

Part 1. Policy scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy, being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

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

Information about the policy

Name of the policy

County Court Rules Committee Consultation – Increase in Financial Jurisdiction (including consequential changes to County Court Scale Costs).

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?

Revised policy. The proposals build on existing County Court jurisdictional limits and the established system of County Court scale costs set out in the County Court Rules (Northern Ireland) 1981.

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

The consultation proposals seek to support the Minister of Justice's intention to increase the general civil financial jurisdiction of the County Court to £60,000, the jurisdiction of District Judges to £20,000, and the defamation jurisdiction to £10,000. The proposals aim to:

- *support proportionate allocation of cases between the High Court and County Court;*
- *enhance access to justice by enabling a greater number of cases to be dealt with in the County Court under simpler and more cost-predictable procedures; and*
- *maintain fair, transparent and reasonable levels of recoverable legal costs through the extension of existing County Court scale costs.*

In addition, the Committee proposes an amendment to Order 55, rule 11, to refine the categories of disease in respect of which a judge or district judge may order an enhancement of costs on grounds of particular complexity. The amendment replaces the general reference to "any asbestosis-related

disease” with a defined list of respiratory diseases aligned to Part 6B (Lung Disease) of the Guidelines for the Assessment of General Damages in Personal Injury Cases in Northern Ireland. The proposed change is intended to provide greater clarity and legal certainty, without altering the discretionary nature of cost enhancement or the fixed level of enhancement available.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy? If so, explain how.

The policy is not designed to benefit particular Section 75 groups. However, by facilitating greater use of the County Court’s more accessible procedures and venues, there may be indirect practical benefits for court users generally, including disabled persons and persons with dependants, through potentially reduced travel, cost and complexity. The proposals apply uniformly and are not targeted at any specific group.

The proposed amendment to Order 55, rule 11 refines the list of disease categories eligible for potential costs enhancement by reference to established judicial guidance. The amendment applies uniformly to all litigants and does not differentiate on the basis of personal characteristics. No evidence has been identified to indicate that the change would have a differential or disproportionate impact on any Section 75 group.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

The County Court Rules Committee, in light of the Minister of Justice’s January 2026 announcement on increasing the County Court’s financial jurisdiction.

Who owns and who implements the policy?

The County Court Rules Committee owns the proposals concerning scale costs and procedural rules, under the County Courts (Northern Ireland) Order 1980. Rules made by the Committee are subject to allowance by the Department of Justice following consultation with the Lady Chief Justice. Implementation would occur through amendments to the County Court Rules (Northern Ireland) 1981.

Implementation factors

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

If yes, are they (please delete as appropriate)

Financial ✓

Legislative ✓

other, please specify

The delivery of the policy is dependent on:

- *legislative amendments to increase County Court jurisdictional limits;*
 - *amendment and approval of County Court Rules;*
 - *alignment with Department of Justice changes to legal aid legislation; and*
 - *effective communication of the revised scales and jurisdiction to court users and practitioners.*
-

Main stakeholders affected

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

Staff ✓

service users ✓

other public sector organisations

voluntary/community/trade unions

other, please specify

- *County Court Rules Committee.*
-

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

- what are they?
- who owns them?

Available evidence

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data. The Commission has produced this guide to [signpost to S75 data](#).

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

Religious belief evidence / information:

- *previous Section 75 screening exercises undertaken in 2016, 2021 and 2024 in relation to County Court scale costs and jurisdiction;*
 - *NICTS Customer Exit Survey 2011;*
 - *NICTS 2018 Court User Survey (civil and family users);*
 - *Census 2021 data on population, age, disability, religion, ethnic group, marital status, sexual orientation and unpaid care;*
 - *Rules Committee Methodology Summary.*
-

Political Opinion evidence / information:

- *previous Section 75 screening exercises undertaken in 2016, 2021 and 2024 in relation to County Court scale costs and jurisdiction;*
 - *NICTS Customer Exit Survey 2011;*
 - *NICTS 2018 Court User Survey (civil and family users);*
 - *Census 2021 data on population, age, disability, religion, ethnic group, marital status, sexual orientation and unpaid care*
 - *Rules Committee Methodology Summary.*
-

Racial Group evidence / information:

- *previous Section 75 screening exercises undertaken in 2016, 2021 and 2024 in relation to County Court scale costs and jurisdiction;*
 - *NICTS Customer Exit Survey 2011;*
 - *NICTS 2018 Court User Survey (civil and family users);*
 - *Census 2021 data on population, age, disability, religion, ethnic group, marital status, sexual orientation and unpaid care;*
 - *Rules Committee Methodology Summary .*
-

Age evidence / information:

- *previous Section 75 screening exercises undertaken in 2016, 2021 and 2024 in relation to County Court scale costs and jurisdiction;*
 - *NICTS Customer Exit Survey 2011;*
 - *NICTS 2018 Court User Survey (civil and family users);*
 - *Census 2021 data on population, age, disability, religion, ethnic group, marital status, sexual orientation and unpaid care;*
 - *Rules Committee Methodology Summary.*
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Marital Status evidence / information:

- *previous Section 75 screening exercises undertaken in 2016, 2021 and 2024 in relation to County Court scale costs and jurisdiction;*
- *NICTS Customer Exit Survey 2011;*
- *NICTS 2018 Court User Survey (civil and family users);*
- *Census 2021 data on population, age, disability, religion, ethnic group, marital status, sexual orientation and unpaid care;*
- *Rules Committee Methodology Summary.*

Sexual Orientation evidence / information:

- *previous Section 75 screening exercises undertaken in 2016, 2021 and 2024 in relation to County Court scale costs and jurisdiction;*
- *NICTS Customer Exit Survey 2011;*
- *NICTS 2018 Court User Survey (civil and family users);*
- *Census 2021 data on population, age, disability, religion, ethnic group, marital status, sexual orientation and unpaid care;*
- *Rules Committee Methodology Summary.*

Men & Women generally evidence / information:

- *previous Section 75 screening exercises undertaken in 2016, 2021 and 2024 in relation to County Court scale costs and jurisdiction;*
- *NICTS Customer Exit Survey 2011;*
- *NICTS 2018 Court User Survey (civil and family users);*
- *Census 2021 data on population, age, disability, religion, ethnic group, marital status, sexual orientation and unpaid care;*
- *Rules Committee Methodology Summary.*

Disability evidence / information:

- *previous Section 75 screening exercises undertaken in 2016, 2021 and 2024 in relation to County Court scale costs and jurisdiction;*
- *NICTS Customer Exit Survey 2011;*
- *NICTS 2018 Court User Survey (civil and family users);*
- *Census 2021 data on population, age, disability, religion, ethnic group, marital status, sexual orientation and unpaid care;*

- *Rules Committee Methodology Summary.*

Dependants evidence / information:

- *previous Section 75 screening exercises undertaken in 2016, 2021 and 2024 in relation to County Court scale costs and jurisdiction;*
- *NICTS Customer Exit Survey 2011;*
- *NICTS 2018 Court User Survey (civil and family users);*
- *Census 2021 data on population, age, disability, religion, ethnic group, marital status, sexual orientation and unpaid care;*
- *Rules Committee Methodology Summary.*

The evidence sources were considered to assess whether any Section 75 group is disproportionately represented amongst court users, experiences barriers in accessing civil justice, or may be affected differently by changes to court jurisdictional limits or recoverable legal costs. The previous Section 75 screenings undertaken in 2016, 2021 and 2024 found no evidence of differential impacts arising from changes to jurisdictional limits or County Court scale costs. The NICTS Customer Exit Survey and 2018 Court User Survey were reviewed to identify any equality-related concerns regarding access to court services; while these surveys highlight general user experiences, they do not identify adverse impacts linked to the policy proposals or to any specific Section 75 category. Census 2021 data was used to understand the demographic composition of the Northern Ireland population and to consider whether any group might experience a disproportionate effect. The Rules Committee Methodology Summary confirms that the proposals concern procedural court rules, jurisdictional allocation and recoverable costs and are intended to apply equally to all court users. Taken together, the available evidence does not indicate that the proposed changes would create differential or adverse impacts for any Section 75 category.

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?

The evidence reviewed, including previous Section 75 screenings, court user research and demographic data, does not identify any specific needs, experiences or priorities within any Section 75 category that would be adversely affected by the proposals. The proposed increases in County Court jurisdiction and

the associated amendments to scale costs do not restrict access to court services, alter eligibility for court procedures, or confer advantages or disadvantages based on personal characteristics. Rather, they determine the court in which a case may be heard and the scale of recoverable costs which may apply. These arrangements operate by reference to case value and case type rather than the characteristics of the parties involved. Accordingly, no evidence has been identified that any Section 75 group would experience a disproportionate impact as a result of the proposed changes.

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

Religious belief

No specific needs, experiences or priorities relating to religious belief have been identified which would interact with, or be affected by, the proposed jurisdictional or scale cost changes

Political Opinion

No specific needs, experiences or priorities relating to political opinion have been identified which would interact with, or be affected by, the proposed jurisdictional or scale cost changes

Racial Group

No specific evidence has been identified indicating that persons from different racial groups would experience the proposed changes differently. The proposals apply irrespective of ethnicity, nationality or language background

Age

No evidence has been identified to suggest that persons of different ages would be affected differently by the proposed jurisdictional limits or scale costs

Marital status

No specific needs or priorities relating to marital status have been identified which would be affected by the proposals

Sexual orientation

No specific evidence has been identified indicating differential impacts on persons of differing sexual orientations

Men and Women Generally

No evidence has been identified that the proposals would have differing implications for men and women. The proposed changes are applied equally to all court users regardless of sex

Part 2. Screening questions

Introduction

In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, the public authority should consider its answers to the questions 1-4 which are given on pages 66-68 of this Guide.

If the public authority's conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then the public authority may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, a public authority should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

If the public authority's conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

If the public authority's conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories and/or good relations categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

- measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
- the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of a 'major' impact

- a) The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
- b) Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;
- c) Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;
- d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are

concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;

- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

In favour of 'minor' impact

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

In favour of none

- 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 evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, by applying the screening questions given overleaf and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.

Screening questions

1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?

Please provide details of the likely policy impacts and determine the level of impact for each S75 categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief**: (insert text here)

What is the level of impact? ~~Minor~~ / ~~Major~~ / None (circle as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**: (insert text here)

What is the level of impact? ~~Minor~~ / ~~Major~~ / None (circle as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**: (insert text here)

What is the level of impact? ~~Minor~~ / ~~Major~~ / None (circle as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Age**: (insert text here)

What is the level of impact? ~~Minor~~ / ~~Major~~ / None (circle as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Marital Status**: (insert text here)

What is the level of impact? ~~Minor~~ / ~~Major~~ / None (circle as appropriate)

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

What is the level of impact? ~~Minor~~ / ~~Major~~ / None (circle as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Men and Women**: (insert text here)

What is the level of impact? ~~Minor~~ / ~~Major~~ / None (circle as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Disability**: (insert text here)

What is the level of impact? ~~Minor~~ / ~~Major~~ / None (circle as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Dependants**:

What is the level of impact? ~~Minor~~ / ~~Major~~ / None (circle as appropriate)

2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories? Yes/No

The policy is not intended as a measure to promote equality of opportunity for any particular Section 75 category. Increasing County Court financial jurisdiction may enable a greater proportion of cases to be determined through procedures that are generally less complex, potentially more accessible and more cost predictable than equivalent High Court proceedings. These potential benefits would be available to all court users regardless of Section 75 characteristics. The available evidence does not indicate that any particular Section 75 group would benefit disproportionately, nor does it identify any unmet equality issue that the proposals are intended to address. Accordingly, no specific equality opportunities requiring targeted intervention have been identified. The amendment to Order 55, rule 11 similarly applies equally to all litigants and is intended only to provide greater clarity and legal certainty regarding costs enhancement for specified disease claims.

Detail opportunities of how this policy could promote equality of opportunity for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

Religious Belief - If ~~Yes~~, provide details:

If No, provide reasons: *No specific opportunities have been identified. The policy is not designed as an equality intervention and is neutral in its application. It has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations. The proposed amendment to Order 55, rule 11 refines the list of disease categories eligible for potential costs enhancement by reference to established judicial guidance. The amendment applies uniformly to all litigants and does not differentiate on the basis of personal characteristics. No evidence has been identified to indicate that the change would have a differential or disproportionate impact on any Section 75 group.*

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

If No, provide reasons: *No specific opportunities have been identified. The policy is not designed as an equality intervention and is neutral in its application. It has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations. The proposed amendment to Order 55, rule 11 refines the list of disease categories eligible for potential costs enhancement by reference to established judicial guidance. The amendment applies uniformly to all litigants and does not differentiate on the basis of personal characteristics. No evidence has been identified to indicate that the change would have a differential or disproportionate impact on any Section 75 group.*

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

If No, provide reasons: *No specific opportunities have been identified. The policy is not designed as an equality intervention and is neutral in its application. It has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations. The proposed amendment to Order 55, rule 11 refines the list of disease categories eligible for potential costs enhancement by reference to established judicial*

guidance. The amendment applies uniformly to all litigants and does not differentiate on the basis of personal characteristics. No evidence has been identified to indicate that the change would have a differential or disproportionate impact on any Section 75 group.

Age - If ~~Yes~~, provide details:

If No, provide reasons: *No specific opportunities have been identified. The policy is not designed as an equality intervention and is neutral in its application. It has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations. The proposed amendment to Order 55, rule 11 refines the list of disease categories eligible for potential costs enhancement by reference to established judicial guidance. The amendment applies uniformly to all litigants and does not differentiate on the basis of personal characteristics. No evidence has been identified to indicate that the change would have a differential or disproportionate impact on any Section 75 group.*

Marital Status - If ~~Yes~~, provide details:

If No, provide reasons: *No specific opportunities have been identified. The policy is not designed as an equality intervention and is neutral in its application. It has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations. The proposed amendment to Order 55, rule 11 refines the list of disease categories eligible for potential costs enhancement by reference to established judicial guidance. The amendment applies uniformly to all litigants and does not differentiate on the basis of personal characteristics. No evidence has been identified to indicate that the change would have a differential or disproportionate impact on any Section 75 group.*

Sexual Orientation - If ~~Yes~~, provide details:

If No, provide reasons: *No specific opportunities have been identified. The policy is not designed as an equality intervention and is neutral in its application. It has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations. The proposed amendment to Order 55, rule 11 refines the list of disease categories eligible for potential costs enhancement by reference to established judicial guidance. The amendment applies uniformly to all litigants and does not differentiate on the basis of personal characteristics. No evidence has been identified to indicate that the change would have a differential or disproportionate impact on any Section 75 group.*

Men and Women generally - If ~~Yes~~, provide details:

If No, provide reasons: *No specific opportunities have been identified. The policy is not designed as an equality intervention and is neutral in its application. It has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations. The proposed amendment to Order 55, rule 11 refines the list of disease categories eligible for potential costs enhancement by reference to established judicial*

guidance. The amendment applies uniformly to all litigants and does not differentiate on the basis of personal characteristics. No evidence has been identified to indicate that the change would have a differential or disproportionate impact on any Section 75 group.

Disability - If ~~Yes~~, provide details:

If No, provide reasons: *No specific opportunities have been identified. The policy is not designed as an equality intervention and is neutral in its application. It has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations. The proposed amendment to Order 55, rule 11 refines the list of disease categories eligible for potential costs enhancement by reference to established judicial guidance. The amendment applies uniformly to all litigants and does not differentiate on the basis of personal characteristics. No evidence has been identified to indicate that the change would have a differential or disproportionate impact on any Section 75 group.*

Dependants - If ~~Yes~~, provide details:

If No, provide reasons: *No specific opportunities have been identified. The policy is not designed as an equality intervention and is neutral in its application. It has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations. The proposed amendment to Order 55, rule 11 refines the list of disease categories eligible for potential costs enhancement by reference to established judicial guidance. The amendment applies uniformly to all litigants and does not differentiate on the basis of personal characteristics. No evidence has been identified to indicate that the change would have a differential or disproportionate impact on any Section 75 group.*

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

Please provide details of the likely policy impact and determine the level of impact for each of the categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief**: (insert text here)
What is the level of impact? ~~Minor~~ / ~~Major~~ / None (circle as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**: (insert text here)
What is the level of impact? ~~Minor~~ / ~~Major~~ / None (circle as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**: (insert text here)

What is the level of impact? ~~Minor~~ / ~~Major~~ / None (circle as appropriate)

The policy is not considered likely to have any impact on good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. The proposals are technical and administrative in nature. The amendment to Order 55, rule 11 is technical and procedural in nature and concerns the clarification of disease categories for the purpose of costs discretion. It is not considered likely to impact on good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

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

Detail opportunities of how this policy could better promote good relations for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

Religious Belief - If ~~Yes~~, provide details:

If No, provide reasons: *No opportunities have been identified.*

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

If No, provide reasons: *No opportunities have been identified.*

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

If No, provide reasons: *No opportunities have been identified.*

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).

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

No evidence has been identified to suggest that persons with multiple identities would be impacted differently as a result of the proposals.

Part 3. Screening decision

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

The policy is screened out from the requirement for a full Equality Impact Assessment. Having considered previous Section 75 screening exercises, court user survey information, demographic evidence and the nature of the proposed amendments, no evidence has been identified that the proposals will have a differential impact on any Section 75 category. The proposals regulate court jurisdiction, procedural allocation and recoverable costs by reference to the value and nature of proceedings rather than the personal characteristics of court users. The policy is therefore assessed as having no adverse impact on equality of opportunity or good relations.

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment the public authority should consider if the policy should be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced - please provide details.

No mitigation measures are required

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

N/A

All public authorities' equality schemes must state the authority's arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity. The Commission recommends screening and equality impact assessment as the tools to be utilised for such assessments. Further advice on equality impact assessment may be found in a separate Commission publication: Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment.

Mitigation

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is 'minor' and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

If so, **give the reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

No mitigation measures are required

Timetabling and prioritising

Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.

If the policy has been ‘**screened in**’ for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Priority criterion	Rating (1-3)
Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations	N/A
Social need	N/A
Effect on people’s daily lives	N/A
Relevance to a public authority’s functions	N/A

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the public authority in timetabling. Details of the Public Authority’s Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the quarterly Screening Report.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?

If yes, please provide details.

Part 4. Monitoring

Public authorities 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, the public authority should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

Effective monitoring will help the public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

The impact of the policy will be kept under review through:

- *consideration of consultation responses;*
- *regular review of County Court scale costs and procedures;*
- *any issues arising from the practical application of the amended Order 55 provisions in relevant cases; and*
- *general monitoring of court user feedback and access to justice considerations.*

Should evidence of adverse impact on any Section 75 group emerge, the screening decision will be revisited.

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

Screened by: *Michael Meehan*

Position/Job Title: *G6, Head of Judicial Support, LCJO*

Date: *18.08.2026*

Approved by:

Position/Job Title:

Date:

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be 'signed off' and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made easily accessible on the public authority's website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.