



Belfast Harbour Commissioners Policies and Procedures

Good Relations Policy

Introduction

Section 75 (1) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires public bodies and named organisations such as Belfast Harbour Commissioners, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:

- Persons of different religious beliefs, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation
- Men and women generally
- Persons with a disability and persons without
- Persons with dependants and persons without.

BHC's Equality Scheme, revised and approved by the Equality Commission in February 2013, sets out how BHC will fulfil the duties imposed by Section 75.

Section 75 (2) of the Act states that without prejudice to these obligations, a compliant organisation is also required, in carrying out its functions, to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

This document sets out the policy of BHC to comply with its obligations and responsibilities, in respect of Section 75 (2) of the Act. Under the scope of this legislation BHC is committed to the promotion of good relations between persons of different religious beliefs, political opinions or racial groups.

The Equality Commission defines the promotion of good relations as "the growth of relations and structures for Northern Ireland that acknowledge the religious, political and racial context of this society and that seek to promote respect equality and trust and embrace diversity in all its forms".

The current strategy from the Northern Ireland Executive on good relations is set out in "Together Building a United Community". The strategy outlines a vision of "a united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation- one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, free of prejudice hate and intolerance."

Together Building a United Community sets out four priorities which are reflected in this revised BHC Good Relations Policy and are as follows:

- Children and young people
- Shared community
- Safe community
- Cultural expression.

Given the commercial nature of the BHC's remit there is limited opportunity to promote good relations. However, BHC acknowledges the importance of good relations and the strategy set out in Together Building a United Community. Where opportunities arise BHC will actively engage in promoting good relations. This includes ensuring employees are fully aware of their Section 75 responsibilities.

Aim

The aim of this policy is to ensure that BHC supports and is committed to the principles of Section 75 of the Act and the regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial group and the new priorities in Together Building a United Community. Good relations will be promoted through our employment policies and practices and where appropriate in our activities with Port Users and other stakeholders. BHC wishes to meet the needs of the diverse nature of the society with which it interacts in the execution of its duties.

Scope

BHC Good Relations Policy is applicable to all BHC employees and will influence how BHC interacts and communicates with its stakeholders.

Statement of Policy

BHC published a Revised Equality Scheme in February 2013. Within the Revised Equality Scheme a commitment is given to promoting good relations.

BHC is committed to the promotion of good relations in policy development and in the delivery of services. This applies to workplace relationships within BHC as well as its relationship with external stakeholders.

BHC will treat all employees, Port Users and other stakeholders with respect and dignity and will seek to provide a positive working environment, free from political, religious or racial discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

Implementation of the Policy

BHC supports a wide range of cross community projects through various Corporate Responsibility initiatives and activities. A number of these activities

are consistent with the four main priorities identified in Together Building a United Community.

This policy, together with the Dignity at Work and Equal Opportunities Policies are in place to ensure all employees are aware of their responsibilities in promoting equality and good relations and to address any issues of harassment or discrimination should they arise. This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the Dignity at Work and Equal Opportunities Policies.

Effective policies are in place for dealing with harassment and discrimination and employees are made fully aware of these policies. BHC has also implemented procedures to deal with complaints of harassment and discrimination. Such offences will be taken very seriously and complaints from individuals in relation to harassment or discrimination will be dealt with in a sensitive manner.

Roles and Responsibilities

Senior management of BHC will implement the good relations duty in consultation with its employees. All BHC employees will be expected to recognise and respect the diversity and interdependence of others, and ensure that they are aware of BHC's statutory duties in relation to the Section 75 legislation.

Training

Training is an integral part of any good relations strategy and will be a continuous process, which is evaluated, monitored and revised as required. It will be relevant and meaningful to employees with a view to creating a positive, inclusive ethos where issues of good relations, stereotyping and discrimination can be discussed openly.

Monitoring

A formal procedure has been put in place to monitor and record all events and activities undertaken or taking place promoting good relations. (See Appendix 1). BHC will monitor its activities on good relations and will communicate progress on the delivery of its statutory duties through its annual progress reports to the Equality Commission.

This policy may need to be adapted from time to time will continue to be reviewed in light of updated guidance from the Equality Commission or new legislation.

Good Relations

Under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 BHC is required in carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the promotion of good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

In addition to the above Together Building a United Community sets out four priorities which are reflected in the revised 2015 BHC Good Relations **Policy relating to children and young people, shared community, safe community and cultural expression**. The aim is to enhance and build on the good relations which exist through the activities of BHC and to be a part of and support such activities.

1.0	Who	- the activity involved	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>
2.0	What	- it was exactly	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>
3.0	When	- did this take place (date)	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>
4.0	Where	- did this take place (location)	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>
5.0	Why	- did this happen, what was the reason	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 60px; width: 100%;"></div>
6.0	Any other Comments	- in relation to this good relations activity	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px; width: 100%;"></div>

Signed: _____

Date: _____

(Forms are to be returned to HR Department as soon as possible)

Revised July 2015