



Equality Screening Template

The Revision of the Good and Harmonious Working Environment policy

Belfast City Council -Equality Screening Template

The Council has a statutory duty to screen all policies. Please note a policy can be written or unwritten, formal or informal. 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. Please note a policy can be written or unwritten, formal or informal.

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. To find out about the training contact – gilmartins@belfastcity.gov.uk / dennisl@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 duties¹ and what they mean in practice is available on the Equality Commission's website.

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

Section A - asks you to provide details about the policy / decision that is being screened.

Section B - has 4 key questions that require you to outline the likely impacts on equality groups, and all supporting evidence.

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.

¹ ECNI 'Section 75 of the NI Act 1998: A Guide for Public Authorities' April 2010. www.equalityni.org

Section A

Details about the policy / decision to be screened

Title of policy / decision to be screened:-

Revision of the Good and Harmonious Working Environment policy

Brief description of policy / decision to be screened:-

(Explain - Is this a new, revised or existing policy? Are there financial / legislative / procurement implications?)

This is the revision of an existing policy which dates back to 1997.

The purpose of this policy is to "promote a good and harmonious working environment and atmosphere in which no worker feels under threat or intimidated because of his or her religious belief or political opinion", as recommended in the 1989 Fair Employment Code of Practice, and later the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998.

Aims and objectives of the policy / decision to be screened:-

(What is the policy trying to achieve?)

In 1997, councillors, management and trade unions signed up to a Joint Declaration of Protection. A copy of the Joint Declaration of Protection was sent to all employees in September 1997, and a further letter was sent in September 1997 seeking the commitment and co-operation of employees in implementing the policy (Joint Declaration of Protection). The current policy which was effective from 6 October 1997 is reflective of the legal requirements of the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998. Within it, the council stated its "Commitment to promoting and maintaining a good and harmonious working environment in which the dignity of every employee is respected. The Council will only permit the display of flags and emblems authorised in line with the spirit and purpose of this declaration and which are consistent with a neutral and harmonious working environment. The Council prohibits the display of unauthorised display of posters, graffiti, flags and emblems or the circulation of materials or articulation of slogans or songs which are likely to give offence or cause apprehension to a particular group of employees".

When first introduced, the policy was referred to as the Neutral and Harmonious Working Environment policy. However, in 2005 the council recognised that a 'neutral' environment may give rise to unlawful indirect discrimination and the policy was subsequently referred to as the Good and Harmonious policy (ECNI guide- Promoting a Good and Harmonious Working Environment).

The aim of the existing policy is to ensure that all members of the council work in an environment in which their dignity is respected and maintained. However, the aim of the review is to ensure that the policy is still relevant, and that relevant advice and support is available for staff and management to make sure that it is implemented across the board. A guidance document will be developed for managers to assist with the decision making process on specific issues. All issues raised will be considered on a case by case basis.

On whom will the policy / decision impact?

Consider the internal and external impacts (both actual or potential)

- Staff - a detailed training exercise will be required to inform staff of new policy
- Service users – members of the public use a range of council facilities and it is recognised that the actions of members of the public and what they wear can impact on the working environment
- Other public sector organizations - Due to the size, geography and diversity of its workforce and city, BCC is recognised for its leadership in policy development of this kind . Consideration is required of implications of the revised policy on Local Government Reform
- Voluntary / community groups / trade unions
- Others, please specify
Third parties e.g. contractors and organisations that hire council venues for events (terms and conditions of use of council property)

Are there linkages to other Agencies/ Departments?

Belfast City Council is an equal opportunities employer and is fully committed to promoting equality and good relations. These principles underline how we do business with organisations and service providers.

The ECNI provides advice and guidance to the council on equality related issues.

As part of Local Government Reform, a working group has been established to look at convergence, operational and policy issues. The Good and Harmonious Working Environment policy review will be considered by this group.

Section B

1. Outline consultation process achieved or planned

The review is being led by the corporate HR section. A sub group of the council's JNCC (Joint Negotiating and Consultation Committee) has been established to review this policy.

The consultation will therefore include:

- Departmental management representation including Good Relations and Legal Services
- Employee representation (from TU groups and 2 x trade union co-coordinators)
- Elected members - through GR partnership group or joint diversity group (including party group leaders)
- ECNI
- Professional expert – Dr John Kremer
- Good Relations Unit
- Rainbow Project/ LGBT groups
- Women's Groups
- Disability groups

2. 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. Please note: It is important to record information gathered from a variety of sources such as:

- *Monitoring information*
- *Complaints*
- *Research /surveys*
- *Consultation exercise and other public authorities*

Section 75 category	Details of evidence / information and engagement
Religious belief	Current statistics The composition of the council workforce (as at 10/01/2014) by

community background is as follows:

- Protestant- 1552 (52.0%) *[54.2%]
- Roman Catholic- 1311 (43.9%) *[45.8%]
- Non- determined- 124 (4.1%)

*This figure excludes non-determined

In terms of “religion” or “religion brought up in”, the 2011 Census indicates that 48.6% of Belfast City residents are from a Catholic community background and 42.3% from a Protestant community background.

In terms of economic activity by “religion” or “religion brought up in” (Northern Ireland Travel to Work Area (NI TTWA)), the 2011 Census indicates the following:

- Protestant- 49.3%; 52.4%- excluding non-determined
- Roman Catholic - 44.7%; 47.6%- excluding non- determined
- Non determined - 6.0%

Good and harmonious policy- six monthly audits

Information gathered when conducting six monthly audits and corporate audit (November 2013) indicates that there is material displayed within the workplace that has the potential to disrupt a good harmonious working environment.

A benchmarking exercise was carried out through APSE’s benchmarking facility with local authorities in the UK and private sector organisations within NI, regarding a good and harmonious working environment policy. There was no evidence to show that there are any more progressive policies than the council’s current policy.

Within community and leisure centres, it is recognised that there is a potential for tension in relation providing community based services and a good and harmonious working environment.

	<p>Guidance documents from the ECNI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 1989, the Fair Employment Code of Practice- first recommended that employers, in order to advance equality of opportunity should aim to ‘promote a good and harmonious working environment...’ • Guide for Employers and Employees- ‘Promoting and Good and Harmonious Working Environment’ – February 2011 • a Unified Guide to Promoting Equal Opportunities in Employment <p>Linkage to other policy documents</p> <p>This policy is being revised in line with the council’s Good Relations Strategy and Equality Scheme. It also compliments other existing council policies i.e. Equal Opportunities Policy 2004, Unfair Treatment Guidelines and Code of Conduct- April 2003.</p> <p>External context</p> <p>Civil unrest within Belfast at end of 2012 due to the council decision to remove the union flag from City Hall. In this context, this policy will be particularly helpful.</p>
Political opinion	<p>The number of democratically elected members in the shadow council is representative of all political opinions and the breakdown by political party is as follows:</p> <p>DUP- 13</p> <p>Sinn Fein- 19</p> <p>SDLP-7</p> <p>Alliance- 8</p> <p>UUP-7</p> <p>PUP- 3</p> <p>Green Party- 1</p>

	<p>People Before Profit Alliance- 1</p> <p>Traditional Unionist Voice- 1</p> <p>The council does not monitor the political opinion of its employees.</p> <p>Personal Emblems</p> <p>There are some individual emblems and symbols that, through their history and associations, and whether intended or not, have come to have a significance that has the potential to make those of a different identity feel uncomfortable or unwelcome.</p> <p>In this category are likely to fall a variety of symbols and emblems with the potential to cause disharmony, and especially those that have been directly linked to community conflict in Northern Ireland and/or to local politics. It is acknowledged that in many other contexts these and other symbols may be wholly acceptable - for example, football shirts worn at a football match, or political Emblems displayed in the context of political events or institutions. Some of the symbols referred to may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Football shirts, e.g. Rangers and Celtic</i> • <i>Badges and insignia linked to paramilitary or political organisations, e.g. buttonholes, tattoos</i> • <i>Badges and insignia, e.g. Easter Lillies, Orange symbols</i> • <i>Posters, displays, tracts, emblems, screensavers, ringtones etc. linked to the above. Please note this list is not exhaustive.</i> <p>In many contexts these symbols and others may be wholly acceptable- for example, football shirts worn at a football match.</p> <p>However, within the workplace and at workplace organised events such emblems may have then potential to cause unnecessary tension and be divisive.</p>
Racial group	<p>Current statistics</p> <p>The composition of the council workforce (as at 10/01/2014) by racial group is as follows:</p> <p>White – 2039 (68.3%)</p>

	<p>Declined to state/ missing- 929 (31.1%)</p> <p>Other racial groups-19 (0.6%)</p> <p>Information relating to employees' race is gathered via a voluntary monitoring survey (conducted every 2-3 years) and therefore the data may not be a true reflection of the breakdown of employees by racial group</p> <p>NI Census figures 2011-There is a higher than average proportion of people from a black and minority ethnic background in Belfast at 3.64% compared with 1.79% in Northern Ireland. The largest minority ethnic groups in Belfast are the Chinese community (0.79%) and the Indian community (0.78%). The 2011 Census shows that 2.85% of the Belfast populations were born in EU countries.</p> <p>Workplace Race Action Plan 2012-2015 (see attached)</p> <p>This plan included the following action points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify language needs/ requirements at induction • Consider the potential/ feasibility of developing English language requirements for all jobs • conduct language audit with employees • commence delivery of cultural awareness training for all new starts
Age	<p>Current statistics</p> <p>The composition of the council workforce (as at 10/01/2014) by age group is as follows:</p> <p>16-24 - 106 employees (3.5%)</p> <p>25-34 - 651 employees (21.8%)</p> <p>35-44 - 740 employees (24.8%)</p> <p>45-54 – 947 employees (31.7%)</p>

	<p>55-65 – 507 employees (17.0%)</p> <p>66+ - 36 employees (1.2%)</p> <p>NI Census figures 2011- Belfast has a lower percentage of young people (aged under 16 years) than the NI average and almost exactly the same percentage of older people (aged over 65 years) as the NI average. According to the 2011 Census, 18.61% of Belfast residents are under 16 years (compared with 20.95% in NI as a whole) and 14.55% are aged over 65 years (compared with 14.56%). Population projections for the 15 year period ending 2021 indicate that the percentage of young people is likely to fall and the percentage of older people is likely to rise.</p>
Marital status	<p>The composition of the council workforce (as at 10/01/2014) by marital status is as follows:</p> <p>Married- 1414 employees (47.3%)</p> <p>Single- 1061 employees (35.5%)</p> <p>Co- habiting- 126 employees (4.2%)</p> <p>Divorced- 88 employees (2.9%)</p> <p>Separated- 88 employees (2.9%)</p> <p>Widowed- 15 employees (0.5%)</p> <p>Partner – 10 employees (0.3%)</p> <p>Civil Partner- 1 employee (0%)</p> <p>Not disclosed/ missing- 184 employees (6.2%)</p> <p>The information relating to employees’ marital status is gathered via a voluntary monitoring survey (conducted every 2-3 years) and therefore the data may not be a true reflection of the breakdown of employees by marital status.</p>
Sexual	The composition of the council workforce (as at 10/01/2014) by sexual

orientation	<p>orientation is as follows:</p> <p>Heterosexual- 728 employees (24.4%)</p> <p>Gay man- 10 employees (0.3%)</p> <p>Gay woman/ lesbian- 10 employees (0.3%)</p> <p>Bi- sexual – 4 employees (0.1%)</p> <p>Other- 4 employees (0.1%)</p> <p>Prefer not to answer- 25 employees (0.8%)</p> <p>Missing- 2206 employees (73.9%)</p> <p>The information relating to employees' sexual orientation is gathered via a voluntary monitoring survey (conducted every 2-3 years) and therefore the data may not be a true reflection of the breakdown of employees by sexual orientation.</p> <p>Benchmarking data from 'Through Our Eyes' report- published by Rainbow Project, commissioned by Department for Social Development</p> <p>Workplace Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Action Plan 2012-2015 (see attached)</p> <p>Action points within this plan include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue delivery of equal opportunities (now diversity) training • develop a protocol for managers on dealing with sensitive handling of issues e.g. language, terminology etc • organise events and workshops • establish a support network for LGBT staff to feed into future planning/ consultation mechanism
Men & women generally	<p>Current Statistics</p> <p>The composition of the council workforce (as at 10/01/2014) by gender is</p>

	<p>as follows:</p> <p>Male- 1757 employees (58.8%)</p> <p>Female – 1230 employees (41.2%)</p> <p>NI Census figures 2011- Belfast has a predominantly female population (51.92% of residents). This is slightly higher than the NI figure of 51.00%. In terms of economic activity by gender the census data for the NI TTWA indicates that 53 % are male and 47% is female</p> <p>Gender Action Plan 2012-2015 (see attached). Action points within this plan include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • carry out equal pay audits • analyse flexible working requests and approvals across departments • education- raise both political awareness and council staff awareness • identify appropriate learning and development interventions for women at all levels • communicate and train relevant staff and trade unions on the Policy on Domestic Violence • engage and partner where appropriate with women sector organisations to identify barriers that women experience and plan to address
Disability	<p>Current Statistics</p> <p>The composition of the council workforce (as at 10/01/2014) by gender is as follows:</p> <p>Disability disclosed- 99 employees (3.3%)</p> <p>No disability- 2114 employees (70.8%)</p> <p>Missing- 774 employees (25.9%)</p> <p>The information relating to employees’ disability is gathered via a</p>

	<p>voluntary monitoring survey (conducted every 2-3 years) and therefore the data may not be a true reflection of the breakdown of employees by disability.</p> <p>The 2011 Census figures showed that one in three (34.35%) of Belfast residents has a disability or long term health problem, which is close to the NI average of 31.43%.</p> <p>Disability Action Plan 2012-2015- see attached</p> <p>Action points within this plan included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current disability awareness training and continue roll-out • Include disability issues in an equality and diversity module/ good relations module of the council’s Core Skills programme • develop a protocol to assist managers to deal effectively and sensitively with employee relations issues
<p>Dependants</p>	<p>Current statistics</p> <p>The composition of the council workforce (as at 10/01/2014) with caring responsibilities is as follows:</p> <p>Yes- 770 employees (25.8%). This covers a range of caring responsibilities e.g. children, relatives, person with a disability</p> <p>No- 1440 employees (48.2%)</p> <p>Missing- 777 employees (26.0%)</p> <p>The information relating to employees’ dependants is gathered via a voluntary monitoring survey (conducted every 2-3 years) and therefore the data may not be a true reflection of the breakdown of employees by caring responsibility.</p> <p>On Census Day 2011, 28.58% of households in Belfast included dependent children, compared with the NI average of 33.86%. 11.71% of households consisted of a lone parent and a dependent child or children, compared with the NI average of 9.09%. 92.78% of lone parents in</p>

	<p>Belfast are female.</p> <p>Work Life Balance policy- This policy is accessible to all employees. It is promoted at diversity training and is currently subject to a detailed review.</p>
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3. 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?

Belfast City Council has put together a series of measures and policies to promote equal opportunities and good relations both in the workplace and in the services we provide. These are reflected in the evidence outlined in Section 2 and each of these should contribute to a good and harmonious working environment. These are kept under review. Also, there is an indication of positive impact on all groups.

Section 75 category	Likely impact?	Level of impact? Minor/Major/None
Religious belief	Positive	None
Political opinion	Positive	None
Racial group	Positive	None
Age	Positive	None
Marital status	Positive	None
Sexual orientation	Positive	None
Men and women generally	Positive	None

Disability	Positive	None
Dependants	Positive	None

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

Section 75 category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
Religious belief	Yes - to ensure consistent implementation of policy	
Political opinion	Yes - to ensure consistent implementation of policy	
Racial group	Yes - to ensure consistent implementation of policy	
Age	Yes - to ensure consistent implementation of policy	
Marital status	Yes - to ensure consistent implementation of policy	
Sexual orientation	Yes - to ensure consistent implementation of policy	
Men and women generally	Yes - to ensure consistent implementation of policy	
Disability	Yes - to ensure consistent implementation of policy	
Dependants	Yes - to ensure consistent implementation of policy	

5. 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?

Belfast City Council has put together a series of measures and policies to promote equal opportunities and good relations both in the workplace and in the services we provide. These are reflected in the evidence outlined in Section 2 and each of these should contribute to a good and harmonious working environment. These are kept under review. They will ensure that people from all of the Section 75 groups will be treated fairly and with respect

Good relations category	Likely impact?	Level of impact? Minor/Major/None
Religious belief	Positive	None
Political opinion	<p>Some individual emblems and symbols that, through their history and associations, and whether intended or not, have come to have a significance that has the potential to make those of a different identity feel uncomfortable or unwelcome.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that in many other contexts these and other symbols may be wholly acceptable - for example, football shirts worn at a football match, or political Emblems displayed in the context of political events or institutions.</p> <p>This policy addresses the issue by acknowledging that within the workplace and at organised work events such emblems may have the potential to cause unnecessary tension and be divisive.</p>	Minor
Racial group	Positive	None

6. 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	The policy aims to increase awareness, understanding , tolerance, inclusivity, respect and consistency	
Political opinion	In relation to the wearing of personal emblems in the workplace the council follows ECNI’s guidance. The policy aims to increase awareness, understanding , tolerance, inclusivity, respect and consistency	
Racial group	The policy aims to increase awareness, understanding , tolerance, inclusivity, respect and consistency	

7. Multiple Identities

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

Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

None Identified

Section C

Belfast City Council also has legislative obligations to meet under the [Disability Discrimination Order](#) and Questions 5 -6 relate to these two areas.

Consideration of Disability Duties

8. 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. Relevant information will be communicated via

- Disability Awareness Training for employees and managers/ supervisors
- Disability Action Plan

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

Explain your assessment in full

Not relevant

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.

Equality	Good Relations	Disability Duties
6 monthly audits	6 monthly audits	6 monthly audits
Training data- Diversity, Good Relations, Disability Awareness Training	Training data- Diversity, Good Relations, Disability Awareness Training	Disability Awareness Training
Formal complaints data- employees and service users	Formal complaints data- employees and service users	Formal complaints data- employees and service users
Monitor queries from line managers requesting guidance	Monitor queries from line managers requesting guidance	Monitor queries from line managers requesting guidance

Additional information

The council has commissioned NISRA to carry out a workforce analysis beyond the requirements of the statutory Article 55 to provide a fuller picture of its current workforce and applicant pool. Using up to date information from the 2011 census, the review will identify trends or potential issues and make recommendations where outreach / affirmative action may be appropriate. The Council will develop suitable plans in consultation with the Equality Commission to seek to address any such matters in a fair and effective way.

Section D

Formal Record of Screening Decision

<p>Title of Proposed Policy / Decision being screened</p> <p>The Revision of the Good and Harmonious Working Environment Policy</p>

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

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Equality of opportunity and good relations
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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*

<input type="checkbox"/>	*Screened In – Necessary to conduct a full EQIA
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>*Screened Out – No EQIA necessary (no impacts)</p> <p>Provide a brief note here to explain how this decision was reached:</p>
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>* Screened Out - Mitigating Actions (minor impacts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a brief note here to explain how this decision was reached: • Explain what mitigating actions and / or policy changes will now be introduced: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Communicate the Good and Harmonious Policy to all staff ➤ Include items relating to the Good and Harmonious Policy in Diversity and Good Relations training
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Formal Record of Screening Decision (cont)

Screening assessment completed by (Officer level) -

Name:

Date:

Department

Signature: please insert a scanned image of your signature below

Screening decision approved by -

Name: Catherine Christy

Date:

Department / Job Title: Chief Executive's Department/Human Resources Manager

Signature: please insert a scanned image of your signature below

Please save the final version of the completed screening form and forward to the Equality and Diversity Officer – gilmartins@belfastcity.gov.uk or dennisl@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*)

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