



Derry City & Strabane
District Council

Comhairle
**Chathair Dhoire &
Cheantar an tSratha Báin**

Derry Cittie & Stràbane
Destrìck Cooncil

Equality Scheme for Derry City and Strabane District Council

*Drawn up in accordance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the
Northern Ireland Act 1998*

*This document is available in a range of formats on request. Please
contact us with your requirements (see below for contact details).*

Derry City and Strabane District Council

Telephone: 02871 253253

Email: john.kelpie@derrystrabane.com

Foreword

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations across a range of categories outlined in the Act¹.

In our equality scheme we set out how Derry City and Strabane District Council proposes to fulfil the Section 75 statutory duties.

We will commit the necessary resources in terms of people, time and money to make sure that the Section 75 statutory duties are complied with and that the equality scheme is implemented effectively, and on time.

We commit to having effective internal arrangements in place for ensuring our effective compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties and for monitoring and reviewing our progress.

We will develop and deliver a programme of communication and training with the aim of ensuring that our elected members and staff are made fully aware of our equality scheme and understand the commitments and obligations within it. We will develop a programme of awareness raising for our consultees on the Section 75 statutory duties and our commitments in our equality scheme.

We, the Mayor, elected members, Chief Executive and staff of Derry City and Strabane District Council, are fully committed to effectively fulfilling our Section 75 statutory duties across all our functions (including service provision, employment and procurement) through the effective implementation of our equality scheme.

We realise the important role that the community and voluntary sector and the general public have to play to ensure the Section 75 statutory duties are effectively implemented. Our equality scheme demonstrates how determined we are to ensure there are opportunities, for people affected by our work, to positively influence how we carry out our functions in line with our Section 75 statutory duties. It also offers the means whereby persons directly affected by what they consider to be a

¹ See section 1.1 of our Equality Scheme.

failure, on our part, to comply with our equality scheme, can make complaints.

On behalf of Derry City and Strabane District and Strabane District Council and our staff we are pleased to support and endorse this equality scheme which has been drawn up in accordance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Commission guidelines.



Mayor



Chief Executive

Date: December 2025

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1 Chapter 1 - Introduction

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

1.1 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires Derry City and Strabane District Council to comply with two statutory duties:

Section 75 (1)

In carrying out our functions relating to Northern Ireland we are required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between

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

(See Appendix 1 for further clarification of these categories)

Section 75 (2)

In addition, without prejudice to the obligations above, in carrying out our functions in relation to Northern Ireland we are required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

“Functions” include the “powers and duties” of a public authority². This includes our employment and procurement functions.

Please see below under “Who we are and what we do” for an explanation of our functions.

Trans Manifesto

Derry City and Strabane District Council are also committed to ensuring that trans people within its community are treated fairly and equally.

Council supports the Trans Manifesto and pledges its commitment to its three core statements:

- Respect trans people as equal citizens with equal rights.

² Section 98 (1) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

- Empower trans individuals to be authorities on all aspects of their own lives.
- Develop diverse, representative, realistic and positive portrayals of trans individuals.

Full details of the Trans Manifesto are contained in Appendix 2.

How we propose to fulfil the Section 75 duties in relation to the relevant functions of Derry City and Strabane District Council.

- 1.2 Schedule 9 4. (1) of the Act requires Derry City and Strabane District Council as a designated public authority to set out in an equality scheme how it proposes to fulfil the duties imposed by Section 75 in relation to its relevant functions. This equality scheme is intended to fulfil that statutory requirement. It is both a statement of our arrangements for fulfilling the Section 75 statutory duties and our plan for their implementation.
- 1.3 Derry City and Strabane District Council is committed to the discharge of its Section 75 obligations in all parts of our organisation and we will commit the necessary available resources in terms of people, time and money to ensure that the Section 75 statutory duties are complied with and that our equality scheme can be implemented effectively.

Who we are and what we do

- 1.4 The Council consists of 40 elected representatives who are elected for a four year period. These representatives meet monthly in full session (except in August) and on a regular basis as members of the Council's various Committees.
- 1.5 Council Staff who provide support to the Council and its Committees and implement its policies are organised into Directorates / Service Areas.
- 1.6 The Chief Executive oversees the work of Directorates through Directors who are also responsible for the Corporate Management of the Council.
- 1.7 The Chief Executive is responsible for the strategic direction of, and advice to, the Council, for the day to day management of services and the longer term planning and allocation of resources. The Council's structure is included in Appendix 3.

1.8 The Council currently has six Committees:-

- Governance and Strategic Planning
- Planning
- Assurance, Audit and Risk
- Business and Culture
- Environment and Regeneration
- Health and Community

1.9 The Council has a defined range of duties and powers. Proposals to amend existing policies or adopt new policies are generally considered by the Committee, which has responsibility for the function to which the policy relates. Proposals/issues relating to key policies or policies which affect more than one function, will have been considered by the Senior Leadership Team in advance of the meeting of the Committee.

1.10 Following discussion at the Committee meeting, agreement will be reached on the action to be taken and this will be minuted. Apart from those items of business which have been delegated by the Council, any decisions will not be final until they have been approved by the full Council and the period for Call-In of decisions has ended.

1.11 The Council has delegated a limited number of decisions to Committees. Such decisions may be acted upon without the approval of the Council.³

1.12 In order to fulfil its duties under Section 75 of the Act, the Council will ensure that an assessment of the impact on equality of opportunity of each proposal to amend the policy or adopt a new policy is outlined in the written report to the Committee which first considers the proposal. In making any decision with respect to such a policy, the Council will take into account any such equality impact assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy.

1.13 The Council performs six principal roles within its local area and district:

- The direct provision of a number of services and facilities,
- The promotion of the arts, tourism, community and economic development,
- The promotion of equality and good relations in carrying out all its functions,
- The regulation and licensing of certain activities relating to environmental health, consumer protection and public safety,

³ The Planning Committee has delegated authority to progress all resolutions on Planning Applications and there is no need to wait for the approval at the monthly Council meeting.

- A representative role on a number of bodies and Boards
- A consultative role in relation to functions conducted by other Government bodies and agencies.

1.14 In the performance of the above roles, the Council carries out functions in the following areas:

- ◆ the provision of facilities for recreation, social and cultural activities, including leisure centres, community centres, parks, open spaces, sports grounds and places of entertainment
- ◆ street cleansing
- ◆ waste collection and disposal
- ◆ the provision of burial grounds
- ◆ the provision of grant aid to support culture and the arts, community development, sports development and the promotion of tourism and economic development
- ◆ the administration and regulation of certain matters relating to the environment, public health and public safety, including building control, food safety, statutory nuisance, houses of multiple occupancy, dangerous buildings, air pollution, noise pollution, dog control, consumer protection and health and safety
- ◆ the licensing and regulation of street trading, places of entertainment, amusement centres, sex establishments, societies lotteries, cinemas, the storage of petroleum spirit and mixtures and the regulation of off-street parking.
- ◆ the making of Bye-laws and regulation of same.
- ◆ Planning Services
- ◆ Urban Regeneration Schemes
- ◆ Community Planning

1.15 To enable the Council to provide the above services and perform its other functions, the Council must levy an annual rate and has the power to:

- ◆ acquire and dispose of land
- ◆ borrow money
- ◆ employ staff
- ◆ procure goods and services

1.16 To support and implement the above statutory functions and the provision of services and facilities, the Council has adopted a number of policies. These include, for example:

- ◆ the awarding of Grant Aid to community and voluntary groups.
- ◆ a charging policy for hire and usage of Council facilities such as leisure centres
- ◆ policies relating to the procurement of goods and services
- ◆ policies relating to employment of Council staff.

2 Chapter 2- Our arrangements for assessing our compliance with the section 75 duties (Schedule 9 4. (2) (a))

2.1 Some of our arrangements for assessing our compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties are outlined in other relevant parts of this equality scheme

- See Chapter 3 for Consultation arrangements
- See Chapter 4 for assessment, monitoring and publication of impact of policies arrangements
- See Chapter 5 for staff training.

In addition we have the following arrangements in place for assessing our compliance:

Responsibilities and reporting

2.2 The Council is committed to the fulfilment of its Section 75 obligations in all parts of its work. Responsibility for determining how this will be achieved lies with the Council Members sitting in a duly convened Meeting of the Council. Operational responsibility for carrying out the decisions of the Council lies with the Chief Executive who will be responsible for the implementation of administrative arrangements to ensure that the Statutory Duties are complied with by the Council in carrying out its functions.

2.3 The Council has a Policy Officer (Equality) in post to support the development, implementation, maintenance and review of the equality scheme in accordance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, including any good practice or guidance that has been or may be issued by the Equality Commission.

2.4 Any questions or comments regarding our equality scheme should in the first instance be referred to the Policy Officer (Equality) at the address given below and we will respond to you as soon as possible:

Policy Officer (Equality)
Derry City and Strabane District Council
98 Strand Road
DERRY
BT48 7NN

Telephone : 028 71 253253 ext. 6705
Email: equality@derrystrabane.com

- 2.5 As part of its Corporate planning process, objectives and targets relating to the statutory duties will be built into Council's strategic and operating plans including those relating to policy, services and individuals. Progress on meeting these objectives will be monitored and reported to the Senior Leadership Team.

Employees' job descriptions and directorate delivery plans reflect their contributions to the discharge of the Section 75 statutory duties and implementation of the equality scheme, where relevant.

- 2.6 Derry City and Strabane District Council prepares an annual report on the progress we have made on implementing the arrangements set out in this equality scheme to discharge our Section 75 statutory duties (Section 75 annual progress report).

The Section 75 annual progress report will be sent to the Equality Commission by 31 August each year and will follow any guidance on annual reporting issued by the Equality Commission.

Progress on the delivery of Section 75 statutory duties will also be included in our annual report.

- 2.7 The latest Section 75 annual progress report is available on our website www.derrystrabane.com/equality or by contacting the Policy Officer (Equality) (See Section 2.4 for details).
- 2.8 Derry City and Strabane District Council liaises closely with the Equality Commission to ensure that progress on the implementation of our equality scheme is maintained.

Action plan/action measures

- 2.9 Derry City and Strabane District Council has developed an action plan to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. This action plan is available at www.derrystrabane.com/equality.
- 2.10 The action measures that will make up our action plan will be relevant to our functions. They will be developed and prioritised on the basis of

an audit of inequalities. The audit of inequalities will gather and analyse information across the Section 75 categories⁴ to identify the inequalities that exist for our service users and those affected by our policies⁵.

- 2.11 Action measures will be specific, measurable, linked to achievable outcomes, realistic and time bound. Action measures will include performance indicators and timescales for their achievement.
- 2.12 We will develop any action plans for a period of between one and five years in order to align them with our corporate and business planning cycles. Implementation of the action measures will be incorporated into our business planning process.
- 2.13 We will seek input from our stakeholders and consult on our action plan before we send it to the Equality Commission and thereafter when reviewing the plan as per 2.14 below.
- 2.14 We will monitor our progress on the delivery of our action measures annually and update the action plan as necessary to ensure that it remains effective and relevant to our functions and work.
- 2.15 Derry City and Strabane District Council will inform the Commission of any changes or amendments to our action plan and will also include this information in our Section 75 annual progress report to the Commission. Our Section 75 annual progress report will incorporate information on progress we have made in implementing our action plans/action measures.
- 2.16 Our action plan is available on request from the Council's Offices at

**98 Strand Road,
Derry,
BT48 7NN,**

or

**47 Derry Road,
Strabane,
BT82 8DY**

⁴ See section 1.1 of this equality scheme for a list of these categories.

⁵ See section 4.1 of this equality scheme for a definition of policies.

and via the Council's website www.derrystrabane.com/equality.

- 2.17 The Scheme will be available upon request in a timely fashion, in alternative formats such as Braille, BSL and ISL signing formats, video, oral presentations, meetings, electronic media, and in minority languages. If you require it in an alternative format please contact us on the details provided (see paragraph 2.4 for details).
- 2.18 A summary leaflet providing details of the approved Equality Scheme, in plain language, will be prepared for distribution throughout all of the Council's facilities and to all of its consultees.

3 Chapter 3 - Our Arrangements For Consulting

(Schedule 9 4. (2) (a)) - on matters to which a duty (S75 (1) or (2)) is likely to be relevant (including details of the persons to be consulted)

(Schedule 9 4. (2) (b)) on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by us on the promotion of equality of opportunity.

- 3.1 We recognise the importance of consultation in all aspects of the implementation of our statutory equality duties. We will consult on our equality scheme, action measures, equality impact assessments and other matters relevant to the Section 75 statutory duties.
- 3.2 We are committed to carrying out consultation in accordance with the following principles (as contained in the Equality Commission's guidance '*Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for Public Authorities (April 2010)*')
- 3.2.1 All consultations will seek the views of those directly affected by the matter/policy, the Equality Commission, representative groups of Section 75 categories, other public authorities, voluntary and community groups, our staff and their trades unions and such other groups who have a legitimate interest in the matter, whether or not they have a direct economic or personal interest.

Initially all consultees (see Appendix 4), as a matter of course, will be notified (by email or post) of the matter/policy being consulted upon to ensure they are aware of all consultations. Thereafter, to ensure the most effective use of our and our consultees' resources, we will take a targeted approach to consultation for those consultees that may have a particular interest in the matter/policy being consulted upon and to whom the matter/policy is of particular relevance. This may include for example regional or local consultations, sectoral or thematic consultation etc.

- 3.2.2 Consultation with all stakeholders will begin as early as possible. We will engage with affected individuals and representative groups to identify how best to consult or engage with them. We will ask our consultees what their preferred consultation methods are and will give consideration to these. Methods of consultation could include:

- Face-to-face meetings

- Focus groups
- Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing
- Questionnaires
- Information/notification by email with an opportunity to opt in/opt out of the consultation
- Internet discussions
- Online consultation or
- Telephone consultations.

This list is not exhaustive and we may develop other additional methods of consultation more appropriate to key stakeholders and the matter being consulted upon.

3.2.3 We will consider the accessibility and format of every method of consultation we use in order to remove barriers to the consultation process. Specific consideration will be given as to how best to communicate with children and young people, people with disabilities (in particular people with learning disabilities) and minority ethnic communities by:

- Working with Council's Children and Young Persons' Coordinator
- Working with Council's Age Friendly Coordinator
- Hosting the Equality, Assurance and Oversight Group and other relevant fora.

We take account of existing and developing good practice, including the Equality Commission's guidance *Let's Talk Let's Listen – Guidance for public authorities on consulting and involving children and young people (2008)*. We will follow Council's consultation guidelines.

Information will be made available, on request, in alternative formats⁶, in a timely manner, usually within two weeks. We will ensure that such consultees have equal time to respond.

3.2.4 Specific training is provided to those facilitating consultations to ensure that they have the necessary skills to communicate effectively with consultees.

⁶ See Chapter 6 of our equality scheme for further information on alternative formats of information we provide.

3.2.5 To ensure effective consultation with consultees⁷ on Section 75 matters, we will develop a programme of awareness raising on the Section 75 statutory duties and the commitments in our equality scheme by undertaking the following:

- Communicating through our consultee list and via the Equality and Assurance Oversight Group and other relevant fora
- Preparing and delivering training in relation to the statutory equality duties under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998
- Providing training on the Code of Practice for Producing Information

3.2.6 The consultation period lasts for a 12 week period⁷ to allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves as part of the process of forming a view. However, in exceptional circumstances when this timescale is not feasible (for example implementing EU Directives or UK wide or other legislation, meeting Health and Safety requirements, addressing urgent public health matters or complying with Court judgements), we may shorten timescales to eight weeks or less before the policy is implemented. We may continue consultation thereafter and will review the policy as part of our monitoring commitments⁸.

Where, under these exceptional circumstances, we must implement a policy immediately, as it is beyond our authority's control, we may consult after implementation of the policy, in order to ensure that any impacts of the policy are considered.

3.2.7 If a consultation exercise is to take place over a period when consultees are less able to respond, for example, over the summer or Christmas break, or if the policy under consideration is particularly complex, we will give consideration to the feasibility of allowing a longer period for the consultation.

3.2.8 We are conscious of the fact that affected individuals and representative groups may have different needs. We will take appropriate measures to ensure full participation in any meetings that are held. We will consider for example the time of day, the appropriateness of the venue, in particular whether it can be accessed by those with disabilities, how the meeting is to be

⁷ Please see Appendix 4 for a list of our consultees.

⁸ Please see below at 4.29 to 4.36 for details on monitoring.

conducted, the use of appropriate language, whether a signer and/or interpreter is necessary, and whether the provision of childcare and support for other carers is required.

3.2.9 We make all relevant information available to consultees in appropriate formats to ensure meaningful consultation. This includes detailed information on the policy proposal being consulted upon and any relevant quantitative and qualitative data.

3.2.10 In making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted, we take into account any assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy.

3.2.11 We provide feedback to consultees in a timely manner. A feedback report is prepared which includes summary information on the policy consulted upon, a summary of consultees' comments and a summary of our consideration of and response to consultees' input. The feedback is provided in formats suitable to consultees. (Please see also 6.3)

3.3 A list of our consultees is included in this equality scheme at Appendix 4. It can also be obtained from our website.

Or by contacting the Policy Officer (Equality) (See Section 2.4 for contact details).

3.4 Our consultation list is not exhaustive and is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it remains relevant to our functions and policies.

We welcome enquiries from any person/s or organisations wishing to be added to the list of consultees. Please contact the Policy Officer (Equality) to provide your contact details and have your areas of interest noted or have your name/details removed or amended (see paragraph 2.4 for details).

Please also inform us at this stage if you would like information sent to you in a particular format or language.

4 Chapter 4 - Our arrangements for assessing, monitoring and publishing the impact of policies
(Schedule 9 4. (2) (b); Schedule 9 4. (2) (c); Schedule 9 4. (2) (d); Schedule 9 9. (1); Schedule 9 9.(2))

Our arrangements for assessing the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted on the promotion of equality of opportunity (Schedule 9 4. (2) (b))

- 4.1 In the context of Section 75, 'policy' is very broadly defined and it covers all the ways in which we carry out or propose to carry out our functions in relation to Northern Ireland. In respect of this equality scheme, the term policy is used for any (proposed/amended/existing) strategy, policy initiative or practice and/or decision, whether written or unwritten and irrespective of the label given to it, e.g. 'draft', 'pilot', 'high level' or 'sectoral'.
- 4.2 In making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted, we take into account any assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy, as required by Schedule 9 9. (2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.
- 4.3 Derry City and Strabane District Council uses the tools of **screening** and **equality impact assessment** to assess the likely impact of a policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity. In carrying out these assessments we will relate them to the intended outcomes of the policy in question and will also follow Equality Commission guidance:
- the guidance on screening, including the screening template, as detailed in the Commission's guidance '*Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for Public Authorities (April 2010)*' and
 - on undertaking an equality impact assessment as detailed in the Commission's guidance '*Practical guidance on equality impact assessment (February 2005)*'.

Screening

- 4.4 The purpose of screening is to identify those policies that are likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity.
- 4.5 Screening is completed at the earliest opportunity in the policy development/review process. Policies which we propose to adopt will be subject to screening prior to implementation. For more detailed

strategies or policies that are to be put in place through a series of stages, we will screen at various stages during implementation.

- 4.6 The lead role in the screening of a policy is taken by the policy decision maker who has the authority to make changes to that policy. However, screening will also involve other relevant team members, for example, Policy Officer (Equality), those who implement the policy and staff members from other relevant work areas. Where possible we will include key stakeholders in the screening process.
- 4.7 The following screening questions are applied to all our policies as part of the screening process:
- 4.7.1 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)
- 4.7.2 Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories? (Yes/No)
- 4.7.3 Are there opportunities, without prejudice, to the equality of opportunity duty, to better promote good relations through tackling prejudice and/ or promoting understanding between the three Section 75 (2) categories, namely persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial group? (Yes/No)
- 4.7.4 Is there evidence to suggest that this policy would promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability? (Yes/No)
- 4.7.5 Is there evidence to suggest that this policy would encourage the participation of people with a disability in public life? (Yes/No)
- 4.8 In order to answer the screening questions, we gather all relevant information and data, both qualitative and quantitative. Evidence can come from many sources and may include information from the Council's own management information systems, including service monitoring and complaints handling systems, or from engagement in research, surveys or consultation exercises. Information to help inform the screening of a policy may also be sourced from commissioned research or from research produced by other public authorities, representative groups, trades unions, business organisations or universities. In the absence of quantitative information there may be other anecdotal evidence, for example, feedback from service users and affected groups on their experience of Council's service delivery.

In taking this evidence into account we consider the different needs, experiences and priorities for each of the Section 75 equality categories. Any screening decision will be informed by this evidence.

4.9 Completion of screening, taking into account our consideration of the answers to screening questions on equality of opportunity set out in 4.7.1 and 4.7.2. above, will lead to one of the following three outcomes:

1. The policy has been 'screened in' for equality impact assessment
2. The policy has been 'screened out' with mitigation⁹ or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted
3. The policy has been 'screened out' without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.

4.10 If our screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'minor' in respect of one, or more, of the equality of opportunity categories, we may on occasion decide to proceed with an equality impact assessment, depending on the policy. If an EQIA is not to be conducted we will nonetheless consider measures that might mitigate the policy impact as well as alternative policies that might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity.

Where we mitigate we will outline in our screening template the reasons to support this decision together with the proposed changes, amendments or alternative policy.

4.11 If our screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'major' in respect of one, or more, of the equality of opportunity categories, we will normally subject the policy to an equality impact assessment. This screening decision will be 'signed off' by the appropriate Director, Lead Officer or Head of Service within Derry City and Strabane District Council.

4.12 If our screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'none', in respect of all of the equality of opportunity categories, we may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no

⁹ Mitigation of adverse impact - Where assessment reveals that a particular policy has an adverse impact on equality of opportunity, a public authority must consider ways of delivering the policy outcomes which have a less adverse effect on the relevant Section 75 categories; this is known as mitigating adverse impact. (ECNI **Section 75 Northern Ireland Act 1998 – a Guide for Public Authorities (April 2010)** p83.

relevance to equality of opportunity, we will give details of the reasons for the decision taken. This screening decision will be 'signed off' by the appropriate Director, Lead Officer or Head of Service) within Derry City and Strabane District Council.

4.13 Our screening reports are published quarterly.

Good Relations Question (4.7.3)

4.14 In relation to the policy under consideration, if the answer to the screening question set out in 4.7.3 above is concluded that Yes, there are opportunities to better promote good relations between the Section 75 (2) categories, through tackling prejudice and/ or promoting understanding, then Council will refer the issue to a Designated Working Group which comprises of elected members and Council officers.

The Group will consider the potential opportunities to promote good relations. The group will consult with relevant stakeholders as part of its consideration, where this consultation is proportionate, relevant and enhances decision-making.

Completion of the screening template will take the Group's consideration into account together with relevant evidence.

The Terms of Reference of the Group are attached at Appendix 5 and are part of the Council's approved Equality Scheme arrangements.

Disability Duty Questions (4.74 and 4.75)

4.15 Council is committed to fulfil the statutory obligations in compliance with Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006). This Act places duties on public authorities, when carrying out their functions to have regard to the need:

- To promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- To encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

In order to mainstream this duty Council have inserted the two questions (See 4.7.4 and 4.7.5) on Section 75 screening template to assess the significance of the disability duties in relation to Council policies/services being considered.

In relation to addressing the screening questions set out in 4.7.4 and 4.7.5 Council will adopt the same process outlined in above for Good Relations (para 4.14).

Completed Screening Templates

- 4.16 As previously stated all considerations will be recorded together with relevant evidence on the screening template.

The outcome of the screening process will be presented to the Governance and Strategic Planning Committee or other relevant committee, which in turn will seek ratification from full Council for approval. The proposed measures will then be relayed back to relevant officers to action.

- 4.17 Following ratification, all screening templates, signed off and approved by the senior manager responsible for the policy (Director, Lead Officer or Head of Service), will be made available on our website as soon as possible.
- 4.18 If a consultee, including the Equality Commission, raises a concern about a screening decision based on supporting evidence, we will review the screening decision.

Equality impact assessment

- 4.19 An equality impact assessment (EQIA) is a thorough and systematic analysis of a policy, whether that policy is formal or informal, and irrespective of the scope of that policy. The primary function of an EQIA is to determine the extent of any impact of a policy upon the Section 75 categories and to determine if the impact is an adverse one. It is also an opportunity to demonstrate the likely positive outcomes of a policy, to seek ways to more effectively promote equality of opportunity and to consider any complementary steps desirable to promote good relations.
- 4.20 Once a policy is screened and screening has identified that an equality impact assessment is necessary, we will carry out the EQIA in accordance with Equality Commission guidance. The equality impact assessment will be carried out as part of the policy development process, before the policy is implemented.

- 4.21 Any equality impact assessment will be subject to consultation at the appropriate stage(s). (For details see above Chapter 3 “Our Arrangements for Consulting”).

Our arrangements for publishing the results of the assessments of the likely impact of policies we have adopted or propose to adopt on the promotion of equality of opportunity (*Schedule 9 4. (2) (d)*; *Schedule 9 9. (1)*)

- 4.22 We make publicly available the results of our assessments (screening and EQIA) of the likely impact of our policies on the promotion of equality of opportunity.

What we publish

Screening reports

These will be published quarterly. Screening reports detail:

- All policies screened by Derry City and Strabane District Council over the three month period
- A statement of the aim(s) of the policy/policies to which the assessment relates
- Consideration given to measures which might mitigate any adverse impact
- Consideration given to alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity;
- Screening decisions, i.e.:
 - whether the policy has been ‘screened in’ for equality impact assessment.
 - whether the policy has been ‘screened out’ with mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.
 - whether the policy has been ‘screened out’ without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.
- Where applicable, a timetable for conducting equality impact assessments
- A link to the completed screening template(s) on our website.

Screening templates

For details on the availability of our screening templates please refer to 4.16.

Equality impact assessments

4.23 EQIA reports are published once the impact assessment has been completed. These reports include:

- A statement of the aim of the policy assessed
- Information and data collected
- Details of the assessment of impact(s)
- Consideration given to measures which might mitigate any adverse impact
- Consideration given to alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity
- Consultation responses
- The decision taken
- Future monitoring plans.

How we publish the information

4.24 All information we publish is accessible and can be made available in alternative formats on request. Please see 6.3 below.

Where we publish the information

4.25 The results of our assessments (screening reports and completed templates, the results of equality impact assessments) are available on our website or by contacting the Policy Officer (Equality) (see paragraph 2.4 for details).

4.26 In addition to the above, screening reports (electronic link or hard copy on request if more suitable for recipients) which include all policies screened over the previous three months are also sent directly to all consultees on a quarterly basis.

4.27 We will inform the general public about the availability of this material through communications such as press releases where appropriate.

Our arrangements for monitoring any adverse impact of policies we have adopted on equality of opportunity
(Schedule 9 4. (2) (c))

- 4.28 Monitoring can assist us to deliver better public services and continuous improvements. Monitoring Section 75 information involves the processing of sensitive personal data (data relating to the racial or ethnic origin of individuals, sexual orientation, political opinion, religious belief, etc). In order to carry out monitoring in a confidential and effective manner, Derry City and Strabane District Council follows guidance from the Office of the Information Commissioner and the Equality Commission.
- 4.29 We monitor any adverse impact on the promotion of equality of opportunity of policies we have adopted. We are also committed to monitoring more broadly to identify opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations in line with Equality Commission guidance.
- 4.30 The systems we have established to monitor the impact of policies and identify opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations are:
- The collection, collation and analysis of existing relevant primary quantitative and qualitative data across all nine equality categories on an ongoing basis
 - The collection, collation and analysis of existing relevant secondary sources of quantitative and qualitative data across all nine equality categories on an ongoing basis
 - An audit of existing information systems within one year of approval of this equality scheme, to identify the extent of current monitoring and take action to address any gaps in order to have the necessary information on which to base decisions
 - Undertaking or commissioning new data if necessary.
- 4.31 If over a two year period monitoring and evaluation show that a policy results in greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, we will ensure that the policy is revised to achieve better outcomes for relevant equality groups.

4.32 We review our EQIA monitoring information on an annual basis. Other monitoring information is also reviewed annually when completing the annual progress report (including relevant quantitative and qualitative data and other documentation such as consultants' reports) and will be available in printed form by writing to the Policy Officer (Equality) (see paragraph 2.4 for details). The Council will inform bodies listed at Appendix 4 when this material is available.

**Our arrangements for publishing the results of our monitoring
(Schedule 9 4. (2) (d))**

4.33 Schedule 9 4. (2) (d) requires us to publish the results of the monitoring of adverse impacts of policies we have adopted. However, we are committed to monitoring more broadly and the results of our policy monitoring are published as follows:

4.34 EQIA monitoring information is published as part of our Section 75 annual progress report [see 2.7]

4.35 All information published is accessible and can be made available in alternative formats on request. Please see below at 6.3 for details.

5 Chapter 5 - Staff training (Schedule 9 4.(2) (e))

Commitment to staff training

- 5.1 We recognise that awareness raising and training play a crucial role in the effective implementation of our Section 75 duties.
- 5.2 Our Chief Executive wishes to positively communicate the commitment of the Derry City and Strabane District Council to the Section 75 statutory duties, both internally and externally.

To this end we have introduced an effective communication and training programme for all staff and will ensure that our commitment to the Section 75 statutory duties is made clear in all relevant publications.

Training objectives

- 5.3 Derry City and Strabane District Council will draw up a detailed training plan for its staff which will aim to achieve the following objectives:
- to raise awareness of the provisions of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, our equality scheme commitments and the particular issues likely to affect people across the range of Section 75 categories, to ensure that our staff fully understand their role in implementing the scheme
 - to provide those staff involved in the assessment of policies (screening and EQIA) with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively
 - to provide those staff who deal with complaints in relation to compliance with our equality scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to investigate and monitor complaints effectively
 - to provide those staff involved in consultation processes with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively
 - to provide those staff involved in the implementation and monitoring of the effective implementation of the Derry City and Strabane District Council equality scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively.

Awareness raising and training arrangements

5.4 The following arrangements are in place to ensure all our staff and elected members are aware of and understand our equality obligations.

- We will develop a summary of this equality scheme and make it available to all staff.
- We will provide access to copies of the full equality scheme for all staff; ensure that any queries or questions of clarification from staff are addressed effectively.
- Staff in Derry City and Strabane District Council will receive a briefing on this equality scheme within 6 months of the approval of this scheme
- The Section 75 statutory duties will form part of induction training for new staff.
- Focused training is provided for key staff within Derry City and Strabane District Council who are directly engaged in taking forward the implementation of our equality scheme commitments (for example those involved in research and data collection, policy development, service design, conducting equality impact assessments, consultation, monitoring and evaluation).
- Where appropriate, training will be provided to ensure staff are aware of the issues experienced by the range of Section 75 groups.
- When appropriate and on an ongoing basis, arrangements will be made to ensure staff are kept up to date with Section 75 developments.

5.5 Training and awareness raising programmes will, where relevant, be developed in association with the appropriate Section 75 groups and our staff.

In order to share resources and expertise, Derry City and Strabane District Council will, where possible, work closely with other bodies and agencies in the development and delivery of training.

Monitoring and evaluation

5.6 Our training programme is subject to the following monitoring and evaluation arrangements:

- We evaluate the extent to which all participants in this training programme have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve each of the above objectives.

- The extent to which training objectives have been met will be reported on as part of the Section 75 annual progress report, which will be sent to the Equality Commission.
- We will monitor the equality profile of all staff trained to ensure the training is accessible and inclusive to all employees.

6 Chapter 6 - Our arrangements for ensuring public access to information and services we provide (Schedule 9 4. (2) (f))

6.1 Derry City and Strabane District Council is committed to ensuring that the information we disseminate and the services we provide are fully accessible to all parts of the community in Northern Ireland. We keep our arrangements under review to ensure that this remains the case.

6.2 We are aware that some groups will not have the same access to information as others. In particular:

- People with sensory, learning, communication and mobility disabilities may require printed information in other formats.
- Members of ethnic minority groups, whose first language is not English, may have difficulties with information provided only in English.
- Children and young people may not be able to fully access or understand information.

Access to information

6.3 To ensure equality of opportunity in accessing information, we provide information in alternative formats on request, where reasonably practicable. Where the exact request cannot be met we will ensure a reasonable alternative is provided.

Alternative formats may include Easy Read, Braille, audio formats (CD, mp3 or DAISY), large print or minority languages to meet the needs of those for whom English is not their first language.

Derry City and Strabane District Council liaises with representatives of young people and disability and minority ethnic organisations, as well as others, and takes account of existing and developing good practice.

In respect of the risk categories identified above, the Council is committed to developing in consultation with representatives of the relevant Section 75 categories, systems to ensure that there are effective means of communicating information to young people and those with disabilities and will consider using approaches such as “Plain English”, and large print in written documentation, providing papers/documentation in advance of meetings, consulting within schools/youth clubs (subject to permission), encouraging the

participation of individuals and representative organisations in the Council's consultative fora.

We will respond to requests for information in alternative formats in a timely manner, usually within 5 working days or as soon as is reasonably practicable depending on the format requested.

- 6.4 In disseminating information through the media we will seek to advertise in the press and/or social media where appropriate.

Access to services

- 6.5 Derry City and Strabane District Council is committed to ensuring that all of our services are fully accessible to everyone in the community across the Section 75 categories. Together with producing information in relation to Council services in alternative formats on request, Council disseminates its information through its website which is fully accessible. The website is W3C WCAG 2.1 and Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 compliant.

Derry City and Strabane District Council also adheres to the relevant provisions of current anti-discrimination legislation.

Assessing public access to information and services

- 6.6 We monitor annually across all our functions, in relation to access to information and services to ensure equality of opportunity and good relations are promoted.

- 6.7 We will monitor this in the following ways:-

- Monitoring of complaints
- Reviewing statistical information, such as the baseline profile of Derry City and Strabane District Council area, which is used in the development of Council's corporate planning process
- Monitoring of the requests received for information in alternative formats.

7 Chapter 7 - Timetable for measures we propose in this equality scheme (Schedule 9 4. (3) (b))

- 7.1 Appendix 6 outlines our timetable for all measures proposed within this equality scheme. The measures outlined in this timetable will be incorporated into our business planning processes.
- 7.2 This timetable is different from and in addition to our commitment to developing action plans/action measures to specifically address inequalities and further promote equality of opportunity and good relations. We have included in our equality scheme a commitment to develop an action plan. Accordingly, this commitment it is listed in the timetable of measures at Appendix 6. For information on these action measures please see above at 2.9 – 2.18.

8 Chapter 8 - Our complaints procedure (Schedule 9 10.)

- 8.1 Derry City and Strabane District Council is responsive to the views of members of the public. We will endeavour to resolve all complaints made to us.
- 8.2 Schedule 9 paragraph 10 of the Act refers to complaints. A person can make a complaint to a public authority if the complainant believes he or she may have been directly affected by an alleged failure of the authority to comply with its approved equality scheme.

If the complaint has not been resolved within a reasonable timescale, the complaint can be brought to the Equality Commission.

- 8.3 A person wishing to make a complaint that Derry City and Strabane District Council has failed to comply with its approved equality scheme should contact:

**Chief Executive
Derry City and Strabane District Council**

Telephone: 028 71 253253

Email: john.kelpie@derrystrabane.com

- 8.4 We will in the first instance acknowledge receipt of each complaint within 5 working days giving details of the Officer who will be dealing with the complaint.

- 8.5 The Chief Executive will forward the complaint to the appropriate Director who will be tasked to carry out an internal investigation of the complaint. The Director will respond substantively to the Chief Executive within one (1) month of the date of receiving the letter of complaint.

Under certain circumstances, if the complexity of the matter requires a longer period, the period for response to the complainant may be extended to two (2) months. In those circumstances, the complainant will be advised of the extended period within one month of making the complaint.

- 8.6 During this process the complainant will be kept fully informed of the progress of the investigation into the complaint and of any outcomes.
- 8.7 Once the Chief Executive has received and approved the findings of the investigation surrounding the complaint he/she will contact the complainant. It is intended that the complainant should be in receipt of the notification of outcome within 40 working days of the complaint being received by Derry City and Strabane District Council.
- 8.8 In any subsequent investigation by the Equality Commission, Derry City and Strabane District Council will co-operate fully, providing access in a timely manner to any relevant documentation that the Equality Commission may require.

Similarly, Derry City and Strabane District Council will co-operate fully with any investigation by the Equality Commission under sub-paragraph 11 (1) (b) of Schedule 9 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

- 8.9 Derry City and Strabane District Council will make all efforts to implement promptly and in full any recommendations arising out of any Commission investigation.

(See Appendix 8 for Summary of Complaints Handling Procedure)

9 Chapter 9 - Publication of our equality scheme (Schedule 9 4. (3) (c))

- 9.1 Derry City and Strabane District Council's equality scheme is available free of charge in print form and alternative formats.
- 9.2 Our equality scheme is available by contacting the Policy Officer (see paragraph 2.4 for details.) It is also available on our website (www.derrystrabane.com).
- 9.3 The following arrangements are in place for the publication in a timely manner of our equality scheme to ensure equality of access:
- We will make every effort to communicate widely the existence and content of our equality scheme. This may include press releases, prominent advertisements in the press the internet and direct (e)mail shots to groups representing the various categories in Section 75.
 - We will email a link to our approved equality scheme to our consultees on our consultation lists. Other consultees without e-mail will be notified by letter that the scheme is available on request. We will respond to requests for the equality scheme in alternative formats in a timely manner, usually within 5 working days or as soon as is reasonably practicable depending on the format requested.
 - Our equality scheme is available on request in alternative formats such as Easy Read, Braille, large print, audio formats (CD, mp3, DAISY) and in minority languages to meet the needs of those not fluent in English.
 - Council will implement systems to ensure that there are effective means of communicating information to young people and those with learning disabilities and will consider using approaches such as providing papers/documentation in advance of meetings, consulting within schools/youth clubs (subject to permission), encouraging the participation of individuals and representative organisations in the Council's consultative fora.
- 9.4 A full list of our stakeholders and consultees are detailed in Appendix 4. This list can also be obtained from the Policy Officer (Equality) (see paragraph 2.4 for details.)

10 Chapter 10 - Review of our equality scheme (Schedule 9 8. (3))

- 10.1 As required by Schedule 9 paragraph 8 (3) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 we will conduct a thorough review of this equality scheme. This review will take place either within five years of submission of this equality scheme to the Equality Commission or within a shorter timescale to allow alignment with the review of other planning cycles.

The review will evaluate the effectiveness of our scheme in relation to the implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties relevant to our functions in Northern Ireland.

- 10.2 In undertaking this review we will follow any guidance issued by the Equality Commission. A report of this review will be made public by notification being sent to all consultees (See Appendix 4) or via Council's website.

A copy will also be made available in printed form or in alternative format on request.

The review report will also be sent to the Equality Commission.

Appendix 1

Example groups relevant to the Section 75 categories for Northern Ireland purposes

Please note, this list is not exhaustive.

Category	Example groups
Religious belief	Buddhist; Catholic; Hindu; Jewish; Muslims, people of no religious belief; Protestants; Sikh; other faiths. For the purposes of Section 75, the term “religious belief” is the same definition as that used in the <i>Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order</i> ¹⁰ . Therefore, “religious belief” also includes any <i>perceived</i> religious belief (or perceived lack of belief) and, in employment situations only, it also covers any “ <i>similar philosophical belief</i> ”.
Political opinion ¹¹	Nationalist generally; Unionists generally; members/supporters of other political parties.
Racial group	Black people; Chinese; Indians; Pakistanis; people of mixed ethnic background; Polish; Roma; Travellers; White people.
Men and women generally	Men (including boys); Trans-gendered people; Transsexual people; women (including girls).
Marital status	Civil partners or people in civil partnerships; divorced people; married people; separated people; single people; widowed people.
Age	Children and young people; older people.
Persons with a disability	Persons with disabilities as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
Persons with dependants	Persons with personal responsibility for the care of a child; for the care of a person with a disability; or the care of a dependant older person.
Sexual orientation	Bisexual people; heterosexual people; gay or lesbian people.

¹⁰ See Section 98 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, which states: “*In this Act... “political opinion” and “religious belief” shall be construed in accordance with Article 2(3) and (4) of the Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order 1998.*”

¹¹ Ibid

Appendix 2 Trans Manifesto

Following a special meeting of the DCSDC LGBTQIA+ Working Group on 29th September 2025 it was agreed that members felt that any change to the Manifesto below would not be in the best interests of trans people. Members suggest that the section be kept in and that a footnote be added to state that the Manifesto was under review and will be updated in due course.

Trans Manifesto—Background (last updated 2020).

“Trans issues have been gaining increasing coverage in the British and Irish media over recent years. This mirrors increasing political debate over trans rights, including the Equality Act 2010, evidence presented at the Leveson Inquiry and the debates over same-sex marriage. The Westminster Government issued the first ever Transgender Action Plan in 2011 and many politicians were contacted regarding press coverage of trans people following the suicide of Lucy Meadows in 2013. In Ireland we have been fighting for many years to have proper Gender Recognition Legislation introduced. Sinn Fein was the first party in An Oireachtas to propose a draft Gender Recognition Bill to be passed by the legislature.

The idea of a Trans manifesto was first raised in the UK in discussions with Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat and Green politicians during the summer of 2013, and the idea was enthusiastically received. FOCUS: THE IDENTITY TRUST simultaneously attempted to engage in dialogue with politicians in Northern Ireland. Accordingly a number of trans groups met in the autumn, and three core statements were unanimously agreed:

- **Respect trans people as equal citizens with equal rights.**

There is a feeling that trans peoples’ rights are sometimes subsidiary to those enjoyed by others. The passing of same-sex marriage legislation means that trans people who married in England, Scotland and Wales no longer need to end their marriage should they wish to seek gender recognition. However in England and Wales the process requires the written consent of the spouse — the so-called spousal veto. Married trans people in Northern Ireland still have to end their marriage prior to gender recognition. The Equality Act seemed to reverse some of the protections

previously enjoyed by trans people, with some controversial exemptions specified.

- **Empower trans individuals to be authorities on all aspects of their own lives.**

Provision of healthcare to enable trans people to transition to their new gender has been enshrined in case law since 1997, but many see the NHS process, usually provided through Gender Identity Clinics, as demeaning. The process of gender recognition requires medical reports, meaning that many have no alternative to the NHS process. However recent statements from NHS leaders indicate an acceptance that people who live with long-term conditions, such as gender dysphoria, quickly become experts with knowledge that matches or even exceeds that of medics. The gender recognition process also indicates that the state owns your gender, with trans people having to convince the state to change it. Those who don't see themselves as male or female (non-binary people) are also becoming more visible, but those two genders remain the only ones recognised in law and in government statistics and documents.

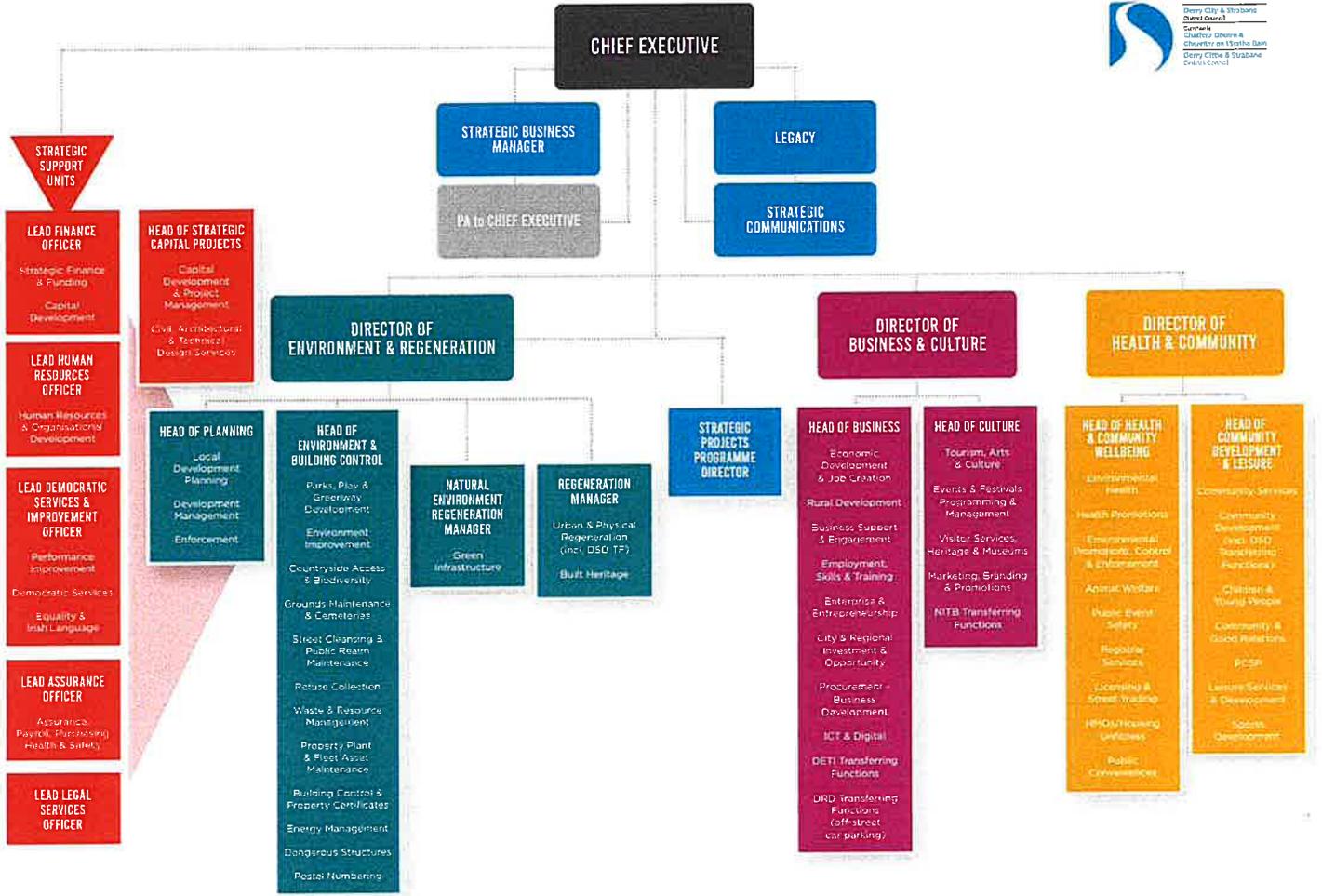
- **Develop diverse, representative, realistic and positive portrayals of trans individuals.**

Trans people feel that media coverage has often been exploitative and sensational, rather than reflecting their real lives or issues that they face. Representations of trans women dominate, leading to the relative invisibility of trans men and non-binary people. Government could take a lead in de-exoticising trans people by including images of and stories from trans people in publications that don't necessarily have any trans focus.

While two specific requests have been made, the real hope is that politicians of all parties will subscribe to a paradigm shift in the way trans people are viewed. By ensuring that all policy decisions are viewed through these three statements, the inequalities that trans people still face (including but not restricted to family law, immigration, education, employment and healthcare) will start to be naturally eliminated.

The intention has never been that trans people should have more rights than anyone else, but instead have the same rights that others take for granted.”

Appendix 3 Organisational Chart



Appendix 4 Consultee List

Action on Hearing Loss
Active Citizens Engaged
Age Friendly (Derry and Strabane)
Age NI
All Saints Caring Association
Alliance Party of Northern Ireland
An Munia Tober
Aontú
Apex Housing
Apprentice Boys of Derry
Ardnashee School and College
Autism Initiatives Northern Ireland
Autism Northern Ireland (PAPA)
Aware Defeat Depression
Baha'i Faith
Ballymacgroarty and Hazelbank Community Partnership
Belfast Islamic Centre
Bob Harte Memorial Trust
Bond Street Community Association
Bridge Accessible Transport
Bryson Care Western Services
CALMS
Cancer Focus Northern Ireland
Cara Friend
Carers National Association
Carnhill Community Centre
Carnhill Resource Centre
Caw Centre
Cedar (Insight 2 Change)
Charity Commission for Northern Ireland
Children's Law Centre
Chinese Welfare Association
Church of Ireland
Church Of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
Churches Trust Ltd
Citizens Advice Bureau
City of Londonderry Grand Orange Lodge
Claudy Rural Development Group

Clooney Estate Residents Association
Commissioner for Older People in Northern Ireland
Committee on Administration of Justice
Community Relations Council
Community Restorative Justice (NW Region)
Creggan Neighbourhood Partnership
Creggan Pre-School and Training Trust (CPTT)
Cruse NI
Culmore Area Forum
Cultúrlann Uí Chanáin
Cumann Gaelach Chnoc na Rós Doire
CÚNAMH
Currynieran Community House
Democratic Unionist Party
Derry Well Women
Derry Youth and Community Workshop
Destined
Destined (Feeny)
Disability Action
Disability Equality NI
Disability Equality NI
Dove House Community Trust
Down's Syndrome Association NI
Drumahoe Community Association
Early Years Organisation for Young Children
Education Authority NI
Eglinton Community Association
Employers Forum on Disability
Equality and Human Rights Unit, oFMdFM
Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
First Housing Aid and Support Services (FHASS)
Foras Na Gaeilge
Fountain Community Forum
Foyle Cruse Bereavement Care
Foyle Deaf Centre
Foyle Downs Syndrome Trust
Foyle Haven
Foyle New Horizons

Foyle U3A
Foyle Women's Aid
Foyle Women's Information Network
Free Presbyterian Church
Galliagh Community Development Group
Gasyard Development Trust
Greater Shantallow Area Partnership
Habinteg Housing Association
Hands That Talk
Holywell Trust
Hungarian-Irish Network
HURT
Independent Councillors
Inner City Trust
Irish Council of Churches
Irish Street Community Association
Irish Street Youth and Community Association
Jehovah's Witnesses
Leafair Community Association
Learmount Community Development Group
Lettershandoney and District Development Group
Lilliput Theatre
Limavady Road Residents Association
Lincoln Courts Community Centre
Local Government Staff Commission for NI
Londonderry Methodist City Mission
Londonderry YMCA
Long Tower Youth and Community Centre
Maydown Ebrington Centre
Men's Action Network
MENCAP
Methodist Church in Ireland
Monreagh Ulster Scots Heritage Centre
Multi-Cultural Resource Centre
Multiple Sclerosis Society (Foyle Branch)
NASUWT
National Autistic Society
NEXUS Institute
NI Association for Mental Health
NI Chest, Heart and Stroke Association

NI Women's Aid Federation
NIACRO
NICCY
NIPSA
NIPSA Branch 532
NISRA
North West Migrants Forum
North West Volunteer Centre
Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty Network
Northern Ireland Assembly
Northern Ireland Chest Heart and Stroke
Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action
Northern Ireland NEWPIN
Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network
Northlands Centre
NSPCC
NW Centre for Learning and Development
NW Community Network
NW Forum of People with Disabilities
Older People North West
Outer North Neighbourhood Partnership
Pat Finucane Centre
Praxis
People Before Profit
Presbytery of Derry and Donegal
R.E.A.L. Network
Rainbow Project - Out NorthWest
Riversdale Otters A.S.C.
RNIB Resource Centre
RNID
Roman Catholic Church
Royal British Legion
Royal British Legion Women's Section
Royal National Institute for the Blind
Rural Area Partnership in Derry
SALT Community Association
SDLP Local Office
Sensory Support Service
Shamrock Hurling Club
Sigersons Ladies GAA Club
Sikh Cultural Centre

Simon Community NI
Sinn Féin
Sion Swifts F.C.
Social Democratic Labour Party
Sollus Centre
St Columb's Park House Peace & Reconciliation Centre
Strabane Athletic F.C.
Strabane Ethnic Community Association
Strabane Volunteer Centre
Strand Foyer
Stroke Organisation
Talking Newspaper
The Cedar Foundation
The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association
The Junction
The Rainbow Project
The Women's Centre
Triangle Association
Triax Neighbourhood Partnership Board
Tuar Ceatha Services
Ulster Scots Agency
Ulster Scots Community Network
Ulster Unionist Party
UNITE
USEL
Verbal Arts Centre
Victim Support Northern Ireland
VOYPIC
Waterside Neighbourhood Partnership
Waterside Women's Centre
West Bank Initiative
Women's Institute
Women's Support Network

Appendix 5 Designated Working Group Terms of Reference

Membership

The Chief Executive will nominate a Director/Head of Service/Lead Officer to chair the working group dependant on the nature of the issue being addressed.

The working group will comprise of cross party elected representatives together with Council officers with particular expertise/interest to assist in addressing the matter/issue at hand.

Purpose

Council subjects all policies/service developments and reviews to a screening process as per its obligations under Section 75 Northern Ireland Act 1998. Through this process issues relating to good relations between Section 75 (2) categories (namely religious belief, political opinion and race) may be highlighted.

The purpose of the group is to consider opportunities to better promote good relations within these categories through tackling prejudice and/or promoting understanding.¹²

The Group will consult with relevant stakeholders as part of its consideration, where this consultation is proportionate, relevant and enhances decision-making.

Meetings

The Group will be convened as and when required to address any issue highlighted through the Council's screening process.

Reporting Arrangements

As appropriate, the recommendations of the Group will be reported in Council's screening template which in turn will be presented to a

¹² In relation to the Disability Duties, the purpose of the Group will be to consider opportunities to promote positive perception of people with a disability and /or the participation in public life of people with a disability.

relevant Council Committee for approve and full Council ratification.

The screening template will be publicly available on the website <http://www.derrystrabane.com/Council/Equality> after they have been ratified by full Council.

Appendix 6 Timetable for measures proposed (Schedule 9 4.(3) (b))

Measure	Lead responsibility	Timetable
Section 75 Annual Progress Report [2.7]	Chief Executive	31 August (annually)
Consultation list reviewed and updated [3.4]	Policy Officer (Equality)	September (annually)
Screening Reports [4.15]	Policy Officer (Equality)	Quarterly
<u>Monitoring</u>		
Review of monitoring information [4.31]	Heads of Service/Lead Officers/ Policy Officer (Equality)	April (Annually – for inclusion in Annual Progress Report)
Publication of monitoring information [4.33;4.34]	Policy Officer (Equality)	August (Annually – in approved Annual Progress Report)
<u>Training</u>		
Development of summary scheme [5.4]	Policy Officer (Equality)	January 2026
Development of overall training programme [5.5]	Policy Officer (Equality)	Annually
	Policy Officer (Equality)	May 2025 and quarterly thereafter
	Policy Officer (Equality)	

Focussed training [5.4]	Policy Officer (Equality)	Every 3 years
Update training [5.4]		Ongoing
Evaluation of training [5.6]		
Access to information and services [6.9]	Policy Officer (Equality)	Ongoing
Communication of equality scheme [9.3]	Policy Officer (Equality)	January 2026 (Induction and E-Learning) and ongoing
Notification of consultees [9.3]	Policy Officer (Equality)	Before Committee
Develop Equality Action Plan 2028-2031	Policy Officer (Equality)	2026-2027
Implement and deliver Equality Action Plan 2024-2027 (7.2)	Chief Executive	Deliver actions over period 2024-27
Monitor Equality Action Plan	Policy Officer (Equality)	Annually
Review of equality scheme [10.1]	Lead Democratic Services and Improvement Officer/ Policy Officer (Equality)	March 2030

Appendix 7 Glossary of terms

Action plan

A plan which sets out actions a public authority will take to implement its Section 75 statutory duties. It is a mechanism for the realisation of measures to achieve equality outcomes for the Section 75 equality and good relations categories.

Action measures and outcomes

Specific measures to promote equality and good relations for the relevant Section 75 and good relations categories, linked to achievable outcomes, which should be realistic and timely.

Adverse impact

Where a Section 75 category has been affected differently by a policy and the effect is less favourable, it is known as adverse impact. If a policy has an adverse impact on a Section 75 category, a public authority must consider whether or not the adverse impact is unlawfully discriminatory. In either case a public authority must take measures to redress the adverse impact, by considering mitigating measures and/or alternative ways of delivering the policy.

Affirmative action

In general terms, affirmative action can be defined as being anything consistent with the legislation which is necessary to bring about positive change. It is a phrase used in the Fair Employment and Treatment Order (NI) 1998 to describe lawful action that is aimed at promoting equality of opportunity and fair participation in employment between members of the Protestant and Roman Catholic communities in Northern Ireland.

Audit of inequalities

An audit of inequalities is a systematic review and analysis of inequalities which exist for service users and those affected by a public authority's policies. An audit can be used by a public authority to inform its work in relation to the Section 75 equality and good relations duties. It can also enable public authorities to assess progress on the implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties, as it provides baseline information on existing inequalities relevant to a public authority's functions.

Consultation

In the context of Section 75, consultation is the process of asking those affected by a policy (ie, service users, staff, the general public) for their views on how the policy could be implemented more effectively to promote equality of opportunity across the 9 categories. Different circumstances will call for different types of consultation. Consultations could, for example, include meetings, focus groups, surveys and questionnaires.

Differential impact

Differential impact occurs where a Section 75 group has been affected differently by a policy. This effect could either be positive, neutral or negative. A public authority must make a judgement as to whether a policy has a differential impact and then it must determine whether the impact is adverse, based on a systematic appraisal of the accumulated information.

Discrimination

The anti-discrimination laws prohibit the following forms of discrimination:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect Discrimination
- Disability Discrimination
- Victimisation
- Harassment

Brief descriptions of these above terms follow:

Direct discrimination

This generally occurs where a public authority treats a person less favourably than it treats (or, would treat) another person, in the same or similar circumstances, on one or more of the statutory non-discrimination grounds. A decision or action that is directly discriminatory will normally be unlawful unless: (a) in an age discrimination case, the decision can be objectively justified, or (b) in any other case, the public authority can rely on a statutory exception that permits it – such as a *genuine occupational requirement exception*; or, a *positive action exception* which permits an employer to use “welcoming statements” or to take other lawful positive action to encourage participation by under-represented or otherwise disadvantaged groups.

Indirect discrimination

The definition of this term varies across some of the anti-discrimination laws, but indirect discrimination generally occurs where a public authority applies to all persons a particular provision, criterion or practice, but which is one that has the effect of placing people who share a particular equality characteristic (e.g. the same sex, or religious belief, or race) at a particular disadvantage compared to other people. A provision, criterion or practice that is indirectly discriminatory will normally be unlawful unless (a) it can be objectively justified, or (b) the public authority can rely on a statutory exception that permits it.

Disability discrimination

In addition to direct discrimination and victimisation and harassment, discrimination against disabled people may also occur in two other ways: namely, (a) *disability-related discrimination*, and (b) *failure to comply with a duty to make reasonable adjustments*.

- (a) *Disability-related discrimination* generally occurs where a public authority, without lawful justification, and for a reason which relates to a disabled person's disability, treats that person less favourably than it treats (or, would treat) other people to whom that reason does not (or, would not) apply.
- (b) *Failure to comply with a duty to make reasonable adjustments*: One of the most notable features of the disability discrimination legislation is that in prescribed circumstances it imposes a duty on employers, service providers and public authorities to take such steps as are reasonable to remove or reduce particular disadvantages experienced by disabled people in those circumstances.

Victimisation

This form of discrimination generally occurs where a public authority treats a person less favourably than it treats (or, would treat) another person, in the same or similar circumstances, because the person has previously exercised his/her rights under the anti-discrimination laws, or has assisted another person to do so. Victimisation cannot be justified and is always unlawful.

Harassment

Harassment generally occurs where a person is subjected to unwanted conduct that is related to a non-discrimination ground with the purpose, or which has the effect, of violating their dignity or of creating for them an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or

offensive environment. Harassment cannot be justified and is always unlawful.

Equality impact assessment

The mechanism underpinning Section 75, where existing and proposed policies are assessed in order to determine whether they have an adverse impact on equality of opportunity for the relevant Section 75 categories. Equality impact assessments require the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data.

Equality of opportunity

The prevention, elimination or regulation of discrimination between people on grounds of characteristics including sex, marital status, age, disability, religious belief, political opinion, dependants, race and sexual orientation.

The promotion of equality of opportunity entails more than the elimination of discrimination. It requires proactive measures to be taken to secure equality of opportunity between the categories identified under Section 75.

Equality scheme

A document which outlines a public authority's arrangements for complying with its Section 75 obligations. An equality scheme must include an outline of the public authority's arrangements for carrying out consultations, screening, equality impact assessments, monitoring, training and arrangements for ensuring access to information and services.

Good relations

Although not defined in the legislation, the Commission has agreed the following working definition of good relations: 'the growth of relations and structures for Northern Ireland that acknowledge the religious, political and racial context of this society, and that seek to promote respect, equity and trust, and embrace diversity in all its forms'. Good relations' means, in particular, having regard to the desirability of a) tackling prejudice and b) promoting understanding.

Mainstreaming equality

The integration of equal opportunities principles, strategies and practices into the every day work of public authorities from the outset. In other words, mainstreaming is the process of ensuring that equality considerations are built into the policy development process

from the beginning, rather than being bolted on at the end. Mainstreaming can help improve methods of working by increasing a public authority's accountability, responsiveness to need and relations with the public. It can bring added value at many levels.

Mitigation of adverse impact

Where an equality impact assessment reveals that a particular policy has an adverse impact on equality of opportunity, a public authority must consider ways of delivering the policy outcomes which have a less adverse effect on the relevant Section 75 categories; this is known as mitigating adverse impact.

Monitoring

Monitoring consists of continuously scrutinising and evaluating a policy to assess its impact on the Section 75 categories. Monitoring must be sensitive to the issues associated with human rights and privacy. Public authorities should seek advice from consultees and Section 75 representative groups when setting up monitoring systems.

Monitoring consists of the collection of relevant information and evaluation of policies. It is not solely about the collection of data, it can also take the form of regular meetings and reporting of research undertaken. Monitoring is not an end in itself but provides the data for the next cycle of policy screening.

Northern Ireland Act

The Northern Ireland Act, implementing the Good Friday Agreement, received Royal Assent on 19 November 1998. Section 75 of the Act created the statutory equality duties.

Policy

The formal and informal decisions a public authority makes in relation to carrying out its duties. Defined in the New Oxford English Dictionary as 'a course or principle of action adopted or proposed by a government party, business or individual'. In the context of Section 75, the term **policies** covers all the ways in which a public authority carries out or proposes to carry out its functions relating to Northern Ireland. Policies include unwritten as well as written policies.

Positive action

This phrase is not defined in any statute, but the Equality Commission understands it to mean any lawful action that a public authority might take for the purpose of promoting equality of opportunity for all persons in relation to employment or in accessing goods, facilities or services (such as health services, housing, education, justice, policing). It may involve adopting new policies, practices, or procedures; or changing or abandoning old ones. *Positive action* is not the same as *positive discrimination*.

Positive discrimination differs from positive action in that *positive action* involves the taking of lawful actions whereas *positive discrimination* involves the taking of unlawful actions. Consequently, *positive action* is by definition lawful whereas *positive discrimination* is unlawful.

Qualitative data

Qualitative data refers to the experiences of individuals from their perspective, most often with less emphasis on numbers or statistical analysis. Consultations are more likely to yield qualitative than quantitative data.

Quantitative data

Quantitative data refers to numbers, typically derived from either a population in general or samples of that population. This information is often analysed by either using descriptive statistics, which consider general profiles, distributions and trends in the data, or inferential statistics, which are used to determine 'significance' either in relationships or differences in the data.

Screening

The procedure for identifying which policies will be subject to equality impact assessment, and how these equality impact assessments will be prioritised. The purpose of screening is to identify the policies which are likely to have a minor/major impact on equality of opportunity so that greatest resources can be devoted to improving these policies. Screening requires a systematic review of existing and proposed policies.

Schedule 9

Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 sets out detailed provisions for the enforcement of the Section 75 statutory duties, including an outline of what should be included in an equality scheme.

Section 75

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act provides that each public authority is required, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:-

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

Without prejudice to these obligations, each public authority in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland must also have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

Section 75 investigation

An investigation carried out by the Equality Commission, under Schedule 9 of the NI Act 1998, arising from the failure of a public authority to comply with the commitments set out in its approved equality scheme.

There are two types of Commission investigation, these are as follows:

1. An investigation of a complaint by an individual who claims to have been directly affected by the failure of a public authority to comply with its approved equality scheme;
2. An investigation initiated by the Commission, where it believes that a public authority may have failed to comply with its approved equality scheme.

Appendix 8 Complaints Handling Process - Equality

Complainant makes complaint in writing, orally or via representative organisation/individual to:

Chief Executive

Derry City and Strabane District Council,

98 Strand Road,

Derry,

BT48 7LL

Tel: 02871253253

Email: John.kelpie@derrystrabane.com



Chief Executive forwards equality complaint to appropriate Director and replies in writing to the complainant, acknowledging the complaint within 5 working days.



Director ensures investigation of the complaint by appropriate officer(s), either of whom may contact Complainant for further information.

Within 30 days the Director writes to the Chief Executive to inform them of the outcome of the investigation.

Director and/or appropriate officer(s) meet with the Chief Executive, if appropriate.



Within 40 days of receipt of the complaint the Chief Executive writes to the complainant to inform them of the outcome of the investigation including details of how to complain to the Equality Commission if the Complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome.

Version	Date	Type of changes
1	Approved by Equality Commission NI on 24 th May 2017	N/a
2	Reviewed February 2020	No changes made
3	Reviewed between February and November 2025	No substantive changes made.

