

Equality & Disability Duties Screening Template

December 2023 version



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

*Sustainability at the heart of a living,
working, active landscape
valued by everyone*

Screening flowchart and template (taken from Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 - A Guide for public authorities April 2010 (Appendix 1)).

Introduction

Part 1. Policy scoping – asks public authorities to provide details about the policy, procedure, practice and/or decision being screened and what available evidence you have gathered to help make an assessment of the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations.

Part 2. Screening questions – asks about the extent of the likely impact of the policy on groups of people within each of the Section 75 categories. Details of the groups consulted and the level of assessment of the likely impact. This includes consideration of multiple identity and good relations issues. This section also includes two questions related to the Disability Duties.

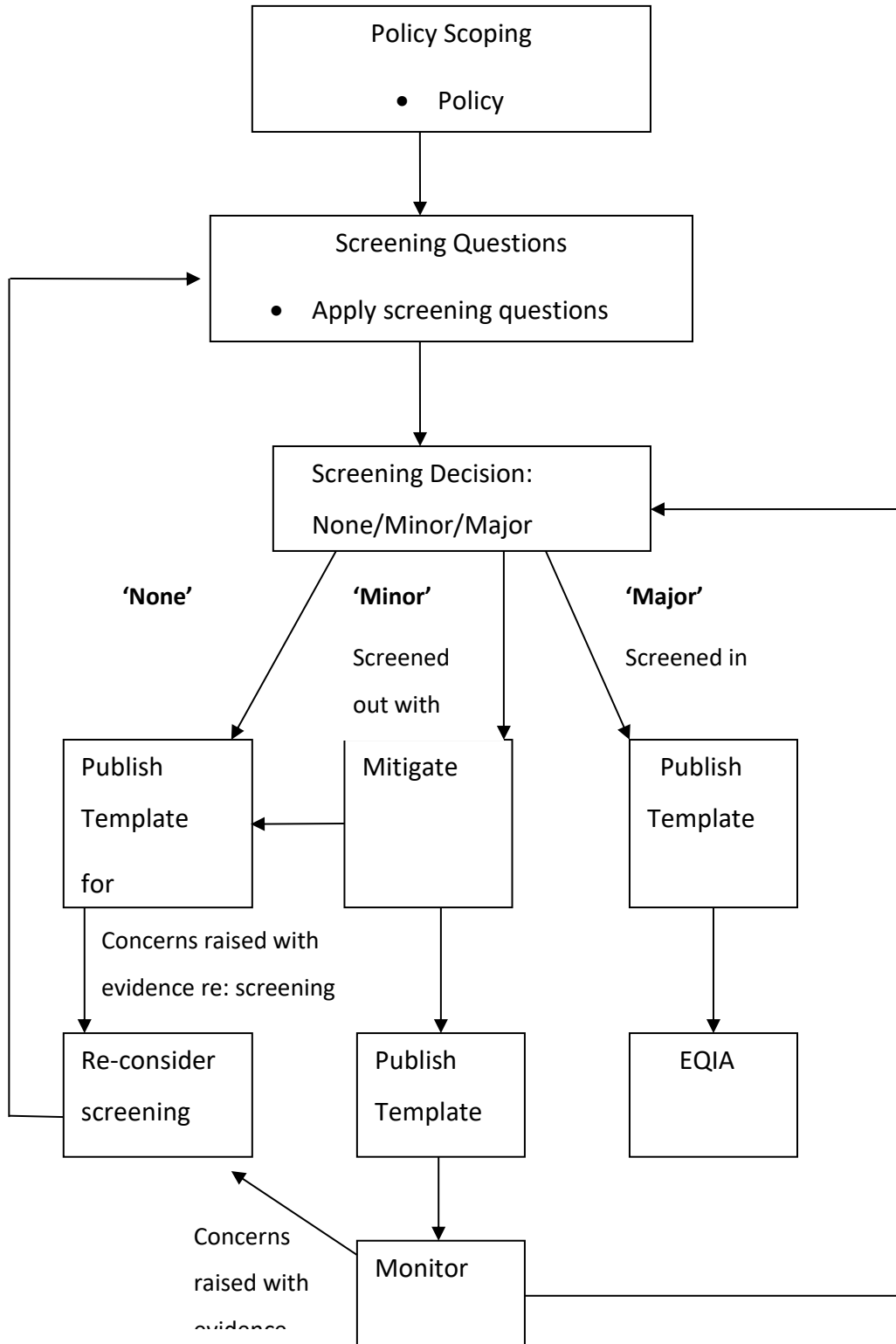
Part 3. Screening decision – guides the public authority to reach a screening decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment (EQIA), or to introduce measures to mitigate the likely impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

Part 4. Monitoring – provides guidance to public authorities on monitoring for adverse impact and broader monitoring.

Part 5. Consideration of Human Rights – please note this is not a Human Rights Screening form but rather a prompt that impacts on Human Rights should be considered.

Part 6. Approval and authorisation – verifies the public authority’s approval of a screening decision by a senior manager responsible for the policy.

A screening flowchart is provided below.



Part 1. Policy scoping

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.

Public authorities should remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the authority), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the authority).

Information about the policy

Name of the policy

The Farm Sustainability Payment Scheme (Eligibility etc) Regulations
(Northern Ireland) 2025

Is this an existing, revised or new policy?

New policy

What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes)

The United Kingdom leaving the EU and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is the most significant change in policy affecting the agri-food sector in over 40 years. It means that our policies are no longer constrained by existing EU rules and gives us opportunity to develop new approaches and support systems to better address the needs of Northern Ireland (NI) agriculture and the environment.

DAERA is introducing new schemes under the Sustainable Agriculture Programme (SAP) to develop a sustainable and resilient agricultural industry. These schemes promote more efficient practices through greater innovation, enhanced farmer knowledge and training, whilst protecting the environment, animal health and welfare and public health.

On 24 March 2022 DAERA announced 54 decisions of future agricultural support, which are being taken forward through the SAP. This Programme will provide a targeted approach to the provision of agricultural support to help farmers to develop their businesses, no matter where they farm, to become more productive, profitable and resilient, to maximise the sustainable returns from the assets at their disposal and to deliver wider public benefits such as climate change mitigation and enhancing biodiversity.

The Farm Sustainability Payment Scheme

The Farm Sustainability Payment Scheme (FSP) forms part of the Sustainable Agriculture Programme (SAP). With effect from 1 January 2026 this Scheme will replace the current Farm Sustainability Transition Payment (FSTP) and will act as a balance between providing a safety net which will help a farm business withstand ‘shocks’ that are beyond its ability to manage

effectively and encouraging farm businesses to become more environmentally sustainable, efficient and resilient. The FSP Scheme is expected to attract approximately 22,000 applications annually.

The introduction of FSP will see the roll out of the following key policy changes:-

- progressive capping
- new land eligibility rules
- new Farm Sustainability Standards to replace cross compliance, and,
- the introduction of conditionalities.

The Farm Sustainability Payment Scheme (Eligibility etc) Regulations will give DAERA the legal powers to introduce the Farm Sustainability Payment and the various elements outlined.

The minimum claim size for the FSP scheme is 3 hectares and applicants for the FSP scheme in 2026 will need to activate three entitlements on three hectares of eligible land to meet the requirements of the scheme.

Progressive Capping

The Farm Sustainability Payment Scheme (Eligibility etc) Regulations introduce progressive capping of the FSP payments phased in over a two year period for payments above £60,000 with capping levels increasing in stages based on the size of payments. Table 1 below sets out how progressive capping will operate.

Table 1

Payment Band	Capping reduction in first year of FSP (%)	Capping reduction in second year onwards of FSP (%)
£190,000.01 +	100	100
£150,000.01- £190,000	40	80
£100,000.01- £150,000	30	60
£80,000.01- £100,000	20	40
£60,000.01- £80,000	10	20
£0-£60,000	0	0

This rationale for introducing progressive capping is because high support payments can encourage unwarranted risk taking and reduce the incentive to manage risk within the farm business. Therefore, a balance needs to be struck between providing a safety net which helps a farm business withstand those shocks that are beyond the ability of that business to manage risk effectively, and dampening the incentive to be efficient, competitive and to manage risk proactively.

Analysis estimates that 265 farm businesses are likely to be impacted by the introduction of progressive capping.

Land Eligibility rules

The Regulations introduce simplified land eligibility rules for the FSP scheme compared to the land eligibility rules in place for the FSTP and the previous Basic Payment Scheme. The objective of the revised rules is to establish practical land eligibility rules for the FSP that complement the scheme’s objectives, can be easily understood, and be robustly and efficiently enforced.

The following land or woodland is eligible for the FSP scheme if -

- it has a boundary recognised by the Department including land with soft features or blanket bogs or lowland raised bogs;
- the applicant –
 - (i) has included as part of their application discrete areas of eligible woodland; or
 - (ii) has included as part of their application up to and including seventy percent stones, scree, rock or scattered rock.

Woodland that is or has been part of a forestry or agri-environment scheme administered by the Department on or after 1 January 2009 is eligible for the scheme.

Woodland that has not been part of a forestry or agri-environment scheme administered by the Department on or after 1 January 2009 is ineligible for the scheme if it is –

- not mapped on the LPIS by the date the regulations come into operation;
- a discrete area of woodland which is 5 hectares or more;
- part of a woodland parcel which is less than 5 hectares and is contained in a woodland block; or
- State owned or on state owned land.

Where land is to be mapped on the LPIS (Land Parcel Identification System) for the first time, an eligible farm business must provide such information in relation to the identification of and the applicant's title to that land as the Department may require, or where land is already mapped on the LPIS, the proof of title may be requested by the Department.

The Regulations include a list of features and land use types that will be ineligible for the FSP such as building sites, land used for solar panels, public and private gardens, public parks, golf courses and airstrips.

To support the simplified land eligibility rules and mitigate against any unintended consequences the Regulations amend the eligibility requirements for the FSP scheme to state that only active farmers undertaking agricultural activity are eligible to apply. They must also have management control of the land used to activate entitlements.

Consequently, the Regulations require applicants for the FSP scheme to carry out agricultural activity on at least 3 hectares of land used to activate entitlements. However, where an applicant submits a claim of less than 5 hectares, they must carry out agricultural activity on at least 2 hectares of land used to activate entitlements.

The land eligibility rules introduced by the Regulations will also apply to EFS Higher Agreements which were made by the Department before the date on which these Regulations come into operation.

The Regulations reset the two-year entitlement confiscation rule from the commencement of the FSP scheme meaning that no entitlements will be confiscated for non-activation in 2026. This is because the FSTP and the FSP are being treated as two separate schemes.

Conditionalities

The regulations legislate that applicants for the FSP scheme will be required to meet the following conditionalities in order to receive their full FSP -

i. Participation in the Soil Nutrient Health Scheme. Farm businesses must have registered for the SNHS and completed training offered to it by the closing of the Single Application Form window (15 May 2027) to be compliant. For those farm businesses that are not compliant at this stage, the Regulations legislate that a 10% reduction will be applied to their Farm Sustainability Payment in 2027. The reduction will be increased to 15% for continued non-compliance in 2028 and will continue to be applied at 15% until the conditionality has been met.

ii. Participation in the Bovine Genetics Project. Farm businesses must have registered for the Project and completed training offered to it by the closing of the Single Application Form window (15 May 2028) to be compliant. As with the SNHS conditionality, for those farm businesses that are not compliant at this stage, the Regulations legislate that a 10% reduction will be applied to their Farm Sustainability Payment in 2028. The reduction will be increased to 15% for continued non-compliance in 2029 and will continue to be applied at 15% until the conditionality has been met.

The Regulations also legislate that the reductions for failure to meet the FSP conditionalities should be applied concurrently.

Technical changes

The Regulations include a number of technical changes.

Firstly they define the order in which DAERA will apply scheme penalties as follows -

- If it is found that a farm business has claimed on more land than it should have an over declaration penalty will be applied first to 'correct'

the claim. To do otherwise could potentially result in a farm business being penalised more than they are paid.

- Secondly, the late claim penalty will be applied, where businesses are penalised 1% for every working day their claim is received late, i.e. after the 15 May.
- The next penalty to be applied will be if a business failed to meet certain Conditionality requirements.
- The final penalty that will be applied is for breaches of Cross-Compliance and Farm Sustainability Standards (FSS). It is necessary to apply the FSS penalty last, as DAERA may receive notification of a breach from three different Competent Control Authorities and these types of penalties can occur at any time of the year. Furthermore, as they are a percentage reduction and not a fixed amount it could involve multiple recalculations of the FSP payment including any penalties applied.

Preliminary checks, i.e. where a farm business has claimed a field which is not recognised by DAERA or has claimed an area greater than the Maximum Eligible Area (MEA), will no longer be mandatory however the Department retains the authority to implement checks where necessary should any issues arise.

The mandatory on-the-spot checks inspection rate for area-based schemes and replace it with a requirement for DAERA to define the rate as land eligibility controls will now be carried out using remote sensing techniques therefore removing this requirement.

The Regulations amend The Farm Sustainability (Transitional Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2025. Firstly, it is clarified that businesses not meeting the historic years requirements are not eligible for FSP in 2026 only. They may be eligible in future years but would need to acquire FSP entitlements and meet all the other requirements of the scheme. Secondly, a restriction is applied on the transfer of entitlements from ineligible businesses in 2026 to new businesses established on or after the day the regulations are made to prevent a circumvention of the Historic Years requirements.

The regulations also amend the Commission Delegated Regulation (Regulation 640/2014). In Article 13 they omit paragraph 3 thereby removing a 1% per day penalty for amendments to fields claimed made after the date of submission.

Article 14 is removed as it is no longer required, as it related to the allocation of entitlements.

Article 16 is amended through replacing non-declaration penalties with penalties for failure to comply with conditionalities.

In article 19a the penalty for over declaration in paragraph 1 is increased from 1.5 the difference found to twice the difference found.

The regulations also omit paragraphs 2 and 3 of Article 19 of the Commission Delegated Regulation (Regulation 640/2014). This removes penalties which exceed 100% of the payment due, in respect of what were previously area-based payments under Pillar 2 (Rural Development) of the Common Agricultural Policy, chiefly agri-environment and forestry payments. These

penalties apply to a very small number of businesses and are complicated to administer as they involve a deduction to payments in following years.

The regulations amend Article 72 of 809/2014 by removing paragraph 3 to simplify the requirements regarding control reports for Farm Sustainability Standard checks.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy? Yes No (select as appropriate)

If so, explain how.

The FSP Scheme is a new scheme and is not targeted at any one particular Section 75 category. All eligible farm businesses will benefit from this policy regardless of which section 75 category they fall into.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

Who owns and who implements the policy?

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision? Yes No (select as appropriate)

If yes, are they (please select as appropriate)

Financial

Legislative

other, please specify:

Main stakeholders affected

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon? (please select as appropriate)

Staff

Service users

Other public sector organisations

Voluntary/community/trade unions

Other, please specify

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

What are they?

- Programme for Government 2024-2027 ‘Our Plan Doing What Matters Most’¹
- DAERA Vision
- DAERA Future Agricultural Policy Framework Portfolio August 2021²
- DAERA Future Agricultural Policy Decisions – March 2022³

Who owns them?

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

Available evidence

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data. The Commission has produced this guide to [signpost to S75 data](#).

¹ <https://www.northernireland.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/newnigov/draft-programme-for-government-our-plan-doing-what-matters-most.pdf>

² [21.22.086 Future Agriculture Framework final V2.PDF \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

³ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/Future%20Agricultural%20Policy%20Decisions%20for%20Northern%20Ireland%20%28Final%29%20%28002%29.pdf>

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

Please ensure all data used is the most current and up to date available. You should verify this by contacting the Departmental Statisticians.

Religious belief evidence/information:

Consideration has been given to the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (2023⁴), 2021 Census of Northern Ireland (phase 1) and the DAERA Farm Equality Indicators Report October 2018 ('Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers').

In the 2023 Life and Times Survey, 38% of the respondents viewed themselves as part of the Protestant Community, 33% as Catholic and 29% as neither.

The 2021 Census indicated that religious beliefs across the NI community are 37.36% Protestant and 42.31% Catholic. 1.34% indicated that they were other religion, 17.39% indicated that they did not have a religion and 1.6% did not state a religion.

⁴ Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey: 2022 (ark.ac.uk)

The DAERA Farm Equality Indicators Report 2018 states that 51% of farms in NI were farmed by a member of the Protestant community and 42% by a member of the Catholic community.

Catholics were more likely than Protestants to farm on very small farms, with 85% of Catholics farming small farms compared with 68% of Protestants, and only 2% of Catholics having large farms compared with 10% of Protestant farmers.

Catholic farmers were also more likely to be engaged in cattle and sheep farming in Less Favoured Areas, with over three quarters (77%) engaged in this type of farming activity compared with less than half (45%) of Protestant farmers. In contrast, a higher proportion of Protestant (16%) than Catholic (5%) farmers were dairy farmers, and twice as many Protestant (25%) as Catholic (12%) farmers were lowland cattle and sheep farmers.

Political Opinion evidence/information:

The Northern Ireland life and Times Survey 2023 found that 28% of the NI population describe themselves as nationalist, 30% as unionist and 37% held neither political opinion (6% either didn't answer or know).

The DAERA Farm Equality Indicators Report 2018 suggested that national identity is a reasonable proxy indicator for the Unionist/Nationalist divide. 44% of farmers have reported their identity as British only, 26% as Irish only and 23% as Northern Irish only with 8% stating another identity or a combination of more than one identity.

The DAERA Farm Equality Indicators Report 2018 identified that a higher proportion of those stating as Irish only or Northern Irish only identity farmed on very small farms (85% and 81% respectively) than those stating a British only identity (69%). In contrast, the proportion of those stating a British only identity farming on large farms (9%) was more than double that of those who stated Irish only (2%) or Northern Irish only (4%) identities. Higher proportions of dairy farmers (62%) and those engaged in mixed farming (63%) stated a British only identity. More than three quarters of those describing their identity as Irish only (77%) and two-thirds of those with a Northern Irish only (68%) identity were engaged in cattle and sheep farming in Less Favoured Areas, compared to less than half (48%) of farmers of British only identity.

In contrast, those stating a British only identity were much more likely to be engaged in farming cattle and sheep in lowland areas, dairy farming, or other types of farming activity, than those stating an Irish only or Northern Irish only identity. Farmers with an Irish only identity were almost twice as likely to farm in Severely Disadvantaged Areas (55%) than farmers with a British only identity (28%). The proportion of those with a Northern Irish identity farming in Severely Disadvantaged Areas was also very high at 48%. On the other hand, the proportion of those describing themselves as British only who farmed in lowland areas (39%) was more than twice that of those with an Irish

only identity (15%) and much higher than those with a Northern Irish only identity (24%).

Racial Group evidence/information:

The 2021 Census of Northern Ireland indicated that 96.6% of the population are white. The 2011 Census indicated that 99% of the rural population are white and the farming population has a similar pattern. A small number of migrant workers are also employed within the farming industry. This would support the view that the FSP policy set out in this document will mainly impact on white beneficiaries.

DAERA's Equality Indicators Report 2018 stated the proportion of farmers stating an ethnicity other than white was too small to examine differences by farm characteristics. This would support the view that the FSP policy set out in this document is likely to affect largely white beneficiaries as this reflects the makeup of the farming population.

Age evidence/information:

The 2021 Census of Northern Ireland reported 326,500 people 65 years and over, comprising 17% of the population.

The 2023 Annual Report of the Registrar General ([nisra.gov.uk](https://www.nisra.gov.uk)) states the Northern Ireland population continues to age with the number of those aged 65 and over increasing by 2.05 per cent to reach 342,482 people (17.8 per cent of the population).

The DAERA Farm Equality Indicators Report 2018⁵ showed that 36% of principal farmers are 65 years and over with 8% under forty years of age, with the average age being 59 years.

Marital Status evidence/information:

The 2021 Census for Northern Ireland indicated that 1,514,743 were aged 16 and over, of this 38% were single (never married or registered a civil partnership), 46% were married or in a civil partnership and 16% were separated, divorced / dissolved civil partnership, widowed / survivor of a civil partnership⁶.

The DAERA Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers Report 2018 showed that 73% of all farmers are married and living with a wife/husband.

Sexual Orientation evidence/information:

The 2021 Census for Northern Ireland recorded 1,514,745 residents aged 16 and over. Of this population 90% indicated that they identified as straight or

⁵ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/final-equality-indicators-report.xls>

⁶ [census-2021-ms-a30.xlsx \(live.com\)](https://www.census.ni.gov.uk/census-2021-ms-a30.xlsx)

heterosexual, 2% identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual or other sexual orientation and 8% preferred not to say or state this information⁷.

There are also a number of new and emerging inequalities, for which evidence is limited but would include issues such as, inequalities experienced by transgender people. As further evidence becomes available DAERA will consider the relevance for the Farm Sustainability Payment Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026.

Men & Women generally evidence/information:

The 2021 Census showed that 51% of the population were female and 49% male. The estimated employment rate in NI for those aged 16-64 in 2020 was 74.8% for males (432,000) and 66.5% for females (392,000). The estimated economic inactivity rate (16-64) was 22.8% for males (132,000) and 31.6% for females (186,000). The number of self-employed (aged 16+) in NI was estimated at 134,000 in 2019, equivalent to just over 15% of all employed people aged 16+. Self-employment was more likely among employed men than women, 22% of all employed men were self-employed, compared with 8% of all employed women.

The Labour Force Survey shows that for January to December 2023 an estimated 2.6% of the total workforce in Northern Ireland (22,000) worked in

⁷ [census-2021-ms-c02.xlsx \(live.com\)](#)

Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing. Of these, 4.5% (20,000) were male and 0.6% (2,000) were female.

The DAERA Farm Equality Indicators 2018 data showed that 91% of farmers in NI are males. Female farmers were more likely than their male counterparts to farm on very small farms while 87% of women farmers had small farms compared to 75% of male farmers.

Disability evidence/information:

The 2021 Census showed that 12% of NI residents report that their day to day activities are limited a lot, and 13% reported that their day to day activity is limited a little⁸.

In NI it is estimated that 25% of the population have some form of disability.

The DAERA Farmer Equality Indicators 2018 data indicated that almost a third of farmers (30%) suffered from a disability limiting their day to day activities with 32% of farmers of very small farms declaring they had a long term condition compared to 20% of farmers with large farms.

Some of the differences in farm characteristics by disability may be partly due to the variation in age profiles of those with and without disabilities. The

⁸ [census-2021-ms-d02.xlsx \(live.com\)](#)

incidence of those reporting that their activities were limited either a little or a lot rises steeply with age.

NI: IN PROFILE Key statistics on Northern Ireland (nisra.gov.uk) 2022⁹ reports that one in five people have a disability or limiting long-term illness, with 16% of people claiming Disability Living Allowance/Personal Independence Payment.

Dependants evidence/information:

The 2021 Northern Ireland Census showed that 29% of all households have dependent children aged between 0-18¹⁰.

2020-21 Family Resources Survey, Northern Ireland¹¹ indicated that 31% of NI households have dependent children (those aged 0-16 and person aged 16-19 who are unmarried and in full time non-advanced education).

The most recent data from the 2018 DAERA Farmer Equality Indicators report revealed that almost 40% of households supported by family farms included one or more dependents. Households of medium sized farms were slightly

⁹ [NI: IN PROFILE | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk)

¹⁰ [census-2021-ms-a24.xlsx \(live.com\)](https://www.census.nisra.gov.uk/census-2021-ms-a24.xlsx)

¹¹ [frs-household-2021-tables.ods \(live.com\)](https://www.dpera.gov.uk/frs-household-2021-tables.ods)

more likely than smaller or larger farms to contain dependents, as were the households of farmers engaged in pig, poultry and mixed farming. Farm households in Disadvantaged Areas (41%) were slightly more likely than those in lowland areas (38%) to contain dependants. On arable farms, 30% of farmers had one or more dependent.

NI: IN PROFILE Key statistics on Northern Ireland (nisra.gov.uk) 2022 reports that one in three households have a dependent child¹² .

NISRA Women in NI 2023 report indicates that over the past 10 years there have been consistently more economically inactive women than men. The most common reason for economic inactivity among women (32%) and men (40%) in 2023 was long term sickness. The biggest difference in economic inactivity between males and females in 2023 was in the number citing family/home as their reason for inactivity. For men, this was the least common reason (8%), in contrast to one in four inactive women (25%). Approximately eight in ten women (79%) with dependent children were economically active in 2023, compared with 94% of men with dependent children.

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the

¹² [NI: IN PROFILE Key statistics on Northern Ireland \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/in-profile)

different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision?

Specify details of the needs, experiences and priorities for each of the Section 75 categories below:

Religious belief

During the pre-engagement stage for the consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, stakeholder input was sought on needs, experiences and priorities in relation to equality and no issues were raised in relation to religious belief in respect of the policy areas included in these Regulations.

The changes introduced by the Regulations facilitate the introduction of a farm support scheme that is open to all farm businesses actively engaged in agricultural activity in Northern Ireland. Therefore, the Regulations do not impact on the Religious Belief Section 75 category.

Political Opinion

In response to the 2018 stakeholder engagement on the Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework from stakeholders representing the wider farming, food and environmental sectors the Department received one comment in relation to political opinion that indicated that future agricultural policy should ensure that it does not disproportionately discriminate against one community over the other (nationalist and unionist).

During the pre-engagement stage for the consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, stakeholder input was sought on needs, experiences and priorities in relation to equality and no issues were raised in relation to political opinion.

The 2021 consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland also received no comments on the policy areas contained within these Regulations.

The changes introduced by the Regulations facilitate the introduction of a farm support scheme that is open to all farm businesses actively engaged in agricultural activity in Northern Ireland. Therefore, the Regulations do not impact on the Political Opinion Section 75 category.

Racial Group

In response to the 2018 stakeholder engagement on Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework from stakeholders representing the wider farming, food and environmental sectors, the Department did not receive any responses to indicate that the future agricultural policy framework would create any inequality in respect of a racial group.

During both the pre-engagement and consultation stages of seeking views on the Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, stakeholder input was sought on needs, experiences and priorities in relation to equality and no issues were raised in relation to racial group in respect of the policy areas contained within these Regulations.

The changes introduced by the Regulations facilitate the introduction of a farm support scheme that is open to all farm businesses actively engaged in

agricultural activity in Northern Ireland. Therefore, the Regulations do not impact on the Racial Group Section 75 category.

Age

In response to the 2018 stakeholder engagement on the Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework from stakeholders representing the wider farming, food and environmental sectors the Department received a number of responses that included concerns about age discrimination if qualification requirements were introduced for grants and a request to support age proofing of future policies.

During the pre-engagement stage for the consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, stakeholder input was sought on needs experiences and priorities in relation to equality and no issues were raised to relation to age.

The 2021 consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland received 1 response which identified that the introduction of the Soil Nutrient Health Scheme as a conditionality for receipt of the FSP Scheme could impact on older farmers who aren't as adaptive to modern farming measures and testing. As a mitigation online and face to face training and guidance is provided to assist applicants to comply with this conditionality. The same approach is being implemented for training associated with the Bovine Genetics Project.

DAERA figures show that approximately 265 businesses (1.2% of all farm businesses) will be impacted by the introduction of progressive capping. Analysis of businesses likely to be impacted by this policy show that farmers in the age bracket 35 – 44 are likely to be disproportionately impacted by this

policy. As a mitigation there has been a 4-year lag between the announcement of this policy and implementation which has allowed farm businesses time to prepare for a reduced payment Also the policy will be phased in over a two-year period to allow impacted businesses time to adjust.

Marital status

In response to the 2018 stakeholder engagement on Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework from stakeholders representing the wider farming, food and environmental sectors, the Department did not receive any responses to indicate that the future agricultural policy framework would create any inequality in respect of marital status.

During both the pre-engagement and the consultation stages of seeking views on the Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, stakeholder input was sought on needs, experiences and priorities in relation to equality and no issues were raised in relation to marital status.

The changes introduced by the Regulations facilitate the introduction of a farm support scheme that is open to all farm businesses actively engaged in agricultural activity in Northern Ireland. Therefore, the Regulations do not impact on the Marital Status Section 75 category.

Sexual orientation

In response to the 2018 stakeholder engagement on Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework from stakeholders representing the wider farming, food and environmental sectors, the Department did not receive any responses to indicate that the future agricultural policy framework would create any inequality in respect of sexual orientation.

During both the pre-engagement and the consultation stages of seeking views on the Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, stakeholder input was sought on needs, experiences and priorities in relation to equality and no issues were raised in relation to sexual orientation category.

The changes introduced by the Regulations facilitate the introduction of a farm support scheme that is open to all farm businesses actively engaged in agricultural activity in Northern Ireland. Therefore, the Regulations do not impact on the Sexual Orientation Section 75 category.

Men and Women Generally

In response to the 2018 stakeholder engagement on Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework from stakeholders representing the wider farming, food and environmental sectors, the Department did not receive any responses to indicate that the future agricultural policy framework would create any inequality in respect of men and women generally.

During both the pre-engagement and the consultation stages of seeking views on the Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, stakeholder input was sought on needs, experiences and priorities in relation to equality and no issues were raised in relation to the men and women category.

The changes introduced by the Regulations facilitate the introduction of a farm support scheme that is open to all farm businesses actively engaged in agricultural activity in Northern Ireland. Therefore, the Regulations do not impact on the Men and Women Generally Section 75 category.

Disability

In response to the 2018 stakeholder engagement on Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework from stakeholders representing the wider farming, food and environmental sectors, the Department did not receive any responses to indicate that the future agricultural policy framework would create any inequality in respect of disability.

During both the pre-engagement and consultation stages of seeking views on the Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, stakeholder input was sought on needs, experiences and priorities in relation to equality and no issues were raised in relation to disability in respect of the policy areas contained within these Regulations.

The 2021 consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, received no responses were raised in respect of this Section 75 category.

The changes introduced by the Regulations facilitate the introduction of a farm support scheme that is open to all farm businesses actively engaged in agricultural activity in Northern Ireland. Therefore, the Regulations do not impact on the Disability Section 75 category.

It is recognised however that the need to undertake training in order to comply with the FSP conditionalities could prove a challenge for this equality category. As a mitigation, the options to undertake online training, or face to face training at accessible locations are provided to assist applicants to comply with the conditionalities.

Dependants

In response to the 2018 stakeholder engagement on Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework from stakeholders representing the wider farming, food and environmental sectors, the Department did not receive any responses to indicate that the future agricultural policy framework would create any inequality in respect of dependants.

During both the pre-engagement and the consultation stages of seeking views on the Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, stakeholder input was sought on needs, experiences and priorities in relation to equality and no issues were raised in relation to dependants.

The changes introduced by the Regulations facilitate the introduction of a farm support scheme that is open to all farm businesses actively engaged in agricultural activity in Northern Ireland. Therefore, the Regulations do not impact on the Dependant's Section 75 category.

It is recognised however that the need to undertake training in order to comply with the FSP conditionalities could prove a challenge for this equality category. As a mitigation, the options to undertake online training, which can

be completed at any time of the day; or face to face training at accessible locations are provided to assist applicants to comply with the conditionalities.

Introduction

In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, the public authority should consider its answers to the questions 1-4.

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

If the public authority's 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.

If the public authority's 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:

- measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
- the introduction of 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

- 1) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
- 2) 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.

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.

Part 2. 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?** Please provide details of the likely policy impacts and determine the level of impact for each S75 categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Religious belief*:

The policy changes being introduced through these Regulations are considered to have no differential impact on the Religious Belief category. No impact on equality of opportunity is expected.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None
(select as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Political Opinion*:

Equality Commission monitoring guidelines for public authorities suggest that community background/religion is a reasonable proxy indicator for the unionist/nationalist divide. Applying this principle to the likely impact of these Regulations suggests that there should be no differential impact on those of differing political opinion.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None
(select as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Racial Group*:

The policy changes being introduced through these Regulations are considered to have no differential impact on the ‘Racial Group’ category. No impact on equality of opportunity is expected.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None
(select as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Age*:

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs 2018 Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland states that the average age of farmers in Northern Ireland was 59 years. Therefore, the policy changes implemented through these Regulations are likely to impact more older farmers than younger farmers.

However, analysis of businesses likely to be impacted by the Progressive Capping policy shows that farmers in the age bracket 35 – 44 are most likely to be disproportionately impacted by this policy. As a mitigation there has been a 4-year lag between the announcement of this policy and implementation which has allowed farm businesses time to prepare for a reduced payment Also the policy will be phased in over a two-year period to allow impacted businesses time to adjust.

The 2021 consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland received 1 response which identified that the introduction of the Soil Nutrient Health Scheme as a conditionality for

receipt of the FSP Scheme could impact on older farmers who perhaps aren't as adaptive to modern farming measures and testing. As a mitigation, online and face to face training and guidance is provided to assist applicants to comply with this conditionality. The same approach is being implemented for the training associated with the Bovine Genetics Project.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None
(select as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Marital Status*:

The policy changes being introduced through these Regulations are considered to have no differential impact on the 'Marital Status' category. No impact on equality of opportunity is expected.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None
(select as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Sexual Orientation*:

The policy changes being introduced through these Regulations are considered to have no differential impact on the ‘Sexual Orientation’ category. No impact on equality of opportunity is expected.

What is the level of impact Minor Major None

(select as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Men and Women*:

The policy changes being introduced through these Regulations are considered to have no differential impact based on gender. No impact on equality of opportunity is expected.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

(select as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Disability*:

The policy changes being introduced through these Regulations are considered to have no differential impact on the ‘Disability’ category. No impact on equality of opportunity is expected.

It is recognised however, that the need to undertake training in order to comply with the FSP conditionalities could prove a challenge for this equality category. As a mitigation, the options to undertake online

training or face to face training at accessible locations are provided to assist applicants to comply with the conditionalities.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

(select as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Dependants*:

The policy changes being introduced through these Regulations are considered to have no differential impact on the ‘Dependants’ category.

No impact on equality of opportunity is expected.

It is recognised however that the need to undertake training in order to comply with the FSP conditionalities could prove a challenge for this equality category. As a mitigation, the options to undertake online training or face to face training at accessible locations are provided to assist applicants to comply with the conditionalities.

What is the level of impact? Major None

(select as appropriate)

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

Yes No (select as appropriate)

Detail opportunities of how this policy could promote equality of opportunity for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

Religious Belief - If Yes, provide details:

(insert text here)

If No, provide reasons:

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility to better promote equality of opportunity for those affected by the policy contained within these Regulations.

Political Opinion - If Yes, provide details:

(insert text here)

If No, provide reasons:

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility to better promote equality of opportunity for those affected by the policy contained within these Regulations.

Racial Group - If Yes, provide details:

(insert text here)

If No, provide reasons:

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility to better promote equality of opportunity for those affected by the policy contained within these Regulations.

Age - If Yes, provide details:

(insert text here)

If No, provide reasons:

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility to better promote equality of opportunity for those affected by the policy contained with these Regulations.

Marital Status - If Yes, provide details:

(insert text here)

If No, provide reasons

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility to better promote equality of opportunity for those affected by the policy contained within these Regulations.

Sexual Orientation - If Yes, provide details:

(insert text here)

If No, provide reasons:

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility to better promote equality of opportunity for those affected by the policy contained within these Regulations.

Men and Women generally - If Yes, provide details:

(insert text here)

If No, provide reasons:

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility to better promote equality of opportunity for those affected by the policy contained within these Regulations.

Disability - If Yes, provide details:

(insert text here)

If No, provide reasons:

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility to better promote equality of opportunity for those affected by the policy contained within these Regulations.

Dependants - If Yes, provide details:

(insert text here)

If No, provide reasons:

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility to better promote equality of opportunity for those affected by the policy contained within these Regulations.

3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Please provide details of the likely policy impact and determine the level of impact for each of the categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Religious belief*:

The policy contained within these Regulations is not expected to impact on good relations between people of different religious beliefs. However, DAERA is proactive in improving good relations between people of different religious belief and will review any issues identified during the implementation of the policy contained within these Regulations.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

(select as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Political Opinion*:

The policy contained within these Regulations is not expected to impact on good relations between people of different political opinion. However, DAERA is proactive in improving good relations between people of different political opinion and will review any issues identified during the implementation of the policy contained within these Regulations.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

(select as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Racial Group*:

The policy contained within these Regulations is not expected to impact on good relations between people of different racial groups. However, DAERA is proactive in improving good relations between people of different racial groups and will review any issues identified during the implementation of the policy contained within these Regulations.

What is the level of impact? Minor Major None

(select as appropriate)

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

Detail opportunities of how this policy could better promote good relations for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

***Religious Belief* - If Yes, provide details:**

(insert text here)

If No, provide reasons:

The policy contained within these Regulations is likely to have no impact on promoting good relations between people of different religious beliefs. However, DAERA is proactive in improving good relations between people of different religious belief and will review any opportunities identified during the implementation of the policy contained within these Regulations.

***Political Opinion* - If Yes, provide details:**

(insert text here)

If No, provide reasons:

The policy contained within these Regulations is likely to have no impact on promoting good relations between people of different political opinion. However, DAERA is proactive in improving good relations between people of different political opinions and will review any opportunities identified during the implementation of the policy contained within these Regulations.

***Racial Group* - If Yes, provide details:**

(insert text here)

If No, provide reasons:

The policy contained within these Regulations is likely to have no impact on promoting good relations between people of different racial groups. However, DAERA is proactive in improving good relations between people of different racial groups and will review any opportunities identified during the implementation of the policy contained within these Regulations.

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? If so, please detail below.

(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.

There are no potential impacts on people with multiple identities from the policy contained within these Regulations.

DAERA also has legislative obligations to meet under the **Disability Discrimination Order**. Questions 5 - 6 relate to these.

Consideration of Disability Duties

- 5. Does this proposed policy or decision provide an opportunity for DAERA to better promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?**

It is very unlikely that there will be any facility within the policy contained within these Regulations to promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities.

- 6. Does this proposed policy or decision provide an opportunity to actively increase the participation by disabled people in public life?**

It is very unlikely that there will be any facility within the policy contained within these Regulations to increase the participation by disabled people in public life.

Part 3. Screening decision (Please delete as appropriate)

1. “Screened out” without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.

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

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment the public authority should consider if the policy should **be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced** - please provide details.

The intention of the FSP Scheme is to act as a balance between providing a safety net which will help a farm business withstand ‘shocks’ that are beyond its ability to manage effectively and encouraging farm businesses to become more environmentally sustainable, efficient and resilient. This will be achieved by setting new eligibility criteria and conditionalities (detailed in Part 1 – Policy Scoping) which apply to all applicants.

The FSP policy has been identified as having minor impacts on the ‘Age’ Section 75 category.

Analysis of businesses likely to be impacted by the Progressive Capping policy shows that farmers in the age bracket 35 – 44 are most likely to be disproportionately impacted by this policy. As a mitigation there has been a

4-year lag between the announcement of this policy and implementation which has allowed farm businesses time to prepare for a reduced payment. Also the policy will be phased in over a two-year period to allow impacted businesses time to adjust.

In addition, the 2021 consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland received 1 response which identified that the introduction of the Soil Nutrient Health Scheme as a conditionality for receipt of the FSP Scheme could impact on older farmers who aren't as adaptive to modern farming measures and testing. As a mitigation online and face to face training and guidance is provided to assist applicants to comply with this conditionality. This same approach will be taken in relation to training for the Bovine Genetics Project. This mitigation will also have a positive impact for the disability and dependants Section 75 categories.

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

All public authorities' equality schemes must state the authority's 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 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 a separate Commission publication: [A Practical Guide to Equality Impact Assessment](#)

Mitigation

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is ‘minor’ and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority 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? Yes No (select as appropriate)

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

Timetabling and prioritising

Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.

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 a public authority’s functions	
Total score	

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the public authority in timetabling. Details of the Public Authority’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? Yes No (select as appropriate)

If yes, please provide details.

--

Part 4. Monitoring

Section 75 places a requirement on DAERA to have equality monitoring arrangements in place in order to assess the impact of policies and services etc; and to help identify barriers to fair participation and to better promote equality of opportunity. Please note the following excerpt from The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland in relation to monitoring:

A system must be established to monitor the impact of the policy in order to find out its effect on relevant groups. The results of ongoing monitoring must be reviewed on an annual basis. The public authority is required to publish the results of this monitoring. And they must be included in the public authorities' annual review on progress to the Equality Commission. The Equality Scheme must specify how and where such monitoring information will be published. It is therefore essential that monitoring is carried out in a systematic manner and that the results are widely and openly published.

If the monitoring and analysis of results over a two year period show that the policy results in greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, the public authority must ensure that the policy is revised to achieve better outcomes for the relevant equality groups.

Further advice on monitoring can be found at: [ECNI Monitoring Guidance for Public Authorities](#)

Outline what data you will collect in the future in order to monitor the impact of this policy or decision on equality, good relations and disability duties.

Equality:

General scheme monitoring –

Work has been undertaken to ensure that all relevant farm business information and metrics will be gathered through the FSP Scheme application process to enable full monitoring and tracking of FSP progress.

A review of the FSP Scheme will be undertaken in 2029. Amongst other things the review will consider if the implementation of the Scheme has led to any unexpected equality issues.

In addition, any future policy changes with the potential to impact Section 75 groups identified as a consequence of the roll out of the Farm Sustainability Payment Scheme (Eligibility etc) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2025 will undergo equality impact assessments.

Good Relations:

General scheme monitoring –

Any future policy changes with the potential to impact Section 75 groups identified as a consequence of the roll out of the Farm Sustainability

Payment Scheme (Eligibility etc) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2025 will undergo equality impact assessments.

In addition, DAERA will monitor the FSP Scheme impacts on good relations through engagement with industry stakeholders.

Disability Duties:

General scheme monitoring –

Any future policy changes with the potential to impact Section 75 groups identified as a consequence of the roll out of the Farm Sustainability Payment Scheme (Eligibility etc) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2025 will undergo equality impact assessments.

Comments from all the Section 75 groups are welcome, especially if any group considers that it is significantly affected by the decisions.

In addition, DAERA will monitor FSP Scheme impacts on disability duties through engagement with industry stakeholders.

Part 5. Consideration of Human Rights

7. The Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998 brings the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into UK law and it applies in N Ireland. Indicate below by deleting Yes/No as appropriate, any potential adverse impacts that the policy or decision may have in relation to human rights issues.

See Annex A for brief synopsis on each of the Human Rights Articles & Protocols.

Right to Life	Article 2	No
Prohibition of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment	Article 3	No
Prohibition of slavery and forced labour	Article 4	No
Right to liberty and security	Article 5	No
Right to a fair and public trial	Article 6	No
Right to no punishment without law	Article 7	No
Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence	Article 8	No
Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion	Article 9	No
Right to freedom of expression	Article 10	No

Right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association	Article 11	No
Right to marry and to found a family	Article 12	No
The prohibition of discrimination	Article 14	No
Protection of property and enjoyment of possessions	Protocol 1 Article 1	No
Right to education	Protocol 1 Article 2	No
Right to free and secret elections	Protocol 1 Article 3	No

8. Please explain any adverse impacts on human rights that you have identified.

None identified

9. Please indicate any ways which you consider the policy positively promotes human rights.

None identified

Part 6 - Approval and authorisation

Before signing off this screening template please confirm that you have completed all the actions listed below.

I can confirm that all the actions listed below have been completed -

- I have explained any technical issues in plain English (easily understood by a 12 year old)
- I have used the most relevant, current & up to date data available
- I have added evidence and explained my assessments in full
- I have provided a brief note to justify my decision to ‘Screen In’ or ‘Screen Out’
- A copy of this screening template and the final decision has been sent to the Equality Unit for their consideration before it has been forwarded for sign-off

Screening assessment completed by (Staff Officer level or above) -

Name: Lorna Christie **Grade:** GD7

Branch: Farm Sustainability & Development Policy Branch

Date: 24/9/25

Signature: please insert a scanned image of your signature.

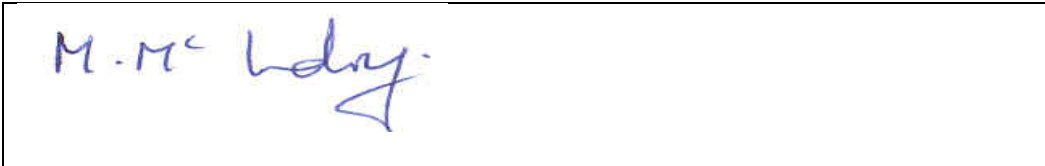
Lorna Christie

Screening decision approved by (must be Grade 3/Deputy Secretary or above) -

Name: Martin McKendry Grade: G3

Branch: Food, Farming and Rural Affairs Date: 28/10/25

Signature: please insert a scanned image of your signature.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "M. McKendry".

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be ‘signed off’ and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made easily accessible on the public authority’s website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.

Please save the final signed version of the completed screening form in the CM container (AE2-19-11940) below as soon as possible after completion and forward the CM link to Equality Branch at equality@daera-ni.gov.uk. The screening template must be saved to the container in **HTML format** (not PDF) in order to comply with accessibility requirements. The screening form will be placed on the DAERA website and a link provided to the Department’s Section 75 consultees.



Strategic
Management DAERA

For more information about equality screening, contact:

DAERA Equality Unit

Capacity, Capability, Equality & Diversity Branch

Jubilee House

111 Ballykelly Road

LIMAVADY

BT49 9HP

Email: equality@daera-ni.gov.uk

Tel: 028 7744 2027



Annex A

Synopsis of Human Rights Act Articles & Protocols

ARTICLE 2

Right to life

1. Everyone's right to life shall be protected by law. No one shall be deprived of his life intentionally save in the execution of a sentence of a court following his conviction of a crime for which this penalty is provided by law.
2. Deprivation of life shall not be regarded as inflicted in contravention of this Article when it results from the use of force which is no more than absolutely necessary:
 - a. In defense of any person from unlawful violence;

- b. In order to effect a lawful arrest or to prevent the escape of a person lawfully detained;
- c. In action lawfully taken for the purpose of quelling a riot or insurrection.

ARTICLE 3

Prohibition of torture

No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

ARTICLE 4

Prohibition of slavery and forced labour

- 1. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude.
- 2. No one shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour.
- 3. For the purpose of this Article the term “forced or compulsory labour” shall not include:
 - a. Any work required to be done in the ordinary course of detention imposed according to the provisions of Article 5 of this Convention or during conditional release from such detention;
 - b. Any service of a military character or, in case of conscientious objectors in countries where they are recognised, service exacted instead of compulsory military service;
 - c. Any service exacted in case of an emergency or calamity threatening the life or well-being of the community;
 - d. Any work or service which forms part of normal civic obligations.

ARTICLE 5

Right to liberty and security

1. Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be deprived of his liberty save in the following cases and in accordance with a procedure prescribed by law:
 - a. The lawful detention of a person after conviction by a competent court;
 - b. The lawful arrest or detention of a person for non-compliance with the lawful order of a court or in order to secure the fulfilment of any obligation prescribed by law;
 - c. the lawful arrest or detention of a person effected for the purpose of bringing him before the competent legal authority on reasonable suspicion of having committed an offence or when it is reasonably considered necessary to prevent his committing an offence or fleeing after having done so;
 - d. the detention of a minor by lawful order for the purpose of educational supervision or his lawful detention for the purpose of bringing him before the competent legal authority;
 - e. The lawful detention of persons for the prevention of the spreading of infectious diseases, of persons of unsound mind, alcoholics or drug addicts or vagrants;
 - f. The lawful arrest or detention of a person to prevent his effecting an unauthorised entry into the country or of a person against whom action is being taken with a view to deportation or extradition.

2. Everyone who is arrested shall be informed promptly, in a language which he understands, of the reasons for his arrest and of any charge against him.
3. Everyone arrested or detained in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1(c) of this Article shall be brought promptly before a judge or other officer authorised by law to exercise judicial power and shall be entitled to trial within a reasonable time or to release pending trial. Release may be conditioned by guarantees to appear for trial.
4. Everyone who is deprived of his liberty by arrest or detention shall be entitled to take proceedings by which the lawfulness of his detention shall be decided speedily by a court and his release ordered if the detention is not lawful.
5. Everyone who has been the victim of arrest or detention in contravention of the provisions of this Article shall have an enforceable right to compensation.

ARTICLE 6

Right to a fair trial

In the determination of his civil rights and obligations or of any criminal charge against him, everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law. Judgment shall be pronounced

publicly but the press and public may be excluded from all or part of the trial in the interest of morals, public order or national security in a democratic society, where the interests of juveniles or the protection of the private life of the parties so require, or to the extent strictly necessary in the opinion of the court in special circumstances where publicity would prejudice the interests of justice.

4. Everyone charged with a criminal offence shall be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law.

5. Everyone charged with a criminal offence has the following minimum rights:

- a. To be informed promptly, in a language which he understands and in detail, of the nature and cause of the accusation against him;
- b. To have adequate time and facilities for the preparation of his defense;
- c. To defend himself in person or through legal assistance of his own choosing or, if he has not sufficient means to pay for legal assistance, to be given it free when the interests of justice so require;
- d. To examine or have examined witnesses against him and to obtain the attendance and examination of witnesses on his behalf under the same conditions as witnesses against him;
- e. To have the free assistance of an interpreter if he cannot understand or speak the language used in court.

ARTICLE 7

No punishment without law

1. No one shall be held guilty of any criminal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a criminal offence under national or international law at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the criminal offence was committed.
2. This Article shall not prejudice the trial and punishment of any person for any act or omission which, at the time when it was committed, was criminal according to the general principles of law recognised by civilised nations.

ARTICLE 8

Right to respect for private and family life

1. Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.
2. There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

ARTICLE 9

Freedom of thought, conscience and religion

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.
2. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

ARTICLE 10

Freedom of expression

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. This Article shall not prevent States from requiring the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema enterprises.
2. The exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for

preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.

ARTICLE 11

Freedom of assembly and association

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.
2. No restrictions shall be placed on the exercise of these rights other than such as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. This Article shall not prevent the imposition of lawful restrictions on the exercise of these rights by members of the armed forces, of the police or of the administration of the State.

ARTICLE 12

Right to marry

Men and women of marriageable age have the right to marry and to found a family, according to the national laws governing the exercise of this right.

ARTICLE 14

Prohibition of discrimination

The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.

Protocol 1

ARTICLE 1

Protection of property

Every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions. No one shall be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by law and by the general principles of international law.

The preceding provisions shall not, however, in any way impair the right of a State to enforce such laws as it deems necessary to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest or to secure the payment of taxes or other contributions or penalties.

Protocol 1

ARTICLE 2

Right to education

No person shall be denied the right to education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions.

Protocol 1

ARTICLE 3

Right to free elections

The High Contracting Parties undertake to hold free elections at reasonable intervals by secret ballot, under conditions which will ensure the free expression of the opinion of the people in the choice of the legislature.

For further information:

Equality Unit,
Equality & Diversity Branch

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA)
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