



Scottish Natural Heritage
Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba

All of nature for all of Scotland
Nàdar air fad airson Alba air fad

Equality Impact Assessment: initial screening

What is being assessed by whom?

Name of the policy¹
Framework for the Openness and Transparency of Board Meetings
Name of person leading the assessment²
Niall Campbell
Names of other team members
Graham Boyle
Is this a new or existing policy? New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing being reviewed <input type="checkbox"/> If existing, then please check to see whether a previous EqIA is available to provide a basis for this assessment.

Initial screening

	Yes	No
Does the policy impact on people? (e.g. on service users, businesses, employees, wider community)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will it have a significant effect on how other organisations operate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does it relate to an area where SNH has set equality outcomes³ ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

¹ The term policy is shorthand for policies, provisions, criteria, functions, practices and activities including the delivery of services.

² Person leading on the policy development

³ Across the range of our activities, more people from BAME communities, people with disabilities and disadvantaged families, individuals and communities enjoy and benefit from nature
Through changes to recruitment and attraction procedures more people from BAME communities and people with disabilities apply for opportunities with SNH
We have an age-inclusive culture that supports and values everyone
We have reduced the gender pay gap to 9%

Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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If you answered **Yes** to any of the above, please proceed to Stage 1 of the EqIA form.

If you answered **No** to all of these, you do not need to carry out an EqIA so proceed to sign and complete the statement below.

An EqIA is not needed Date:

Signed	Date
Lead officer:	
Responsible officer ⁴ :	

Please now publish the initial screening section of the form in eRDMS file [B239231](#) and email confirmation to diversity@nature.scot Please also retain a copy with your policy documents.

⁴ Person with overall responsibility for the policy.

Equality Impact Assessment: assessing impact

Stage 1. The purpose of the policy, service, activity etc.

What is the purpose of the policy?	To ensure that there is openness and transparency in the framework in which Board decision-making is conducted.
Who does the policy affect? (employees, customers, equality groups, stakeholders)	Staff, stakeholders and the general public.
What results/outcomes are intended?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Meetings are publicised so that staff, stakeholders and members of the public are aware of when and where these are taking place; • that meetings are accessible; • that accompanying decision papers and minutes of the meetings are readily available.

Stage 2. Relevance to the needs of the general equality duty

Please consider which aspects of the policy are relevant to the three needs of the general equality duty

	Comment
Eliminate unlawful discrimination	Accessibility and awareness of Board and Committee decision-making should be inclusive to all the people of Scotland.
Advance equality of opportunity	N/A
Foster good relations between groups of people	N/A

Stage 3. To which of the equality groups is this policy relevant?

All	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pregnancy and maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gender	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Religion and belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	Marriage and civil partnership ⁵	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you decide that the assessment is not relevant to some groups, please say why below.

This policy does not have a specific relevance to race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or marriage and civil partnership. Inclusion has considered how these equality groups would be impacted from accessing Board meetings, access to meeting information etc and no discernible equality issues have been identified.

⁵ In relation to unlawful discrimination in employment

Stage 4. Evidence

Please consider what evidence is available to help you identify the impact the policy may have on people amongst the relevant groups you have identified? Both quantitative (statistics etc.) and qualitative (event feedback etc.) are equally valid. Please consider a range of sources, including: consultation exercises, surveys, feedback from staff, stakeholders, participants, research reports, [Scottish Government Evidence Finder](#), the views of equality groups, as well your own experience of working in this area etc.

Remember to consider whether this requires you to consult relevant equality groups. Where it is not possible to gather new information in time to inform the assessment, consider including such actions in your plans to monitor and review the policy.

Protected characteristic	Evidence	Source	Gaps and actions taken
Gender	59% of our workforce are female 74% of employees who work part time are female SLT and board have gender parity	SNH Equality Report 2019	The framework seeks to ensure that meetings are held at times which are accessible to those with care commitments Where possible video conferencing will be made available to minimise excessive travel requirements.
Age	The estimated population for Scotland on 30 June 2015 was 5,373,000, with 17% of people estimated to be aged under 16, 65% aged 16-64 and 18% aged 65 and over.	National Records of Scotland, 2015 Annual Population Survey Equality Report 2019	The framework seeks to ensure that people of all ages have access to information relating to Board and Committees. As we focus our communications on information being provided through our website this may disadvantage those, particularly the

	<p>64% of our workforce is over 45.</p> <p>Longer serving staff are feeling disengaged from the SNH and its strategic aims. and undervalued.</p>	<p>People Survey 2018/Age Inclusive Steering Group</p>	<p>elderly, who may not have access to such media.</p> <p>To overcome this we shall consider other ways of communication where it is felt there is a requirement to broaden exposure to our decision-making processes. However, this will be taken on a case-by-case basis depending upon the circumstances/topic being reviewed.</p> <p>We encourage representatives from Young People Panel to attend at board meetings. Consider widening attendance to include other members of staff/ or where staff asked to present papers inviting them to attend the meeting.</p>
Disability	<p>The proportion of people in Scotland with a long-term activity-limiting health problem or disability was 20 per cent, the same as reported in the 2001 Census</p>	<p>Scotland's 2011 Census (Release 2A, Table 8)</p>	<p>The framework seeks to ensure that no one is disadvantaged by their disability if they have an interest in Board decision-making. Documents will be made accessible where required to those with visual impairment or other disabilities.</p>
Pregnancy and maternity	<p>The Equality Act 2010 highlights that it is discrimination to treat a woman unfavourably</p>	<p>https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance</p>	<p>The framework will ensure that locations of meetings provide sufficient facilities for women to breastfeed.</p>

	because she is breastfeeding.		
Religion or belief	Muslims constitute 1.45% of the population of Scotland	2011 Census	The framework will ensure that locations of meetings provide sufficient facilities for Muslims to adhere to their faith.

Additional comments:

Stage 5. The significance of the potential impacts

Please consider what the evidence tells you about the likely impact (positive or negative) on people sharing a protected characteristic, i.e. how significant could the impacts be if we did not make any adjustments? Remember the duty is also positive – so please identify where the policy offers opportunities to promote equality and/or foster good relations.

Protected characteristic	Impacts	Positive (+) Negative (-) Neutral (0)	High (H) Medium (M) Low (L)
Age	The media used to provide information about our Board and their decisions is through the SNH website. Some members of the public, particularly the elderly, may not have access to these facilities.	-	L
Gender	Meetings are held during the daytime when there is the greatest opportunity for members and staff to be available. This may have some impact on those members of the public with caring responsibilities who may wish to attend in person, particularly mothers with young children.	-	L
Disability	Meeting venues are selected that provide access to those with disabilities	+	H
Pregnancy and maternity	Meeting venues that are used provide sufficient restroom facilities. However, we couldn't always guarantee that there will be alternative facilities to enable breastfeeding to take place.	-	M
Religion or belief	Meeting venues that are used may not have private rooms to enable Muslims to adhere to their faith	-	M

Use the following guidance to inform your responses:

Indicate:

- Where you think that the policy could have a POSITIVE impact on any of the equality groups like promoting equality and equal opportunities or improving relations within equality groups
- Where you think that the policy could have a NEGATIVE impact on any of the equality groups, i.e. it could disadvantage them
- Where you think that this policy has a NEUTRAL effect on any of the equality groups listed below i.e. it has no effect currently on equality groups.

It is important to remember that a policy may be highly relevant to one aspect of equality and not relevant to another.

<p>High impact (The policy or process is very equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is significant potential for or evidence of adverse impact The policy is institution wide or public facing The policy has consequences for or affects significant numbers of people The policy has the potential to make a significant contribution to promoting equality</p>
<p>Medium impact (The policy or process is somewhat equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is some evidence to suggest potential for or evidence of adverse impact The policy is institution wide or cross-Unit, but mainly internal The policy has consequences for or affects some people The policy has the potential to make a contribution to promoting equality</p>
<p>Low impact (The policy or process might be equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is little evidence to suggest that the policy could result in adverse impact The policy operates mainly within a Unit The policy has consequences for or affects few people The policy may have the potential to contribute to promoting equality</p>

Stage 6. Action needed to fulfil the needs of the general equality duty

Please consider the results of your impact assessment, what mitigating or positive action do you recommend in order to fulfil the three needs of the general equality duty? This will involve considering whether the evidence indicates that there is likely to be a differential impact⁶ on particular equality groups, and particularly whether this impact is disproportionately negative. Remember that it is lawful under the Equality Act to treat people differently in some circumstances, for example taking positive action or putting in place single-sex provision where there is a need for it. It is both lawful and a requirement of the general equality duty to consider if there is a need to treat disabled people differently, including more favourable treatment where necessary.

Needs of the general equality duty	Mitigating or positive actions needed, recommended or planned for each protected characteristic. (Age, Disability, Gender, Race, Sexual orientation, Gender reassignment, Pregnancy and maternity, Religion or belief)
1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation or harassment	<p>SNH strongly advocates fairer and more equal access to nature for all. This includes obtaining access and information about the decisions taken by our Board. We recognise that modern forms of communication, along with when and where we hold our meetings, may limit and/or impact on certain groups.</p> <p>We will therefore take account of these groups in our approach to communications and in our meeting venues and timings to ensure that we are inclusive as we possibly can be to ensure that we are conforming to the Equality Act.</p>
2. Advancing equality of opportunity	SNH seeks to be an inclusive organisation. We shall ensure that information about our Board and their decisions reflects this through greater promotion of their work, seeking to eliminate any potential barriers that may disadvantage groups.
3. Fostering good relations	–

⁶ Suggests that a particular group has been affected differently by a policy, in either a positive, neutral or negative way.

Stage 7. Taking account of the results of the assessment

Having considered the potential or actual impacts you should be in a position to make an informed judgement on what should be done. In all cases, document your reasoning that justifies your decision. There are four main options you can take:

- **No major change** – your assessment demonstrates that the policy is robust. There is no potential for unlawful discrimination and you have taken all opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitoring and review
- **Adjust the policy** – this involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality or to foster good relations.
- **Continue the policy** (despite the potential for adverse impact) – you should clearly set out the justifications for doing this and how you believe the decision is compatible with our obligations under the duty
- **Stop and remove the policy** – if there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, you should consider stopping the policy altogether. If a policy leads to unlawful discrimination it should be removed or changed.

Option selected	Justification
Continue the policy	<p>There are impacts from the nature in which we communicate information and decisions taken by our Board. Whilst we have indicated that we shall seek other methods where it is considered appropriate to do so we will need to take a proportionate approach.</p> <p>This means that we shall take account of the potential audience, whether we are meeting their requirements, and the practicality and feasibility of utilising other forums to widen our approach such as notices in local newspapers, TV advertisements etc.</p>

Stage 8. Summary of agreed actions resulting from your assessment

What action, by whom, will be undertaken as a result of the impact assessment.

No.	Action	Person responsible	Timescale
1.	Revise information held on Website to ensure that details about the Board,	Graham Boyle	Before end of Q4 2019/20.

	meetings and decisions are more readily accessible.		
2.	Information is published in advance of meetings to enable attendance and available as download.	Graham Boyle	Before end of Q4 2019/20

Stage 9. Monitoring implementation and review

We have reviewed the navigation needed to access core information, and have subsequently reduced the number of clicks needed to access it. We will continue to further refine archiving information to ensure webpages can be clearly navigated. Next March (2021) we will review whether any additional refinement of navigation can be achieved. This will take account of the monitoring of our core information using Google Analytics to check on the levels of access to the relevant pages.

We will keep a record of when meeting dates are, and when information for those meetings was published. This will enable us to track how often we meet our targets.

Review date	Person responsible
March 2021	Sara Lewis

Stage 10. Procurement

The public sector equality duty for procurement requires bodies to consider how they can further fulfil the needs of the general duty in how they procure goods and services both through the award criteria and contract conditions. This applies to thresholds which most, if not all, our procurement falls below. However, EHRC guidance encourages public bodies to adopt these principles to help meet our broader obligations in relation to procurement and equality.

Consequently, if your proposal involves any related procurement of goods, services or advice, you should now consider how best to reflect the results of your impact assessment in the procurement process.

Award criteria at tender stage	n/a
How will you evaluate award criteria	
Contract performance criteria	

Stage 11. Authorisation

Please confirm that:

This Equality Impact Assessment has informed the development of this policy:

Yes No

Opportunities to promote equality in respect of age, disability, sex, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, race and religion or belief have been considered, i.e.:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation;
- Advancing equality of opportunity;
- Fostering good relations

Yes No

I am satisfied with the equality impact assessment that has been undertaken for Framework for the Openness and Transparency of Board Meetings and give my authorisation for the results of this assessment to be published on the SNH website.

Name:	Graham Boyle
Position:	Chief of Staff
Authorisation date:	30th March 2020

Note: if this EqIA is associated with a policy that requires Director, Management Team or Board sign-off, you should arrange for the results of the assessment to accompany approval of the policy. This is to ensure that decision-makers are given sufficient information to enable them to pay due regard to equality when making their decision.

Stage 12. Storing and publishing this EqIA

The regulations require that where an assessment has been made and the policy is implemented, the results of any assessment be published 'within a reasonable period' of the decision to apply the policy.

Please save your EqIA to an appropriate folder. For example, if it relates to a project, you should save it to the project folder. Please also record summary information about your EqIA in the tracking spreadsheet [B239231](#). Send the Objective ID to the Equality and Diversity Team diversity@snh.gov.uk for review and publication on the SNH website.

Guidance and tools

Glossary of key terms

[Equality and Human Rights Commission](#)

[Equality Challenge Unit](#)

Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

[EHRC guidance on public sector equality duty](#)

[EHRC guidance on impact assessments](#)

SNH

[EqIA – Process Map](#)