

**Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council**



**Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties  
Annual Progress Report 2016-17**

**Contact:**

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Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:  
[www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk](http://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 2016 and March 2017**

## **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 2016-17, 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.*

The statutory duties continue to be promoted and implemented across Council through a variety of mechanisms and activities, including:

#### Reporting to Elected Members/Council

As appropriate relevant matters are reported to the appropriate Council Committee and subsequently full Council. This ensures that all Councillors are kept informed of equality matters and can provide input as may be relevant.

#### L&CCC Officer Meetings

Such meetings both allow for the provision of advice, information and guidance to officers across all departments of Council as well as provide an opportunity for the identification of any matter within each department or across departments that may need addressed. Good practice can also be identified and noted and, as necessary, steps taken to apply same across Council.

#### Training

Training for officers is provided both “generically” and also in relation to “specific” matters that have been identified as a potential training need. Once agreed as a legitimate need the relevant training is developed and delivered as soon as may be practicable. In many instances both front-line/customer-facing officers and supervisors would be trained at the same time in order that both have their awareness and knowledge base updated and both are aware of relevant equality matters being dealt with in that particular service area.

#### Data

It is recognised that data is crucial to assisting officers in implementing the statutory duties effectively. Council continues to progress this by emphasising the collection of “equality relevant” data across all departments of Council (and as appropriate at the relevant geographical level). By so doing it is anticipated that this will parallel external data sources and consequently assist in relation to policy development, policy review and also monitoring. Consequently, the above will contribute to the overall promotion of equality of opportunity for all groups.

Indeed, Council had a statistician in place through secondment from NISRA for a period of time to assist in a range of data collection and analysis exercises.

### The Statutory Duty Network

Council continues to actively participate in the Statutory Duty Network which brings together officers from all 11 Councils to discuss the broad range of equality matters that may impact on the local government sector. These meetings facilitate information and good practice exchange as well as supporting, where possible, a standardised approach to a range of matters. In effect this assists each Council to meet both their strategic and operational aims with respect to the statutory duties.

### Diversity Champion/Disability Champion Initiative

The Diversity Champion/Disability Champion initiative remains supported by Council. Such identified individuals (which include both Elected Members and officers) continue to promote these areas of activity within Council. Also, a number of Elected Members have disabilities and they too support this worthwhile initiative within the overall equality agenda. Indeed one Elected Member with a physical disability is a nominated Diversity Champion for Council.

### Networking

Contact is maintained with a broad range of other organisations across all sectors at both local, regional and national levels. Such networks promote positive communications and support a sound foundation for any engagement relevant to equality matters within Council.

### Conferences & Seminars

Relevant seminars and conferences are attended by the Equality Officer (and other officers as required) and in the recent past these have included seminars and conferences in relation to human rights issues, refugee awareness, LGBT/Transgender equality and the WHO age friendly initiative to name a few. Needless to say relevant events held by the Equality Commission are also attended as necessary.

Such seminars and conferences would cover most or all of the designated groups and often highlight various issues that may be impacting upon them at that point in time. Where good practice can be identified this may be followed up within Council at a later date. By so doing this can help facilitate the continual roll-out of good practice across Council and consequently the promotion of equality of opportunity for all.

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2016-17 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

The equality action plan has always been taken to be a flexible plan as it's recognised that not only will actions be completed over time but that additional actions may require to be added to the plan as, for example, services develop etc.

#### Information & Accessible Services

It can be highlighted that many of the action measures relate to information provision and ensuring that the particular service is accessible to all users/groups and will remain so into the future.

#### Networking & Engagement

Taking forward the action plan involves a number of activities including both maintaining and developing new networks with relevant organisations and groups. Such engagement can help provide feedback which can be built into both the policy development and service delivery roles of Council. Where any matter is identified as in need of being dealt with this can be given consideration and effectively taken forward in a timely manner.

#### L&CCC Officer Meetings

Internal meetings with officers across Council can also serve to identify further areas for action in order that services continue to be delivered on an inclusive basis for all groups. Such meetings can also underline the value of cross-departmental working with respect to implementing the statutory duties across Council.

#### Conferences & Seminars

The scanning of the external environment through attending seminars and conferences as well as meeting groups and individuals can assist in gathering information and identifying good practice in respect of one or more of the designated groups. If actions are identified that require to be included in the action plan then these can be given consideration as to how best to progress each particular action. Importantly, the value of qualitative information/data is very often highlighted through such activities.

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**3** Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2016-17 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

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

Please provide any details and examples:

As noted elsewhere policies are being developed for L&CCC. Consequently there may be changes to the previous policies as applied by the former two Councils. All such policies will be subject to screening and due process prior to implementation.

**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:

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

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

See below.

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

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):*

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

As policies are reviewed and developed to be appropriate for L&CCC it is inevitable that some of these will be changed in some way from former policies. However, with the screening of such policies being undertaken it is anticipated that the screening process will help ensure that all groups are impacted upon positively by the policy in question. Where this may not be the case mitigation

of any potential adverse impact will be considered and appropriate action taken with respect to that policy or that particular group or groups. If the screening outcome of any policy indicates that an EQIA should be given consideration then this too would be progressed as appropriate following the relevant guidance.

## 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 2016-17 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:

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2016-17 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:

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6 In the 2016-17 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 2016-17 report
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The new corporate plan will now directly reference the statutory duties and make explicit the importance to Council of all departmental plans likewise ensuring that the statutory duties are central to all activity of Council.

**Equality action plans/measures**

7 Within the 2016-17 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:	<input type="text"/>	Actions ongoing:	<input type="text" value="12"/>	Actions to commence:	<input type="text"/>
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Please provide any details and examples *(in addition to question 2)*:

The core actions of information provision and ensuring that Council services are accessible to all continue to be actively progressed. The former may be provided on an ad-hoc/as required basis as well as particular client groups being targeted through "customer clinics/information sessions" etc. across various service areas.

All services continue to strive to ensure that their service is accessible to all and this would include the broad range of activities from physical access to listening to the customer/service user in order to improve/develop any particular service etc.

8 Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2016-17 reporting period *(points not identified in an appended plan)*:

None

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- 9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2016-17 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 2016-17 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:

- 12 In the 2016-17 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)*: Continued and on-going networking with local statutory agencies as well as local groups (community and voluntary) provides opportunities for a range of groups to have a positive impact on the work of Council.

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For example, the now well established links with the local Health Trust and various groups representing the broad range of disabilities gives those with disabilities a positive role in the focus, design and implementation of the annual involvement event which Council facilitates as part of its Disability Action Plan commitments.

Not only does this facilitate interaction and networking with Council but also provides those with disabilities an opportunity to meet various Assembly Ministers (who have consistently spoken at such events in Council), senior staff in many organisations across all sectors and by so doing give local disabled individuals a wider and louder voice in relation to their particular needs.

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:

- 13** Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2016-17 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

Yes                      X No                       Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

- 14** Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2016-17 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

X Yes                       No                       Not applicable – no commitment to review

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

[Insert link to any web pages where screening templates and/or other reports associated with Equality Scheme commitments are published]

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

5
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A number of departments have also had review sessions to help ensure that Section 75 remains a priority across all departments. This has included both senior staff as well as staff responsible for implementing the particular service area;

A programme of training for all other relevant staff is presently being developed and confirmed. This will utilise the available Equality & Diversity E-Learning Module as well as follow this up with specific training as identified within the E-Learning Module roll-out;

It would be envisaged that for customer facing staff much of the training to be delivered will be of a practical nature thus ensuring that all groups can readily avail of the services provided by Council;

Also, specific training in relation to Section 75 has been undertaken with the recently nominated Equality Champions (presently one in each Council department). Relevant training will continue to be provided as the role and remit of the Equality Champion is further embedded and developed in each department;

It can also be noted that if further training needs are identified for staff then training to meet such needs will be delivered as soon as is practicable, for example, it was identified that leisure staff would benefit from autism awareness training and it was agreed to have Autism NI deliver the relevant training. This was completed and has contributed to leisure staff dealing with more confidence and more pro-actively with, in particular, children with autism;

Corporate induction training also includes input to cover Section 75 in order to give a general overview of the two statutory duties and also provide examples of good practice in respect of the delivery of services to all the designated groups, this is always well received by front-desk/customer facing staff irrespective of their departmental location. The approach taken within such training is to show the statutory duties as a positive tool to aid the delivery of services for all users;

Also, the Equality Officer and the Policy Officer both participated on the Local Government Staff Commission initiative "Champions of Change" which looked at a range of equality and diversity matters and how these could be progressed with Council in a time of organisational change;

The Equality Officer, as the Council's officer Diversity Champion, also attended a number of Diversity Champions Seminars as organised by the Equality and Diversity Training Group of the LGSC;

All such activities continue to help ensure that training needs are met across the organisation at all levels and with respect to all the statutory groups.

- 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:

The training delivered to Heads of Service (and their middle managers) has worked particularly well in that one main objective within the training was to emphasise the importance of policy screening across all Council activity.

With departments having begun to review their policies (previously those of the former extant Councils) in order to develop L&CCC policies, this has helped to underline the move to policy development (as well as identification) and screening, with the number of policies being screened increasing in number.

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

- 26 Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2016-17, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

### Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

- 27 How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2016-17?

Insert number here:

0
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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 L&CCC Equality Scheme was submitted as requested on the 26 November 2014 and approved by the Equality Commission on 25 March 2015. Consequently, it will be due for review, given the 5 year timeline from the submission date, before 26 November 2019.

- 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*)

It would be anticipated that equality activity will continue to focus on policy development, policy screening (including policy identification) and as noted above a review of available information may be undertaken to facilitate such activity.

The information review may be undertaken as part of a wider review of IT and data systems etc. that may be required within the new Council.

Training will continue to be undertaken as required and the remit of the Equality Champions will be kept under review in order that this role can actively support staff within departments to follow due process as required.

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The above will be supported by a range of other activity (as noted earlier) to ensure that best practice is promoted within Council, that evidence based outcomes continue to be progressed and, as may be necessary, ensure that any changes in legislation or guidance are built into the work of Council in the future.

**30** In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next (2017-18) reporting period? *(please tick any that apply)*

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

The provision of services to all groups will continue to be a priority. If there were to be legislative changes (eg. in relation to GFS, TBUC etc.) then advice and guidance on such matters would be a requirement. Also, it would be useful for the Commission to consider providing advice and guidance in relation to the “new” functions that were transferred to local government in April 2015.

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

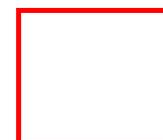
**1. Number of action measures for this reporting period that have been:**



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 <sup>i</sup>	Outcomes / Impact <sup>ii</sup>
National <sup>iii</sup>	Existing and new networks developed in order to facilitate policy influence at a high level.	Increase contact with such groupings.	Information and learning further developed. Where good practice established this is applied within Council as appropriate.
Regional <sup>iv</sup>	Existing and new networks developed in order to facilitate policy influence at a medium level.	Increase contact with such groupings.	Information and learning further developed. Where good practice established this is applied within Council as appropriate.
Local <sup>v</sup>	Existing and new networks developed in order to facilitate policy influence at a lower/local level.	Increase contact with such groupings and continue to undertake the annual “involvement session”, which	Information and learning further developed. Where good practice established this is applied within Council as appropriate. Feedback

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		aims to focus on local needs and how best to meet these.	from the “involvement session” given consideration in respect of potential service development etc.
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2(b) What **training action measures** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Training has always been undertaken in two strands – “generic” training and “specific” training.	<p>Both serve to update and increase officers information and knowledge. Continue to place “disability matters” as important within the work of Council and by so doing promote the Sec 49 duties.</p> <p>Where more “specific” training is identified as being required this can be delivered either internally or externally as necessary. The aim being to provide officers with the confidence and knowledge they need within a developmental and supportive context to provide their service to all and indeed, as practicable, enhance such provision.</p>	<p>Such training can involve officers at all levels. Customer facing officers continue to be provided with the information and skills to further assist them in delivering a good practice service.</p> <p>Other officers are trained as required and this reflects identified needs within respective departments of Council.</p> <p>Training sessions may be one-off “identified” sessions for 10-20 officers while other training sessions could cover officers identified within an entire department, potentially around 60-80 officers (or more).</p> <p>By taking such an approach the disability duties are supported.</p>
2			

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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 networks are maintained and kept under review to, as far as is practicable, ensure effectiveness	Monitoring of alternative formats requests etc. Corporate approach taken to the provision of information. Where matters arise these are given consideration.	Alternative formats provided as necessary. The potential role of various relevant “new” technologies noted. Communication linked to other activities, including the statutory duties. Positive attitudes promoted.
2	Individual and group contacts/networks maintained across all sectors at appropriate levels	Existing contacts maintained and developed. As new contacts may arise these are “nurtured” as required.	All feedback/input given due consideration. Positive/pro-active approach taken to ensure good practice delivered to all service users.

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

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Take a “social model” approach to disability matters generally and promote disability across all	Actively promote disability within the “see the individual” perspective – the “can do” as opposed to the “can’t do”.	Continue to work toward (within the new Council) all officers being aware of disability

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	services/areas of Council responsibility.	Provide information as necessary. Sign-post to other organisations as may be required. Hold a minimum of three meetings with the local H&SC Trust relevant PoC/officers etc.	matters and having a positive attitude toward those with disability. Ensure that services are accessible to all. The contribution of those with a disability acknowledged and their skills and abilities supported.
2	Continue to work toward the removal of “barriers” (especially attitudinal) with respect to disability within the remit of Council	Promote the positives to all regarding removing such barriers. Promote the disability work of Council at appropriate opportunities. Hold a minimum of three meetings with the local H&SC Trust relevant PoC/officers etc.	The pro-active role and good practice of Council emphasised. Promoting inclusion through inter-departmental/inter-organisational working. The broad range of disabilities promoted, including multiple-disabilities, and relevant approaches given due consideration.

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			

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

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

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 with both individuals and groups, especially where a relationship has been established over time, can provide qualitative information which can “tell the story” for that individual or group (any such story can’t be told simply by utilising numerical data). By personalising the

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story this can forcefully illustrate the impact of disability on individual lives. Consequently, officers continue to, for example, further appreciate these impacts and also acquire the confidence and skills to help meet both the needs of the individual and their representative group.

Also, through such conversations matters of concern (many of which are often “minor” in nature) may be raised and these in turn taken back to the appropriate service for consideration as to how to actively progress.

### (b) Quantitative

The “data mountain” continues to grow as too do the sources of such data. Data is only relevant if the right data is collected for the right reason within the right context. By such a “selective” approach data can be utilised and analysed for best purpose in respect of any grouping. It is accepted, however, that even allowing for the volumes of data available there will be “gaps” and these will include areas such as sexual orientation, hidden disabilities, “multiple identities” and indeed others (the qualitative story telling noted above can sometimes help fill such gaps).

Both regional and local data has a particular relevance to meeting local needs and in this instance promoting the disability duties. An increasing range of data is becoming available at local geographies and this, in recent times, has helped to emphasise the value of having local data as a catalyst to the provision of local services.

Indeed it can be noted that the “new” LCCC has a new geographical boundary within which is located a new demography, totalling over 140,000 individuals, with a new community make-up and so on. Data with respect to all such areas will take time to develop and “ensure access” for all departments of Council. By so doing a positive contribution will be made to all section 75 groups, including those with a disability.

By facilitating a better understanding of local needs and requirements this will ensure that, over time, “best services” can be provided to all service users and in so doing that the statutory duties, including the disability duties, are met for all groups.

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

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- 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			

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?

While keeping the DAP under review it has been recognised by the Corporate Management Team that there is a need to quantify further the outcomes/performance indicators contained within the DAP. It is thought that the best way to do this would be to review the plan (in parallel with the present ongoing DAP review etc.) overall and build into the reviewed plan more quantifiable outcome measures within an agreed timescale. This timing fits well with Council now being further “bedded in” after being established in April 2015.

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This will continue to support disability across all Council departments and more readily allow them to identify targets met (and unmet). By so doing promote the “statutory duties” generally and allow for a more open and transparent DAP to be developed over time and one that will better fit with a range of new functions that are now the responsibility of Council post 2015.

Once the review of the DAP is completed in the near future, this will be consulted upon and all relevant stakeholders invited to feedback prior to the DAP being finalised and implemented. It is anticipated that this will both meet the requirements of Sec 49A as well as further progress meeting local needs of those with a disability in the coming period.

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<sup>i</sup> **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.

<sup>ii</sup> **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.

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

<sup>iv</sup> **Regional**: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level

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

<sup>vi</sup> **Milestones** – Please outline what part progress has been made towards the particular measures; even if full output or outcomes/ impact have not been achieved.