



**Belfast**  
City Council

## Equality Screening Template

**Soccer grass pitch allocation policy**

**August 2016**

# Equality Screening Template



The Council has a statutory duty to screen. This includes our strategies, plans, policies, legislative developments; and new ways of working such as the introduction, change or end of an existing service, grant funding arrangement or facility. This screening template is designed to help departments consider the likely equality impacts of their proposed decisions on different groups of customers, service users, staff and visitors.

Before carrying out an equality screening exercise it is important that you have received the necessary training first. To find out about the training needed or any other queries on screening, contact the Equality and Diversity Officers (job-share) Stella Gilmartin or Lorraine Dennis on extension 6026/7 or by email [equality@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:equality@belfastcity.gov.uk).

The accompanying **Screening Guidance** note provides straightforward advice on how to carry out equality screening exercises. Detailed information about the Section 75 equality duties and what they mean in practice is available on the Equality Commission's website<sup>1</sup>.

The screening template has 4 sections to complete. These are:

**Section A** - provides details about the policy / decision that is being screened

**Section B** – gives information on the consultation process, supporting evidence gathered and has 4 key questions outlining the likely impacts on all equality groups.

**Section C** - has 4 key questions in relation to obligations under the Disability Discrimination Order

**Section D** - is the formal record of the screening decision.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.equalityni.org/archive/pdf/S75GuideforPublicAuthoritiesApril2010.pdf>

## Section A

### **Details about the policy / decision to be screened**

#### **1. Title of policy / decision to be screened:-**

Soccer grass pitch allocation.

#### **Brief description of policy / decision to be screened:-**

The new soccer grass pitch allocation policy has been developed primarily to align the parallel allocation process historically in place in Belfast along with the inherited practice which accompanied the boundary changes as part of Local Government Reform. The policy emerged following a practice review which includes the following specific elements:

- Align dual allocation processes that were in place with the introduction of Local Government Reform which resulted in an increase in the number of teams and pitches in the Council area.
- General under-usage of pitches identified within the previous season.
- Requests received for use of pitches from Leagues outside of Belfast.
- Council is receiving competing requests for recently upgraded facilities such as the new pitch and changing pavilion at the Waterworks site (Westlands).

#### **1. Aims and objectives of the policy / decision to be screened:-**

The new policy sets out the general grass pitch allocation policy and ways to equitably manage the operational elements which impact the overall supply and demand from soccer for grass pitches. This includes the introduction of an assessment approach for exceptional circumstances whereby the leagues require additional pitches. It also includes a specific assessment matrix where clubs seek the same pitch in exceptional circumstances and leagues are unable to allocate as per the normal booking process. It promotes ongoing partnership working for greater alignment of supply and demand of provision to further sports and leisure development in the city.

**2. On whom will the policy / decision impact?**

Staff	Yes
Service users	Yes
Other public sector organizations	No
Voluntary / community groups / trade unions	Yes sports clubs
Others, please specify	Yes leagues, governing bodies and etc.

**3. Are there linkages to other Agencies/ Departments?**

Sport NI the non-government body with a remit for sport in NI.

## **Section B**

**Information on the consultation process, supporting evidence gathered and has 4 key questions outlining the likely impacts for equality and good relations.**

### **6. Outline consultation process planned or achieved**

There are ongoing discussions with leagues around the allocation of pitches for each soccer season with a scheduled meeting each August to discuss allocation for the upcoming season.

- The independent consultant, contracted to review grass pitch allocation and derive the policy position, introduced a survey and focus groups to engage the relevant leagues currently booking directly on behalf of clubs with Council. They extended this opportunity to individual clubs with an historical arrangement to book directly either with Belfast or formerly Castlereagh council. Further consultation was completed with Members, IFA and other councils to complete the review.
- Two meetings were set up for the leagues to discuss the content of the draft report post review in advance of a Council decision being taken. During the meeting the content and formalized practice were outlined along with likely impact and the desire to build positive partnership arrangements to maximize the outputs and outcomes from soccer grass pitch allocated provision.
- Individual meetings also take place routinely throughout each season where a need is identified e.g. relating to specific venues or bookings and etc.
- The proposal went through People and Communities Committee on 10<sup>th</sup> May and following party group briefings was represented to the June 16 Committee and ratified by Council in July 16.
- Since 14/15 season, individual meetings have continued where a pitch has received multiple requests for use without resolution and one most recently to introduce the assessment matrix if no other arrangement could be agreed.

## 7. Available evidence

*What evidence / information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Set out all evidence below to help inform your screening assessment. It is important to record information gathered from a variety of sources such as: monitoring information; complaints; research surveys; consultation exercises from other public authorities.*

<b>Section 75 category</b>	<b>Likely impact?</b>	<b>Level of impact? Minor/Major/None</b>
Religious belief	We have no detailed evidence of the religious beliefs of those people who use our soccer pitches on a Saturday. It is known that soccer is played by people from both the main religious traditions in Northern Ireland but there is no robust evidence on what percentage of players hold various religious beliefs. The new policy agrees the allocation of pitches falls to leagues and where an exception occurs the specific assessment matrix is developed to provide a fair and equitable approach across the city.	None
Political opinion	As above	None
Racial group	There is no compelling evidence of any impact in this area. Any new club would join a league and benefit from the new policy arrangement.	None
Age	The soccer pitch allocation policy covers the adult league and junior leagues and no difference is noted in this area therefore promoting opportunity across all ages.	None
Marital status	There is no compelling evidence where there is any impact in this area.	None

Sexual orientation	There is no compelling evidence where there is any impact in this area.	None
Men and women generally	Currently women's football books on a casual basis however a women/ mixed league could avail of the same arrangements as the male adult leagues for grass pitch allocation. Pitches are currently dedicated to Women's football in the summer to accommodate needs.	None
Disability	There is no compelling evidence of any impact in this area.	None
Dependants	There is no compelling evidence of any impact in this area.	None

**8. What is the likely impact (indicate if the policy impact is positive or negative) on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? What is the level of impact?**

Section 75 category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
Religious belief		None – the policy has been developed to create consistent decision making in this area.
Political opinion		None – the policy has been developed to create consistent decision making in this area.
Racial group		None – the policy has been developed to create consistent decision making in this area.
Age		None – the policy has been developed to create consistent decision making in this area.

Marital status		None – the policy has been developed to create consistent decision making in this area.
Sexual orientation		None – the policy has been developed to create consistent decision making in this area.
Men and women generally		None – the policy has been developed to create consistent decision making in this area.
Disability		None – the policy has been developed to create consistent decision making in this area.
Dependants		None – the policy has been developed to create consistent decision making in this area.

**9. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?**

<b>Section 75 category</b>	<b>If Yes, provide details</b>	<b>If No, provide reasons</b>
Religious belief	Council continues to promote the outcomes of health and wellbeing with the Irish Football Association (IFA) and any other soccer governing bodies to ensure there is the ongoing promotion of equal opportunities and the development of our assets to support this and any future development in this sport along with any others.	
Political opinion	Council continues to promote the outcomes of health and wellbeing with the IFA and any other soccer governing bodies to ensure there is the ongoing promotion of equal opportunities and the development of our assets to support this and any future development in this sport along with any others.	

Racial group	Council continues to promote the outcomes of health and wellbeing with the IFA and any other soccer governing bodies to ensure there is the ongoing promotion of equal opportunities and the development of our assets to support this and any future development in this sport along with any others.	
Age	Council continues to promote the outcomes of health and wellbeing with the IFA and any other soccer governing bodies to ensure there is the ongoing promotion of equal opportunities and the development of our assets to support this and any future development in this sport along with any others.	
Marital status	Council continues to promote the outcomes of health and wellbeing with the IFA and any other soccer governing bodies to ensure there is the ongoing promotion of equal opportunities and the development of our assets to support this and any future development in this sport along with any others.	
Sexual orientation	Council continues to promote the outcomes of health and wellbeing with the IFA and any other soccer governing bodies to ensure there is the ongoing promotion of equal opportunities and the development of our assets to support this and any future development in this sport along with any others.	
Men and women generally	Council continues to promote the outcomes of health and wellbeing with the IFA and any other soccer governing bodies to ensure there is the ongoing promotion of equal opportunities and the development of our assets to support this and any future development in this sport along with any others.	

Disability	Council continues to promote the outcomes of health and wellbeing with the IFA and any other soccer governing bodies to ensure there is the ongoing promotion of equal opportunities and the development of our assets to support this and any future development in this sport along with any others.	
Dependants	Council continues to promote the outcomes of health and wellbeing with the IFA and any other soccer governing bodies to ensure there is the ongoing promotion of equal opportunities and the development of our assets to support this and any future development in this sport along with any others.	

**10. To what extent is the policy likely to impact (positive or negatively) on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? What is the level of impact?**

Good relations category	Likely impact?	Level of impact? Minor/Major/None
Religious belief	Minor positive impact may be measured due to people playing sport together and having equal access to Council's pitches	Minor positive
Political opinion		None
Racial group		None

**11. 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 reasons
Religious belief	Yes by working with the governing bodies and leagues to co-ordinate need, provision and allocation of pitches to ensure that they are shared spaces and accessible to all.	

Political opinion	Yes by working with the governing bodies and leagues to co-ordinate need, provision and allocation of pitches to ensure that they are shared spaces and accessible to all.	
Racial group	Yes by working with the governing bodies and leagues to co-ordinate need, provision and allocation of pitches to ensure that they are shared spaces and accessible to all.	

## Section C

Belfast City Council also has legislative obligations to meet under the **Disability Discrimination Order** and Questions 12-13 relate to these two areas.

### Consideration of Disability Duties

#### **12. Does this proposed policy / decision provide an opportunity for the Council to better promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?**

*Explain your assessment in full*

Yes working with the Governing bodies and leagues we can further the mutual objectives of respect and good relations by providing equal opportunity to services. To this end when assessing new applications for pitch allocation whether from leagues or where there are multiple requests for a pitch we have built in and weighted the need to integrate opportunities for disabled people and underrepresented groups in the player development / sports development plans. Assessing the good practice standards of the club / league via Clubmark also acts as a tool to measure positive attitudes and practice. In this case where the governing body expects disability awareness and training to be in place this will be a requisite of Clubmark.

#### **13. Does this proposed policy / decision provide an opportunity to actively increase the participation by disabled people in public life?**

*Explain your assessment in full*

Yes both through Clubmark and the player / sports development plans we are rewarding best practice and this includes particular targeting of disabled people and

underrepresented groups.

## 14. Multiple Identities

**Provide details of data on the impact of the policy with multiple identities**

**Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.**

The new policy is set out to create a single equitable approach to allocation soccer grass pitch provision. As part of the review it was found that one league prefers to use the casual bookings process and this is a mitigating action available alongside the opportunity for a league to apply under the assessment process for soccer grass pitch allocation. It is expected any new leagues which reflect multiple identities will benefit from a new policy being in place to afford them equal opportunity and as such it promotes positive impact from the historical position held. The assessment matrix have also been shaped following equality guidance to manage any negative impacts from multiple identities and promote inclusion.

## 15. Monitoring Arrangements

*Section 75 places a requirement the Council to have equality monitoring arrangements in place in order to assess the impact of policies and services etc; and to help identify barriers to fair participation and to better promote equality of opportunity.*

*Outline what data you will collect in the future in order to monitor the impact of this policy / decision on equality, good relations and disability duties.*

<b>Equality</b>	<b>Good Relations</b>	<b>Disability Duties</b>
League secretary meetings are held annually with a recent commitment to build on this frequency. Future breakdown of bookings will form part of these ongoing monitoring meetings as outlined as a gap in the	League secretary meetings are currently annual and there was a commitment to make more frequent. Future breakdown of bookings will form part of these ongoing monitoring meetings as outlined as a gap in the	League secretary meetings are currently annual and there was a commitment to make more frequent. Future breakdown of bookings will form part of these ongoing monitoring

review.	review.	meetings as outlined as a gap in the review.
		Where assessment matrixes are applied the relevant scoring will determine the impact on disability and underrepresented groups which Council will retain according to its data protection guidelines.

## Section D

### Formal Record of Screening Decision

**Title of Proposed Policy / Decision being screened**

**Soccer grass pitch allocation**

**I can confirm that the proposed policy / decision has been screened for:**

✓	equality of opportunity and good relations
✓	disabilities duties

**On the basis of the answers to the screening questions, I recommend that this policy / decision is – (place an X in the appropriate box below)**

	* <b><u>Screened In</u></b> – Necessary to conduct a full EQIA
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	* <b><u>Screened Out</u></b> – No EQIA necessary (no impacts)
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X	* <b><u>Screened Out</u></b> – Mitigating Actions (minor impacts)  <b>Provide a brief note here to explain how this decision was reached:</b>
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The development of the new policy is to align parallel processes for pitch allocation to provide one equitable soccer grass pitch allocation policy.

The new policy covers items raised in the review and incorporates suitable mitigating actions to promote equality and introduces new steps to support disability or underrepresented groups in this process.

**Explain what mitigating actions and / or policy changes will now be introduced:**

The creation of the new policy will mitigate against and promote equal opportunity and has built in direct support to develop the inclusion of disabled and underrepresented groups. It is unlikely the policy will have an impact more or less on any individual identity.

**Formal Record of Screening Decision** (cont.)

**Screening assessment completed by (Officer level) -**

**Name:** Elaine Black and Claire Sullivan

**Date:** 02.08.16

**Department :** City and Neighbourhood Services Department

**Confirmed as complete by:** Elaine Black

**Screening decision approved by -**

**Name:** Rose Crozier

**Date:** 19.09.16

**Department:** City and Neighbourhood Services Department

Please save the final version of the completed screening form and forward to the Equality and Diversity Officer – [equality@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:equality@belfastcity.gov.uk). The screening form will be placed on the BCC website and a link provided to the Council's Section 75 consultees.

For more information about equality screening contact –

**Stella Gilmartin / Lorraine Dennis**  
**Equality & Diversity Officer (*job-share*)**  
**Belfast City Council**  
**City Hall**  
**Belfast**  
**BT1 5GS**  
**Telephone: 028 90270511**  
**[equality@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:equality@belfastcity.gov.uk)**