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**Statutory Equality Duties**

**Screening Of New Council Policies**

**(Questionnaire)**

# Screening of New Policies

**Introduction and Guidance Notes**

* 1. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland 1998 (“The Act”) requires the Council in carrying out its functions, powers and duties to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:

1. between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital

status or sexual orientation;

1. between men and women generally;
2. between persons with disability and persons without;
3. between persons with dependants and persons without.

1.2 In addition, without prejudice to its obligations above, the Council shall in carrying out its functions, powers and duties have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. The Council supports the principles of good relations: equity, respecting diversity and interdependence, and the development of relationships built on trust and respect.

1.3 As stated in its Equality Scheme, the Council intends to screen all of its policies (formal

and informal), functions and roles in order to determine which would require a fuller

equality analysis in the form of an impact assessment.

* 1. This questionnaire is aimed at providing a standardised, systematic approach to the

screening exercise. A summary of this document will be made available to the Council’s

consultees and the general public, via the Council’s web-site and in other formats, (upon

request). This document may also be produced, in full, as part of consultations

regarding Equality Impact Assessments.

1.5 When the Council is considering a new policy, it will determine whether the policy has the

potential to have significant implications for equality of opportunity and/or good relations and if so will conduct a full impact assessment.

* 1. Where due limited quantitative and/or qualitative research data, it is not possible to establish the ‘significance’ of the equality impact, policies which score positively against any of the screening criteria should be designated for detailed impact assessment.

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| **Part 1: Policy Scoping** Name of Policy: Counter Fraud Policy |
| Please tick as appropriate √  **New Policy Revised Policy**  √  **Corporate Policy** **Departmental Policy**  If Departmental, please specify which department;  **\_\_** |
| 3a. Please describe the aims of the policy:. Derry City Council is committed to the prevention of fraud and the promotion of an anti-fraud culture. This Policy covers the prevention, detection and management of fraud and/or corruption and fair dealing in matters pertaining to fraud and / or corruption. It aims to raise the awareness of fraud and its prevention in the Council environment and to give guidance to both the reporting of suspected fraud and how the investigation of that report will proceed.  **3b.** Are there any associated objectives of the policy? If so, what are they?   * To define clearly the responsibilities for the prevention of fraud; * To establish procedures for reporting suspected fraud and how investigations into fraud must be carried out; * To have regular and ongoing monitoring and reporting of fraud risks including early warning mechanisms; * To conduct a review of the effectiveness of the systems of internal control in place; * Undertake appropriate assessments of fraud risks to balance the cost of operating controls relative to the benefits obtained from managing the related fraud and the impact on staff, the public and service delivery; * Investigate problems as these arise and ensure lessons are learnt and services are improved; |
| Are there any Section75 groups which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy? If so, explain how This is a universal policy and is not targeted at any particular Section 75 category. |
| Who initiated or wrote the policy? The Lead Assurance Officer |
| Who is responsible for the implementation of the policy? Everyone in an organisation contributes to the management of fraud risk. This starts at the top where senior management set the tone of the organisation and promote an anti-fraud culture throughout the organisation.  **The Chief Executive** has overall responsibility and is accountable for the effectiveness of fraud risk management. The Chief Executiveis responsible for:   * Developing and maintaining an effective control environment to prevent fraud; * Ensuring that rigorous and prompt investigations are carried out if fraud occurs; * Ensuring that all staff are aware of the organisation’s counter-fraud policy and know what their responsibilities are in relation to combating fraud; * Ensuring that appropriate anti-fraud training and development opportunities are available to all staff; * Taking appropriate disciplinary / legal action against perpetrators of fraud; * Taking disciplinary action against a line manager or supervisor where supervisory failure has contributed to the commission of the fraud; and * Taking appropriate action to recover assets and losses. * Ensuring that appropriate action is taken to minimise the risk of similar frauds occurring in future.   **Directors**  The Directors are responsible for establishing and maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of Council policies, aims and objectives. The system of internal control is designed to respond to and manage the whole range of risks faced by Derry City & Strabane District Council. It is based on an on-going process designed to identify the principal risks, to evaluate the nature and extent of those risks and to manage them effectively. Managing fraud risk will be seen in the context of the management of this wider range of risks.  **Management:**  The primary responsibility for preventing fraud lies with management through:   * Assessing the types of risk (including fraud risk) involved in the operations for which they are responsible; * Ensuring that an adequate system of internal control exists within their areas of responsibility; * Ensuring that controls are being complied with and their systems continue to operate effectively; * Reviewing and testing the control systems for which they are responsible regularly; * Implementing new controls to reduce the risk of similar fraud occurring where frauds have taken place; and * Ensuring compliance with anti-fraud policies and the fraud response plan.   However, while Managers are responsible for assessing and controlling the level of risk within their areas of authority, it is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of fraud and take the necessary steps to minimise the risk to the Council.  Managing the risk of fraud is the same in principle as managing any other business risk. It is best approached systematically both at organisational and operational level. Managers should identify risk areas, assess the scale of risk, allocate responsibility for managing specific risks and implement and test controls to minimise the risks.  Management also have a responsibility to familiarise themselves with common fraud techniques in areas for which they have control. This should include being alert to signs which may indicate that fraud is taking place.  These may include:   * Staff under stress without a heavy workload; * Unexplained wealth and sudden change in lifestyle; * Staff always working late; * New staff resigning quickly; * Original documents being lost and replaced by photocopies; * Suppliers / contractors / customers insisting on dealing with a particular member of staff; * Excessive use of correcting fluids; * Cosy relationships with suppliers / contractors / customers; * Reluctance of staff to take leave; * Sudden changes in behaviour; and * Staff refusing promotion.   Management will support the implementation of this policy and co-operate with Internal Audit, other services and personnel involved in undertaking investigative work and the PSNI in the detection, reporting and investigation of fraud, corruption and financial impropriety, including prosecution of offenders.  **Internal Audit**  Internal Audit is responsible for:   * Assisting in the deterrence and prevention of fraud by examining and evaluating the effectiveness of controls. * Ensuring that management has reviewed its risk exposures and identified the possibility of fraud as a business risk. * Carrying out fraud investigations in line with the organisation’s fraud response plan and other related organisational policies.   **Employees:**  Derry City & Strabane District Council must have, and be seen to have, the highest ethical and personal standards and be honest and objective in their work. Every member of staff is responsible for:   * Acting with propriety in the use of official resources and in the handling and use of public funds whether they are involved with cash or payments systems, receipts or dealing with contractors or suppliers; * Conducting themselves in accordance with the seven principles of public life set out in the first report of the Nolan Committee ‘Standards in Public Life’. They are selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership; * Being alert to the possibility that unusual events or transactions could be indicators of fraud and alerting managers where they believe the opportunity for fraud exists. * Reporting known or suspected frauds. * Assisting in the investigation of suspected fraud; and * Liaising with PSNI, where required to do so.   The Council expects all people and organisations that are in any way associated with it to be honest and fair in their dealings with it and their clients and customers. The Council expects employees to lead by example in these matters. |
| 7. Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision? If yes, are they  Financial  **√**  **√**  Legislative  Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **8.**  Who are the internal/external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon?  **√**  **Staff**  **√**  **Service Users**  **Other public sector organisations**    **Voluntary/Community/Trade Unions**    **Other, Please specify – \_\_\_**  This Counter Fraud Policy is concerned with internal and external fraud committed against Derry City Council by Council employees, suppliers of goods and services, contractors in the course of their work or other persons. |
| 9. Is this policy associated with any other Council Policy(s)? Yes No  √  If yes, please state the related policy(s) below.  Whistleblowing Policy  Risk Management Strategy  Codes of Conduct for Local Government Officers and Elected Members  Employee Disciplinary Procedures |
| **10(a).** How does the policy contribute towards the achievement of the Council’s  strategic objectives?  **This policy supports the Council’s mission of to “Deliver improved social, economic and environmental outcomes for everyone” by establishing and maintaining the highest levels of probity, good governance systems and practices and exemplar legal services to support informed, transparent decision making, accountability, efficient service delivery and the effective management of risk.** |
| 11. How does the Council interface with other bodies in relation to the implementation of this policy? Council will work with Local Government Auditor to ensure that this policy is implemented effectively |

**Available evidence**

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data.

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

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| **Section 75 category** | **Details of evidence/information** |
| **Religious belief** | |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **LGD** | **All usual residents** | **Catholic** | **Protestant and other Christian** | **Other religions** | **None** | | **Northern Ireland** | 1,810,863 | 817,385  (45.14%) | 875,717  (48.36%) | 16,592  (0.92%) | 101,169  (5.59%) | | **Derry & Strabane** | 147,720 | 106,600  (72.16%) | 37,527  (25.40%) | 940  (0.64%) | 2,653  (1.80%) | |
| **Political opinion** | **The political opinion of the Council’s elected members is as follows:**  **Sinn Féin 16 seats**  **SDLP 10 seats**  **Democratic Unionist 8 seats**  **Independents 4 seats**  **Ulster Unionist 2 seats**  **This breakdown is taken as an approximate representation of the political opinion of people within the Derry City and Strabane District Council area.** |
| **Racial group** | **The breakdown detailing the ethnic profile of the residents of the new Council area is as follows:**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Total Usual Residents** | **147720** | | White | 145546 | | Chinese | 301 | | Irish Traveller | 116 | | Indian | 670 | | Pakistani | 48 | | Bangladeshi | 23 | | Other Asian | 222 | | Black Caribbean | 53 | | Black African | 86 | | Black Other | 41 | | Mixed | 462 | | Other | 163 | |
| **Age** | **The age profile of the Derry and Strabane LGD area at Census Day 2011 is as follows:**   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Age Profile** | **NI** | **Derry and Strabane** | | **0-4** | 124382 | 10259 | | **5-7** | 67662 | 5653 | | **8-9** | 43625 | 3858 | | **10-14** | 119034 | 10904 | | **15** | 24620 | 2363 | | **16-17** | 51440 | 4729 | | **18-19** | 50181 | 4443 | | **20-24** | 126013 | 10399 | | **25-29** | 124099 | 10481 | | **30-44** | 373947 | 30635 | | **45-59** | 347850 | 28082 | | **60-64** | 94290 | 7475 | | **65-74** | 145600 | 10775 | | **75-84** | 86724 | 5876 | | **85-89** | 21165 | 1217 | | **90+** | 10231 | 571 | |
| **Marital status** | **The table below illustrates the marital status profile of the Derry and Strabane LGD:**   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Marital Status** | **Derry and Strabane LGD** | **NI** | | All usual residents: Aged 16+ years | **83663** | **1431540** | | Single (never married or never registered a same-sex civil partnership): Aged 16+ years | **46326**  (40.39%) | **517393**  (36.14%) | | Married: Aged 16+ years | **49218**  (42.92%) | **680831**  (47.56%) | | In a registered same-sex civil p’ship: Aged 16+ years | **93**  (0.08%) | **1243**  (0.09%) | | Separated (but still legally married or still legally in a same-sex civil p’ship): Aged 16+ years | **5886**  (5.13%) | **56911**  (3.98%) | | Divorced or formerly in a same-sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved: | **6179**  (5.39%) | **78074**  (5.45%) | | Widowed or surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership: Aged 16+ years | **6981**  (6.09%) | **97088**  (6.78%) | |
| **Sexual orientation** | **Analysis of the Census 2011 indicates that between 2% and 10% of the population may be lesbian, gay or bisexual.**  **There are no official statistics in relation to the number of gay, lesbian or bisexual people in Northern Ireland. However, research conducted by the HM Treasury shows that between 5% - 7% of the UK population identify themselves as gay, lesbian, bisexual or ´trans´ (transsexual, transgendered and transvestites) (LGBT). This is a sizeable proportion of the population here in Northern Ireland.** |
| **Men and women generally** | **The gender profile for the Derry and Strabane LGD is as follows:**   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **LGD** | **Male** | **Female** | | Northern Ireland | 887323 | 923540 | | Derry and Strabane LGD | 72475 | 75245 | |
| **Disability** | * **According to the 2011 Census 22.95% of people in the Derry and Strabane LGD have a long-term health problem or disability that limits their day-to-day activities;**  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **LGD** | **All usual residents** | **Long-term health problem or disability: Day-to-day activities**  **limited a lot** | **Long-term health problem or disability: Day-to-day activities limited a little** | **Long-term health problem or disability: Day-to-day activities not limited** | | **Northern Ireland** | 1810863 | 215232  (11.89%) | 159414  (8.8%) | 1436217  (79.31%) | | **Derry and Strabane** | 147720 | 20710  (14.02%) | 13193  (8.93%) | 113817  (77.05%) |   The |
| **Dependant** | * **According to the 2011 Census 37.65% of households in the Derry and Strabane LGD have a dependants as compared to the Northern Ireland average of 33.85% households;**  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | All households | One family and no other people: Married or in a registered same-sex civil partnership couple:  Dependent children | One family and no other people: Cohabiting couple:  Dependent children | One family and no other people: Lone parent: Dependent children | Other household types: With dependent children | | Northern Ireland | 703275 | 138677  (19.72%) | 16186  (2.3%) | 64228  (9.13% | 18980  (2.7%) | | Derry and Strabane | 55596 | 10370  (18.65%) | 1097  (1.97%) | 7284  (13.1%) | 2187  (3.93%) | |

**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/decision? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories

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| --- | --- |
| **Section 75 category** | **Details of needs/experiences/priorities** |
| **Religious belief** |  |
| **Political opinion** |  |
| **Racial group** | **Possible language difficulties for existing staff and potential staff members whose first language is not English** |
| **Age** |  |
| **Marital status** |  |
| **Sexual orientation** |  |
| **Men and women generally** |  |
| **Disability** | **Possible language difficulties for existing staff and potential staff members who may have possible learning difficulties and problems with understanding** |
| **Dependants** |  |

**Part 2: Screening questions**

**Introduction**

In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, the public authority should consider its answers to the questions 1-4.

If the public authority’s conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then the public authority may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is ‘screened out’ as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, a public authority should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

If the public authority’s conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

If the public authority’s conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories and/or good relations categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

* measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
* the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

**In favour of a ‘major’ impact**

1. The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
2. Potential equality impacts 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.

**In favour of ‘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.

**In favour of none**

The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.

1. 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.

Taking into account the evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, by applying the screening questions given overleaf and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.

**Screening questions**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. **What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? minor/major/none** | | | | |
| **Section 75 category** | | **Details of policy impact** | | **Level of impact? minor/major/none** |
| **Religious belief** | |  | | None |
| **Political opinion** | |  | | None |
| **Racial group** | |  | | None |
| **Age** | |  | | None |
| **Marital status** | |  | | None |
| **Sexual orientation** | |  | | None |
| **Men and women generally** | |  | | None |
| **Disability** | |  | | None |
| **Dependants** | |  | | None |
| 1. **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** |  | | **This policy is applicable to all staff regardless of their religious belief** | |
| **Political opinion** |  | | **This policy is applicable to all staff regardless of their political opinion** | |
| **Racial group** | **Derry City & Strabane District Council commit to putting information into an alternative format where necessary to ensure staff members fully understand their responsibilities under this policy** | |  | |
| **Age** |  | | **This policy is applicable to all staff regardless of age** | |
| **Marital status** |  | | **This policy is applicable to all staff regardless of their marital status** | |
| **Sexual orientation** |  | | **This policy is applicable to all staff regardless of their sexual orientation** | |
| **Men and women generally** |  | | **This policy is applicable to all staff regardless of their gender** | |
| **Disability** | **Derry City & Strabane District Council commit to putting information into an alternative format where necessary to ensure staff members fully understand their responsibilities under this policy** | |  | |
| **Dependants** |  | | **This policy is applicable to all staff regardless of whether or not they have dependants** | |

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| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. **Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between Section 75 equality categories through tackling prejudice and/or promoting understanding?** | | |
| **Section 75 category** | **Details of policy impact** | **Level of impact minor/major/none** |
| **Religious belief** |  | **None** |
| **Political opinion** |  | **None** |
| **Racial group** |  | **None** |
| **Age** |  | **None** |
| **Marital status** |  | **None** |
| **Sexual orientation** |  | **None** |
| **Men and women generally** |  | **None** |
| **Disability** |  | **None** |
| **Dependants** |  | **None** |

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| --- | --- |
| 1. **Is there evidence to suggest that this policy would promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability?** | |
| **If Yes, provide details** | **If No, provide reasons** |
|  | N/A |
| 1. **Is there evidence to suggest that this policy would encourage the participation of people with a disability in public life?** | |
| **If Yes, provide details** | **If No, provide reasons** |
|  | N/A |

**Additional considerations**

**Multiple identity**

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?

(*For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).*

N/A

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

N/A

**Part 3. Screening decision**

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

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| **This is a corporate policy which appears to have no differential impact on any of the Section 75 equality categories.** |

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment the public authority should consider if the policy should be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced. Please provide details

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If the decision is to subject the policy to an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

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**Part 4: Mitigation**

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is ‘minor’ and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative 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 policy.

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| **Where necessary Derry City & Strabane District Council will ensure that all information relating to this policy is presented in an appropriate format to ensure staff are fully aware of their responsibilities in the effective implementation of this policy.** |

**Part 5 - Approval and authorisation**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Screened by:** | **Position/Job Title** | **Date** |
| Denise McDonnell | Lead Assurance Officer | 01.04.17 |
| **Approved by:** |  |  |
|  |  |  |

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be ‘signed off’ and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made easily accessible on the public authority’s website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.