



## Accessible Communications Policy (DRAFT)

Document Control			
Policy Owner	Ann McAleer		
Policy Author	Corporate Policy & Equality Officer		
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Adopted By		Date	
Review Date		By Whom	
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## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This policy has been developed to help to ensure that the Council has a clear and consistent approach to the provision of accessible information and communication support.

## **2.0 Policy Aims & Objectives**

- 2.1 **Policy Aim:** To ensure that Council information is presented in an accessible way, and where appropriate in a range of formats and languages which are tailored to the needs of the intended audience (ties in the new interpretation and translation policy).

### **2.2 Policy Objectives:**

- To promote inclusive communication to enable people with communication support needs to access information more effectively
- To increase awareness among Council staff or service users who have increased communication needs
- To mainstream the accessibility of information to help ensure that all service users have their communication needs met
- To establish good practice in order to benefit Council services in the future as well as now

## **3.0 Underpinning Legislation**

- 3.1 The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 prohibits discrimination and requires local authorities to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that services are accessible. This includes Council communications.
- 3.2 Section 6.1 of this policy contains examples of alternative formats which are considered as examples of reasonable adjustments.
- 3.3 Since 2006, public authorities must also pay due regard to the need:
- To promote positive attitudes towards disabled people, and
  - To encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

- 3.4 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998) requires public authorities to have due regard to promote equality of opportunity across a number of grounds, including disability.
- 3.5 The Human Rights Act (1998) also makes human rights a part of local legislation and means that public authorities must respect, protect and uphold the rights of all service users.
- 3.6 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) provides specific human rights protections for persons with disabilities, including accessibility of information and communication. The Convention states that Persons with disabilities have the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health without discrimination on the basis of disability.

#### **4.0 Policy Scope**

- 4.1 It is important that documents and information published by Mid Ulster District Council are accessible and inclusive. This includes documents and information authored and produced in-house and commissioned from external agencies. This ensures that information can be read or received and understood by as many people as possible. It reduces – but does not remove – the need for alternative formats to be produced. Therefore, this policy relates to all of the Council's communications specifically:

- Written/printed communications
- Face-to-face communications
- Digital communications

- 4.2 Each of these areas are examined in turn to consider the varying communication needs of our service users:

### **Written/Printed Communications**

- 4.3 If a document is initially designed using the core accessibility principles (see Appendix A for guidance), the information will already be accessible to a greater number of people and may reduce demand for alternative formats. Structured planning will also make best use of resources available and will reduce duplication of work across Council departments
- 4.4 Structured planning can be carried out by:
- Carrying out research and identifying the target audience at the commissioning stage
  - Considering how to reach audience members by using a mix of channels and appropriate formats, considering any costs.
- 4.5 This information can be made available in alternative formats, such as easy read or large print, and in alternative languages on request. Please contact the Council's Corporate Policy & Equality Officer with your request. The Council's Accessible Communication Statement is included as Appendix D.

### **Face-to-Face Communications**

- 4.6 This policy is compatible with processes in place across Mid Ulster District Council, such as the 'Just A Minute' Initiative. The Council's Equality Scheme also requires preparation work to take place in relation to all projects/plans and strategies. Within that context, the scope of this policy extends to considering the communication requirements of the audience at the planning stage of projects/plans and strategies. This is necessary in order to ensure that everyone's communication needs are considered proactively and within the timeframe that is required by the Council's Equality Scheme. Appendix A sets out specific guidance for face to face communication.

### **Digital Communications**

- 4.7 All electronic documents, including all documents published on Mid Ulster District Council's website or intranet should adhere to the accessibility guidance set out in Council's protocols for accessible communication (Appendix A).

- 4.8 The Council's websites must, by default, achieve a high level of accessibility and any specifications which commission web-based services, including those provided by 3rd party suppliers, must incorporate accessibility requirements at the planning stage.
- 4.9 Appendix C sets out specific guidance for accessible digital communications.
- 4.10 It is anticipated that the following groups are most likely to be directly impacted upon by the policy:
- People who are blind or have visual loss
  - People who are deaf or have hearing loss
  - People who are deafblind
  - People who have a learning disability
  - People who have limited or no English
- 4.11 The following groups may also be affected by the policy:
- People with aphasia
  - People with a mental health condition which affects their ability to communicate
  - People with dyslexia
  - People with autism
- 4.12 Please note that these categories may not represent all of the groups who may be affected.

## **5.0 Linkage to Our Corporate Plan**

- 5.1 Referring to Mid Ulster District Council's Corporate Plan 2015-2019, this policy contributes toward the delivery of Corporate Theme 1, (*Delivering for Our People*).

## **6.0 Submitting Requests for Alternative Formats**

- 6.1 The Council shall consider all requests to provide communications in a range of alternative formats. Alternative formats can include documents being made available in large-print, on disk, on audiocassette and in Braille and in other languages upon request. Requests should be made to the Corporate Policy & Equality Officer.

- 6.2 Council Officers who receive the request should make the person submitting the request aware that there are waiting times in place for request for some types of translation services.
- 6.3 All Council staff must take responsibility for their own actions and how their communication methods may affect others. Staff should be flexible in the way they communicate and deliver services. Staff should always be mindful that different people will require different types of support to access Council services effectively.

## **7.0 Roles and Responsibilities**

- 7.1 **Chief Executive:** has ultimate authority with regard to the implementation of the Equality Scheme. This policy is an outworking of the Equality Scheme to ensure equality of opportunity in relation to how the Council provides accessible communication.
- 7.2 **Departments:** are responsible for; the day to day implementation of this policy and ensuring a high quality service is provided to all customers including people with additional communication requirements.
- 7.3 **Staff:** All Council staff must take responsibility for ensuring that how they are communicating with customers takes into account that different people will have different communication needs. Staff should also ensure that accessibility is considered at the beginning of the process.

## **8.0 Impact Assessment**

### **8.1 Equality Screening & Impact**

The policy shall be subjected to equality screening in accordance with the council's screening process.

### **8.2 Staff & Financial Resources**

No issues have been identified which would significantly impact on the council's resources and delivery of its business as a result of this policy being implemented. Many adjustments to make communications accessible can be completed with little or no cost attached.

### **8.3 Rural Needs Implications**

The policy shall be subjected to a Rural Needs Impact Assessment.

### **9.0 Support and Advice**

- 9.1 Advice and guidance on the implementation of this should be sought from the Corporate Policy & Equality Officer.

### **10.0 Communication**

- 10.1 Democratic Services is responsible for the communication of this policy.

### **11.0 Monitoring and Review**

- 11.1 Implementation of this policy will be monitored and a formal review undertaken 24 months from its effective date.



## **Appendix A- Protocols for Accessible Written/Printed Communications**

### **Fonts**

- Document text size should be a minimum of 12 point, preferably 14 point.
- Use Arial font. This is Council's agreed font for internally produced documents.
- Avoid italics, underlining, simulated handwriting, blocks of capitalised letters or anything styled.

### **Design and Layout**

- Use a simple, clear and uncluttered design and layout.
- All body text should be left aligned. Avoid aligning text or to the right or justifying text.
- All text should be the same orientation on the page.
- Use bold sparingly, only highlight a few words rather than a paragraph.
- Leading (space between lines) should not be too cramped, preferably 1.5-line spacing.
- Text should never be placed over an image or fitted around an image.
- The contrast between the text and background should be as high as possible.
- Space between columns of text should be large enough to be distinct.
- Colour text/fonts should not be used.
- Do not use abbreviation or acronyms.
- Keep your words, sentences and paragraphs short and simple.
- Use page numbers and headings consistently.

## **Images:**

- Images can help communicate messages and support understanding.
- Make sure images are as big and as clear as possible.
- Text should never be placed over an image or fitted around an image.
- Images in colour are preferable.
- Authentic photographs of real people or places are preferable.
- Put a clear picture next to accompanying text.

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## **Appendix B- Guidance for Face to Face Communication**

- Make sure you have the person's attention before trying to communicate with them.
- Identify yourself clearly. Say who you are and what you do – it may be more relevant to explain your reason for seeing the person rather than your job title.
- Check that you are in the best position to communicate, usually this will be facing the person, but consider whether seated or standing is more appropriate. Communication at eye level is usually easiest so if you are speaking to a wheelchair user consider sitting down if possible.
- Find a suitable place to talk, with good lighting and away from noise and distractions.
- Speak clearly but do not shout.
- Keep your face and lips visible – do not cover your mouth with clothing, a hand or your hair. If a member of staff is concerned about religious expression they should discuss this with their manager in advance.
- Use gestures and facial expressions to support what you are saying.
- If necessary, repeat phrases, re-phrase the sentence or use simpler words or phrases.
- Use plain, direct language and avoid using figures of speech.
- Check if the person has understood what you are saying. Look for visual clues as well as asking if they have understood.
- Encourage people to ask questions or request further information. Ask if they would like anything in writing as a reminder or reference.
- Try different ways of getting your point across. For example, writing things down, drawing or using symbols or objects to support your point.
- Keep messages short, clear and to the point.
- Provide a pen and paper to enable the person to write or draw key points themselves.
- Try to keep communication and documents consistent, as repetition will support effective communication.
- Recap the key points at the end of the conversation.

## **Appendix C- Guidance for Digital Communication**

- Writing for digital channels should, where applicable, meet the same standards as writing for print.
- Photographs and video content should, where possible, be captioned.
- Appropriate measures should be taken to assist accessibility and screen reading technology, including the use of alt text tags for images, meaningful hyperlinks (avoid hyperlinking phrases such as 'click here') and camel case (capitalisation) in hashtags where more than 1 word is used.

## **Appendix D- Accessible Communication Statement**

All Mid Ulster District Council publications should include the 'accessible communication statement' in a prominent position, as follows:

'This information can be made available in alternative formats, such as audio, braille, easy read or large print and may be provided in alternative languages, upon request. Please contact Mid Ulster District Council's Corporate Policy & Equality Officer on 03000 132 132 Ex 24612 or via [ann.mcaleer@midulstercouncil.org](mailto:ann.mcaleer@midulstercouncil.org)'

The statement should be in no less than 12 point, in an obvious place, such as on the front cover page. For longer documents, it would be appropriate to duplicate the statement on the back cover as well as at the beginning.



## Equality & Good Relations Screening Report

### Introduction

Appendix B

Mid Ulster District Council has a statutory duty to screen its policies, procedures, practices/decisions. This Policy Screening Form and Report assists Council Departments to consider the likely equality and good relations impacts of the aforementioned, if any, placed upon our ratepayers, citizens, service users, staff and visitors to the district.

### Section 1 – Policy scoping

This asks the Policy Author to provide details on the policy, procedure, practice and/or decision being screened and what available evidence you have gathered to help make an assessment of the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations. Reference to policy within this document refers to either of the aforementioned (policy, procedure, practice, and/ or decision).

### Section 2 – Screening questions

This asks about the extent of the likely impact of the policy on groups of people within each of the Section 75 categories. Details of the groups consulted and the level of assessment of the likely impact. This includes consideration of multiple identity and issues.

### Section 3 – Screening decision

This guides the Council to reach a screening decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment (EQIA), or introduce measures to mitigate the likely impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity.

### Section 4 – Monitoring

This provides guidance to the Council on monitoring for adverse impact and broader monitoring.

### Section 5 – Approval and authorisation

This verifies the Council's approval of a screening decision by a senior manager responsible for the policy.

### Appendix A

### Screening Process

## Section 1 Policy Scoping & Information

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration which sets the context and confirms the aims and objectives for the policy being screened. Scoping the policy helps to identify constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy author to work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

<b>1. Policy Name</b>		
Draft Accessible Communication Policy		
<b>2. Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?</b>		
This is a new policy.		
<b>3. What is it trying to achieve? (aims/outcomes)</b>		
This policy aims to ensure that Council information is presented in an accessible way, and where appropriate in a range of formats and languages which are tailored to the needs of the intended audience.		
<b>4. Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?</b>	Yes	x
	No	
If so, please explain  People in the following S75 categories are expected to benefit from this policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Men &amp; Women generally</li><li>• People with a disability</li><li>• People of various age groups</li><li>• Racial groupings</li></ul>		
<b>6. Who initiated or wrote the policy?</b>		
This policy was initiated as a result of Mid Ulster District Council's Equality Action Plan.		
<b>7. Who owns and who implements the policy?</b>		
Mid Ulster District Council		

## Implementation factors

		Yes	No
Are there any factors which could contribute to/ detract from intended aim/ outcome of the policy?		No	
• If yes, are they financial?		✓	
• If yes, are they legislative?		✓	
• If yes, Please specify	<p><b>Financial:</b> Councils have to deliver their services within their annual budget allocation.</p> <p><b>Legislative:</b> The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 prohibits the discrimination of disabled people and requires local authorities to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that services are accessible to everyone. This includes how Council communicates.</p>		
• Other, Please specify			

## Stakeholders

The internal and external (actual or potential) that the policy will be impacted upon

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

## Others policies with a bearing on this policy

Policies	Owners
Procurement Policy	Finance Team

## Available evidence

Information and available evidence (qualitative and quantitative) gathered to inform the policy under each of the Section 75 groups as identified within the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information																																				
Religious belief	<p>63.77% of the population were brought up in the Catholic religion and 33.46% belong or were brought up in a Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related) religion. Other religions comprised 690 (0.5%) and None 3,153 (2.28%) of the population (Source: 2011 Census).</p> <table><tr><th>Religion or Religion brought up in</th><th>No.</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>Catholic</td><td>88,375</td><td>63.77</td></tr><tr><td>Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related)</td><td>46,372</td><td>33.46</td></tr><tr><td>Other religions</td><td>690</td><td>0.5</td></tr><tr><td>None</td><td>3,153</td><td>2.28</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>138,590</td><td>100</td></tr></table>	Religion or Religion brought up in	No.	%	Catholic	88,375	63.77	Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related)	46,372	33.46	Other religions	690	0.5	None	3,153	2.28	Total	138,590	100																		
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Political opinion	<p>Political party representation can be used as an approximate barometer of political opinion of people within Mid Ulster council area. The most recent local government/ council election in 2014 the percentage 1<sup>st</sup> preference vote share for each of the political party/ independents is detailed bellowed along with representation (seats) on Council (Source: NISRA):</p> <table><tr><th>Party</th><th>Votes</th><th>Percentage</th><th>Council Seats</th></tr><tr><td>SF</td><td>22,587</td><td>41.0%</td><td>18</td></tr><tr><td>DUP</td><td>9,723</td><td>17.6%</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>UUP</td><td>9,573</td><td>17.4%</td><td>7</td></tr><tr><td>SDLP</td><td>7,600</td><td>13.8%</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>Independent</td><td>2,689</td><td>4.9%</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>TUV</td><td>2,380</td><td>4.3%</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Alliance</td><td>250</td><td>0.6%</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>UKIP</td><td>195</td><td>0.4%</td><td>0</td></tr></table>	Party	Votes	Percentage	Council Seats	SF	22,587	41.0%	18	DUP	9,723	17.6%	8	UUP	9,573	17.4%	7	SDLP	7,600	13.8%	6	Independent	2,689	4.9%	1	TUV	2,380	4.3%	0	Alliance	250	0.6%	0	UKIP	195	0.4%	0
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Racial group	<p>According to the 2011 Census the overwhelming majority of the population 136,485 (98.48%) were classified as ‘white’. Within this total will be migrant communities, such as Polish, Lithuanian and so forth. Statistics indicate that the number of people in Mid Ulster Local Government District (LGD) born outside Northern Ireland is:</p> <table><tr><th>Place of Birth</th><th>No.</th></tr><tr><td>Great Britain</td><td>4,053</td></tr><tr><td>Republic of Ireland</td><td>2,250</td></tr><tr><td>EU Countries (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia)</td><td>6,795</td></tr></table>	Place of Birth	No.	Great Britain	4,053	Republic of Ireland	2,250	EU Countries (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia)	6,795																												
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	Other	2,280																												
	The minority ethnic language profile within the area can serve as a possible indicator of the Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) community profile within the district. The composition of language groups in Mid Ulster LGD area is also noted from the 2011 census by NISRA as:																													
	<table><tr><th>Main Languages of residents in Mid Ulster Council area</th><th>No.</th></tr><tr><td>English</td><td>125,715</td></tr><tr><td>Polish</td><td>2,008</td></tr><tr><td>Lithuanian</td><td>2,039</td></tr><tr><td>Portuguese</td><td>903</td></tr><tr><td>Irish (Gaelic)</td><td>404</td></tr><tr><td>Slovak</td><td>477</td></tr><tr><td>Russian</td><td>297</td></tr><tr><td>Latvia</td><td>261</td></tr><tr><td>Hungarian</td><td>117</td></tr><tr><td>Chinese</td><td>64</td></tr><tr><td>Tagalog/Filipino</td><td>38</td></tr><tr><td>Malaysian</td><td>33</td></tr><tr><td>Other</td><td>922</td></tr></table>		Main Languages of residents in Mid Ulster Council area	No.	English	125,715	Polish	2,008	Lithuanian	2,039	Portuguese	903	Irish (Gaelic)	404	Slovak	477	Russian	297	Latvia	261	Hungarian	117	Chinese	64	Tagalog/Filipino	38	Malaysian	33	Other	922
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Age	The age profile of Mid Ulster Local Government District area as at 2015 (Source, NISRA)																													
	<table><tr><th></th><th>Mid Ulster</th><th>Northern Ireland</th></tr><tr><td>Total Population</td><td>144,002</td><td>1,851,621</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>0-15 years</td><td>33,123</td><td>385,200</td></tr><tr><td>16-39 years</td><td>47,646</td><td>583,116</td></tr><tr><td>40-64 years</td><td>43,621</td><td>591,481</td></tr><tr><td>65+ years</td><td>19,612</td><td>291,824</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Population Change % (2005-2015)</td><td>15.3%</td><td>7.2%</td></tr></table>			Mid Ulster	Northern Ireland	Total Population	144,002	1,851,621				0-15 years	33,123	385,200	16-39 years	47,646	583,116	40-64 years	43,621	591,481	65+ years	19,612	291,824				Population Change % (2005-2015)	15.3%	7.2%	
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Marital status	The below table sets out the marital status profile for Mid Ulster District Council area as extracted from results of the 2011 Census																																																					
		Mid Ulster		Northern Ireland																																																		
		No.	%	No	%																																																	
	Single (never married or never registered a same sex civil partnership) (Aged 16+)	38,353	35.97	517,393	36.14																																																	
	Married (Aged 16+)	54,192	50.82	680,831	47.56																																																	
	In a registered same sex civil partnership (Aged 16+)	62	0.06	1,243	0.09																																																	
	Separated (but is still legally married or still legally in a same sex civil partnership) (Aged 16+)	3,369	3.16	56,911	3.98																																																	
	Divorced or formerly in a same sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved (Aged 16+)	4,139	3.88	78,074	5.45																																																	
	Widowed or surviving partner from a same sex civil partnership (Aged 16+)	6,523	6.12	97,088	6.78																																																	
Sexual orientation	No specific statistics are available from the 2011 government census for this Category and there are therefore no official statistics available in relation to persons of different sexual orientation. However, the Integrated Household Survey would include between 3% and 4% would be either gay, lesbian and/or bisexual. However, due to the nature of 'disclosure' in this area, umbrella organisations often state that the figure may be closer to 10%.																																																					
	<table><tr><td>Region</td><td>Heterosexual / Straight</td><td>Gay/ Lesbian</td><td>Bisexual</td><td>Gay/ Lesbian/ Bisexual</td><td>Other</td><td>Don't know /refuse</td><td>No response</td></tr><tr><td>England</td><td>92.54%</td><td>1.10%</td><td>0.51%</td><td>1.61%</td><td>0.33%</td><td>4.07%</td><td>1.45%</td></tr><tr><td>Wales</td><td>93.93%</td><td>1.04%</td><td>0.48%</td><td>1.52%</td><td>0.45%</td><td>2.99%</td><td>1.11%</td></tr><tr><td>Scotland</td><td>94.65%</td><td>0.82%</td><td>0.33%</td><td>1.14%</td><td>0.26%</td><td>2.59%</td><td>1.37%</td></tr><tr><td>N Ireland</td><td>93.00%</td><td>0.64%</td><td>0.96%</td><td>1.60%</td><td>0.26%</td><td>3.98%</td><td>1.17%</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>92.80%</td><td>1.06%</td><td>0.51%</td><td>1.57%</td><td>0.32%</td><td>3.89%</td><td>1.42%</td></tr></table>							Region	Heterosexual / Straight	Gay/ Lesbian	Bisexual	Gay/ Lesbian/ Bisexual	Other	Don't know /refuse	No response	England	92.54%	1.10%	0.51%	1.61%	0.33%	4.07%	1.45%	Wales	93.93%	1.04%	0.48%	1.52%	0.45%	2.99%	1.11%	Scotland	94.65%	0.82%	0.33%	1.14%	0.26%	2.59%	1.37%	N Ireland	93.00%	0.64%	0.96%	1.60%	0.26%	3.98%	1.17%	Total	92.80%	1.06%	0.51%	1.57%	0.32%	3.89%
Region	Heterosexual / Straight	Gay/ Lesbian	Bisexual	Gay/ Lesbian/ Bisexual	Other	Don't know /refuse	No response																																															
England	92.54%	1.10%	0.51%	1.61%	0.33%	4.07%	1.45%																																															
Wales	93.93%	1.04%	0.48%	1.52%	0.45%	2.99%	1.11%																																															
Scotland	94.65%	0.82%	0.33%	1.14%	0.26%	2.59%	1.37%																																															
N Ireland	93.00%	0.64%	0.96%	1.60%	0.26%	3.98%	1.17%																																															
Total	92.80%	1.06%	0.51%	1.57%	0.32%	3.89%	1.42%																																															
Research also 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).																																																						

Men & women generally	<p>The gender profile of Mid Ulster LGD is detailed as;</p> <table><tr><th></th><th colspan="2">Mid Ulster</th><th colspan="2">Northern Ireland</th></tr><tr><th></th><th>No.</th><th>%</th><th>No.</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>Male</td><td>69,362</td><td>50.05</td><td>887,323</td><td>49.00</td></tr><tr><td>Female</td><td>69,228</td><td>49.95</td><td>923,540</td><td>51.00</td></tr></table>		Mid Ulster		Northern Ireland			No.	%	No.	%	Male	69,362	50.05	887,323	49.00	Female	69,228	49.95	923,540	51.00					
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Male	69,362	50.05	887,323	49.00																						
Female	69,228	49.95	923,540	51.00																						
Disability	<p>According to the 2011 NISRA census statistics 19.39% of people had a long-term health problem or disability that limited their day-to-day activities whilst 80.43% of people within the district stated their general health was either good or very good</p> <table><tr><th></th><th colspan="2">Mid Ulster</th><th colspan="2">Northern Ireland</th></tr><tr><th></th><th>No.</th><th>%</th><th>No.</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>Disability / long term health</td><td>26,870</td><td>19.39</td><td>374,646</td><td>20.69</td></tr><tr><td>No disability / long term health problem</td><td>111,720</td><td>80.61</td><td>1,436,217</td><td>79.31</td></tr></table> <p>In Northern Ireland the profile of persons with a disability has been reported by Disability Action as;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More than 1 in 5 or 21% of the population have a disability</li><li>• 1 in 7 people have some form of hearing loss</li><li>• 5,000 persons use sign language - British Sign Language and/or Irish Sign Language</li><li>• There are 57,000 blind persons or persons with significant impairment</li><li>• 52,000 persons with learning difficulties</li></ul>		Mid Ulster		Northern Ireland			No.	%	No.	%	Disability / long term health	26,870	19.39	374,646	20.69	No disability / long term health problem	111,720	80.61	1,436,217	79.31					
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No disability / long term health problem	111,720	80.61	1,436,217	79.31																						
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. The below table provides a summary with respect Mid Ulster LGD.</p> <table><tr><th></th><th colspan="2">Mid Ulster</th><th colspan="2">Northern Ireland</th></tr><tr><th></th><th>No.</th><th>%</th><th>No.</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>Households with dependent children</td><td>18,626</td><td>38.99</td><td>238,094</td><td>33.86</td></tr><tr><td>Lone parent households with dependents</td><td>3,485</td><td>7.30</td><td>63,921</td><td>9.09</td></tr><tr><td>People providing unpaid care</td><td>12,821</td><td>10.69</td><td>231,980</td><td>11.82</td></tr></table> <p>Of the households in Mid Ulster Local Government District with dependent children, they can be summarised as;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 7,407 families in households have 1 dependent child</li><li>• 6,394 families in households with two dependent children</li><li>• 5,014 families in households with three dependent children</li></ul> <p>There are 37,306 dependent children within families.</p>		Mid Ulster		Northern Ireland			No.	%	No.	%	Households with dependent children	18,626	38.99	238,094	33.86	Lone parent households with dependents	3,485	7.30	63,921	9.09	People providing unpaid care	12,821	10.69	231,980	11.82
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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	N/A
Political opinion	N/A
Racial group	There is a varied minority ethnic community resident in Mid Ulster Council area.
Age	Mid Ulster District Council has an aging population.
Marital status	N/A
Sexual orientation	N/A
Men and women generally	N/A
Disability	5% of the population in the Mid Ulster District have a disability.
Dependants	N/A

## Section 2 – Screening Questions

In making a decision as to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA), the Council should consider its answers to the questions 1- 3 detailed below.

If the Council's conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity categories, then the Council may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity, the Council should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

If the Council's conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

If the Council's conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

- measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
- the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity.

#### **In favour of a 'major' impact**

- a) The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
- b) Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;
- c) Potential equality impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;
- d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;
- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

#### **In favour of 'minor' impact**

- a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
- b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
- c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
- d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity.

#### **In favour of none**

- a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity.

- b) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity for people within the equality categories.

## Screening questions

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
Religious belief		<b>None</b>
Political opinion		<b>None</b>
Racial group	<p>Removes and minimises disadvantages faced by people whose first language is not English, or people with other communications needs, who need to access our information.</p> <p>Takes steps to make sure that everyone is able to obtain and understand the information we provide, and are able to communicate with us in ways that meets their individual needs.</p> <p>Encourages people to participate and make informed choices</p>	<b>Minor (positive)</b>
Age	<p>Removes and minimises disadvantages faced by people whose first language is not English, or people with other communications needs, who need to access our information.</p> <p>Takes steps to make sure that everyone is able to obtain and understand the information we provide, and are able to communicate with us in ways that meets their individual needs.</p>	<b>Minor (positive)</b>

	Encourages people to participate and make informed choices	
Marital status		<b>None</b>
Sexual orientation		<b>None</b>
Men and women generally		<b>None</b>
Disability	<p>Removes and minimises disadvantages faced by people whose first language is not English, or people with other communications needs, who need to access our information.</p> <p>Takes steps to make sure that everyone is able to obtain and understand the information we provide, and are able to communicate with us in ways that meets their individual needs.</p> <p>Encourages people to participate and make informed choices</p>	<b>Minor (positive)</b>
Dependants		<b>None</b>

**2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within Section 75 equality categories? (Yes/ No)**

Section 75 category	If <b>Yes</b> , provide details	If <b>No</b> , provide reasons
Religious belief		This policy will be implemented equally regardless of religious belief.

Political opinion		This policy will be implemented equally regardless of political opinion.
Racial group	This policy takes steps to make sure that everyone is able to obtain and understand the information we provide, and are able to communicate with us in ways that meets their individual needs.	
Age	This policy takes steps to make sure that everyone is able to obtain and understand the information we provide, and are able to communicate with us in ways that meets their individual needs.	
Marital status		This policy will be implemented equally regardless of marital status.
Sexual orientation		This policy will be implemented equally regardless of sexual orientation.
Men and women generally		This policy will be implemented equally regardless of gender.
Disability	This policy takes steps to make sure that everyone is able to obtain and understand the information we provide, and are able to communicate with us in ways that meets their individual needs.	
Dependants		This policy will be implemented equally regardless of responsibility for dependents.



**3. Are there opportunities without prejudice, to the equality of opportunity duty, to better promote good relations between Section 75 equality categories, through tackling prejudice and/ or promoting understanding? (Yes/ No)**

	No	x
	Yes	

If yes, please detail the opportunities below:

--

If yes is concluded to Question 3, then the policy will be referred to the Council's Good Relations Working Group for consideration. The Group will consider the potential opportunities and assess if and how the overall impact of a decision/policy can better promote good relations.

### **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).*

N/A

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

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## Section 3 – Screening Decision

In light of answers provided to the questions within Section 3 select one of the following with regards the policy:

		Select One
1	Shall not be subject to an EQIA - <i>with no mitigating measures required</i>	x
2	Shall not be subject to an EQIA - <i>mitigating measures/ alternative policies introduced</i>	
3	Shall be subject to an EQIA	

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

Overall this policy provides a minor positive and therefore does not require an EQIA.

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

If 3 above (i.e. shall be subject to an EQIA), please provide details of the reasons.

## Mitigation

When it is concluded that the likely impact is 'minor' and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, you may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity?

If so, give the **reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy:

Overall this policy provides a minor positive and therefore does not require an EQIA.

## Timetabling and prioritising

If the policy has been screened in for equality impact assessment, please answer the below to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

- **On a scale of 1-3 (1 being lowest priority and 3 being highest), assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.**

Priority criterion	Rating (1-3)
Effect on equality of opportunity	
Social need	
Effect on people's daily lives	
Relevance to a Council's functions	

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the Council in timetabling. Details of the Council's Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the Screening Reports.

- **Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?**

Yes	
No	

## Section 5 – Monitoring

Effective monitoring will help identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which may lead the Council to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and policy development. Please detail proposed monitoring arrangements below:

This policy will be monitored in relation to the types of alternative communication that are requested by service users and to ensure there are no gaps in information provision.

## Section 6 – Approval and authorisation

Screened by:	Position/ Job Title	Date
Ann McAleer	Corporate Policy & Equality Officer	11/12/18
Approved by:	Position/ Job Title	Date
Philip Moffett	Head of Democratic Services	19/12/18

**Note:** 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 easily accessible on the council website as soon as possible following completion and be available on request.