

ARDS AND NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Policy Screening Form

1.	Policy Reference (Equality use only)	E 208
2.	Policy Name	Amendment of Standing Orders to enable remote attendance at Council meetings
3.	Existing / Revised / New Policy	Revised policy
4.	Responsible Officer	Chief Executive
5.	Description of policy to be screened	<p>The Local Government (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of District Council Meetings) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 came into effect on 1 May 2020. The Regulations make provision to enable councils to hold meetings remotely including (but not limited to) by telephone conferencing, video conferencing, live webcast and live interactive streaming. The Regulations apply to all councils and all council meetings including committee or sub-committee meetings, executive meetings and meetings of joint committees of two or more councils.</p> <p><u>Amendment to Standing Orders</u> In order to enable the remote attendance of Elected Members, the press and the public at Council and Committee meetings, the Council's Standing Orders were amended in line with the Regulations.</p>
	Aims and Expected Outcomes – what is the Policy expected to achieve?	<p>The Standing Orders have been amended in line with the 2020 Regulations to enable remote attendance at Council and Committee meetings due to the restrictions on travel and on social distancing introduced due to the coronavirus pandemic. Enabling this method of access to meetings enables the democratic process to continue despite the current health crisis.</p>
6.	Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit and how they may benefit.	<p>All Section 75 categories should benefit from this arrangement as it enables Committee and Council meetings to take place and provision will be made for all who are and may be required to attend to access them remotely. Where members of the public and press have the facility to do this they will be entitled to attend remotely with the same conditions as the attendance at the meetings.</p>

7.	Factors which could contribute to / detract from the intended aims / outcomes of the Policy when being implemented	All elected members and officers have been provided with the technology required to access the meetings remotely, however a small number could potentially have difficulties with using the equipment and fully participating in the meeting due to factors such as age or the need to have support to operate it – however this is being addressed by the Business Technology Section who will ensure training and support is provided to all who require it prior to the first meeting, and that all are thereafter content they can use the technology to attend and participate in remote meetings. Provision will be made if required for any individuals who still feel unable to operate the technology themselves to attend Council offices for the duration of the meeting, where Business Technology Officers will be on hand to provide support and assistance.
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8.	The main stakeholders on whom the policy will impact. For example, Employees, Potential Service Users and Community Groups Consider the internal and external impacts (either actual or potential) and comment, or list, information where appropriate	The Council, Elected Members, Officers of the Council, residents and ratepayers to the Borough, members of the press and members of the public.
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9.	Please provide details of other policies which have a bearing on this one.	
E 28 Corporate Complaints policy and procedure E 63 ANDBC Corporate Health and Safety Management Systems Policy E 64 Business Continuity Policy E 65 Information, Communications and Technology Policy E 72 Performance Improvement Plan E 153 Customer Care Strategy E 186 Ards and North Down Borough Council Scheme of Delegation	Ards and North Down Borough Council	

10.	Available evidence (quantitative and qualitative) considered as important to encourage completion in relation to :	
Religious Belief	Summary: The Northern Ireland Census 2011 (NISRA) statistics for the Borough area showed that 75% are or have been brought up in Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related) religions. While this varied across the borough from 17% in Portaferry ward to 87% in Carrowdore ward this does not have any relation to this policy. These compared to 48% for Northern Ireland as a whole.	

See table below

Data:

Religion or Religion Brought up in (Numbers with % in brackets)

	All usual residents	Catholic	Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related)	Other Religions	None
Northern Ireland	1,810,863 (100%)	817,385 (45%)	875,717 (48%)	16,592 (1%)	101,169 (6%)
Ards and North Down Borough Council	156,672 (100%)	20,550 (13%)	117,589 (75%)	1,729 (1%)	16,804 (11%)

Source: [Religion or religion brought up in. Census 2011, NISRA](#)

Political Opinion

Summary:

Electoral Office data from recent Local Government elections detail the political representation on Ards and North Down Council, The Stormont Executive for this electoral area and Westminster election. This data is an approximate measure of political opinion of the voting electorate within the Borough. Turnout to vote in North Down and Strangford constituencies tend to be lower than the rest of NI suggesting less strong political opinions. Of those who do turn out, the results show preferences for voting Unionist parties.

See table below

Data:

Council Election results

The most recent local council election (2nd May 2019) showed:

	Eligible Electorate	Votes Polled (% Turnout)	Elected Candidate											
			DUP	Sinn Féin	UUP	SDLP	Alliance	Independent	TUV	Green	PUP	Aontu	CCLA	

Northern Ireland	1,305,553	687,733 (52.7%)	122	105	75	59	53	24	6	8	3	1	1
Ards and North Down Borough Council	112,077	47,161 (42.1%)	14		8	1	10	3	1	3			
Ards Peninsula (DEA)	16,656	7,369 (44.2%)	3		1	1	1						
Bangor Central (DEA)	17,194	6,678 (38.8%)	2		1		1	1		1			
Bangor East and Donaghadee (DEA)	16,956	6,915 (40.8%)	2		2		1	1					
Bangor West (DEA)	13,479	5,448 (40.4%)	1		1		2			1			
Comber (DEA)	13,681	6,272 (45.8%)	2		1		1			1			
Holywood and Clontarf (DEA)	14,158	6,229 (44.0%)	1		1		2			1			
Newtownards (DEA)	19,953	8,250 (41.4%)	3		1		2	1					

Source: [The Electoral Office, NI](#)

Racial Group	<p>Summary: NISRA, NINIS and Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership data provide up to date data. The 2011 census showed that 32,000 (1.8%) of the usually resident population in Northern Ireland is from a minority ethnic background. Within the borough, the 2011 Census showed that 1.5% (2,300) were from a minority ethnic background. Across the borough this ranged from 5.2% in Loughview ward to 0.3% in Lisbane ward. See table below</p> <p>Data:</p>
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Ethnic Group (Numbers with % in brackets)

	All usual residents	White	Chinese	Indian	Bangladeshi	Other	Black African	Black Other	Mixed	Other
Northern Ireland	1,810,863 (100%)	1,778,449 (98%)	6,303 (0%)	6,198 (0%)	540 (0%)	6,089 (0%)	2,345 (0%)	12,710 (0%)	6,014 (0%)	3,654 (0%)
Ards and North Down Borough Council	156,672 (100%)	154,365 (99%)	406 (0%)	283 (0%)	177 (0%)	415 (0%)	139 (0%)	132 (0%)	556 (0%)	199 (0%)
Ards Peninsula	22,797 (100%)	22,641 (99%)	29 (0%)	17 (0%)	5 (0%)	17 (0%)	6 (0%)	2 (0%)	54 (0%)	26 (0%)
Bangor Central	23,524 (100%)	24,469 (98%)	105 (0%)	43 (0%)	17 (0%)	43 (0%)	26 (0%)	32 (0%)	9 (0%)	38 (0%)
Bangor East and Donaghadee	24,892 (100%)	22,648 (99%)	56 (0%)	27 (0%)	10 (0%)	91 (0%)	11 (0%)	2 (0%)	82 (0%)	19 (0%)
Bangor West	22,946 (100%)	17,763 (98%)	19 (0%)	135 (0%)	2 (0%)	11 (0%)	3 (0%)	26 (0%)	73 (0%)	15 (0%)
Comber	18,152 (100%)	18,216 (99%)	30 (0%)	8 (0%)	9 (0%)	35 (0%)	4 (0%)	8 (0%)	55 (0%)	17 (0%)
Hollywood and Clondeboye	18,382 (100%)	20,061 (98%)	65 (0%)	31 (0%)	23 (0%)	81 (0%)	81 (0%)	56 (0%)	1 (0%)	61 (0%)
Newtownards	20,560 (100%)	27,841 (99%)	105 (0%)	20 (0%)	111 (0%)	30 (0%)	8 (0%)	6 (0%)	75 (0%)	20 (0%)

Source: [Ethnic Group, Census 2011, NISRA](#)

Age

NISRA have published population projections for the Borough which show that the proportion of those aged 85 and over are expected to more than double within the next 25 years.
ANDBC has the highest % population of older people in Northern Ireland.
See table below

Data:

Age Groups (Numbers with % in brackets)

	0-15	16-39	40-64	65+	Total
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Northern Ireland	385,200 (21%)	583,116 (31%)	591,481 (32%)	291,824 (16%)	1,851,621 (100%)
Ards and North Down Borough Council	29,801 (19%)	43,239 (27%)	54,094 (34%)	31,663 (20%)	158,797 (100%)

Sources: [Demography and Methodology Branch, NISRA](#)
[World Health Organization](#)

Marital Status

The 2011 Northern Ireland Census showed that 48% of adults (those aged over 16 years of age) in Northern Ireland were either married or in a registered same-sex civil partnership. Within the borough, 54% of adults fell into this category. This varies across the borough from 36% in Central (Ards) ward to 64% in Lisbane ward.

See table below

Data:

Marital Status (All aged 16+) (Numbers with % in brackets)

	All usual residents	Single (never married or never registered a same-sex civil partnership)	Married	In a registered same-sex civil partnership	legally married or still legally in a same-sex civil partnership)	Divorced or formerly in a same-sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved	Widowed or surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership
Northern Ireland	1,431,540 (100%)	517,393 (36%)	680,831 (48%)	1,243 (0%)	56,911 (4%)	78,074 (5%)	97,088 (7%)
Ards and North Down Borough Council	126,945 (100%)	36,730 (29%)	67,866 (53%)	123 (0%)	4,328 (3%)	8,548 (7%)	9,350 (7%)

Source: [Northern Ireland 2011 Census, Marital Status](#)

Sexual orientation

Summary:

It should be noted that no reliable data is available on sexual orientation-NISRA are currently examining methodology on how to measure this. However, the 2011 census indicates that less than 1% of the Northern Ireland adult population (those aged 16 years and over) were in a registered same-sex civil partnership. This was similar to the borough as a whole. The Continuous Household Survey in Northern Ireland estimated this figure between 0.9% and 1.9% in 2015-2016. The Office for National Statistics estimates a similar range for the United Kingdom (1.7%).

Source: [Northern Ireland 2011 Census, Marital Status](#)
[ONS 2015 Sexual Identity](#)

Men & Women generally	<p>According to census (NISRA) almost half of the population of Northern Ireland were male (49%) and this was similar throughout Ards and North Down Borough Council (48%). See table below</p> <p>Data:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="467 331 1578 558"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Males</th> <th>Females</th> <th>All</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Northern Ireland</td> <td>887,323 (49%)</td> <td>923,540 (51%)</td> <td>1,810,863 (100%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ards and North Down Borough Council</td> <td>75,920 (48%)</td> <td>80,752 (52%)</td> <td>156,672(100%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Source: Age Structure, Census 2011, NISRA Review of statistical classification and delineation of settlements, NISRA</p>		Males	Females	All	Northern Ireland	887,323 (49%)	923,540 (51%)	1,810,863 (100%)	Ards and North Down Borough Council	75,920 (48%)	80,752 (52%)	156,672(100%)																		
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Disability	<p>The 2011 Census (NISRA) showed that 20% of the population in Ards and North Down area had a health issue or disability (including those related to old age) which has lasted or expected to last at least 12 months. (This was similar to the Northern Ireland figure of 21%.)</p> <p>Disability Living Allowances, 2015</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="467 842 1539 1780"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2015 (Disability Living Allowance Recipients)</th> <th>2015 (Multiple Disability Benefits) *MDB is aggregated data from Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance data, and data for Employment and Support allowance</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Northern Ireland</td> <td>209,280</td> <td>251,490</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ards and North Down Borough Council</td> <td>13,840</td> <td>18,080</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ards Peninsula</td> <td>2,920</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bangor Central</td> <td>2,250</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bangor East and Donaghadee</td> <td>1,740</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bangor West</td> <td>1,650</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Comber</td> <td>1,270</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Holywood and Clandeboye</td> <td>1,180</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Newtownards</td> <td>2,840</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Northern Ireland Census 2011 Long-term health problem or disability by long-term problem or disability</p>		2015 (Disability Living Allowance Recipients)	2015 (Multiple Disability Benefits) *MDB is aggregated data from Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance data, and data for Employment and Support allowance	Northern Ireland	209,280	251,490	Ards and North Down Borough Council	13,840	18,080	Ards Peninsula	2,920	n/a	Bangor Central	2,250	n/a	Bangor East and Donaghadee	1,740	n/a	Bangor West	1,650	n/a	Comber	1,270	n/a	Holywood and Clandeboye	1,180	n/a	Newtownards	2,840	n/a
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	Dependents	<p>Summary: In considering this dimension the following have been included: persons with responsibility for the care of a child, children, a person with a disability and or an older person. According to the Continuous Household Survey, 2013-2016, 37% of Ards and North Down claimed to have a dependent (This did not differentiate on the type of dependent). According to the 2011 Census, 7,474 households in Ards and North Down had a dependent child under the age of 4 (This might give an indication on the numbers who would have buggies or prams). Sources: Continuous Household Survey</p>
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11.	Based on data previously provided what are the needs, experiences and priorities for each of the following categories, in relation to this policy/decision?	
	Religious Belief	<p>In order to access the meetings remotely, all individuals must have access to technology (a computer, a laptop, a tablet or a smart phone) and the ability to use the technology. This is irrespective of their religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status, sexual orientation or gender. Also irrespective if they have a disability or dependents.</p> <p>Some individuals may require additional support in training, software or the equipment available due to their age if in the older age group, a disability or they may be required to attend to dependents when on meeting calls. However, the same meetings would be held in a physical location were they not held remotely, and it is likely this would restrict access to a number of people who would be unable to attend a physical meeting due to factors such as care for dependents, disability, or as is the case in the current Covid situation, due to the fact they are shielding for health or age related reasons.</p> <p>Members and Officers who are required to attend will all have their technology and user issues addressed through training and Business Technology support prior to the first meeting.</p>
n	Political Opinion	
	Racial Group	
	Age	
	Marital Status	
	Sexual orientation	
	Men & Women generally	
	Disability	
	Dependents	

Does this Policy require an Equality Impact Assessment?

1.	What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for each of the Section 75 categories?		
		Detail of Impact	Level of Impact Minor/Major/None
	Religious Belief	All individuals that are required to be present at the meetings will be supported in any way that will ensure they fully participate. The system of streaming will also	None
	Political Opinion		
	Racial Group		
	Age		
	Marital Status		

	Sexual orientation	give access to individuals who may not have otherwise been able to physically access the meetings. This will also include carers and those with a disability.	
	Men & Women generally		
	Disability		
	Dependents		

2.	Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories?		
		If "Yes", provide details	If "No", provide details
	Religious Belief	No as all individuals are provided with support that is appropriate to their needs in relation to taking part in the meetings. The facility to view meetings live will enable individuals who may not otherwise be able to access the meeting to watch them where they have access to the necessary software.	
	Political Opinion		
	Racial Group		
	Age		
	Marital Status		
	Sexual orientation		
	Men & Women generally		
	Disability		
Dependents			

3.	To what extent is the Policy likely to impact on Good Relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?		
		Details of Impact	Level of Impact Minor/Major/None
	Religious Belief	None	
	Political Opinion	This amendment to standing orders is a consequence of the restrictions of meetings and unnecessary travel due to the coronavirus pandemic.	
Racial Group			

4.	Are there opportunities to better promote Good Relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?		
		If "Yes" provide details	If "No" provide details
	Religious Belief	No as the arrangements are on account of the restrictions of meetings and unnecessary travel due to the coronavirus pandemic. Live streaming may encourage a greater range individuals to watch the meetings than would otherwise attend a physical meeting, thus increasing public participation in the democratic process.	
	Political Opinion		
Racial Group			

Additional Considerations

	Multiple Identity Considerations	Details of Impact or potential impact (Positive/Negative)
	<p>Are there any potential impacts of the policy decision on people with multiple identities? (e.g. disabled minority ethnic persons). Where appropriate provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.</p>	<p>The revised arrangements will impact on all individuals planning, preparing, taking part in and watching the meetings and each will have their own multiple identity.</p> <p>The technology will enable some individuals to remotely attend meetings who would not otherwise participate if it was a physical meeting, whilst some who are required to participate in remote meetings may find it more difficult, but all who are required to attend the meetings will be facilitated with reasonable adjustments.</p>

Disability Discrimination Order (NI) 2006

Does this proposed policy provide an opportunity to:	Yes / No	Explain your reasoning:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>better promote positive attitudes</u> towards disabled people - <u>increase participation</u> by disabled people in public life 	Yes	<p>This arrangement will better promote positive attitudes towards disabled people as reasonable adjustments will be in place for those that must participate and those who have the equipment at home but could not attend physical meetings will be able to watch proceedings.</p> <p>This may also increase the participation of disabled people and carers who would not be able to attend due to their responsibilities.</p>

Monitoring Arrangements

Section 75 places a requirement on the Council to have equality monitoring arrangements in place to assess the impact of policies and services, help identify barriers to fair participation and to better promote equality of opportunity.

Outline what data you could collect in the future to monitor the impact of this policy / decision on <u>equality, good relations and disability duties</u>	<p>Comments and complaints received by participants, particularly those that indicated they were unable to participate or view the meeting due to it being remote.</p> <p>Reasonable adjustments requested and those carried out.</p>
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I can confirm that the proposed policy / decision have been screened for:-

X	Equality of opportunity and good relations
X	Disabilities duties

On the basis of the answers to the screening questions, I recommend that this policy / decision is:-

<input type="checkbox"/>	Screened Out – No EQIA necessary (no impacts)
X	Screened Out – Mitigating Actions (minor impacts) Ensure that all reasonable adjustments that are identified are made to facilitate all who are required to participate in the meetings
<input type="checkbox"/>	Screened In – Necessary to conduct a full EQIA
	Please detail actions to be taken:

Screening assessment completed by:-

Name: Gillian Robinson
Title: Executive Officer
Date: 29 May 2020
Signature:

Director/Head of Service decision approved by:

Name: Stephen Reid
Title: Chief Executive
Date: 29 May 2020
Signature:

If an Equality Impact Assessment is required

Priority Rating for Timetabling an Equality Impact Assessment. (1-3)	Priority Criterion	Rating
	Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations	
	Social need	
	Effect on people's daily lives	
	Relevance to a public authority's functions	

Is this Policy Affected by Timetables established by other relevant Public Authorities?	
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	Monitoring Recommendation	
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	Approval and Authorisation	Position/Job Title:	Date:
	Screened by: Gillian Robinson	Executive Office	29 May 2020
	Approved by: Stephen Reid	Chief Executive	29 May 2020