

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council



**Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties
Annual Progress Report**

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Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:

<https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk>

Signature:



This report has been prepared using a template circulated by the Equality Commission.

It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and good relations duties, and implementing Equality Scheme commitments and Disability Action Plans.

This report reflects progress made between April 2019 and March 2020

PART A – Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Scheme

Section 1: Equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice

- 1** In 2019-20, please provide **examples** of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved.

Please relate these to the implementation of your statutory equality and good relations duties and Equality Scheme where appropriate.

Examples of services impacting positively on the designated groups

The following list provides a range of examples of events, activities and programmes that have been undertaken and implemented across Council in order to promote equality of opportunity and good relations (further information on a number of these are provided later in this section).

- Youth Council – 24 young people recruited for a 2 year term. The YC provides an opportunity for young people to engage with Council leaders and to be the representative voice of young people locally.
- International Children’s Day used as a focus to run events involving both children and adults from multi-cultural backgrounds. Such an environment contributes to the understanding of other cultures and it’s estimated that overall some 5500 individuals were impacted upon.
- As part of Good Relations Week and to promote community belonging a quiz (“Diversity University”) was held involving 100 participants, with an estimated further 1000 impacted indirectly. Questions focused on good relations matters locally and the outcome was positive progression of the community belonging initiative.
- Three initiatives were piloted (Grand Choice, Forthill Cultural & Arts Programme, St. Patricks Welcoming Booklet) to celebrate cultural diversity. This allowed local small un-constituted groups to partner with larger constituted groups and consequently run a series of successful events and activities.
- To continue to ensure that all spaces are welcoming to all communities (as part of St. Patricks Day 2020 events) two identified community groups put on various activities, in a facility not normally accessed by the other community. Those who participated gave very positive views on their experience. Again it’s considered that some 5000 individuals were impacted upon either directly or indirectly.
- The Good Relations & Cultural Identity Grant Scheme awarded funding to 11 groups, 6 of which were new applicants. This new 3 year grant scheme (the first in NI) aims to enhance capacity for cross-community dialogue in respect of

the TBUC priorities. Estimates put direct and indirect impact on individuals as 1200 and 12000 respectively.

- As part of the CSAW (council Safe & Well) initiatives targeted at various identified groups a series of pilates, yoga, circuits, gardening, walking and ten pin bowling sessions were held for older people to help improve mental and physical health and wellbeing. A total of approximately 150 people were involved in the programmes.
- Likewise a series of activities including ten pin bowling, self-defence, gardening, walking and circuits sessions were held for people with disabilities to help improve their physical health and wellbeing. A total of approximately 130 people were involved in the programmes.
- One identified group, mothers and babies, covered a series of relevant classes. This helped reduce social isolation and also improved mental health and wellbeing. A total of approximately 100 mothers and 100 babies took part.

Review - Policy development & screening etc.

One such area “reviewed” within this period was the statutory duty process in respect of policy development and screening and reporting to relevant Committees within Council. This review was deemed required in order to promote policy development and screening in parallel across all departments and provide an evidence base on which decisions may be made.

Briefly, this included:

- Undertaking a time-limited audit of equality activity within each department (and consequently each Committee).
- Checking to verify that all equality activity was included and documented as required.
- Reporting back to the Corporate Management Team with recommendations to further embed the statutory duty process in all the activity of Council, for example, the Equality Officer meets quarterly with each Departmental Management Team to promote the duties and look at equality activity within an agreed timeframe.
- By undertaking the above “review” and by its implementation it is considered that appropriate services will be delivered to all and the value of further “mainstreaming” highlighted to both staff and service users.

It can be made explicit that the above piece of work which began in Autumn 2019 and, after being developed with input from all departments, was approved and agreed by the Corporate Management Team at a meeting in February 2020, was stalled in its implementation due to the Covid 19 pandemic but will be rolled out as soon as is practicable to do so across Council.

One example of the practical working out of policy development and screening is the development of Bells Lane Allotments. The Parks & Amenities Unit reviewed the facility and found a badly neglected and poorly managed site which had become feral

with no consideration in the design for elderly or disabled users. Allotment holders were not abiding by the rules and regulations and these documents themselves were very out of date.

Following engagement with plot holders, the allotments have been transformed with a purpose built community space (indoor and outdoor), incorporating DDA compliant raised beds, car parking, and toilets and CSAW (see above) programmes run for both individual users and community groups.

Such practical implementation of policies and activities serves to underline the value of the statutory duties and their potential for being of direct benefit to all groups, and in this particular example older people and those with disabilities.

A number of other areas remain central to promoting commitments within the Equality Scheme and these continue to remain firmly on the equality agenda, for example:

Training

Training is undertaken as required and is targeted as may be appropriate at various levels of staff. Awareness raising and training for Elected Members is also included to help ensure that they too are aware of their statutory duty responsibilities.

With Council having new functions it is thought appropriate that training in respect of these be undertaken as required. Contact was made with the Commission who facilitated two introductory sessions – one for planning staff and one for Elected Members – with the potential for other more specific sessions to be discussed and agreed.

Following the policy development and screening review (above) it was identified that further training to support this process be undertaken. Consequently in February 2020 nominations were requested from Directors for appropriate staff to undertake training in respect of the Sec 75 and Rural Needs Impact Assessment processes (the latter to be undertaken by DAERA) and front-line staff to receive generic awareness training to support their delivery of services to all groups. Unfortunately, due to the Covid 19 situation, this training has had to be postponed but will be undertaken at the earliest opportunity.

Other relevant areas

A number of other areas are relevant to achieving improvements in service delivery through promoting the statutory duties, namely:

- The Equality Officer meeting with other officers, at all levels, as necessary in respect of a broad range of equality matters.
- The Equality Officer, and indeed other relevant officers, attending seminars and conferences (including those held by the Equality Commission, for example in respect of the consultation on the Revised Complaints & Investigation

Procedures held in May 2019) to both keep updated with information/developments and to use such events to facilitate good practice across service delivery for all groups.

- Work with other organisations (e.g. Local Government Staff Commission/Society Of Local Authority Chief Executives is ongoing) in respect of the Equality & Diversity Framework and Employers for Disability NI in respect of disability training to utilise their expertise, learn from same and then where appropriate apply this to service areas within Council.

The implementation of the statutory duties is kept under consideration and as areas may be identified as requiring “review” this is undertaken as soon as may be practicable. The overall aim is to continually ensure that services are delivered equitably to all groups within the Council area.

The Statutory Duty Network (SDN)

The SDN continues to meet and provides a forum for matters in respect of equality of opportunity and good relations to be discussed. The network provides opportunities to exchange good practice, agree approaches to particular matters, identify areas that may need clarification from the Commission etc. and also share experiences of policy development with regard to the provision of services by all Councils.

Staff from the Commission have been in attendance for recent meetings and it would be hoped that the Commission and the SDN will have a closer working relationship, reciprocal to both, going forward.

Good Relations

In respect of Sec 75(2), the good relations duty, a broad range of activities are developed and implemented with reference to Together Building a United Community and the programmes undertaken include:

Young people engaged in bringing the community together

The local Youth Council continues to work in active partnership with PSNI, PCSP and the EA to further the needs of local youth. This initiative provides local young people with an opportunity to engage with key decision makers, directly input to local issues and be a representative voice to affect positive change for youth locally.

In the 2019 – 2020 period a new cohort of 24 members was recruited to the Youth Council for a 2 year term. A training programme, including good relations, was provided to these members with an aim of developing a “mini” action plan for the forthcoming period.

88% of the participants indicated that they found the programme positive and 96% indicated that it helped them to better understand bringing different communities together.

The social action programme inclusive of a train the trainer component and engagement with Council will help ensure that the positives experienced by these members will cascade out to their wider communities.

Improving the attitude of young people from different backgrounds

Council has very successfully utilised International Children's Day (celebrated in June 2019) to promote inclusion for this group and improve community relations through a festival of events delivered in shared spaces within the City.

The multi-disciplinary event planning team ensured that individuals and groups representing countries such as Poland, Lithuania, India, South Africa and also the Filipino community, as well as local community groups and schools all take part. Within the festival there are opportunities for engagement with local community and voluntary groups as well as relevant statutory organisations and local businesses who all provide stalls/information desks on the day.

Such a multi-cultural environment helps contribute to the understanding of other cultures and groups and can build trust and respect and by so doing challenge the negative stereotypes that often prevail in respect of such groups.

This very successful day (which it is estimated impacts directly and indirectly on some 5500 individuals) has for the past four years been undertaken in partnership with the Welcome Group and due to its ongoing success the planning team are considering expanding this event into other areas of Council.

Cultural diversity is celebrated

The aim is to continue to increase the number of people who experience cultural traditions distinct from their own. This is achieved through various community and arts events with a focus on young families and those who utilise the open spaces and by so doing continues to promote shared spaces.

For the 2019 – 2020 period three pilot initiatives were undertaken (Grand Choice, Forthill Cultural and Arts Programme and St. Patricks Welcoming Booklet) and these pilots allowed local small un-constituted groups to partner with larger constituted groups to run their activities.

Increased sense of community belonging

By working with urban and rural communities this emphasises that sectarianism and racism can occur in both and that by opening dialogue between the two opportunities may arise to tackle sectarian and racist attitudes and actions amongst groups.

For example, rural sectarianism may be silent/invisible with little or no opportunity to generate a positive dialogue locally as space may not be shared and areas would be associated with predominantly one group or other etc.

By comparison urban communities often face such issues more overtly, through, for example, flags and symbols marking territory, and consequently directly and indirectly excluding other groups. The above illustrates the need to build capacity locally, create dialogue and continue to work toward good relations for all locally.

To facilitate the above in the 2019 – 2020 period Good Relations Week included a “Diversity University” quiz with questions centred on good relations matters locally. Ten teams were recruited, with 61% of recruits being new to Good Relations Week, resulting in 100 individuals taking part directly. With indirect participation estimated at 1000 again this indicates the value of such events for progressing community belonging locally.

An increase in the percentage of people who feel a sense of belonging to NI as a whole

Using a range of historical backdrops (1690, WW1, 1916 etc.) this programme aims to develop a better understanding of such events on a cross-community basis and as a learning experience facilitate information/knowledge gathered to be applied within each participants own community. It is considered that by undertaking such a programme the involvement of all communities in the historical development of our society will be further shared and contribute to better good relations in the future.

Reduce the prevalence of hate crime and intimidation

Holocaust Memorial Day 2020 was utilised to not just remember the terrible events of the Holocaust but to acknowledge the positive contributions that all cultural traditions make to their communities.

It was appropriate that the Lisburn Syrian Community Association actively participated in the event (the first such Syrian community group in NI) as some 250 Syrian refugees are now settled in the Lisburn area and illustrate that problems remain for various groups throughout the world today.

A community where places and spaces are safe for all

A promotional/educational video has been developed to explore issues of identity locally. This will include the 250+ Syrian refugees settled locally and the potential impact on the local population.

With racist activity increasing in recent times it becomes essential that there is a greater understanding of all groups locally and this has to be proactively promoted to help ensure respect and tolerance for everyone and part of this is promoting safe places and spaces for all.

In this reporting period a new initiative between the Irish Linen Centre and the Good Relations unit of Council undertook three collaborative activities/talks within the framework of utilising history to help understand the present. The journalist Kate Adie was the central speaker at one of the events.

Over 200 participants were recruited to directly attend the events with a further 2500 being indirectly impacted upon. Over 70% of participants felt the programme was positive and contributed to ensuring that facilities and spaces in the local area are available and safe for all to use.

Increased use of shared spaces and services

A Good Relations Audit was conducted in the past to not only facilitate the available TEO funding stream but also to inform the development of the GR Action Plan going forward to cover a 3 year period.

As would be anticipated a broad range of areas were included in the audit – consultation and engagement with stakeholders, the scoping of GR activity locally, present service delivery evaluation and TBUC strategy implications etc.

By undertaking the above a “locally focussed” GR strategy and action plan will be facilitated whereby targeted activities will aim to achieve the necessary agreed outcomes with consequent evaluation and monitoring undertaken accordingly.

One example of ensuring that all spaces are welcoming to all communities is the St. Patricks Day 2020 events where two identified groups put on various activities, following some event management training from Council staff.

One event was held in a local Orange Hall and members of the local Catholic community not only attended but gave very favourable feedback about the event and its positive impact on good relations.

Council proudly notes that the St. Patricks Day events impact directly on some 1000 individuals with another 5000 indirectly impacted.

An increase in the percentage of people who consider the area they live in as welcoming to all communities

This programme utilises the Good Relations and Cultural Identity Grant Scheme to provide funding to some 11 groups locally in the 2019-2020 period with a view to enhance their capacity for cross-community dialogue in respect of all the TBUC priorities. It can be noted that 6 of the 11 successful groups were new to the scheme and this again underlines the continual roll-out of activities across the Council area. For all successful groups information sessions and training are provided to assist them to maximise the impact their funding grant may make locally.

The major initiative in the new GR&CI Grant Scheme is the move from an annual grant to a three year grant which it is considered will allow successful applicant groups to provide sustainability and continuity within their programmes over the three year period. LCCC is the first Council regionally to fund such a scheme on a 3 year basis.

Estimates put direct and indirect impact on individuals as 1200 and 12000 respectively and it's considered that such numbers can only increase as the 3 year grant scheme continues to be implemented in local communities.

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By way of conclusion, in relation to all the programmes and activities undertaken within this time period (2019 – 2020), it is estimated that in excess of 5250 participants were directly involved in the above, with indirect participation accounting for a further estimated 32500 individuals, indicating the value of undertaking such positive work across all local groups.

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2019-20 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

Action plans by their very nature will involve both short term and longer term actions. Consequently, in all likelihood the plan will change over time as actions complete and new ones are added.

Provision of accessible information & services

One ongoing action is that of the provision of accessible information and services. This helps to promote, on an ongoing basis, an inclusive approach across all groups with regard to information and service provision. Those with disability and those from an ethnic background, for example, continue to benefit from the provision of alternative formats and languages other than English (such services may be provided electronically also where appropriate).

By way of example, in April 2019, departments were asked by the Equality Officer to indicate what services they provide to those with a range of disabilities. In respect of making information accessible it was noted that services are in place to cover those with sensory impairments as well as a broad range of disabilities generally.

On a very practical level Council provides infrastructure to a range of events, including toilet facilities. The accessibility of such facilities for those with disabilities is always given consideration and in May 2019 Council was in contact with Mobiloo (who provides a mobile and fully accessible toilet facility for those in wheelchairs, who may need hoists etc.) to gain information on their service and give consideration to ensuring all events are welcoming for all, inclusive of toilet facilities provided.

Networking & engagement

Networking and engagement with other individuals and representative bodies and organisations continues to prove informative and beneficial. Such contacts include:

- other Councils
- the NI Housing Executive
- the Inclusive Mobility & Transport Advisory Committee (IMTAC)
- Access Research Knowledge (ARK)
- NI Human Rights Commission
- Equality Coalition

For example, by attendance at the ARK seminar, in relation to their NI Life & Times range of surveys, it was made known that data could be provided at a local government level on a three year basis (due to small numbers and the need to maintain anonymity), such data can potentially cover all survey modules which have been run for the required time period.

By such contact not only can information be exchanged but areas of particular concern for groups may be highlighted. This knowledge may then be built into the activities of Council to ensure services continue to be provided to all, inclusive of where mitigation measures or a policy may be amended to facilitate this. Consequently, the promotion of equality of opportunity continues to be embedded across Council.

Internal meetings and contacts

The value of internal meetings and contacts should not be overlooked as it is these that form a foundation on which other activities may be built that will result in the delivery of the action plan and the achievement of outcomes for all groups.

Such internal meetings may include staff on a single department basis or on a cross-departmental basis as necessary. For example, the provision of information to ethnic groups would generally be discussed with various departments (Corporate, Leisure, as well as specific units such as MCU and IT).

Needless to say the Equality Officer is the contact point for all Section 75 matters within Council and provides advice to all departments covering a broad range of equality related matters e.g. payment for second brown bins (April 2019), kerbside collection review (June 2019), Council responsibilities in respect of the Irish language (September 2019) and consideration of the initial screening of the Dundonald International Ice Bowl capital program (December 2019).

- 3** Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2019-20 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

Yes No (go to Q.4) Not applicable (go to Q.4)

Please provide any details and examples:

There is an emphasis on screening policies at the earliest opportunity and this continues to result in more polices being screened. Within this approach while all groups are noted those which may require particular emphasis are underlined to ensure inclusion within the statutory duty process.

By way of example, the recently introduced Vitality Membership, which covers a range of activities offered through Leisure Services, is a session-based membership leisure package open to all groups. There is an income related measure contained within the membership that was proactively introduced to allow both individuals with, for example, a range of disabilities to avail of the leisure activities, as well as those on lower incomes to likewise have access to membership and consequently help improve their health and wellbeing.

The Vitality Membership “package” has proven extremely popular across all groups and all the activities offered so much so that further development of the package will in all likelihood take place in the near future. The package, which went through the statutory duty process, set out to be inclusive to all and has successfully accomplished that aim.

Indeed, given the present Covid situation and the renewed emphasis on everyone to look after their health and wellbeing, especially at this time, the Vitality membership clearly illustrates the value of implementing the statutory duties for the general benefit of all and where any adverse impact is identified take steps to mitigate to ensure access to such a valuable service also for, in this instance, those on low incomes and those with a disability etc.

- 3a** With regard to the change(s) made to policies, practices or procedures and/or service delivery areas, what **difference was made, or will be made, for individuals**, i.e. the impact on those according to Section 75 category?

Please provide any details and examples:

It is considered that the above will continue to ensure services are available to and equitably provided to all groups and where mitigation of any sort may be required, in respect of particular groups, this will be accommodated as necessary.

One example is in relation to the City Centre Masterplan consultation undertaken during May/June 2019. An electronic survey was utilised in order to ensure that consultation was as accessible as possible to all groups, including those with visual

impairments who could use their adaptive technology (Browsealoud) to participate in and fully respond to the consultation.

A further example is the Lisburn Light Festival which has been running since November 2018 and where the equality screening is reviewed annually. Council liaises with stakeholders in the planning stages of the festival and engages with external organisations to seek advice and guidance on how best to manage the lighting and sound display. These organisations include:

- Autism NI
- RNIB
- Epilepsy Action NI and
- Action on Hearing Loss

Special relaxed nights are scheduled which offer the opportunity to view the light attractions with quieter music and fewer lights switched on. We also engage with special needs schools, such as Park View, and this has resulted in the inclusion of special sensory nights to accommodate visitors with sensory needs.

Due to Covid-19 events this year will be “virtual in nature” but we will continue to engage with relevant stakeholders to ensure the festival promotes the statutory duties, is accessible to as many groups as possible, for example, older people and individuals with disabilities.

3b What aspect of the Equality Scheme prompted or led to the change(s)? *(tick all that apply)*

- As a result of the organisation’s screening of a policy *(please give details):*

The review of equality activity, including screening, has led to a revised process to ensure the Sec 75 commitments are met for all groups. As noted above this process will be implemented as soon as possible and it is considered will further contribute to the early identification of policies/activities requiring statutory duty input, the potential impact on all the groups and consequently the continued promotion of equality of opportunity.

- As a result of what was identified through the EQIA and consultation exercise *(please give details):*

By way of example it can be noted that equality screening takes place routinely for construction projects and public realm schemes. Contractors are required to meet considerate contractor guidelines where applicable and to operate within equality guidelines and raise awareness of section 75 compliance on site. Consultation and engagement takes place as required in the design phase

of the scheme to ensure the end product complies with the section 75 statutory duties as given in the legislation.

- As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact *(please give details)*:

- As a result of changes to access to information and services *(please specify and give details)*:

- Other *(please specify and give details)*:

The above is presented within the broader commitments of the statutory duties in order to both mainstream the duties generally but additionally allow for specific areas to be further addressed and in so doing continue to meet all Sec 75 requirements effectively.

Section 2: Progress on Equality Scheme commitments and action plans/measures

Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)

- 4 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2019-20 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*
- Yes, organisation wide
 - Yes, some departments/jobs
 - No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
 - No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
 - Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

By so doing, at particular levels and in relation to particular posts, the responsibilities associated with the statutory duties are made explicit to all as too the importance of integrating these fully within service delivery across Council.

One example of how this operates is feedback in respect of training received regarding the Sec 75 duties and this allows for further alignment of the particular post with any

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required training in order to continue to deliver services to all, and allows for the breadth of training that may be required to be covered over time.

Where training may be identified that would impact on a broad range of staff e.g. front line staff then discussions are held with the training unit in Human Resources & Organisational Development to progress as appropriate. An example of this is the disability awareness training undertaken by EfD NI who provided some 19 needs focussed sessions to over 350 staff.

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2019-20 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- Yes, organisation wide
- Yes, some departments/jobs
- No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Performance plans also serve to ensure that the statutory duties are made explicit here too for staff and that service performance within specified timeframes can be usefully utilised in the implementation of the duties.

6 In the 2019-20 reporting period were **objectives/ targets/ performance measures** relating to the Section 75 statutory duties **integrated** into corporate plans, strategic planning and/or operational business plans? (*tick all that apply*)

- Yes, through the work to prepare or develop the new corporate plan
- Yes, through organisation wide annual business planning
- Yes, in some departments/jobs
- No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation's ongoing corporate plan
- No, the organisation's planning cycle does not coincide with this 2019-20 report
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Equality action plans/measures

7 Within the 2019-20 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:

17

Actions ongoing:

4

Actions to commence:

Please provide any details and examples (*in addition to question 2*):

It would be considered that virtually all of the action points/measures contained within departmental action plans have been met. The 4 actions which remain ongoing would cover the provision of information, in alternative formats as well as where relevant languages other than English, across all of the departments of Council.

The present equality action plan is under review and a new plan to cover the incoming period of the Equality Scheme of Council (2020 through to 2025) is being developed in partnership with all Council departments.

The new plan will take account of relevant documentation such as the corporate, departmental and community plans, and in so doing this will ensure that any areas that require to be "prioritised", due to identified need, may be taken forward in a timely manner. Providing services to local residents and visitors will continue to be a core activity across all Council departments.

By progressing the above within the strategic vision of Council and cross-referencing this to the work of each department, through policy development and screening, will allow for the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations to be further developed within Council. This will ensure that commitments given in the Equality Scheme and the statutory duties are complied with.

8 Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2019-20 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

No changes were made to the existing equality action plan/measures. With the Equality Scheme recently reviewed the action plan/measures will be given further consideration and updated as necessary to ensure they are relevant to the Equality Scheme going forward in the next period.

9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2019-20 reporting period, the following have been identified: (*tick all that apply*)

- Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the known inequality
- Action(s) to address the known inequality in a different way
- Action(s) to address newly identified inequalities/recently prioritised inequalities
- Measures to address a prioritised inequality have been completed

Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)

10 Following the initial notification of consultations, a targeted approach was taken – and consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance: *(tick one box only)*

- All the time Sometimes Never

11 Please provide any **details and examples of good practice** in consultation during the 2019-20 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

N/A for this period. However, as noted above when consultations are undertaken they follow the relevant guidance, are always targeted at those groups most relevant, accommodate different formats etc. to allow for full participation and feedback from all.

12 In the 2019-20 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently used by consultees**: *(tick all that apply)*

- Face to face meetings
- Focus groups
- Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing
- Questionnaires
- Information/notification by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation
- Internet discussions
- Telephone consultations
- Other *(please specify)*:

Please provide any details or examples of the uptake of these methods of consultation in relation to the consultees' membership of particular Section 75 categories:

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13 Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2019-20 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

14 Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2019-20 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes No Not applicable – no commitment to review

A number of groups who no longer operate locally or regionally e.g. Lisburn Access Group as well as an organisation who now functions solely in England were deleted from the list. Where a consultation takes place and a consultee indicates that they wish to be removed from the list this is adhered to as quickly as possible. Likewise if an individual, group or organisation asks to be included on the consultation list this too will likewise adhered to.

Arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

Policies and screening templates etc. (as well as documents relating to EQIAs) can be accessed at <https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk>.]

15 Please provide the **number** of policies screened during the year *(as recorded in screening reports)*:

30

16 Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2019-20:

	Policy consultations conducted with screening assessment presented.
	Policy consultations conducted with an equality impact assessment (EQIA) presented.
1*	Consultations for an EQIA alone.

17 Please provide details of the **main consultations** conducted on an assessment (as described above) or other matters relevant to the Section 75 duties:

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- 21** In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies? *(tick one box only)*

Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

- 22** Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2019-20 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

N/A – activities and policies would be reviewed/monitored generally on an annual basis and if no differential impact/adverse impact is identified for any group then the activity/policy would continue to be implemented. If an adverse impact were to be identified then the activity/policy would be objectively looked at and consideration given to re-screening, mitigation and/or the adoption of another policy going forward.

- 23** Please provide any details or examples of monitoring that has contributed to the availability of equality and good relations information/data for service delivery planning or policy development:

N/A – while monitoring may indicate both good quality data as well as gaps in data provision (often this relates to particular groups e.g. LGBT) monitoring alone may not indicate developments within data delivery across services.

For example, NISRA (NI Statistical Research Agency) continues to provide official data sources at local geographical level and this coupled with other data sources e.g. academia, community and voluntary sectors etc. combine to provide comprehensive data at that point in time. It is this timely data that Council endeavours to utilise in order to assist the statutory duty process, including evaluating and reviewing activities and policies in order to ensure services are provided equitably and in a proportionate manner to all.

The above within the screening process, for example, is presented to staff as one way to evidence the screening outcome decision and to ensure that monitoring is included within the Sec 75 process as any service is implemented.

Staff Training (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 5)

- 24** Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2019-20, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

As noted earlier it was deemed necessary for any training programme to include training in respect of the new functions of Council and to have any training provided include both officers and Elected Members.

The identification of this need was quickly progressed by the Equality Officer through contacts within the Commission and two pilot sessions were subsequently held, one for planning staff (this being one of the new functions of Council) and one for Elected Members. Both sessions facilitated by Commission staff.

The sessions were seen as valuable and discussion identified potential areas of further training. Subsequently the Commission produced "What District Council Planners Need to Know" and this too indicates the value of joint working in relation to this important area. Since the above sessions were held the Commission has informed Council that they have contacted NILGA with a view to developing an all Council/regional approach to such matters.

Although a number of Elected Members participated in the above session the ideal is that all Elected Members receive the necessary training – this may be to inform them about the statutory duties generally or more specifically to look at the equality implications of areas such as procurement and planning etc.

While often particular service delivery models are used to facilitate training objectives those services which would either be mainly inward facing or "low volume" outward/public facing have been found to be effective examples to use within particular training contexts.

For example - while some 90% of the work of Building Control is regulatory and where policies, regulations or guidance etc. comes through from the relevant Government Department, which is generally accompanied by a Section 75 screening outcome, this Unit of Council has promoted the statutory duties to raise overall awareness amongst staff and a core lesson learnt is that the statutory duties have to be actioned, where appropriate, at the earliest opportunity and cannot work effectively as an addition or afterthought to any decision previously enacted.

By taking such a service and showing the value of applying the statutory duties, and the potential benefits to all service users, clearly indicates to staff the need to be aware of the duties and apply them early within any policy/activity development and screening process.

A further example is provided by the Assets Unit - while virtually all of the work of the Unit is internally facing the Unit does ensure that the Council estate is accessible to, for example, older people and individuals with disabilities where possible to do so.

The Unit would also be responsible for a number of other areas such as encroachment on Council land and property and would endeavour at all times to ensure that Council land is maximised for the benefit of all residents.

By helping to make the links from a service that many would not immediately see as having an equality impact to potential actual impacts on service users again positively

supports the requirement to undertake the statutory duties as per the commitments given in the Equality Scheme of Council.

- 25** Please provide **any examples** of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives:

While the above has a focus on the statutory duties “strategically” and was aimed at managers, Heads of Service, Directors and Elected Members front line staff too need trained in order to deliver services to the designated groups. In effect they require more practical training which has often to include “problem solving”, dealing with service complaints, individual customer dissatisfaction and so on (although very often with praise for a good service delivered).

Employers for Disability NI (EfD NI) completed a major training programme for Council (initiated in late 2018 and running through into the 2019/20 period and which covered over 360 staff) in the present period covering awareness raising as well as how to provide the “best service” to a very broad range of individuals with disabilities. This included individuals with autism and dementia which was an area identified by staff as one that they were having to increasingly deal with on a daily basis.

Training provided information, showed how to deal with individuals across many varied conditions, did so in a practical manner and allowed those staff attending to fully raise their “hesitations and concerns”, as they didn’t want to do the wrong thing in respect of any customer. Needless to say the sessions were a great success and feedback was unanimously extremely positive.

Public Access to Information and Services (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 6)

- 26** Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2019-20, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

N/A

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

- 27** How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2019-20?

Insert number here:

0

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

Section 3: Looking Forward

28 Please indicate when the Equality Scheme is due for review:

The present Equality Scheme of Council was approved by the Commission in March 2015. Consequently it has just been reviewed as required under the legislation (NI Act 1998 Schedule 9 Paragraph 8 (3) i.e. a scheme shall be reviewed within 5 years of submission to the Commission for approval).

The outcome of the five year review is that no substantive changes are required to the Equality Scheme of Council and consequently the next review of the Equality Scheme will be due in 2025 at the latest (a later review being undertaken within 5 years of a previous review).

29 Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements (screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? (*please provide details*)

A number of areas considered central to Equality Scheme commitments will continue to be progressed in the coming period. These include:

Policies & activities

The auditing of activities/policies across Council with a view to ensuring activity/policy development is undertaken as early as possible in relation to the statutory duties.

Revised equality process

The development of a revised process to record equality activity across Council will be introduced to help ensure any activity with an equality aspect will be captured and both present and forthcoming activities recorded within a quarterly timeframe on a departmental basis (see 1 above).

Data & information

To facilitate the above the importance of data and information in respect of providing an evidence base for screening outcome decisions will continue to be promoted.

Training

Training will continue to be important and particularly so in respect of the “new” responsibilities Council has and Council looks forward to working with the Commission in respect of the identified training needs for both officers and Elected Members.

Engagement

Consideration will be given to the potential for further engagement with the designated groups and this will include the involvement of relevant units/departments across Council e.g. community planning.

30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next (2019-20) reporting period? (*please tick any that apply*)

PART A

- Employment
- Goods, facilities and services
- Legislative changes
- Organisational changes/ new functions
- Nothing specific, more of the same
- Other (please state):

PART B - Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and Disability Action Plans

1. Number of action measures for this reporting period that have been:

18

Fully achieved

Partially achieved

Not achieved

2. Please outline below details on all actions that have been fully achieved in the reporting period.

2 (a) Please highlight what **public life measures** have been achieved to encourage disabled people to participate in public life at National, Regional and Local levels:

Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs ⁱ	Outcomes / Impact ⁱⁱ
National ⁱⁱⁱ	Maintain existing and develop new contacts/networks with a view to positively impacting upon policy at the highest level	Increase the number of such contacts. Emphasise the importance of ensuring the national cascades down to the regional and local levels	Information, learning, good practice developed and applied as appropriate
Regional ^{iv}	Maintain existing and develop new contacts/networks with a view to positively impacting upon policy at the regional level	Increase the number of such contacts. Emphasise the importance of vertically linking the regional to the national and the local	Information, learning, good practice developed and applied as appropriate

PART B

Local ^v	Maintain existing and develop new contacts/networks with a view to positively impacting upon policy at the local level	<p>Increase the number of such contacts. Emphasise the importance of vertically linking the local to the regional and the national</p> <p>Where engagement takes place with local groups that this facilitates the assessment of local needs and how best to meet these</p>	<p>Information, learning, good practice developed and applied as appropriate</p> <p>Feedback from any engagement taken into account in respect of policy/service development</p>
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2(b) What **training action measures** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Both generic and specific training is undertaken as required	<p>Generic training provides a baseline of information and serves to place disability centrally within the work of Council and consequently help facilitate the Sec 49 duties</p> <p>If a requirement for specific training is identified this will be delivered as effectively and as soon as is practicable with the aim of providing officers with the knowledge and skills required to</p>	<p>Training can involve officers at different points in time. Those who are customer facing require training to enable them to deliver a good practice service to all, and have such training updated as service requirements may develop</p> <p>Other officers are trained as required/when a need is identified within their units/departments</p> <p>Training may be delivered as a one-off session or as part of a wider training programme across Council</p>

PART B

		provide the service to all and enhance the service as may be required	This approach ensures officers receive the training relevant to their service/training needs and consequently that they are best placed to support the Sec 49 duties
2			

2(c) What Positive attitudes **action measures** in the area of **Communications** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Communication channels are maintained and reviewed to ensure effectiveness at all levels	Requests for alternative formats kept under review A corporate approach to communication taken Other related matters given consideration as they may arise	Alternative formats provided on request Impact of new technologies noted Communication linked directly to the Sec 75 duties Positive attitudes promoted in respect of alternative formats to all groups
2	Contacts/networks maintained across relevant sectors at the necessary level	Contacts/networks maintained As new contacts initiated/developed these are progressed as necessary	Inputs from contacts/networks given consideration and progressed as necessary Ensure communication with groups is effective and delivered within a good practice service framework

PART B

2 (d) What action measures were achieved to ‘**encourage others**’ to promote the two duties:

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	A social model approach is taken to disability	Positively promote disability Provide information in appropriate formats Sign-post to other groups/organisations as appropriate Maintain contact with the local Health Trust and convene meetings/activities as required	Continue to ensure that officers maintain a positive attitude toward all disabilities Ensure the continued accessibility of services Support the contribution of those with a disability in all areas
2	Continue to promote and support the removal of barriers relating to disability	Highlight the positives of removing barriers Promote relevant activities at every opportunity Meet with other stakeholders to facilitate the above as required	Promote good practice at all times Internal working arrangements complimented by external contacts to promote inclusion The breadth of disabilities promoted, individual supported with appropriate approaches taken at all times

PART B

2 (e) Please outline **any additional action measures** that were fully achieved other than those listed in the tables above:

	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
1			
2			

3. Please outline what action measures have been **partly achieved** as follows:

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
1				
2				

PART B

4. Please outline what action measures **have not been achieved** and the reasons why.

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1		
2		

5. What **monitoring tools** have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?

(a) Qualitative

Contact maintained with disability groups locally and regionally. Feedback provides information and insights into needs and requirements. This assists in identifying “gaps/areas to consider improvement” and also underlines where good practice services are already being implemented.

(b) Quantitative

Internal data is utilised where available across Council services. Complaints (as well as compliments etc.) are recorded and used to identify particular services, their users and the issues that may have arisen. Any specific issue raised under the Sec 49 duties is dealt with through the appropriate department or departments.

External data, of which there is an abundance, is extensively used across Council. This would range from regional Census data to local NINIS data depending on requirements. Additionally, other sources of data, the community sector and academia etc., would also be utilised if appropriate to do so.

PART B

By combining the above data sources these give a foundation on which to evaluate and monitor service provision to all groups and help identify areas where additional improvements/amendments may be required in order to fulfil the relevant duties.

6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions has your organisation either:

- made any **revisions** to your plan during the reporting period or
- taken any **additional steps** to meet the disability duties which were **not outlined in your original** disability action plan / any other changes?

No

If yes please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

PART B

7. Do you intend to make any further **revisions to your plan** in light of your organisation's annual review of the plan? If so, please outline proposed changes?

In the forthcoming period it is anticipated that the plan will be amended in light of the following, identified as relevant to fully implementing all aspects of the plan:

Continuing quantification of outcomes to facilitate any targets being met.

Informally/formally consult with stakeholders to gain feedback on areas of the plan where review may be required.

It would be accepted by individual stakeholders that a smaller number of actions that are achievable are preferable to "ongoing" actions and the above would be progressed with this in mind.

By undertaking the above it is considered that the DAP will become more action positive, measureable, with more achievable actions being implemented and met. Consequently the Sec 49 duties will be further embedded within all Council activities to the benefit of all.

ⁱ **Outputs** – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.

ⁱⁱ **Outcome / Impact** – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action? Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.

ⁱⁱⁱ **National** : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments

^{iv} **Regional**: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level

^v **Local** : Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora.