

# **Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council**

## **Section 75 Equality and Good Relations Screening**

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

#### **Name of the activity/policy/project**

Small Settlements Rural Shop Front Scheme (2022-23)

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

New scheme

#### **Introduction and Background to the project:**

##### **Small Settlements Rural Shop Front Scheme - 80% funded by DfC/DAERA**

This grant will be offered to small business owners with premises on the main street within small settlements, to enhance the appearance and condition of their shop fronts and signage, making the area a more attractive place for both occupiers and visitors.

These Small Settlements include: Glenavy, Maghaberry, Moneyreagh, Dromara, Annahilt, Ballinderry, Aghalee, Drumbeg, Milltown.

All businesses within the Small Settlements listed above are eligible to apply.

Applicants must apply by completing an Expression of Interest Form and if they meet the criteria of the scheme they will be invited to complete an Application Form.

Successful applicants will receive a grant of up to 80% - maximum £12,500 (ex VAT). Applicants must demonstrate a contribution of a minimum 20% of the overall costs (ex VAT) has been paid.

This does not preclude applicants from carrying out additional enhancement works, however the extra costs incurred will not be covered by Council. Successful candidates must only carry out the works as agreed in advance of the release of funding from the Council.

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

The scheme aims to:

- Help support businesses to replace their shop front façade and signage
- Create a more pleasing environment by improving shop fronts, resulting in wider benefits for the public realm and civic pride.

**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 scheme is available to businesses throughout the Small Settlements named above and is intended to benefit all eligible business owners who apply and all sections of the community. It is not targeting any specific Section 75 groups but there may be minor incidental benefits to some groups. For example, some older service users or those with a disability may particularly benefit from business improvements to shop fronts which provide clearer signage or improved access routes.

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

Economic Development Unit, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

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

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council own the policy. The grants programme is funded through Department for Communities (DfC)/ Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and administered by Economic Development.

**Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the activity/policy/project? If yes, give brief details of any significant factors.**

**Financial:** Funded by Department for Communities (DfC) / Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) – there is a fixed budget

**Other:** Time - The project is required to be delivered within timeframes agreed between DfC and LCCC. It is anticipated the project will be finished by March 2023.

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

**Staff** - Staff involved in administering the project

**Service users** - Residents and visitors of all Small Settlements and local business owners

**Other public sector organisations** – DfC, DfI and DAERA are funders

**Voluntary/community/trade unions** – n/a

**Other** – Elected members and groups who may be consulted

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

<b>Name of policy/strategy/plan</b>	<b>Who owns or implements?</b>
City Centre Masterplan	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council (LCCC)
Local Development Plan	LCCC
Regeneration and Investment Action Plan	LCCC
Urban Regeneration Community Development Framework	Department for Communities
Interim Equality scheme	Department for Communities
Equality and Disability Action Plans	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.**

The following evidence was considered to inform this policy:

- 2011 NI Census Data for all eligible Small Settlements
- Knowledge of local demographics of the settlements concerned
- Planning Regulations and Guidance
- Officers' previous experience administering shopfront schemes
- Stakeholder meetings/conversations (Council Officers and Members, Business Owners and Residents)

<b>Section 75 Category</b>	<b>Details of evidence/information</b>
Religious Belief	We do not have information on the religious background of eligible business owners in the settlements concerned but it is expected that they will represent a range of religious beliefs and none. Staff and customers will likely reflect local demographics and visitors may be all religions and none.
Political Opinion	We do not have information on the political opinions of eligible business owners in the settlements concerned but it is expected that they will represent a range of views. Staff and local customers will likely reflect local demographics of the various settlements and visiting customers will reflect the wider population.
Racial Group	We do not have information on the racial background of eligible business owners but a small proportion will be owned by BME people (e.g. ethnic food take away businesses). There are fewer BME residents in Small Settlements compared with the overall district.
Age	We do not have information on the age of eligible business owners but they are likely to be of different ages. Staff and customers will be from a range of ages.
Marital Status	We do not have information on the marital status of eligible owners but they will likely reflect the wider population.
Sexual Orientation	We do not have information on the sexual orientation of eligible business owners but likely that they will reflect the population as a whole. It is estimated that between 5 and 10% of the population may identify as other than

	heterosexual. Staff and customers will similarly reflect population statistics for the district.
Men & Women Generally	We do not have information on the gender make-up of eligible business owners. It is known that, on average, women are less likely to own or run a business but will be well represented in some types of small business that feature on town/village main streets. Staff and visitors are likely to be male and female and may include a small percentage of Trans people (reflecting the general picture).
Disability	We do not have information on whether eligible business owners have disabilities. Disabled people are under-represented as business owners but it is likely that some small businesses in the relevant settlements may have a disability as just under 20% of the LCCC population are known to have a disability (Census 2011 data). Staff and customers will reflect the wider population.
People with and without Dependants	We do not have specific information on the dependency status of eligible business owners but it is likely that they will reflect the wider LCCC population. Staff and customers will also include those who care for children, older people or people with disabilities.

## 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 specific needs identified other than the need for a fair and transparent application process that is promoted widely to ensure all eligible business owners know about it and are able to apply. There is also a need for objective criteria which are not related to any personal characteristics.
Political Opinion	No specific needs identified as above
Racial Group	All eligible business owners need to know about the scheme and be able to apply. Additional supports in terms of promotion may be required for business owners who are newer to the district or who do not have English as a first language.
Age	No specific needs identified in relation to business owners. Any changes to premises that are funded by the scheme should not impact negatively on access for older people.
Marital Status	No different needs identified so long as there is a fair and objective application process.
Sexual Orientation	No different needs identified so long as there is a fair and objective application process.
Men & Women Generally	No different needs identified so long as there is a fair and objective application process.
Disability	Some business owners who have a disability may need reasonable adjustments to enable them to access information about the scheme or to apply. Any improvements to business premises should not impact negatively on access for people with disabilities, either staff or customers.
Dependants	No different needs identified for business owners provided there is a fair application process. Any changes to business premises should not impact negatively on customers who have dependants, eg, parents with buggies or carers of disabled people.

## 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 impact identified provided the scheme has objective eligibility criteria and the application process is fair. The scheme is available across towns and villages with different demographics. Funding will be awarded to eligible businesses that meet the criteria and business owners from all backgrounds will have an equal opportunity to benefit.	None
Political Opinion	No impact identified as above	None
Racial Group	No impact as the scheme will be promoted widely so all eligible businesses can apply and be considered against objective criteria	None
Age	No significant impact but some older people may benefit slightly from improvements to shop fronts, eg, signage or access routes	Minor - positive
Marital Status	No impact identified	None
Sexual Orientation	No impact identified	None
Men & Women Generally	No impact identified	None

Disability	No significant impact identified but some disabled customers may benefit slightly from improvements to shop fronts, eg, signage and access routes.	minor
People with and without Dependants	No significant impact identified but any improvements to physical access features of shop fronts may have minor benefits for parents/carers with buggies or carers of disabled people	minor

\* See Appendix 1 for details.

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

<b>Section 75 Category</b>	<b>IF Yes, provide details</b>	<b>If No, provide details</b>
Religious Belief Political Opinion Racial Group Age Marital Status Sexual Orientation Men & Women Generally Disability People with and without Dependants		No opportunities identified at this stage.  Adjustments and support to apply will be provided for any applicant who needs them.



**Equality Action Plan 2021-2025**

Does the activity/policy/project being screened relate to an action in the Equality Action Plan 2021-2025? If yes, specify which action.

No

**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?

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?**

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 Political Opinion Racial Group	No impact on good relations identified. The scheme is available equally across different towns and villages with different demographics and is not directly relevant to good relations.	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?**

Good Relations Category	IF Yes, provide details	If No, provide details
-------------------------	-------------------------	------------------------

Religious Belief Political Opinion Racial Group		This is a financial assistance scheme for businesses that does not lend itself to promoting good relations.
-------------------------------------------------------	--	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**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.**

N/A

### 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>It has been concluded that a detailed equality impact assessment is not necessary as no negative impacts have been identified and any incidental impacts are likely to be minor and positive. To ensure equality of opportunity, the scheme will be advertised as widely as possible - on the Council website, social media channels and word of mouth from Council Officers. No additional mitigations are deemed necessary as the needs of particular user groups have already been taken into account in planning the scheme.</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 Regeneration team will monitor the activity of the scheme generally as part of normal review and evaluation. This will also allow us to improve any future schemes by implementing lessons learned. Monitoring will include how/where the scheme was promoted, how many enquiries were received, how many applications were received, how many were successful, outcomes of the funding and how they contributed to council objectives, feedback from applicants, complaints, etc.

## Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

	<b>Position/Job Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Screened by:</b> Becky Gamble Yvonne Burke	Project Support Officer Regeneration Manager	20/04/22
<b>Reviewed by:</b> Mary McSorley	Equality Officer	15.07.22
<b>Approved by:</b> Paul McCormick	Head of Economic Development	18/10/22

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 Project Overview**

### **Small Settlements - Rural Shop Front Scheme (2022-23)**

#### **Project Description and Background:**

Funding has been secured through the Department for Communities (DfC), Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) to deliver a Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme.

For the purpose of the Small Settlements funding allocation DfC/DfI/DAERA defined an eligible small settlement of normally having a population of between 1,000 and 4,999.

This grant will be offered to small business owners with premises on the main street within small settlements, to enhance the appearance and condition of their shop fronts and signage, making the area a more attractive place for both occupiers and visitors.

These Small Settlements include; Glenavy, Maghaberry, Moneyreagh, Dromara, Annahilt, Ballinderry, Aghalee, Drumbeg, Milltown.

Following on from recent City Centre revitalisation schemes and shop front renewal programmes there was a review of business signage and shop front facades across the Small Settlements in Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council. The review was undertaken by City Centre Management and the Councils Planning team in response to a number of queries received from new businesses in the area regarding signage.

Planning identified a number of businesses which do not conform to planning guidelines for shop fronts and signage.

The Council recognise the importance of enhancing shopfronts and supports businesses operating in Small Settlements to retain shop frontages that complement the character of the building and appearance of the area.

All businesses within the named Small Settlements are eligible to apply.

Successful applicants will receive a grant of up to 80% - maximum £12,500 (ex VAT).

Applicants must demonstrate a contribution of a minimum 20% of the overall costs (ex VAT) has been paid.

This does not preclude applicants from carrying out additional enhancement works, however the extra costs incurred will not be covered by Council. Successful candidates

must only carry out the works as agreed in advance of the release of funding from the Council.

## **Application Process**

- **Stage 1 – Expression of Interest**

Applicants are given the opportunity to apply through an expression of interest process and are required to submit an estimated cost to undertake the works. If the submission meets the objective of the scheme they will be invited to submit an application.

- **Stage 2 – Application**

In order to progress this stage, the applicant will be required to provide architectural drawings detailing the proposed works.

Full application will include the provision of:

- Confirmation of engagement with competent architect. Contact details must be provided.
- 3 written quotations for proposed works demonstrating value for money has been achieved.
- Evidence of security of tenure and/or written consent from property owner.

If your application is successful, confirmation will be sent via email, detailing the amount of grant you are eligible for and match funding required. Your letter of offer will be issued to you upon receipt of your planning reference number.

- **Stage 3 – Letter of Offer**

A letter of offer will be provided on provision of the following (provided via email):

- Architectural drawings of the proposed heritage shop front and signage submitted to planning and planning reference number provided. Drawings should be shown to scale e.g. 1:100. *To ensure clarity of shop front detail, include elevation drawings at a scale of 1:20 and section drawings at 1:10 as appropriate.*

**We understand that this process can be lengthy so please allow for time to consult with planning and provide final drawings in order to secure planning approval.**

### **Aims of the Scheme:**

The scheme aims to support businesses to replace their shop front façade and signage in order to conform to the standards outlined in planning regulations and guidelines. The aim of the scheme is to create a more pleasing environment by improving shop fronts, resulting in wider benefits for the public realm and civic pride.

## **Project Duration**

The project is to be completed by March 2023 to meet the deadline for funding.

## **Appendix 2 – 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.