

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Section 75 Equality and Good Relations Screening template (Oct 2022)

Part 1. Information about the activity/policy/project being screened

Name of the activity/policy/project

Enhanced transparency through publishing webcast recordings of all committee meetings.

Is this activity/policy/project – an existing one, a revised one, a new one?

The activity is based on the enhancement of existing arrangements to publish webcast recordings of all Committee meetings as part of the Council's commitment to transparency by default.

Background

In October 2022 the Council took the decision to livestream all Full Meetings of Council and publish webcast recordings on its website. Committee meetings are not livestreamed however, audio recordings are made available on the website following ratification of the minutes.

In February 2025, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council (LCCC) agreed to adopt a Notice of Motion on transparency. The considerations arising from the Motion are:

- a. Transparency by default
- b. Options to facilitate the livestream of all committee meetings and amendments to relevant policies to reflect this practice
- c. Publication of recordings within an appropriate timeframe
- d. Amendments to Standing Orders to require a recorded vote where the outcome is not unanimous

What are the intended aims/outcomes the activity/policy/project is trying to achieve?

The intended aims/outcomes of the activity are:

- To provide openness and transparency to the Council's decision-making process by publishing webcast recordings of all Committee meetings.

- To promote public trust and democratic engagement by ensuring that Council and committee meetings are accessible to all members of the public through live broadcast (Council) and timely publication of recordings.
- Amend relevant policies/protocols to incorporate publishing webcast recordings and the voting process where the outcome is not unanimous.

Who is the activity/policy/project targeted at and who will benefit? Are there any expected benefits for specific Section 75 categories/groups from this activity/policy/project? If so, please explain.

All members of the public, including those who may experience barriers to physical attendance such as individuals with disabilities, caring responsibilities, or limited access to transport. Elected Members will also benefit from increased public confidence in decision-making processes.

Who initiated or developed the activity/policy/project?

The proposed changes are the result of a notice of motion adopted by the Council and will be developed by the Member Services Unit within the Finance and Corporate Services Department.

Who owns and who implements the activity/policy/project?

Owned by Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council. Will be implemented by the Members Services Unit.

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the activity/policy/project?

Yes

If yes, give brief details of any significant factors.

- Financial implications due to budget pressures. This may impact the quality of the arrangements put in place.
- Legal implications e.g. GDPR issues will have to be monitored.
- Technical issues may mean that there are delays in publication on occasion.

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the activity/policy/project will impact upon? Delete if not applicable

Staff

- Chief Executive
- Senior Management Team
- Heads of Service
- Member Services Unit
- Technicians
- Corporate Communications Unit
- IT Services
- All Staff

Service users

- Rate payers
- Members of the public
- Media

Other public sector organisations

The following public sector organisations will be impacted as representatives who attend Council and Committee meetings will be captured in the livestream and webcast recordings published on the Council's website:

- DfI – Roads Services
- Northern Ireland Water Services
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive
- Belfast and Lisburn Health Trusts

Other

- Elected Members
- Other stakeholders who have reason to engage with the Council through formal structures
- Members of the public sitting in the public gallery captured in the livestream and recordings.

Other policies/strategies/plans with a bearing on this activity/policy/project [

Name of policy/strategy/plan	Who owns or implements?
Standing Orders	LCCC
Local Government Act (NI) 2014	Northern Ireland Assembly
Local Government (Remote Meetings) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024.	Department for the Communities
LCCC Access to Council and Committee Meetings and Agenda Report Minutes Protocol	LCCC
Remote Meetings Protocol	LCCC

Available evidence

What evidence/information (qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered or considered to inform this activity/policy? Specify details for each Section 75 category.

Most up to date NISRA population data from Census 2021 (published 22/09/22)
[Lisburn and Castlereagh Census Data](#)

Consideration has been given to the approaches adopted by other councils in relation to the livestreaming of their meetings.

Given that we do not hold information on the categories of people who access recordings of our meetings the following section has been based on the makeup of Elected Members of the council, as well as census data for the Council area

Section 75 Category	Details of evidence/information
Religious Belief	NI Census 2021 data for the Lisburn and Castlereagh area: 58% Protestant (or other Christian) 27% Catholic 2% Other 13% None

	We do not have information on the religious background of businesses or individuals who may access this programme. The Council does not hold information on the religious belief of Elected Members.												
Political Opinion	The Local Government Election in May 2023 demonstrated the following weighting in the Borough’s political opinion. Note: only 52% of those eligible submitted a vote. <table><tr><td>DUP (%)</td><td>Alliance (%)</td><td>UUP (%)</td><td>SF (%)</td><td>SDLP (%)</td><td>Ind (%)</td></tr><tr><td>35</td><td>32.5</td><td>15</td><td>10</td><td>5</td><td>2.5</td></tr></table> The Council has 40 Elected Members drawn from the following political parties: DUP - 14 APNI - 13 UUP - 6 SF - 4 SDLP – 2 INDEPENDENT – 1	DUP (%)	Alliance (%)	UUP (%)	SF (%)	SDLP (%)	Ind (%)	35	32.5	15	10	5	2.5
DUP (%)	Alliance (%)	UUP (%)	SF (%)	SDLP (%)	Ind (%)								
35	32.5	15	10	5	2.5								
Racial Group	Using the same Census/boundary data indicates that just over 4% of the population were from an ethnic minority group.												
Age	The population in 2021 totalled 149,106: 28,331 (0-14) 44,731 (15-39) 49,205 (40-64) 26,839 (65+ years)												
Marital Status	For the 16+ population in relation to marital and civil partnerships: 33% single 52% married or civil partnership 3% separated 6% divorced or formerly in a civil partnership. 6% widowed or surviving partner from a civil partnership												

Sexual Orientation	The Census 2021 data indicates that 91% identified as straight or heterosexual, 2% of the household population identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual or other sexual orientation, while 7% prefer not to say or not stated.
Men & Women Generally	The LCCC population (2021) was 51% female and 49% male. This reflects the overall NI position. LCCC Elected Members: • Female – 22.5% • Male – 77.5%
Disability	Census data 2021 suggests that 21.7% of the LCCC population have a long-term health problem or disability. This is a 3.4% increase on the Census 2011 figure.
People with and without Dependants	2021 Census Information – Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council is just slightly above the mid – point Northern Ireland in relation to dependent children in household between ages of 0 - 4; 5 – 9; 10 – 14, but is in bottom position in relation to children & young adults aged 15 – 19 years. In 2021, of the 60,143 households in the Lisburn & Castlereagh City council area 14.4% (8,661) had dependent children. 10.98% of the population on average provide unpaid care, with 3.4% providing in excess of 50 hours per week.

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

Section 75 Category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
Religious Belief	No different needs or experiences identified in relation to religious belief, political opinion.
Political Opinion	
Racial Group	Council meetings and information should be accessible for everyone including people who do not have English as their first language. This may require modification to the Council website, including recordings of meetings, or provision of information in alternative languages if requested.
Age	It is anticipated that some people in this category, for example older people, are more likely to want or need access to the livestream and recordings of meetings.
Marital Status	No different needs or experiences identified for these groups in relation to the proposed changes.
Sexual Orientation	
Men & Women Generally	No different needs or experiences identified for these groups in relation to the proposed changes.
Disability	People with different disabilities have different access needs when it comes to information. For example, the livestream and recordings will be accessible for those with visual impairments but those with hearing impairment will have different needs. This can be met

	through the publication of meeting packs and minutes on the council website, as well as the use of sign language interpreters (via the introduction of remote services which are currently being explored)
Dependants	People who have dependent children or adults, including those with disabilities, may not be able to attend meetings and therefore would benefit from being able to access a recording at a time that suits them. Streamlined minutes will also provide a succinct account of the business. Some people with dependants may prefer the convenience of access to the live stream which will no longer be available for committees.

Part 2. Screening questions

1 What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this activity/policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?

Section 75 Category	Details of likely impact – will it be positive or negative? If none anticipated, say none	Level of impact - major or minor* - see guidance below
Religious Belief	No differential impact by religious belief or political opinion as the proposed changes apply equally to all.	None
Political Opinion		
Racial Group	The publication of recordings could potentially disadvantage those whose first language is not English. However, the Council's website uses software which can translate.	Minor – negative Minor - positive

Age	Some older people may appreciate the opportunity to access recordings in their own time. However, some members of the public may not have the necessary technology or skills to access recordings and may prefer to obtain a hard copy of the minutes. They may also prefer access to the live stream.	Minor – positive Minor - negative
Marital Status	No different impact identified for these groups	None
Sexual Orientation		
Men & Women Generally		
Disability	Anyone who is unable to attend meetings will find it helpful to access recordings in their own time and at their own pace. Recordings may be suitable for some people with certain disabilities but less accessible for some, for example those with hearing impairment.	Minor – positive Minor - negative
Dependants	The ability to access recordings of meetings may facilitate people who have caring responsibilities.	Minor – positive

* See Appendix 1 for details.

2(a) Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories?

Section 75 Category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide details
Religious Belief		No opportunity identified
Political Opinion		No opportunity identified
Racial Group	Whilst our corporate information on the website can be translated using the assistive software, the Council could possibly do more to make those from racial minorities and newcomers to the area aware of council business, including meetings. People for whom English is not their first language may require translations.	
Age	Older people who cannot access the livestream and recordings can be provided with a hard copy of minutes.	
Marital Status		No opportunity identified
Sexual Orientation		No opportunity identified
Men & Women Generally		No opportunity identified
Disability	The livestream and recordings can be accessed on the Council's website. Anyone who is unable to attend meetings may find it helpful to be able to access	

	this in their own time and at their own pace. LCCC are currently taking steps to procure Video Relay Service (VRS) and Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) services which will assist further with ensuring accessibility for the deaf community. The Department for Communities guidance will inform any further actions that may be taken, and the Equality Screening will be updated to reflect this.	
People with and without Dependents		No opportunity identified

Equality Action Plan 2021-2025

Does the activity/policy/project being screened relate to an action in the Equality Action Plan 2021-2025? Yes/No If yes, specify which action.

Yes – 2.1 Access to Council information

2(b) DDA Disability Duties (see Disability Action Plan 2021-2025)

Does this policy/activity present opportunities to contribute to the actions in our Disability Action Plan:

- to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?
- to encourage the participation of disabled people in public life?

Yes, action 4.4 – Accessibility of Council website and communications. The publication of recordings will provide access to the Council's decision-making process for those who are unable to attend meetings in person. They can access the Council meeting remotely or the Committee recordings in their own time and at their own pace.

3 To what extent is the activity/policy/project likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Good Relations Category	Details of likely impact. Will it be positive or negative? [if no specific impact identified, say none]	Level of impact – minor/major*
Religious Belief	No direct impact on good relations for any of these groups identified in relation to the proposed changes.	N/A
Political Opinion		
Racial Group		

*See Appendix 1 for details.

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

Good Relations Category	IF Yes, provide details	If No, provide details
Religious Belief		No specific good relations opportunities identified
Political Opinion		
Racial Group		

Multiple identity

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

Consideration was given to the potential implications of the proposed changes for the different equality categories, for example, older people with disabilities.

Part 3. Screening decision/outcome

Equality and good relations screening is used to identify whether there is a need to carry out a **full equality impact assessment** on a proposed policy or project.

There are 3 possible outcomes:

- 1) **Screen out** - no need for a full equality impact assessment and no mitigations required because no relevance to equality, no negative impacts identified or only very minor positive impacts for all groups. This may be the case for a purely technical policy for example.
- 2) **Screen out with mitigation** - no need for a full equality impact assessment but some minor potential impacts or opportunities to better promote equality and/or good relations identified, so mitigations appropriate. Much of our activity will probably fall into this category.
- 3) **Screen in for full equality impact assessment** – potential for significant and/or potentially negative impact identified for one or more groups so proposal requires a more detailed impact assessment. [See Equality Commission guidance on justifying a screening decision.]

Choose only one of these and provide reasons for your decision and ensure evidence is noted/referenced for any decision reached.

Screening Decision/Outcome	Reasons/Evidence
Option 1 Screen out – no equality impact assessment and no mitigation required [go to Monitoring section]	
Option 2 Screen out with mitigation – some potential impacts identified but they can be addressed with appropriate mitigation or some opportunities to better promote equality and/or good relations identified [complete mitigation section below]	It has been concluded that there is no need to carry out a full equality impact assessment on the proposal to publish webcast recordings on the Council website. The proposed changes are fairly minor procedural changes and may be slightly beneficial for a number of groups. However potential for minor negative impact was identified for those whose

	first language isn't English or those with hearing impairments – see Mitigation section below.
Option 3 Screen in for a full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) [If option 3, complete timetabling and prioritising section below]	

Mitigation (Only relevant to Option 2)

Can the activity/policy/project plan be amended or an alternative activity/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 activity/policy and ensure the mitigations are included in a revised/updated policy or plan.

It is recognised that, whilst livestreaming Council meetings and publishing Committee meeting webcast recordings on the Council website will benefit some groups, this may not be accessible to everyone, for example, older people who do not have access to the internet, people with hearing difficulties or people whose first language is not English.

The minutes published on the Council's website can be transcribed into alternative languages using the software which supports the Council's website. This will provide access for those whose first language is not English and those who have hearing impairment. LCCC are currently taking steps to procure Video Relay Service (VRS) and Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) services which will assist further with ensuring accessibility for the deaf community. The Department for Communities guidance on the Sign Language Act will inform any further actions that may be taken, and the Equality Screening will be updated to reflect this.

Timetabling and prioritising for full EQIA (only relevant to Option 3)

If the activity/policy has been '**screened in**' for full equality impact assessment, give details of any factors to be considered and the next steps for progressing the EQIA, including a proposed timetable.

N/A

Is the activity/policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities? Yes/No. If yes, please provide details.

No

Part 4. Monitoring

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

Effective monitoring will help a public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the activity/policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and activity/policy development.

What will be monitored and how? What specific equality monitoring will be done? Who will undertake and sign-off the monitoring of this activity/policy and on what frequency? Please give details: This will be updated when policy finalised

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

	Position/Job Title	Date
Screened by: Judith McNamee	Head of Governance & Communications	19.5.26
Reviewed by: Annie Wilson	Equality Officer	02.06.26
Approved by: -		

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Note: On completion of the screening exercise, a copy of the completed Screening Report should be:

- approved and 'signed off' by a senior manager responsible for the activity/policy
- included with Committee reports, as appropriate
- sent to the Equality Officer for the quarterly screening report to consultees, internal reporting and publishing on the LCCC website
- shared with relevant colleagues
- made available to the public on request.

Evidence and documents referenced in the screening report should also be available if requested.

Appendix 1 – Equality Commission guidance on equality impact

*Major impact:

- a) The policy/project is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
- b) Potential equality matters 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;
- c) 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;
- d) 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;
- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

Minor impact

- a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
- b) 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;

- c) 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;
- d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

No impact (none)

- a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations;
- b) 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.

Updated Template @ Oct 2022