



Equality Screening Template  
Leisure Transformation Programme

## **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](mailto:gilmartins@belfastcity.gov.uk) / [dennisl@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto: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 duties<sup>1</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> ECNI 'Section 75 of the NI Act 1998: A Guide for Public Authorities' April 2010. [www.equalityni.org](http://www.equalityni.org)

## Section A

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

#### Title of policy / decision to be screened:-

Leisure Transformation Programme

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

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

The Leisure Transformation Programme is a new, strategic programme of investment in our leisure facilities and services over the next ten years. This involves a £105million capital investment in our assets as well as transforming how we deliver our services in order that we achieve our intended health outcomes as well as providing greater value for money to the ratepayer. This Programme extends over a 10 year period, though there are intensive discussions taking place at present with regard to the future business operating model that will have an impact in the more immediate term.

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

*(What is the policy trying to achieve?)*

The aim of the programme is “To create modern, affordable health and wellbeing facilities coupled with excellent customer service so that more people will feel inspired to lead a more active lifestyle and therefore enjoy a better quality of life.”

There are two key strands to the programme:

1. **Transforming Assets** – an investment of £105 million in the development of our leisure asset base
2. **Transforming Services** – an improvement programme that will put in place new governance arrangements with a view to offering better customer service and value for money as well as creating greater health and social benefits. Political dialogue is currently underway (Apr 14) with regard to the future business operating model and a decision on this is anticipated in May 14.

The SRO for the overall Programme is the Director of Parks and Leisure.

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

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

- Staff
- Service users
- Other public sector organisations
- Voluntary / community groups / trade unions
- Others, please specify - Construction industry, elected members, central government departments, leisure industry

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

The overall Programme is being delivered by a range of departments across the council due to the varied work streams e.g. HR, OD, legal, finance, capital development, communications. There is also the likelihood that there may be funding from central government departments such as DCAL, DSD, DETI, DEL, DHSSPS etc.

## Section B

### 1. Outline consultation process achieved or planned

To date there has been consultation with the Trade Unions concerning issues that may affect staff. This screening report recommends that an EQIA be carried out and there will therefore be extensive further consultation in line with the provisions of the Council's Equality Scheme.

### 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*

Evidence has been gathered from a range of sources including:

- Financial and HR analysis with regard to performance and costs
- Best practice from other operating models
- Legal analysis with regard to procurement
- Consultants employed to assist with analysis of VAT and other implications of change
- Public and stakeholder consultation at the point of design of new assets - this includes consultation with specific user groups and public surveys alongside which respondents are asked to complete a monitoring form.
- Our contracted consultant (Policy Arc) has also developed a 'profile' of key areas in which the programme would hope to realize benefits and then conducted an analysis of the specific needs of the section 75 categories in each of these fields; namely:
  1. Physical health
  2. Mental health
  3. Education and employment
  4. Reduction in anti-social behaviour and crime

## 5. Social cohesion.

Data for this has been taken from a range of sources including the Census, the 2010 Sport and Physical Activity Survey (SAPAS) commissioned by Sport NI and the Continuous Household Survey (CHS) 2011-12.

With regard to asset design the programme is based on the principle of balanced investment thus mitigating against issues of accessibility in the provision of service. There is also ongoing dialogue with key government departments and sporting governing bodies; particularly in reference to the stadia development. Where consultation during the design period has identified specific user needs these have been addressed through the design. It is also likely that when considering programming provision across the city issues of accessibility will be considered.

**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?**

The Leisure Transformation Programme represents a significant investment in local services as well as the potential for radically altering the way in which we deliver these services (subject to a decision by Council). It is intended that these would be positive changes; however, it will be important to have due regard to promoting equality of opportunity throughout our work. The contracted consultant (Policy Arc) has provided a statement on the potential benefits of sport and leisure activities and the Section 75 groups that have the greatest need of these benefits (attached at Appendix A). This statement also includes information on those groups which are under-represented in terms of participation in sport and leisure activities.

There may be also be impacts on staff, if a decision is made to transfer them to the employ of an arms length body.

There is therefore potential for major impacts on equality of opportunity for those affected by the Programme across all the Section 75 equality categories.

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

Yes – the Programme will allow for the development of new approaches to the promotion of equality of opportunity, for example through setting objectives and targets for the participation of people in under-represented groups. It is understood that different customers will have different needs. The hope is that through this transformation we will provide a more responsive and flexible service that is tailored to the needs of customers rather than providing a generic approach to leisure regardless of the location, customer base etc.

**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?**

Future programming and the operating model should support greater market responsiveness. Asset design should also consider public realm and issues of access and egress thus promoting movement across and within the city for individuals and groups from different areas and promoting better relationships. The level of impact is considered to be minor.

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

Yes - as noted we wish the service to be modern, accessible and flexible and in so doing create new opportunities for customers from a range of different backgrounds to interact and partake in services alongside each other.

**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***

Research indicates that disabled people participate in physical activity less (both in terms of frequency and duration) than average; however, this is mainly due to an older age profile (see Appendix A). Through improved asset design and improved service provision we would aim to promote greater accessibility and support for people with a disability using our facilities and promote the participation of disabled people alongside non-disabled people. In doing so we hope this would help improve attitudes towards disabled people.

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

At this stage we have not identified any specific opportunities to increase the participation by disabled people in public life as a result of the Programme. However, the improvements to service provision will encourage greater inclusion of disabled people and may encourage them to become more involved in public life. The Programme will also support employment and training across the city which may offer greater opportunities to disabled people.

**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.*

The details of what data will be collected and when will be outlined in the final EQIA report. Details of this will be brought through the appropriate governance channels for consideration; at which time we will be in a position to provide greater detail on this point.

<b>Equality</b>	<b>Good Relations</b>	<b>Disability Duties</b>

## Section D

### Formal Record of Screening Decision

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

Leisure Transformation Programme

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>*Screened In</b> – Necessary to conduct a full EQIA</p> <p><i>The EQIA will be carried out in parallel with the development of the new management procedures (subject to Council decision). The findings of the EQIA will influence the arrangements put in place for the management of sport and leisure facilities to ensure that equality issues continue to be accorded a high priority.</i></p>
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>*Screened Out</b> – 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 type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>* Screened Out - Mitigating Actions</b> (minor impacts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide a brief note here to explain how this decision was reached:</li><li>• Explain what mitigating actions and / or policy changes will now be introduced:</li></ul>
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## **Formal Record of Screening Decision** (cont)

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

Name: Eve Bremner

Date: 21.3.14

Department / Job Title: Parks & Leisure, Programme Manager

Signature: please insert a scanned image of your signature below

### **Screening decision approved by -**

Name: Caroline Wilson

Date:

Department / Job Title: Neighbourhood and Development 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](mailto:gilmartins@belfastcity.gov.uk) or [dennisl@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto: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)**  
**Belfast City Council**  
**City Hall**  
**Belfast**  
**BT1 5GS**  
**Telephone: 028 90270511**

**[gilmartins@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:gilmartins@belfastcity.gov.uk) or [dennisl@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:dennisl@belfastcity.gov.uk)**

**Appendix A**

**LEISURE TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME:**

## **PROMOTING EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY**

### **1. Introduction**

The Council is in the process of developing a new approach to the management and delivery of sport and leisure services that will provide opportunities not only to improve the quality of service delivery but to address some of the key inequalities that currently exist in relation to the benefits that can result from participation in sport and leisure. This paper sets out some of those benefits and highlights the groups of people within the Section 75 equality categories who are currently under-represented in terms of participation.

In order to ensure that these inequalities are addressed within the new management arrangements, the Council will need to set parameters for the operation of sport and leisure facilities in relation to programming of activities, concessionary charges, marketing etc. Section 4 below explores these options in more detail.

### **2. Benefits of participation in sport and leisure**

There is a wide range of research studies on the benefits of participation in sport and leisure activities. These suggest that there are five key areas of benefit:

- Physical health – physical activity reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and obesity and may reduce the risk of certain types of cancer, hypertension and osteoporosis;
- Mental health – moderate exercise is a viable way to treat depression and dementia and can reduce the risk of dementia;
- Education and employment – exercise has been shown to increase capacity for learning and improve energy levels and concentration and therefore influences educational attainment and employment prospects;
- Reduction in anti-social behaviour and crime – physical activity can be beneficial in tackling anti-social behaviour and crime by providing a diversionary activity, creating a hook for teaching emotional and career skills, achieving behaviour modification and building self-esteem;
- Social cohesion – sport and leisure contribute positively to many of the factors that build social cohesion including all of the above.

There is some data and research to indicate that certain Section 75 groups are at greater risk in terms of these key areas.

**Key findings**

<p><b>Religion</b></p>	<p><b>Physical health.</b> The 2011 Census showed differences in general health according to religion. Those who were or had been brought up as Catholics were typically more likely than those who belonged to or had been brought up in Protestant denominations to assess their general health as either ‘bad’ or ‘very bad’. The relative differences were more noticeable in the older age groups.</p>
<p><b>Gender</b></p>	<p><b>Physical health.</b> Men have a higher incidence of all types of cardiovascular disease than women and are at a higher risk of obesity, except in the under 25 age group. Women have a slightly higher risk of diabetes and a much higher risk of osteoporosis than men.</p> <p><b>Employment.</b> Employment rates are higher for men than women but the current economic recession has resulted in the greatest negative impact on young men.</p>
<p><b>Age</b></p>	<p><b>Physical health.</b> The risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, hypertension and osteoporosis all increase with age. Levels of obesity increase with age up to about 54 years, then decline.</p> <p><b>Mental health.</b> There are an estimated 19,000 people in Northern Ireland with a form of dementia, only 2% of whom are aged under 65. There is also evidence that in the UK as a whole the highest incidence of mild mental illness is among the 50-54 age group.</p> <p><b>Employment.</b> In 2013 over half (55%) of unemployed people were aged 16-29.</p> <p><b>Anti-social behaviour.</b> Conduct disorders are the most common mental and behavioural problems in children and young people and the prevalence increases throughout childhood.</p>
<p><b>Racial group</b></p>	<p><b>Physical health.</b> Mortality rates from cardiovascular disease are much higher for people of South Asian origin and there is evidence that type 2 diabetes is six times more common in this group. There has also been some research suggesting that people in some minority ethnic groups are more likely to be overweight or obese.</p>

	<p><b>Anti-social behaviour.</b> The prevalence of conduct disorders in the UK varies across ethnic groups; for example, their prevalence is lower than average in children and young people of south Asian family origin and higher than average in children and young people of African-Caribbean family origin.</p>
<b>Disability</b>	<p><b>Physical health.</b> People with mental health problems tend to have significantly higher rates of long-term physical health problems. There is also some evidence to suggest that obesity may be more prevalent among disabled people.</p> <p><b>Mental health.</b> People with learning disabilities may experience a higher risk of dementia because of premature ageing. People with Down’s syndrome have an increased genetic risk of developing dementia.</p> <p><b>Employment.</b> The latest figures show that just over a third (37.6%) of disabled persons are in employment compared to 74.7% of non-disabled persons. Only about one fifth of people with mental ill-health or learning disability are in employment, despite the fact that research in the USA suggests that up to 58% of adults in this category are able to work.</p> <p><b>Anti-social behaviour.</b> Conduct disorders commonly coexist with other mental health problems particularly Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.</p>
<b>People with dependants</b>	<p><b>Employment.</b> People with dependents face additional barriers to employment including access to affordable child care and continuation of benefits once in employment. The proportion of lone parents in employment is particularly low and there is evidence of higher job exit levels among this group.</p>

### 3. Inequalities in participation

The above analysis shows that people in certain Section 75 groups are subject to inequalities within Northern Ireland society and that increased participation in sport and leisure activities may help to address some of the inequalities. However, the groups most at risk are, in many cases, the ones that are under-represented in terms of participation.

There are two main sources of detailed information on participation in sport and leisure activities. The 2010 Sport and Physical Activity Survey (SAPAS) commissioned by Sport NI provided information on levels of participation in activities at home, work, getting about, and organised sport and recreation and published findings by age, gender and disability. The Continuous Household Survey (CHS) 2011-12 presented respondents with a list of 39 sports activities and asked which, if any, they participated in during the previous 12 months; findings were published by religion, gender, age, marital status, disability and dependants. It should be noted that the two surveys used different definitions of sport with the CHS including lower intensity exercise such as walking.

**Key findings**

<b>Religion</b>	The CHS showed that there was no difference between levels of participation in sport between people from a Catholic background and those from a Protestant background.
<b>Gender</b>	Both reports showed that men are more likely than women to participate in sport. The figure for Belfast <sup>2</sup> from the SAPAS report is particularly pronounced with only 25% of women participating compared with 45% of men.
<b>Age</b>	The CHS showed that participation levels peak for the 25-34 age group at 78% and then decrease with age; only 37% of people aged 65+ participate. The SAPAS report showed a similar gap with only 21% of those aged 50+ participating compared with 55% of those aged 16-29. The SAPAS report for Belfast showed very low figures for the 50+ age group at only 17%.
<b>Marital status</b>	The CHS showed that single people are more likely to participate in sport (71%) compared with those who are married or cohabiting (64%). The report noted that differences in marital status proportions were likely to be due to other factors such as age and dependents.
<b>Disability</b>	The CHS showed that people with a limiting long standing illness are less likely to participate in sport (44%) than those without (70%). The SAPAS report for Belfast put the figure for people with disabilities at only 12% compared with 19% for Northern Ireland as

<sup>2</sup> These figures are for the new council area (as defined in 2010).

	a whole.
<b>People with dependants</b>	The CHS showed that people with dependants are more likely to participate in sport (69%) than those without (59%).

The SAPAS report shows that participation in sport in Belfast is below the NI average in many categories with women, disabled people and those aged over 30 being significantly under-represented.

There is also some additional evidence about the participation of people in particular Section 75 groups from more general research reports which includes:

<b>Racial group</b>	Research commissioned by the UK Sports Council in 2009 <sup>3</sup> suggests that inequality and discrimination persist in the provision of and access to sport and physical recreation opportunities by black and ethnic minority communities. These communities are poorly represented at decision making levels and face a range of barriers to sports participation.
<b>Gender</b>	Research by the Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation <sup>4</sup> indicates that there are significant emotional barriers to sporting participation for women, notably low levels of body confidence. In addition there are practical barriers for women in disadvantaged communities which include cost and the time of day at which sports are played.
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	Research commissioned by the UK Sports Councils in 2009 <sup>5</sup> concluded that there is no reliable evidence to allow analysis of the extent to which Lesbian Gay and Bisexual (LGB) people undertake different levels of sports participation but that there was anecdotal evidence that non-inclusive attitudes, homophobia and self-censorship exist.
<b>Dependants</b>	The Sport England Active People Survey 2009/10 showed that women aged 25-34 with children at home are half as likely as women the same age without children to take part in sport on a regular basis, the main barrier being lack of child care.

<sup>3</sup> A systematic review of the literature on Black and Ethnic Minority Communities in Sport and Physical Education, 2009

<sup>4</sup> Physical Activity and Mothers, 2005

<sup>5</sup> A Literature Review of Sexual Orientation in Sport, 2008

#### **4. Addressing inequalities**

The Council already has initiatives in place to address some of the current inequalities, for example through the sports development programme and the Healthwise scheme. However, the Leisure Transformation Programme presents a major opportunity to increase participation in sport and leisure activities by under-represented groups. For this opportunity to be maximised it is essential that the facilities and activities provided are appropriate for these groups, are provided in the right locations and are appropriately marketed.

If the Council confirms its decision to appoint a non-profit distributing organisation (NPDO) to manage sport and leisure facilities, it will be necessary to develop a specification for the management contract. To ensure that current inequalities continue to be addressed, the Council will need to consider the parameters within which the NPDO will have freedom to determine the programming of activities, charges, opening hours etc. In order to maximise the promotion of equality of opportunity the Council could, for example, seek to ensure that:

- the programming and location of classes and activities will take account of the need to encourage participation by under-represented groups;
- charging policies will include concessionary rates for certain groups;
- opening hours and the times of classes and activities will recognise the needs of various groups to participate at different times of day;
- marketing policies will recognise the need to attract people from under-represented groups;
- all information about sport and leisure activities will be made accessible in alternative formats to meet the needs of those with visual and/or hearing impairments, children and young people, people with learning or communication difficulties and people for whom English is not their first language.

It may be sufficient to build into the specification something similar to the above bullet points and require the NPDO to monitor usage and report back at regular intervals. Alternatively the Council may wish to set specific targets for the participation of under-represented groups. In this case, it may be necessary to establish accurate

baseline figures in terms of current usage of specific activities by people from under-represented groups, taking into account the population of those areas which will become part of the city boundaries in 2015.

## **5. Summary**

This paper outlines some of the benefits of participation in sport and leisure activities and the groups that could potentially benefit to the greatest degree. It presents evidence on low participation by people from a number of Section 75 groups:

- women;
- older people (in all age bands from 50 years upwards);
- disabled people;
- black and minority ethnic (BME) groups;
- lesbian, gay and bisexual people;
- people with dependent children, particularly lone parents.

The Leisure Transformation Programme presents a major opportunity to increase participation in sport and leisure activities by under-represented groups. For this opportunity to be maximised it is essential that the facilities and activities provided are appropriate for these groups, are provided in the right locations and are appropriately marketed. The Council will need to consider how to set parameters for these elements in the specification for the management contract.