

BELFAST CITY COUNCIL



Belfast
City Council

Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties

Annual Progress Report 2021-2022

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

<https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/council/equality/annualreports.aspx>

Signature:

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**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 2021 and March 2022

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 2021-22, 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.

Please see Appendix 2 to the Annual Progress report entitled “Equality Action Plan 2021-2024”. This corporate level document was agreed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 19th February 2021. It outlines how Belfast City Council will promote equality and diversity in our ambitions to create a city in which people love to live, learn, invest, work and visit. This Plan contributes to our compliance with section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and contains some of the information in the Audit of Inequalities, which is a systematic approach to identify inequalities across the nine section 75 categories which are relevant to a public authority’s functions.

In addition, the Plan contains some of the key priorities from our Corporate Plan, which will have the biggest impact on inequalities. It takes the priorities of the Belfast Agenda, the Community Plan, and sets out ways in which the Council will deliver these to grow a sustainable, inclusive economy and equitable society. To fulfil our responsibilities, our Corporate Plan not only ensures we deliver the day-to-day services which the people of Belfast rely upon; we stretch ourselves through a series of strategic priorities to ensure we positively affect the lives of everyone in Belfast.

- 2 Please provide examples of outcomes and/or the impact of equality action plans/ measures in 2021-22 (or append the plan with progress/examples identified).**

Please see Appendix 2 attached, which provides an update on all actions and gives insight into outcomes.

3 Has the application of the Equality Scheme commitments resulted in any changes to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2021-22 reporting period? (tick one box only)

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

Please provide any details and examples:

The Council’s Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 24th September 2021 had considered a report setting out options for language or languages to be used in naming and signage in leisure facilities designated with a City-wide catchment. The Committee had agreed, in terms of Olympia Leisure Centre, to erect bilingual external naming and internal directional signage, with a report on the detail and appearance of that signage to be submitted to a future meeting.

Thereafter, that decision had been called in on both procedural and community impact grounds. A legal opinion had been sought where counsel had found that only the community impact element had merit. The legal opinion had also recommended that the Council should, in any consideration of the decision, bear in mind its duties under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and its equality scheme. The decision of 24th September had been included on the agenda for the next available meeting of the Council on 10th January, 2022 and had been referred back to the Committee for further consideration.

Accordingly, a proposal was made that the Committee agrees to proceed with an Equality Impact Assessment on the erection of bilingual external naming and internal directional signage at Olympia Leisure Centre. On a recorded vote, twelve members voted for the proposal and six against and it was declared carried

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:

For examples and details, please see 3 above.

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

The decision to erect bilingual external naming and internal directional signage had been called in on both procedural and community impact grounds. A legal opinion had found that only the community impact element had merit and recommended also that the Council should, in any consideration of the decision, bear in mind its duties under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and its equality scheme. It was agreed that an Equality Impact Assessment be undertaken in respect of the Olympia Leisure Centre.

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 2021-22 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:

Section 75 responsibilities

Examples of content in new job descriptions from 6 May 2021.

Chief Officer – Job Descriptions

Responsible for the implementation of Departmental obligations of the council’s statutory duties under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and other applicable legislation, to promote equality of opportunity and good relations, including implementation of the Council’s Equality Scheme within all departmental plans and reporting thereon.

Job Descriptions involved with the design of services

Responsible for providing advice to stakeholders on the Council’s statutory duties under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and other applicable legislation and to monitor the integration of these objectives into strategic and operational plans; service design and delivery.

Policy Job Descriptions

Ensuring all policy development, consultations and frameworks comply with the Council’s statutory duties under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and other applicable legislation and the Council’s Equality Scheme.

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2021-22 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:

Equality of opportunity is mainstreamed throughout the Council and integrated within performance plans as applicable.

6 In the 2021-22 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 2021-22 report
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The five-year review of the Equality Scheme demonstrated areas where improvements can be made and these were incorporated into the new corporate plan.

Equality action plans/measures

7 Within the 2021-22 reporting period, please indicate the number of:

Actions completed: Actions ongoing: Actions to commence:

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

PART A

The appendix entitled Equality Action Plan 2021 – 2024 was agreed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 19th February 2021. 45 of these actions are ongoing and will be reviewed as necessary. A number of strategic actions have been developed and are also being delivered including:

Covid 19 Recovery Plan

City Deal

Capital Projects

Belfast Stories

Belfast Agenda Refresh

City and Neighbourhoods Transition and Improvement Plan

8 Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2021-22 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

The Equality and Action Plan 2021 – 2024 has been agreed at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 19th February 2021. The Scheme is being reviewed through the Equality Scheme Implementation Plan which is currently ongoing.

9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2021-22 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 2021-22 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:**

Council Decision to Erect Bilingual/Multilingual External Naming and Internal Directional Signage in Andersonstown, Lisnasharragh, Olympia and Templemore Leisure Centres

This decision relates to the roll out of the Language Strategy 2018-23. In developing the Strategy, the Council was mindful of various legal positions including Counsel's opinion and international and domestic legal obligations and standards. The Strategy contains an overarching Language Framework which allows for the development of three separate policies on:

- Irish Language
- Ulster-Scots Language
- Other Languages (including sign language)

Following a special meeting on 11th October 2019, Council agreed to the installation of multilingual welcome signs in all its leisure centres with immediate effect and to carry out a public consultation regarding bilingual/multilingual signage in four leisure centres.

The Council consulted on its proposals, which were drawn up in line with its language strategy, regarding external naming and internal directional signage at the four citywide leisure centres which were being delivered as part of the Council's £105 m Leisure Transformation Programme: Andersonstown, Lisnasharragh, Olympia and Templemore.

It was also proposed that internal directional signage should include pictorial signage to enhance accessibility, for example, to new communities and disabled people. The Council was mindful of the location and history of each centre, along with the needs of new communities and disabled people.

The decision was in line with the aims of the Language Strategy 2018-2023, to commit to supporting minority languages while allowing the needs of speakers of Irish, Ulster-Scots and other minority languages, including sign language, to be addressed effectively.

The Language Strategy was subject to extensive consultation which included:

- Two public meetings on the draft Policy on Linguistic Diversity
- Four targeted focus groups on each of the individual strands – Irish Language Policy, Ulster-Scots Language Policy and two separate events for Other Languages Policy
- Questionnaire on Citizen Space
- Internal engagement with HR, staff and Trade Unions

Consultation also included:

- Engagement events were arranged in the local areas of the four Leisure Centres
- Council and GLL staff received an on-line survey and were provided with an opportunity for face-to-face engagement
- An on-line questionnaire survey was made available to the public, along with hard copies for those who were unable to access the material electronically
- Engagement with disabled communities including the Council’s Disability Advisory Panel
- Focus groups which engaged with representatives of the Irish Language and Ulster-Scots communities
- Engagement with the Council’s Equality Consultative Forum and Migrants Forum
- Engagement with an external consultant
- Details of consultation events were available on the Council’s website and social media channels

12 In the 2021-22 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

PART A

- ✓ Internet discussions
- ✓ Telephone consultations
- ✓ Other (*please specify*): Remote as opposed to face-to-face meetings due to pandemic

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:

The Council’s Equality Consultative Forum which is made up of a range of representatives from section 75 groups has been consulted on various policies including:

- Audit of Inequalities and Action Plan 2021-24
- Air Quality Action Plan
- Belfast Agenda Update
- Menopause Policy and Guidance
- Gender Identity Plan
- Ten Year Tourism Plan – Make Yourself at Home
- Bolder Vision
- Dual Language Street Signage

In addition, the Disability Advisory Panel, which comprises members with a range of disabilities were also consulted on various policies including: Air Quality Action Plan, Forth Meadow Community Greenway, Dual Language Street Signage, Buy a Bin Service, Disability Action Plan and Ten Year Tourism Plan “Make Yourself at Home”.

13 Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2021-22 reporting period? (tick one box only)

- Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

14 Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2021-22 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)

<https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/council/equality-and-diversity/equality-screening-reports>

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

31

16 Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2021-22:

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

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

The following consultations included links to the related equality screening:

- Belfast Air Quality Action Plan (Draft)
- Social Procurement Policy (Draft)

The following consultation included a link to the draft EQIA:

- Draft Dual Language Street Signs Policy

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

PART A

Please provide any details and examples:

Please see 3 above. Following consultation with residents and a legal opinion being sought, the Council's Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, agreed to proceed with an Equality Impact Assessment on the erection of bilingual external naming and internal directional signage at the Olympia Leisure Centre.

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 2021-22 reporting period? (tick one box only)

X Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The results of the draft EQIA which was undertaken in relation to the Street Signage Policy was published on the Your Say platform during 2021-2022. The final policy will be agreed during 2022-2023 and the final EQIA will be published on the Council's website.

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 2021-22 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:

This is currently on-going

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

Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

- 22 Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2021-22 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:**

None during this reporting period.

- 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:**

None during this reporting period.

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 2021-22, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.**

Introduction to Allyship, 22 June 2021 – **20**

First Steps to Bi-Inclusion, 30 September 2021 – **8**

First Steps to LGBT Inclusion, 9 September 2021 – **10**

Championing LGBT+ inclusion as a Senior Leader, 28 September 2021 – **10**

Transgender Awareness, 14 June 2021 – **13**

Let's Talk Sexual harassment (Men Only, IWD) – 11 March 22 – **5**

Diversity E-learning for Employees, April 21 – March 22 – **261**

Diversity E-learning for Managers. April 21 – March 22 – **100**

Disability Awareness for Employees, 28 October 21 – **22**

Disability Awareness for Employees, 25 November 21 – **26**

Disability Awareness for Managers, 3 November 21 – **16**

A number of awareness raising session around domestic violence and abuse were also delivered.

PART A

All training sessions are evaluated with analysis being taken forward in the following ways, as appropriate: feedback to internal / external trainers, content review and development of further training.

We recognise that awareness raising and training play a crucial role in the effective implementation of our Section 75 duties. Our Chief Executive wishes to positively communicate the commitment of the Council to the Section 75 statutory duties, both internally and externally.

We are currently reviewing the effectiveness of our communication and training programme for all staff and awareness raising activities for all elected Members of Council. These activities will:

- raise awareness of the provisions of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, our equality scheme commitments and the particular issues likely to affect people across the range of Section 75 categories, to ensure that our staff and elected Members fully understand their role in implementing the scheme
- provide those staff involved in the assessment of policies (screening and EQIA) with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively
- to provide those staff who deal with complaints in relation to compliance with our equality scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to investigate and monitor complaints effectively
- provide those staff involved in consultation processes with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively
- provide those staff involved in the implementation and monitoring of the effective implementation of the Council's equality scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively.

Following review of our Equality Scheme in 2020 we have put in place the following awareness raising and training arrangements in this reporting year:

- We have developed a summary of the Equality Scheme and made it available to all staff.
- We provide access to copies of the full Equality Scheme for all staff; ensuring that any queries or questions of clarification from staff are addressed effectively.
- Council staff received a briefing on our Equality Scheme, this will be done annually
- The Section 75 statutory duties form part of induction training for new staff.
- Focused training is provided for key staff within the Council who are directly engaged in taking forward the implementation of our equality scheme commitments (for example those involved in research and data collection, policy development, service design, conducting equality impact assessments, consultation, monitoring and evaluation)
- Training will be provided to ensure staff are aware of the issues experienced by the range of Section 75 groups (examples outlined above)
- When appropriate and on an ongoing basis, arrangements will be made to ensure staff are kept up to date with Section 75 developments

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:

Overall Comments- Disability Awareness for Managers

“It was very beneficial to me personally given I have only recently began a management role”

“very enjoyable and insightful course”

“Very useful and informative and the two trainers were very interesting and knowledgeable”

“Really informative and useful training that I can put into practice in my job. It was clear that the trainers are very passionate about their work”

Overall Comments- Disability Awareness for Employees

“I feel more confident in dealing with people with disabilities and the terminology that should be used”

“I really enjoyed the training and found it to be extremely informative. It left me with a desire to improve how I do things, to ensure anything I produce as part of my job is accessible to those with a disability”

“Good general awareness for me, it really opened my eyes to the whole area of disabilities”

“Great informative session”

“Excellent course, was particularly pleased to see that the needs and requests of the neurodiverse community was being adhered to and that their identity was being honoured as they wish it”

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

26 Please list any examples of where monitoring during 2021-22, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation to access to information and services:

None during this reporting period

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

27 How many complaints in relation to the Equality Scheme have been received during 2021-22?

Insert number here:

None

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 Equality Scheme will be reviewed during 2024.

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)

In line with the guidance received from the Equality Commission, the implementation of section 75 will continue to be an area of focus for 22-23 with all areas to continue to be of focus.

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):

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:

5

Fully achieved

22

Partially achieved

3

Not achieved

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

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

Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs ⁱ	Outcomes / Impact ⁱⁱ
National ⁱⁱⁱ			
Regional ^{iv}			
Local ^v			

All our work is at Belfast level. However, we impact at many levels by promoting excellence in equality, sharing good practice and promoting leadership. Belfast City Council has a range of activities across all departments, which promote the two duties. Any action measures which were completed during reporting period 19-20 are not included below.

PART B

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

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1			

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			

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

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	The Disability Advisory Panel (DAP) to attend and participate in consultation processes and to provide advice and guidance on various capital projects	The Disability Advisory Panel met 4 times online – on a quarterly basis.	Quarterly meetings, including consultations, completed on at least 4 projects. Changes were made to various services, due to advice and input from the DAP.

PART B

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
			<p>Improved opportunities for disabled people to engage with and influence policy makers.</p> <p>The following topics were discussed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Forth Meadow Greenway consultation 2. Street Signage consultation 3. Making Yourself at Home consultation 4. Access & Inclusion Funding 5. Air Quality consultation
2	Facilitate a Sign Language Users Forum	A Sign Language Users Forum met 3 times online during 2020/21	Improved opportunities for Sign Language Users to engage with and influence policy makers and to educate employees.
3	The Disability Staff Network to provide support on future action planning	4 staff network meetings arranged.	Disabled people are provided with appropriate support to enhance employability and obtain employment.

PART B

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

	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
1	Provide ongoing advice and support to employees in relation to reasonable adjustment requirements	Number of reasonable adjustments requested completed	Develop the capacity of the organisation to support people with disabilities in the workplace.
2	Arrange a minimum of 3 Forum meetings per year and additional meetings as required.	The Disability Advisory Panel met 4 times during 2021/22, on the following dates: 17 June 2021 7 September 2021 7 December 2021 8 March 2022	Feedback encouraged from council departments in how we can encourage greater participation by disabled people and how we can improve our services

PART B

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	Review membership of Equality Consultative Forum (ECF) and increase representation of disabled people and representing organisations	New ECF Terms of Reference established % attendance at each meeting from cross section of disability organisations/individuals % of staff/members who understand purpose of the ECF and find it useful Effective feedback mechanism established, and used by members	Feedback encouraged from disabled people and their representative groups in how we can encourage greater participation by disabled people in public life and we can prove that we act on this feedback	The Equality Consultative Forum has been taking place virtually since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Forum met twice on the following dates: 17th June 2021 & 1 st December 2021. Attendance at meetings was low. A review of the forum and commitment to group has not taken place.
2	To promote and review disabled toilet access and engage with disability groups to encourage wider use	Effective review of existing process for disabled toilets and	Improve awareness of disabled toilet facilities for people with disabilities	A changing places facility was first introduced to the City Hall in 2018 and, as a result, further changing places facilities are in place at Belfast City Hall, Belfast

PART B

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
		effective feedback from disability groups		Zoo and at following leisure centres; Olympia, Lisnasharragh, Andersonstown, Brook and Girdwood. Plans to introduce further changing places facilities are underway.
3	Review recruitment process in respect of adjustments provided to applicants with autism and learning difficulties	% of changes implemented	Disabled people are provided with appropriate support to enhance employability and obtain employment	Resources have not been available to progress this action. Have undertaken to benchmark with other organisations
4	Consider all requests for reasonable adjustments as part of the selection process	% of reasonable adjustments requested and provided	Disabled people are provided with appropriate support to enhance employability and obtain employment	One reasonable adjustment provided at interview stage.
5	Facilitate at least 30 work experience placements for people with disabilities	30 placement opportunities facilitated,	Disabled people have the opportunity to	No placements provided for people with disabilities to date.

PART B

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
	Participate in annual job shadowing initiative promoted by NIUSE (internal)	including three via the job shadowing initiative	participate in work experience	A few virtual project- based placements have been offered. However, the majority of placements are still on hold due to Covid-19 Contact has been made with Belfast Met regarding the possibility of providing placements as part of their Positive Action Programme once placements resume.
6	Provide ongoing advice and support to employees in relation to reasonable adjustment requirements Investigate options around how staff could be encouraged and feel confident in declaring a disability via internal HR system Conduct a voluntary monitoring exercise	Monitor number of reasonable adjustments requests and those subsequently provided Create database of types of reasonable adjustments made Publish results from investigation /voluntary	Develop the capacity of the organisation to support staff with disabilities	238 reasonable adjustment have been provided during 2021-2022. Of these, 139 were DDA related. 37 were permanent adjustments/ arrangements and 201 were temporary. Examples of adjustments included redeployments; flexible working arrangements; non- requirement to attend meetings in the office or via Teams depending on numbers attending and current health; restricted duties;

PART B

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
		<p>monitoring and make recommendations as appropriate</p>		<p>homeworking, phased return to work; attendance at medical appointments; avoidance of time sensitive work.</p> <p>Voluntary monitoring exercise which was due to be carried out was delayed due to Covid-19.</p> <p>A significant number of staff do not have access to PC's. These employees would be required to complete a paper-based survey which was not viable due to the restrictions.</p>
7	<p>Deliver targeted outreach to encourage and support disabled people to consider enterprise and start a business</p>	<p>Increase in % participants with disability on enterprise awareness initiatives</p>	<p>Disabled people who are considering starting a business are supported</p>	<p>Through the council's Enterprise Support there is ongoing engagement with disability organisations to ensure there is access to support as required.</p> <p>As part of the programmes outreach, there has been engagement with Jobs and Benefits Offices, Cedar Foundation, North</p>

PART B

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
				<p>Belfast Women's Initiative & Support Project, Women's Tec and NIACRO to work to increase levels of participation in enterprise and business start among disabled people.</p> <p>Enterprise awareness activity includes ongoing engagement with Disability NI and Disability Action to ensure activity is inclusive of individuals with a disability.</p> <p>Representatives of these organisations share details of activity to their clients and there is also regular attendance at events and workshops.</p> <p>Through the council's support for social enterprise and cooperatives, a range of organisations were engaged who directly work with disabled people. The Chief Executive of USEL is the appointed Social</p>

PART B

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
				<p>Enterprise Sector Champion who engages regularly with council officers as well as the delivery agent for the council’s Social Enterprise and Cooperative Support Programme and stakeholder groups. This role enables the CEO to raise the profile of support in addition to raising the profile of the sector across Belfast as well as the wider region. Through this activity, the council engaged with a range of organisations who specifically provide employability skills support and training and employment opportunities for those with a disability including USEL, Orchardville Society (Orchardville Works), NOW Group, Disability Action and RNIB.</p> <p>There have been several participants through the programme who provide</p>

PART B

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
				<p>support for those with a disability: Kids Together, Spectra Sensory, Angel Eyes NI, St Joseph’s Centre for the Deaf and SENSspace.</p> <p>Across activities there are ongoing challenges collecting equality monitoring information as we are currently working remotely. (This is also not a mandatory requirement of programme participation).</p>
8	Review and consider opportunities to engage disabled people in the Belfast Employability Pathway (Belfast Workplace)	6 monthly retrospective measurement of participant numbers on disability focused employment initiatives	Disabled people are supported to access employability initiatives	As part of the programmes outreach, there has been engagement with Jobs and Benefits Offices, Cedar Foundation, North Belfast Women's Initiative & Support Project, Women’s Tec and NIACRO to work to increase levels of participation in enterprise and business start among disabled people. While the Cedar Foundation has a direct focus on disability

PART B

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
	Provide specific adaptations/support to enable participants to take part in council employability initiatives	6 monthly retrospective measurement of participant numbers on disability focused employment initiatives	Disabled people are supported to access employability initiatives	<p>support, the other groups listed represent and engage with disabled people.</p> <p>Eight enterprise awareness presentations were delivered to the Employability NI group which has a remit of providing increased support for those with health conditions (especially mental health) and other disabilities.</p> <p>The Council's Employment Academy Model provides tailored training to help Belfast residents gain employment and helps businesses with recruitment needs.</p> <p>The total number of participants on the council's Employment Academies stands at 816 people either being selected for or participating on an Employment Academy with a current into-work rate of 75% for the 454 people who have completed to</p>

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
				<p>date. Sectors include Transport (logistics, bus driving and taxi driving), business, construction, social care, leisure, fibre optics and childcare.</p> <p>Enterprise Pathway: two new cohorts have been engaged from April 21 with 35 people now engaged. Officers are currently reviewing impact to date with a view to embedding within the enterprise framework.</p> <p>Disabled people can encounter significant barriers when taking their first steps into work or for those who acquire a disability during their working life to re-enter the labour market.</p> <p>To ensure inclusivity, all reasonable adjustments are put in place in partnership with employers to ensure</p>

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
				<p>that participants, (including those with learning disabilities) are not disadvantaged when participating in employment initiatives. The Employability and Skills team seeks opportunities to work closer with disability organisations to further strengthen and provide better understanding of any gaps in provision of support available. Engagement has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monthly workshops with Employability and providers – including Disability sector providers – on upcoming Employment Academies and other interventions.

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ringfencing places on BCC General Operative Employment Academy for those with a disability.
9	<p>Engage with under-represented groups via umbrella organisation representation on the Enterprise and Business Growth Working Group Put in place reasonable adjustments to support disabled people access support programmes designed to help them start a business</p>	<p>Hold 2 meetings per year minimum with representative bodies/stakeholder groups</p>	<p>Programmes and activities are promoted to persons with a disability through suitable mediums</p>	<p>The team regularly engage with Disability Action, as one of our key stakeholders, to ensure that communication on our support is distributed to their client groups. Where appropriate, we also engage with the Council’s Disability Forum.</p> <p>No meetings have taken place this year. However, the team are in regular communication with Disability Action to enable pathways to entrepreneurship for individuals.</p> <p>Disability Action have been engaged in the consultation to support the outline business case for the future business</p>

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
				start-up model. This new model aims to ensure the supports in places are accessible for individuals with a disability, as well as other underrepresented groups.
10	Address licensing of Pavement Cafes when the council receives guidance from the Department for Infrastructure	Monitor implementation of licensing Pavement Cafes	Disabled people have appropriate support so that they can participate in the cultural life of the city on an equal basis	While finalised guidance from the DfI has not yet been forthcoming, during the pandemic, the Council introduced a temporary Pavement Café licensing scheme to assist with business recovery. Due to end in September 2021, the Council subsequently extended this temporary scheme until September 2022, with a review and update of the equality screening being carried out. A key consideration prior to issuing a licence includes an assessment to ensure the pavement café does not obstruct the

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
				<p>footpath or footway and does not present a hazard for pedestrians, particularly those with a physical/mobility disability or visual sight loss or who are blind. The extension of the temporary scheme will enable the further monitoring of pavement cafes, process review to take place and any issues arising from enforcement measures to be considered.</p> <p>This will also provide an opportunity to review and improve our guidance, particularly in terms of accessibility, and its impact on disabled people to consider opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity, but also in relation to pavement café furniture and the standards that we should set to ensure a vibrant and attractive city.</p>

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
				A report is to be taken to the Licensing Committee prior to September 2022 to seek Members views on how to proceed with transition to a permanent scheme. Any permanent scheme will be equality screened.
11	Engage with city centre retailers to consider how to support disabled people as part of customer focus support programmes	Number of businesses that participate	City centre retailers are encouraged to support accessibility for disabled people	As a result of Covid 19, this engagement plan has not progressed. However, the council is working to reengage Business Improvement Districts within the city centre and support them to put in place a business support programme. Part of this plan is to ensure retailers consider the needs of individuals and support accessibility for disabled people in the city centre.
12	Scope and research the accessibility of Belfast City Centre to identify gaps and	Conclusion of research and determine next steps	Persons with a disability are able to attend and	We are continuing to scope and research accessibility of the city centre, through

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
	<p>opportunities, to enable disabled people to participate fully in city centre life. This will include initiatives to promote accessibility in the city centre from an economic development perspective.</p>	<p>in delivery to target hard to reach groups</p>	<p>fully engage in events and programmes delivered by council</p>	<p>design and development of programmes and initiatives to support the development of a diverse and vibrant city centre. This builds on our previous report highlighting the City Centre Connectivity Study, the Cultural Strategy and Future City Centre programme. There are several specific initiatives in the city centre that demonstrated this integrated approach including a play area at Cathedral Gardens, quiet space at St. George's and Smithfield Markets, City Centre Events planning.</p> <p>Cathedral Gardens is the first multifunctional play area of its kind in Belfast City Centre. Designed by toddlers and primary school children, it has the following disabled friendly sensory play</p>

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
				<p>equipment/features: A giant spinning ‘hamster’ wheel (the first to be installed in any Council park), musical play equipment (xylophone, outdoor drums, a sound wheel and a cavatina) and a tactile hazard paving and a handrail to steps of an upper level. This engages children’s visual stimulation, hearing, touch and vestibular senses. Inclusive physical disability features are improved ramped access to the play area and installation of wheelchair accessible picnic tables.</p> <p>This project was featured as best practice by the following organisations: The Royal Town Planning Institute: Practice Advice on engaging children and young people, Urban Land Institute report on innovative responses to COVID-19 in the public</p>

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
				<p>realm, Belfast Healthy Cities “Designing Places for Children and Young People” and in the Los Angeles Times: 14 clever COVID-19 design solutions from around the world).</p> <p>Both St. George’s Market and Smithfield Markets now offer a quiet hour first thing each morning of the market. A new layout has been created which allows for a much quieter seating area in a space that is a distance from live music for our customers with sensory or hearing issues. The recent new layout has been designed to ensure total accessibility throughout the whole market floor. Aisles are wide for any customers who are wheelchair users.</p>

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
				<p>The City Events Team identify gaps and opportunities via post project evaluation research and equality screening on City Centre Events. This enables disabled people to participate fully in city centre life. Importantly, it promotes accessibility in the city centre while simultaneously benefiting footfall and trade.</p> <p>Using this research, the City Events Team complete an Inclusive Events Template for each event in their annual council-run programmes. Key measures adapted for various events include: ensuring event sites and activities are fully accessible for all; Sign Language interpreters and palantypists for performances; pre bookable accessible sessions for those attending events, and / or children</p>

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
				<p>attending workshops/activities on site; universal access areas for those who are not comfortable in large crowds; accessibility platforms; mobile accessible toilets / accessible changing facilities, access to free mobility scooters and appropriate pictorial signage. Assistance dogs are also permitted on our event sites. At the most recent Christmas event (2021), Traffic Attendants monitored accessible parking bays in Wellington Place to ensure accessible parking in that area was kept strictly for disabled parking close to the site.</p>
14	<p>Identify opportunities to ring-fence certain posts to long-term unemployed, including those with a disability and ensure any pre-</p>	<p>Ring-fence 20% of places available on pre-recruitment and training</p>	<p>Disabled people are provided with appropriate support to</p>	<p>No pre-recruitment and training programmes delivered to date.</p>

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
	recruitment and training programme caters for any reasonable adjustments	programmes to people with disabilities	enhance employability and obtain employment	<p>Work has been ongoing to identify suitable opportunities to ringfence places as part of the Open Spaces and Street Scene (OSS) Review. Up to nine posts will be ringfenced to long term unemployed, including disabled people.</p> <p>A pre -recruitment and training programme for unemployed people is scheduled from 11-15 April for OSS General Operative roles. 16 places will be made available on the programme, four of which are ringfenced for people with disabilities.</p> <p>There has been engagement with the disability organisations regarding these opportunities.</p> <p>Twelve paid placement opportunities were offered through the DfC's JobStart</p>

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
				Programme- nine people were appointed, four of whom had a disability. They will be offered an extended placement opportunity for nine months
15	Effective partnership working with the British Deaf Association	Develop and implement a 3-year BSL and ISL Charter Action Plan in partnership with the British Deaf Association	Public attitudes to disabled people are more positive and negative attitudes are challenged	Implementation of BSL and ISL Charter is work in progress. A procurement exercise for a new video Relay Service contract was completed. We offer a Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) service at all leisure centres, City Hall, Cecil Ward Building, Tropical Ravine and Belfast Zoo. We continue to engage with the Sign Language community via our Sign Language Users' Forum.
16	Consult with internal staff and Mencap to explore the introduction of appropriate communication tools for people with learning disabilities at	A number of communication tools for people with learning	Disabled people have appropriate support so that they can participate	Covid-19 has put this action point on hold.

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
	customer centres e.g., City Hall, Belfast Zoo	disabilities at customer centres	in the cultural life of the city on an equal basis	
17	Create a translation protocol document for Sign Language Users and disabled people accessing council's online material and electronic documents	Staff to be able to complete requests for documents in alternative formats and arrange required communication support BCC online material and electronic documents to be produced in accessible formats	Building staff capacity in providing accessible formats for people with disabilities	The 'Making Communications Accessible' Guide is work in progress and will be completed during 2022/23. This guide will support staff to provide accessible material.
18	Roll-out Diversity Awareness training programmes for council employees: - continue delivery of disability equality awareness training	Deliver 12 disability awareness training sessions to managers and employees	Develop the capacity of staff to ensure awareness of the legal obligations in relation to employment and service delivery	3 disability awareness sessions delivered virtually, 2 employee sessions and 1 manager session.

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - continue to seek nominations from staff with disabilities to provide specific awareness raising session around disability - continue providing access to diversity e-learning programme; - continue delivery of classroom-based diversity training; - identify and target awareness raising sessions on specific areas of disability - incorporate equality and diversity module into Tier 3 Training 	<p>Deliver 12 diversity awareness training sessions to managers and employees</p> <p>All new staff to attend training within 6 months of commencing employment</p>		<p>No diversity sessions have been delivered in person during the pandemic.</p> <p>The e-learning programme is being rolled out to everyone, including new starts, and as a refresher as face-to-face training not yet possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Mental Health First Aid training programme was delivered (3x half day sessions) • Stress Awareness for Managers session on 26th Jan 2022 - 148 managers attended. • A new Health and Wellbeing Hub, 'Staywell', was launched providing advice and guidance on a range of health and wellbeing issues.

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of personal stories outlining how hobbies and interests help to protect and improve mental health have been included on Interlink. • Delivery of awareness raising sessions - prostate cancer; ovarian and cervical; dementia awareness, breast and bowel screening awareness; men’s mental; health webinar (delivered by Aware NI to celebrate International Men’s Day); nutrition and the menopause; Promoting personal health and wellbeing sessions • Heart health information included on Interlink.

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
19	Research the possibility of including disability awareness sessions for Members in the Members Training Programme and include Disability Action Plan in the members Induction Programme. Upload the Disability Action Plan to the Members Portal	Communicate outcomes of research and plan next steps if applicable	Develop the capacity of Members to ensure awareness of the legal obligations in relation to employment and service delivery	Disability Awareness training for members is still under consideration.
20	Promote the range of alternative formats that are available	Evaluation of accessibility of council information via various formats	Persons with a disability are able to easily access relevant council information	<p>This is work in progress. We want as many people as possible to be able to use the website and involve people with disabilities in our User Experience stage of our new website development.</p> <p>Website accessibility scores are as 'excellent' by Silktide. We have committed to annual manual testing of our site, by users with a range of disabilities to ensure we see how others access our information.</p>

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
				<p>We've also made the website text as simple as possible to understand and it is approved by the Plain English Campaign on an annual basis.</p> <p>Recently introduced customer service standards actively promoting staff training in the use of Plain English.</p>
21	<p>To promote and review disabled toilet access and engage with disability groups to encourage wider use including promoting the Changing Places facilities across the City and review the existing process</p>	<p>Report on the review of existing process and the number of stakeholder organisations engaged for 19/20</p> <p>Increase in choice of available Changing Places</p>	<p>Improve awareness of disabled toilet facilities for people with disabilities</p>	<p>A changing places facility was first introduced to the City Hall in 2018 and, as a result, further changing places facilities are in place at Belfast City Hall, Belfast Zoo and at following leisure centres; Olympia, Lisnasharragh, Andersonstown, Brook and Girdwood. Plans to introduce further changing places facilities are underway.</p> <p>The review/refresh of the Toilet Strategy is a cross-Departmental piece of work and</p>

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
		<p>facilities across the city from 3 to 5 over the next 24 months</p> <p>Ensuring a continuing presence of Changing Places facilities are available on BCC and Changing Places website</p>	<p>Improve accessibility to Changing Places facilities across the City. Disabled toilet access and Changing Places facilities are actively reviewed as part of the Council's capital development process</p> <p>Improve social inclusion for people with disabilities</p>	<p>discussions are ongoing to determine where it best fits in the organisation. As such the work is likely to be carried over into 2022/23</p>
22	Organise specialist training/workshop for Project Sponsors/Project Managers/APMs regarding the	Deliver 2 training sessions % of staff who found the training useful	Promotion of positive attitudes towards disabled people	A one-day DDA training course has taken place within the Project Management Unit.

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
	relevant DDA issues on capital build scheme			

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

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1	Language Officer to represent council at the Coalition on Deafness	No invitation to a Coalition meeting during 2020/21.
2	Continue to promote/communicate our options for access to information/forms/ people/services in relation to council buildings	Due to the Covid -19 this action has been delayed.
3	Conduct a voluntary monitoring exercise to investigate options around how staff could be encouraged and feel confident in declaring a disability via internal HR system	Due to the Covid -19 this action has been delayed.

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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

The Disability Action Plan 2019-2022 was monitored during this reporting period. Quarterly operational Equality and Diversity Network meetings are held internally at the Council and at these meetings, we are able to monitor progress from feedback provided by departmental representatives.

(b) Quantitative

Monitoring milestones in action plans and reporting to ECNI in annual report.

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

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

No, we have not made any revisions or taken any additional steps which were not outlined in the original disability action plan

Please select

If yes please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1			
2			

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	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
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?

A new Disability Action Plan for 2022-2025 is currently being prepared and is out for public consultation at present. This can be accessed on the following link: <https://yoursay.belfastcity.gov.uk/draft-disability-action-plan>

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

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

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

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

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