



**Belfast**  
**City Council**

**Equality Screening Outcome Report and Rural Needs Impact  
Assessment**

**January to March 2019**

## Introduction

### Legislation – An Overview

#### Section 75 Statutory Equality Duties

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires the Council, when carrying out its functions in relation to Northern Ireland, to have due regards to the need to promote equality of opportunity between nine categories of persons, namely:

- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- between persons with dependants and persons without.

Without prejudice to its obligations above, the council must also have regards to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

The Council's Revised Equality Scheme was formally approved by the Equality Commission in March 2015. The revised Scheme outlines how we propose to fulfil our statutory duties under Section 75. Within the Scheme, the council gave a commitment to apply the screening methodology below to all new and revised policies and where necessary and appropriate to subject new policies to further equality impact assessment.

- What is the likely impact of equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy/proposal, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?
- Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within Section 75 equality categories?
- To what extent is the policy/proposal likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

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

In keeping with the Council's commitments in its Equality Scheme, the Council has applied the above screening criteria to new policies and proposals. Screening identifies policies that are likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

Screening identifies the impact of the policy/proposal as major, minor or none.

- If major – an Equality Impact Assessment may be carried out.
- If minor – consider mitigation or alternative policy and screen out.
- If none – screen out and give reasons.
- Ongoing screening – for strategies/policies that are to be put in place through a series of stages – screen at various stages during implementation.

The council also committed within its Revised Equality Scheme to prepare and publish for information regular reports on its screening exercises. This is screening report providing details on all screenings undertaken from the period January to March 2019

### **Rural Needs Impact Assessments**

The Council also has a statutory duty under the Rural Needs (Northern Ireland) Act 2016 to consider rural needs in the development of new policies, plans or strategies or in any service design/delivery decisions. The Council must therefore engage with rural stakeholders in relation to policy development when it is relevant and appropriate. The Equality and Diversity Unit is responsible for reporting to the Strategic, Policy and Resources Committee and for ensuring that annual reporting returns are submitted to DAERA.

To further promote openness and transparency, there is a link to each completed screening and rural needs impact assessment template on the Council's website.

[www.belfastcity.gov.uk](http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk)

The templates details all policies screened over this period and includes decisions reached.

## **Consultation**

The development of new policies and proposals will be supported by effective engagement processes to ensure that staff, service users and all interested parties are fully involved.

Planning for, and delivering safe and cost effective services requires close collaboration at many levels.

If you have any queries about this document, and its availability in alternative formats (including Braille, disk and audio cassette, and in other languages to meet the needs of those who are not fluent in English) then please contact:

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## **Screening Outcome**

The screening outcomes are outlined in the table below. Three possible outcomes are recorded:

If **Major** – an Equality Impact Assessment may be carried out. **EQIA** - subject to further scrutiny under Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 to determine the impact upon

those directly affected, which in turn will require informal and formal consultation with a wide range of stakeholders.

If **Minor** – consider mitigation or alternative policy and screen out.

If **None** – screen out and give reasons.

### Screening Outcome Options

Major= In

Minor= Out with mitigation

None= Out without mitigation

### Rural Needs Impact Assessment Options

Does the policy, plan, strategy or service design/delivery impact on the social and economic needs of people in rural areas?

### Belfast City Council Equality Screening Outcome Report and Rural Needs Impact Assessment

This report includes published screenings and Rural Needs Impact Assessments for the period January to March 2019. Copies can be found at:

<http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/council/equality/eqia.aspx>

Description of Policy/Proposal	Rural Needs Impact Assessment	ECNI Screening Decision and Contact
Buddy Scheme – it is intended that the Scheme will offer support to staff affected by cancer and other chronic illnesses	The Buddy Scheme is for use by internal staff and will have no impact on residents in rural areas	Screened Out – No EQIA necessary (no impacts)
New staff rotas at Belfast Zoo from April 2019	This change in staff working patterns will have no impact on people living in rural areas	Screened Out - No EQIA necessary (no impacts)
Disability Action Plan 2019-2022	This plan relates to our legislative requirements under the disability duties. They are positive duties and underpin the provision of all	Screened Out – No EQIA necessary (no impacts)

	services across the Council's area	
Aquatics Strategy for Belfast 2018/2030	The social and economic needs of people living in rural areas have not been identified in relation to this policy	Screened Out – Mitigating Actions (minor impacts)
Revised Domestic Violence Policy	This policy is for use by internal staff and will have no impact on people in rural areas	Screened Out – Mitigating Actions (minor impacts)
Achieving Through People Framework	This policy is for use by internal staff and will not have any impact on people in rural areas	Screened Out – Mitigating Actions (minor impacts)
Belfast Green and Blue Infrastructure Plan	The GIPB can be used to aid planning and investment decision making, including encouraging consideration of potential opportunities to enhance and expand the blue and green infrastructure network through new development. Therefore the impact will apply across the Belfast City Council area regardless of whether proposed development is in an urban or rural area	Screened Out - No EQIA necessary (no impacts)
Developer Contributions Framework – A guide to developer contributions and planning requirements	This framework will be used to aid planning assessments to ensure that new development is appropriately mitigated and managed. Therefore, the impact will apply across the Council's area regardless of whether the proposed development is in an urban or rural area	Screened Out - No EQIA necessary (no impacts)