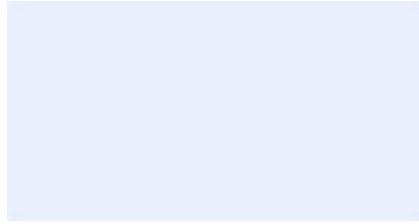


**Insert Name of Public Authority and add Logo in Picture Box Derry**

**City and Strabane District Council**



**Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties**

**Annual Progress Report**

**Contact details:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and Equality Scheme	Name: Ellen Cavanagh Telephone: 02871 253 253 Email: ellen.cavanagh@derrystrabane.com
<input type="checkbox"/> Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Action Plan	As above <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Name: Click or tap here to enter text. Telephone: Click or tap here to enter text. Email: Click or tap here to enter text.
Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:	<a href="https://www.derrystrabane.com/aboutcouncil/equality">https://www.derrystrabane.com/aboutcouncil/equality</a>
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 2023 and March 2024

### **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 2023-24, 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.*

During 2023-24, Derry City and Strabane District Council continued to progress equality and good relations work under the Council's 2020-2023 Equality Action Plan, the final year of that plan.

During the year (January 2024), a new Draft Audit of Inequalities was carried out and new Draft Equality and Disability Action Plans were developed and taken to Council. Council approved these for public consultation, preparation for which was underway at year end. Following the public consultation, both Plans and the Audit of Inequalities will be updated and published.

Twenty policies and initiatives in a range of service areas were screened for equality and good relations impacts during the 2023-24 year. These included:

- Updated Maternity Policy and Guidance for Staff
- New Draft Disability Action Plan 2024-2026 (public consultation planned)
- New Draft Equality Action Plan 2024-2026 (public consultation planned)
- New Dual Language Street Naming Policy (public consultation planned)
- Be Active: A Physical Activity, Wellbeing and Sport Strategy
- Pilot for delivering Community Support Fund and Good Relations Funding □ Performance Improvement Objectives and Corporate Improvement Plan for 2024/25 (public consultation planned).

Progress has been made on building equality of opportunity and good relations into key Council initiatives and day to day activities. Examples include:

- PEACEPLUS programmes
- Good Relations programme funded via the NI Executive's T: BUC strategy
- Age Friendly Work to implement Strategy and Action Plan
- Work to achieve UNICEF Child Friendly City and Community status
- Labour Market Partnership programmes – aimed at key target groups including women, men, people with disabilities, young people

## PART A

- Language Services – promotion of Irish, Ulster-Scots and other minority languages integrated into key council initiatives in addition to development work to deliver on Council language policies and international obligations
- Implementation of Strategic Growth Plan and local Development Plan
- Improved service delivery for People with a Disability across a range of functions including Sports Services, Arts and Cultural services and civic events
- Improved access to services for newcomer residents and minority ethnic groups
- Programme to mark key disability campaigns / initiative through public relations activity including Mayoral events, press releases, social media promotion and building illuminations.
- Multi-cultural One World Festival and Culture Night
- Inclusive civic events such as St Patrick’s Day and Halloween Festivals
- Extensive programme of Wellbeing activities, resources and support for staff and Elected Members with a focus on supporting good mental health and those with disabilities.
- Extensive awareness raising of external support organisations relevant to Section 75 categories via internal communications, website and social media channels.

During the year a number of deputations from stakeholders representing Section 75 groups were received and equality related Motions passed by the Council, and action on these will be progressed in 2024-25.

Examples include:

- Commitment to work with RNIB and work towards making Derry City and Strabane area an accessible place for people who are blind or visually impaired.
- Commitment to establish a Council working group to ensure the needs of LGBTQI+ people are fully reflected in Council services and policy making
- Commitment to work with relevant support organisations and build on previous access and inclusion initiatives (JAM friendly, deaf aware, etc) to ensure DCSDC is Dementia friendly
- Commitment to explore potential for gender budgeting with the NI Women’s Budget Group
- Commitment to development via co-design process of a Council wide AntiPoverty Action Plan
- Commitment to have Council facilities designated as a Safe Place for victims of domestic violence or abuse
- Commitment to conduct an online survey in the council area to assess the accessibility of mental health support.

PART A

- 2** Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2023-24 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

**See attached plan with updates on action measures/progress highlighted.**

**3** Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2023-24 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

Yes

No (go to Q.4)

Not applicable (go to Q.4)

Please provide any details and examples:

Examples include:

**Accessibility of information** - changes to protocol for communications staff re use of images in social media posts to ensure accessibility for screen readers. All images now have a text description and hashtags use capitalisation for easier reading.

**Review of Maternity Policy** – amendments made to include new provision for breastfeeding

**Pilot of new approach to delivery of Community Support Fund and Good Relations Grant Aid** to improve fair access to smaller community groups. Following a review of the grant aid scheme, it was identified that smaller and less established groups were more likely not to be successful in applications for funding. The new approach is intended to ensure that selection criteria are fairer for these groups which should lead to a higher success rate.

**Accessible Toilet provision** – following feedback, a review of signage was carried out and new signage installed in a range of venues including offices, community centres, leisure venues and pitches to promote Council’s accessible toilet provision. Council also re-launched its Community Toilet Scheme where local businesses are supported to offer toilet facilities to the public. This ensures additional provision to meet the needs of the public – residents and visitors to the area – particularly benefitting those groups who need convenient access to toilets to enable them to participate in civic life.

**Access and Inclusion work**

The programme of Access and Inclusion activities built on previous years and in 2023/24 linked with the Council’s Age Friendly programme to include older people.

A **new online navigation** system was launched by the Access and Inclusion team to help visitors and service users plan visits to 14 Council cultural venues. The ‘social narrative videos’ aim to particularly help disabled and neurodiverse customers who have additional needs to plan their visit.

The **FestivALL** programme (March 2024) was a celebration of creativity and talent where people with disabilities face no barriers to participation in arts and cultural activity. It included partnership working with various groups including Destined, The Hub and BUD Club, Tuned In, New Horizons, Praxis and Foyle Down Syndrome Trust and gave disabled people a public platform to profile their skills and abilities.

**“See the person not the disability”** awareness packs were distributed to 40 local primary schools and 13 post primary schools as part of Council’s activities to mark International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

**Language services** – The Council’s Languages team continued to provide translation and other support for members of the public whose first language is not English. Further Language Awareness sessions were offered to Council staff and Elected Members – Irish and Ulster-Scots. Languages programmes were built into other key Council initiatives such as Age Friendly, Child Friendly work, Culture Night, Positive Ageing Month in addition to core Ulster-Scots Language and Irish Language Week programmes. The work of the Languages team makes a significant contribution to the promotion of Good Relations within the Council area. The Languages Team is also working with NICCY and CCEA on the creation of three bespoke animations about Child Rights voiced and/or voiced and signed in Irish, Ulster-Scots and Makaton.

#### **Sport and Leisure provision**

Ensuring participation from under-represented groups – people with disabilities, older people, women – was a key Performance Objective for 2023-24 and targets for participation were exceeded.

Council supported an exciting new initiative ‘Angling for All’ in conjunction with the Foyle River Catchment Outdoor Group and the Loughs Agency which aimed at making Angling more accessible for groups who previously had no connection with the sport – women, people with disabilities, young people.

Plans for a new leisure facility in Strabane were progressed with further public consultation planned for 2024.

Extensive engagement on development of a new Be Active: Physical Activity, Wellbeing and Sport Strategy undertaken.

#### **Age Friendly Programme delivered**

Work to achieve the **UNICEF UK Child Friendly status** progressed. This included training for staff in Child Rights and new opportunities for young people to have their say in issues that affect them that build on the existing Council Youth Ministry initiative.

**Policing and Community Safety Partnership programme** delivered and targets achieved.

**Good Relations Programme**, funded under the NI Executive's T: BUC strategy, delivered. Multi-cultural activities supported including the One World Festival and Culture Night (Sept 2023).

**Labour Market/Employability initiatives** – free programmes were delivered targeting key groups identified in the Equality Action Plan – women, men, young people, people with disabilities and targeting sectors with identified skills shortages and/or job opportunities.

**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:

- Service users with certain disabilities should benefit from more accessible website content and social media posts which are used to promote Council information.
- Female employees will benefit from enhanced provision in the Council's Maternity Policy to accommodate breastfeeding on return to work.
- The proposed changes to criteria for the Community Support and Good Relations Grant Aid programmes should mean and newer or smaller community groups should find it easier to make successful applications for funding. Over time, this should have the effect of increasing inclusion and broadening the community base that benefits from council funding.
- Improved Toilet signage and the Community Toilet Scheme should benefit a number of groups – parents/carers/families, older people, people with disabilities or certain health conditions, those who do not have English as a first language – where access to appropriate toilet provision is essential for them to participate in council services and day to day activities.
- Improved health outcomes for under-represented groups targeted for physical activity/sports programmes.
- Improved physical and other accessibility measures increase potential for participation in arts and cultural activities and civic events for various equality groups, particularly older people, those with disabilities and carers.

PART A

- Improved cross-community relationships from Good Relations, PCSP, Age Friendly and Child Friendly activities.
- Older people will benefit from increased focus through Age Friendly work and Mayoral activities such as the monthly tea dances, and children and young people will benefit from the added focus of work to achieve UNICEF UK Child Friendly City and Community status.
- Key target groups – older people, those with disabilities, LGBT people and women who have reported higher levels of worry about crime - will benefit from the actions of the Policing and Community Safety Partnership Action Plan.
- Key target groups will benefit from training and employability programmes.
- Under-represented groups will benefit from enhanced targeting in sports provision.

**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):*

Council staff have a greater awareness of S75 issues including barriers to participation and through the development and screening processes aim to mitigate any adverse impacts. Additionally, pre-development consultations have helped to inform the policy and/or any necessary operational changes.

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Click or tap here to enter text.



PART A

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Feedback from meetings of the Council's consultative forum, the Equality Assurance and Oversight Group, and feedback via earlier consultations on projects such as development of Corporate Improvement Objectives, Community Planning exercises, PCSP work, Good Relations work and service-related consultations, for example, Sports Services all inform changes to services and business planning. Feedback via the Council's complaints system also prompts consideration of service improvements when issues are highlighted.

## 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 2023/24 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:

PART A

Included as standard in all staff job descriptions is the requirement to comply with all equality legislation, including the S75 and Disability Duties, as appropriate to the role.

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2023-24 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:

Relevant services / directorates will have equality duties as standard in their performance plans.

6 In the 2023-24 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 corporate plan

No, the organisation's planning cycle does not coincide with this 2023-24 report

Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Corporate plans and the directorate plans that flow from these include commitments to deliver on the Council's Equality duties, as appropriate to the function. Each directorate delivery plan includes a section on the S75 duties.

**Equality action plans/measures**

**7** Within the 2023-24 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:

20

Actions ongoing:

6

Actions to commence:

3

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

**See attached Equality Action Plan for progress against actions.** A new Action Plan is being developed at year end for the 2024-2026 business years. Outstanding actions that have not been completed or are ongoing, and that are deemed appropriate to continue based on the latest Audit of Inequalities, will continue into the new Plan and the next reporting period.

**8** Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2023-24 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

N/A

**9** In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2023-24 reporting period, the following have been identified: (*tick all that apply*)

PART A

- 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 2023-24 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:

The main equality-focused consultation undertaken in 2023-24 was in relation to a new Audit of Inequalities. This involved engagement with a range of stakeholders in addition to secondary research. Engagement included surveys and meetings with community groups representing Section 75 groups, meetings with staff and elected members, a meeting with the Equality Assurance and Oversight Group, feedback from an external audit of Good Relations activities and feedback from key service areas.

There were also consultations on various strategic projects, for example on Draft Performance Objectives for 2023-24 and the Be Active: Physical Activity, Wellbeing and Sport Strategy (concluded April 2024).

There was also a number of smaller-scale consultations targeted at local residents in relation to proposed local initiatives which involved press and social media promotion and local

PART A

information sessions as appropriate. An example was the consultation on the Glendermott Shared Space Project covering the areas of Drumahoe, Currynierin and Tullyally.

Due to staff movements/ changes/ development in the period under review, there was only one meeting of the Equality Assurance and Oversight Group. There are plans to revitalise this group in the 2024-25 year.

**12** In the 2023-24 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 by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation

Internet discussions

Telephone consultations

Other *(please specify)*: Click or tap here to enter text.

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:

Since the onset of Covid-19, there has been more focus on engagement via website and social media and online meetings, although there was a return to face to face meetings in 2023/4, for example, meetings of the Equality Assurance and Oversight Group. Online engagement proved effective for a time during the pandemic. However, changes in Council and community personnel has resulted in a reduced relationship with key stakeholders and there are plans to revitalise the Equality Assurance and Oversight Group in 2024-25.

PART A

- 13 Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2023-24 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

Yes

No

Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

With changes in Council personnel in the Equality function and many changes in key contacts in the community and voluntary sector, it may be necessary to consider awareness raising in the coming period. Consultation on the new draft Equality and Disability Action Plans and Draft Audit of Inequalities planned for 2024 will provide a platform for this.

- 14 Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2023-24 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

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] <https://www.derrystrabane.com/about-council/equality/screening>

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

PART A

Twenty projects/policies were subjected to screening.

**16** Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2023-24:

Policy consultations conducted with **screening** assessment presented - None

Policy consultations conducted **with an equality impact assessment** (EQIA) presented - None

Consultations for an **EQIA** alone- None

No formal EQIA consultations in the period under review, however, a draft EQIA document had been prepared for one policy and discussions are ongoing. Plans are underway for consulting on a new Dual Language Street Naming Policy and new Equality and Disability Action Plans early in the 2024-25 business year.

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

Consultation to inform a new Audit of Inequalities was carried out in 2023 and into Q4 of 2024 to inform new Equality and Disability Action Plans for 2024-2026.

There was consultation on Council's Draft Improvement Objectives for 2023-24.

There was extensive engagement to inform the Council's Be Active: Physical Activity, Wellbeing and Sport Strategy.

**18** Were any screening decisions (or equivalent initial assessments of relevance) reviewed following concerns raised by consultees? (*tick one box only*)

Yes

No concerns were raised

No

Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Arrangements for publishing the results of assessments (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)**

**19** Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2023/24 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

Yes

No

Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Arrangements for monitoring and publishing the results of monitoring (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)**

**20** From the Equality Scheme monitoring arrangements, was there an audit of existing information systems during the 2023-24 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

Yes

No, already taken place

No, scheduled to take place at a later date

Not applicable

Please provide any details:

Following consultation with the Equality Commission and the LGSC baseline study of diversity in local government, there were efforts to focus on monitoring but these are at an early stage. For example, Council has started to monitor the make-up of our Elected Members and plans to monitor participation in training.

There is ongoing monitoring of participation in sports services which will be strengthened in the new Sport & Physical Activity Strategy.



PART A

Programmes such as PCSP action plan and Age Friendly work is monitored.

Community Venue Fund – applications and success rates were monitored

- 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:

Following a review of the Community Venue Fund programme, changes are proposed to make the process fairer for new or smaller community groups.

- 22** Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2023-24 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

No examples for the period under review.

- 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:

While all service delivery is monitored in relation to programme or service objectives, monitoring for equality purposes is still a developing area and will be a focus of the Council's equality work in the coming period.

Functions where service monitoring is informing service planning include sports services and funding programmes. Monitoring of take-up of physical activity programmes has informed the new Be Active: Physical Activity, Wellbeing and Sport Strategy and reviews of applications and success rates inform changes to criteria for funding programmes.

Monitoring of customer feedback and complaints routinely inform service delivery, particularly in relation to highlighting accessibility issues.

### **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 2023-24, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

Again, due to staff movements / transitions / development, there was a reduction in the normal delivery of equality related training in 2023-24 and this will be addressed in 2024-25.

Training delivered included:

Recruitment & Selection training – 59 employees

Section 75 EQIA – 1 employee (provided by ECNI)

One session of Equality Screening training delivered to managers/policy makers

The Equality Officer and/or Lead Democratic Services & Improvement Officer attended meetings of the LGSC Statutory Duty Network and other events organised by the LGSC.

The Access & Inclusion team organised training to meet the needs of their staff in relation to the Arts and Culture function – Disability Awareness, Planning an Accessible Event and Deaf Awareness training. Sessions were delivered by New Horizons and Destined and staff were introduced to tools and techniques aimed at improving access and inclusion to arts events for people who are d/Deaf, disabled or neurodiverse.

- 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:

Feedback from all training was positive in terms of objectives being met.

Feedback from the Arts & Culture team training suggested that the groups delivering the training also benefited from their engagement with the Council in terms of making contacts and opening up opportunities for future collaboration with the Council and partnership working with other groups.

Member participation in Local Democracy Week along with Language Awareness training promoted greater insights to young people and linguistic diversity.

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

- 26** Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2023-24, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

DCSDC has extensive guidance on producing accessible information which is publicised to staff across the organisation. This includes minimum standards for font size, formats, etc and the proactive offering of information in alternative formats and languages where needed.

Communications staff regularly make changes to improve accessibility as issues are raised. For example, all images used on social media channels and on the website now include a text description which can be read by a screen reader. In social media posts, the first letter of words is capitalised in hashtags so screen readers can read them correctly and magnification users can see it more clearly.

Where new website content is being developed, attention is given to accessibility for a range of user groups and disabilities.

### **Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)**

- 27** How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2023-24?

Insert number here: One

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

Awaiting outcome of ECNI consideration at year end

### **Section 3: Looking Forward**

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

February 2025

- 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*)

PART A

Yes. Public consultation on an EQIA relating to a new Dual Language Street Naming Policy to be undertaken in Q1 2024-25.

Consultation on an EQIA relating to new draft Equality Action Plan and Disability Action Plan for 2024-2026 and draft Audit of Inequalities 2023/24 also planned to commence Q1 2024-25.

There will be a renewed focus on training in Section 75 processes for staff and Elected Members as limited training was possible in 2023-34.

There will also be a focus on equality monitoring and issues raised in feedback from the planned consultation on new Equality and Disability Action Plans.

The availability of a new Audit of Inequalities and implementation of the new Plans in 2024 will provide a platform for promotion of the Section 75 duties and changes to internal processes, including reporting on equality related achievements.

**30** In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next 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):

Development / rollout of language legislation

Impact of cost of living crisis on S75 groups

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

<b>1. Number of action measures for this reporting period that have been:</b>		
<b>21</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
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>	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Regional <sup>iv</sup>	2.2 Commitment to identify Council Diversity Champions and participate in LGSC training and networking events	Three Elected Member Diversity Champions (later renamed Ambassadors) appointed. Council's Policy Officer also an Ambassador.	Best practice promoted and shared. Greater awareness and understanding of issues affecting disabled people.
	2.6 Sharing Best Practice with and learning from other Councils through the Statutory Duty Network (SDN).	Policy Officer (Equality) attended quarterly meetings of the Statutory Duty Network.	Good practice shared and lessons learned from other equality officers.

PART B

Local <sup>v</sup>	1.1 Host meetings of Equality Assurance and Oversight Meeting to enable people with a disability to influence Council decision-making	Due to a staffing movements / transitions/ developments in the Equality Officer post, only one meeting held in this period.	Opportunity provided for participants with a disability to have their views heard directly.
	1.3 Involve people with a disability in service planning and predevelopment exercises	Disability support groups and key contacts targeted and involved in planning for sports services, capital projects, arts and cultural events, community planning	Needs of disabled people considered and addressed in service development and project planning. Ongoing improvements based on feedback from stakeholders with a disability and emerging good practice.
	2.1 Host and organise awareness event in association with disability groups	Various activities delivered under Access and Inclusion Programme, including FestivALL in March 2024 and two events to mark International Day of Persons with Disabilities (Dec 2023). Disability groups hosted by Mayor and school and disability support groups encouraged to participate in civic events and activities. Council/Mayoral acknowledgement of success of local Paralympian, Jason	Increased positive profile for disabled people, focusing on their abilities and success which raises awareness and influences public opinion.

PART B

		<p>Smyth and Special Olympics team.</p>	
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	<p>3.1 Host meetings of the Equality Assurance and Oversight Group (EAOG) to enable people with a disability from Council area to influence decision making</p>	<p>One meeting of the EAOG organised in the 2023-24 year. Various deputations from disability support groups hosted by Council, Mayoral meetings held and targeted meetings held in various functions.</p>	<p>Council management and Elected members more aware of issues and needs of disabled people and disabled people enabled to participate in decision making.</p>
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PART B

	<p>3.4 Involve disabled people in the delivery of awareness training to elected members and staff</p>	<p>Awareness training organised by the Access &amp; Inclusion team and delivered by New Horizons and Destined. Workshop on Planning Accessible Events delivered for front of house and other relevant staff. Staff have also availed of JAM Card training, Deaf awareness and training from University of Atypical.</p>	<p>Disabled people had the opportunity to engage directly with Council services and to highlight issues and needs as well as profiling their organisations and raising awareness of specific disabilities. Staff more aware of disabilities and how to anticipate and accommodate needs.</p>
	<p>3.5 Involved people with a disability in the planning and development stage of events</p>	<p>Ongoing via the Access and Inclusion team and Festivals and Events team. Training and partnership projects delivered in 2023-4, including general disability awareness training and a workshop on organising accessible events.</p>	<p>Staff more aware of disabled people's needs and disabled people able to proactively influence council practice to improve accessibility for all.</p>



PART B

	<p>3.6 Develop bespoke initiatives for targeted disability needs (including autism, dementia and mental health)</p>	<p>Various initiatives in Arts &amp; Culture and Health &amp; Community Directorate, including Age Friendly work. Council has committed to becoming a Dementia friendly district, is JAM friendly and staff regularly receive information and training on mental health conditions and to support their own mental health and that of their families. Participation in sport and leisure activities encouraged to support mental health.</p>	<p>Staff and Elected Members more aware of different disabilities. The public/service users and staff will be better supported and facilitated to participate in Council activities and services.</p>
	<p>3.7 Put in place reasonable adjustments to support people with a disability to access and participate in Council events</p>	<p>Provision made for different disabilities when organising and delivering civic events, for example, quiet spaces, accessible parking. Invitations to meetings/events routinely invite people to specify if they need adjustments to enable them to attend.</p>	<p>Accessibility and full participation of disabled people and their carers facilitated.</p>

PART B

	3.9 Work in partnership with representative groups and statutory bodies to develop initiatives and explore funding opportunities that will enhance the lives of people with a	Access for All employment initiative in conjunction with NOW Group launched March 2024. This programme will equip people with a disability	Improved confidence of people with a learning disability to live independently and find employment
	learning disability – Council participation in at least one initiative	with the skills to work in the hospitality industry.	
	3.10 Programme at least one show per year which is delivered by/includes performers who have a disability	FestivALL programme (March 2024) included a range of events and participating disability organisations.	Disabled performers given a public platform and an opportunity to showcase their skills and abilities which promotes positive attitudes and builds confidence.
	4.1 Conduct a confidential monitoring survey of staff and elected members to determine numbers with a disability	Monitoring of Elected Members was undertaken; monitoring for staff still outstanding. However, all new job applicants are routinely asked if they have a disability and whether any adjustments are needed and in-service staff are also supported with adjustments as required.	There should be no barriers to participation as a Member due to disability and staff and job applicants with a disability are well supported.

2(b) What **training action measures** were achieved in this reporting period?

PART B

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	2.3 Provide induction training to new employees on the Council's Equality Scheme, and Equality and Disability Action Plans.	Equality obligations routinely included in staff induction and via online training modules. Promotion of key equality resources promoted to staff with signposting to other sources.	All Council staff should be aware of Council's obligations to disabled people and other equality groups. Staff in particular roles, eg Communications or management more aware of how to promote positive attitudes.
2	2.4 Ensure front line staff have received Autism training and JAM Card training.	Training delivered by Access and Inclusion team for front line staff in Arts and Culture.	Autism and disability awareness well established in front line services with staff able to provide improved customer care to service users with autism and/or communication difficulties.
	2.6 Sharing Best Practice with and learning from other Councils through the Statutory Duty Network.	Staff and Elected Member engagement with the Statutory Duty Network and LGSC Equality and Diversity events ongoing.	Staff and Members better informed and motivated to introduce continuing improvements and emerging good practice to benefit disabled service users.

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

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact

PART B

1	Public relations and communications work	Council regularly promotes awareness of certain disabilities through press releases, events or social media promotion to mark days such as International Day of Persons with a Disability, Autism Awareness, Dementia Awareness. Staff and Elected members regularly receive information about disability awareness days and are signposted to resources. The Mayor regularly hosts meetings or profiles individuals or disability support groups.	More public understanding of disabilities and positive profile for disabled people
2	Publications, website and social media promotion	The Communications team regularly uses images of disabled people in their promotional material and publications.	People with disabilities portrayed in proactive, positive roles which helps to eliminate ignorance and prejudice towards disabled people.
3	Disability awareness training	Awareness training includes the use of language regarding disability which lessens prejudice and encourages respect.	Staff more informed about appropriate language to use when referring to disability and disabled people

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

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
2	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

PART B

	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

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	1.2 Screen all new policies to assess the significance of the policy on the Disability Duties	Twenty policies/projects screened in 2023-24. The integrated screening template includes questions on the Disability Duties.	All policies and projects are considered for potential to deliver on the Disability Duties.
2	1.4 Review and report on progress on the Disability Action Plan	Plan reviewed in 2023 and Annual Progress Report submitted to the Equality Commission August 2023.	Delivery of Plan ensures focus on promoting positive attitudes and encouraging participation as required by the legislation.
	2.9 Attend Job Fairs to raise awareness of Council's progress and opportunities in employing people with a disability	Council staff continued to promote job opportunities at various recruitment fairs.	People with disabilities more aware of job opportunities and reasonable adjustments that Council will make for applicants and employees with a disability.
	3.2 Encourage involvement and participation in the development of Local Area Growth Plans including the Cluster Village Plans	All Section 75 categories encouraged to participate in consultations on local projects with specific targeting of people with disabilities.	Disabled people have the opportunity to input to Council plans that affect them.

PART B

	3.11 Ensure all leisure services provide inclusive services for disabled users	Disability Hub status for relevant centres	More disabled people able to participate in sport and leisure activities.
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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	2.5 Work with representative Disability organisations to provide opportunities for job shadowing/work experience	Increased participation of people with a disability in the workplace	Improved sense of achievement, confidence and value for people with a disability	Partnership work continued but no formal placements delivered due to ongoing fallout from Covid. To be revisited in next planning period.
2	2.10 Provide staff on selection panels for ring-fenced posts with disability awareness training	All panel members appropriately trained	All applicants with a disability treated fairly during selection process	No ring-fenced posts offered in 2023-24. However, staff were trained in Recruitment and Selection and some new staff with a disability were recruited through the normal channels.
	4.2 Develop monitoring arrangements to audit access to communication for people with a disability (internally for staff and externally for members of the community)	100% of information emanating from the Council will be accessible to all	All information will be accessible to all residents, including people with a disability	Ongoing with feedback responded to. Progress on monitoring arrangements delayed due to staffing gaps/capacity.

PART B

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

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1	2.7 Ring-fence at least 2 posts per year for people with a disability	This action measure was paused during Covid-19 and not progressed in 2023-24 due to staffing gaps/capacity but will be re-visited in 2024.
2	3.3 Implement a shadowing initiative to allow people with a disability to spend a day with the Mayor/Deputy Mayor	This action measure was paused due to Covid-19 and not progressed in 2023-24 but will be re-visited in 2024.
3	4.3 Develop enhanced equality monitoring for disability categories in terms of Strategic Growth Plan	Not progressed in 2023-24 due to staffing gaps/capacity but will be re-visited in 2024.

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

Through equality screening exercises, all project leaders encouraged to put in place appropriate monitoring arrangements for equality purposes and not just performance measurement purposes.

(b) Quantitative

PART B

In 2023-24, a monitoring exercise was undertaken for Elected Members following the recommendations from the Local Government Staff Commission baseline survey. A new equality monitoring form was developed for Elected Member training.

Preparation was also done to focus on equality monitoring for staff training.

An equality monitoring form was updated to track participation in online public consultation exercises. Equality monitoring details are sought in respect of complaints but limited feedback is provided.

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?

2023-24 was the last year of the Disability Action Plan. A new plan is being developed and will be consulted on and finalised in 2024.

If yes please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1	Not applicable	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
2	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
3	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
4	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
5	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.



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?

2023-24 was the last year of the Disability Action Plan. A new plan is being developed and will be consulted on and finalised in 2024.

<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 for a

## Appendix to Annual Progress Report 2023-24

## Equality Action Plan 2020-2023 – Review of Progress

Inequality	Positive Action Measures	Actions taken/progress in the 2023-2024 period
<p>Leisure facilities are being under-used by various Section 75 categories (women, carers, people with a disability, people over 65 years of age, ethnic minority groups)</p>	<p>Deliver a sports and physical activities programme to promote greater activity by people with a disability, women, girls, older people and those living in areas of high social need.</p> <p>Review programming/opening times/concessionary rates and/or reduced price, free programmes to cater for all sectors of the community and introduce at least one new tailored programme to cater for each underrepresented groups.</p>	<p>Programmes delivered to target groups and targets for the year exceeded.</p> <p>New activities included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of free boccia kits to Health Trust day care centres to encourage participation by older people and those with disabilities</li> <li>• Increased take up of GP referral programmes</li> <li>• Expansion of activities at Disability Hub</li> <li>• Active Citizens Programme encouraging new participants</li> <li>• Free to use outdoor gym facilities.</li> </ul> <p>Consultation on new Physical Activity, Wellbeing and Sport Strategy carried out to identify barriers to participation, especially for underrepresented groups and to inform service planning for the future.</p>

PART B

<p>Rural areas are more likely to suffer in terms of social wellbeing in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of local facilities</li> <li>• Lack of youth clubs and professionally trained youth workers</li> <li>• Isolation</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Capacity</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul>	<p>Review community centre provision across the Council area and update or provide new facilities</p>	<p>An audit of council community centres was carried out as part of the Audit of Inequalities.</p> <p>Changes to funding for community centres via the venue funding programme proposed to make it easier for some areas to access funding.</p> <p>Focus on equitable provision of council facilities with support provided for community facilities to ensure local provision.</p> <p>Community participation in local priority setting in Local Community Partnerships.</p>
<p>Physical access has been cited as a barrier to participation, particularly in some cultural facilities for people with a disability</p>	<p>Council is working towards achieving Every Customer Counts charter status for facilities</p>	<p>Access and Inclusion programme continued to provide physical improvements to cultural and leisure facilities in response to feedback and emerging good practice.</p> <p>Provision of quiet spaces and other accessibility measures now offered routinely for public events and activities in council facilities. Increased promotion of accessibility measures in response to public feedback.</p> <p>FestiveAll events organised to provide inclusive opportunities for disabled performers and International Day of Persons with Disabilities marked.</p> <p>Further training for front line staff delivered in partnership with local disability support groups.</p>

PART B

<p>Lack of awareness and availability of information in an appropriate format affects certain sectors of the community – specifically in terms of the Age, Disability and Racial Group categories</p>	<p>Review the Council’s Code of Practice on Producing Information</p> <p>Roll out awareness sessions for staff</p> <p>Prepare easy read versions of key documents</p>	<p>No new easy read versions produced during 2023-24 but staff more aware of the need to produce all information in more user-friendly formats and language to aid accessibility for all.</p> <p>Increased emphasis on accessible information and language on website and on social media channels.</p> <p>Availability of information in other formats routinely promoted.</p>
<p>Barriers to people fully participating in public/political life</p>	<p>Review timetable of meeting times and incorporate where possible some flexibility</p>	<p>Virtual meetings used for much community engagement post-Covid which facilitates some groups with increased flexibility and shorter time commitment/ limited travel.</p> <p>While a return to physical attendance for Council and Committee meetings was reintroduced post-Covid, remote attendance continued to be facilitated for those who preferred this.</p> <p>All key council meetings continued to be held during daytime hours which reduces the impact on those with family/caring responsibilities.</p>

PART B

<p>Under-representation from certain S75 groups due to a perceived lack of skills and confidence</p> <p>Women are significantly under-represented in elected office and in public office</p>	<p>Roll out awareness sessions to staff on Council’s Code of practice on arranging accessible meetings and events.</p> <p>Develop a programme of awareness raising and confidence building to encourage people to play an active part in civic life, including building on events around Local Democracy Week.</p>	<p>Promotion of Code of Practice on accessible meetings and events ongoing.</p> <p>Council officers and Members continued to participate in LGSC EDI and Diversity Ambassador initiatives.</p> <p>DCSDC had 37.5% of female Elected Members and had a female Mayor again in 2023-24.</p> <p>Local Democracy Week programme delivered 13-17 November 2023. Events included Meet the Mayor, Q&amp;As with Mayors and Councillors, and Mayor and Councillors go back to school days. The programme encourages participation from primary and post-primary schools and across sectors.</p>
<p>Women, people with a disability, older people and people from the LGBT community expressed higher levels of worry about all crime</p>	<p>Continue to roll out community warden scheme.</p> <p>Raise awareness of other Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) initiatives such as community warden scheme and “safer homes” campaign.</p>	<p>PCSP programme delivered as per strategy and targets achieved for key initiatives such as home safety referrals and take up of ‘safer homes’ scheme.</p> <p>Addressing public perception of crime and available support services continued to be a focus.</p>

PART B

<p>People from certain S75 groups are less likely to do voluntary work due to barriers which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Access and location/ timing of meetings or events</li> <li>· Language</li> <li>· Stigma/discrimination faced by minorities</li> </ul> <p>Suitable opportunities</p>	<p>Develop a volunteer policy for staff</p> <p>Raise awareness of volunteering opportunities at Council events</p> <p>Roll out awareness sessions for staff on Council's Code of Practice on arranging accessible meetings and events</p>	<p>Progress on developing a policy postponed due to Covid and other HR priorities – to be re-visited in the coming period.</p> <p>Council continued to support work placements for school, college and university students and to raise awareness of the Council and roles potentially available in future at careers events.</p> <p>Promotion of Code of Practice ongoing.</p>
<p>Need for elected members to understand the equality issues of all S75 categories in order to best represent their interests</p>	<p>All Councillors will receive equality/diversity training to promote a greater understanding of equality issues and obligations</p>	<p>Extensive Member Development Programme provided for all Elected Members. Council appointed 3 Diversity Ambassadors in 2023-24 and participation in LGSC and NILGA equality and diversity activities encouraged.</p>
<p>Lack of job opportunities in the Derry City Council area</p>	<p>Subject to legislation incorporate social clauses in all capital work with significant spend.</p> <p>Identify investment opportunities for business which is primarily focused on disadvantaged areas.</p>	<p>Council use the following clauses for the capital works where there is significant spend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted Recruitment &amp; Training for education leavers</li> <li>• Targeted Recruitment &amp; Training for people 25 years and over and unemployed for 12 months</li> <li>• Targeted Recruitment &amp; Training for people under 25 years and unemployed for 6 months</li> <li>• Targeted Work Experience</li> </ul>

PART B

<p>Transport can sometimes be a barrier to accessing the civic amenity service particularly for older people, women, people with dependants and people with a disability</p>	<p>Raise awareness of bulky lift service to ensure everyone in the Council area are aware of alternative method for their waste disposal.</p>	<p>Promotion of service ongoing.  Web site and 'App' enhanced.</p>
<p>Lack of understanding on how to use civic amenity service and recycling bins</p>	<p>All information and signage should be available in an appropriate format so that those whose first language is not English and those with low literacy levels can use the service properly.</p>	<p>Information in other formats and languages provided where needed / requested.</p>
<p>Lack of awareness of the needs and priorities of increasingly diverse communities within the Council area when delivering Council services</p>	<p>Ensure Equality module forms part of Induction training for new staff to ensure basic awareness of statutory duties</p> <p>Provide training in the Equality screening/equality impact assessment processes so that staff can identify needs and priorities of all users when reviewing and developing services</p>	<p>Equality modules were available to staff through the Council's online learning portal and new resources are planned for 2024-25.</p> <p>Due to a staffing movements / transitions / development only one training session was delivered in the period. There will be a renewed focus on equality related training in 2024-25.</p> <p>One to one support was provided as required, when completing screening / EQIA processes.</p>

PART B

<p>Lack of participation of Section 75 groupings in consultation exercises</p>	<p>Provide training in the Equality screening/equality impact assessment processes so that S75 representative group can understand the importance of their participation in shaping Council's policies and services which may affect them</p>	<p>Local stakeholders encouraged to participate in Council consultations and to attend meetings of the Equality Assurance and Oversight Group in information issued for consultations.</p> <p>Extensive consultation took place for the Audit of Inequalities in 2023 and to inform the new Be Active: Physical Activity, Wellbeing and Sport Strategy.</p> <p>Due to capacity issues, only one meeting of the EAOG took place in 2023-24 but there are plans to revitalise the Group in 2024-25.</p>
<p>Lack of monitoring data across Council services in general</p>	<p>Carry out an Audit of Inequalities</p> <p>Deliver awareness raising sessions on monitoring of services</p> <p>Internal monitoring systems to be set up</p>	<p>An Audit of Inequalities was undertaken by Council staff in 2023 to inform new Equality and Disability Action Plans. The Draft Audit will go out to public consultation early in the 2024-25 year.</p> <p>Equality Monitoring will continue to be a focus in the coming year.</p>