



NIFRS Corporate Plan 2015-2020 and Annual Business Plan 2015-2016

**Section 75 & Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998
SCREENING REPORT**

August 2015

Protecting Our Community



Part 1: Policy Scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy or policy area. 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.

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

Information about the policy

Name of the policy or policy area:

Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service Corporate Plan 2015-2020 and Annual Business Plan 2015-16

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy/policy area?

Existing	Revised	New
		✓

Brief Description

The aim of NIFRS Corporate Plan 2015-20 and Annual Business Plan 2015-16 is to set out how Northern Ireland Fire & Rescues Service (NIFRS) will continue delivering effective services whilst, at the same time, delivering an affordable and sustainable service. The Corporate Plan 2015-2020 highlights recent achievements and sets out how NIFRS intends to face its challenges for the future and specifically in each of the five Annual Business Plans arising during the Corporate Plan lifetime.

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

In pursuit of NIFRS Vision and Mission, the Corporate Plan 2015-2020 document details Strategic Aims and Strategic Objectives, together with Strategic Outcomes over the next five years and provides a framework which outlines how NIFRS will deliver outcomes and measure performance.

The Corporate Plan 2015-2020 is built around four Key Strategic Objectives:-

- Prevention, Protection and Emergency Response.
- Effectively Managing Resources
- Supporting our People
- Effective Governance, Performance and improvement

In addition the Corporate Plan 2015-2020 will reflect the NIFRS Board statutory duties and, within those duties, the priorities set by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) the current governing body. This is outlined as a requirement in the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum produced by the Department which sets out a requirement for NIFRS to produce a Corporate Plan which will cover 3-5 years and an Annual Business Plan of key actions.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?

YES	NO	N/A
✓		

If YES, explain how.

The Corporate Plan contains a number of key organisational strategies together with a governance framework.

- Integrated Risk Management Strategy
- Prevention and Protection Strategy
- Road Safety Strategy
- Human Resources Strategy
- Health and Safety Strategy

The above Strategies are subject to screening and consultation under the Section 75 process, involving stakeholder engagement.

NIFRS must also have desirability to promoting good relations in respect of religious belief and political opinion. NIFRS provides an emergency response across all of Northern Ireland, irrespective of local demographics. Operational service delivery is underpinned by risk analysis and allocating resources appropriate to identified risk and need. The above Strategies are all focused on protecting the community and driving down risk and are informed by interpreting corporate information, statistical data and engaging with partner agencies, service users and other key stakeholders.

There is no evidence to suggest that the strategic outcomes would have a detrimental impact on Good Relations.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

The Director of Planning, Performance and Governance is responsible for the development and implementation of the Corporate Plan 2015-2020 and Annual Business Plan.

Who owns and who implements each element of the policy?

The NIFRS Corporate Plan 2015-2020 and Annual Business Plan 2015-2016 is owned by the NIFRS Board and is implemented by the Corporate Management Team, through the Directorate and Area Command organisation structure. Responsibility lies with the Director of Planning, Performance and Governance for the publication and dissemination of the Corporate Plan and Annual Business Plan and also for quarterly monitoring of performance in relation to the Annual Business Plan tasks

Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?

YES	NO	N/A
✓		

If YES, are they

Financial: YES (If YES, please detail)

Contributing factors to the successful implementation of the NIFRS Corporate Plan 2015-2020 and Annual Business Plan 2015-2016:-

- Implementation of budget monitoring across the organisation to ensure objectives can be reasonably achieved within resource allocation.

Detracting factors to the successful implementation of the NIFRS Corporate Plan 2015-2020 and Annual Business Plan 2015-2016:-

- The ongoing implementation of efficiency savings will negatively impact on the Strategic Outcomes indicated in the Plan

Legislative: Y / N (If YES, please detail)

Not applicable. However, it is noted that NIFRS is required under the 'Management Statement and Financial Memorandum' to produce a Corporate Plan and Annual Business Plan and present same to Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety (DHSSPS) within agreed timescales. This is a joint document between DHSSPS and NIFRS outlining the requirements of NIFRS in relation to its Board and management of the Service

Other, please specify:

- DHSSPS issue a list of annual measures to be included in Arms-Length Bodies (ALB) business plans. NIFRS has to include these measures in the Annual Business Plan and report on performance bi-annually to the Department
- Development of the Corporate Plan is 'top-down bottom-up' process with objectives that are drilled down locally from Directorate level to Districts, Stations and Headquarter Units.
- The Corporate objectives are also part of the individual performance management process for all employees

Main stakeholders affected

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

Staff:

NIFRS Board and all NIFRS employees – the Corporate Management Team, members of the Directorate and Area Command management teams and all employees involved in front line service delivery and support roles

Service users:

The general public

Other public sector organisations:

- DHSSPS
- Partner agencies – Police Service for Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland Ambulance Service, Maritime Coastguard Agency
- Local City and District Councils
- MLAs/MPs/local Councillors
- Other government departments – Department of Finance & Personnel; Department of Environment
- Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

Voluntary/community/trade unions:

Section 75 representative groups and organisations. NIFRS Representative Bodies – Fire Brigades Union; NIPSA; UNITE the Union; Retained Firefighters Union

Other, please specify:

Not applicable

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

What are they and who owns them?

The Corporate Plan contains a number of key organisational strategies together with our governance framework. These strategies/documents include:

- NIFRS Integrated Risk Management Plan
- NIFRS Prevention and Protection Strategy
- Road Safety Strategy
- Human Resources Strategy
- Health & Safety Strategy
- Equality & Diversity Strategy

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.

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

Section 75 Category	Details of Evidence/Information
	<p>To ensure that equality is mainstreamed into the development of the NIFRS Corporate Plan 2015-2020 and Annual Business Plan 2015-2016, the Corporate Services Manager carried out initial equality screening on a proposed draft document. This involved completing a preliminary screening questionnaire and considering the Section 75 profile of the workforce.</p> <p>As part of the screening process, the lead officer identified the relevant stakeholders and also factors that would contribute to or detract from successful implementation of the Framework.</p> <p>The Section 75 profile of the NIFRS workforce in terms of the equality categories indicated that women remain significantly under-represented at only 10% of total employees and, in particular amongst the uniformed category. It is also evident that minority ethnic groups and people with disabilities are also under-represented. In relation to community background, 55% of employees are Protestant, 40% are Roman Catholic and 5% are from an 'Other' background.</p> <p>An internal and external consultation exercise took place on the NIFRS Corporate Plan 2015-2020 and Annual Business Plan 2015-2016, during 22 May to 14 August 2015.</p> <p>The consultation process involved communication to all employees signposting them to the Corporate Plan consultation document and questionnaire. The consultation exercise was also circulated electronically to the NIFRS Section 75 consultee list and was promoted on the NIFRS website, along with downloadable documents and consultation questionnaire.</p>

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 for each of the Section 75 categories

Section 75 Category	Details of Needs/Experiences/Priorities
	<p>In relation to disability and accessibility of NIFRS corporate information accessibility of the NIFRS Corporate Plan 2015-2020 and Annual Business Plan 2015-2016 NIFRS gave a commitment to ensuring that the document would be made available in alternative formats, where reasonable.</p> <p>At the time of initial screening no other specific needs were identified for any of the Section 75 groups. The Corporate Plan is designed around a number of key strategies which are subject to individual consultation processes including Section 75.</p> <p>No responses were received during the consultation process and no different needs, experiences or priorities were identified, over and above meeting accessible information needs for persons with disabilities, as already acknowledged during initial screening.</p>

Part 2: Screening Questions

Introduction

1. If the conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 categories, then you may decide to screen the policy **out**. If a policy is 'screened out', you should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.
2. If the conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to an EQIA.
3. If the conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an EQIA, or to measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or an alternative policy.

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 hence it would be appropriate to conduct an EQIA;
- 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 among affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;
- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

In favour of 'minor' impact

- a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
- b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
- c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
- d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of none

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

Taking into account the earlier evidence, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity / good relations for those affected by this policy, by applying the following screening questions and the 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 grounds? Minor/Major/None		
Section 75 Category	Details of Policy Impact	Level of Impact? Minor/Major/None
Religious belief	None identified	None
Political opinion	None identified	None
Racial / ethnic group	None identified	None
Age	None identified	None
Marital status	None identified	None
Sexual orientation	None identified	None
Men and women generally	None identified	None
Disability	None identified	None
Dependants	None identified	None

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

Section 75 Category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
<p>Men and Women generally</p> <p>Persons with disabilities and persons without</p> <p>Religious belief, political opinion</p> <p>Racial group</p>	<p>No consultation responses were received and no significant adverse impacts for any of the S75 groups identified.</p> <p>However, it is recognised that women remain significantly under-represented in the NIFRS workforce at only 10% of total employees and, in particular amongst the uniformed category. Under the Corporate Plan and Annual Business Plan, objectives on recruitment and selection (under the key Strategic Theme 'Supporting our People') will continue to focus on areas of under-representation</p> <p>Also, it is evident that minority ethnic groups and people with disabilities are also under-represented. In relation to community background, 55% of employees are Protestant, 40% are Roman Catholic and 5% are from an 'Other' background. These aspects are also kept under review as part of HR business planning.</p>	

3 To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? **Minor/Major/None**

Good Relations Category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact Minor/Major/None
Religious belief	<p>The Corporate Plan and Annual Business Plan covers all aspects of NIFRS business over a 5 year period. This includes our operational activities; Integrated Risk Management Plan and also community prevention and protection initiatives, targeted at specific risk areas which includes minority groups</p>	Minor
Political opinion		
Racial group		

4 Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?		
Good relations category	If Yes , provide details	If No , provide reasons
Religious belief Political opinion Racial group	<p>Human Resources annual business plan includes implementation of outreach measures to under-represented groups to promote firefighting as a viable career option. Roman Catholics continue to be under-represented in the operational workforce. However, the level of under-representation has significantly reduced in the past decade as a result of outreach and also changes to the NI demography.</p> <p>The Corporate Plan specifically includes annual business plan objectives in relation to Equality and Inclusion.</p> <p>The Corporate Plan specifically includes annual business plan objectives in relation to targeting community protection and education initiatives to identified 'at risk' groups, including minority ethnic groups</p>	

Additional considerations

Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?

(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

The annual business plan for Human Resources includes objectives for operational recruitment. Review of Wholetime Firefighter recruitment methods considers evidence eg academic attainment of young Protestant males in areas of social deprivation and this informs decision on future recruitment processes.

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

The Equality Commission has advised NIFRS to keep applicant success rates for Wholetime Firefighter under review. Some evidence in relation to young Protestant male academic attainment in Northern Ireland includes

- Dr Ken Harland and Sam McCready, Centre for Young Men’s Studies presentation to John Moore University, Liverpool 10 February 2010. www.cyms.ulster.ac.uk
- Taking Boys Seriously – A Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Male School-Life Experiences in Northern Ireland No 59, 2012; Dr Ken Harland and Sam McCready, Centre for Young Men’s Studies
- Education Inequalities in Northern Ireland Summary Report March 2015 Research conducted by: Dr Stephanie Burns, Prof Ruth Leitch, Prof Joanne Hughes, School of Education Queen’s University

Part 3: Screening Decision

In light of your answers to the previous questions, do you feel that the policy should: (please underline one):

- 1. Not be subject to an EQIA (with no mitigating measures required)**
- 2. Not be subject to an EQIA (with mitigating measures /alternative policies)**
- 3. Be subject to an EQIA**

If 1. or 2. (i.e. not be subject to an EQIA), please provide details of the reasons why:

1. Not to be subject to an EQIA and no mitigating measures required.

No consultation responses were received and no significant adverse impacts for any of the S75 groups identified.

If 2. (i.e. not be subject to an EQIA), in what ways can identified adverse impacts attaching to the policy be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced?

Not applicable

In light of these revisions, is there a need to re-screen the revised/alternative policy at a future date? YES/ NO

If YES, when & why?
Not applicable

If 3. (i.e. to conduct an EQIA), please provide details of the reasons:

Not applicable

Timetabling and Prioritising EQIA

If 3. or 4., is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities? **YES/ NO**

If YES, please provide details:

Not applicable

Please answer the following questions to determine priority for timetabling the EQIA. 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 EQIA.

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

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for EQIA. This list of priorities will assist you in timetabling the EQIA. Details of your EQIA timetable should be included in the quarterly Section 75 report.

Proposed date for commencing EQIA: **Not applicable**

Any further comments on the screening process and any subsequent actions?

None

Part 4: Monitoring

Effective monitoring will help identify any future adverse impacts arising from the policy which may lead you to conduct an EQIA, as well as help with future planning and policy development. You should consider the guidance contained in the Commission’s Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007). The Commission recommends that where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, then you should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

Please detail proposed monitoring arrangements below:

The Annual Business Plan is produced each year and the Corporate Plan is subject to a rolling review annually. In respect of individual Directorate business plans, where there are key strategies or policy developments these will be screened individually.

Part 5: Approval and Authorisation

Screened by:	Position/Job Title	Date
Hazel Kelly	Corporate Services Manager	October 2015
Approved by:		
Liz Cuddy	Director of Planning, Performance & Governance	October 2015
Referred to HR Manager Equality, Inclusion & Legal:		October 2015

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. The Policy Lead Officer will have involved the Equality Manager from the outset who will now make the Template easily accessible on the NIFRS website as soon as possible following completion. This is in compliance with Equality Commission for Northern Ireland requirements.

