

Disability Action Plan

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

2015 – 2020

October 2015

Foreword

The Plan is a statement of the Council's commitment to and proposals for fulfilling the statutory obligations in compliance with Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006).

This places new duties on public authorities when carrying out their functions to have due regard to the need:

- to promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities, and
- to encourage participation by people with disabilities in public life

The Plan outlines how disability issues can be more effectively mainstreamed, thus ensuring that they are central to the whole range of policy decision-making within the Council.

Mayor

Chief Executive

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1. Introduction

1.1 Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended by the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006, requires the Council in carrying out its functions to have due regard to the need:

- to promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities, and
- to encourage participation by people with disabilities in public life

1.2 The Council is committed to the fulfilment of its disability duties in all parts of its organisation and has set out how it intends to do this in this Disability Action Plan.

1.3 The Council will undertake as appropriate a planned programme of communication and training on the above two disability duties.

2. Purpose of the disability action plan

2.1 This Plan sets out how the Council proposes to fulfil the disability duties in relation to its functions.

3. Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council – role and functions

3.1 The roles and functions of Council cover three main types, these are – direct, representative and consultative and include:

- the direct provision of a number of services and facilities
- the promotion of the arts, tourism, community and economic development
- the regulation and licensing of certain activities relating to environmental health, consumer protection and public safety

- a representative role on a number of bodies and Boards including Education and Health
- a consultative role in relation to functions conducted by other Government bodies and agencies on issues such as planning, water, roads and housing

3.2 In the performance of the above roles the Council carries out functions across many areas, including:

- the provision of facilities for recreational, social and cultural activities including leisure centres, community centres, parks, open spaces, sports grounds and places of entertainment
- street cleansing
- waste collection, treatment and disposal
- the provision of burial grounds
- the provision of grant aid to support the Arts, community development and the promotion of tourism and economic development
- the administration and regulation of certain matters relating to the environment, public health and public safety including building control, food safety, statutory nuisance, dangerous buildings, air pollution, noise pollution, dog control, consumer protection and health and safety
- the licensing and regulation of street trading, places of entertainment, amusement centres, sex establishments, societies lotteries, cinemas and petroleum stations
- the making of bye-laws and regulation of same

From 01 April 2015 Council acquired powers in relation to:

Planning – local development plan functions, development control and enforcement

Roads – off street parking (except Park & Ride)

Urban regeneration & community development – functions associated with physical development (e.g. environmental improvement), area based regeneration (e.g. neighbourhood renewal), some community

development programmes for the voluntary and community sectors

Housing – registration of houses in multiple occupation, housing unfitness responsibilities (including repair and demolition notices)

Local Economic Development (from Invest NI) – Start a Business Programme and Enterprise Shows, Youth Entrepreneurship (e.g. Princes Trust/Shell Livewire), Investing for Women, Neighbourhood Renewal (re: enterprise initiatives)

Local Tourism – tourist accommodation development (small scale), providing business support/customer care schemes/advice to developers on tourism policies and related matters

In addition to the above – some elements of the EU Rural Development Programme, authority to “spot-list” buildings on a temporary basis, authority to compile list(s) of buildings of architectural and/or historical interest, local water recreational facilities, local sports (greater involvement at local government level) as well as “community planning” and a “general power of competence”

3.3 To enable the Council to provide the above services and perform its other functions, the Council must levy an annual rate and has the power to:

- acquire and dispose of land
- borrow money
- employ staff
- procure goods and services.

3.4 To support and implement the above statutory functions and provision of services and facilities, the Council has adopted a wide range of policies.

4. Public life positions over which the Council has responsibility

- 4.1 The Council has no direct responsibility over any public life position. However, where Council may be able to promote the disability duties it will endeavour to do so in relation to such posts.

5. The commitment of Council to the effective implementation of the Plan

- 5.1 The Council is committed to the effective implementation of the Plan. Responsibility for determining policy on how this will be achieved lies with the Elected Members.
- 5.2 Day to day responsibility for carrying out the policy determined by the Elected Members lies with the Chief Executive and he/she will be responsible for the implementation of administrative arrangements to ensure that the disability duties are complied with by the Council. As part of its strategic corporate planning process, the Council will build objectives and targets relating to the disability duties into corporate and business plans. These will be reflected at all levels of planning including individual employee objectives and annual plans.
- 5.3 Progress on meeting objectives, including those relating to the disability duties will be monitored and reported upon at the most senior level within the organisation on a quarterly basis. Achievement of objectives will also be monitored as appropriate through performance review.
- 5.4 A formal report of progress on meeting the objectives relating to the disability duties will be included in the Council's annual report to the Equality Commission.

6. Internal arrangements

- 6.1 Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council consists of 40 elected representatives who meet monthly in full session. There are also six standing committees, these are:

Corporate Services Committee
Leisure & Community Development Committee
Development Committee
Environmental Services Committee
Governance & Audit Committee
Planning Committee

7. Effective engagement

- 7.1 The Council is committed to engaging with people with disabilities in the implementation, monitoring and review of this Plan.

8. Annual report

- 8.1 The Council will prepare an annual report on the implementation of its Plan. This report will be included as part of the Council's annual report to the Equality Commission on the implementation of the Equality Scheme of Council.
- 8.2 A copy of the annual report will be made available on the Council's website and at its headquarters building, the Island Civic Centre (Lisburn).

9. Five year review

- 9.1 The Council will carry out a review of its plan (within five years), in consultation with the Equality Commission for NI.

10. Consultation

- 10.1 The Council is committed to carrying out consultation in a meaningful manner in the development of its disability duties. Council is keen to help bring about change for people with disabilities and are therefore focussing on the issue of involvement and participation in order to assist with the development of the Plan.
- 10.2 To do this the Council is actively engaged on a number of levels; firstly at a representative group level at the regional level and secondly, at the local level by holding an “involvement session” to enable a two-way dialogue to be established and maintained between Council and individuals with a disability and their representative organisations.
- 10.3 Our “involvement session” is designed to ensure that disabled people can assist the Council by:
- identifying any barriers they face in participating in public life in general and specifically any barriers they may have encountered in relation to their dealings with the Council
 - identifying any circumstances in the past in which they perceive Council has not promoted positive attitudes towards people with disabilities and by identifying future opportunities for the Council to promote such attitudes
 - setting priorities and identifying solutions as regards the taking of remedial action
 - monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of measures taken
- 10.5 Local disability groups will be invited to the “involvement session” and it would be anticipated to hold such a session on an annual basis.

We will also place press advertisements in local papers to allow individuals the opportunity to attend. Thus ensuring that both groups and individuals are given the opportunity to participate.

- 10.6 To ensure that we as a Council are responsive to the needs of people with disabilities relevant Officers will attend our involvement session. Elected Members will, as appropriate, be invited to also attend.
- 10.7 As part of the involvement session, as appropriate, documents will be made available in appropriate formats. Information in alternative formats will be made available on request and all efforts will be made to have information available in a timely fashion. Consideration will also be given to how best to communicate information to young disabled people as well as other relevant considerations in respect of the Section 75 “designated groups”.
- 10.8 The Council is keen to ensure the highest level of inclusivity in our involvement session and therefore we will consider matters such as the following:
- the time of day of the session
 - the appropriateness of the venue, and whether it could be accessed by those with disabilities
 - how the session will be run
 - the use of appropriate language
 - whether a signer or interpreter is necessary
- 10.9 The Council believes it is important that people with disabilities are involved in the implementation, monitoring and review of the Plan. Appendix 1 of this document notes some examples of initiatives the Council has already undertaken. We will continue to seek the views of groups and individuals in relation to any activity the Council is undertaking and will give consideration to amending any activity following any input received.
- 10.10 Following on from our involvement session we may wish to further discuss the implementation of the Plan by meeting with or utilising:
- individuals
 - advisory groups
 - consultative panels
 - internet discussion groups

- telephone focus groups
- surveys

and other innovative ways of involving people with disabilities.

- 10.11 The Council believes that by hosting an annual involvement session that this will allow for a two-way discussion; giving people with disabilities an opportunity to provide feedback in a constructive manner. Prior to the annual session the Council will allow adequate time for groups and individuals to consult amongst themselves prior to attending the information session, we will therefore aim to provide relevant information in advance of the annual information session to those groups and individuals who have previously indicated their attendance and/or other groups and individuals to whom it may be of relevance.

11. Action measures

- 11.1 The Council has already taken a number of measures to promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities and encourage their participation in public life as a result of the duties under Section 75. Examples of these are given at Appendix 1.
- 11.2 The following are the measures which Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council intends to take in order to implement the disability duties for the forthcoming period.

Action Measure	Responsibility	Impact	Time-Scale	Performance Indicator
<p>Mainstreaming</p> <p>To continue to include disability within any policy screening.</p> <p>Prepare an Annual Report to the ECNI on implementation of the Plan.</p> <p>To continue to work with all service areas to ensure inclusion of disability matters.</p>	<p>Heads of Service and all relevant officers.</p> <p>Equality Officer.</p> <p>Equality Officer.</p>	<p>Ensure disability issues mainstreamed at an early stage of policy development.</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Annually.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p>	<p>No. of screening forms completed.</p> <p>No. of action measures met.</p> <p>Keep under review.</p>

Action Measure	Responsibility	Impact	Time-Scale	Performance Indicator
<p>Training</p> <p>Continue to provide training in relation to disability inclusive of the disability duties to staff and, as appropriate, Elected Members</p> <p>Continue to provide “specialist” training as necessary for senior managers and other staff eg. recruitment and selection panels, front line staff.</p>	<p>Equality Officer. All relevant officers.</p> <p>Equality Officer. All relevant officers.</p>	<p>Increased awareness of disability issues and promotion of positive attitudes towards people with disabilities</p>	<p>Ongoing, as appropriate.</p> <p>Ongoing, as appropriate.</p>	<p>No. of sessions undertaken and evaluation of same.</p> <p>No. of sessions undertaken and evaluation of same.</p>

Action Measure	Responsibility	Impact	Time-Scale	Performance Indicator
<p>Encouraging participation in public life</p> <p>Encourage participation in public life</p> <p>In relation to the above Council will as appropriate:</p> <p>Promote the removal of barriers</p> <p>Promote the provision of appropriate training and support</p> <p>Encourage others to promote the above</p>	<p>It is to be noted that Council does not appoint individuals to public life positions and therefore would have no direct input to this area.</p>	<p>With reference to the DAP continue, as appropriate, to promote equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.</p>	<p>Ongoing, as appropriate.</p>	<p>Keep under review.</p>

Action Measure	Responsibility	Impact	Time-Scale	Performance Indicator
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<p>Internal measures</p> <p>Continue mainstreaming, of the statutory duties, including the disability duties, to ensure “disability” built-into work of Council</p> <p>Continue to ensure access to all Council facilities</p> <p>Continue to maintain contact with disabled individuals and representative groups locally and regionally</p> <p>Continue to implement the DDA for both employees and applicants for employment who have been identified with a disability</p>	<p>Heads of Service, Equality Officer and all relevant officers.</p>	<p>Increased awareness of disability issues and the promotion of positive attitudes towards people with disabilities.</p>	<p>Ongoing, as appropriate.</p>	<p>No. of meetings with relevant officers and no. of screening pro-formas completed.</p> <p>Keep under review.</p> <p>Keep under review.</p> <p>Keep under review.</p>
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Action Measure	Responsibility	Impact	Time-Scale	Performance Indicator

<p>Communication</p> <p>Continue to progress the inclusion of disability in all relevant Working Groups</p> <p>In Council publications include positive images of individuals with a disability.</p> <p>Keep under review the “accessibility” of the Councils web-site and communication methods/policies generally</p> <p>Continue to work with disabled individuals and their representative groups.</p>	<p>All relevant officers.</p>	<p>Disability positively communicated throughout Council</p> <p>Disabled people portrayed in a positive role and the promotion of positive attitudes towards people with disabilities.</p>	<p>Ongoing, as appropriate.</p>	<p>Keep under review.</p>
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Action Measure	Responsibility	Impact	Time-Scale	Performance Indicator
Continue to work with other organisations to promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities.				

12. Measuring Performance/Performance Indicators

- 12.1 The Council is committed to monitoring and reviewing policies and practices to ensure that disability equality duties are being met. Monitoring the progress of this Plan itself is a significant element.
- 12.2 As part of this process, the Annual Review of the Plan will provide a part of the monitoring and review process and assist in drafting appropriate targets and Performance Indicators (PIs) for the next period, whilst reporting on the achievement, or otherwise, of those set for the period of the Annual Review.
- 12.3 The Council has included the following PIs within this Plan.
- 12.4 Some targets are very specific, whilst other are of a more general nature, thus ensuring the Plan is a realistic and proactive plan, not solely reactive. Some targets are not related to a specific time, as over the 5-year period, we want to ensure that the Council meets the practical needs of people with disabilities and their carers on a timely basis.
- 12.5 The purpose of these PIs is to provide a measure of how the Council is implementing their disability duties and to ensure we are focusing on their needs at a time when it is appropriate to have them addressed.
- 12.6 Some PIs may be measured against similar public authorities, whilst others are specific to Council by, for example, addressing the needs of those receiving the service.

13. Proposed performance indicators

- 13.1 To continue to implement reasonable adjustments, as per the DDA, for employees identified as having a disability (as defined by the DDA).
- 13.2 To display positive attitudes towards people with disabilities through Council publications.

- 13.3 Continue to monitor and take appropriate actions in relation to disability-related matters generally, including accessibility auditing, identifying training needs and sourcing advice on specific “disability” needs.
- 13.4 Monitor Council comments/complaints to ensure appropriate corrective action is taken.
- 13.5 Continue to work with local and regional representative groups and disabled individuals to ensure “equality of opportunity” in respect of the “disability duties” contained in the Plan.
- 13.6 Train staff, as appropriate, in disability awareness and continue to “update” training as appropriate throughout the life of the Plan.
- 13.7 To identify potential specific training needs for those departments who interface with the public and, as appropriate, meet these needs through appropriate training methods.
- 13.8 Include in the above training reference to the Disability Discrimination Act, for staff and Senior Management, as appropriate. This training will emphasise the purpose and value of the Plan.
- 13.9 Continue to screen policies and practices in line with the Equality Scheme commitments and review as necessary where potential adverse impact is identified.
- 13.10 Continue to encourage work placements etc. for those with a disability.

14. How the disability action plan will be published

- 14.1 Following submission to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, this Plan will be available by contacting:

Equality Officer
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Island Civic Centre
The Island
Lisburn
BT27 4RL

Tel: 028 9250 9250

E-mail: equality.officer@lisburn.gov.uk

- 14.2 The availability of the Disability Action Plan will be advertised in the press and can be accessed on the Council's website at:

www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk

- 14.3 The Council will, through ongoing work with people with disabilities including learning disabilities, find appropriate ways of communicating the Plan. The Plan will be produced in clear print and plain language and will be available in alternative formats on request.
- 14.4 The Plan will be highlighted through the press and other relevant methods including meetings with relevant groups and individuals.
- 14.5 Employees will be made aware of the Plan and a copy of the Plan will be placed on the staff intranet.

Appendix 1

Examples of action measures already undertaken by Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council include the following:

ARC21 Initiative – to help ensure that waste collection/recycling services etc. are as inclusive as possible;

Provision of information (including relevant documents etc.) in alternative formats on request;

Facilities upgrade (as appropriate) – to help ensure that facilities are as DDA compliant as is practicable;

A range of training to include both disability awareness and disability equality, as well as sign-language training – training provided to officers (especially customer-facing) and Elected Members as appropriate;

Leisure Services – to help ensure that such services take cognisance of patrons with disabilities;

Working Groups – relevant officers sit on a number of such groups to help promote the Section 49A duties;

Safeguarding Policy – this policy was developed to help ensure that vulnerable adults/younger people are taken account of in the work of Council and that they remain safe within any Council environment;

The above exemplifies the range and number of initiatives already being undertaken by Council. Many of these are on a “cross-departmental” basis which further facilitates the implementation of the duties.

Appendix 2

Committee Structure of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council (2015)

