



**Northern  
Ireland  
Office**

# **Programme of NIO Consultations, Screenings and Equality Impact Assessments**

**SIX MONTHLY UPDATE**

**JULY - DECEMBER 2017**

**Corporate Governance Team  
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## SECTION 75 – THE LEGAL BACKGROUND

Under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the NIO 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
- men and women generally
- persons with a disability and persons without
- persons with dependants and persons without.

In addition, and without prejudice to the obligations above, in carrying out our functions in relation to Northern Ireland we are required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. The NIO is also required to meet our legislative obligations under the Disability Discrimination Order.

### Monitoring & Publication

The NIO uses the tools of **Screening** and **Equality Impact Assessments** to assess the likely impact of a policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations. In carrying out these assessments we must relate them to the intended outcomes of the policy in question and also follow Equality Commission guidance:

- Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for Public Authorities (April 2010); and
- Practical guidance on equality impact assessment (February 2005)

In line with Schedule 9 4.(2)(d) the NIO is required to publish details of any Screening Policies & Equality Impact Assessments. Our Equality Scheme sets out that we will publish this information on a six monthly basis.

A summary of Screening Reports & Equality Impact Assessments will be included in the Section 75 Annual Progress Report.

To aid in publication of this information and the completion of The Annual Progress Report, each Business Group should provide a quarterly return detailing:

- Any Consultation Exercises
- Screening Exercises
- Equality Impact Assessments

## NIO Programme of Consultations, Equality Screening & Equality Impact Assessments

### i) Consultation Exercises within the last 6 Months

Policy	Current Status	Last Updated	Is this a Limited* Consultation (please complete for any new/current Consultations)
<b>Recently Completed consultations</b>			
<b>Current Consultations</b>			

Policy	Current Status	Last Updated	Is this a Limited* Consultation (please complete for any new/current Consultations)
<b>Forthcoming Consultations (within the next 3 months)</b>			
Consultation on addressing the legacy of the past	Drafted, currently awaiting No 10 clearance	January 2018	No

\* A limited Consultation is a consultation which lasts less than 12 weeks.

ii) **Screening Exercises within the last 6 Months**

Policy	Current Status
<b>Screening Exercises</b>	
NIO Conversion Exercise (copy attached at Annex A)	Screened out July 2017
Transparency of political donations and loans received by Northern Ireland Political Parties and regulated donees. (copy attached at Annex B)	Screened out October 2017
Consultation on addressing the legacy of the past	Awaiting clearance to enable launch of public consultation outlined highlighted above.

iii) **EQIA Timetable**

Policy	Current Status
<b>EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS</b>	



**Northern  
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**Annex A**

**Conversion exercise from  
loan/secondment/fixed term  
contract to permanent**

**Screening Form**

**August 2017**

## SECTION 75 – THE LEGAL BACKGROUND

Under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the NIO 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
- men and women generally
- persons with a disability and persons without
- persons with dependants and persons without.

2. In addition, and without prejudice to the obligations above, in carrying out our functions in relation to Northern Ireland we are required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. The NIO is also required to meet our legislative obligations under the Disability Discrimination Order.

3. A list of the main groups identified as being relevant to each of the Section 75 categories is at **Annex A** of this document.

## INTRODUCTION

4. This form should be read in conjunction with the Equality Commission's Section 75 guidance "A Guide for Public Authorities" April 2010, available on the Equality Commission's website ([www.equalityni.org](http://www.equalityni.org)). **Staff should complete a form for each new or revised policy for which they are responsible (see page 4 for a definition of a policy in respect of Section 75).**

5. The purpose of screening is to identify those policies that are likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations and so determine whether an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is necessary. Screening should be introduced at an early stage when developing or reviewing a policy.

6. The lead role in the screening of a policy should be taken by the policy decision-maker who has the authority to make changes to that policy and should involve in the screening process:

- other relevant team members;
- those who implement the policy;
- staff members from other relevant areas of work; and
- key stakeholders.

7. A flowchart which outlines the screening process is attached at **Annex B**.

8. The first step in the screening exercise is to gather evidence to inform the screening decisions. Relevant data may be either quantitative or qualitative or both (this helps to indicate whether or not there are likely equality of opportunity and/or good relations impacts associated with a policy). Relevant information will help to clearly demonstrate the reasons for a policy being either 'screened in' for an EQIA or 'screened out'.

9. The absence of evidence does not indicate that there is no likely impact but if none is available, it may be appropriate to consider subjecting the policy to an EQIA.

10. Screening provides an assessment of the likely impact, whether 'minor' or 'major', of its policy on equality of opportunity and/or good relations for the relevant categories. In some instances, screening may identify the likely impact is none.

11. The Equality Commission has developed a series of four questions, included in Part 2 of this screening form with supporting sub-questions, which should be applied to all policies as part of the screening process. They identify those policies that are likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

## SCREENING DECISIONS

12. Completion of screening should lead to one of the following three outcomes. The policy has been:

- i. 'screened in' for equality impact assessment;
- ii. 'screened out' with mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted; or
- iii. 'screened out' without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.

## SCREENING AND GOOD RELATIONS DUTY

13. The Equality Commission recommends that a policy is 'screened in' for EQIA if the likely impact on **good relations** is 'major'. While there is no legislative requirement to engage in an equality impact assessment in respect of good relations, this does not necessarily mean that EQIAs are inappropriate in this context.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

14. Further information on equality, including a copy of the NIO Equality Scheme, yearly progress reports on equality to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, information on data sources and the Cabinet Office code of practice on consultation may be found on the NIO Intranet under About the NIO > Equality.

15. If you have any questions regarding the screening exercise or Section 75 in general please contact the Corporate Governance Team on 028 9076 5497; or [nio.equalityscheme@nio.gov.uk](mailto:nio.equalityscheme@nio.gov.uk).

16. When you have completed the form please retain on file in the branch for record purposes, and send a copy to the s75 equality advisor.

## **PART 1 – POLICY SCOPING**

### **DEFINITION OF POLICY**

1.1. There have been some difficulties in defining what constitutes a policy in the context of Section 75. To be on the safe side, it is recommended that you consider any new initiatives, proposals, schemes or programmes as policies or changes to those already in existence. It is important to remember that even if a full EQIA has been carried out in an “overarching” policy or strategy, it will still be necessary for the policy maker to consider if a further EQIA needs to be carried out in respect of those policies cascading from the overarching strategy.

### **OVERVIEW OF POLICY PROPOSALS**

1.2. The aims and objectives of the policy must be clear and terms of reference well defined. You must take into account any available data that will enable you to come to a decision on whether or not a policy may or may not have a differential impact on any of the s75 categories.

### **SCOPING THE POLICY**

1.3. The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

1.4. Remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the NIO), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the NIO).



## INFORMATION ABOUT THE POLICY

Name of the policy	Conversion exercise from loan/ secondment/ Fixed Term Contract to permanent
Is this an existing, revised or new policy?	New policy which builds on the current arrangements for NICS staff to transfer through an existing exemption and is drawn up in line with Civil Service Resourcing policy.
What is it trying to achieve (intended aims/outcomes)?	The purpose of the policy is to return the department to the 60:40 balance last achieved in 2014 through a managed process of conversion and to provide an opportunity for staff to apply to become permanent members of the NIO. This is an evidence-based process, anticipated to be offered annually, and will take into account the skills of the individual and needs of the department. Applications will be assessed against clearly identified criteria.
Are there any s75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy? If so, explain how.	None identified
Who initiated or wrote the policy?	Mark Byers, HR Director
Who owns and who implements the policy?	Northern Ireland Office Resourcing Review Panel

## IMPLEMENTATION FACTORS

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?	None identified
If yes, are they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- financial</li> <li>- legislative</li> <li>- other (please specify)</li> </ul>	

## MAIN STAKEHOLDERS AFFECTED

<p>Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- staff</li> <li>- service users</li> <li>- other public sector organisations</li> <li>- voluntary/community/trade unions</li> <li>- other (please specify)</li> </ul>	Staff
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## OTHER POLICIES WITH A BEARING ON THIS POLICY

What are they?	Recruitment policy
Who owns them?	Ministry of Justice

## AVAILABLE EVIDENCE

1.5. Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Please ensure that your screening decision is informed by relevant data.

**What evidence / information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the s75 categories.**

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information
Religious belief	None held
Political opinion	None held
Racial group	HR data
Age	HR data
Marital status	HR data

Sexual orientation	None held
Men and women generally	HR data
Disability	HR data
Dependants	None held

## NEEDS, EXPERIENCES AND PRIORITIES

1.6. 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 s75 categories.

Section 75 category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
Religious belief	N/A
Political opinion	N/A
Racial group	N/A
Age	N/A
Marital status	N/A
Sexual orientation	N/A
Men and women generally	N/A
Disability	N/A
Dependants	N/A

## PART 2 – SCREENING QUESTIONS

### INTRODUCTION

2.1. In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an EQIA, please give consideration to your answers to the questions 1-4 which are given on pages 66-68 of the Equality Commission’s “A Guide for Public Authorities”.

2.2. If your conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, you may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is ‘screened out’ as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, you should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

2.3. If your conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

2.4. If your conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories and/or good relations categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

- take measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
- introduce an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

### 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 and/or good relations 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 and/or good relations.

## **IN FAVOUR OF NONE**

- a. The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
- b. The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

2.5. Taking into account the evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, by applying the screening questions given overleaf and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.

## 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		none
Political opinion		none
Racial group		none
Age		none
Marital status		none
Sexual orientation		none
Men and women generally		none
Disability		none
Dependants		none

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

Section 75 category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
Religious belief		There are no opportunities within the policy to promote equality of opportunity, but it will have no adverse impact on any of the Section 75 categories
Political opinion		There are no opportunities within the policy to promote equality of opportunity, but it will have no adverse impact on any of the Section 75 categories
Racial group		There are no opportunities within the policy to promote equality of opportunity, but it will have no adverse impact on any of the Section 75 categories
Age		There are no opportunities within the policy to promote equality of opportunity, but it will have no adverse impact on any of the Section 75 categories
Marital status		There are no opportunities within the policy to promote equality of opportunity, but it will have no adverse impact on any of the Section 75 categories
Sexual orientation		There are no opportunities within the policy to promote equality of opportunity, but it will have no adverse impact on any of the Section 75 categories
Men and women generally		There are no opportunities within the policy to promote equality of opportunity, but it will have no adverse impact on any of the Section 75 categories
Disability		There are no opportunities within the policy to promote equality of opportunity, but it will have no adverse impact on any of the Section 75 categories
Dependants		There are no opportunities within the policy to promote equality of opportunity, but it will have no adverse impact on any of the Section 75 categories

**3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? (minor/major/none)**

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

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

Good relations category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
Religious belief		N/A
Political opinion		N/A
Racial group		N/A



## 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*).

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

N/A

## PART 3 – SCREENING DECISION

**If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.**

Screened out - the policy will not have any impact on Section 75 categories. It is voluntary and all staff who have been appointed through a fair and open competition will be given the opportunity to request to have their posts made permanent if they choose to do so. Decisions will be evidence-based, and take into account the skills set of the individual and the needs of the department.

**If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, you should consider if the policy should be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced.**

N/A

**If the decision is to subject the policy to an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.**

N/A

3.1. All public authorities' equality schemes must state the arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity. The Equality Commission recommends screening and equality impact assessment as the tools to be utilised for such assessments. Further advice on equality impact assessment may be found in the Equality Commission publication: "Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment".

### MITIGATION

3.2. If you have 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 or good relations.

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

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

N/A

## TIMETABLING AND PRIORITISING

3.3. If the policy has been ‘**screened in**’ for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

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

Priority criterion	Rating (1-3)
Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations	
Social need	
Effect on people’s daily lives	
Relevance to the NIO’s functions	
<b>Total rating score (total of 12)</b>	

*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 you in timetabling. Details of the NIO’s Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the quarterly Screening Report.*

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

**If yes, please provide details.**

## **PART 4 – MONITORING**

4.1. The NIO should consider the guidance contained in the Commission’s Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

4.2. The Equality Commission recommends that where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, you should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

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

## PART 5 - APPROVAL AND AUTHORISATION

<b>Screened by:</b>	NIO HR
<b>Grade/Branch/Group:</b>	Business Delivery Group
<b>Date:</b>	8/8/2017
<b>Approved by Deputy Director:</b>	Mark Byers
<b>Date:</b>	8/8/2017

*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 and made available on request.*

*Any screening forms completed within the Department will be published on a six monthly basis in line with our Departmental Equality Policy monitoring arrangements. Such information will be collated and published by the Corporate Governance Team.*



**Northern  
Ireland  
Office**

**Annex B**

# **Transparency of Political Donations & Loans Received by NI Political Parties & Regulated Donees**

**Screening Form**

**October 2017**

## SECTION 75 – THE LEGAL BACKGROUND

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- men and women generally
- persons with a disability and persons without
- persons with dependants and persons without.

2. In addition, and without prejudice to the obligations above, in carrying out our functions in relation to Northern Ireland we are required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. The NIO is also required to meet our legislative obligations under the Disability Discrimination Order.

3. A list of the main groups identified as being relevant to each of the Section 75 categories is at **Annex A** of this document.

## INTRODUCTION

4. This form should be read in conjunction with the Equality Commission's Section 75 guidance "A Guide for Public Authorities" April 2010, available on the Equality Commission's website ([www.equalityni.org](http://www.equalityni.org)). **Staff should complete a form for each new or revised policy for which they are responsible (see page 4 for a definition of a policy in respect of Section 75).**

5. The purpose of screening is to identify those policies that are likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations and so determine whether an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is necessary. Screening should be introduced at an early stage when developing or reviewing a policy.

6. The lead role in the screening of a policy should be taken by the policy decision-maker who has the authority to make changes to that policy and should involve in the screening process:

- other relevant team members;
- those who implement the policy;
- staff members from other relevant areas of work; and
- key stakeholders.

7. A flowchart which outlines the screening process is attached at **Annex B**.

8. The first step in the screening exercise is to gather evidence to inform the screening decisions. Relevant data may be either quantitative or qualitative or both (this helps to



indicate whether or not there are likely equality of opportunity and/or good relations impacts associated with a policy). Relevant information will help to clearly demonstrate the reasons for a policy being either 'screened in' for an EQIA or 'screened out'.

9. The absence of evidence does not indicate that there is no likely impact but if none is available, it may be appropriate to consider subjecting the policy to an EQIA.

10. Screening provides an assessment of the likely impact, whether 'minor' or 'major', of its policy on equality of opportunity and/or good relations for the relevant categories. In some instances, screening may identify the likely impact is none.

11. The Equality Commission has developed a series of four questions, included in Part 2 of this screening form with supporting sub-questions, which should be applied to all policies as part of the screening process. They identify those policies that are likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

## SCREENING DECISIONS

12. Completion of screening should lead to one of the following three outcomes. The policy has been:

- i. 'screened in' for equality impact assessment;
- ii. 'screened out' with mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted; or
- iii. 'screened out' without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.

## SCREENING AND GOOD RELATIONS DUTY

13. The Equality Commission recommends that a policy is 'screened in' for EQIA if the likely impact on **good relations** is 'major'. While there is no legislative requirement to engage in an equality impact assessment in respect of good relations, this does not necessarily mean that EQIAs are inappropriate in this context.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

14. Further information on equality, including a copy of the NIO Equality Scheme, yearly progress reports on equality to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, information on data sources and the Cabinet Office code of practice on consultation may be found on the NIO Intranet under About the NIO > Equality.

15. If you have any questions regarding the screening exercise or Section 75 in general please contact the Corporate Governance Team on 028 9076 5497; or [nio.equalityscheme@nio.gov.uk](mailto:nio.equalityscheme@nio.gov.uk).

16. When you have completed the form please retain on file in the branch for record purposes, and send a copy to the s75 equality advisor.

## PART 1 – POLICY SCOPING

### DEFINITION OF POLICY

1.1. There have been some difficulties in defining what constitutes a policy in the context of Section 75. To be on the safe side, it is recommended that you consider any new initiatives, proposals, schemes or programmes as policies or changes to those already in existence. It is important to remember that even if a full EQIA has been carried out in an “overarching” policy or strategy, it will still be necessary for the policy maker to consider if a further EQIA needs to be carried out in respect of those policies cascading from the overarching strategy.

### OVERVIEW OF POLICY PROPOSALS

1.2. The aims and objectives of the policy must be clear and terms of reference well defined. You must take into account any available data that will enable you to come to a decision on whether or not a policy may or may not have a differential impact on any of the s75 categories.

### SCOPING THE POLICY

1.3. The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

1.4. Remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the NIO), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the NIO).

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE POLICY

Name of the policy	Transparency of political donations and loans received by Northern Ireland Political Parties and regulated donees.
Is this an existing, revised or new policy?	This is a revised policy.
What is it trying to achieve (intended aims/outcomes)?	This policy will provide for the full publication of information relating to political donations and loans received by Northern Ireland Political Parties and regulated donees on or after 1 July 2017.
Are there any s75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy? If so, explain how.	All s75 categories are expected to benefit from this intended policy which will increase transparency for all.
Who initiated or wrote the policy?	The NIO (Constitutional Policy and Rights Group) is responsible for the development and delivery of this policy and the associated legislation.
Who owns and who implements the policy?	As above, however the Electoral Commission (Northern Ireland) will be responsible for implementing the policy ie: for publishing information on donations and loans received by the Northern Ireland political parties.

## IMPLEMENTATION FACTORS

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?	Any delay in passing the necessary legislation would mean a delay in implementing this revised policy.
If yes, are they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- financial</li> <li>- legislative</li> <li>- other (please specify)</li> </ul>	Legislative - as above.

## MAIN STAKEHOLDERS AFFECTED

<p>Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- staff</li> <li>- service users</li> <li>- other public sector organisations</li> <li>- voluntary/community/trade unions</li> <li>- other (please specify)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Northern Ireland Political Parties</li> <li>- Private donors - British and Irish citizens and businesses</li> <li>- The Electoral Commission (NI)</li> </ul>
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## OTHER POLICIES WITH A BEARING ON THIS POLICY

<p>What are they?</p>	<p>There is a wider UK government policy of ensuring transparency in relation to donations and loans to political parties.</p> <p>This revised policy for Northern Ireland will bring Northern Ireland into line with the wider UK government policy on transparency in respect of donations and loans to political parties.</p> <p>Some of the Northern Ireland Political Parties already implement transparency policies for donations received.</p>
<p>Who owns them?</p>	<p>UK government policy is owned by the Cabinet Office.</p>

## AVAILABLE EVIDENCE

1.5. Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Please ensure that your screening decision is informed by relevant data.

**What evidence / information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the s75 categories.**

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information
Religious belief	None of the information gathered and analysed, either qualitative or quantitative, would indicate a direct impact on this group from the proposed policy change.
Political opinion	None of the information gathered and analysed, either qualitative or quantitative, would indicate a direct impact on this group from the proposed policy change. We sought the views of a wide range of political parties in Northern Ireland and there was broad support, representing all sides of the community, for a change in the current policy so as to provide transparency around donations and loans to political parties in Northern Ireland.
Racial group	None of the information gathered and analysed, either qualitative or quantitative, would indicate a direct impact on this group from the proposed policy change.
Age	None of the information gathered and analysed, either qualitative or quantitative, would indicate a direct impact on this group from the proposed policy change.
Marital status	None of the information gathered and analysed, either qualitative or quantitative, would indicate a direct impact on this group from the proposed policy change.
Sexual orientation	None of the information gathered and analysed, either qualitative or quantitative, would indicate a direct impact on this group from the proposed policy change.
Men and women generally	None of the information gathered and analysed, either qualitative or quantitative, would indicate a direct impact on this group from the proposed policy change.
Disability	None of the information gathered and analysed, either qualitative or quantitative, would indicate a direct impact on this group from the proposed policy change.
Dependants	None of the information gathered and analysed, either qualitative or quantitative, would indicate a direct impact on this group from the proposed policy change.

## NEEDS, EXPERIENCES AND PRIORITIES

1.6. 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 s75 categories.

Section 75 category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
Religious belief	None
Political opinion	None.
Racial group	None
Age	None
Marital status	None
Sexual orientation	None
Men and women generally	None
Disability	None
Dependants	None

## PART 2 – SCREENING QUESTIONS

### INTRODUCTION

2.1. In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an EQIA, please give consideration to your answers to the questions 1-4 which are given on pages 66-68 of the Equality Commission’s “A Guide for Public Authorities”.

2.2. If your conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, you may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is ‘screened out’ as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, you should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

2.3. If your conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

2.4. If your conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories and/or good relations categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

- take measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
- introduce an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

### 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 and/or good relations 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 and/or good relations.

## **IN FAVOUR OF NONE**

- a. The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
- b. The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

2.5. Taking into account the evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, by applying the screening questions given overleaf and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.



## 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	This policy is not expected to impact on equality of opportunity in this category. However, there could be a minor impact of increased publicity on some in this category if any prominent members of a particular religious belief are revealed as donors to political parties which are perceived as representing another religious belief.	Minor
Political opinion	This policy is not expected to impact on equality of opportunity in this category. We sought the views of political parties in Northern Ireland and there was broad support, representing all sides of the community, for a change in the current policy so as to provide transparency around donations and loans to political parties in Northern Ireland.  However, there could be a minor impact on some in this category if there are members of one community background who have donated to political parties which are perceived as representing another community background.	Minor
Racial group	N/A	None
Age	N/A	None
Marital status	N/A	None
Sexual orientation	N/A	None
Men and women generally	N/A	None
Disability	N/A	None
Dependants	N/A	None

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

Section 75 category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
Religious belief		No. Everyone will enjoy the same access to the published information on donations and loans received by Northern Ireland political parties.
Political opinion		No. Everyone will enjoy the same access to the published information on donations and loans received by Northern Ireland political parties.
Racial group		No. Everyone will enjoy the same access to the published information on donations and loans received by Northern Ireland political parties.
Age		No. Everyone will enjoy the same access to the published information on donations and loans received by Northern Ireland political parties.
Marital status		No. Everyone will enjoy the same access to the published information on donations and loans received by Northern Ireland political parties.
Sexual orientation		No. Everyone will enjoy the same access to the published information on donations and loans received by Northern Ireland political parties.
Men and women generally		No. Everyone will enjoy the same access to the published information on donations and loans received by Northern Ireland political parties.
Disability		No. Everyone will enjoy the same access to the published information on donations and loans received by Northern Ireland political parties.
Dependants		No. Everyone will enjoy the same access to the published information on donations and loans received by Northern Ireland political parties.

**3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? (minor/major/none)**

Good relations category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact minor/major/none
Religious belief	<p>This policy is not expected to impact on good relations in this category. On the contrary, this policy is expected to improve community relations across all s75 categories by removing the confidentiality around political donations and loans in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>However, there could be a minor impact of increased publicity on some in this category if any prominent members of a particular religious group are revealed as donors to political parties which are perceived as representing another religious group.</p>	Minor
Political opinion	<p>This policy is not expected to impact on good relations in this category. On the contrary, this policy is expected to improve community relations across all s75 categories by removing the confidentiality around political donations and loans in Northern Ireland</p> <p>However, there could be a minor impact on some in this category if there are members of one community background who have donated to political parties which are perceived as representing another community background.</p>	Minor
Racial group	<p>This policy is not expected to impact on good relations in this category. On the contrary, this policy is expected to improve community relations across all s75 categories by removing the confidentiality around political donations and loans in Northern Ireland</p>	None

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

Good relations category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
Religious belief		<p>N/A.</p> <p>This policy is expected to improve community relations across all s75 categories</p>

Political opinion		N/A  This policy is expected to improve community relations across all s75 categories
Racial group		N/A  This policy is expected to improve community relations across all s75 categories

## 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*).

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

None of the information gathered and analysed, either qualitative or quantitative, would indicate a direct impact on people with multiple identities from the proposed policy change. We sought the views of political parties in Northern Ireland and there was broad support, representing all sides of the community, for a change in the current policy so as to provide transparency around donations and loans to political parties in Northern Ireland.

Whilst there is no evidence to suggest that there may be some catholic unionists and/or protestant nationalists who donate to political parties, this revised policy may impact on any who are revealed as donors to political parties.

## PART 3 – SCREENING DECISION

**If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.**

There is currently no publicly available information, either qualitative or quantitative about who donates to most of the political parties in Northern Ireland, on which an equality impact assessment can be based.

**If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, you should consider if the policy should be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced.**

The alternative policy which has been in place to date is for there to be no transparency. This revision of policy which is focussed on providing full transparency around donations and loans to political parties in Northern Ireland has widespread support among the people of Northern Ireland and there is also broad support for this policy across the political parties.

**If the decision is to subject the policy to an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.**

N/A

3.1. All public authorities' equality schemes must state the arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity. The Equality Commission recommends screening and equality impact assessment as the tools to be utilised for such assessments. Further advice on equality impact assessment may be found in the Equality Commission publication: "Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment".

## MITIGATION

3.2. If you have 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 or good relations.

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

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

This is an alternative policy to that which currently exists and it is being introduced with broad support from political parties in Northern Ireland and widespread support from the people of Northern Ireland. This policy is expected to improve good relations across all s75 categories by removing the confidentiality around political donations and loans in Northern Ireland.

The policy which is currently in place has effectively been for no transparency.

## TIMETABLING AND PRIORITISING

3.3. If the policy has been ‘**screened in**’ for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

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

Priority criterion	Rating (1-3)
Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations	
Social need	
Effect on people’s daily lives	
Relevance to the NIO’s functions	
<b>Total rating score (total of 12)</b>	

*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 you in timetabling. Details of the NIO’s Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the quarterly Screening Report.*

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

**If yes, please provide details.**

## PART 4 – MONITORING

4.1. The NIO should consider the guidance contained in the Commission’s Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

4.2. The Equality Commission recommends that where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, you should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

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

## PART 5 - APPROVAL AND AUTHORISATION

<b>Screened by:</b>	<b>NIO Official</b>
<b>Grade/Branch/Group:</b>	<b>Constitutional Policy &amp; Rights Group</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>4 October 2017</b>
<b>Approved by Deputy Director:</b>	Bilal Zahid
<b>Date:</b>	23 October 2017

*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 and made available on request.*

*Any screening forms completed within the Department will be published on a six monthly basis in line with our Departmental Equality Policy monitoring arrangements. Such information will be collated and published by the Corporate Governance Team.*