.  Women are significantly under-represented as Elected Members on LCCC with only 17.5% female councillors (NI average – 26.4%).  At present (April 2021), women are over-represented in the senior management team (3 of 5 (60%) senior staff are female).  LCCC workforce data - 790 employees at Nov 2020. 57.2% of workforce are male and 42.8% female. Analysis of the age profile shows an aging workforce – only 9.4% of employees were aged under 30, with 79.2% aged between 30 and 59 and 11.4% over 60 (at Nov 2020). |
| Disability | Census data suggests 0ver 18% of the LCCC population have a disability or long term health condition that limits day to day activity. |
| Dependants | Dependants includes people who care for:  A child or children  A dependant with a disability  A dependant older person. |

### Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular activity/policy/decision? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Sec 75 Category | Details of needs/experiences/priorities |
| Religious Belief | LCCC district has a higher proportion of residents from a Protestant community background. There may be a perception of inequality among the minority tradition. |
| Political Opinion | Based on latest election results, LCCC is a unionist controlled council so there may be a perception among some from a nationalist background that their identity is not equally recognised. |
| Racial Group | Newcomers to the area require additional support to enable them to fully access council information and services. Information needs to be made available in other languages where needed. Council needs to target and consult with relevant support groups who have more direct access to service users/potential service users to maximise their understanding of council functions and services. |
| Age | LCCC has a slightly lower percentage of children (0-15) than the N Ireland average and a slightly higher proportion of older people (65+).  Some older people will have physical access needs or may not be able to use technology to access information and services. |
| Marital Status | Most council services are equally available to people who are married or not married. People who are married are more likely to have children and to need relevant services. |
| Sexual Orientation | There are no local support groups in the LCCC council area at present. LCCC residents access services from Belfast- based regional groups. The lack of a council area support group means it is difficult to ascertain if there are particular issues for LGB people in relation to the work and services of LCCC specifically. |
| Men & Women Generally | Women are significantly under-represented on LCCC with only 17.5% female councillors. There may therefore be a perception of male bias in council decision making.  However, women are well represented in the current senior management team (at April 2021, 3 of 5 (60%) senior team are female).  Northern Ireland has a small but growing Trans population which is probably reflected in the LCCC area. Trans adults and young people may have some specific needs, for example, in terms of access to leisure facilities or being/feeling safe in public places. |
| Disability | People with disabilities have specific access needs – eg, physical access to council facilities, access to information etc. Council is already committed to making reasonable adjustments for disabled service users but needs to be alert to the different needs of people/groups according to their specific disability. Publicly available information needs to be made available if needed in alternative formats. |
| Dependants | People with responsibility for the care of dependants can be from any age group and background but more women have caring responsibilities. Dependants include not only children/young people and older people (eg, elderly parents or other relatives) but can include disabled adults who have very different needs to children.  Some adjustments and provision that is helpful for disabled people or older people can also benefit people with dependants. |

**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 Sec 75 equality categories? (minor/major/none\*)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Sec 75 Category | Details of activity/policy impact | Level of impact (minor/major/none\*) |
| Religious Belief | All policies/plans/activities will be screened for potential equality impact and mitigations considered if necessary | Level of impact will depend on the particular policy or activity but action plan measures are intended to have a positive impact |
| Political Opinion | As above | As above |
| Racial Group | All activity will be screened and adjustments or mitigations considered to address any identified issues or specific needs of those who do not have English as a first language or who have cultural needs | As above |
| Age | As above  The equality action plan has some specific measures that will help ensure the particular needs of older people are met. | As above |
| Marital Status | Limited potential for impact on this group | As above |
| Sexual Orientation | The action plan includes a measure designed to increase awareness of LGB issues among council staff, Elected Members and therefore ensure that any specific needs are taken into account in service planning and delivery | As above |
| Men & Women Generally | All policies/plans/activities will be screened for potential equality impact and mitigations considered if necessary. Awareness raising around Trans issues should lead to enhanced consideration of needs in relation to certain services | As above |
| Disability | All activity will be screened and adjustments or mitigations considered to address any identified issues or specific needs of people with different types of disability. Training measures will enhance awareness and staff’s confidence in dealing with disability and ensuring that services are responsive and accessible. | As above |
| Dependants | All policies/plans/activities will be screened for potential equality impact and mitigations considered if necessary | As above |

\*See Appendix 1 for details.

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

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Sec 75 Category | IF Yes, provide details | If No, provide details |
| Religious Belief | Council’s Equality Scheme and the EAP are specifically intended to promote equality of opportunity for the different equality groups.  However, other opportunities may be identified through feedback from public consultation and in the rolling out of the Equality Action Plan and the annual review of progress. |  |
| Political Opinion |
| Racial Group |
| Age |
| Marital Status |
| Sexual Orientation |
| Men & Women Generally |
| Disability |
| Dependants |

3 To what extent is the activity/policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? (minor/major/none\*)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Good Relations Category | Details of activity/policy impact | Level of impact (minor/major/none\*) |
| Religious Belief | Council’s Equality Scheme with its commitment to screen all activity for potential equality and good relations impact and this action plan are designed to impact positively on the promotion of good relations. | Level of impact will vary according to the particular activity |
| 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?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Good Relations Category | IF Yes, provide details | If No, provide details |
| Religious Belief | Further opportunities may be identified through public consultation |  |
| Political Opinion |
| Racial Group |

**Additional considerations**

**Multiple identity**

Provide details of data on the impact of the activity/policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

|  |
| --- |
| Council recognises that many people will have needs based on multiple identity and these should be taken into account in relation to policies and service delivery.  Equality screening is designed to tease out the relevance or potential impact of multiple identities, for example, the particular challenges or barriers experienced by older people who have a disability, younger people who are LGB or T and who come from a minority ethnic background, or women who may experience inequality based on gender and cultural or religious traditions. |

**Part 3. Screening decision**

There are 3 screening decision outcomes, as noted below.

Choose only 1 of these and provide reasons for your decision outcome and ensure evidence is noted/referenced for any decision outcome reached.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Screening Decision Outcomes Options | Reasons/Evidence |
|  |  |
| Option 1  Screen out without mitigation |  |
| Option 2  Screen out with mitigation | It is considered that the Draft Equality Action Plan does not need to be subject to a full Equality Impact Assessment as it is designed to respond positively to identified needs of different equality groups and therefore have a positive impact. It will however be subject to public consultation according to the commitments in LCCC’s Equality Scheme and will be amended as necessary following feedback from the public and representative groups. |
| Option 3  Screen in for a full EQIA |  |

**Mitigation (Relevant to Option 2)**

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is ‘minor’ and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Can the activity/policy/decision be amended or changed 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.

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| The Equality Action Plan is essentially a set of positive action measures designed to address identified inequalities and to further promote equality of opportunity and good relations. If feedback from the public consultation suggests further measures are necessary, the plan can be amended accordingly. |

**Timetabling and prioritising (Relevant to Option 3) - Not applicable**

Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising activities/policies for equality impact assessment.

If the activity/policy has been **‘screened in’** for equality impact assessment, then 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 activity/policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Priority criterion | Rating (1-3) |
|  |  |
| Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations |  |
| Social need |  |
| Effect on people’s daily lives |  |
| Relevance to a public authority’s functions |  |
|  |  |
| Total Rating Score |  |

Is the activity/policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?

If yes, please provide details

|  |
| --- |
| **N/A** |

**Part 4. Monitoring**

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission’s Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

The Commission recommends that where the activity/policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, the public authority should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

Effective monitoring will help the 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.

Who will undertake and sign-off the monitoring of this activity/policy and on what frequency?

Please give details below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Will be undertaken by:  Name & Position/Job Title: | Frequency (eg. Annually): |
| All Heads of Service/Directors to review departmental actions and report on through departmental reporting mechanisms  Review and reporting to be co-ordinated by the Equality Officer | At least biannually.  Annual review of progress to be reported in annual S75 progress report to the Equality Commission |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| Will be signed-off by: |  |
| Name & HoS Title: | Caroline Magee |
|  | Head of HR & OD |
|  |  |

**Part 5 - Approval and authorisation**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Screened by:** | **Position/Job Title** | **Date** |
|  |  |  |
| Mary McSorley | Equality Officer | 18.05.21 |
| **Approved by:** |  |  |
| Caroline Magee | Head of HR and Organisation | 09.06.21 |

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each activity/policy screened should be ‘signed off’ and approved by a senior manager responsible for the activity/policy, made easily accessible on the public authority’s website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.

Appendix 1

Major impact:

1. The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
2. 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;
3. 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;
4. 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;
5. The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
6. The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

Minor impact

1. The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
2. 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;
3. 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;
4. By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

No (none) impact

1. The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations;
2. 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.

Appendix 2

The following documentation (as a minimum) should be available to support the screening outcome decision:

* A written copy of the activity/policy in question;
* The screening template duly completed with the screening decision made explicit;
* All evidence utilised/referenced to support the screening decision to be available.