

DoF Screening template

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.

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

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

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

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

Section D - 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?

Revised.

a) Name of the policy

The Public Service Pensions (Exercise of Powers, Compensation and Information) Directions (Northern Ireland) 2023

b) Brief Description of the policy

The Department of Finance has responsibility under section 27 of the Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Act 2022 (the Act) to make directions with regards to the powers of the public service schemes to make regulations within scope of the Act. The Directions are not subject to Assembly procedure.

The Act provides a remedy for members of the public service pension schemes who were affected by discrimination in transitional protections when reformed public service pension schemes were introduced in 2015.

In December 2018, the Court of Appeal in England and Wales had ruled in the cases of McCloud and Sergeant that transitional protections in public service schemes unlawfully discriminated on grounds of age and that this discrimination must be remedied. This has commonly become known as 'the McCloud ruling'. The devolved schemes in NI incorporated the same age-based transitional protections and legal advice confirmed a requirement to similarly remedy the discrimination that has occurred since 2015 and remove it for the future. Following consultation with interested stakeholders, the Department of Finance has taken steps to progress a

remedy in the form of the ‘deferred choice underpin’ (DCU). This approach means all eligible members will receive a choice at the point of retirement whether to take legacy or reformed scheme benefits for the period between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022, (known as the remedy period). As part of the remedy all public servants who continued in service from 1 April 2022 onwards now do so as members of their respective reformed scheme.

The Assembly agreed two Legislative Consent Motions on 1 November 2021 and 31 January 2022 for the remedy provisions in the Act to apply for devolved schemes in NI in the same way as for the equivalent schemes in GB.

DoF has undertaken previous screening exercises on the main policies to address age discrimination which the Act gives effect to. These exercises concluded that a full EQIA was not necessary. Further details can be found in the links below.

Link to: [Policy screening - Public service pension schemes: proposed changes to the transitional arrangements to the 2015 schemes.](#)

Link to: [Policy screening template: Public Service Pensions - Amendments to the Cost Control Mechanism \(Second LCM for the Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Bill\).](#)

This screening document builds on the previous screening exercises completed on the remedy for age discrimination in transitional protections to the reformed public service pension schemes in NI. The purpose of these Directions is to specify how the powers and remedy provisions in the Act are used by NI public service pension scheme responsible Departments when implementing the remedy in those individual schemes. They will enable the Departments to proceed to consult on those scheme regulations.

This document concerns the equality screening of the provisions in the Directions. It is for responsible Departments to consider, through consultation and equality screening at a scheme specific level, any additional impact of the scheme regulations made under the relevant powers of the Act.

c) Aims of the policy/ Rationale behind the changes

The Department of Finance Directions specify how powers under the Act are to be used by public service pension schemes in their scheme regulations. The Directions are needed to allow schemes to proceed to consult stakeholders ahead of making scheme regulations by 1 October 2023 to remedy the discrimination in each public service pension scheme. As noted above, these scheme level consultations will involve further scheme specific equality screening by each scheme responsible department.

The Directions will be used by scheme responsible departments when setting out in regulations how the scheme will manage the changes to benefits that may occur at the time of members making their choice under the DCU. For active and deferred members of the schemes this will be at the point of their retirement and members will be provided with the tools and information to decide which scheme is most beneficial for them for the remedy period 2015 to 2022.

The Directions are designed to assist schemes in facilitating member decision making and ensuring the discrimination in transitional protections is addressed in line with the agreed provisions in the Act.

They cover the main provisions in the Act, and which schemes can now utilise in regulations in respect of:

- Powers to reduce or waive liabilities
- Pension credit members
- Voluntary contributions
- Transfers
- Further powers to make provisions about special cases
- Powers to pay compensation
- Power to require employer to reimburse compensation paid by scheme manager
- indirect compensation
- remedial arrangements to pay voluntary contributions to legacy schemes
- interest and process

Given the analogous relationship between the public service schemes here and in GB the content of the DoF Directions reflects that of the equivalent [Directions](#) already made by the Treasury on 14 December 2022 for equivalent schemes in GB. An [equality impact exercise](#) published by the Treasury alongside its equivalent Directions considered the measures set out in the Directions did not give rise to any differential impact on individuals with regard to protected characteristics

d) Who will the policy affect?

Members of the NI public service pension schemes which NI Departments have responsibility for.

e) Is this a NICS wide policy?

This policy affects five of the NICS Departments who have responsibility for the devolved public service pension schemes. Civil Servants – the Department of Finance; Judicial Office Holders & Members of the Police Service – the Department of Justice; Local Government Workers – the Department for Communities; Teachers

- the Department for Education; Health Service Workers and Fire & Rescue workers
- the Department of Health.

f) Who will implement the policy?

The Department of Finance makes these Directions under the Act. They will be used by individual scheme responsible Departments when making regulations to implement the remedy in their scheme.

g) Will this policy or revision address an existing inequality? Yes/No
If yes, please give details.

No – The introduction of the Directions in themselves will not address an existing inequality. However, they will assist NI devolved pension schemes when making regulations to implement a remedy for age discrimination in transitional protections to public service schemes which arose as a consequence of the McCloud ruling.

h) Will this policy or revision benefit any Section 75 categories? Yes/No
If yes, please give details.

No –. The introduction of the Directions in themselves will not address an existing inequality. However they will assist NI devolved pension schemes when making regulations to implement a remedy for age discrimination in transitional protections to public service schemes which arose as a consequence of the McCloud ruling.

i) Will this policy or revision have an adverse differential impact upon any of the Section 75 groupings? Yes/No. If yes, please give details.

No – The introduction of the Directions, will not have an adverse differential impact upon any of the Section 75 groupings.

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 Section 75 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 Section 75 group.

- **Religious belief**

ALL

[Equality Commission for Northern Ireland 'Fair Employment Monitoring Report No.31 - Annual Summary of Monitoring Returns', Latest Edition, 2020.](#)

Civil Servants

[Equality Statistics for the NICS - NISRA, July 2022.](#)(Page 8, 9 & 24)

Members of Police Force

[Police Service \(NI\) Workforce Composition Statistics - September 2022](#)

Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Workers

The NIFRS monitors all equality groups identified in Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 including religious belief. Information on all Section 75 groups is collected from applicants for NIFRS vacancies. Link to [Revised Equality Scheme for NIFRS](#)

- **Political opinion**

Civil Servants

[Equality Statistics for the NICS - NISRA, July 2022.](#) (Page 30 - this page reference confirms that NICS does not collate this evidence.)

Health Service Workers

Data on political opinion of employees is not readily available for the total Health and Social Care Workforce or recorded by all Health and Social Care employing authorities. There is no evidence that the proposals raise any specific equality issues for members in relation to political opinion.

Teachers

This information is not available as Article 71 of the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 makes schools exempt from the requirement to monitor the political opinion of their teaching staff. There is no evidence that the proposals raise any specific equality issues for members in relation to political opinion.

Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Workers

The NIFRS monitors all equality groups identified in Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 including political opinion. Information on all Section 75 groups is collected from applicants for NIFRS vacancies. Link to [Revised Equality Scheme for NIFRS](#)

Members of Police Force

There is currently no statistical analysis available for this category in respect of members of the PSNI. Link to [Police Service \(NI\) Workforce Composition Statistics - September 2022](#)

- **Racial group**

Civil Servants

[Equality Statistics for the NICS - NISRA, July 2022.](#)(Page 14, 28 & 29)

Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Workers

The NIFRS monitors all equality groups identified in Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 including racial group. Information on all Section 75 groups is collected from applicants for NIFRS vacancies. Link to [Revised Equality Scheme for NIFRS](#)

Teachers

This information is not usually collated and we have not been able to identify any single source of information on the workforce in relation to this measure. However, there is no indication that this policy will disproportionately impact on the basis of racial group. The Department for Education is considering whether this information could, in future, be collated and included in the DfE digest of statistics on the Education Workforce which is published on an annual basis.

Members of Police Force

[Police Service \(NI\) Workforce Composition Statistics - September 2022](#)

Health Service Workers

Data on racial grouping of employees is not readily available for the total Health and Social Care workforce or recorded by all employing authorities. There is no evidence that the proposals raise any specific equality issues for members in relation to racial grouping.

- **Age**

Civil Servants

[Equality Statistics for the NICS - NISRA, July 2022.](#) (Page 10, 11 & 25)

Teachers

[The Annual Statistics Digest - number of teachers registered with the General Teaching Council \(NI\) by age and gender - March 2018.](#)

Members of Police Force

There is currently no statistical analysis available for this category in respect of members of the PSNI. Link to [Police Service \(NI\) Workforce Composition Statistics - September 2022](#)

Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Workers

The NIFRS monitors all equality groups identified in Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 including age. Information on all Section 75 groups is collected from applicants for NIFRS vacancies. Link to [Revised Equality Scheme for NIFRS](#)

Health Service Workers

Age profiling statistics extracted from the Business Services Organisation (BSO) Health and Social Care Payroll System.

- **Marital status**

Civil Servants

The NICS currently monitors community background, age, disability, ethnic origin and gender but has recently extended that monitoring to cover the remaining equality groups identified in Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 including marital status. At present, information on all the Section 75 groups is collected from applicants for NICS vacancies and work is continuing on the design of the database that will be used to collect and hold Section 75 data on NICS employees. However, there is no indication that this policy will impact disproportionately on the basis of marital status.

[Equality Statistics for the NICS - NISRA, July 2022.](#) (Page 30)

Teachers

This information is not usually collated and we have not been able to identify any single source of information on the workforce in relation to this measure. However, there is no indication that this policy will disproportionately impact on the basis of marital status. The Department for Education is considering whether this information could, in future, be collated and included in the DfE digest of statistics on the Education Workforce which is published on an annual basis.

Members of Police Force

There is currently no statistical analysis available for this category in respect of members of the PSNI. Link to [Police Service \(NI\) Workforce Composition Statistics - September 2022](#)

Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Workers

The NIFRS monitors all equality groups identified in Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 including marital status. Information on all Section 75 groups is collected from applicants for NIFRS vacancies. Link to [Revised Equality Scheme for NIFRS](#)

Health Service Workers

Data on marital status of employees is not readily available for the total Health and Social Care workforce or recorded by all employing authorities. There is no evidence that the proposals raise any specific equality issues for members in relation to marital status.

- **Sexual orientation**

Civil Servants

Data on sexual orientation of employees is not readily available for the total NICS workforce. There is no evidence that the proposals raise any specific equality issues for members in relation to marital status.

[Equality Statistics for the NICS - NISRA, July 2022.](#) (Page 28 & 29)

Health Service Workers

This information is not readily available for the total Health and Social Care workforce or recorded by all employing authorities. There is no evidence that the proposals raise any specific equality issues for members in relation to sexual orientation.

Teachers

This information is not collected by employing authorities. There is no indication that this policy will disproportionately impact on the basis of sexual orientation.

Members of Police Force

There is currently no statistical analysis available for this category in respect of members of the PSNI. Link to [Police Service \(NI\) Workforce Composition Statistics - September 2022](#)

Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Workers

The NIFRS monitors all equality groups identified in Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 including sexual orientation. Information on all Section 75 groups is collected from applicants for NIFRS vacancies. Link to [Revised Equality Scheme for NIFRS](#)

- **Men & women generally**

ALL

[Equality Commission for Northern Ireland 'Fair Employment Monitoring Report No.31 - Annual Summary of Monitoring Returns', Latest Edition, 2020.](#)

Civil Servants

[Equality Statistics for the NICS - NISRA, July 2022.](#) (Page 6, 7 & 23)

Teachers

[The Annual Statistics Digest - number of teachers registered with the General Teaching Council \(NI\) by age and gender - March 2018.](#)

Members of Police Force

[Police Service \(NI\) Workforce Composition Statistics - September 2022](#)

Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Workers

The NIFRS monitors all equality groups identified in Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 including men and women generally. Information on all Section 75 groups is collected from applicants for NIFRS vacancies. Link to [Revised Equality Scheme for NIFRS](#)

- **Disability**

Civil Servants

[Equality Statistics for the NICS - NISRA, July 2022.](#) (Page 12, 13, 26 & 29)

Teachers

This information is not usually collated. However, there is no indication that this policy will disproportionately impact on the basis of disability. The Department for Education is considering whether this information could in future be collated and included in the DfE digest of statistics on the Education Workforce which is published on an annual basis.

Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Workers

The NIFRS monitors all equality groups identified in Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 including disability. Information on all Section 75 groups is collected from applicants for NIFRS vacancies. Link to [Revised Equality Scheme for NIFRS](#) and [NIFRS Disability Action Plan 2016 to 2021](#)

Members of Police Force

There is currently no statistical analysis available for this category in respect of members of the PSNI. Link to [Police Service \(NI\) Workforce Composition Statistics - September 2022](#)

Health Service Workers

This information is not readily available for the total HSC workforce or recorded by all employing authorities. There is no evidence that the proposals raise any specific equality issues for members in relation to disability.

- **Dependants**

Civil Servants

Data on dependants of employees is not readily available for the total NICS workforce. There is no evidence that the proposals raise any specific equality issues for members in relation to dependant status.

[Equality Statistics for the NICS - NISRA, July 2022.](#) (Page 28 & 30)

Teachers

This information is not collected by employing authorities. There is no evidence that this policy will disproportionately impact on the basis of dependant status.

Members of Police Force

There is currently no statistical analysis available for this category in respect of members of the PSNI. Link to [Police Service \(NI\) Workforce Composition Statistics - September 2022](#)

Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Workers

The NIFRS monitors all equality groups identified in Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 including dependant status. Information on all Section 75 groups is collected from applicants for NIFRS vacancies. Link to [Revised Equality Scheme for NIFRS](#)

Health Service Workers

This information is not readily available for the total Health and Social care workforce or recorded by all employing authorities. There is no evidence that the proposals raise any specific equality issues for members in relation to dependant status.

If you have no evidence held, outline how you will obtain it:

The use of data will be kept under review as further policy development is conducted. The Department of Finance welcomed views from consultees for all proposals in this assessment.

Data for each of the nine Section 75 categories is not readily available and collated by all of the NI public service pension schemes. There is no opportunity for this to change at this stage, however, this will be kept under review.

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)

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

- **Religious belief:**

None - There is likely to be no impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy within the above Section 75 category.

- **Political opinion:**

None - There is likely to be no impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy within the above Section 75 category.

- **Racial group:**

None - There is likely to be no impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy within the above Section 75 category.

- **Age:**

None - There is likely to be no impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy within the above Section 75 category.

- **Marital status:**

None - There is likely to be no impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy within the above Section 75 category.

- **Sexual orientation:**

None - There is likely to be no impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy within the above Section 75 category.

- **Men and women generally:**

None - There is likely to be no impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy within the above Section 75 category.

- **Disability:**

None - There is likely to be no impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy within the above Section 75 category.

- **Dependants:**

None - There is likely to be no impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy within the above Section 75 category.

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

- **Religious belief:**

No - There is no realistic scope for the policy itself to be used to promote equality of opportunity for people within the above Section 75 category.

- **Political opinion:**

No - There is no realistic scope for the policy itself to be used to promote equality of opportunity for people within the above Section 75 category.

- **Racial group:**

No - There is no realistic scope for the policy itself to be used to promote equality of opportunity for people within the above Section 75 category.

- **Age:**

No - There is no realistic scope for the policy itself to be used to promote equality of opportunity for people within the above Section 75 category.

- **Marital status:**

No - There is no realistic scope for the policy itself to be used to promote equality of opportunity for people within the above Section 75 category.

- **Sexual orientation:**

No - There is no realistic scope for the policy itself to be used to promote equality of opportunity for people within the above Section 75 category.

- **Men and women generally:**

No - There is no realistic scope for the policy itself to be used to promote equality of opportunity for people within the above Section 75 category.

- **Disability:**

No - There is no realistic scope for the policy itself to be used to promote equality of opportunity for people within the above Section 75 category.

- **Dependants:**

No - There is no realistic scope for the policy itself to be used to promote equality of opportunity for people within the above Section 75 category.

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

- **Religious belief:**

None - The policy is likely to have no impact upon good relations between people of different religious belief.

- **Political opinion**

None - The policy is likely to have no impact upon good relations between people of different political opinion.

- **Racial group**

None - The policy is likely to have no impact upon good relations between people of different racial groups.

- **Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between these three groups?**

- **Religious belief:**

No - The policy will not provide opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief.

- **Political opinion**

No - The policy will not provide opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different political opinion.

- **Racial group**

No - The policy will not provide opportunities to promote better good relations between people of different racial groups.

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).

No – There are no potential impacts of the policy/decision for persons within the Section 75 groups including people with multiple identities.

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

Not applicable – see above response.

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.

Mitigation measures proposed:

There is no need to introduce any mitigating measures as there is no impact identified on each criteria.

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

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

Explain your assessment in full

No – The proposed policy does not provide an opportunity for DoF to better promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.

The powers covered by the proposed directions relate to retrospective regulations that will be made by scheme responsible departments to cover how they will manage the changes to benefits that may occur at the time of members making their choice under the DCU remedy.

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

Explain your assessment in full

No – The proposed policy does not provide an opportunity to actively increase the participation by disabled people in public life.

The powers covered by the proposed directions relate to retrospective regulations that will be made by scheme responsible departments to cover how they will manage the changes to benefits that may occur at the time of members making their choice under the DCU remedy.

Consideration of Human Rights

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 i.e. 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

(delete as appropriate)

Right to Life	Article 2	No
Prohibition of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment	Article 3	No
Prohibition of slavery and forced labour	Article 4	No
Right to liberty and security	Article 5	No
Right to a fair and public trial	Article 6	No
Right to no punishment without law	Article 7	No
Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence	Article 8	No
Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion	Article 9	No
Right to freedom of expression	Article 10	No
Right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association	Article 11	No

Right to marry and to found a family	Article 12	No
The prohibition of discrimination	Article 14	No
Protection of property and enjoyment of possessions	Protocol 1 Article 1	No
Right to education	Protocol 1 Article 2	No
Right to free and secret elections	Protocol 1 Article 3	No

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

The policy does not provide an opportunity to positively promote human rights.

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

No adverse impacts on human rights have been identified.

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>

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 Department of Finance will utilise the data listed below in the future in order to monitor the impact of this policy / decision on equality, good relations and disability duties.

Equality

Links to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland 'Fair Employment Monitoring Report No.31 – Annual Summary of Monitoring Returns', Latest Edition, 2020; Equality Statistics for the NICS – NISRA, July 2022 and the Revised Equality Scheme for NIFRS are provided at Section B.

Good Relations

Northern Ireland Public Service Workforce Statistics.

Disability Duties

Northern Ireland Public Service Workforce Statistics.

The NI Fire and Rescue Service monitors all equality groups identified in Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 including disability. Information on all Section 75 groups is collected from applicants for NIFRS vacancies. Link to [Revised Equality Scheme for NIFRS](#) and [NIFRS Disability Action Plan 2016 to 2021](#)

Section D - Formal Record of Screening Decision

Title of Proposed Policy / Decision being screened:

The Public Service Pensions (Exercise of Powers, Compensation and Information) Directions (Northern Ireland) 2023

I can confirm that the proposed policy / decision has been screened for (i) equality of opportunity, (ii) good relations disabilities duties and (iii) human rights issues

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

***Screened Out** - No EQIA necessary (no impacts)

Provide a brief note to explain how this decision was reached:

The Department considers that the introduction of the Directions will not have an adverse differential impact upon any of the Section 75 groupings.

The Department of Finance Directions specify how powers under the Act are to be used by public service pension schemes in their scheme regulations. They will enable schemes to proceed to consult stakeholders ahead of making scheme regulations by 1 October 2023 to remedy the discrimination in each public service pension scheme. These scheme level consultations will involve further scheme specific equality screening by each scheme responsible department.

The Directions are designed to assist schemes in facilitating member decision making and ensuring the discrimination in transitional protections is addressed in line with the agreed provisions in the Act.

The directions ensure consistency of how the measures to remedy age discrimination contained in the Act are implemented in scheme regulations and do so without reference to protected characteristics at s75.

Individual schemes will conduct further screening as part of their scheme level consultations on remedy.

DoF undertook 2 previous screening exercises on the main policies to address age discrimination which the Act gives effect to. These exercises concluded that a full EQIA was not necessary. Further details can be found in the links below.

Link to: [Policy screening - Public service pension schemes: proposed changes to the transitional arrangements to the 2015 schemes.](#)

Link to: [Policy screening template: Public Service Pensions - Amendments to the Cost Control Mechanism \(Second LCM for the Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Bill\)](#).

This screening document builds on the previous screening exercises completed on the remedy for age discrimination in transitional protections to the reformed public service pension schemes in NI.

With the making of these Directions members in the public service schemes will continue to receive a high quality defined benefit pension with a guaranteed payment in retirement that is protected against inflation, regardless of their gender; racial background; age; disability; persons with dependents and persons without; political opinion; religion or belief; sexual orientation, or marital/civil partnership status.

Screening assessment completed by -

Name **Darrell Harvey**
Grade **Staff Officer**
Date **4/1/23**

And approved by –

Name **Stephen Ball**
Grade **GD7**
Date **4/1/23**

Central Support Team Notified 4/1/23

Equality Contacts advised 6/1/23

Screening uploaded to DoF website 6/1/23