

POLICY SCREENING FORM

Background

Under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the College is required 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; and,**
- **between persons with dependants and persons without.**

Without prejudice to the obligations set out above, the College is also required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

Screening

The screening procedure should lead to one of two conclusions:

- The policy being screened does not have a significant impact on equality of opportunity and therefore does not require an EQIA
- The policy being screened has (or is likely to have) a significant impact on equality of opportunity and may require an EQIA.

Scoping the Policy

Title of Policy: NHA Governance Handbook – Nov. 2024

Policy Aim: This Handbook is aligned with the Association’s Conduct of Board Members & Involvement in Decision Making Policy (v1) - Sept. 24 and is in keeping with current legislation and law. The aim of this Handbook is to provide additional guidance to Board members relating to their roles and responsibilities and to always provide all our stakeholders with confidence that our Board act with integrity, avoiding any suggestion of influence or improper motives.

Policy Ref: GOV002

Brief Description: The Handbook provides an in-depth overview to Board members of their responsibilities relating to all actions carried out by its members and staff throughout the organisation.

Who defines or defined the policy?

The Association’s Board of Management and CEO defined this Handbook, in which it follows the seven principles of public life adopted by the Nolan Committee and includes legal requirements and good practice.

This Handbook has been developed and also defined following the guidance laid out in the Charity Commission - The Code of Good Governance (3rd Edition).

Who implements the policy?

Newington Housing Association will implement this policy.

Is the policy applied uniformly throughout the organisation? *If NO, what are the consequences*

Yes

Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy?

The main stakeholders are identified as NHA Board, staff, tenants, key business partners (i.e. Apex HA), other stakeholders, statutory agencies and the public.

What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the aim or implementation of the policy?

None

How do we interface with other bodies in relation to implementation of this policy?

We interface with other bodies in relation to implementation of this Strategy via our day-to-day operational activities and through audits and regulatory assessments.

Which other policies are related to this policy?

This Handbook lies within our Governance Directorate, overseen and reviewed by our CEO and is aligned to our Conduct of Board Members & Involvement in Decision Making Policy (v1) - Sept. 24.

Other associated policies/documents are:

- Charity Commission - The Code of Good Governance (3rd Edition)
- Terms of Reference (TOR) for Management Committees
- Assets Committee – TOR
- Communities Committee – TOR
- Finance & HR Committee – TOR
- Audit & Risk Committee – TOR
- Risk Management Strategy & Policy 2024/25
- Group Statement on Policies (NHA & Apex HA)

What data is currently available to facilitate the screening of this policy?

None

Answering the Four Screening Questions

The four questions ask for evidence in relation to the Section 75 dimensions. You should not think of the “don’t know” column in the form as the easy option to respond to any of the questions. In cases where you don’t know and you don’t have data, you will need to make a judgement based on experience as to whether the policy you are screening may have an impact on any of the nine dimensions. If your judgement is that the policy may have a differential adverse impact in relation to any of the Section 75 dimensions (i.e. it affects some groups differently and less favourably than other groups), you should seek to obtain evidence. You should note that evidence can be qualitative – i.e. drawn from the experience of individuals from their perspective - as well as quantitative. Officers must give consideration to steps that they could reasonably be expected to take to obtain evidence and thereby inform their decision-making. Such steps could include meeting with a representative group or selective consultation.

Where there is little or no evidence, and common sense indicates that a differential impact may be expected, you should discuss this with the Equality Officer.

1. Is there any evidence of higher or lower participation or uptake by different groups?

	Yes	No	Not known
Religious belief		X	
Political opinion		X	
Racial group		X	
Age		X	

Marital status		x	
Sexual orientation		x	
Gender		x	
Disability		x	
Dependency		x	

Please comment:

N/A

2. Do different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this policy issue?

	Yes	No	Not known
Religious belief		x	
Political opinion		x	
Racial group		x	
Age		x	
Marital status		x	
Sexual orientation		x	
Gender		x	
Disability		x	
Dependency		x	

Please comment:

N/A

3. Have consultations with relevant groups, organisations or individuals indicated that policies of this type create problems that are specific to them?

	Yes	No
Religious belief		x
Political opinion		x
Racial group		x
Age		x
Marital status		x
Sexual orientation		x
Gender		x
Disability		x
Dependency		x

Please comment:

N/A –This Handbook was developed to ensure a high standard of oversight and effective governance of the organisations by the Board.

4. In relation to implementing this policy, is there an opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations by altering the policy or by working with others in Government or in the larger community?

Yes

No

5. With reference to Questions 1 to 4 please summarise how you believe the policy may impact on the organisation's obligation to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity.

We do not believe the policy impacts on the organisation's obligation to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity.

6. What data do you believe will be required to ensure effective monitoring of the policy following implementation?

Internal data we hold relating to individual Board members.

7. In the context of Question 3 are there any relevant groups which you believe should be consulted at this time? Please specify

There are no relevant groups which we believe should be consulted at this time.

8. Any other comments on the policy and/or screening exercise?

No

9. On the basis of answers to Questions 1 to 4 above (and in particular positive answers), do you recommend that the policy should be subjected to a full impact assessment?

Yes

No

Please elaborate

