

BALLYMONEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EQUALITY SCHEME

**NORTHERN IRELAND ACT 1998
SECTION 75
STATUTORY EQUALITY OBLIGATIONS**

**Borough Offices, Riada House,
14 Charles Street, Ballymoney, BT53 6DZ.**

Telephone: 028 2766 0200

Facsimile: 028 2766 0222

Email: info@Ballymoney.gov.uk

Website: www.ballymoney.gov.uk

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FOREWORD

This Equality Scheme is an important document in that it is a statement of Ballymoney Borough Council's commitment to fulfilling the statutory obligations in compliance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. This Act places new duties on public authorities to promote equality of opportunity and good relations.

The scheme is also important because it outlines a plan for the more effective mainstreaming of equality issues, thus ensuring that they are central to the whole range of policy-making and implementation within the Council. The scheme will relate to how the Council carries out all its functions, powers and duties relating to Northern Ireland.

The Council recognises the importance of the statutory duties placed upon it and has impressed upon staff the need for compliance. It has agreed to the allocation of necessary resources to ensure that the statutory duties are complied with and that the scheme is drawn up and implemented effectively and on time.

We hereby commit Ballymoney Borough Council to the full, effective and timely implementation of this scheme; to monitoring and reviewing progress; and to the development and delivery of a planned programme of communication and training on the Equality Scheme.

Signed:

Councillor William T Kennedy
Mayor

John Patrick Dempsey
Chief Executive

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Introduction

- 1.1 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 ('the Act') requires the Council in carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:
- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
 - between men and women generally;
 - between persons with a disability and persons without;
 - between persons with dependants and persons without.
- 1.2 In addition, without prejudice to its obligations above, the Council shall in carrying out its functions, have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.
- 1.3 The Council is committed to the fulfilment of its Section 75 obligations in all parts of its organisation. It is committed to allocating necessary resources (in terms of time, people and money) to ensure that the statutory duties are complied with and that the equality scheme is drawn up and implemented effectively and on time.
- 1.4 The Council will ensure that there are effective internal arrangements in place to ensure that the duties are effectively complied with and for monitoring and reviewing progress.
- 1.5 The Council will undertake a planned programme of communication and training on the Section 75 obligations for all staff and elected members.
- 1.6 This equality scheme sets out how the Council proposes to fulfil the duties imposed by Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Act.

2 The Council - its role, functions and policies

- 2.1 The Council performs five principal roles within its local area and district:
- the direct provision of a number of services and facilities,
 - the promotion of the arts, tourism, community and economic development,
 - the regulation and licensing of certain activities relating to environmental health, consumer protection and public safety,
 - a representative role on a number of bodies and Boards including Education and Health,
 - a consultative role in relation to functions conducted by other Government bodies and agencies on issues such as planning, water, roads and housing.
- 2.2 In the performance of the above roles the Council carries out functions in the following areas:

- the provision of facilities for recreational, social and cultural activities including leisure centres, community centres, parks, open spaces, sports grounds and places of entertainment,
- street cleansing,
- waste collection and disposal
- the provision of burial grounds
- the provision of grant aid to support the Arts and community development and the promotion of tourism and economic development,
- the administration and regulation of certain matters relating to the environment, public health and public safety including building control, food safety, statutory nuisance, dangerous buildings, air pollution, noise pollution, dog control, consumer protection and health and safety.
- the licensing and regulation of street trading, places of entertainment, amusement centres, sex establishments, societies, lotteries, cinemas and petroleum stations,
- the making of Byelaws and regulation of same.

2.3 To enable the Council to provide the above services and perform its other functions, the Council must levy an annual rate and has the power to:

- acquire and dispose of land
- borrow money
- employ staff
- procure goods and services.

2.4 To support and implement the above statutory functions and provision of services and facilities, the Council has adopted a number of policies, listed in Appendix 1. There may be some omissions from this list and Council will ensure that all its functional responsibilities and policies, whether written or unwritten, will be screened as set out in section 6.

3 Organisational Structure

3.1 The Council consists of 16 representatives, elected for a four-year period, who meet twice monthly in full session. In addition there are four standing committees, each comprising seven members plus the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, which meet monthly:

- Finance and General Purposes
- Development
- Health and Environmental Services
- Leisure and Amenities.

There are also several sub committees and working groups. Supporting these committees and working groups are the various departments of the Council. The committees, sub-committees and working groups provide policy recommendations to the Council; Council alone determines policy.

3.2 The Chief Executive oversees the implementation of Council policies through the Senior Management Team, which together with the councillors create the corporate body of the Council.

3.3 The Chief Executive is responsible for provision of strategic direction and advice to the Council, for the day-to-day management of services and the longer term planning and allocation of resources.

3.4 The Council has five departments, each headed by a Director/Chief Officer

The Chief Executive's Department is responsible for

- Civic and ceremonial functions
- Conduct of local elections
- Corporate planning/policy
- Corporate services – council & committees
- District Partnership (Peace & Reconciliation)
- Economic development
- Emergency planning
- Employment monitoring
- Liaison with Government Departments
- Marketing/corporate PR
- Mayor and Member services
- Town Centre Management

The Health & Environmental services Department is responsible for

- Amusement Permits; Societies Lotteries
- Consumer Protection (unsafe consumer goods)
- Dog Licensing and Control
- Entertainment Licensing
- Environmental awareness/sustainability
- Food control (premise hygiene; food composition/labelling)
- Health and Safety at Work
- Illegal Dumping
- Noise and Air Pollution
- Nuisance Abatement/Pest Control
- Other licensing/enforcement
- Petroleum Licensing
- Refuse collection and Disposal
- Skip Service and Facilities
- Street cleansing and Litter Control
- Street Trading
- Supply of Refuse Containers

The Leisure & Amenities Department is responsible for

- Access to the countryside
- Arts/cultural services
- Building maintenance & cleansing
- Community relations
- Community services

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- Grounds & cemetery maintenance
- Minor works
- Museum services
- Public toilets
- Recreation/leisure
- Tourism

The Finance & Administrative Services Department is responsible for

- Annual tenders
- Cemetery administration
- Central administration service
- Financial management
- ICT services
- Insurance portfolio
- Personnel services
- Property certificates
- Registration of births, deaths & marriages

The Building Control Department is responsible for

- Building regulations
- Dangerous buildings/structures
- Postal naming and numbering

- 3.5 The Council is committed to the fulfilment of its Section 75 obligations in all parts of its organisation. Overall responsibility for determining policy on how this will be achieved lies with the Elected Members. Day to day responsibility for carrying out the policy determined by the Elected Members lies with the Chief Executive, who is responsible for the implementation of administrative arrangements to ensure that the Section 75 duties are complied with by the Council in carrying out its functions. Statutory responsibility for the effective implementation of the Section 75 duties lies with the Council.

The Chief Executive, Mr John P Dempsey, will be the point of contact for the Equality Commission and complainants. The contact address is the Borough Offices, Ballymoney Borough Council, Riada House, 14 Charles Street, Ballymoney, BT53 6DZ, Telephone 028 2766 2280, E-mail address: john.dempsey@Ballymoney.gov.uk. The Senior Management Team, comprised of the Chief Executive, three Directors and Chief Building Control Officer, will act as the inter-departmental group to co-ordinate the implementation of Section 75 obligations and will be responsible for its implementation within each of their individual departments. For information an Organisation Chart showing the different departments within Ballymoney Borough Council is set out in Appendix 2.

- 3.6 The Council will take account of the fact that the Scheme must be written in language that is comprehensible and accessible to those outside the Council.

4 Arrangements for assessing compliance with Section 75 duties

- 4.1 The Council will assess over a five-year period how each of its policies contributes to the promotion of equality of opportunity and the promotion of good relations within the terms of Section 75 of the Act. In relation to the promotion of equality of opportunity this will be done through equality impact assessments (see Paragraph 10 below) and the timetable at paragraph 7.2 will be followed. In relation to the promotion of good relations, the procedure detailed in Appendix 3 will be followed.
- 4.2 In order to fulfil its duties under Section 75 of the Act, the Council will ensure that an assessment of the impact on equality of opportunity of each proposal to amend a policy or adopt a new policy is outlined in the written report to the Committee or Sub-Committee which first considers the proposal. In making any decision with respect to such a policy the Council will take account of any such assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy.
- 4.3 In developing a corporate planning process, the Council will build objectives and targets relating to the statutory duties into corporate and business plans. These will be reflected at all levels of strategic planning within the Council including individual staff objectives and annual plans. Progress on meeting objectives, including those relating to the statutory duties will be monitored and reported upon at the most senior level within the organisation on a quarterly basis. In this context the term “most senior level” refers to Mayor and Chief Executive level. Individual performance will be monitored and reviewed through performance review arrangements, when these are introduced.
- 4.4 A formal report of progress on meeting the objectives relating to the statutory duty will be included in the annual report, which will be introduced as part of the corporate planning process.
- 4.5 The Council will also prepare an annual statement which includes details of the steps which have been taken during the year to promote equality of opportunity and a review of progress made and the limitations experienced concerning the implementation of the arrangements specified in the Equality Scheme and in complying with the statutory duties, including progress on the good relations duty. The review of progress will include progress made in respect of all of the Council’s functions and will be made public. The annual statement will be sent to the Equality Commission to assist it in compiling the Commission’s Annual Report, as required by sub-paragraph 5(1)(b) of Schedule 8 to the Act.
- 4.6 The Council will liaise with the Equality Commission to ensure that the progress outlined in the Annual Review of Progress is maintained.
- 4.7 The Council will liaise with the Equality Commission and the Community Relations Council on issues relevant to the fulfilment of the Section 75 obligations. It will respond constructively to proposals from those bodies relating to its compliance with the Section 75 obligations.

5 Approach to be adopted to screening and timetabling

5.1 In fulfilling its statutory obligations, the Council intends to adopt a four-stage approach:

Stage 1	Screening of policies
Stage 2	Timetable for setting priorities
Stage 3	Consultation on the proposed screening exercise
Stage 4	Report on the screening exercise

6 Stage 1 Screening of policies

6.1 The Council intends to screen all of its policies, both written and unwritten, in order to determine which would require a fuller equality analysis in the form of an impact assessment. Screening will be carried out in compliance with the guiding principles on consultation.

6.2 The screening criteria which the Council will use are:

- Is there any evidence, or other reason to believe, that there is higher or lower participation or uptake by any of the nine different groups?
- Is there any evidence that any of the nine different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular policy issue?
- Is there an opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity or better community relations by altering the policy or working with others in government or in the wider community?
- Have consultations with relevant groups, organisations or individuals indicated that particular policies create problems which are specific to them?

6.3 The Council is subjecting all of its policies detailed at paragraph 2.4 to the screening criteria. If the answer to any of the criteria set in paragraph 6.2 is positive, consideration will be given to whether to subject the policy to impact assessment.

7 Stage 2 Timetable for setting priorities

7.1 Having screened its policies as outlined in stage 1 and defined which policies it believes should be subjected to full impact assessment, the Council will prioritise these in order to establish a meaningful timetable.

7.2 The Council proposes to prioritise these impact assessments, in the first instance, based upon its Best Value programme. [Best Value is a process whereby all the activities of the council are subjected to scrutiny over a 5-year

period, to ensure that the activities are providing the standard of service people want, at a cost they are prepared to pay] This would ensure a cost effective and comprehensive review of the policy in question. Those policies identified at Stage 1 above for full impact assessment will therefore be assessed, as part of the Best Value review of services to which they relate, according to the following timetable: -

- Year 1: October 2000 – June 2001**
Central Administration
Council Business Management
Economic Development
Finance & Internal Audit (including procurement)
Information & Communications Technology
Tourism
Waste Disposal & Recycling
- Year 2: July 2001 – June 2002**
Building Control & Postal Numbering
Estate Management
Human Resources (including recruitment)
Waste Collection
- Year 3: July 2002 – June 2003**
Arts, Culture and Heritage
Community Relations & Community Services
Dog Control
Registration Services
Street Cleansing
- Year 4: July 2003 – June 2004**
Environmental Health
Licensing
Bought in professional services
- Year 5: July 2004 – June 2005**
Leisure Management

7.3 The Council intends to work to this timetable unless it determines, independently or through consultation, that a policy should be assessed at an earlier stage. Where this applies consideration will be given to changing the timetable or assessing such a policy, separately from the Best Value review of the relevant service, at an earlier date.

7.4 During the period of twelve months following commencement of this scheme, the Council currently anticipates that the following initiatives will have policy implications:

- Community Relations Strategy, 2000 – 2003
- Local Agenda 21 Strategy for Ballymoney Borough Council
- Provision of additional office accommodation

- 7.5 Other new policies may be developed during the five-year period which cannot yet be specified. Any new policies will be screened for fuller impact assessment using the criteria identified at paragraph 6.2 and in compliance with the guiding Principles on consultation.

8 Stage 3 Consultation and submission of revised scheme to the Equality Commission

- 8.1 The Council is consulting with the organisations listed at Appendix 4 on the result of the screening and the timetabling/prioritisation exercise. Consultation will be carried out as set out in Section 11 below.

9 Stage 4 Report on the screening exercise

- 9.1 The Council will include a detailed report of the screening exercise in its annual report to the Equality Commission. The screening report will list all those policies which are to be impact assessed and the timetable for completing same. The report will detail which policies proposed by those consulted as necessary for impact assessment have not been included and why.

10 Equality impact assessments

- 10.1 The Council, in conducting impact assessments will comply fully with the guidance in Annex 1 of the Guidelines and any subsequent advice to be issued by the Commission.
- 10.2 With regard to consultation in relation to impact assessment the Council will consult with those directly affected by the Policy being assessed whether or not they have a direct personal or economic interest in the policy concerned. Having concluded the impact assessment the Council will consult with those listed at Appendix 4 and will make available, on request, any relevant documents and materials used in carrying out the assessment. Consultation will be conducted in the manner set out in section 11.
- 10.3 On making any decision on a current or proposed policy the Council will take into account any relevant equality impact assessment and the outcome of associated consultation. This is a statutory requirement under para. 9(2) of Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

11 Consultation

- 11.1 The Council is committed to consulting on matters to which the duty to promote equality of opportunity or good community relations is likely to be relevant. The Council is committed to carrying out consultation in an effective manner, which is timely, open and inclusive, and in doing so will use one or more of the following methods:
- letters;
 - meetings with the public, in groups or as individuals;
 - standing or ad hoc consultative fora;

- attitude surveys of service users and potential service users;
 - consultative panels;
 - press releases/advertisements;
 - internet;
 - direct invitation to groups.
- 11.2 In all cases the Council will take into account the views of the groups as to which methods are most appropriate; this will be particularly relevant in the case of local groups working with young people and those with learning disabilities. In this regard the Council will ensure that it also directly seeks the views of young people and people with a learning disability in examining ways to engage in more effective communication with these groups.
- 11.3 The Council will work with representative groups and individuals of the Section 75 categories in order to identify how best to obtain their views. This may involve face-to-face meetings, advisory groups, surveys, consultative panels, internet discussions, citizens juries and other innovative ways of consulting as there will be methods of consultation which are more effective for specific groups and it will be important to establish the basis for dialogue and engagement during the life of the Scheme.
- 11.4 Where meetings are held for the purpose of consultation the Council will consider issues such as the time of day, the appropriateness of the venue, in particular whether it can be accessed by those with disabilities, how the meeting is to be run, the use of appropriate language, whether a signer is necessary, and the provision of childcare. Appropriate measures will be taken by the Council, to ensure full participation in any meetings that are held.
- 11.5 Information will be made available on request in accessible formats such as Braille, disc and audiocassette and in minority languages to meet the needs of those who are not fluent in English. Systems will be put in place to ensure that information is available in accessible formats in a timely fashion.
- 11.6 Information will be made available in consultation with affected groups, to ensure the highest level of inclusivity in any policy decision-making.
- 11.7 The Council considers it particularly important, in the case of all consultations, that sufficient, timely and appropriate information is provided to enable groups and individuals to consider the full implications of proposals and it will take steps to ensure this.
- 11.8 The Council will release relevant qualitative and quantitative data and other documentation such as consultants' reports. Arrangements to release relevant information will be available for all consultations.
- 11.9 The Council will allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves as part of the process of forming a view and will therefore aim to provide a period of at least two months for consultation exercises and will begin consultation as early as possible. The Council will also be sensitive to the different needs and customs of consultees.

- 11.10 Appendix 4 contains a list of those consulted on the draft Equality Scheme. This list will be used for consultation on all matters relevant to the statutory duties. [The list has been extended since the draft scheme was first issued for comment in March 2000 and will be added to as the council becomes aware of other organisations that can contribute to the process.]
- 11.11 A copy of all the comments received by 28 June 2000 on the draft scheme is included in Appendix 6.

12 Monitoring

12.1 Knowledge of the uptake of services provided by the Council and the impact of its policies on the different groups within the Section 75 categories will be of assistance in assessing progress towards equality of opportunity. Within one year of approval of this Scheme, the Council will assess the extent of existing monitoring and the scope for extending it. In addition to the value of any further information required for assessing progress towards equality of opportunity, this review will also take into account the following factors.

- Resource implications
- Readiness of the public to supply information
- Availability of proxy measures (e.g. postcode analysis)

12.2 A system will be established to monitor the impact of all policies, which will be reviewed on an annual basis and the results published.

12.3 The Council will seek, as necessary, to develop sensitive systems of monitoring in consultation with relevant organisations.

12.4 In some cases an equality impact assessment may identify anticipated differential adverse impact on particular groups within the Section 75 categories. Assuming that no alternative policy is feasible, steps will be taken, wherever possible, to mitigate such anticipated adverse impact. The Council may, in such circumstances, commission special monitoring to confirm the extent of the adverse impact and/or the success of any mitigating measures. Information collected in this special monitoring would be taken into account in any future review of the policy.

If monitoring and evaluation show that a policy results in greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, the policy will be revised.

12.5 Details regarding the consideration of the impacts of alternatives and/or mitigation of impacts will be presented during decision-making.

12.6 The Council will seek to co-operate closely with the NI Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) in its review of existing monitoring arrangements and its consideration of special monitoring of anticipated adverse impacts.

12.7 Other data sources the Council may use include:

- Information from other Councils in Northern Ireland, Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland
- Census
- Labour Force Survey
- Continuous Household Survey
- Pressure group data
- Statutory agencies
- Deprivation studies and other appropriate indices
- Published research reports
- Community view

13 Publication of equality impact assessments and monitoring

13.1 The Council will make publicly available the outcome of any equality impact assessment and of any monitoring undertaken as a result. This material will be accessible at the Council's website at www.ballymoney.gov.uk. It will also be available in printed form by writing to the Council's offices at **Ballymoney Borough Council, Riada House, 14 Charles Street, Ballymoney, BT53 6DZ**, phoning on **028 2766 2280** or by email on info@ballymoney.gov.uk. The Council will inform the general public about the availability of this material through press releases and the display of public notices and posters. It will also inform bodies listed at Appendix 4 when this material is available.

13.2 The published information on equality impact assessment will include:

- the aim of the policy to which the assessment relates;
- details of any considerations given by the Council to measures which might mitigate any adverse impact of that policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity;
- details of any consideration given by the Council to any alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity.

13.3 This information will be available to publications and media associated with Section 75 categories eg. talking newspapers and publications in languages other than English.

13.4 Information will be made available on request, and in a timely fashion, in accessible formats such as Braille, disc and audiocassette and in minority languages to meet the needs of those who are not fluent in English, in accordance with the arrangements outlined in paragraph 11.5 and 11.6.

14 Training

- 14.1 The Council will ensure that all staff and elected members are given general awareness training on equality issues and training on the Section 75 obligations and the requirements of this Equality Scheme will be given to all staff to ensure that they fully understand their role in implementing the Scheme.
- 14.2 The Council undertakes to prepare a detailed training plan for all Council staff over the 5 year period to which the Equality Scheme refers which will aim to achieve the objectives outlined below:
- to raise awareness of current anti-discrimination legislation in Northern Ireland including the provisions of Section 75, Schedule 9 and Section 76 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998;
 - to provide employees involved in the screening of policies with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively;
 - to provide those employees involved in the equality impact assessment of policies with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively;
 - to provide those employees who deal with complaints in relation to the implementation of the Council's Equality Scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to investigate and monitor complaints effectively;
 - to provide those employees involved in the consultation processes with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively;
 - to provide those employees involved in the implementation of the Council's Equality Scheme to do this work effectively;
 - to evaluate the extent to which all participants in this training programme have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve each of the above objectives.
- 14.3 Affected groups will be involved in the development and delivery of the training programme so that the training objectives can be realised and so that there is real awareness of issues affecting the groups.
- 14.4 Where appropriate, more focused training will be provided for specialist staff (eg. senior management, trainers, staff involved in research and data collection).
- 14.5 Training will be provided in-house or by external consultants dependent upon the level of staff, the extent of their involvement in implementing the Scheme and the subsequent depth of knowledge required.
- 14.6 The Council will report on the extent to which the above training objectives have been achieved in its annual review to the Equality Commission.
- 14.7 Training will include effective internal and external communication of the commitment of the Mayor and Chief Executive to the statutory duty.

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- 14.8 The Council is committed to evaluating the training provided, to assess the extent to which staff fully understand their role in implementing the duties.
- 14.9 Within two years of the approval of the scheme, all staff and Elected Members will be trained as described above. Subsequently, all new staff and newly elected or co-opted Elected Members, will be informed of the requirements of Section 75 and this Equality Scheme in their induction training.
- 14.10 The Council will provide copies of this scheme to all staff.

15 Public Access to Information and Services

- 15.1 The Council is committed to effective communication with the public. It recognises, however, that there is a risk that some sections of the public will not enjoy equality of opportunity in accessing information provided by the Council. There are three particular risk areas:
- people with sensory and learning disabilities may have particular difficulties with information in print;
 - members of ethnic minority groups, whose first language is not English, may have difficulties with information provided only in English;
 - some local newspapers are read predominantly by members of only one community.
- 15.2 In disseminating information through the local press, the Council will ensure that press statements and public advertisements are accessible to both main communities. It will also be made available to publications and media associated with Section 75 categories.
- 15.3 Information will be made available on request in accessible formats such as Braille, disc and audiocassette and in minority languages to meet the needs of those who are not fluent in English in accordance with the arrangements outlined in paragraph 11.5 and 11.6.
- 15.4 Specific consideration will be given to how best to communicate with young people and those with learning disabilities.
- 15.5 The Council intends that all of its services are fully accessible to all parts of the community. Equality impact assessments will highlight any factors which indirectly discriminate by making a particular service less accessible to particular groups. The Council will monitor access to information and services to ensure equality of opportunity.
- 15.6 In all Council premises open to the public, the Council will seek to promote equality of opportunity and good relations within the terms of Section 75 of the Act. All public offices, leisure and community centres will promote a welcoming and harmonious environment. The Council will adhere to the relevant provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

16 Publication of the Equality Scheme

- 16.1 Following submission to the Equality Commission, this scheme will be available from the Council's office at **Ballymoney Borough Council, Riada House, 14 Charles Street, Ballymoney, BT53 6DZ**. It will also be available on the Council's website at www.ballymoney.gov.uk. The Council will issue a press statement and make use of prominent advertisements in advising of its availability and will send a copy of the scheme to those bodies listed at Appendix 4.
- 16.2 The Scheme will be available in alternative formats as detailed in paragraphs 11.5 and 11.6.
- 16.3 Specific consideration will be given to how best to communicate the scheme to young people and those with learning disabilities.
- 16.3 With regard to ensuring that the scheme is comprehensible, the Council will produce a summary of the Scheme which will be given to all staff.
- 16.4 In addition all staff will have access to a copy of the full Scheme.

17 Complaints

- 17.1 The Council will respond to complaints that it has not fulfilled its statutory obligations and will seek to resolve such complaints bilaterally. Complaints should be made directly to Mr John P Dempsey, Chief Executive, Borough Offices, Riada House, 14 Charles Street, Ballymoney, BT53 6DZ (telephone no. 028 2766 2280). Where complainants need support in making complaints, e.g. due to inability to communicate in English or to disability, this will be provided. Complaints will be acknowledged and investigated and a substantive response issued within one month. The response will include information on the procedure for bringing the complaint to the Equality Commission, should the complainant remain dissatisfied.

The Council will ensure that the complaints procedure is accessible to all complainants.

18 Review of the Equality scheme

- 18.1 Within 5 years of submitting this scheme to the Equality Commission, the Council will conduct a formal review of the scheme to evaluate its effectiveness in meeting the statutory duty. This review will include an assessment of how the Council has complied with its Section 75 obligations and how equality of opportunity and good relations have been advanced in relation to the direct services and key policies. The Council will consult with those bodies listed at Appendix 4 before submission of the review to the Equality Commission. This review will be carried out in accordance with any guidance provided by the Equality Commission, and will be made public. Copies of the finalised review document will be available, upon request, to organisations listed in Appendix 4.

19 Summary Action Plan and Timetable

19.1 The following timetable summarises the measures which the Council proposes to take during the five years following the commencement of the scheme:

Year 1 July 2000 – June 2001

Screening of policies (July 2000 – September 2000)

Consultation on the proposed screening exercise (Stage 3) (October 2000 – November 2000)

Report on the proposed screening exercise (Stage 4) (December 2000)

Equality impact assessments of all policies in relation to the following functional areas:

- **Information & Communications Technology**
- **Economic Development**
- **Council Business Management**
- **Finance & Internal Audit**
- **Central Administration**
- **Waste Disposal & Recycling**
- **Tourism**

and of all new policies resulting from the following measures:

- **Community Relations Strategy, 2000 – 2003**
- **Provision of additional office accommodation**
- **Local Agenda 21 Strategy for Ballymoney Borough Council**

Review of monitoring arrangements.

Review of arrangements for providing information to the public.

General awareness training of staff in equality issues and in the Council's Equality Scheme.

Preparation of a statement on the progress made in implementing the measures specified in the Equality Scheme and in complying with the statutory duties, which will be sent to the Equality Commission.

Year 2 July 2001 – June 2002

Equality impact assessments of policies in relation to:

- **Waste Collection**
- **Human Resources**

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- **Building Control & Postal Numbering**
- **Estate Management**

Training for all staff completed.

Preparation of a statement on the progress made in implementing the measures specified in the Equality Scheme and in complying with the statutory duties, which will be sent to the Equality Commission.

Year 3 July 2002 – June 2003

Equality impact assessments of policies in relation to:

- **Street Cleansing**
- **Dog Control**
- **Community Relations & Services**
- **Arts, Culture and Heritage**
- **Registration services**

Preparation of a statement on the progress made in implementing the measures specified in the Equality Scheme and in complying with the statutory duties, which will be sent to the Equality Commission.

Year 4 July 2003 – June 2004

Equality impact assessments of policies in relation to:

- **Environment Health**
- **Licensing**
- **Bought in professional services**

Preparation of a statement on the progress made in implementing the measures specified in the Equality Scheme and in complying with the statutory duties, which will be sent to the Equality Commission.

Year 5 July 2004 – June 2005

Equality impact assessments of policies in relation to:

- **Leisure Management**

Preparation of a statement on the progress made in implementing the measures specified in the Equality Scheme and in complying with the statutory duties, which will be sent to the Equality Commission.

Review of the Equality Scheme

Appendix 1

List of policies of Ballymoney Borough Council.

Chief Executive's Department

Economic development

- Provision of advice to individuals and organisations
- Selection of themes and projects for inclusion within action plan
- Strategy development process

Council Business management

- Appointment of members to offices, committees & outside bodies
- Appointments of members to courses, conferences & delegations
- Conduct of meetings of Council, committees and subcommittees
- Grants and support to outside bodies
- Provision of information/facilities to press/public
- Provision of information/services to members
- Tackling employment imbalances
- Timetabling of meetings and arranging agendas

Health & Environmental Services Department

- Designation of Newspapers for licensing purposes.
- Dog Control Out of Hours Service.
- Dog Control Recovery Fee and other charges.
- Enforcement re. Fixed Penalty Notices (dogs) and breach of Council Byelaws relating to the Consumption of Intoxicating Liquor in Designated Places.
- Environmental Services Charges.
- Generic Enforcement.
- Health and Environmental Services Plan 1999-2000.
- Monitoring of Borough Air Quality.
- Opening Hours – Civic Amenity Sites.
- Operational Control – Crosstagherty Landfill.
- Partnership with ARENA Network (N.I.) re. promotion of environmental awareness and sustainability.
- Placement of Litter Receptacles and Dog Faeces Containers.
- Procurement of Pig Products.
- Refuse Collection Assisted Persons Scheme.
- Refuse Collection Service Specification.
- Skin Cancer Prevention.
- Skip Service Rationalisation and Recycling Initiatives.
- Smoking.
- Street Cleansing Operational Plan.
- Zonation of lands re. Litter Code of Practice.

Leisure & Amenities Department

- Access to the Countryside Strategy
- Arts Funding Policy – Grant Application
- Arts Strategy
- Byelaws Relating to Pleasure Grounds
- Capital Development Programme 2000/2001
- Causeway Museums Strategy
- Community Relations Funding Policy – Grant Application
- Community Relations Strategy
- Conditions of Letting relating to Caravan, Tent Sites - Drumaheglis Marina & Caravan Park
- Conditions of Letting relating to Recreation Grounds
- Conditions of Letting relating to Town Hall, Social Centre, Cricket Park, Riada Centre
- DSO – Method Statement and Organisational Structure
- Health & Safety At Work Policy – Amenities Section
- Leisure & Amenities Policy Document
- Local Sports Advisory Committee Funding – Grant Application
- Pricing Policy Relating to Town Hall, Social Centre, Cricket Park, Riada Centre, Recreation Grounds, Cemetery, Drumaheglis Marina & Caravan Park
- Registration of Vessels on the River Bann at Drumaheglis Marina
- Rules Relating to Burial Grounds

Finance & Administration Department

Finance

- Arrangements for Banking Services
- Debt Recovery
- Fraud and Corruption
- Insurance Services
- Methods of Payment – employees/supplies
- Payment Terms
- Procurement of Goods and Services

Personnel

- Absenteeism
- Code of Conduct
- Conditions of Service
- Equal Opportunities
- Harassment
- Recruitment of Staff
- Training and Development
- Well-Being

Administration

- Hours of Business
- Hours of Business – Council Offices
- Out of Normal Office Hours Service
- Property Certificate administration and charges

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- Provision of advice/information to individuals
- Registration Services
- Registration Services Charges

Building Control Department

- Building Control Plan 1999/2000.
- Fees for non-statutory services.
- Naming and numbering of housing developments.
- Out-of-hours inspection service.

Note: Council is committed to ensuring that all of its policies, whether written or unwritten, will be examined to ensure that they comply with the equality and good relations duties of the Act.

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Appendix 2

Ballymoney Borough Council Organisational Chart

Appendix 3

Methodology for promotion of good relations

A3.1 Ballymoney Borough Council is committed to the promotion of good relations as required by the Act, and recognises that good relations will only be developed if there is equality as required under the legislation. The Council believes that equality can only be properly established if there are also good relations and that both requirements of the legislation are dependent on each other.

A3.1.1 The Council therefore commits itself to the three principles of Community Relations viz.

- a) Equity: equality of access to resources
- b) Respecting Diversity: recognition, understanding and tolerance of difference
- c) Interdependence: obligations and commitments to others, inter-connectedness.

A3.1.2 As part of its work in complying with the requirements of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Council wishes to reflect the diverse nature of society as portrayed through diverse cultures, classes, creeds, political opinions and ethnic origins. The Council is concerned with recognising differences and making the most of everyone's potential, not simply with eliminating discrimination, harassment and intimidation. It believes that there should be respect for diverse backgrounds of people not only in the organisation but with those whom it has, and may have, dealing either as staff, clients, suppliers or the general public. The council therefore gives a commitment that diversity will be managed in a constructive and productive way so that everyone will be encouraged to meet their full potential, and that differences will be respected and valued.

A3.1.2 The promotion of good relations is the responsibility of senior management of the organisation. It will involve more than the drawing up of a list of taboo subjects which must never be discussed, but instead involves the development of relationships of trust and respect in which even the delicate or divisive issues can be discussed. The freedom to discuss sensitive issues in a non-threatening manner is vital if the organisation is to be able to meet the needs of a diverse society.

A3.1.3 The good relations policy is important for the Council in order to enable it to fulfil its mainstream functions in this diverse society, and therefore it must be linked to the functions of the organisation. The policy will apply equally throughout the organisation and all levels and grades will be part of training and monitoring of the policy

A3.2. The Council will undertake an internal audit of the organisation to determine the state of relations in the organisation. It will also carry out an external audit to ascertain how the organisation is perceived in the community it serves by those from different religious beliefs, political opinions or racial groups; this audit may also relate to other parties in the organisation's supply chain.

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- A3.3 The Council undertakes to act on the outcome of the audit and to introduce policies and procedures to support areas where there are positive indicators, and redress areas where there are deficiencies.
- A3.4 The responsibility for the 'Good Relations' duty will be allocated to an officer within the Council and necessary resources for the task will be allocated.
- A3.5. The Council is committed to the creation of the freedom for staff to discuss community relations and cultural diversity as part of the development of the 'good relations' duty and in furtherance of the delivery of services in a divided society, without any prejudice to the development of the general equality agenda.
- A3.6. The training for staff in Equality will include the promotion of the good relations.
- A3.7. The annual review of the Equality scheme will include a section on the promotion of good relations.

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Appendix 4

List of Bodies to be consulted

Regional organisations

Age Concern Northern Ireland
British Deaf Association (NI)
Carers National Association NI
Causeway Volunteer Bureau
Child Care Northern Ireland
Children's Law Centre
Chinese Welfare Association
Coalition on Sexual Orientation (CoSo)
Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ)
Community Relations Council (CRC)
Derry Well Woman
Disability Action
Down's Syndrome Association
Employers' Forum on Disability
Equality Commission
Fermanagh Women's Network
Foyle Friend
Gingerbread Northern Ireland
Help the Aged, Northern Ireland:
Indian Community Centre
Lesbian Line
MENCAP (Royal Society for Mentally Handicapped Children and Adults)
Multi-cultural Resource Centre
Newry & Mourne Women
NICVA
Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health
Northern Ireland Committee, Irish Congress of Trade Unions (NIC-ICTU)
Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM)
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC)
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)
Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation
Northern Ireland Women's European Platform (NIWEP)
NSPCC
Press for Change
Royal National Institute for Deaf People
Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB Northern Ireland)
Rural Community Network
Save the Children
Simon Community NI
The Equality Unit
The Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland (LGSC)
The Rainbow Project
Traveller Movement Northern Ireland
West Belfast Economic Forum

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Women's Forum Northern Ireland
Women's Support Network
Youth Council for Northern Ireland

Local Organisations

Ballymoney Borough Council's Community Relations Sub-Committee
Ballymoney Borough Council's Councillors
Cheers Youth Group
Compass Advocacy Group Ltd
Disability Forum
Vulnerable Isolated People

The following organisations have been added since the draft Equality Scheme was issued and will be included in future consultations:

Regional Bodies

Trades Unions with members in Council's workforce

ATGWU
GMB
MSF
NIPSA
UNISON

Northern Ireland Political Parties

Alliance Party of Northern Ireland	APNI
Democratic Unionist Party	DUP
Green Party	
Labour	
NI Conservative Associations	NICA
Ni Unionist Party	NIUP
NI Women's Coalition	NIWC
Progressive Unionist Party	PUP
Sinn Fein	SF
Social Democratic and Labour Party	SDLP
Ulster Democratic Party	UDP
Ulster Unionist Party	UUP
United Kingdom Unionist Party	UKUP
United Unionist Assembly Party	UUAP
Workers Party	WP

Local Bodies

Ballymoney Empowerment Programme

List of Ballymoney Borough Churches

All Saints Church of Ireland, Loughguile
Ballymoney Baptist
Ballymoney Church of God
Ballymoney First Presbyterian

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Ballymoney Free Presbyterian
Ballymoney Methodist
Ballymoney Reformed Presbyterian
Ballyweaney Presbyterian, Cloughmills
Bushvale Presbyterian, Stranocum
Church of the Sacred Heart, Cloughmills
Cloughmills Free Presbyterian
Cloughmills Reformed Presbyterian
Derrykeighan Church of Ireland
Dervock Presbyterian
Dervock Reformed Presbyterian
Drumreagh Presbyterian
Dunloy Presbyterian
Elim Pentecostal, Ballymoney
Finvoy Church of Ireland
Finvoy Presbyterian
Garryduff Presbyterian, Ballymoney
Killagan Church of Ireland, Cullybackey
Kilraughts Presbyterian
Kilraughts Reformed Presbyterian
Our Lady & St Patrick's, Ballymoney
Our Lady & St John's, Dervock
Rasharkin Free Presbyterian
Rasharkin Presbyterian
Roseyards Presbyterian, Ballymoney
Salvation Army, Ballymoney
St Andrew's Church of Ireland, Rasharkin
St Columban's, Plains
St James's Presbyterian, Ballymoney
St Joseph's, Dunloy
St MacNissi's, Magherahoney
St Mary's, Rasharkin
St Patrick's Church of Ireland, Ballymoney
St Patrick's, Loughguile
Trinity Presbyterian, Ballymoney

Note: The Council may extend this list where it becomes aware of other groups that can contribute to making the consultation process more effective.

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Appendix 5

Comments on Ballymoney Borough Council's draft Equality Scheme

Comments were received from the organisations listed below: -

Age Sector Reference Group
Ballymoney Borough Council's Community Relations Sub-Committee
Causeway Volunteer Bureau
Coalition on Sexual Orientation (CoSO) *
Committee on the administration of Justice (CAJ)
Community Relations Council
Derry Well Woman
Down's Syndrome Association
Equality Commission
Fermanagh Women's Network *
Lesbian Line
Mencap in Northern Ireland
Multi-Cultural Resource Centre
Newry & Mourne Women
NIPSA *
Northern Ireland Committee, ICTU (NIC) *
Press for Change *
Rural Community Network
Simon Community Northern Ireland
UNISON Northern Ireland *
West Belfast Economic Forum
Women's Forum NI

Those marked * arrived too long after the deadline for receipt of submissions to be considered in the revision of the scheme. However many of the points made have been addressed as a result of other representations and the others will be examined and consideration given to them in the implementation of the scheme.

The comments are set out in the pages which follow.