

## Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Policy Screening Form

### Policy Information

Name of the policy	City of Sanctuary
Is this an existing, revised or new policy?	New – Council is seeking to join the City of Sanctuary Local Authority Network and work towards accreditation as a Council of Sanctuary
What is it trying to achieve (aims/outcomes)	The City of Sanctuary initiative closely aligns with the Council's statutory responsibilities under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, particularly in promoting equality of opportunity and fostering good relations. The purpose of the initiative is to build a culture of hospitality and welcoming by creating opportunities for relationships of solidarity between local people and those seeking sanctuary. The core values are inclusivity, openness, participation, inspiration, solidarity and integrity. It is felt that this is a strong fit with the Council's current Social Inclusion and Good Relations work.
Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?	Supporting people seeking sanctuary does not mean favouring one group over another. It is about building efficient, inclusive systems that work for all residents.  While all Section 75 categories will benefit indirectly, people fleeing violence and persecution would predominantly be persons of a different racial group.
If so, explain how.	By promoting equality of opportunity and fostering good relations through building an inclusive environment for people fleeing violence and persecution.
Who initiated or wrote the policy?	N/A
Who owns and who implements the policy?	Alison Robb, Assistant Director Community Development

### Implementation factors

	Yes	No
Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?	x	
If yes, are they Financial		
If yes, are they Legislative		
If yes, and they are Other please specify:	Home Office legislation and policy. Organised objection to immigration/illegal	

	immigration.
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### Main stakeholders affected

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

	Yes	No
Staff	✓	
Service users	✓	
Other public sector organisations	✓	
Voluntary/community/trade unions	✓	
Other, please specify:		

### Other policies with a bearing on this policy

What are they	N/A
Who owns them	N/A

### Available evidence

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for relevant Section 75 categories.

Section 75 Category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities					
Religious belief	<b>LGD</b>	<b>All usual residents</b>	<b>Catholic</b>	<b>Protestant and other Christian</b>	<b>Other religions</b>	<b>None</b>
	<b>Northern Ireland</b>	1,903,178	869,753 (45.7%)	827,545 (43.5%)	28,514 (1.5%)	177,360 (9.3%)
	<b>Newry, Mourne &amp; Down</b>	182,074	131,300 (72.1%)	39,970 (22.0%)	1,327 (0.7%)	9,477 (5.2%)
	(Source: Census Data 2021).					

Political opinion	<p>Elected political party representation is an approximate barometer of political opinion of people within the Council area.</p> <p>The party breakdown of the Council’s elected members is as follows:</p> <table><tr><td>Sinn Féin</td><td>20 seats</td></tr><tr><td>SDLP</td><td>8 seats</td></tr><tr><td>Independents</td><td>2 seats</td></tr><tr><td>Democratic Unionist</td><td>5 seats</td></tr><tr><td>Ulster Unionist</td><td>1 seats</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance</td><td>5 seats</td></tr></table> <p>Councillors are elected within seven District Electoral Areas (DEAs) across the Council area. With respect to party political representation, democratic deficits exist within particular DEAs i.e three DEAs have no PUL Councillor representation (Newry, Crotlieve and Downpatrick), two DEAs have one PUL (Slieve Croob and Slieve Gullion) Councillor and, one DEA has one CNR (Rowallane).</p>			Sinn Féin	20 seats	SDLP	8 seats	Independents	2 seats	Democratic Unionist	5 seats	Ulster Unionist	1 seats	Alliance	5 seats																														
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Racial group	<p>According to the 2021 Census, 3.4% (65,604) of the usually resident population of Northern Ireland belongs to minority ethnic groups. This is almost double the proportion in 2011 (1.8%).</p> <p>The minority ethnic language profile within the area serves as a possible indicator of the BME community profile. The composition of language groups in the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area is noted by NISRA (2021) as follows:</p> <p><b>Minority Ethnic Language Profile of the Newry, Mourne and Down LGD Area</b></p> <table><tr><td>Main language of residents in Newry, Mourne and Down District LGD</td><td>Number</td><td>Percentage %</td></tr><tr><td>English</td><td>168,408</td><td>96.1</td></tr><tr><td>Polish</td><td>2,143</td><td>1.22</td></tr><tr><td>Lithuanian</td><td>1,149</td><td>0.66</td></tr><tr><td>Irish</td><td>553</td><td>0.32</td></tr><tr><td>Romanian</td><td>347</td><td>0.2</td></tr><tr><td>Portuguese</td><td>119</td><td>0.06</td></tr><tr><td>Arabic</td><td>170</td><td>0.09</td></tr><tr><td>Bulgarian</td><td>677</td><td>0.39</td></tr><tr><td>Chinese (not otherwise specified)</td><td>70</td><td>0.04</td></tr><tr><td>Slovak</td><td>98</td><td>0.05</td></tr><tr><td>Hungarian</td><td>106</td><td>0.06</td></tr><tr><td>Spanish</td><td>77</td><td>0.04</td></tr><tr><td>Latvian</td><td>279</td><td>0.15</td></tr></table>			Main language of residents in Newry, Mourne and Down District LGD	Number	Percentage %	English	168,408	96.1	Polish	2,143	1.22	Lithuanian	1,149	0.66	Irish	553	0.32	Romanian	347	0.2	Portuguese	119	0.06	Arabic	170	0.09	Bulgarian	677	0.39	Chinese (not otherwise specified)	70	0.04	Slovak	98	0.05	Hungarian	106	0.06	Spanish	77	0.04	Latvian	279	0.15
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	Russian	180	0.10
	Tetun	22	0.01
	Malayalam	51	0.03
	Tagalog/Filipino	44	0.03
	Cantonese	38	0.02
	Other languages	711	0.41
Age	According to the 2021 Census, the age profile of the Newry, Mourne and Down LGD is as follows:		
	Age Profile	NI	Newry, Mourne & Down
	0-4	113,825	11,722
	5-7	73,456	7,693
	8-9	51,020	5,259
	10-14	126,919	13,151
	15	23,220	2,254
	16-17	46,641	4,923
	18-19	43,343	4,024
	20-24	111,383	10,022
	25-29	116,407	10,354
	30-44	375,518	34,970
	45-59	381,910	36,612
	60-64	113,043	10,755
	65-74	176,934	16,922
	75-84	110,149	9,872
	85-89	25,877	2,344
	90+	13,517	1,191
Marital status	The table below provides an overview of the marital status profile of the Newry, Mourne and Down area:		
	<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>Newry, Mourne and Down LGD</b>	<b>NI</b>
	All usual residents: Aged 16+ years	141,996	1,514,743
	Single (never married or never registered a same-sex civil partnership) Aged 16+ years	52,128 (36.7%)	576,708 (38.1%)
	Married: Aged 16+ years	68,076 (47.9%)	690,509 (45.6%)
	In a registered same-sex civil partnership: Aged 16+ years	201 (0.14%)	2,742 (0.19%)
	Separated (but still	4,975	57,272

	legally married or still legally in a same-sex civil partnership): Aged 16+ years	(3.5%)	(3.8%)												
	Divorced or formerly in a same-sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved	7,704 (5.4%)	91,128 (6.0%)												
	Widowed or surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership: Aged 16+ years	8,912 (6.3%)	96,384 (6.4%)												
	Census 2021														
Sexual orientation	Analysis of the Census 2021 indicates that between 2% and 10% of the population may be lesbian, gay or bisexual.  There are no official statistics in relation to the number of gay, lesbian or bisexual people in Northern Ireland. However, research conducted by the HM Treasury shows that between 5% - 7% of the UK population identify themselves as gay, lesbian, bisexual or 'trans' (transsexual, transgendered and transvestite) (LGBT). This is a sizeable proportion of the population here in Northern Ireland.														
Men and women generally	The gender profile for the Newry, Mourne and Down LGD is as follows: <table><tr><td>LGD</td><td>Male</td><td>Female</td></tr><tr><td>Northern Ireland</td><td>936,132</td><td>967,043</td></tr><tr><td>Newry, Mourne and Down LGD</td><td>90,063</td><td>92,011</td></tr></table> Census 2021					LGD	Male	Female	Northern Ireland	936,132	967,043	Newry, Mourne and Down LGD	90,063	92,011	
LGD	Male	Female													
Northern Ireland	936,132	967,043													
Newry, Mourne and Down LGD	90,063	92,011													
Disability	According to the 2021 Census 22.88% of people in the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area has a long-term health problem or disability that limits their day-to-day activities. <table><tr><td>LGD</td><td>All usual residents</td><td>Long-term health problem or disability: Day-to-day activities limited a lot</td><td>Long-term health problem or disability: Day-to-day activities limited a little</td><td>Long-term health problem or disability: Day-to-day activities not limited</td></tr><tr><td>Northern Ireland</td><td>1,903,179</td><td>217,964 (11.45%)</td><td>245,057 (12.88%)</td><td>1,440,158 (75.67%)</td></tr></table>					LGD	All usual residents	Long-term health problem or disability: Day-to-day activities limited a lot	Long-term health problem or disability: Day-to-day activities limited a little	Long-term health problem or disability: Day-to-day activities not limited	Northern Ireland	1,903,179	217,964 (11.45%)	245,057 (12.88%)	1,440,158 (75.67%)
LGD	All usual residents	Long-term health problem or disability: Day-to-day activities limited a lot	Long-term health problem or disability: Day-to-day activities limited a little	Long-term health problem or disability: Day-to-day activities not limited											
Northern Ireland	1,903,179	217,964 (11.45%)	245,057 (12.88%)	1,440,158 (75.67%)											

	<p>Newry, Mourne and Down</p> <p>182,074</p> <p>19,789 (10.87%)</p> <p>21,868 (12.01%)</p> <p>140,417 (77.13%)</p> <p>In Northern Ireland the profile of people with a disability is cited as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More than 1 in 5 or 21% of the population in Northern Ireland has a disability The incidence of disability is higher in Northern Ireland than any other part of the UK</li> <li>• 1 in 7 people in Northern Ireland have some form of hearing loss</li> <li>• 5,000 sign language users who use British Sign Language (BSL) and/or Irish Sign Language (ISL)</li> <li>• In Northern Ireland there are 57,000 blind people or people with significant visual impairment</li> <li>• 52,000 people with learning disabilities</li> </ul> <p>(Source: Disability Action)</p>
Dependants	<p>Persons with dependents may be people who have personal responsibility for the care of a child (or children), a person with a disability, and / or a dependent older person.</p> <p>According to the Census 2021, there are 68,396 households in Newry, Mourne and Down, 33.9% of which have dependent children. With regard to these figures, dependents are defined as those aged 0-15 years or those aged 16-18 years who are in full-time education and living with their parents or grandparents. Similar to the regional trend, the proportion of households with dependents in the District has declined from 50% in 1981 to 33.9% in 2021.</p> <p>There are 5,639 lone parent households with dependent children in Newry, Mourne and Down which equates to just over 8% of number of total households in the District and is the fourth highest in Northern Ireland, after Belfast (17,292), Derry and Strabane (7,639) and Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon (6,556). Half of the parents in lone parent households in Newry, Mourne and Down are unemployed, almost a quarter are in full time employment and over a quarter are in part time employment. 93% of the parents in lone parent households in the District are female compared to 11% who are male.</p> <p>In 2019-21, the teenage birth rate (under 20 years old) was 6.5 per 1,000 mothers, which is the fourth highest in Northern Ireland after Belfast (11.4); Antrim &amp; Newtownabbey (6.9) and Mid and East Antrim (6.8) but below the regional average of 6.8 per 1,000 births.</p>

### Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

<b>Section 75 Category</b>	<b>Details of needs/experiences/priorities</b>
Religious belief	Working with people, raising awareness and understanding, supporting social cohesion and integration.
Political opinion	Working with people, raising awareness and understanding, supporting social cohesion and integration.
Racial group	Working with people, raising awareness and understanding, supporting social cohesion and integration.
Age	Working with people, raising awareness and understanding, supporting social cohesion and integration.
Marital status	Working with people, raising awareness and understanding, supporting social cohesion and integration.
Sexual orientation	Working with people, raising awareness and understanding, supporting social cohesion and integration.
Men and women generally	Working with people, raising awareness and understanding, supporting social cohesion and integration.
Disability	Working with people, raising awareness and understanding, supporting social cohesion and integration.
Dependants	Working with people, raising awareness and understanding, supporting social cohesion and integration.

### Screening Questions

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

<b>Section 75 category</b>	<b>Details of policy impact</b>	<b>Level of impact? Major/minor/none</b>
Religious belief	Positive action/equality of opportunity/positive good relations	Minor - positive

	measure	
Political opinion	Positive action/equality of opportunity/positive good relations measure	Minor - positive
Racial group	It is acknowledged people fleeing violence and persecution would predominantly be persons of a different racial group.  Positive action/equality of opportunity/positive good relations measure.	Major – positive
Age	Positive action/equality of opportunity/positive good relations measure	Minor - positive
Marital status	Positive action/equality of opportunity/positive good relations measure	Minor - positive
Sexual orientation	Positive action/equality of opportunity/positive good relations measure	Minor - positive
Men and women generally	Positive action/equality of opportunity/positive good relations measure	Minor - positive
Disability	Positive action/equality of opportunity/positive good relations measure	Minor - positive
Dependants	Positive action/equality of opportunity/positive good relations measure	Minor - positive

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

<b>Section 75 category</b>	<b>If <b>Yes</b>, provide details</b>	<b>If <b>No</b>, provide details</b>
Religious belief		No – the proposed initiative will enable structured social



		inclusion programmes and facilitate sharing of best practice.
Political opinion		No – the proposed initiative will enable structured social inclusion programmes and facilitate sharing of best practice.
Racial group		<p>No – the proposed initiative will enable structured social inclusion programmes and facilitate sharing of best practice.</p> <p>Its primary purpose will be to embed a culture of hospitality and welcome for people fleeing violence and persecution through identifying opportunities to build positive relationships between local people and those seeking sanctuary.</p> <p>Actions will be underpinned by the core values of inclusivity, openness, participation, inspiration, solidarity and integrity which are a strong fit with the Council's current Social Inclusion and Good Relations programme of activity.</p>
Age		No – the proposed initiative will enable structured social inclusion programmes and facilitate sharing

		of best practice.
Marital status		No – the proposed initiative will enable structured social inclusion programmes and facilitate sharing of best practice.
Sexual orientation		No – the proposed initiative will enable structured social inclusion programmes and facilitate sharing of best practice.
Men and women generally		No – the proposed initiative will enable structured social inclusion programmes and facilitate sharing of best practice.
Disability		No – the proposed initiative will enable structured social inclusion programmes and facilitate sharing of best practice.
Dependants		No – the proposed initiative will enable structured social inclusion programmes and facilitate sharing of best practice.

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

<b>Good relations category</b>	<b>Details of policy impact</b>	<b>Level of impact? Major/minor/none</b>
Religious belief	Yes – via structured good relations programmes/sharing of best practice	Minor - positive
Political opinion	Yes – via structured good relations programmes/sharing of	Minor - positive

	best practice	
Racial group	<p>It is acknowledged people fleeing violence and persecution would predominantly be persons of a different racial group.</p> <p>This initiative has potential to have a positive impact via structured good relations programmes/sharing of best practice</p>	Major – positive

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

Good relations category	If <b>Yes</b> , provide details	If <b>No</b> , provide details
Religious belief		No – the proposed initiative will enable structured social inclusion programmes and facilitate sharing of best practice.
Political opinion		<p>No – the proposed initiative will enable structured social inclusion programmes and facilitate sharing of best practice.</p> <p>Its primary purpose will be to embed a culture of engagement, hospitality and welcome for people fleeing violence and persecution through identifying opportunities to build positive relationships between local people and those seeking sanctuary.</p> <p>Proposed actions will be underpinned by the</p>

		core values including inclusivity and participation which complement the Council's current Social Inclusion and Good Relations programme of activity.
Racial group		No – the proposed initiative will enable structured social inclusion programmes and facilitate sharing of best practice.

### 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).

None

### Screening Decision

In light of your answers to the previous questions, do you feel that the policy should (please underline one):

1. **Not be subject to an EQIA (with no mitigating measures required)**
2. Not be subject to an EQIA (with mitigating measures /alternative policies)
3. Be subject to an EQIA

If 1. or 2. (i.e. not be subject to an EQIA), please provide details of the reasons why:

It is not recommended the proposal be subject to an EQIA (with no mitigating measures required) on the basis that no specific adverse impacts have been identified at the current time.

The City of Sanctuary initiative would be designated as being a positive

action measure as it closely aligns with the Council's statutory responsibilities under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, particularly in promoting equality of opportunity and fostering good relations. The primary purpose is to build a culture of hospitality and welcome by creating opportunities to build positive relationships between local people and those seeking sanctuary.

The core values are inclusivity, openness, participation, inspiration, solidarity and integrity are a strong fit with the Council's current Social Inclusion and Good Relations programme of activity.

If 2. (i.e. not be subject to an EQIA), in what ways can identified adverse impacts attaching to the policy be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced?

In light of these revisions, is there a need to re-screen the revised/alternative policy? Yes / No. If No, please explain why

If 3. (i.e. to conduct an EQIA), please provide details of the reasons:

## Timetabling and prioritising EQIA

If 3. is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities? NO

If YES, please provide details:

Please answer the following questions to determine priority for timetabling the EQIA. 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 EQIA.

Priority criterion	Rating (1-3)
Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations	
Social need	
Effect on people's daily lives	

Relevance to a public authority's functions	
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Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for EQIA. This list of priorities will assist you in timetabling the EQIA. Details of your EQIA timetable should be included in the quarterly Section 75 report.

Proposed date for commencing EQIA: \_\_\_\_\_

## Monitoring

Effective monitoring will help identify any future adverse impacts arising from the policy which may lead you to conduct an EQIA, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

Please detail proposed monitoring arrangements below:

Monitoring will be ongoing to identify any future adverse impacts which may require an EQIA.

In addition, as part of the accreditation process Council will develop a strategy/framework for supporting people seeking sanctuary in the community.

## Approval and Authorisation

Screened by:	Position/Job Title	Date
Alison Robb	Assistant Director Community Development	8/9/25
Approved by:		
Andrew Patterson	Director, Active and Healthy Communities	09/09/25

Note: The completed policy screening template, signed off by the appropriate policy lead within the Council, and approved by the senior manager responsible for the policy, should be forwarded to the Head of Corporate Policy who will arrange for it to be included in the Council's Quarterly Report on Screening and made available on the Council's website.