

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Policy Screening Form

Policy Information

Name of the policy	Volunteer Policy
Is this an existing, revised or new policy?	Revised
What is it trying to achieve (aims/outcomes)	<p>This policy has been developed to encourage and support volunteering within Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (Council) and to provide guidance to ensure the interests of volunteers, staff and service users are met within our volunteering activities. The aim is to develop and promote best practice in the involvement and support of volunteers in the work of the Council.</p> <p>Specifically, the policy aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage development of volunteering in all appropriate areas of the Council. • Recognise and promote the importance of volunteering to the Council. • To provide clear guidance to individuals, groups and corporate organisations considering volunteering opportunities with Council. • Identify standards to which Council staff and volunteers are expected to adhere.
Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy? If so, explain how.	No specific Section 75 categories are expected to benefit from the policy.
Who initiated or wrote the policy?	Sonya Stephenson, Head of Programmes
Who owns and who implements the policy?	Amanda Smyth, Assistant Director Economy, Growth and Tourism

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		X
If yes, are they Legislative	X	

If yes, and they are Other please specify:	
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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	X	
Service users	X	
Other public sector organisations		
Voluntary/community/trade unions		
Other, please specify:	Volunteers	

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

What are they Who owns them	<p>The following, which is not an exhaustive list, are the principal related policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Plan • Internet Acceptable Use Policy and all other IT and staff policies • Disciplinary Policies • Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees • Local Government Employee and Councillors Working Relationship Protocol • Safeguarding Policy • Domestic Abuse Policy • Bilingualism Policy • Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Equality Scheme • Access to Information Policy and Procedure • Records Management Policy and Procedure • Retention and Disposal Schedule <p>This following is not an exhaustive list of the related legislative provisions and measures requiring regulatory and legal compliance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Data Protection Regulation 2018 • The Data Protection Act (2018) • Freedom of Information Act 2000
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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	LGD	All usual residents	Catholic	Protestant and other Christian	Other religions	None												
	Northern Ireland	1,903,178	869,753 (45.7%)	827,545 (43.5%)	28,514 (1.5%)	177,360 (9.3%)												
	Newry, Mourne & Down	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>3 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>4 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	3 seats	Democratic Unionist	5 seats	Ulster Unionist	1 seats	Alliance	4 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>																	

	Minority Ethnic Language Profile of the Newry, Mourne and Down LGD Area		
	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
	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	<p>The table below provides an overview of the marital status profile of the Newry, Mourne and Down area:</p> <table><tr><th>Marital Status</th><th>Newry, Mourne and Down LGD</th><th>NI</th></tr><tr><td>All usual residents: Aged 16+ years</td><td>141,996</td><td>1,514,743</td></tr><tr><td>Single (never married or never registered a same-sex civil partnership) Aged 16+ years</td><td>52,128 (36.7%)</td><td>576,708 (38.1%)</td></tr><tr><td>Married: Aged 16+ years</td><td>68,076 (47.9%)</td><td>690,509 (45.6%)</td></tr><tr><td>In a registered same-sex civil partnership: Aged 16+ years</td><td>201 (0.14%)</td><td>2,742 (0.19%)</td></tr><tr><td>Separated (but still legally married or still legally in a same-sex civil partnership): Aged 16+ years</td><td>4,975 (3.5%)</td><td>57,272 (3.8%)</td></tr><tr><td>Divorced or formerly in a same-sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved</td><td>7,704 (5.4%)</td><td>91,128 (6.0%)</td></tr><tr><td>Widowed or surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership: Aged 16+ years</td><td>8,912 (6.3%)</td><td>96,384 (6.4%)</td></tr></table> <p>Census 2021</p>	Marital Status	Newry, Mourne and Down LGD	NI	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 legally married or still legally in a same-sex civil partnership): Aged 16+ years	4,975 (3.5%)	57,272 (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%)
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Sexual orientation	<p>Analysis of the Census 2021 indicates that between 2% and 10% of the population may be lesbian, gay or bisexual.</p> <p>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.</p>																								
Men and women	<p>The gender profile for the Newry, Mourne and Down LGD is as follows:</p>																								

generally	<table><tr><th>LGD</th><th>Male</th><th>Female</th></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						
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Disability	<p>Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the) Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006 requires the Council in carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and➤ encourage participation by disabled people in public life. <p>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.</p> <table><tr><th>LGD</th><th>All usual residents</th><th>Long-term health problem or disability: Day-to-day activities limited a lot</th><th>Long-term health problem or disability: Day-to-day activities limited a little</th><th>Long-term health problem or disability: Day-to-day activities not limited</th></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><tr><td>Newry, Mourne and Down</td><td>182,074</td><td>19,789 (10.87%)</td><td>21,868 (12.01%)</td><td>140,417 (77.13%)</td></tr></table> <p>In Northern Ireland the profile of people with a disability is cited as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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• 1 in 7 people in Northern Ireland have some form of hearing loss• 5,000 sign language users who use British Sign Language (BSL) and/or Irish Sigh Language (ISL)• In Northern Ireland there are 57,000 blind people or people with significant visual impairment• 52,000 people with learning disabilities <p>(Source: Disability Action)</p>	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%)	Newry, Mourne and Down	182,074	19,789 (10.87%)	21,868 (12.01%)	140,417 (77.13%)
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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 & Newtownabbey (6.9) and Mid and East Antrim (6.8) but below the regional average of 6.8 per 1,000 births.</p>
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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.

Section 75 Category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
Religious belief	No specific needs, experiences and priorities have been identified.
Political opinion	No specific needs, experiences and priorities have been identified.
Racial group	Volunteers for whom English is not their primary language may require additional support.
Age	No specific needs, experiences and priorities have been identified.
Marital status	No specific needs, experiences and priorities have been identified.
Sexual orientation	No specific needs, experiences and priorities have been identified.
Men and women generally	No specific needs, experiences and priorities have been identified.
Disability	In line with our Disability Duties to promote positive attitudes to disabled people and encourage participation of disabled people in public life Council must give consideration to reasonable adjustments for volunteers with a disability.
Dependants	No needs, experiences and priorities have been identified.

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?

Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? Major/minor/none
Religious belief		None
Political opinion		None
Racial group		None
Age		None
Marital status		None
Sexual orientation		None
Men and women generally		None
Disability	Volunteering opportunities for people with disability is a positive action in relation to Council's disability statutory duties to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and encouraging participation by disabled people in public life.	Major - positive
Dependants		None

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

Section 75 category	If Yes , provide details	If No , provide details
Religious belief		No
Political opinion		As stated previously, this policy has been developed to encourage and support volunteering within Newry, Mourne and Down District Council and to provide guidance to ensure the interests of volunteers, staff and service users are met within our volunteering activities. The aim is to develop and promote best practice in the involvement and support of volunteers in the work of the Council.
Racial group		
Age		
Marital status		
Sexual orientation		
Men and women generally		
Disability		
Dependants		

		<p>Specifically, the policy aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage development of volunteering in all appropriate areas of the Council. • Recognise and promote the importance of volunteering to the Council. • To provide clear guidance to individuals, groups and corporate organisations considering volunteering opportunities with Council. • Identify standards to which Council staff and volunteers are expected to adhere.
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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?

Good relations category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? Major/minor/none
Religious belief		None
Political opinion		None
Racial group		None

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 details
Religious belief		No
Political opinion		No
Racial group		No

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 recommended the reviewed Council's Volunteer Policy not be subject to an EQIA (with no mitigating measures required).

As previously stated, the policy has been developed to encourage and support volunteering within Newry, Mourne and Down District Council and to provide guidance to ensure the interests of volunteers, staff and service users are met within our volunteering activities.

While the primary aim is to develop and promote best practice in the involvement and support of volunteers in the work of the Council, the policy and associated volunteer agreement / procedure also address specific policy aims to:

- Encourage development of volunteering in all appropriate areas of the Council.
- Recognise and promote the importance of volunteering to the Council.
- To provide clear guidance to individuals, groups and corporate organisations considering volunteering opportunities with Council.
- Identify standards to which Council staff and volunteers are expected to adhere.

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	

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:

Council will continue monitor the policy and will review in 4 years or in light of legislative changes and requirements.

A Volunteer Agreement / Procedure has been developed to implement the practical outworking of the policy.

Approval and Authorisation

Screened by:	Position/Job Title	Date
Sonya Stephenson	Head of Programmes	3 December 2025
Approved by:	Amanda Smyth Assistant Director, Economy Growth & Tourism	05/01/2026

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.