**Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council**

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

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

This screening exercise is focused on the Council’s policy on Invitations to Civic Functions, Visits and Council Events (as agreed by Council in January 2020 – copy attached).

**Background**

**Civic functions/events**

Civic functions are planned for many reasons and can originate from requests to the Mayor/Council from:

* another Elected Member
* an outside organisation or
* a Notice of Motion

Civic functions are hosted by the Mayor. Guidance on the guest list is detailed in the policy document. This normally includes Elected Members, their partners/spouses, corporate management team, Freemen of the City, MLAs, MP, Lord Lieutenant and High Sheriff and any other guests deemed appropriate by the Mayor.

Each request is considered on the following basis:

* Exceptional Service to the council area or local community – this should be in the areas of voluntary or charitable work
* A significant anniversary - this should be a milestone of 25, 50 or 100 years
* A very significant or unique achievement - this would be recognised throughout Northern Ireland and beyond and the recipient should have a strong association with the Lisburn and Castlereagh area.

**Visits to the council area**

There are occasions where there will be Royal visits or high profile dignitaries visiting the council area. The policy document also sets out how these visits should be managed.. In all cases the Mayor will welcome such visitors to the City Council area.

**Invitations from outside groups**

The Mayor/Council will receive invitations from outside groups seeking support for events. Support may take the form of either monetary or non-monetary assistance.

The policy on Invitations to Civic Functions, Visits and Council Events provides guidance for considering such requests.

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

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

The policy is an existing document agreed by Council in January 2020.

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

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that an open and transparent policy is in place to provide clarity on the procedures to be followed when:

* the Council organises civic functions/events
* hosts dignitaries to the Council area
* considers invitations from outside groups

The intended aim of the policy is to provide a protocol for the management of the above events.

It also provides guidance around Council expenditure on civic functions and hospitality to ensure it is appropriate, justifiable and proportionate whilst being mindful of the provisions of the Code of Conduct for Councillors and employees.

**Who is the policy targeted at and who will benefit? Are there any expected benefits for specific Section 75 categories/groups from this policy? If so, please explain.**

The policy does not target any specific Section 75 groups however, there may be incidental benefits for particular equality groups although that is not the main objective of the document.

**Who initiated or developed the policy?**

The Corporate Communications and Administration Unit within the Corporate Services Department developed the policy in January 2020.

**Who owns and who implements the policy?**

LCCC owns the policy and it will be applied by different departments across the Council.

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

Yes

**If yes, give brief details of any significant factors.**

**Financial**

Events agreed outside of the agreed civic events budget planned as part of the estimates process can be challenging to deliver.

**Other**

Whilst the objective of the policy is to provide clear direction on how the council manages certain situations, the nature of civic events may cause difficulty for some section 75 groups. However, it does not disadvantage any particular group.

**Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy 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, members of the public

**Other public sector organisations**

Northern Ireland Office, Armed Forces sector, health sector, education sector, central government

**Voluntary/community/trade unions**

Historic Royal Palaces,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**

**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)](https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/resident/community-services/supporting-our-veterans) | 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 organizing 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 |

**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**](https://explore.nisra.gov.uk/area-explorer-2021/N09000007/)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section 75 Category** | **Details of evidence/information** 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.   * 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.   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 |
| Religious Belief | **Census information**  As per the Census 2021   * 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.   **Other information**   * Feedback from guests at civic events/functions * Complaints received following civic events/functions |
| Political Opinion |
| Racial Group | * 4% of the Lisburn & Castlereagh population are from an ethnic minority population (2021 Census) * The remaining 96% of the population are white |
| Age | The outcomes of the policy will have no impact on people from these categories. Therefore statistical evidence has not been analysed. |
| Marital Status |
| Sexual Orientation |
| Men & Women Generally |
| Disability |
| People with and without Dependants |

### 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 policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section 75 Category** | **Details of needs/experiences/priorities** |
| Religious Belief | People from a catholic/nationalist background may have difficulty with the nature of some civic events organised by the council. 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. The civic 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 and loyal toasts. |
| Political Opinion |
| 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 | No evidence of specific needs identified in relation to this policy |
| Marital Status |
| Sexual Orientation |
| Men & Women Generally |
| Disability |
| People with and without 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 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 identified | Minor |
| Political Opinion | Potential negative impact identified | Minor |
| Racial Group | Potential negative impact identified | Minor |
| Age | No impact identified | N/A |
| Marital Status | No impact identified | N/A |
| Sexual Orientation | No impact identified | N/A |
| Men & Women Generally | No impact identified | N/A |
| Disability | No impact identified | N/A |
| People with and without Dependants | No impact identified | N/A |

\* 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. An interdenominational approach is used when organising church services to ensure inclusivity of all faiths. A cross community methodology is also applied when schools are involved in civic events to promote good relations. |  |
| Political Opinion |  |
| Racial Group |  |
| Age |  | No opportunities identified in relation to this policy for any of these groups. |
| Marital Status |  |
| Sexual Orientation |  |
| Men & Women Generally |  |
| Disability |  |
| People with and without Dependants |  |

**Equality Action Plan 2021-2025**

Does the activity/policy/project being screened relate to an action in the [Equality Action Plan 2021-2025](https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/council/publications/equality-section-75/action-plans-equality-and-disability)? **Yes** If yes, specify which action.

Theme 6: Policy development and business planning –

**2(b) 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](https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/council/publications/equality-section-75/action-plans-equality-and-disability):

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

No

**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 | Minor |
| Political Opinion | Potential negative impact identified | Minor |
| Racial Group | Potential negative impact identified | Minor |

\*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 | The council strives to promote equality for section 75 groups. An interdenominational approach is used when organising church services to ensure inclusivity of all faiths. A cross community methodology is also applied when schools are involved in the civic events programme to promote good relations. |  |
| 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] |  |

**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.

The policy itself does 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:

* Ensure that Church services are interdenominational to promote inclusivity
* Where appropriate a balance of cross community representation of schools and/or community groups will be included in civic events
* All events will be considered in the context of the Council’s wider programme of events across the year
* The policy on Invitations to Civic Functions, Visits and Council Events to be reviewed to incorporate the above actions.

**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.

**Not applicable**

**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:

* Number civic events
* Positive feedback from guests
* Number of complaints received

Specific equality monitoring to be undertaken:

* Theme of events ie military, sporting, community based
* Breakdown of schools and faith based organisations involved

The monitoring will be undertaken by the Civic Events Officer and signed off by the Head of Corporate Communications & Administration.

**Part 5 - Approval and authorisation**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Position/Job Title** | **Date** |
| Screened by: Cathy Adamson | Acting PCSP/Members Services Officer | 20/11/2023 |
| Reviewed by: Annie Wilson | Equality Officer | 11/01/2024 |
| **Approved by:** Frances Byrne | Head of Corporate Communications & Administration | 11/01/2024 |

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:

1. The policy/project 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 impact (none)

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.

Updated Template @ Oct 2022