



SECTION 75 SCREENING FORM

[View the full list of the Section 75 Statutory Equality Duties for Public Authorities.](#)

The promotion of equality of opportunity entails more than the elimination of discrimination. It may also require proactive measures to be taken to maintain and secure equality of opportunity.

Section 75 (1) requires the Assembly Commission in carrying out its functions, powers and duties 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.

Without prejudice to the obligations set out above, the Commission is also required to:

- a) have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different
 - religious belief
 - political opinion; or
 - racial group
- b) meet legislative obligations under the Disability Discrimination Order.

What is a policy?

The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) state in their guidance that the term 'policy' is used to denote any strategy, policy (proposed/amended/existing) or practice and/or decision, whether written or unwritten. The Commission's Equality Scheme reflects the ECNI's definition of a policy and this should be applied in determining what needs to be screened. The Equality Scheme states:

"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'."

If you are in doubt, please contact the Equality and Good Relations Unit for advice. Equality screening guidance notes are also available on Assist.

Part 1 Policy scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context, and to set out the aims and objectives for the policy being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step-by-step basis.

The ECNI, in their 'model equality screening form', note that public authorities should remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the authority), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the authority).

Policy Details

Name of the policy to be screened/description:

The approach agreed by the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission to accept the donation of, and erect a 'Centenary Stone' at a site to the east of Parliament Buildings, adjacent to Lord Craigavon's tomb.

Is this policy an existing, new or revised policy? (Please append policy to screening form)

New Policy

What is it trying to achieve? (brief outline of intended aims/outcomes of the policy)

In 2012, the Assembly Commission agreed an approach to govern how official events and initiatives during the decade of centenaries would be marked within Parliament Buildings.

In February 2021, the Assembly Commission could not reach consensus, amongst the five Members holding office at that time on a request from the leaders of the unionist parties to erect a monument, paid for by unionist MLAs, to mark the centenary of Northern Ireland on the curtilage of Parliament Buildings, at a site to the west of the building.

On 13 February 2023, the request was made again by the leaders of the unionist parties and the Assembly Commission agreed by consensus, amongst the four Members holding office at that time, to the request.

While the stone is being donated, the Assembly Commission will be accountable for how it is dealt with within the framework of the Assembly Commission's corporate and legal responsibilities. The Assembly Commission has therefore received comprehensive advice in relation to how it gives effect to the decision.

The purpose of doing so has been to develop a policy approach to implementing the request which:

- Complies with the Assembly Commission's statutory obligations, including with regard to equality and good relations.
- Takes account of the Assembly Commission's obligations as an employer.
- Takes account of the environment of Parliament Buildings as the home of a political institution.
- Is consistent with other relevant policies of the Assembly Commission.
- Has regard to any views raised on the matter by Assembly Commission Members.

In considering this matter in detail, the Assembly Commission has agreed an alternative preferred site to that originally requested to mitigate potential equality and good relations issues. This is in recognition that the stone marks an anniversary which is important to the unionist community but is viewed differently by those of other political opinions.

Are any of the Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy/decision? Please explain how.

The proposal is to erect a 'Centenary Stone' on the curtilage of Parliament Buildings. The category of political opinion is likely to be the most relevant category involved with the erection of this monument. It is recognised that the stone commemorates the centenary of

the creation of Northern Ireland as an event of significance to those from a unionist political opinion. However, it is also understood that the creation of Northern Ireland is not viewed positively by others, particularly those of the nationalist political opinion as it marked the partition of the island of Ireland.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

The Adviser to the Speaker/ Head of Corporate Support developed the advice to give effect to the decision to erect the stone at the request of the Assembly Commission, including the recommendation for the site adjacent to Lord Craigavon's tomb to mitigate potential adverse impacts arising from the original proposed site.

Directorate responsible for devising and delivering the policy?

Corporate Support are leading on the approach and it will be delivered with support across relevant business areas.

Was consultation carried out as part of this screening exercise?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Background to the Policy to be screened

Include details of any pre- consultations/consultations which have been conducted and whether the policy has previously been tabled at SMT/ Assembly Commission meetings.

In 2012, the Assembly Commission agreed an approach on how events falling within the decade of centenaries would be handled within Parliament Buildings. This included a set of principles and a process for how these issues would be decided, including that all decisions on these events would be taken by the Assembly Commission by consensus.

On 6 January 2021, separately from the Assembly Commission's ongoing process to develop a programme to mark the centenary of the creation of Northern Ireland/ partition, the then leaders of the three unionist parties wrote to the Speaker as Chair of the Assembly Commission. They noted that this centenary was of "immense significance to unionists", that there was an expectation that it be marked at the "seat of government" and that they had been engaging to develop "a measured but sensitive proposal for the Assembly Commission's consideration."

The letter proposed the erection of the stone within the curtilage of Parliament Buildings. The stone would be at no cost to the public purse i.e. it would be donated. It would have a granite base with the remainder being made of Portland stone to be in keeping with the building. It was to be produced by S McConnell & Sons of Killeel.

The Assembly Commission considered the proposal at a meeting on 17 February 2021. At this meeting, the Assembly Commission agreed by consensus the centenary event proposals which were developed through its own discussions. However, consensus could not be reached on the proposal for a stone. The Speaker asked Members to take the stone proposal away to provide more time. Officials then went out to Members via written procedure, but consensus was not achieved (the Sinn Féin representative did not consent). The proposal fell and there was some media coverage as a result.

The Assembly dissolved for elections in May 2022. The Members of the Assembly Commission continued to hold office until their successors would be appointed. However, John O'Dowd MLA was appointed as a Minister shortly after the election. Under Standing Orders, this meant that he ceased to be a member of the Assembly Commission and a vacancy was therefore created.

However, as the Assembly was unable to elect a Speaker, as it is legally required to do so before the Assembly can conduct further business, a motion could not be brought to appoint a new Member to fill the vacancy on the Assembly Commission. Sinn Féin therefore no longer had a Member on the Assembly Commission. While the Assembly Commission agreed that Sinn Féin could nominate an MLA to attend meetings under a previously agreed arrangement in certain circumstances, that MLA is not a Member and does not have voting rights etc.

On 6 February 2023, the leaders of the unionist parties again wrote to the Speaker to propose that the Assembly Commission give fresh consideration to the siting of a centenary stone at Parliament Buildings. They noted that the previous decision to refuse the stone “caused great hurt” to the unionist community in general.

On 13 February 2023, the Assembly Commission considered the proposal. The Sinn Féin representative attending the meeting raised concerns as to whether it was valid to bring such a proposal forward when a significant number of MLAs were not represented on the Assembly Commission. However, as the four voting Members all agreed (representing DUP, Alliance, UUP and SDLP), the consensus required under the Assembly Commission’s agreed approach for centenary events was met.

It was noted that officials would take the matter away to work through the issues to give effect to the decision. The Speaker wrote to the unionist party leaders to inform them of the decision, that the Assembly Commission would be updated as required, and that he would communicate with them again once the details had been worked through.

The Assembly Commission has to balance the fact that Parliament Buildings is home to a political institution and legislature with the equality and good relations obligations it has as a public body. It also has obligations under fair employment law as an employer.

Therefore, the Assembly Commission is required to have due regard in carrying out its functions to the promotion of equality of opportunity between groups listed in section 75 of the 1998 Act (between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; between men and women generally; between persons with a disability and persons without; between persons with dependents and persons without).

All these issues have to be considered in relation to giving effect to the Assembly Commission’s decision to erect the stone. In giving advice to the Assembly Commission, and in advance of conducting this screening exercise, potential adverse impacts on section 75 groups, particularly those who are not of a unionist political opinion, were already anticipated.

The unionist parties originally requested that the stone be placed at a site to the west of Parliament Buildings which would have been in an area which is a communal space for

users of Parliament Buildings including all MLAs, Assembly staff and the staff of parties and MLAs.

The Assembly Commission therefore received advice to indicate that proceeding on this communal site would inevitably require consultation with building users and would be more likely to require a full EQIA. The impact on Members, staff and visitors was considered in terms of the issues above in relation to political opinion and maintaining a harmonious working environment. Consideration of equality of opportunity was also taken into account in terms of physical access to the alternative site of the stone for those with disabilities.

The Assembly Commission instead agreed the creation of a new preferred site specifically at the east side of the building adjacent to Lord Craigavon's tomb. This is a location which is not a communal area and does not have frequent footfall to access other areas etc. As it is adjacent to the site of Lord Craigavon's tomb, this area is currently only likely to be more frequently visited by those of a unionist political opinion or those with historical interest.

This issue was also considered in the context that the Assembly Commission completed a review of the items displayed in Parliament Buildings in 2022 following extensive agreement with party representatives on the Assembly Commission. This resulted in the installation of a new and permanent display of items in Parliament Building which is fully inclusive of all political opinion in Parliament Buildings.

As both Parliament Buildings and Lord Craigavon's tomb have listed building status, then an environmental heritage approach was also required. Therefore, the site for the stone will be curated to be in keeping with the tomb site and will therefore have a historical and dignified environment.

The Assembly Commission has also had discussions to minimise the cost of the stone and its installation to the public purse.

Implementation factors

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

☒ Yes

☐ No

If yes, are they

☐ Financial

☐ Legislative

☒ Other, please specify:

Political - the fact that Parliament Buildings is a political environment with representation from different political opinions means that there will be those who have a different political opinion to those who support the erection of the stone. That is why this process is being taken forward with detailed advice with regular consultation with the political parties represented on the Assembly Commission.

Main stakeholders affected

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon?

☒ Staff

☒ Service users

☐ Other public sector organisations

☐ Voluntary/community/trade unions

☒ Other, please specify

MLAs, party staff and visitors to the buildings

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

What are these policies and who owns them? Please list:

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission Equality Scheme 2022-2026 (Equality and Good Relations Unit)

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission Good Relations Action Plan 2022-2025 (Equality and Good Relations Unit)

Health and Safety at Work Policy (Building Services)

Dignity at Work Policy (Corporate Services)

Consideration of available data/research

(This means any data or information you currently hold in relation to the policy or have gathered/generated during policy development). Evidence to inform the screening process may take many forms and should help you to decide who the policy might affect the most. It will also help ensure that your screening decision is informed by relevant data.

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy?

For example, is there any evidence of higher or lower participation or uptake by different groups? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

Section 75 category and details of evidence/information

Religious belief

HR data as at 1 May 2023.

Breakdown of Permanent staff by Community Background

Community Background	Number of staff	Percentage of staff
Protestant	189	57%
Roman Catholic	130	39%
Non-determined	13	4%

Community Background by Grade

Grade	Protestant	Roman Catholic	Non-determined	Total
1-3	7	8	0	15
4	14	19	3	36

Grade	Protestant	Roman Catholic	Non-determined	Total
5	23	22	4	49
6	24	32	2	58
7	60	21	0	81
8	61	28	4	93
Total	189	130	13	332

Information is also available from NISRA (Northern Ireland Census 2021). The 2021 census shows that 42.31% of the Northern Ireland population indicated that their religion or the religion they were brought up in was Catholic; 37.36% indicated they were Protestant or other Christian; 1.34% indicated “Other”; and 18.96% indicated “None”.

Political opinion

Currently we do not have any data on the political opinion of our staff. The ECNI has advised that data on Religious Belief can be used as a proxy for political opinion.

The Assembly Commission is ultimately responsible for this policy and its composition and processes have their genesis in statute. The Assembly Commission is representative of the votes cast by the electorate in Assembly elections and ordinarily (when the Assembly is sitting to allow vacancies to be filled) includes Members from the five main political parties.

The Assembly Commission is responsible for providing the support and services required by the Assembly, including maintaining Parliament Buildings. The largest party in the Assembly is Sinn Féin, of the nationalist designation, with 27 MLAs. The second largest party is the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), of the unionist designation, with 25 seats. The unionist designation is the largest designation in the Assembly with 37 seats followed by the nationalist designation with 35 seats.

The Assembly Commission seeks to do its business by consensus as much as possible. The decision that the stone would be erected was supported on the Assembly Commission by representatives from the DUP, Alliance Party, UUP and SDLP.

Racial group

Assembly Commission Section 75 Staff Survey results as at 31 August 2021.

It should be noted that a total of 196 responses were received to the survey representing 60 per cent of all permanent Assembly Commission staff.

Category	Per cent (%) Survey
White	97.5
Chinese	0.0
Irish Traveller	0.0
Roma	0.0
Filipino	0.0
Indian	0.0
Asian	0.5
Arab	0.0
Black African	0.0
Black Other	0.0
Mixed Ethnic Group	0.0
Other Ethnic Group	0.5
Prefer not to say	1.5
Total	100

Age

HR data as at 1 May 2023.

Age profile of staff.

AGE	NUMBER
20 – 24	2
25 - 29	4
30 - 34	17
35 - 39	31
40 - 44	59
45 - 49	63
50 - 54	65
55 - 59	42
60 - 64	30
65+	19
TOTAL	332

Age Profile by Grade.

GRADE	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65+	TOTAL
1-3	0	0	0	1	2	3	7	1	1	0	15
4	0	0	3	1	6	8	4	7	5	2	36
5	0	0	4	6	7	15	9	5	1	2	49
6	0	0	3	6	9	9	17	8	4	2	58
7	0	2	3	5	21	18	15	6	8	3	81
8	2	2	4	12	14	10	13	15	11	10	93
TOTAL	2	4	17	31	59	63	65	42	30	19	332

Marital status

Assembly Commission Section 75 Staff Survey results as at 31 August 2021.

It should be noted that a total of 196 responses were received to the survey representing 60 per cent of all permanent Assembly Commission staff.

Category	Percentage (%)
Single	19.9
Married	70.9
Separated	1.0
Divorced	4.6
Other (please specify)	1.5
Prefer not to say	2.0
Total	100.0

Sexual orientation

Assembly Commission Section 75 Staff Survey results as at 31 August 2021.

It should be noted that a total of 196 responses were received to the survey representing 60 per cent of all permanent Assembly Commission staff.

Category	Percentage (%)
Heterosexual	95.9
Gay or Lesbian	1.6
Bisexual	0.0
I use another term (write in)	0.0

Category	Percentage (%)
Prefer not to say	2.6
Total	100.0

Men and women generally

HR data as at 1 May 2023.

Breakdown of Permanent Staff by Gender.

Gender	Number of staff	Percentage of staff (%)
Male	176	53
Female	156	47

Gender Profile by Grade.

GRADE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1-3	8	7	15
4	12	24	36
5	22	27	49
6	26	32	58
7	44	37	81
8	64	29	93
TOTAL	176	156	332

Disability

Assembly Commission Section 75 Staff Survey results as at 31 August 2021.

It should be noted that a total of 196 responses were received to the survey representing 60 per cent of all permanent Assembly Commission staff.

Category	Per cent (%)
Yes	19.5
No	75.4
Don't know	4.1
Prefer not to say	1.0
Total	100.0

Type of Disability.

Category	Per cent (%)
Mobility impairment	26.3%
Hearing impairment	21.1%
Reduced physical capacity	21.1%
Mental Illness	21.1%
Other (please specify)	21.1%

The needs of disabled people have been, and will be continue to be, considered in the development and design of access to the site and in compliance with the relevant building regulations. This will help to mitigate against any potential adverse impact

Dependants

Assembly Commission Section 75 Staff Survey results as at 31 August 2021.

It should be noted that a total of 196 responses were received to the survey representing 60 per cent of all permanent Assembly Commission staff.

Category	Per cent (%)
No	35.4
Yes, for a child/children	50.8
Yes, for 1 or more adult dependents	22.1
Other	2.6
Prefer not to say	2.1
Total	100.0

Current Assessment of Impact

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision? and what is the actual or likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by the policy. **(See appendix 1 for information on levels of impact).**

Specify details of the needs, experiences and priorities for each of the Section 75 categories below:

Section 75 category

Religious belief

Needs/experiences/priorities/impacts: The information provided in the previous sections, demonstrates needs, experiences and priorities, the importance of considering the impact of the erection of the stone and the subsequent mitigations to address statutory equality responsibilities.

Impact Level: Minor Impact

Political opinion

Needs/experiences/priorities/impacts: As above

Impact Level: Minor Impact

Racial group

Needs/experiences/priorities/impacts: As above

Impact Level: None

Age

Needs/experiences/priorities/impacts: As above

Impact Level: None

Marital status

Needs/experiences/priorities/impacts: As above

Impact Level: None

Sexual orientation

Needs/experiences/priorities/impacts: As above

Impact Level: None

Men and women

Needs/experiences/priorities/impacts: As above

Impact Level: None

Disability

Needs/experiences/priorities/impacts: As above

Impact Level: None

Dependants

Needs/experiences/priorities/impacts: As above

Impact Level: None

If you do not have enough data to tell you about potential or actual impacts, you may need to generate more data to distinguish what groups are potentially affected by your policy.

Part 2 Screening Questions

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

Section 75 category

Religious belief

Issues: Religious belief is relevant to this issue to the extent that it aligns with political opinion below.

Impact Level: Minor Impact

Political opinion

Issues: The information gathered, both demonstrates the complexity of some of the issues relating to characteristics listed under Section 75, and a minor impact in relation to religious belief and political opinion, While there will be differing views on the stone between those of a unionist and nationalist political opinion, the approach taken means it is considered that the erection of the stone, adjacent to the site of Lord Craigavon's tomb, will have no adverse impact on equality of opportunity. The stone will not be in a communal area, or on a route with footfall, but will be erected in a dedicated and gated area meaning that anyone wanting to visit the site will do so under their own choice. As it is in the same area as Lord Craigavon's tomb, first Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, anyone who would have an adverse opinion is unlikely to be in this area. The stone will be in a curated paved area with hedging and among trees which will mean it will not be in visible eyeline on entry to Parliament Buildings or its surroundings.

Impact Level: Minor Impact

Racial group

Issues: This policy is unlikely to have any impact on anyone identified within this Section 75 category.

Impact Level: None

Age

Issues: As above

Impact Level: None

Marital status

Issues: As above

Impact Level: None

Sexual orientation

Issues: As above

Impact Level: None

Men and women generally

Issues: As above

Impact Level: None

Disability

Issues: Provision will be made to ensure there is physical access to the site for those with physical disabilities or mobility issues.

Impact Level: None

Dependants

Issues: As above

Impact Level: None

Are there any actions which could be taken to reduce or mitigate any adverse impact which has been identified, or opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the section 75 categories?

Section 75 category

Religious belief

Issue: No adverse impact has been identified as the Assembly Commission has agreed a preferred site which mitigates potential adverse impacts.

Impact Level: Minor Impact - Mitigations regarding siting, and access to view the centenary stone have been considered.

Political opinion

Issue: No adverse impact has been identified as the Assembly Commission has agreed a preferred site which mitigates potential adverse impacts.

Impact Level: Minor Impact - Mitigations regarding siting, and access to view the centenary stone have been considered.

Racial group

Issue: As above.

Impact Level: None

Age

Issue: As above.

Impact Level: None

Marital status

Issue: As above.

Impact Level: None

Sexual orientation

Issue: As above.

Impact Level: None

Men and women generally

Issue: As above.

Impact Level: None

Disability

Issue: As above.

Impact Level: None - Mitigations will be put in place to ensure physical access for those with mobility issues.

Dependants

Issue: As above

Impact Level: None

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

Good relations category

Religious belief

Details of policy Impact: It is expected that the policy will have a minimal impact on good relations between people of different religious belief. Whilst the erection of a 'Centenary Stone' may be viewed as being welcomed more by those from a Protestant background, the location (in a dedicated and gated memorial site which is not in a communal area or area of common footfall) means it will have minimal impact on those from a 'non-Protestant' background.

Impact Level: None

Political opinion

Details of policy Impact: It is expected that the policy will have a minimal impact on good relations between people of different political opinion. Whilst the erection of a 'Centenary Stone' may be viewed as being welcomed more by those from a Unionist background, the location (in a dedicated and gated memorial site which is not in a communal area or area of common footfall) means it will have minimal impact on those from a 'non-Unionist' background.

Impact Level: None

Racial group

Details of policy Impact: Click or tap here to enter text.

Impact Level: None

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

Section 75 category

Religious belief

If Yes, provide details: Click or tap here to enter text.

If No, provide reasons: While the erection of the stone may be broadly welcomed by many of those from the Protestant community, and the site selected will minimise the impact of the erection of the stone on those of other religious beliefs or political opinions, a shared view is unlikely to be developed in relation to the stone.

Political opinion

If Yes, provide details: Click or tap here to enter text.

If No, provide reasons: While the erection of the stone may be broadly welcomed by many of those from the Protestant community, and the site selected will minimise the impact of the erection of the stone on those of other religious beliefs or political opinions, a shared view is unlikely to be developed in relation to the stone.

Racial group

If Yes, provide details: Click or tap here to enter text.

If No, provide reasons: The erection of the stone has minimal impact on different racial groups. There are no opportunities to promote equality issues of this nature.

Consultation

Tell us about who you have talked to about your proposals, either internally or externally and who you have formally or informally consulted, to help you decide if the policy needs further equality investigation?

Consultation has taken place with all relevant business areas in the Assembly Secretariat including the Equality and Good Relations Unit, Legal Services, Finance Office, Building Services, the Communications Office and the Secretariat Management Group.

There have been regular discussions with the Members of the Assembly Commission on the erection of a 'Centenary Stone', both collectively and individually.

The Assembly Commission agreed in 2012 an approach to agreeing how to mark centenaries within Parliament Buildings, including that they would be agreed by consensus by the Assembly Commission. The proposal to erect the stone was agreed by consensus by the four Members on the Assembly Commission who were holding office at that time. However, the preferred site has been selected in recognition that there are a significant number of MLAs and others who would have a negative view of the erection of the stone.

Initial external consultation has taken place with the Historic Environment Division of the Department for Communities and planning officers in Belfast City Council. Officials have previously engaged with the Equality Commission who have indicated that the proposed approach is a measured way forward.

Disability Duties

Consider whether the policy:

- a) Discourages disabled people from participating in public life and fails to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.

The policy does not discourage disabled people from participating in public life or fail to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.

- b) Provides an opportunity to better positive attitudes towards disabled people or encourages their participation in public life.

There are no opportunities within this decision to actively increase the participation by disabled people in public life. The approach taken will ensure that anyone who wishes to view the stone will have access to do so.

Additional considerations

Multiple identities

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

(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men).

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

There is no data to show the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. However, it is not considered that there are any adverse impacts on people with multiple identities.

Part 3 Screening decision

Through screening, an assessment is made of the likely impacts; either major, minor or none, of the policy on equality of opportunity and/or good relations for the relevant categories. Completion of screening should lead to one of the following three outcomes:

check the appropriate box:

- ☐ Screened out' i.e. the likely impact is none and no further action is required.
- ☒ 'Screened out' with mitigation i.e. the likely impact is minor and measures will be taken to mitigate the impact or an alternative policy will be proposed.
- ☐ 'Screened in' for an equality impact assessment (EQIA) i.e. the likely impact is major and the policy will now be subject to an EQIA.

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

The reason for not conducting an equality impact assessment is that, based on the information previously provided, the Assembly Commission has already taken a significant mitigating measure by selecting an alternative site for the stone from that originally requested which ensures it is not in a communal area, or in an area of frequent footfall.

It is instead to be located in an existing area which already has a connection with unionist political opinion and therefore those of an alternative political opinion are unlikely to be in this space. In addition, the stone is being donated and has not been produced with the use of public resources.

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, but the policy has minor equality impacts, please provide details of the reasons for this decision and of any proposed mitigating measures or proposed alternative policy.

The impacts are minor because a specific site has been selected, as detailed above, to mitigate against the potential of the stone being displayed in a communal area.

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

Not applicable

Timetabling and prioritising for EQIA

Complete this section only if your business area/directorate plans to conduct two or more EQIAs.

Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment:

Click or tap here to enter text.

If the policy has been 'screened in' for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Priority criterion

Rating (1-3)

Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations

Choose an item.

Social need

Choose an item.

Effect on people's daily lives

Choose an item.

Relevance to a public authority's functions

Choose an item.

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please provide details

Click or tap here to enter text.

Part 4 Monitoring

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

The ECNI recommends that where a policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, the public authority should monitor more broadly for adverse impact. See *ECNI Monitoring Guidance for use by Public Authorities (July 2007) pages 9-10, paragraphs 2.13 – 2.20*

Please detail how you will monitor the effect of the policy?

Section 75 places a requirement on the Assembly Commission to have equality monitoring arrangements in place and as such monitoring on the implementation of the policy will be carried out.

Monitoring will consider:

- Any complaints raised regarding the implementation or operation of the policy, particularly those which indicate a potential adverse impact
- Any complaints raised regarding site access to the centenary stone
- Any relevant comments received from visitor feedback
- Any additional relevant data which may become available in the future

What data is required in the future to ensure effective monitoring of the policy?

See above

Part 5 Data Protection

If applicable, has legal advice been given due consideration?

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ N/A

Has due consideration been given to information security in relation to this policy?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Part 6 Approval and authorisation

Screened by: Robin Ramsey

Position/Job Title: Adviser to the Speaker/ Head of Corporate Support

Date: Monday, 27 November 2023

Approved by: Lesley Hogg, Clerk/Chief Executive

The policy lead should sign and date the policy under the 'screened by' heading. It should then be countersigned by an approver. The Approver should be the senior manager responsible for the policy which would normally be a Head of Business. In instances where a screening decision concludes that an EQIA is required then the screening form should be countersigned by the Director instead of the Head of Business.

There are of course a range of issues which may fall within the scope of being novel, contentious or politically sensitive and could only be taken forward following consultation with the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission (Assembly Commission). Where policy screening highlights novel, contentious or politically sensitive issues, once approved by the Director, the screening form should be forwarded to the Clerk/Chief Executive for review, prior to proceeding to SMT and the Assembly Commission.

A copy of the completed screening form, related policy and any other relevant associated documentation should be forwarded to the Equality Manager.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO INFORM THE ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT TO THE EQUALITY COMMISSION

1. Please provide details of any measures taken to enhance the level of engagement with individuals and representative groups.

Click or tap here to enter text.

2. In developing this policy/decision were any changes made as a result of equality issues raised during:
 - a) pre-consultation/engagement;
 - b) formal consultation;
 - c) the screening process; and/or
 - d) monitoring/research findings.

If so, please provide a brief summary including how the issue was identified, what changes were made, and what will be the expected outcomes/impacts for those affected.

Click or tap here to enter text.

3. Does this policy/decision include any measure(s) to improve access to services including the provision of information in accessible formats? If so, please provide a short summary.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Appendix 1 Screening Questions

Introduction

In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, you should consider your answers to the questions above.

In addition, the screening questions above further assist you in assessing your policy and must be completed. Some of these questions require you to assess the level of impact of the proposed policy on “equality of opportunity” and “good relations”. The scale used when assessing this impact is either “None”, “Minor” or “Major”. The following paragraphs set out what each of these terms mean.

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

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

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

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

In favour of a 'major' impact

- a) The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
- b) Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;
- 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.

In favour of '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.

In favour of 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.