**DoF Screening template**

**Background**

Screening is the first of two methods by which the necessary level of “regard” is demonstrated as being paid to the statutory equality goal, as set out in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The DoF Equality Scheme commits us to screening our policies. This includes our strategies and plans, policies, legislative developments; and new ways of working such as – the introduction, change or end of an existing service, procedure, policy etc.

This screening template is designed to help business areas consider the likely equality and human rights impacts of their proposed decisions on different groups of customers, service users, staff and visitors.

Detailed information about the Section 75 equality duties and what they mean in practice is available on the Equality Commission’s website: <http://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/S75GuideforPublicAuthoritiesApril2010.pdf>

A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be ‘signed off’ and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made accessible on the DoF website as soon as possible following completion and made available in alternative formats on request.

All Section 75 consultees should be advised of the screening exercise once the final policy decision has been taken. Details of the Equality Consultee list is available from Strategic Equality Branch.

This policy has been screened by:

Name Janis Marynowski

Grade DP

Branch Financial Management Branch

Contact Details 02890 254725

Date 1 April 2019

And approved by:

Name Stewart Barnes

Grade G5

Directorate Finance & Corporate Services

Contact Details 02890 254723

Date

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

**Section A** - asks you to provide details about the policy / decision that is being screened.

**Section B** - has 4 key questions that require you to outline the likely impacts on equality groups, and all supporting evidence.

**Section C** - has 4 key questions in relation to obligations under the Disability Discrimination Order and the Human Rights Act.

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

**SECTION A**

**Information about the policy**

This 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 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 on a step-by-step basis.

Remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for us) as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by us).

Is this a new or revised policy?

New

1. Name of the policy

Department of Finance (DoF)’s 2019-20 Budget.

1. Brief Description of the policy

This policy relates to the Department of Finance’s budget for 2019-20 following the NI Budget announcement by the Secretary of State on 28th February 2019.

The Department has been allocated a non-ringfenced DEL budget of £155.5m and a net capital budget of £35.3m.

1. Aims of the policy/ Rationale behind the changes

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| DOF has a critical role in working with Departments to ensure value for money, sound financial management and accountability in line with public sector financial processes. The Department provides a range of common corporate services, primarily to NICS Departments, in areas such as HR, training, finance, ICT, legal services, internal consultancy, internal audit and procurement. DoF also provides a range of frontline services, for example, in the areas of civil registration, rates collection, valuation, land registration and mapping information. The Department is also responsible for the NI Direct Programme which aims to modernise and improve services to the citizen and drive channel shift to on-line transactions.  The aim of the DoF budget for 2019/20 is to enable the Department to continue to carry out these core services and to take forward initiatives to benefit the NI citizen and make the NICS truly representative of the people we serve. As a Department that enables others to deliver their services, we contribute to the achievement of the NICS Outcome Delivery Plan. We also, through our Enterprise Shared Services, have a role in Outcome 11, “we connect people and opportunities through our infrastructure”.  The Department will continue to consider how it currently operates and reduce or stop non-essential areas and streamline functions where possible. |

1. Who will the policy affect?

Departmental Staff

NICS Staff

NI Citizens

1. Is this a NICS wide policy?

No. It solely relates to the DoF Departmental Budget. However, any cut in common corporate services may impact on how other departments deliver their services.

1. Who will implement the policy?

DoF Departmental Board and DoF Finance Branch.

1. Will this policy or revision address an existing inequality?

If yes, please give details.

There is scope for the DoF budget for 19/20 to address existing inequalities through financing the work of NICS HR, LPS Revenue and Benefits and Digital Inclusion to address these issues – see Section B evidence and screening questions.

1. Will this policy or revision benefit any Section 75 categories?

If yes, please give details.

There is scope for the DoF budget for 19/20 to positively impact on the Section 75 categories – see Section B screening questions.

1. Will this policy or revision have an adverse differential impact upon any of the Section 75 groupings?

If yes, please give details

No.

**Section B**

**Available evidence**

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data.

What evidence / information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Set out all evidence below along with details of the different groups you have met and / or consulted with to help inform your screening assessment.

Please also provide details of priorities and needs identified for each group

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| --- | --- |
| **Section 75 category** | **Details of evidence / information and engagement / needs and priorities** |
| Religious belief | The review of the Department’s Audit of Inequalities identified under-representation of Protestants in administrative and junior management grades in the NICS and under-representation of Protestants and Catholics in some grades in the Professional and Specialist groups compared to the labour market. These inequalities are still relevant.  Actions measures are included in our Section 75 Action Plan 2018-23 to address this – the use of positive action advertising statements and other actions to be developed as part of an outreach/marketing strategy.  **Equality Statistics for the NICS (Sept 2018)** - Protestants (and males) outnumber Catholics (and females) at the most senior grades while the opposite tends to be true at the more junior levels. That said, the representation has become more balanced over the past number of years. The comparative difference between Protestants and Catholics is 1.8 percentage points, compared to 16.6 percentage points in 2000. Overall the community background composition of the NICS is similar to that of its comparator population (1.7 percentage points difference). |
| Political opinion | Community background can be taken as a proxy indicator for political opinion. |
| Racial group | The review of the Department’s Audit of Inequalities identified under-representation staff from ethnic minorities. This inequality is still relevant.  Actions measures are included in our Section 75 Action Plan 2018-23 to address this – the development of an outreach/marketing strategy and associated actions in consultation with organisations representing under-represented groups; and DoF Racial Equality Champion engagement with business areas to ensure that all policies and operational practices of the Department and its agency take account of the aims and principles of the Racial Equality Strategy 2015-25 and continued external engagement.  **Equality Statistics for the NICS (Sept 2018)** - the proportion of staff from minority ethnic groups is 0.3%, lower than the economically active population (1.8%). |
| Age | The review of the Department’s audit of inequalities identified that the elderly (and socially excluded and visually impaired persons) have traditionally found it harder to access Government services via the Web Channel. Our Section 75 Action Plan 2018-23 includes actions to address this – digital inclusion activities and the Go ON NI programme, together with increased working relationships and working in partnership with organisations represented on the Digital Assist Steering Group to deliver bespoke training, awareness and information sessions.  The Department contributes to Outcome 11 of the NICS Outcome Delivery Plan, we connect people and opportunities through our infrastructure, in particular through the usage of online channels to access public services. Data are under development within the department for this indicator.  Our Section 75 Action Plan 2018-23 includes measures to encourage the update in lone pensioner allowance rate relief.  Our action plan also includes a measure that Lot 1 Contractors (General Job Roles) under the Framework Agreement for the provision of Agency workers to recruit a minimum of 15% of AA and AO job roles from the long-term unemployed and those leaving education, as per contract specification.  **Equality Statistics for the NICS (Sept 2018)** - NICS has an older age profile than that of the economically active population. In particular, the proportion of NICS staff aged 50 and over is more than double that of the economically active population. Staff aged 16-24 are in a minority at all grade levels with none at DP level and above. As a result, the average age (median) of staff has increased from 39 in 2000 to 46 in 2018.  **The Communications Market Report produced by Ofcom in 2017** records that more than eight in ten (83%) households in Northern Ireland have access to the internet. Almost eight in ten households (79%) have access to fixed broadband at home, and two thirds (68%) of adults in NI use the internet through a mobile phone. 76% of adults in NI personally use a smartphone. The proportion of adults using a smartphone has more than doubled over the past five years and 62% of households in NI own a tablet computer in 2017.  **The NI Omnibus Survey May/June 2018** records that 85% of people in NI have used the internet with this figure reaching 99% for the 25-34 year old age group and 97% for 35-49 year olds. For 50-64 year olds the figure is 75%. Non usage is highest amongst the 65 years and over age group (48% users). |
| Marital status | The review of the Department’s Audit of Inequalities identified that an inequality exists in relation to the law in NI treating unmarried fathers differently from married and unmarried mothers. Our Section 75 Action Plan 2018-23 includes an action for us to consider amendments to current laws and take forward recommendations on parent/child contact emerging from The Lord Chief Justice Review.  The **2011 Census** reports that 36.14% of the NI population (Aged 16+) have never married or never registered a same-sex civil partnership, 47.56% of that age cohort are married, 0.09% are in a registered same-sex civil partnership, 3.98% are separated but still legally married or still legally in a same-sex partnership, 5.45% are divorced or have their same-sex partnership legally dissolved and 6.78% are widowed or are a surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership. |
| Sexual orientation | **NICS LGBT Employment Survey 2017** – 744 people (13.08% of respondents) identified themselves as being lesbian, gay or bisexual and 42 people (0.75% of respondents) identified themselves as being transgender. |
| Men & women generally | The review of the Department’s Audit of Inequalities identified under-representation of males/females in some occupational groups/grade levels in the NICS compared to the NI labour market. These inequalities are still relevant.  Actions measures are included in our Section 75 Action Plan 2018-23 to address this – the use of positive action advertising statements and other actions to be developed as part of an outreach/marketing strategy. The development of transgender guidance for managers and staff is also included.  **Equality Statistics for the NICS (Sept 2018)** - females make up just over the half of the NICS workforce and outnumber males at the more junior grades. The opposite is true in the more senior roles. Female representation at SO level and above is below female representation in the economically active population, however it has been increasing steadily since 2010. |
| Disability | The review of the Department’s audit of inequalities identified that visually impaired people (and older people and socially excluded persons) have traditionally found it harder to access Government services via the Web Channel. Our Section 75 Action Plan 2018-23 includes actions to address this – digital inclusion activities and the Go ON NI programme, including specific IT sessions for those with a mental or physical disability or to those caring for a disabled person, together with increased working relationships and working in partnership with organisations represented on the Digital Assist Steering Group to deliver bespoke training, awareness and information sessions.  The Department contributes to Outcome 11 of the NICS Outcome Delivery Plan, we connect people and opportunities through our infrastructure, in particular through the usage of online channels to access public services. Data are under development within the department for this indicator.  The review of our audit of inequalities also highlighted the NICS disability working group report of the experience of staff with disabilities in the NICS in the areas of recruitment, career development and management support and that the recommendations for action are being considered.  Our Section 75 Action Plan 2018-23 includes measures to encourage the update in disabled persons allowance rate relief.  Our Disability Action Plan 2018-23 includes a measure to promote and develop the work experience programme, providing meaningful placements for people with disabilities with a wide range of disability organisations.  **Equality Statistics for the NICS (Sept 2018)** - the proportion of staff who declared a disability (5.6%) is lower than in the economically active population (9.1%). 59.5% of staff have not recorded whether or not they have a disability so the true proportion of disabled staff is likely to be higher. The proportion of staff who declared a disability was highest in the more junior analogous grades, ranging from 8.7% at AA level to 3.3% at Grade 7 and above.  **House of Commons briefing paper: People with disabilities in employment, Number 7540, 30 November 2018** - between July 2017 and June 2018 the employment rate for Northern Ireland for people who are disabled was 34.8%. For those who were not disabled, the corresponding figure was 78.5%.  **2011 Census** - 21% of the population of Northern Ireland have a long-term health problem or disability which limits their day-to-day activities. |
| Dependants | The NICS does not collect information on dependents. The **2011 Census** identified that 33.86% of all households had dependent children.  **Equality Commission NI Key Statement on Inequalities in Employment** - lone parents with dependents and carers experience barriers to their participation in employment. |

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| **No evidence held? Outline how you will obtain it:** |

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**Screening questions**

There are 4 essential screening questions:

1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the nine Section 75 categories? (minor/major/none)
2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 categories? (yes/no)
3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact upon good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? (minor/major/none)
4. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between these three groups? (Yes/No)

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| **1** What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? minor/major/none | | |
| Section 75 category | Details of policy impact | Level of impact? minor/major/none |
| All categories | The majority of the Department’s spending is on the delivery of services to other NICS and public sector bodies. There are opportunities in this budget period for the Department to have a positive impact on equality of opportunity for the Section 75 categories. NISRA will enhance the available equality data by providing appropriate breakdowns for the NICS Outcome Delivery Plan population indicators and will continue the work for the 2021 Census. The Census provides a baseline for all population statistics and monitoring rural impacts as well as key equality statistics to support policy development and equality monitoring.  NICS HR will oversee the delivery of the NICS People Strategy and the NICS Diversity and Inclusion priorities within this, including the development of an outreach strategy. Cross-cutting projects such as NICS apprenticeships and new approaches to job-share should have a positive impact on equality of opportunity.  The Department will support the drive for greater diversity in public appointments through outreach activity for our public appointment competitions and support of initiatives such as the Boardroom Apprentice. | Minor (+) |
| Religious belief | Funding available for NICS HR outreach activities.  Budget savings requirements may limit the amount of recruitment competitions. | Minor (+) |
| Political opinion | Funding available for NICS HR outreach activities.  Budget savings requirements may limit the amount of recruitment competitions. | Minor (+) |
| Racial group | Outreach activity with minority ethnic groups to identify and address barriers to accessing the Department’s services.  Funding available for NICS HR outreach activities.  Budget savings requirements may limit the amount of recruitment competitions. | Minor (+) |
| Age | Land and Property Service (LPS) Revenue and Benefits provides rating support of around £56m to 95,000 citizens through the award of Housing Benefit, Rate Relief, Lone Pensions and Disabled Persons Allowance. LPS will continue to promote and deliver these benefits.  The nidirect citizen contact centre will continue to provide assisted digital services via telephone for citizens who do not have personal access to online services.  The Digital Inclusion team will deliver Go ON NI to provide assisted digital and digital skills services across NI – to address both digital skills and also to provide assistance to citizens when engaging with our online digital government services. | Minor (+) |
| Marital status | No impacts identified. | None. |
| Sexual orientation | Participation in the Stonewall Equality Index to assess progress on LGBT equality in NICS. | Minor (+) |
| Men and women generally | Implementation of the NICS Gender Action Plan, including activities in support of International Women’s Day and International Men’s Day.  Funding available for NICS HR outreach activities.  Budget savings requirements may limit the amount of recruitment competitions. | Minor (+) |
| Disability | Land and Property Service (LPS) Revenue and Benefits provides rating support of around £56m to 95,000 citizens through the award of Housing Benefit, Rate Relief, Lone Pensions and Disabled Persons Allowance. LPS will continue to promote these benefits.  The nidirect citizen contact centre will continue to provide assisted digital services via telephone for citizens who do not have personal access to online services.  The Digital Inclusion team will deliver Go ON NI to provide assisted digital and digital skills services across NI – to address both digital skills and also to provide assistance to citizens when engaging with our online digital government services.  Funding available for NICS HR outreach activities.  Development of Work Placement Scheme for people with disabilities and initiatives to increase recruitment of people with disabilities.  Budget savings requirements may limit the amount of recruitment competitions. | Minor (+) |
| Dependants | The Department’s focus on agile working will provide more flexible working arrangements. | Minor (+) |

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| **2** 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 | See response to Q1. |  |
| Political opinion | See response to Q1. |  |
| Racial group | See response to Q1. |  |
| Age | See response to Q1. |  |
| Marital status |  | None identified. |
| Sexual orientation | See response to Q1. |  |
| Men and women generally | See response to Q1. |  |
| Disability | See response to Q1. |  |
| Dependants | See response to Q1. |  |

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| **3** To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? minor/major/none | | | |
| Good relations category | Details of policy impact | | Level of impact minor/major/none |
| Religious belief | No impact anticipated. | | None. |
| Political opinion | No impact anticipated. | | None. |
| Racial group | The budget should not impact negatively on the work of the Departmental Racial Equality Champion. Racial equality events organised and promoted by the Departmental Racial Equality Champion, under the Racial Equality Strategy, raise awareness amongst staff and can help to have a positive impact on good relations. | | Minor |
|  | | | |
| **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 reasons | |
| Religious belief |  | No. | |
| Political opinion |  | No. | |
| Racial group |  | Not specifically under this budget but see response to Q3. | |

**Additional considerations**

**Multiple identity**

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; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).*

It is not anticipated that the budget will have a negative impact on people with multiple identities. NICS Equality Statistics show that there is under-representation at certain grades of some categories of multiple identities, e.g. Protestant males in entry level posts to the general service occupational group. The budget includes provision to enable NICS HR to take forward outreach and diversity and inclusion activities, though budget savings requirements may limit the amount of recruitment competitions.

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

N/A

**Mitigation**

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is ‘minor’ and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Alternatively there may already be policies in place which would mitigate any adverse impact identified.

Please provide details in the box below:

N/A

Section C

DoF also has legislative obligations to meet under the Disability Discrimination Order and the Human Rights Act . The following questions relate to these two areas.

Consideration of Disability Duties

1. Does the proposed policy / decision provide an opportunity for DoF to better **promote positive attitudes** towards disabled people?

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| Within this budget there is provision to develop recruitment and work experience opportunities for people with disabilities. Employing people with disabilities can contribute to promoting positive attitudes (as colleagues and customers see their abilities). |

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

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| Within this budget there is provision to develop recruitment and work experience opportunities for people with disabilities, in consultation with disabled people, thereby increasing their participation in public life. |

Consideration of Human Rights

1. The Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998 brings the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into UK law and it applies in N Ireland. Articles 3 and 4 are classified as “absolute” rights ie the State can never withhold or take away these rights. All others are either “qualified” or “limited”. Further information is available via the following link

<http://www.nicshumanrightsguide.com/>

Indicate any potential *adverse impacts* that the policy / decision may have in relation to human rights issues.

**Adverse**

**impact**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Right to Life | **Article 2** | Yes/no |
| Prohibition of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment | **Article 3** | Yes/no |
| Prohibition of slavery and forced labour | **Article 4** | Yes/no |
| Right to liberty and security | **Article 5** | Yes/no |
| Right to a fair and public trial | **Article 6** | Yes/no |
| Right to no punishment without law | **Article 7** | Yes/no |
| Right to respect for private and family life, home  and correspondence | **Article 8** | Yes/no |
| Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion | **Article 9** | Yes/no |
| Right to freedom of expression | **Article 10** | Yes/no |
| Right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association | **Article 11** | Yes/no |
| Right to marry and to found a family | **Article 12** | Yes/no |
| The prohibition of discrimination | **Article 14** | Yes/no |
| Protection of property and enjoyment of possessions | **Protocol 1 Article 1** | Yes/no |
| Right to education | **Protocol 1 Article 2** | Yes/no |
| Right to free and secret elections | **Protocol 1 Article 3** | Yes/no |

Please indicate any ways which you consider the policy positively promotes human rights.

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| None identified. |

Please explain any adverse impacts on human rights that you have identified.

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| N/A |

If you have identified any adverse impacts on human rights through this screening you must complete a Human Rights Impact Assessment: <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/human-rights-impact-assessment-proforma>.

**Monitoring Arrangements**

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission’s [Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007)](http://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/S75MonitoringGuidance2007.pdf): <http://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/S75MonitoringGuidance2007.pdf>

The Commission recommends that where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, the public authority should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

Effective monitoring will help the public authority 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.

**Please detail proposed monitoring arrangements below:**

The budget will be monitored throughout the period. The normal budget monitoring process affords the Department the opportunity to reallocate and reprioritise the DoF budget as the financial year progresses.

Section D

Formal Record of Screening Decision

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| **Title of Proposed Policy / Decision being screened:** |

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

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| √ | equality of opportunity and good relations |
| √ | disabilities duties; and |
| √ | human rights issues |

On the basis of the answers to the screening questions, I recommend that this policy / decision is –

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|  | \***Screened In** – Necessary to conduct a full EQIA |

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| √ | \***Screened Out** – No EQIA necessary (no negative impacts) |

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|  | \* **Screened Out -** Mitigating Actions (minor impacts)  Provide a brief note here to explain how this decision was reached: | |
| **Screening assessment**  **completed by - approved by –** | | |
| Name Janis Marynowski Name Stewart Barnes  Grade DP Grade G5  Date 1 April 2019 Date | |  |
| Strategic Equality Branch Notified 1 April 2019  Equality Contacts advised (date) | | |