

# 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

Customer Service Guidelines

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

A revised activity.

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

Council has had customer service guidelines in place since 2019. This has recently been reviewed to make reference to the Corporate Plan 2024-2028 and the Complaints Handling Procedure that is MCHP compliant in accordance with the Public Services Ombudsman Act (NI) 2016.

#### 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.

The guidelines are not targeted at any specific Section 75 group. They are intended to benefit all ratepayers and service users.

#### Who initiated or developed the activity/policy/project?

Council wants to continue its journey as a customer centric organisation focussed on providing excellent service.

The review of the Customer Service Guidelines was prompted in order to make reference to the Corporate Plan 2024-2028 and the Complaints Handling Procedure that is MCHP compliant in accordance with the Public Services Ombudsman Act (NI) 2016.

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

LCCC

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

No

**If yes, give brief details of any significant factors.**

N/A

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

**Staff** - applies to all staff

**Service users**

**Other Elected Members**

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

| <b>Name of document/activity/policy</b>  | <b>Who owns or implements document/activity/policy?</b> |
|--|---|
| 1. 1.The Council's Corporate Plan & Ambitions 2024 - 2028<br>lccc-corporate-plan-2024-2028-web<br>(lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk)  | Chief Executive's Office/all services                   |
| 2. Annual Performance Improvement Plans and Reports<br><a href="https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/council/performance-improvement">https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/council/performance-improvement</a> | All services  |
| 3. Communications activity   | Corporate Communications                                |
| 4. Equality Scheme and associated equality policies and plans  | Equality Officer  |
| 5. Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014<br><a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2014/8/part/12/enacted">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2014/8/part/12/enacted</a>              | Department for Communities (DfC)                        |

## 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.**

| Sec 75 Category   | Details of evidence/information   |
|-------------------|---|
| Religious Belief  | <p>NI Census 2021 data for the Lisburn and Castlereagh area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>49% Protestant (or other Christian)</li> <li>24% Catholic</li> <li>1.5 Other religion</li> <li>24% No religion</li> <li>1.4% Not stated</li> </ul>  |
| Political Opinion | <p>National identity is often used as an indicator of political opinion – unionist/nationalist. Analysis of Census 2021 data for LCCC showed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>41% identified as British</li> <li>16% Irish</li> <li>21% Northern Irish</li> <li>22% Other</li> </ul> <p>Political party representation on LCCC from local government elections 2019 (40 Members):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DUP – 15</li> <li>UUP – 11</li> <li>Alliance – 9</li> <li>Sinn Fein – 2</li> <li>SDLP – 2</li> <li>Green Party NI – 1 (later moved to SDLP)</li> </ul> <p>Total – at least 64% unionist</p> |
| Racial Group      | <p>Census 2021 suggests 87% of the LCCC population were born in N Ireland. The same data indicates almost <b>4%</b> were from an ethnic minority (up from <b>96%</b> were white (including Irish Traveller)).</p> <p>The LCCC area has small populations of various nationalities, including Syrian refugees, and a minority of residents will speak languages other than English as their first language.</p>  |
| Age               | <p>Census 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0-14 years – 19%</li> <li>15-39 years – 30%</li> </ul>   |

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
|                                    | <p>40-64 years – 33%</p> <p>65+ years – 18%</p>   |
| Marital Status                     | <p>The 2021 census records for people over the age of 16 for the LCCC area:</p> <p>Single - 33%</p> <p>Married or in civil partnership - 52%</p> <p>Separated – 3%</p> <p>Divorced or formerly in civil partnership - 6%</p> <p>Widowed or surviving partner from civil partnership – 6%</p>  |
| Sexual Orientation                 | <p>Census 2021:</p> <p>Straight/heterosexual – 91%</p> <p>Gay, lesbian or other sexual orientation – 2%</p> <p>Prefer not to say or not stated – 7%</p>   |
| Men & Women Generally              | <p>The estimated population of LCCC local government district in 2021 census was 149,100, of which 73,059 (49%) were male and 76,041 (51%) were female.</p> <p>There is no official statistic on the number of people in N Ireland who identify as Transgender or non-binary but data from the 2021 Census for England and Wales suggests that 0.5% do not identify with the sex they were attributed at birth.</p> |
| Disability                         | <p>Census 2021 found that 21.7% of LCCC residents reported they had a long-term health problem or disability that limited their day-to-day activities a little or a lot (12.4% and 9.3% respectively). This is a 3.4% increase on the Census 2011 figures.</p>  |
| People with and without Dependants | <p>People with dependants includes parents of young children, parents of older dependant or disabled people, carers of elderly family members and others.</p> <p>Census 2021 found that 31% of households in LCCC had one or more dependent children.</p> <p>Census 2021 also found that 12.8% of residents aged over 5 years reported that they carried out unpaid care for family members or others.</p>          |

## 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

| Sec 75 Category   | Details of needs/experiences/priorities  |
|---|--|
| Religious Belief<br>Political Opinion<br>Racial Group<br>Age<br>Marital Status<br>Sexual Orientation<br>Men & Women Generally<br>Disability<br>Dependants | As these guidelines are available to all residents and visitors to the LCCC council area, detailed analysis of demographic and other data by equality category is not considered relevant to this screening. |

## 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?**

| Sec 75 Category   | Details of activity/policy impact   | Level of impact (minor/major/none*) |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| Religious Belief<br>Political Opinion<br>Racial Group<br>Age<br>Marital Status<br>Sexual Orientation<br>Men & Women Generally<br>Disability<br>Dependants | The Customer Service Guidelines are intended to benefit all council ratepayers and service users and will not directly impact on equality of opportunity.<br><br>It is not anticipated that there will be any negative impacts associated with the revision of the Customer Service Guidelines. There may be some minor positive outcomes as a result of updating the guidelines, such as producing | None                                |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  | the Customer Service Guidelines<br>in Easy Read format |  |
|--|--|--|

\*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<br>Political Opinion<br>Racial Group<br>Age<br>Marital Status<br>Sexual Orientation<br>Men & Women Generally<br>Disability<br>People with and without Dependants |                         | Opportunities to better promote equality and/or good relations will be considered in relation to the implementation of this activity. |

**2 (b) Equality Action Plan 2021-2025**

Does the activity/policy/project being screened relate to an action in the Equality Action Plan 2021-2025?

No

**2(c) DDA Disability Duties (see Disability Action Plan 2021-2025) [new]**

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?

No

**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?**

| <b>Good Relations Category</b>                        | <b>Details of likely impact. Will it be positive or negative? [if no specific impact identified, say none]</b> | <b>Level of impact – minor/major*</b> |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| Religious Belief<br>Political Opinion<br>Racial Group | This activity will not specifically impact on the promotion of good relations for any group.                   | None                                  |

\*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?**

| <b>Good Relations Category</b>                        | <b>IF Yes, provide details</b> | <b>If No, provide details</b>     |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Religious Belief<br>Political Opinion<br>Racial Group |                                | Not in relation to this activity. |

**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.**

We are aware that people have more than one identify and may experience additional disadvantage accordingly. Multiple identity is not directly relevant to this particular activity.

**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   |
|--|--|
| <p>Option 1</p> <p><b>Screen out</b> – no equality impact assessment and no mitigation required [go to Monitoring section]</p>   | <p>The Customer Service Guidelines are available to all residents and visitors to the LCCC council area. It is intended to benefit everyone the council serves, and no negative impacts should result.</p> |
| <p>Option 2</p> <p><b>Screen out with mitigation</b> – 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]</p> |  |
| <p>Option 3</p>  |  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Screen in</b> for a full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)</p> <p>[If option 3, complete timetabling and prioritising section below]</p> |  |
|--|--|

**Mitigation (Only relevant to Option 2) N/A**

**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.

**Timetabling and prioritising for full EQIA (only relevant to Option 3) N/A**

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.

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

**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: [The Guidelines will be kept under review and updated or amended when necessary.](#)

## Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

|   | Position/Job Title                                 | Date     |
|---|--|----------|
| <b>Screened by:</b><br>Kerrie-Anne McKibbin | Performance Improvement Officer                    | 03/06/25 |
| Annie Wilson                                | Equality Officer                                   | 03/06/25 |
| <b>Approved by:</b><br>Greg Bowkett         | Head of Human Resources & Organisation Development | 04/06/25 |

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.