

Equality & Disability Duties Screening Template

December 2023 version



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

An Roinn
**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Depairtment o'
**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**

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.

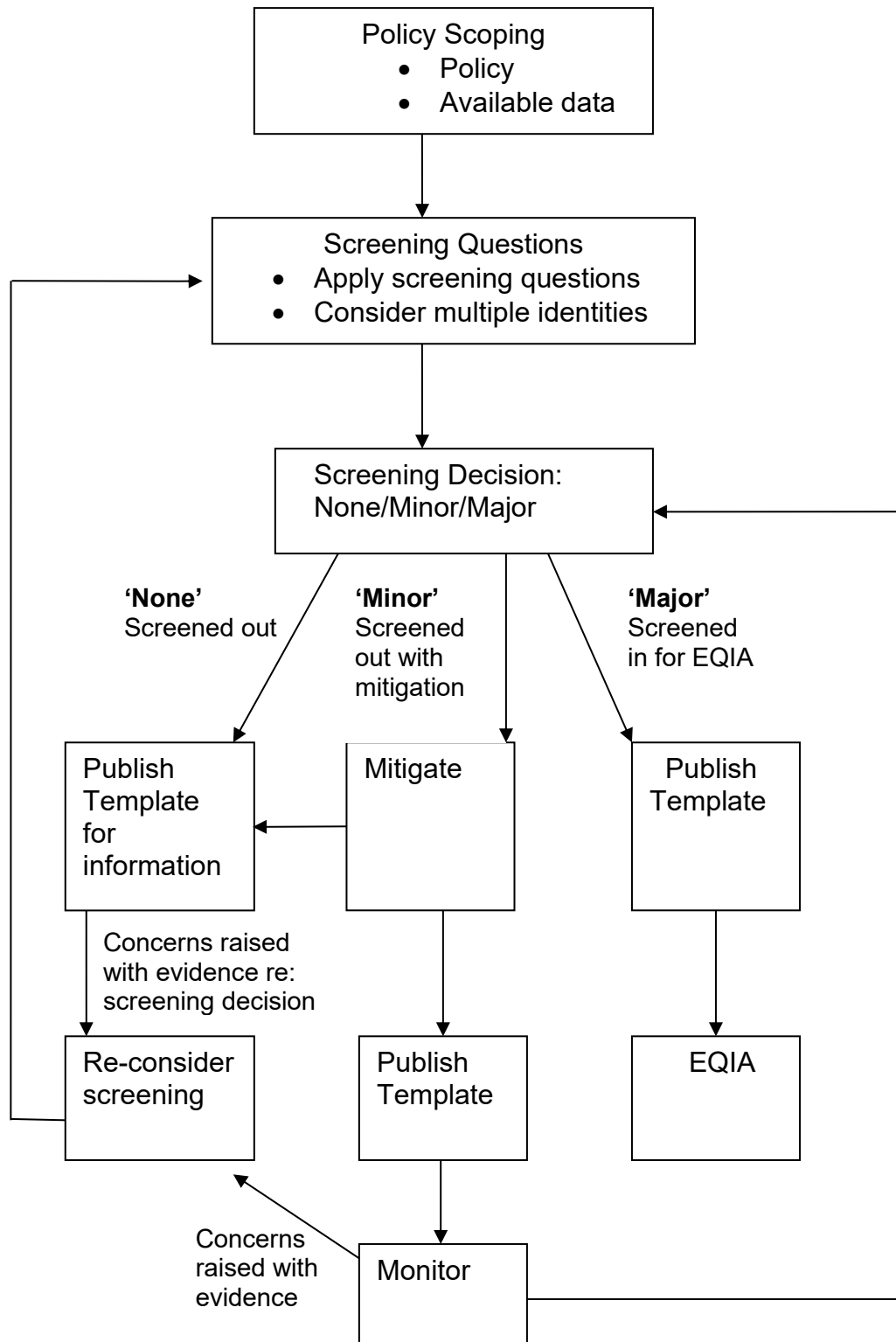
Part 3. Screening decision – guides the public authority to reach a screening decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment (EQIA), or to introduce measures to mitigate the likely impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality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

Inflationary increase to dog licensing fees in Northern Ireland.

Is this an existing, revised or new policy?

Revised policy. Dog licence fees were originally set in 1983 by the Dogs Order (Northern Ireland) 1983. Dog licence fees were amended in 2011 by the Dogs Amendment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

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

The policy would increase the dog licence fees for single licences, block licences and concessionary dog licences in Northern Ireland. The dog licence fee amounts would be specified in legislation and in line with the rate of inflation.

A block licence applies to a licence for three or more dogs kept by the dog owner at the same premises. A concessionary dog licence applies to dog owners on income related benefits or dog owners who have their dog neutered.

The policy aims to ensure that the dog licensing system in Northern Ireland remains sustainable and capable of meeting statutory enforcement duties. It seeks to provide councils with additional resources to manage stray dogs, conduct investigations, and enforce dog control legislation. Increasing the fee will support wider public safety, reduce environmental nuisance, and improve dog welfare outcomes.

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.

No. Increasing dog licence fees would affect all dog owners in NI and there is no evidence to suggest that it would impact on any particular section 75 group within the community.

There will, however, be positive impacts to S75 groupings overall by enhancing public safety by implementing better controls over dog ownership and it may also help promote responsible dog ownership as more careful consideration may be given before purchasing a dog.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA)

Who owns and who implements the policy?

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) is responsible for dog control policy and legislation.

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

District Councils - will be the main organisations affected by the policy, as they are responsible for enforcing the legislation, but they will also benefit from this policy as increasing the dog licence fees will help councils to cover the cost of dog control services in their council area.

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

What are they?

The Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983

The Dogs (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 2011

The Dogs (Licensing and Identification) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012

Who owns them?

DAERA

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](#).

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:

The proposed policy would affect all dog owners in Northern Ireland required to obtain a licence. Officials have researched this policy and considered how it could have an impact on different groups in Northern Ireland. There is no evidence available to suggest that increasing dog licensing fees will impact on stakeholders as the result of their religious beliefs.

Data from the 2021 Census indicates that the main current religions in Northern Ireland were: 42.3% Catholic, 16.6% Presbyterian, 11.6% Church of Ireland, 2.4% Methodist, 6.9% Other Christian denominations and 1.3% 'Other' religions. In addition, 17.4% of the population had 'no religion'¹.

¹ [census-2021-ms-b19.xlsx](#)

Statistics provided by the UK Pet Food Association in 2024² indicates that there are 13.5 million dogs in the United Kingdom and that 36% of UK households own dogs. In addition, in 2024 it was estimated that 60% of households in the UK had a pet.

A survey from the Pet Food Manufacturers Association (PFMA) from 2022³ indicated that in Northern Ireland had a higher percentage of homes with pet dogs (44%). Data from Pet Business World indicates that 55% of pet owners live in the city and about one-third are under the age of 40.

There is no evidence to suggest that pet ownership differs by religious belief or that religious belief will be impacted by this legislation.

Political Opinion evidence/information:

The proposed policy would affect all dog owners in Northern Ireland required to obtain a licence. Officials have researched this policy and considered how it could have an impact on different groups in Northern Ireland. There is no evidence available to suggest that increasing dog licensing fees will impact on stakeholders as the result of their political opinion.

However, results from the Northern Ireland Life and Times 2022⁴ survey showed the following political opinions of those interviewed:

- Unionist – 31%
- Nationalist – 26%
- Neither – 38%
- Other – 1%
- Don't know – 4%

² [UK Pet Food 2024 | Annual Report](#)

³ [PFMA 2022 Annual Report | Pet Food Manufacturers Association](#)

⁴ [Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 2022: Online Questionnaire](#)

There is no evidence to suggest that pet ownership figures stated above differ by political opinion, nor will political opinion be impacted as a result of the introduction of this legislation.

Racial Group evidence/information:

The proposed policy would affect all dog owners in Northern Ireland required to obtain a licence. Officials have researched this policy and considered how it could have an impact on different groups in Northern Ireland. There is no evidence available to suggest that increasing dog licensing fees will impact on stakeholders as the result of their racial background.

A paper on socio-demographics of pet ownership among adolescents in Great Britain, found ethnicity to be the single most important predictor of pet ownership, with white adolescents being more likely to own any type of pets than non-white adolescents.

Census 2021 figures show 96.6% of the NI population identify as White⁵. The new policy will impact all dog owners, and the general public, irrespective of racial group.

Age evidence/information:

The proposed policy would affect all dog owners in Northern Ireland required to obtain a licence. Officials have researched this policy and considered how it could have an impact on different groups in Northern Ireland. There is no evidence available to suggest that increasing dog licensing fees will impact on stakeholders disproportionately as the result of their age.

⁵ [census-2021-ms-b01.xlsx](#)

Census 2021 figures show the following age breakdown for the NI population⁶:

- 0-14 – 19.2%
- 15-39 – 31.2%
- 40-64 – 32.4%
- 65 and over – 17.2%

A BMC veterinary Research paper on sociodemographic factors associated with pet ownership noted that pet ownership increased during childhood (up to age 10 years) and was expected to continue on this trajectory. However, it was found to peak, at age 11 for all pet types, then slightly decreased afterwards for all pet types except cats and dogs, which slightly increased.

A PDSA animal wellbeing report in 2022⁷ indicated that dog owners are less likely to be in the age range 25-34 (14%) or 35-44 (14%) compared to cat (16% and 17% respectively), but more likely to be 55+ years (36%).

Marital Status evidence/information:

The proposed policy would affect all dog owners in Northern Ireland required to obtain a licence. Officials have researched this policy and considered how it could have an impact on different groups in Northern Ireland. There is no evidence available to suggest that increasing dog licensing fees will impact on stakeholders as the result of their marital status.

Data from the 2021 census showed that 45.6% of the population in NI⁸ are married, 38.1% single, 6.0% divorced, 6.4% widowed and 3.8% separated. The policy will affect all dog owners equally, irrespective of marital status.

⁶ [census-2021-ms-a02.xlsx](#)

⁷ [pdsa-paw-report-2022.pdf](#)

⁸ [census-2021-ms-a30.xlsx](#)

A PDSA animal wellbeing report in 2022⁹ showed that dog owners are less likely to live in household of 1 person (12%) or 2 people (40%) but are more likely to be in 3-4 person households (38%) or 5+ people (8%).

Nevertheless, there is no evidence to suggest that marital status as a factor might be impacted by this legislation.

Sexual Orientation evidence/information:

The proposed policy would affect all dog owners in Northern Ireland required to obtain a licence. Officials have researched this policy and considered how it could have an impact on different groups in Northern Ireland. There is no evidence available to suggest that increasing dog licensing fees will impact on stakeholders as the result of their sexual orientation.

Data from the 2021 census showed that approximately 90% of the population are heterosexual, 2.1% gay, lesbian, bisexual or other sexual orientation, and 7.9% did not wish to state or left the question unanswered¹⁰. However, this policy will affect all dog owners in NI, irrespective of sexual orientation.

There is no evidence to suggest that pet ownership figures stated above differ by sexual orientation or that sexual orientation as a factor will be impacted by the introduction of this legislation.

Men & Women generally evidence/information:

The proposed policy would affect all dog owners in Northern Ireland required to obtain a licence. Officials have researched this policy and considered how it could have an impact on different groups in Northern Ireland. There is no

⁹ [pdsa-paw-report-2022.pdf](#)

¹⁰ [census-2021-ms-c04.xlsx](#)

evidence available to suggest that increasing dog licensing fees will impact on stakeholders disproportionately as a result of their gender.

Data from the 2021 census showed that 51% of the population are female and 49% male¹¹. Data from a Pet Food Manufacturers Association (PFMA) survey from 2022¹² indicates that households who have a dog are 37% male and 32% female in the UK.

This policy will affect all dog owners in NI, irrespective of sex.

There is no evidence to suggest that gender as a factor will be impacted by the introduction of this legislation.

Disability evidence/information:

The proposed policy would affect all dog owners in Northern Ireland required to obtain a licence. Those who have a dog wholly or mainly for the purpose of assisting that person to carry out normal day-to-day activities relevant to their disability are not required to obtain a licence for that dog. Officials have researched this policy and considered how it could have an impact on different groups in Northern Ireland. There is no evidence available to suggest that increasing dog licensing fees will impact on stakeholders with disabilities, who are required to obtain a licence, disproportionately. Local councils collect data to dog licences in their area and the application form for a dog licence does not request details about disabilities.

Data from the 2021 census shows that 44.9% of the NI population are living with long term health problems or disabilities which impact their day-to-day activities a lot¹³.

¹¹ [census-2021-ms-a07.xlsx](#)

¹² [PFMA 2022 Annual Report | Pet Food Manufacturers Association](#)

¹³ [census-2021-ms-d03.xlsx](#)

Dependants evidence/information:

The proposed policy would affect all dog owners in Northern Ireland. Officials have researched this policy and considered how it could have an impact on different groups in Northern Ireland. There is no evidence available to suggest that increasing dog licensing fees will impact on stakeholders disproportionately due to having dependants. Local councils collect the data in relation to dog licences in their area and the application form does not request details about dependents.

Data from the 2021 census shows that 30.7% of households have one or more dependent child under the age of 18¹⁴.

Data from a Pet Food Manufacturers Association (PFMA) survey from 2022¹⁵ indicates 46% of households who have children also have a dog in the UK.

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision?

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

Religious belief

The legislation will increase dog licence fees for single, block and concessionary licences in Northern Ireland. This policy will be applied to all dog owners required to obtain a licence in Northern Ireland. People in this

¹⁴ [census-2021-ms-a24.xlsx](#)

¹⁵ [PFMA 2022 Annual Report | Pet Food Manufacturers Association](#)

equality category are not identified as having distinct needs, experiences or priorities.

Political Opinion

The legislation will increase dog licence fees for single, block and concessionary licences in Northern Ireland. This policy will be applied to all dog owners required to obtain a licence in Northern Ireland. People in this equality category are not identified as having distinct needs, experiences or priorities.

Racial Group

The legislation will increase dog licence fees for single, block and concessionary licences in Northern Ireland. This policy will be applied to all dog owners required to obtain a licence in Northern Ireland. People in this equality category are not identified as having distinct needs, experiences or priorities.

Age

The legislation will increase dog licence fees for single, block and concessionary licences in Northern Ireland. This policy will be applied to all dog owners required to obtain a licence in Northern Ireland. People in this equality category are not identified as having distinct needs, experiences or priorities.

Marital status

The legislation will increase dog licence fees for single, block and concessionary licences in Northern Ireland. This policy will be applied to all dog owners required to obtain a licence in Northern Ireland. People in this

equality category are not identified as having distinct needs, experiences or priorities.

Sexual orientation

The legislation will increase dog licence fees for single, block and concessionary licences in Northern Ireland. This policy will be applied to all dog owners required to obtain a licence in Northern Ireland. People in this equality category are not identified as having distinct needs, experiences or priorities.

Men and Women Generally

The legislation will increase dog licence fees for single, block and concessionary licences in Northern Ireland. This policy will be applied to all dog owners required to obtain a licence in Northern Ireland. People in this equality category are not identified as having distinct needs, experiences or priorities.

Disability

The legislation will increase dog licence fees for single, block and concessionary licences in Northern Ireland. This policy will be applied to all dog owners required to obtain a licence in Northern Ireland. It is understood that people who have a disability may require assistance dogs to aid them in carrying out day to day activities and so they are not required to obtain a dog licence in those circumstances. People in this equality category required to obtain a licence are not identified as having distinct needs, experiences or priorities.

Dependants

The legislation will increase dog licence fees for single, block and concessionary licences in Northern Ireland. This policy will be applied to all dog owners required to obtain a licence in Northern Ireland. People in this equality category are not identified as having distinct needs, experiences or priorities.

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.

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*:

Based on the available evidence cited above, there is nothing to indicate that pet ownership varies by religious belief or that this legislation would

have any impact on individuals due to their religious belief. It is therefore the opinion of DAERA that the proposed increase in fees will have no adverse effect on equality of opportunity for this group as it applies equally to all dog owners regardless of Section 75 category.

What is the level of impact? Minor ☐ Major ☐ None ☒

(select as appropriate)

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

Based on the available evidence cited above, there is no evidence to suggest that political opinion has an impact on pet ownership, nor will political opinion be impacted as a result of the introduction of this legislation. It is therefore the opinion of DAERA that the proposed increase in fees will have no adverse effect on equality of opportunity for this group as it applies equally to all dog owners regardless of Section 75 category.

What is the level of impact? Minor ☐ Major ☐ None ☒

(select as appropriate)

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

Based on the available evidence cited above, there is no evidence to suggest that racial group has an impact on pet ownership, nor will racial groups be impacted as a result of the introduction of this legislation. It is therefore the opinion of DAERA that the proposed increase in fees will have no adverse effect on equality of opportunity for this group as it applies equally to all dog owners regardless of Section 75 category.

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

Details of the likely policy impacts on Age:

Based on the available evidence cited above, there is no evidence to suggest that age has an impact on pet ownership, nor will age be impacted as a result of the introduction of this legislation. It is therefore the opinion of DAERA that the proposed increase in fees will have no adverse effect on equality of opportunity for this group as it applies equally to all dog owners regardless of Section 75 category.

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

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

Based on the available evidence cited above, there is no evidence to suggest that marital status has an impact on pet ownership, nor will marital status be impacted as a result of the introduction of this legislation. It is therefore the opinion of DAERA that the proposed increase in fees will have no adverse effect on equality of opportunity for this group as it applies equally to all dog owners regardless of Section 75 category.

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

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

Based on the available evidence cited above, there is no evidence to suggest that sexual orientation has an impact on pet ownership, nor will sexual orientation be impacted as a result of the introduction of this legislation. It is therefore the opinion of DAERA that the proposed increase in fees will have no adverse effect on equality of opportunity for this group as it applies equally to all dog owners regardless of Section 75 category.

What is the level of impact Minor ☐ Major ☐ None ☒

(select as appropriate)

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

Based on the available evidence cited above, there is no evidence to suggest that gender has an impact on pet ownership, nor will gender be impacted as a result of the introduction of this legislation. It is therefore the opinion of DAERA that the proposed increase in fees will have no adverse effect on equality of opportunity for this group as it applies equally to all dog owners regardless of Section 75 category.

What is the level of impact? Minor ☐ Major ☐ None ☒

(select as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Disability*:

Based on the available evidence cited above, there is no evidence to suggest that disability has an impact on pet ownership, nor will disability be impacted as a result of the introduction of this legislation. It is

therefore the opinion of DAERA that the proposed increase in fees will have no adverse effect on equality of opportunity for this group as it applies equally to all dog owners regardless of Section 75 category.

What is the level of impact? Minor ☐ Major ☐ None ☒

(select as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on *Dependants*:

Based on the available evidence cited above, there is no evidence to suggest that dependents have an impact on pet ownership, nor will dependents be impacted as a result of the introduction of this legislation. It is therefore the opinion of DAERA that the proposed increase in fees will have no adverse effect on equality of opportunity for this group as it applies equally to all dog owners regardless of Section 75 category.

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:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

There is no impact envisaged on, or opportunity to promote equality of opportunity for people within this category. However, the proposed reforms will be subject to a public consultation, and the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

Political Opinion - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

There is no impact envisaged on, or opportunity to promote equality of opportunity for people within this category. However, the proposed reforms will be subject to a public consultation, and the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

Racial Group - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

There is no impact envisaged on, or opportunity to promote equality of opportunity for people within this category. However, the proposed reforms will be subject to a public consultation, and the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

Age - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

There is no impact envisaged on, or opportunity to promote equality of opportunity for people within this category. However, the proposed reforms will be subject to a public consultation, and the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

Marital Status - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons

There is no impact envisaged on, or opportunity to promote equality of opportunity for people within this category. However, the proposed reforms will be subject to a public consultation, and the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

Sexual Orientation - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

There is no impact envisaged on, or opportunity to promote equality of opportunity for people within this category. However, the proposed reforms will be subject to a public consultation, and the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

Men and Women generally - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

There is no impact envisaged on, or opportunity to promote equality of opportunity for people within this category. However, the proposed reforms will be subject to a public consultation, and the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

Disability - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

There is no impact envisaged on, or opportunity to promote equality of opportunity for people within this category. However, the proposed reforms will be subject to a public consultation, and the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

Dependants - If Yes, provide details:

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

There is no impact envisaged on, or opportunity to promote equality of opportunity for people within this category. However, the proposed reforms will be subject to a public consultation, and the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

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*:

This policy is not expected to impact on good relations between people of different religious beliefs because it applies to all dog owners regardless of religious beliefs.

What is the level of impact? Minor ☐ Major ☐ None ☒

(select as appropriate)

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

This policy is not expected to impact on good relations between people of different political opinions because it applies to all dog owners regardless of political opinion.

What is the level of impact? Minor ☐ Major ☐ None ☒

(select as appropriate)

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

This policy is not expected to impact on good relations between people of different racial groups because it applies to all dog owners regardless of racial group.

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:**

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

No, the policy will apply equally to all stakeholders regardless of religious belief.

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

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

No, the policy will apply equally to all stakeholders regardless of political opinion.

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

N/A

If No, provide reasons:

No, the policy will apply equally to all stakeholders regardless of racial group.

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.

The policy will apply equally to all dog owners who require a licence so people with multiple identities will not be adversely affected.

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?**

The proposed policy would apply equally to all stakeholders. It is not anticipated that it will provide an opportunity to promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability. However, the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

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

It does not provide an obvious opportunity to increase the participation by disabled people in public life. This policy is in relation to increasing dog licence fees in Northern Ireland and will apply equally to all stakeholders. However, the responses to the consultation will be monitored to inform the position.

Part 3. Screening decision (Please delete as appropriate)

“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.

The policy proposes to increase the dog licence fees for single, block and concessionary dog licences in Northern Ireland to help cover the cost of dog control services, enhance public safety through improved dog control and promote responsible dog ownership.

This Equality and Human Rights Screening Exercise which assessed evidence relating to S75 considerations, including equality of opportunity and good relations, Disability Duties and Human Rights has concluded that the policy would apply equally to all dog owners and no group will be disproportionately impacted.

A public consultation will however invite comments on the proposals, and on this Equality and Human Rights Screening Exercise, and responses will be monitored to further inform the position.

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.

N/A. No mitigations or alternatives are needed. The policy will apply to dog owners equally. A public consultation will however invite comments on the proposals, and on this Equality and Human Rights Screening Exercise, and responses will be monitored to further inform the position.

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

N/A

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.

N/A

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	N/A
Social need	N/A
Effect on people’s daily lives	N/A
Relevance to a public authority’s functions	N/A

Priority criterion	Rating (1-3)
Total score	N/A

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.

N/A

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:

DAERA will consider all comments generated from the relevant public consultation. Should there be a reduction in the number of dogs being licensed following an increase in fees over a certain period may indicate an adverse impact which would be investigated further.

Good Relations:

DAERA will consider all comments generated from the relevant public consultation. Should there be a reduction in the number of dogs being licensed following an increase in fees over a certain period may indicate an adverse impact which would be investigated further.

Disability Duties:

DAERA will consider all comments generated from the relevant public consultation. Should there be a reduction in the number of dogs being licensed following an increase in fees over a certain period may indicate an adverse impact which would be investigated further.

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

Equality & Disability Duties – Screening Template

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.

No adverse impact on human rights have been identified.

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

No ways to positively promote human rights have been 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

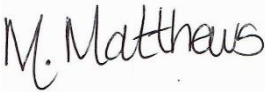
Screening assessment completed by (Staff Officer level or above) -

Name: Michelle Matthews

Grade: Deputy Principal

Branch: Animal Welfare & Dog Control Policy Branch **Date:** 24/03/2026

Signature: please insert a scanned image of your signature.

A rectangular box containing a scanned image of a handwritten signature in black ink, which reads "M. Matthews".

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

Name: Brian Dooher

Grade: 3

Branch: VSAHG

Date: 16/4/26

Signature: please insert a scanned image of your signature.

A rectangular box containing a scanned image of a handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "B. Dooher".

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 form will be placed on the DAERA website and a link provided to the Department’s Section 75 consultees.

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

1. 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.
2. Everyone charged with a criminal offence shall be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law.
3. 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)
Jubilee House
111 Ballykelly Road
Ballykelly
Limavady
BT49 9HP

Tel: 028 7744 2027

Email: equality@daera-ni.gov.uk



Department of

**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

An Roinn

**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Depairtment o'

**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**