

Screening Form

1. Is this a Policy
2. Name of Community Centres and Halls Pricing Policy 2024/25
Policy/Strategy/Plan/Public Service

3. Reference 312

4. Category of Revised
Policy/Strategy/Plan/Public Service

5. Please provide a description of the Policy/Strategy/Plan/Public Service

The revised policy provides details of the Community Centres and Halls 2022/23 budget performance and usage figures from 2023/24 year to date. However the focus of the revised policy is to provide rationale for a higher than inflation percentage increase to the 2024/25 pricing policy. Two appendices supplement the report, Appendix 1 includes details of the impact of the current pricing policy on staff costs subsidised by Council and ratepayers and estimated income based on the inflation percentage increase and proposed percentage increase (11% average). Appendix 2 details the current pricing policy and both options for 2024/25 percentage increase with additional relevant notes for reference.

6. Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.

The objective of the revised policy is to positively impact the 2024/25 rate setting process and budget performance of the Community Centres and Halls section. As highlighted in the report and appendices, the section is currently significantly subsidised by Council and ratepayers. The proposed percentage increase to the 2024/25 pricing policy will effectively manage the deficit between income per room hire and staff costs, without too excessively impacting customers. In addition, the proposed percentage increase will positively impact income and therefore provides the opportunity to reinvest into the Centres and Halls to the benefit of customers and residents of the Borough. In short, the revised policy aims to add £1 (11% on average) to the three main room hire prices rather than a 55p increase (6%).

7. Who initiated or wrote the Policy/Strategy/Plan/Public Service? Community Centres & Halls Manager

8. Who is responsible for the implementation of the Policy/Strategy/Plan/Public Service? Head of leisure Services

9. Is this policy affected by timetables established by other relevant Public Authorities? No

Equality

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

Yes

1a. If Yes, which Section 75 categories are expected to benefit?

All

1b. How are they expected to benefit?

The positive budget performance which is anticipated if the proposed percentage increase is approved will contribute to the continuity of the existing Community Centres and Halls service provision, therefore positively impacting all our Section 75 users. A positive budget performance will also provide opportunities for the section (staff, facilities, and processes) to be modernised and therefore again positively impacting our customers.

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

Yes

2a. If yes, are they:

Financial - is it dependent on financial support of Council or another named Body or Organisation?

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

Staff, Service Users, Other Public Sector organisations, Voluntary/Community/Trade Unions,
Potential Visitors

4. Is this policy associated with any other Council Policy (or Policies)?

Yes

4a. If yes, please state the related Policy (or Policies)

289 Charging and Income Policy

5. Does this policy affect Internal or External users?

Both

Evidence to help inform the Section 75 screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data.

6. What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy?

All

Religious belief evidence

Community halls are used by all aspects of religious belief.

Political opinion evidence

No bearing on this policy

Racial group evidence

Various Racial groups use community halls for meetings, events.

Age evidence

All age groups use the community halls.

Marital status evidence

No bearing on this policy

Sexual orientation evidence

No bearing on this policy

Men and women generally evidence

Several of the Section 75 categories are not asked for or recorded by the Community Centres or Halls service (age, sexual orientation, religious beliefs etc) but men and woman generally speaking in qualitative terms noted that a price increase would be acceptable given that for several years no price increase was implemented. In addition, the Centres and Halls are priced very competitively in compassion to similar facilities.

Disability evidence

Many disability groups use the facilities available.

Dependants evidence

The halls are used for those with dependants from Birthday parties to mums and tots groups.

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

7. Please provide details of different needs, experiences and priorities for each of the categories

Customers, of any Section 75 category, need a safe, clean, and effective Community Centre or Hall to attend an activity in. Their experience needs to be in accordance with Council's statutory compliance guidelines and a generally positive experience, free from prejudice of any kind. A priority for, disabled customers for example, is that the Centre or Hall is suitable for them to can access to and that the amenities within the Centre and hall are also accessible.

8. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Religious belief?

Minor

8a. Impact on equality of opportunity - Religious belief

A price increase may impact those with a religious belief, however the cost is minimum. Money generated will provide opportunities for the section (staff, facilities, and processes) to be modernised therefore having a positive impact on all customers.

9. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Political opinion?

Minor

9a. Impact on equality of opportunity - Political opinion

A price increase may impact those with a political opinion, however the cost is minimum. Money generated will provide opportunities for the section (staff, facilities, and processes) to be modernised therefore having a positive impact on all customers.

10. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Racial group?

Minor

10a. Impact on equality of opportunity - Racial group

A price increase may impact those racial groups, however the cost is minimum. Money generated will provide opportunities for the section (staff, facilities, and processes) to be modernised therefore having a positive impact on all customers.

11. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Age?

Minor

11a. Impact on equality of opportunity - Age

A price increase may impact age groups, however the cost is minimum. Money generated will provide opportunities for the section (staff, facilities, and processes) to be modernised therefore having a positive impact on all customers.

12. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Marital status?

Minor

12a. Impact on equality of opportunity - Marital status

A price increase may impact those with marital status, however the cost is minimum. Money generated will provide opportunities for the section (staff, facilities, and processes) to be modernised therefore having a positive impact on all customers.

13. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Sexual orientation?

Minor

13a. Impact on equality of opportunity - Sexual orientation

A price increase may impact those with a sexual orientation, however the cost is minimum. Money generated will provide opportunities for the section (staff, facilities, and processes) to be modernised therefore having a positive impact on all customers.

14. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Men and women generally?

Minor

14a. Impact on equality of opportunity - Men and women generally

A price increase may impact men and women, however the cost is minimum. Money generated will provide opportunities for the section (staff, facilities, and processes) to be modernised therefore having a positive impact on all customers.

15. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Disability?

Minor

15a. Impact on equality of opportunity - Disability

A price increase may impact those with a disability, however the cost is minimum. Money generated will provide opportunities for the section (staff, facilities, and processes) to be modernised therefore having a positive impact on all customers.

16. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, in relation to Dependants?

Minor

16a. Impact on equality of opportunity - Dependants

A price increase may impact those with dependants, however the cost is minimum. Money generated will provide opportunities for the section (staff, facilities, and processes) to be modernised therefore having a positive impact on all customers.

17. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories? If Yes, provide details. If No, provide reasons.

Religious belief

It is difficult to judge if this revised policy will better promote equality of opportunity for people within Section 75 categories, however the continuity of existing service provision, and potential enhancement of it, offered by this revised policy will ensure the current level of promotion and facilitation of equal opportunities will continue at the very least, if not improve through greater usage of the Centres and Halls.

Political opinion

It is difficult to judge if this revised policy will better promote equality of opportunity for people within Section 75 categories, however the continuity of existing service provision, and potential enhancement of it, offered by this revised policy will ensure the current level of promotion and facilitation of equal opportunities will continue at the very least, if not improve through greater usage of the Centres and Halls.

Racial group

It is difficult to judge if this revised policy will better promote equality of opportunity for people within Section 75 categories, however the continuity of existing service provision, and potential enhancement of it, offered by this revised policy will ensure the current level of promotion and facilitation of equal opportunities will continue at the very least, if not improve through greater usage of the Centres and Halls.

Age

The Centres and Halls currently provide numerous opportunities for people in this category to take part in activities that positively impact them physically, mentally, and socially. The continuity of this service provision for this category of people is crucial and will likely benefit from a positive budget performance and potential reinvestment by Council in the facilities.

Marital Status

It is difficult to judge if this revised policy will better promote equality of opportunity for people within Section 75 categories, however the continuity of existing service provision, and potential enhancement of it, offered by this revised policy will ensure the current level of promotion and facilitation of equal opportunities will continue at the very least, if not improve through greater usage of the Centres and Halls.

Sexual orientation

It is difficult to judge if this revised policy will better promote equality of opportunity for people within Section 75 categories, however the continuity of existing service provision, and potential enhancement of it, offered by this revised policy will ensure the current level of promotion and facilitation of equal opportunities will continue at the very least, if not improve through greater usage of the Centres and Halls.

Men and women generally

It is difficult to judge if this revised policy will better promote equality of opportunity for people within Section 75 categories, however the continuity of existing service provision, and potential enhancement of it, offered by this revised policy will ensure the current level of promotion and facilitation of equal opportunities will continue at the very least, if not improve through greater usage of the Centres and Halls.

Disability

A continuity of service provision in addition to positive budget performance made possible by this revised policy could benefit people in this category as it could highlight a need for change in the facilities or activities.

Dependants

A positive budget performance made possible by this revised policy could potentially benefit this category of people via investment in the facilities or activates at the Centres and Halls

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

None

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

Yes

19a. Please provide your reasons below

A continuation of current service provision, made possible by this revised policy, will potentially promote good relations opportunities between all Section 75 categories, for example at Community Development and other association / residents group events, activities, meetings held in the Centres and Halls.

Disability Discrimination Order (NI) 2006

20. Is there evidence to suggest that this policy would promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability?

Yes

20a. Provide details of opportunities identified

This revised policy will make the Community Centres and Halls section more feasible and therefore potentially encourage greater usage by this category of people whilst ensuring they can continue using our Centres and Halls.

21. Is there evidence to suggest that this policy would encourage the participation of people with a disability in public life?

No

Additional Considerations

22. Are there any potential impacts of the policy / decision (positive or negative) on people with multiple identities?

No

Monitoring Arrangements

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

Data on usage at Centres and Halls is currently collated and reviewed and therefore this is an existing monitoring method that would be appropriate to gauge if the pricing increase has discouraged customers from using the Centres and Halls. Feedback and complaints would also present an opportunity to monitor the impact of this revised policy. Discussions between the Community Centres and Halls Manager and attendees of User Forums could also be used to monitor the impact of this revised policy.

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

Screened Out - No negative impacts

26. Monitoring Recommendations

Ensure the Council's Complaints procedure is clearly advertised to all users of the Centres and Halls so feedback is available and encouraged. Monitoring of customer feedback will be added to the Centres and Halls management team's agenda to be discussed at monthly meetings.

Conclusion

The writer of this revised policy does not believe that any category of Section 75 will be negatively impacted by this proposal. The proposal, at the very least, offers the potential to ensure the continuity of the existing Community Centre and Halls provision throughout the Borough by increasing the pricing policy by 11% rather than the suggested 6%. This equals a £1 increase on most rooms and hall prices however some prices will not increase at all, including by the minimum 6%. It should be noted that currently available discounts on prices will remain unchanged for particular groups.

Please upload any supporting documents for review



Pre Section 75 Appendix1.docx



Pre Section 75 Appendix2.docx



Pre Section 75 Communitydocx

Email

enquiries@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

Screening Panel Comments

Appendix - Religious Belief

Religious belief (Internal)

* Small numbers removed as individuals could be identifiable

	Catholic	Protestant & other Christian	Other religions	Total
Males F/T	33	388	34	425
	8%	84%	8%	100%
Males P/T	*	*	*	8
	25%	63%	13%	100%
Females F/T	58	223	6	287
	20%	78%	2%	100%
Females P/T	12	20	5	35
	32%	54%	14%	100%
Total	105	606	46	757
	14%	80%	6%	100%

Religious belief (External)

The Northern Ireland Census 2021 (NISRA) statistics for the Borough area show the religious group the person belongs to or for people with no current religion their religious group of upbringing. People with no current religion and no religion of upbringing are labelled 'None'.

On Census Day 2021 in Northern Ireland just under one person in five (19.0%) either had 'no religion' (17.4%) or 'religion not stated' (1.6%). Nearly one person in three in Ards and North Down (32.1%) had 'no religion' or 'religion not stated' On census day 2021 bringing together information on current religion and religion of upbringing, 45.7% of the population were either Catholic or brought up as a Catholic, while 43.5% were recorded as 'Protestant and other Christian (including Christian related)'. Again, bringing together information on current religion and religion of upbringing, 1.5% of the population are classified as 'other religions' and 9.3% of the population identified that they neither belonged to nor were brought up in a religion. This points to the increasingly secular nature of the population ('None').

	All usual Residents	Catholic	Protestant and other Christian Religions	Other Religions	None
Ards and North Down	163,659	22,912	111,288	1,636	27,822
Northern Ireland	1,903,178	875,461	818,366	19,031	171,286
Ireland					
		Ards and North Down		Northern Ireland	
All Usual residents		163,659		1,903,178	
Catholic		18,003		799,334	
Presbyterian		47,461		323,540	

Church of Ireland	22, 912	228,381
Methodist	6,546	38,063
Other Chrtistian Religions	16,365	133,222
Other Religions	1,636	19,031
No Religion/Not stated	52,370	361,603

Appendix - Political Opinion

Political opinion (External)

Electoral Office data from recent Local Government elections (2023) and Northern Ireland Assembly Elections (2022) detail the political representation on Ards and North Down. Data also shows the turnout to vote. This tends to be lower than the rest of Northern Ireland, suggesting less strong political opinions, however the results show a preference in Ards and North Down for Unionist Parties.

Constituency	Registered Voters	Turnout
North Down	70,176	60%
Strangford	70,755	68%
Northern Ireland	1,373,731	63%

District Electoral Area	Eligible Electorate	Votes Polled
Overall Turnout (2023)		
Ards and North Down	123,736	57,677
Borough Council Area		
Overall Turnout (2023)	1,380,372	745,400
Northern Ireland		

Party	Local Government		NI Assembly	
	Seats Held ANDBC	Seats Held Northern Ireland	Elections seats	
			NI Assembly	
			North Down and Strangford	NI Assembly Elections Northern Ireland
Alliance	12	67	4	17
Aontù	0	0	0	0
DUP	14	122	3	25
Green	2	5	0	0
Independants	3	19	1	2
People before Profit	0	1	0	1
SDLP	1	39	0	8
Sinn Fèin	0	144	0	27
TUV	0	9	0	1
UUP	8	54	2	9
Other	0	1	0	0

Appendix - Racial Group

Racial group (Internal)

* Small numbers removed as individuals could be identifiable

Racial Group	Total	Percentage
White	682	78.66%
Black	*	*
Chinese	*	*
Other	*	*
Did not want to answer	*	*
Left Black	176	20.30%

Racial group (External)

On Census Day 2021, 3.4% of the population, or 65,600 people, belonged to minority ethnic groups. This is around double the 2011 figure (1.8% – 32,400 people) and four times the 2001 figure (0.8% – 14,300 people); Taken together the bulletin reports and tables released today show an increasing diversity from 2011 to 2021 in Northern Ireland's population across statistics on ethnic group, main language, country of birth and passports held. This increasing diversity is evident to a greater or lesser degree across all 11 Local Government Districts.

All Usual Residents	163,660
White	159,892
Irish Traveller	24
Roma	19
Indian	388
Chinese	500
Filipino	308
Pakistani	87
Arab	28
Other Asian	468
Black African	309
Black Other	135
Mixed	1,236
Other ethnicities	266

Main Language	Ards and North Down	Northern Ireland
English	160,385	1,808,019
Other	3,279	95,158

Passports Held	Ards and North Down	Northern Ireland
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All Usual Residents	163,659	1,903,178
UK only	109,651	894,493
Ireland Only	13,092	513,858
Uk and Ireland	13,098	95,158
Other Passport(s)	4,909	95,158
No Passport	21,275	304,508

Appendix - Age

Age (Internal)

Age Profile	Female	Female %	Male	Male %
16 to 29	20	6%	26	65%
30 to 39	75	23%	83	19%
40 to 49	105	33%	121	27%
50 to 59	80	25%	176	39%
65+	42	13%	41	9%
Total	322	100%	447	100%

Age (External)

On Census Day 2021 Ards and North down had the largest increase in the number of people aged 65 and over. This rose from 27,692 (17.7%) in 2011 to 36,226 (22.1%) in 2021, demonstrating the scale of population change due to ageing.

Age Profile	Northern Ireland	Ards and North Down
0 to 14	361,602	27,822
15 to 39	589,983	44,187
40 to 64	609,015	55,644
65+	323,539	36,226

Total	1,903,173	163,659
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Appendix - Marital Status

Marital Status (Internal)

* Small numbers removed as individuals could be identifiable

Marital Status	Total	Percentage
Single	180	20.76%
Married	405	46.71%
Divorced	35	4.04%
Co Habiting	14	1.61%
Separated	25	2.88%
Civil Partnership	*	*
Left Blank	207	23.88%

Marital Status (External)

Statistics classifies people aged 16 and over according to their legal marital or civil partnership status on Census Day 21 March 2021. The law in relation to marriage and civil partnership changed in the ten years to 2021. A summary of the changes in Northern Ireland is given below:

- civil partnership for opposite-sex couples became legal in late 2019;
- marriage for same-sex couples became legal in 2020; and
- in late 2020 a couple in a civil partnership could convert their status from civil partnership to marriage.

The rise in the 'single' population and the fall in the 'married' population here is in line with results from recent censuses in England and Wales. These figures mirror changes in society and specifically in personal relationships that has been witnessed over the last 50 years. Ards & North Down LGD, which has the oldest demographic profile of all 11 LGDs, has the highest percentage of adults who were widowed, at 8%.

Marital Status	Northern Ireland	Ards and North Down
Single	575,966	41,540
Married or in Civil Partnership	682,065	68,340
Separated, Divorced or Formally in a Civil Partnership	151,570	13,400
Widowed or Surviving partner from a Civil Partnership	97,004	10,720

Appendix - Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation

Statistics show that 2.1% (31,600) of NI population aged 16 and over identified as 'lesbian, gay, bisexual or other (LGB+)' and 90.0% (1,363,900) identified as 'straight or heterosexual'. More urban LGDs have a higher percentage of people who identified as LGB+. Almost 8% of our population aged 16 and over (119,300) either ticked 'prefer not to say' or chose not to answer the question. Taken together, these are labelled 'No sexual orientation stated' in these statistics.

8.8% percent of people who identified as LGB+ in Northern Ireland live in the Ards and North Down Borough, Statistics also show that 800 Households in the Borough are living in a same sex couple relationship.

Living in households by

relationship	Northern Ireland	Ards and North Down
Living in a Same Sex Couple	9,600	800
Not Living as a Couple	694,600	53,500
	Northern Ireland	Ards and North Down
All usual Residents (over 16)	1,515,700	134,000
Straight or Hetrosexual	1,364,130	121,940
Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual or other Sexual orientation	30,314	2,680
No sexual orientation stated	121,256	9,380

Appendix - Men and Women Generally

Men and women generally (Internal)

Male	Female	Total
511	356	867
58.94%	41.06%	100%

Men and women generally (External)

The Northern Ireland usually resident population increased by 5.1% (92,300) from 2011 to 2021. The Census 2021 population is recorded at 1,903,175 people up from 1,810,863 people in 2011. Ards & North Down had an increase of population from 2011 of 7,000, which is 4.5%.

The census day population comprised of 967,000 females and 936,100 males. Statistics show that for every 100 females in Ards and North Down Borough there were 94.9 males.

Statistics show that 54% of the Borough are employed 2% are Unemployed and 43% are Economically inactive. Of those employed, 37% were in the Public administration, education and health Industry and 2% were in the Agriculture, energy and water industry.

62% of employed people travelled to work in a car or van and 34% travelled 5km-20km to their place of work.

There were 70,445 households recorded in Ards and North Down 4,400, 5.9% were unoccupied at the time of the survey.

The average household size in sits at 2.30 (2.44 in NI). 31% are single occupancy and 6% had more than 6 people living in the property.

72% of the Borough owns their own property, this has decreased by 2% from 2011 where 13% are Social rented and increase of 2% increase in 2011.

LGD	Male	Female
Northern Ireland	932,554	970,618
Ards and North Down	80,192	83,466

Appendix - Disability

Disability (External)

A self-assessment of whether a person has a long-term health problem or disability that limits daily activities and which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months. It includes problems that are due to old age. The 2021 Census (NIRSA) demonstrates an increase of 15% or more in the percentage of people who reported a long-term health problem or disability which limited day-to-day activities. 41,300 or 25.3% of people in Ards and North Down had a limiting long-term health problem or disability. Ards & North Down experienced an increase of 31.4% from 2011. These changes are in part a reflection of the Boroughs ageing population.

The following statistics show a breakdown in residents in Northern Ireland and Ards and North Down borough with a Disability that is expected to last 12 months or more.

The figures show that 7.2 per cent of the Borough have deafness or partial hearing loss, 68% being over the age of 65. 2% have blindness or partial sight loss, 11% of those people are aged 0-39 years. 1.6 % have mobility or dexterity difficulty that requires the use of a wheelchair, in comparison to Northern Ireland statics this means that 9.3% of all those who have mobility or dexterity difficulty that requires the use of a wheelchair reside in the Borough.

0.8% have an intellectual or learning disability including dyslexia and Downs Syndrome. 1.6% have Autism or Asperger syndrome, 49% are between 0-14 years whilst 40% are aged 15- 39 year. 8.1 % have an emotional, psychological or mental health condition, includes depression and schizophrenia, this is highest in the age ranges of 40 – 64 years (47%). 2% have frequent periods of confusion or memory loss, including Dementia, this is most prevalent with ages 65+. 10% of residents have another condition, for example Cancer, Heart Disease or Diabetes, again this is most prevalent in age 65+. Taken together these results show that policy making must consider Ards and north Down aging population and health and disability issues as well as recognition for those that provide unpaid care throughout the Borough.

LGD	All usual residents	Activites Not Limited	Limited a little	Limited a lot
Northern Ireland	1,903,178	1,446,415	247,413	209,349
Ards and North Down	163,659	122,744	22,912	18,002
Long term Health Conditions	None	1	2	3 or More
Northern Ireland	1,237,065	342,572	152,254	171,286
Ards and North Down	101,468	32,731	14,729	14,729

Disability Breakdown Age range (0 - 65+)	Ards and North Down		Northern Ireland	
Deafness or Partial Hearing loss	11,802		109,457	
Blindness or Partial Sightloss	3,214		33,961	
Mobility or dexterity difficulty that required the use of a wheelchair	2,641		28,138	
Intellectual or learning disability include dyslexia and Downs Syndrome	1,469		16,923	
Autism or Asperger Syndrome	2,628		35,367	
Emotional, psychological or mental health condition inc depression and schizophrenia	13,275		165,127	

Frequent periods of confusion or memory loss inc Dementia	3,432		37,789	
Other conditions E.g Cancer, Heart Disease or Diabetes	167,752		16,636	

Appendix - Dependants

Dependants (External)

For the Purposes of S75 a dependant can be classed as Persons with personal responsibility for the care of a child; for the care of a person with a disability; or the care of a dependant older person.

In Census 2021 one person in eight of NI population aged 5 or more (or 222,200 people) noted that they provided unpaid care. One important point to note in Policy making is that 2,600 children aged 5 to 14 in Northern Ireland provide unpaid care.

Ards & North Down LGD had the highest percentage of people who provide unpaid care throughout Northern Ireland , 13.7% estimated at 30,414 residents. 'Unpaid care' covers looking after, giving help or support to anyone because they have long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses, or problems related to old age

A dependent child is a person aged 0 to 15 in a household (whether or not in a family) or aged 16 to 18 in full-time education and living in a family with his or her parent(s) or grandparent(s). 'No dependent children' includes households with no children and households where all children are non-dependent. In Ards and North Down there were 27,822 Children (defined as those aged 0 to 14). Children make up 19.2% of the Northern Ireland population. This percentage varies across the Local Government Districts and is lowest in Ards and North Down where the proportion is 17.0%.

According to Birth statistics on NISRA Ards and North Down recorded 2,854 births between 2020 and 2022 , giving an indication of the numbers using buggies or prams in use.

	Dependent children in household: None	Dependent children in household: one	Dependent children in household: Two	Dependent children in household: Three
Northern Ireland	71%	11%	11%	6%
Ards and North Down	74%	11%	11%	4%

24. Does this policy require an Equality Impact Assessment?

No

1. Please provide a short title which describes the activity being undertaken by the Public Authority that is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016. E.g

Community Centres and Halls Pricing Policy 2024/25

2. What definition of 'rural' is the Plan using in respect of Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition)

Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

3. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?

No

3d. Please explain why the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is NOT likely to impact on people in rural areas

A review of the NISRA NI Area Statistics in rural locations where Community Centres and Halls are has revealed that none of the Deprivation Ranks within the various SOAs is of concern when considering this proposal. A mitigation measure of this proposal is that the existing discounts on price currently available to charities and other groups is being upheld.

Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

4. Has the Public Authority taken steps to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas that are relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Yes

Deprivation levels can be found at [Home Page | NI Area Statistics | NISRA](#)

4a. Please indicate which of the following methods or information sources were used by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas

Published Statistics Other Publications

4b. Please provide details of the methods and information sources used to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas including relevant dates, names of organisations, titles of publications, website references, details of surveys or consultations undertaken etc.

NI Area Statistics

DAERA

4c. Please provide details of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas which have been identified by the Public Authority?

It is widely accepted that in a similar way to people in larger towns and villages, customers and residents in our rural areas need access to a Community Centre for physical, social, and mentally beneficial activities. Economically, NISRA demonstrates some useful information in terms of deprivation in addition to our usage and income figures from Centres and Halls in rural areas that indicate that the pricing policy is appropriate.

Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

5. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the Social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

A marginal difference in salaries is noted by DAERA in those from rural areas than in urban areas, however the proposed price increase does not suggest it would be unsustainable by customers in rural areas. Broadband connectivity is lower in rural areas and the investment and implementation in free WI-FI at all Community Centres and Halls, including rural areas, will be of benefit to those in rural areas more so than urban areas. Social isolation in rural locations has been and continues to be a cause for concern and therefore the continued provision of Community Centres and Halls particularly in rural areas is essential.

Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

6. Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service been influenced by the rural needs identified?

Yes

6a. Please explain how the development, adopting, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service been influenced by the rural needs identified.

To help mitigate against social isolation in rural areas the Community Centres and Halls service must become more feasible and this revised policy will assist in this process and therefore contribute to the continued level of service provision. The Wi-Fi installation in the Community Centres and Halls has been an excellent addition to the service provision and a positive budget performance will contribute to its continued availability in urban and rural Centres and Halls.

Documenting and Recording

7. Please tick below to confirm that I confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained and **the RNIA Template will be retained** relevant information complied. **by the Public Authority and relevant information on the Section 1 activity compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.**

Sustainability is a holistic approach that considers ecological, social and economic dimensions, recognising that all must be considered together to find lasting prosperity.

Sustainable development is all about meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Depending on your answer your answer may be a 'positive' impact or a 'negative' impact. Specific guidance at each question.

There may be 'no impact'.

If you are not sure complete as 'don't know'

1. What impact will the proposal have on the local community including the ability of people to meet their essential needs?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Transport - Is the activity accessible to everyone via public transport or active travel, in a safe and sustainable way?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</p>	Positive
<p>Public Placemaking, Community & Culture - Is the activity impacting on people's sense of place and community by being included and connected to the area?</p> <p>Is the activity impacting on our cultural offering, helping citizens, visitors and young people become acquainted with art and culture?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</p>	Positive

Comments

	Comments
Transport	
Public Placemaking, Community & Culture	A more feasible Community Centres and Halls service will provide facilities and activities for customers and visitors of the Borough in numerous locations.

2. What impact will the proposals have on local, sustainable food supply chains?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Food - If this activity involves either the direct or indirect purchase of food or catering services will there be a negative impact on a sustainable food system?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative.</p> <p>Additional information:</p> <p>Food systems currently account for 21-37% of total global greenhouse gases and are a primary cause of environmental degradation and significantly contribute to socio-economic and health inequalities. This can be mitigated by specifying sustainable food and catering services, fresh seasonal food of a high nutritional value produced through low environmental impact farming methods and high standards of animal welfare.</p>	No Impact

Comments

	Comments
Food	No impact

3. What impact will the proposals have on diversity and equality of opportunity?

	What is the impact of the activity?
Equal opportunity - Does the activity have a positive or negative impact on inclusivity and discrimination?	Positive

Comments

	Comments
Equal opportunity	The proposal will provide a continuation, or enhancement, of the current level of equal opportunities.

4. What impact will the proposals have on prosperity, social value and fair trade?

	What is the impact of the activity?
Decent jobs and income - Are local employment opportunities being created removed 'or removed'? Will there be any volunteering opportunities? Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.	No Impact
Will the financial benefits help raise local income levels and tackle poverty and derivations of poverty such as food and fuel poverty? Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.	Don't know

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Social Value - Will the activity lead to the creation of works or services? Are there opportunities to support apprenticeships or training opportunities to combat social exclusion? Are there any opportunities to work with organisations with an environmental or social mission (e.g., from the VCSE sector)?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</p>	Don't know
<p>Human and labour rights - Will there be provisions to ensure workers up the supply chain have their human and labour rights respected?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</p> <p>Additional information:</p> <p>Products at high risk of the use of child labour and contravention of human and labour rights include electronic equipment, textiles, agricultural commodities and construction materials.</p>	No Impact

Comments

	Comments
Decent jobs and income	
Financial benefits	The impact of this proposal will benefit Council and ratepayers, however it is not possible to say if this benefit will be used to tackle food and fuel poverty.
Social value	There could be opportunities in the VCSE sector in the future but it would be part of a wider process and not subject to this proposal.
Human and labour rights	

5. What impact will the proposals have on greenhouse gas emissions, including energy and transport?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Greenhouse Gas Emissions - Will this activity have a positive or negative impact on greenhouse gases (most commonly caused by fossil fuel burning or deforestation)?</p> <p>Additional information:</p> <p>Greenhouse gases include CO₂, CH₄, N₂O, HFCs, PFCs or SF₆. The most common sources include consumption of brown (non-renewable) electricity, burning of coal, oil, petrol, diesel, natural gas, emissions from landfill sites, and the destruction of natural carbon sinks such as peat bogs, woodlands, forests, grasslands, freshwater lakes, and wetlands.</p>	No Impact
<p>Energy - Will the activity reduce energy demand through energy efficiency and low-carbon technologies?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</p> <p>Additional information:</p> <p>Will energy come from renewable energy sources e.g., solar, wind etc.? Will buildings be designed and constructed to high energy and environmental standards?</p>	No Impact
<p>Transport - Will the activity be accessible to everyone via active travel (Bike/walking) or public transport? Does the proposal help to reduce non-essential travel and individual car use?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</p>	Don't know
<p>Embodied carbon - Will the activity use materials from 'heavy industries' such as cement, concrete, iron and steel, or require international transportation of materials using aviation or shipping?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative.</p>	No Impact

6. What impact will the proposals have on waste generation or how waste is managed?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Waste generation - Will this activity lead to the production of waste?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative.</p> <p>Additional information:</p> <p>Have you considered how to reduce waste through demand management and re-use strategies which support the circular economy?</p>	No Impact
<p>Waste Management - Is waste going to be managed in a responsible, sustainable way?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive.</p> <p>Additional information:</p> <p>Will waste be monitored? What recycling provisions are there? Will any waste be sent to landfill?</p>	Positive

Comments

	Comments
Waste generation	
Waste management	Recycling figures and processes are one of the sections KPI's

7. What impact will the proposals have on the direct consumption of natural resources, including materials, minerals and fresh water?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Materials - Will this activity lead to the consumption of raw materials? (Raw materials include steel, oil, corn, grain, gasoline, wood / forest resources, plastic, natural gas, and coal).</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative.</p> <p>Additional information:</p> <p>Can materials be swapped or reduced, to minimize pressure on natural resources and reduce environmental impact?</p>	No Impact

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Will lifecycle costing exercises be used in procurement (e.g., if purchasing vehicles, energy-intensive equipment or major capital projects) in order to minimise the consumption of natural resources and achieve value for money</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive</p>	<p>No Impact</p>
<p>Fresh water - Will this activity increase pressure on freshwater resources through direct water consumption?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</p>	<p>No Impact</p>
<p>Will the activity impact on the public's ability to access a clean and safe water supply?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</p> <p>Additional information:</p> <p>Unsustainable water consumption includes use of mains water or other freshwater supplied without water efficiency or recycling measures.</p>	<p>No Impact</p>

8. What impact will the proposals have on local resilience to the adverse effects of climate change and severe weather events, including drought, landslips, flooding and sites designated as being at risk of flooding or sea level rise?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Adverse Weather and Climate Impacts - Will buildings, infrastructure, or natural assets be at risk to the adverse effects of climate change and extreme weather?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes select negative</p> <p>Additional Information:</p> <p>For Northern Ireland, climate change is causing hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters with more extreme weather and rising sea levels.</p> <p>A precautionary approach is advised for all planning and construction decisions, taking into account the latest UK Climate Change Projections and making sure that development is not permitted on flood plains and / or land at risk of flooding under future climate scenarios.</p> <p>Avoid activities that may be vulnerable to overheating or flood risk.</p> <p>New assets (e.g. landscaping, buildings etc.) should be future proofed, ensuring all investments are resilient to current and future climate conditions.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">No Impact</p>

9. What impact will the proposals have on the local environment (e.g., air/water/soil pollution, land conversion, visual impacts, traffic, noise, vibration, odour, dust, particulates, smoke), heritage (including designated heritage, archaeology sites or listed buildings) and wildlife (including protected sites and species)?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Air pollution - Will the activity produce air pollutants?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</p> <p>Additional Information:</p> <p>Air pollutants include: Particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5); Ozone (O3) Nitrogen dioxide (NO2); Carbon Monoxide (CO); Sulphur Dioxide (SO2).</p> <p>The most common causes of air pollution are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fuel combustion from motor vehicles (e.g. cars and heavy-duty vehicles) • Heat and power generation (e.g. oil and coal power plants and boilers) • Industrial facilities (e.g. manufacturing factories, mines, and oil refineries) • Municipal and agricultural waste sites and waste incineration/burning. 	<p>No Impact</p>
<p>Ozone layer depletion - Will this activity produce ozone depleting substances (fluorinated gases)?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</p> <p>Additional Information:</p> <p>Fluorinated greenhouse gases (F gases) include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) • perfluorocarbons (PFCs) • sulphur hexafluoride (SF6) <p>For example through the use of refrigeration and air conditioning units.</p>	<p>No Impact</p>

	What is the impact of the activity?
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<p>Water/soil pollution - Will this activity involve any construction work, street works or road deliveries of construction materials or other goods?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</p> <p>Additional Information:</p> <p>Soil and water pollution is caused from damaging rainwater run-off arising from road surface treatments, tyre abrasion, fuels and lubricants.</p> <p>Procurement and contractual mechanisms can be used to ensure that building and civil engineering contractors adhere take steps to ensure pollution is prevented from occurring or from dispersing to other areas. Contractors can minimise the use of all substances that could cause pollution and failing that, implement and communicate procedures to ensure the correct disposal (or release) of substances that could cause pollution.</p>	<p>No Impact</p>
<p>Chemical pollution - Will there be any use of toxic chemicals including pesticides, paint or cleaning products?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</p>	<p>No Impact</p>
<p>Will there be any excess fertiliser use that could result in nitrogen or phosphorus runoff?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</p>	<p>No Impact</p>
<p>Noise pollution - Is the activity likely to create a noise nuisance?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</p> <p>Additional information:</p> <p>Noise pollution can have detrimental effects on human health, amenity, productivity and the natural environment.</p> <p>Eliminating or reducing excessive noise is a legal responsibility and helps to limit the disturbance of residents and businesses, caused by activities and operations.</p>	<p>No Impact</p>

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Land conversion - Will this activity result in the reduction in the area of forested land, directly or indirectly?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</p> <p>Additional information:</p> <p>Deforestation usually arises from the clearing of land for development, agriculture, or logging for paper, wood, or minerals.</p>	No Impact
<p>Built Heritage - Will this activity impact on designated heritage sites such as a World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Archaeology Site, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site or Registered Park and Garden?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</p>	No Impact
<p>Natural Heritage and Biodiversity - Will this activity result in any displacement or loss of biodiversity, overfishing or affect protected or designated sites (e.g. ASSIs, SPAs etc).</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select negative</p> <p>Changes in land use exert the most significant effect on biodiversity. These changes include the conversion of natural ecosystems into agriculture or into urban areas; changes in frequency, duration or magnitude of wildfires and similar disturbances; and the introduction of new species into land and freshwater environments.</p>	No Impact

10 What impact will the proposals have on ensuring peace, justice, public participation and partnership working for sustainable development?

	What is the impact of the activity?
<p>Peace - Will this activity have a negative or positive impact on community safety, crime or anti-social behaviour?</p>	Positive
<p>Justice - Are there safeguards in place to prevent against bribery and corruption?</p> <p>Note: If the answer is yes, select positive</p> <p>Decision making should be open and transparent with clear governance and accountability arrangements.</p>	No Impact

	What is the impact of the activity?
Political voice - Are citizens involved and do they have a role in deciding what happens and how it gets implemented? Note: If the answer is yes, select positive	Positive
Partnerships - Will this activity involve working with others either locally or at a national level to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development? Note: If the answer is yes, select positive	Positive

Comments

	Comments
Peace	The Community Centres and Halls service positively impacts on the community aspects mentioned
Justice	
Political voice	
Partnerships	

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

Screened Out - No negative impacts

1. Is Data Protection relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

No

Data Protection Officer Comments