

Equality Screening Template



The Council has a statutory duty to screen. This includes our strategies, plans, policies, legislative developments; and new ways of working such as the introduction, change or end of an existing service, grant funding arrangement or facility. This screening template is designed to help departments consider the likely equality impacts of their proposed decisions on different groups of customers, service users, staff and visitors.

Before carrying out an equality screening exercise it is important that you have received the necessary training first. To find out about the training needed or any other queries on screening, contact the Equality and Diversity Officer Lorraine Dennis on extension 6027 or Lisa McKee on extension 6310 or by email equality@belfastcity.gov.uk

The accompanying **Screening Guidance** note provides straightforward advice on how to carry out equality screening exercises. Detailed information about the Section 75 equality duties and what they mean in practice is available on the Equality Commission's website¹.

The screening template has 4 sections to complete. These are:

Section A - provides details about the policy / decision that is being screened

Section B – gives information on the consultation process, supporting evidence gathered and has 4 key questions outlining the likely impacts on all equality groups.

Section C - has 4 key questions in relation to obligations under the Disability Discrimination Order

Section D - is the formal record of the screening decision.

¹ <http://www.equalityni.org/archive/pdf/S75GuideforPublicAuthoritiesApril2010.pdf>

Section A

Details about the policy / decision to be screened

1. Title of policy / decision to be screened:-

Belfast City Council Safeguarding All Ages Policy 2022.

2. Brief description of policy / decision to be screened:-

(Explain - Is this a new, revised or existing policy? Are there financial / legislative / procurement implications?)

This is to update and replace the existing policy from 2009.

The Council recognise's everyone has a fundamental right to be safe. Whatever the cause, or wherever it occurs, harm caused to children, young people or adults by abuse, exploitation or neglect is not acceptable. In response to Keep Safe Children – Our duty to Care (2017) and Keep Adults safe – A shared responsibility (2015) published by Volunteer Now to reflect development in Safeguarding and changes in legislation and guidance, we reviewed the current policy and procedure and recommended some improvements; Following this in 2018 we introduced a Safeguarding Panel and began a piece of work to establish robust policies and procedures, demonstrating our commitment to safeguarding and to provide clear and practical support to elected members, staff, agency workers, casual workers, and volunteers. We have designed this document to be user friendly and to incorporate the ethos that safeguarding of all ages is everyone's responsibility.

3. Aims and objectives of the policy / decision to be screened:-

((What is the policy trying to achieve?))

Section one of the policy is in reference to Child Safeguarding and protection.

Every child and young person have a right to feel safe and protected and, as a provider of public facilities and services, we are committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for the children and young people who use our facilities, access our services or come into contact with members of our workforce. We will take all reasonable steps to protect children and young people using our facilities and services from harm, discrimination, or degrading treatment whilst respecting their rights, wishes, and feelings.

We aim to do this by:

- Recognising that all children and young people have the right to freedom from abuse and protection from harm.
- Putting in place robust recruitment procedures to ensure that those individuals whose behaviour could be a threat to the safety and well-being of children and young people are not offered employment.
- Raising the awareness of the duty of care responsibilities throughout the council.
- Actively encouraging good practice amongst all employees, volunteers, and elected members throughout the council and promoting wider awareness wherever possible, with partnership organisations and user groups.
- Creating a safe and healthy environment within all our services, avoiding situations where abuse or allegations of abuse may occur.
- Respecting and promoting the rights, wishes, and feelings of children and young people and working closely with other agencies.
- Recruiting, training, supervising, and supporting employees who work with children and young people to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children and young people from abuse, and themselves against false allegations. Employees who work with children and young people will be subject to the appropriate level employment checks. All appropriate new staff will be inducted on these policy and procedures with sign-off from their line managers'
- Highlighting the Code of Behaviour specific to Safeguarding
- Responding to any allegations appropriately and implementing the appropriate council policies and procedures.
- Requiring employees, volunteers, and elected members to follow the council's safeguarding children and young people policy and procedures.

- Having appropriately trained Designated Safeguarding Officers in place to co-ordinate children and young people safeguarding issues and give advice. (Please note, certain council facilities / services operate outside of 9am – 5pm, therefore, this may result in a Duty Manager rather than a Designated Officer being onsite outside of these hours.)
- Ensuring we maintain confidentiality where appropriate and we restrict access to confidential information to the appropriate authorities.
- Carrying out a regular audit and review of the effectiveness of our safeguarding children and young people policy and procedures.
- Helping to maintain professionalism and standards of service which are associated with best practice provision, including a Code of Behaviour.
- We are committed to reviewing our policies, procedures, practices and training in line with changes in legislation and best practice or at a minimum every three years.

2.2 Objectives

Our objectives to achieve these aims are:

- To provide appropriate training for all appropriate employees, volunteers and elected members
- To aid employees, volunteers, and elected members to respond sensitively and seriously to anyone who discloses information about abuse and be confident and able to take appropriate action swiftly, regardless of whom the allegation is about.
- To promote the general welfare and well-being of children and young people within council facilities and services.
- To develop and implement effective procedures for recording and responding to complaints of alleged or suspected child or young person abuse.

[Section 2 is in relation to Adult Safeguarding.](#)

Aims of the safeguarding adult's policy and procedures:

This aim of this document is to:

- demonstrate our commitment to providing and maintaining an organisation that protects adults from harm, and protects staff, agency workers, volunteers and the organisation itself from potential allegations.

- promote zero-tolerance of harm to all adults from abuse, exploitation, or neglect.
- Influence the way our organisation thinks about harm to adults resulting from abuse, exploitation or neglect by embedding a culture which recognises every adult's right to respect and dignity, honesty, humanity and compassion in every aspect of their life.
- prevent and reduce the risk of harm to adults, while supporting people's right to maintain control over their lives and make informed choices free from coercion.
- encourage our staff, agency workers and volunteers to work collaboratively across sectors and on an inter-agency and multi-disciplinary basis, to introduce a range of preventative measures to promote an individual's capacity to keep themselves safe and to prevent harm occurring;
- establish clear guidance for reporting concerns that an adult is, or may be, at risk of being harmed or in need of protection and how these will be responded to; including a Code of behaviour;
- promote access to justice for adults at risk who have been harmed as a result of abuse, exploitation or neglect;
- promote a continuous learning approach to adult safeguarding;
- make sure our staff are carefully selected, vetted and trained in issues of safeguarding adults;
- provide guidance on appropriate and relevant supervision; including the appointment of officers with delegated safeguarding responsibility within each of our business units;
- make sure staff are aware of the adults safeguarding policy and procedures within the council; their role within the policy and the consequence of not following these procedures;
- make sure appropriate action is always taken in the event of an incident, in-line with best practice;
- provide clear procedures and guidance on how staff, agency workers, volunteers and contractors must deal with any safeguarding issues or concerns; (Code of Behaviour)
- provide guidelines on appropriate safeguarding training for staff / agency/ workers / volunteers.
- provide guidelines for staff, agency workers, volunteers when dealing with adults at risk; (Code of Behaviour)
- provide a Safeguarding Adults Code of Behaviour for staff and volunteers; and,
- Provide a complaints procedure with guidance on how a complaint can be raised regarding a safeguarding issue.

We will ensure staff, agency workers, volunteers and contractors are aware of the safeguarding standards within the organisation, their role within the policy, and the consequence of not following our procedures.

We will make sure that appropriate training or awareness is given to staff, agency workers, and volunteers to ensure an understanding of their role in recognising abuse and to familiarise them with our safeguarding adult's policies and procedures.

We are committed to reviewing our policies, procedures, practices and training in line with changes in legislation and best practice or at a minimum every three years.

Principles of Safeguarding Adults at Risk

The guidance given in the policy and procedures is based on the following principles:

- A rights-based approach: To promote and respect an adult's right to be safe and secure; to freedom from harm and coercion; to equality of treatment; to the protection of the law; to privacy; to confidentiality; and freedom from discrimination.
- An empowering approach: To empower adults to make informed choices about their lives, to maximise their opportunities to participate in wider society, to keep themselves safe and free from harm and enabled to manage their own decisions in respect of exposure to risk.
- Person-centered approach: To promote and facilitate full participation of adults in all decisions affecting their lives taking full account of their views, wishes and feelings and, where appropriate, the views of others who have an interest in his or her safety and well-being.
- A consent-driven approach: To make a presumption that the adult has the ability to give or withhold consent; to make informed choices; to help inform choice through the provision of information, and the identification of options and alternatives; to have particular regard to the needs of individuals who require support with communication, advocacy or who lack the capacity to consent; and intervening in the life of an adult

against his or her wishes only in particular circumstances, for very specific purposes and always in accordance with the law.

- A collaborative approach: To acknowledge that safeguarding adults will be most effective when it has the full support of the wider public and of safeguarding partners across the statutory, voluntary, community, independent and faith sectors working together and is delivered in a way where roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability are clearly defined and understood. Working in partnership and a person-centred approach will work hand-in-hand.

All adults, regardless of age, ability or disability, gender, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or gender status have the right to be protected from abuse and poor practice and to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment.

We will seek to make sure that the organisation is inclusive and make reasonable adjustments for any ability, disability or impairment, we will also commit to continuous development, monitoring, and review.

We will always respect the rights, dignity and worth of all adults.

We recognise that ability and disability can change over time, such that some adults may be additionally vulnerable to abuse, for example those who have a dependency on others or have different communication needs.

We recognise that an adult with an impairment or a disability may or may not identify themselves/be identified as an adult 'at risk' or vulnerable.

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/dhssps/adult-safeguarding-policy.pdf>

4. On whom will the policy / decision impact?

Consider the internal and external impacts (both actual or potential) and explain:-

Staff	YES
Service users	YES
Other public sector organizations	YES
Voluntary / community groups / trade unions	YES
Others, please specify	YES

- **Anyone who interacts with BCC third party contractors etc.**

5. Are there linkages to other Agencies/ Departments?

The Policy is relevant across our organisation and all those who provide services on our behalf.

Section B

Information on the consultation process, supporting evidence gathered and has 4 key questions outlining the likely impacts for equality and good relations

6. Outline consultation process planned or achieved:

The Safeguarding all ages policy has been/ and continues to undergo a rigorous consultation process.

The policy was designed and created under the jurisdiction of the Safeguarding panel. The panel is made up of senior officers and holds a strategic role in relation to Safeguarding.

The development also included the implementation group of officers at an operational level.-

Both these panels formed part of the quality assurance framework for Safeguarding and met bi-monthly

The policy has also been agreed by the Joint Consultative Committee by management and trade Unions.

The policy has also been presented to the SP&R Committee and received support from all parties.

A further 12 week public consultation is due to take place from mid-April 2022.

This will include but no be limited to:

1. Using the Your Belfast forum
2. Directed e-mails to relevant stakeholders for example SBNI members, Volunteer Now, NSPCC, SOLACE, members of the Local Government Safeguarding Network (LGSN), the Local Adult Safeguarding Panel (LASP) and wider community networks.
3. Contacting the disability forum members
4. The Belfast Youth Council

What evidence / information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Set out all evidence below to help inform your screening assessment.

It is important to record information gathered from a variety of sources such as: monitoring information; complaints; research surveys; consultation exercises from other public authorities.

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information and engagement
Religious belief	Updated post Public Consultation 10/10/22: During the process numerous engagement activities were undertaken:
Political opinion	
Racial group	
Age	
Marital status	

[Type here]

Sexual orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internally all stakeholders including the Trade Unions, Safeguarding Panel, Senior management and staff were involved in the process; • Externally the draft policy was shared for comment with the following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Belfast panel members ○ Local adult safeguarding partnership members ○ Children and young person strategic partnership ○ Local Government Safeguarding network. ○ It was also shared with a number of relevant focus groups and forums via the Equability team. • Finally, a 14 week public consultation between May 2022 and August 2022. The consultation did not result in any changes to the current equality screening.
Men and women generally	
Disability	
Dependants	

8. What is the likely impact (indicate if the policy impact is positive or negative) on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? What is the level of impact?

Section 75 category	Likely impact?	Level of impact? Minor/Major/None
Religious belief	This policy ensures the safeguarding commitment is provided to each individual irrespective of their S75 category. It includes age specific activities and behaviour where appropriate; facilities for carers and reasonable adjustments for those with a disability to ensure participation.	None
Political opinion		None
Racial group		None
Age		Minor/positive
Marital status		None
Sexual orientation		Minor/positive
Men and women generally		None
Disability		Minor/positive
Dependants		Minor/positive

[Type here]

9. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?

Section 75 category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
Religious belief	This policy ensures the safeguarding commitment is provided to each individual irrespective of their S75 category. It includes age specific activities and behaviour where appropriate; facilities for carers and reasonable adjustments for those with a disability to ensure participation.	
Political opinion		
Racial group		
Age		
Marital status		
Sexual orientation		
Men and women generally		
Disability		
Dependants		

10. To what extent is the policy likely to impact (positive or negatively) on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? What is the level of impact?

Good relations category	Likely impact?	Level of impact? Minor/Major/None
Religious belief		None
Political opinion		None
Racial group		None

[Type here]

11. 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 reasons
Religious belief		This policy is aimed at safeguarding all children, young people and adults who access the council's facilities and services and applies to all of the above regardless of their religious belief, political opinion or racial group
Political opinion		
Racial group		

Section C

Belfast City Council also has legislative obligations to meet under the **Disability Discrimination Order** and Questions 12-13 relate to these two areas.

Consideration of Disability Duties

12. Does this proposed policy / decision provide an opportunity for the Council to better promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?

Explain your assessment in full

No. This policy positively promotes equality of opportunity for all to whom it applies.

13. Does this proposed policy / decision provide an opportunity to actively increase the participation by disabled people in public life?

[Type here]

Explain your assessment in full

Positive actions are encouraged towards all those included in this policy.

14. Multiple Identities

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy with multiple identities.

This policy will be delivered to all equitably and has positive actions within it to ensure that each child, young person or adult who may be vulnerable is dealt with as an individual with their own unique multiple identities.

The implementation of this policy will ensure that where any potential barriers such as language, access to facilities and/or services are identified these will be addressed in an appropriate and timely manner.

15. Monitoring Arrangements

Section 75 places a requirement the Council to have equality monitoring arrangements in place in order to assess the impact of policies and services etc; and to help identify barriers to fair participation and to better promote equality of opportunity.

Outline what data you will collect in the future in order to monitor the impact of this policy / decision on equality, good relations and disability duties.

Equality	Good Relations	Disability Duties
Number of enquiries to Designated Officer/s and number of reported incidents will be monitored with relevant Section 75 data for each incident if available.		

Section D

Formal Record of Screening Decision

Title of Proposed Policy / Decision being screened

Belfast City Council

Safeguarding All Ages Policy 2022

I can confirm that the proposed policy / decision has been screened for –

[Type here]

X	equality of opportunity and good relations
X	disabilities duties

On the basis of the answers to the screening questions, I recommend that this policy / decision is – (place an X in the appropriate box below)

	* Screened In – Necessary to conduct a full EQIA
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	* Screened Out – No EQIA necessary (no impacts) Provide a brief note here to explain how this decision was reached:
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X	* Screened Out - Mitigating Actions (minor impacts) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide a brief note here to explain how this decision was reached:• Explain what mitigating actions and / or policy changes will now be introduced: <p>This policy ensures the safeguarding commitment is provided to each individual irrespective of their S75category . It includes age specific activities and behaviour where appropriate; facilities for carers and reasonable adjustments for those with a disability to ensure participation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The formation of the Safeguarding Panel and the Operational group as part of the Assurance framework will allow for the identification of gaps in the process and for operational officers to risk assess their own teams and identify training or support requirement.
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[Type here]

Formal Record of Screening Decision *(cont)*

Screening assessment completed by (Officer level) -

Name: Anthony McPeake

Date: 31/03/2022

Department : Safeguarding Compliance Manager

Signature: please insert a scanned image of your signature below



Screening decision approved by -

Name: David Sales

Date:

Department:

Signature: please insert a scanned image of your signature below

Please save the final version of the completed screening form and forward to the Equality and Diversity Officer – equality@belfastcity.gov.uk. The screening form will be placed on the BCC website and a link provided to the Council's Section 75 consultees.

For more information about equality screening contact –

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