

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

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

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

Introduction

The purpose of this equality screening report is to assess the potential equality impacts of the Civic Events Policy, the Mayoral Protocol, and the Procedures on Civic Representation at Events, ensuring that they align with statutory obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

These policies provide guidance on the role of the Mayor, Elected Member representation at civic events, and participation in internal and external events. The Civic Events Policy also provides guidance in relation to the format of civic events. The screening will evaluate whether any differential impact exists on the basis of the nine equality categories and how such impacts are mitigated.

Policy Context

These policies ensure that civic representation is fair, transparent and inclusive, upholding the Council's commitment to good relations and equality of opportunity.

The **Civic Events Policy** outlines the framework for planning and delivering civic events in a manner that is accessible and inclusive to all communities.

The **Mayoral Protocol** provides guidance on the role, responsibilities, and conduct of the Mayor, including invitations and the handling of civic matters.

The **Civic Representation Procedures** establish a process for determining Council representation at events, both internal and external, ensuring consistency and appropriateness of attendance.

Name of the activity/policy/project

Civic Events Policy

Mayoral Protocol

Civic Representation Procedures

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

The three policies are connected and are the outcome of a review of the Policy on Invitations to Civic Functions, Visits & Council Events. Elected Members participated in a focus group to inform the development of these documents.

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

The aim of these policies is to:

- Provide clear guidance on the role of the Mayor and Elected Members in relation to civic representation.
- Ensure that civic events are inclusive, representative and promote good relations.
- Establish procedures for Council representation at events.

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 activity is targeted at the following groups:

- Elected Members
- Council Officers
- Residents and community groups
- External event organisers
- Dignitaries, visitors, and businesses

The policies aren't targeting any specific Section 75 groups however, there may be incidental benefits for particular equality groups although that is not the main objective of the activity.

Who initiated or developed the activity/policy/project?

The policies were developed by the Corporate Communications and Administration Unit in the Finance and Corporate Services Department.

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

LCCC owns the policies, which will be implemented primarily by the Corporate Communications and Administration Unit, alongside various departments across the Council.

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

Yes

If yes, give brief details of any significant factors.

Financial

The budget for civic events is agreed annually.

In year requests for events additional to the agreed civic calendar of events can be challenging to deliver due to budgetary constraints.

Other

Whilst the objectives of the policies are to provide guidance on the Mayor's role, civic representation at events and the management of civic events, the nature of certain events may not be supported by some section 75 groups. However, the policies do not disadvantage any particular group. Many of the events are guided by civic and ceremonial protocols that are long established.

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

Staff

All departments within the council

Service users

Elected Members, Freemen of the City, MLAs, MPs, Lord Lieutenants, Deputy Lord Lieutenants, Ministers, members of the public

Other public sector organisations

- Northern Ireland Office
- Armed Forces Organisations
- Health Organisations
- Education Organisations
- Central Government Departments

Voluntary/community/trade unions

Historic Royal Palaces, the Royal British Legion, local churches, schools, community groups and voluntary or charity groups operating within the council area who make a contribution to the area and individuals who make a contribution through charitable or voluntary work or through personal achievement.

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

Name of policy/strategy/plan	Who owns or implements?
Armed Forces Covenant Supporting our veterans (lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk)	LCCC
Departmental Budgets	LCCC
Civic Ceremonial: A Handbook, History and Guide for Mayors, Councillors and Officers	A book by Paul Millward providing guidance and best practice to councils organising civic events
Code of Conduct for Councillors	Department for Communities – Local Government & Housing Division
Code of Conduct for Employees	The Local Government Reform Joint Forum
PR and Photographic Policy	LCCC

Available evidence

What evidence/information (qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered or considered to inform this activity/policy? Specify details for each Section 75 category.

Most up to date NISRA population data from Census 2021 (published 22/09/22)
[Lisburn and Castlereagh Census Data](#)

Section 75 Category	<p>Details of evidence/information</p> <p>In relation to the policy being screened information has been gathered from the Census 2021 on the makeup of the resident population of the Lisburn and Castlereagh area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4% were from an ethnic minority population and the remaining 96% were white; • 24% identified as Catholic and • 51% belonged to a 'Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related)' religion; and 25% did not state a religion • 41% indicated that they had a British national identity • 16% had an Irish national identity • 21% had a Northern Irish national identity and • 11% had a British & Northern Irish identity. <p>The council itself is made up from 40 elected members who represent 6 different political groups: DUP – 14 APNI – 13 UUP – 6 SF – 4 SDLP – 2 INDEPENDENT – 1</p>
Religious Belief	<p><u>Census information</u></p> <p>As per the Census 2021</p>
Political Opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24% of the Lisburn and Castlereagh area identified as Catholic and • 51% belonged to a 'Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related)' religion; and 25% did not state a religion • 41% indicated that they had a British national identity • 16% had an Irish national identity • 21% had a Northern Irish national identity and • 11% had a British & Northern Irish identity. <p><u>Other information</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from guests at civic events/functions

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints received following civic events/functions
Racial Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4% of the Lisburn & Castlereagh population are from an ethnic minority population (2021 Census) The remaining 96% of the population are white
Age	N/A
Marital Status	N/A
Sexual Orientation	N/A
Men and Women Generally	N/A
Disability	Census 2021 data (most recent available) indicated that 21.7% of the LCCC population had a long-term health problem or disability.
People With and Without Dependents	N/A
People with and without Dependents	N/A

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	<p>People from a catholic/nationalist background may not support the nature of some events where the council is represented as well as certain civic events organised by the council.</p> <p>A number of events in the annual calendar are of a military nature such as Armed Forces Day, Remembrance events, Veterans Awards and church services to mark significant anniversaries. Where possible, event programmes are inclusive and welcoming of all faiths <i>and</i> none</p>
Political Opinion	

	The civic and ceremonial protocols followed by the Council may present challenges for some section 75 categories (approx. 24% of the population of LCCC area). These protocols will involve representatives of the monarchy, loyal toasts and flag raising.
Racial Group	4% of the resident population are from an ethnic group and 2% are from a non Christian faith. The nature of some civic events may not align with their beliefs.
Age	N/A
Marital Status	N/A
Sexual Orientation	N/A
Men and Women Generally	N/A
Disability	The policies specifically include measures to ensure that those with disabilities can be included and commits to measures that enable participation such as sign language interpreters and changing places toilets.
People With and Without Dependents	N/A
People with and without Dependents	N/A

Part 2. Screening questions

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

Section 75 Category	Details of likely impact – will it be positive or negative? If none anticipated, say none	Level of impact - major or minor* - see guidance below
Religious Belief	Potential negative impact - Civic representation at Church based events could be perceived as exclusionary.	Minor

Political Opinion	Potential negative – the Mayor’s attendance at military led events may be viewed as politically biased.	Minor
Racial Group	Potential negative – some events may not always reflect the diversity of the local community.	Minor
Age	No impact anticipated for these groups	
Marital Status		
Sexual Orientation		
Men & Women Generally		
People with and without Dependants		
Disability	Minor positive. New policies commit the Council to ensuring that events are more inclusive for example sign language interpreters for public events and changing places toilet facilities.	

* See Appendix 1 for details.

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

Section 75 Category	IF Yes, provide details	If No, provide details
Religious Belief	The council strives to promote equality for section 75 groups.	.
Political Opinion		
Racial Group	An interdenominational approach is used when organising church services to ensure inclusivity of all	

	<p>faiths involving participation from a range of churches.</p> <p>A cross-community focus is also applied when schools are involved in civic events to promote good relations encouraging schools from all sectors to attend.</p> <p>Civic events are planned sensitively and where possible include a focus on the historic and educational aspects in partnership with ILCLM.</p>	
Age	No opportunities identified in relation to this policy/project/activity for any of these groups.	
Marital Status		
Sexual Orientation		
Men & Women Generally		
People with and without Dependants	The policies encourage organisers to consider measures to ensure that events are as inclusive as possible.	
Disability		

Equality Action Plan 2021-2025

Does the activity/policy/project being screened relate to an action in the Equality Action Plan 2021-2025?

Yes - Theme 6: Policy development and business planning

2(b) DDA Disability Duties (see Disability Action Plan 2021-2025) [new]

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 – as part of these policies a number of inclusive measures have been added to ensure that those with disabilities have more opportunity to attend.

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?

Good Relations Category	Details of likely impact. Will it be positive or negative? [if no specific impact identified, say none]	Level of impact – minor/major*
Religious Belief	Potential negative impact identified, however, these policies support the promotion of good relations by ensuring that civic events and engagements foster mutual understanding and respect among different communities, including unionist and nationalist, Protestant and Catholic, Christian and non-Christian, local and newcomer, and minority ethnic groups. The policies align with principles of good relations by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensuring inclusivity in civic representation and event planning.• Promoting impartiality in Mayoral engagements to prevent perceptions of political or religious bias.• Encouraging participation from diverse community and school	Minor
Political Opinion		
Racial Group		

	<p>groups to reflect the demographic and cultural diversity of the area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding principles of fairness, respect, and equality into decision-making regarding civic events and representation. 	
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*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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training & Awareness – Provide ongoing training for elected members and officers on cultural sensitivity and unconscious bias. • Inclusive Communication – Ensure event promotion reaches diverse communities, including translations where needed. • Feedback Mechanisms – Establish a process for communities to provide input on civic events and representation. 	N/A
Political Opinion		
Racial Group		

Multiple identity

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

No impact has been identified in relation to this policy 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
Option 1 Screen out – no equality impact assessment and no mitigation required [go to Monitoring section]	
Option 2 Screen out with mitigation – some potential impacts identified but they can be addressed with appropriate mitigation or some opportunities to better promote equality and/or good relations identified [complete mitigation section below]	Potential impacts on religious, political and racial groups have been identified which the Council will address with appropriate mitigation measures.
Option 3	

Screen in for a full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) [If option 3, complete timetabling and prioritising section below]	
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Mitigation (Only relevant to Option 2)

Can the activity/policy/project plan be amended or an alternative activity/policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

The policies do not directly benefit or disadvantage specific section 75 categories. However, the nature of some events may be perceived as to benefit one side of the community over another. The council will take the following mitigating steps to address any potential negative impact to better promote equality of opportunity:

- **Civic Events:** Ensure that the Civic Events Policy promotes inclusivity and encourages participation from all community groups through a focus on history, culture and education. Schools from all sectors are included where appropriate and religious services are interdenominational.
- **Mayoral Engagements:** The Mayoral Protocol reflects the need for impartiality and the avoidance of engagements that may be divisive. The Mayor will remain apolitical and attend events based on civic duty, not religious affiliation across a wide spectrum.
- **External Event Invitations:** The Civic Representation Procedures help maintain transparency and provide clear procedures for the council representation at events. The policy ensures alignment with democratic principles and the make up of the council.

In addition, the Council organises a range of annual events that actively embrace and celebrate the entire community, including the Mayor's Parade, Twilight Night, the Half Marathon and Fun Run, the Christmas Switch-On parade, and the Light Festival. These events are designed to be inclusive, welcoming people from all backgrounds and fostering a sense of shared community identity. The civic policies and practices should be considered in the context of the Council's extensive events plan.

Timetabling and prioritising for full EQIA (only relevant to Option 3) [

If the activity/policy has been '**screened in**' for full equality impact assessment, give details of any factors to be considered and the next steps for progressing the EQIA, including a proposed timetable.

Not applicable

Is the activity/policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities? Yes/No. If yes, please provide details.

No

Part 4. Monitoring

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

Effective monitoring will help a public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the activity/policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and activity/policy development.

What will be monitored and how? What specific equality monitoring will be done? Who will undertake and sign-off the monitoring of this activity/policy and on what frequency? Please give details:

The following information will be monitored:

- Attendance at civic events, ensuring diverse representation.
- Public feedback on inclusivity and accessibility of events.
- Complaints or concerns raised regarding perceived bias in civic engagements.
- Effectiveness of mitigation measures in reducing any identified impacts.

Specific Equality Monitoring

- Surveys to assess satisfaction levels across different Section 75 groups.
- Engagement with community representatives to identify emerging equality concerns.

The monitoring will be undertaken by the Civic Events Officer and Mayor's Secretary and signed off by the Head of Corporate Communications and Administration.

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Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

	Position/Job Title	Date
Screened by: Cathy Adamson	Acting PCSP/Members Services Officer	28/03/2025
Reviewed by: Annie Wilson	Equality Officer	13/05/2025
Approved by: Frances Byrne	Head of Corporate Communications and Administration	13/05/25

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.