

## Belfast City Council



**Belfast**  
City Council

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

#### Contact:

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

#### Signature:

Lorraine Dennis Michael Johnston

**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 2022 and March 2023**

## **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 2022-23, please provide **examples** of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved.

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

The implementation of our statutory equality and good relations duties through our Equality Scheme shaped our Equality Action Plan which runs from 2021 until 2024.

The Equality Action Plan contains some of the key priorities from our Corporate Plan, which will have the biggest impact on inequalities. Our Corporate Plan is a reflection of what people in Belfast have told us they want and the type of leadership they feel the city needs. It takes the priorities of the Belfast Agenda, the Community Plan, and sets out the 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.

Addressing economic inequalities is a key policy area which has undergone significant development, two examples are Employment Academies and providing match funding to four European Social Fund (ESF) projects. Employment Academies help Belfast residents to get jobs or move up the ladder to a better job. Academies help employers with their recruitment needs and sectors focus on workforce demand for example (Tech; Transport and Logistics; Working with Children; Health and Social Care; Leisure; Construction; Fibre optics etc.). Tailored training is provided for groups of up to 15 people, ranging from one week up to sixteen-week period depending on the sector. Qualifications are provided from Levels 1-5. Barriers are removed for participants attending training (by providing out of pocket expenses such as childcare and travel) and additional language support is provided for those where English is not their first language or where reasonable adjustments are made for people with disabilities.

To maximise participation across the city and to promote opportunities, Employment Academies are widely advertised, and strong relationships are built among Section 75 groups and their clients. Since April 2022, 639 people participated in Employment Academies (with an into-employment rate of 78% for those successfully completing) in sectors ranging from logistics, business support, public sector driving, construction, classroom assistants, social care, health care, construction, leisure, fibre optics and childcare/ play work. In addition, 97 people were supported with gaining retrofit qualifications that has enabled the qualifications to be embedded within the skills infrastructure which bring the total participant number to 716.

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Of the 619 who started an Employment Academy, so far the attrition rate has been 3%, 246 have fully completed and of these 194 have gained job/better job (79% of those completing). 369 are still participating, some on longer-term upskilling programmes which can last up to 18 months. Of those still going through an academy, 170 are already in work and are receiving support, qualifications or licences needed to access a better job. These include Level 3-5 qualifications and broken down as:

- 68 people are undertaking Childcare Upskilling;
- 65 are completing Health & Social Care Upskilling; and
- 37 are undertaking Classroom Assistant Upskilling at Level 3.

A second example is part of the Council's efforts to support the long-term unemployed and economically inactive to enter the labour market, where we provided match funding to four European Social Fund (ESF) projects. Programmes help key target groups (long-term unemployed, economically inactive, young people not in education, employment or training, lone parents, and disabled people) to develop their skills and get a job or become self-employed. Belfast's economic inactivity rate sits at 25.8 per cent and the primary reason is disability and sickness (especially among males). Since April 2022 until Dec 2022, these ESF projects supported 2405 people with 912 gaining employment and 239 progressing to education/training.

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- 2** Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2022-23 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

Please see Appendix 1 for an update on all actions included in our current Equality Action Plan.

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**3** Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2022-23 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

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

Please provide any details and examples:

Examples where the application of the Equality Scheme has resulted in changes include:

- i. Pilot Workstyles Policy
- ii. Heritage Trail Sign Policy

**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:

- i. Screening of the Pilot Workstyles Policy identified positive impact for staff who had a disability or caring responsibilities.
- ii. Screening of the Heritage Trail Sign Policy – City Hall considered the needs of disabled people in the development of the Heritage Trail Sign Policy. This included a particular focus in ensuring disabled customers were involved in the design phase and also included consultation with the council’s Disability Advisory Panel. This will help to mitigate against any potential adverse impact on the disabled community.

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

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

The screening exercise promoted analysis of evidence, impact and mitigations for all Section 75 categories.

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):*

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

Other (*please specify and give details*):

**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 2022-23 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:

The Section 75 statutory duties are integrated within job descriptions where relevant to the post. Examples include Human Resources Contract Manager and Assets Development Officer. Both job descriptions include reference to: 'Ensure all policy development, consultations and frameworks comply with the council's statutory duties under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998; 1998 Human Rights Act, other applicable legislation and the council's Equality Scheme.'

**5** Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2022-23 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:

The Equality Action Plan was developed in conjunction with the Corporate Plan and contains some of its key priorities. All departments were involved with the Audit of Inequalities, which is a systematic approach to identify inequalities, across the nine Section 75 categories (religious belief, political opinion, race, age, gender, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, people with dependants or without), as relevant to a public authority's functions. The Audit of Inequalities underpins the Equality Action Plan and the actions included therein are monitored annually.

6 In the 2022-23 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 2022-23 report
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

(see Section 1) The Equality Action Plan contains some of the key priorities from our Corporate Plan, which will have the biggest impact on inequalities. Our Corporate Plan is a reflection of what people in Belfast have told us they want and the type of leadership they feel the city needs. It takes the priorities of the Belfast Agenda, the Community Plan, and sets out the 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.

**Equality action plans/measures**

**7** Within the 2022-23 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:	5	Actions ongoing:	56	Actions to commence:	4
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Please provide any details and examples (*in addition to question 2*):

Action 3.2 - Finalisation and implementation of the Belfast Open Spaces Strategy should have commenced in 2021. However, due to a continued lack of human resource there has been no progress to develop a 5-year action plan for the delivery of the BOSS. Given the operational nature of tasks and activities across the department, and new and emerging issues towards the end of the year, we had limited resources to deliver on this strategy. It remains in our business planning for next year and will receive priority as soon as appropriate resources are in place.

Action 3.6 - Review and implement the council’s Toilet Provision Strategy to improve the accessibility of toilets and maintain and promote the Changing Places toilet facility was scheduled to commence in 2021. Whilst the strategic approach has not commenced 16 changing places facilities have been developed in Belfast City Council area.

Action 5.19 - Research into best practice and assessment of the council’s engagement and participation of young people, including development of best practice guidance for council officers was scheduled to commence in 2021. Due to the work on the refresh of the Belfast Agenda, the pilot and the capacity building needed within the new youth council, this work has been put on hold at a corporate level.

**8** Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2022-23 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

The Equality Action Plan 2021 – 2024, which is appended and updated for 22/23 was agreed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2021. A number of strategic actions have been further developed and are included in the totals above. Further actions have also been developed and are also being delivered including:

- City Deal
- Capital Projects
- Belfast Stories
- Belfast Agenda Refresh

**9** In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2022-23 reporting period, the following have been identified: (*tick all that apply*)

- x Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the known inequality



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- x Action(s) to address the known inequality in a different way
- x Action(s) to address newly identified inequalities/recently prioritised inequalities
- x 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                      x                      Sometimes                       Never

- 11** Please provide any **details and examples of good practice** in consultation during the 2022-23 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:

From August to November 2022 the consultation for Belfast Stories took place. By 2028, Belfast Stories, a new visitor attraction, will open on the site where North Street and Royal Avenue meet including the former Bank of Ireland buildings. An exciting and authentic experience with Belfast’s people and personality at its heart, it aims to attract both tourists and locals. As part of the Belfast Region City Deal, it also aims to help regenerate the city and surrounding areas. There are three main experiences within or parts to the visitor attraction: stories, screen and social.

Section 75 was at the heart of consultation, with equality impact assessments fully utilised as tools that help us understand the different needs of different groups of people, how they might be affected by what we want to do and how we could make changes to promote equal opportunities or good relations for different groups. We’ve thought about how we can reach out to people to make sure they have an opportunity to be involved in the project and tell us what they think.

Different methods of becoming involved with the consultation were widely published through a range of media, these included reading our equality impact assessment and answer a quick survey or visiting the physical consultation hub at 2 Royal Avenue and pop-up consultation hubs throughout the city. Group and one to-one meetings were also used with the Belfast Stories equity steering group, residents’ groups in rural areas within the council boundaries and any other key organisations representing protected groups of people not engaged through any other method.

- 12** In the 2022-23 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently used by consultees**: *(tick all that apply)*

- x Face to face meetings

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

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:

Council forums including Sign Language Forum, Disability Action Group, Migrant and Minority Ethnic Forum, Youth Forum and Equality Consultative Forum are often consulted on a range of issues.

One ongoing issue remains how to balance the need and desire for public consultation with the ever-increasing demands on the voluntary and community sector.

**13** Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2022-23 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- x Yes       No       Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Yes different forums were publicised through a range of media.

**14** Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2022-23 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- x Yes       No       Not applicable – no commitment to review

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

<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*):

16
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16 Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2022-23:

12	Policy consultations conducted with <b>screening</b> assessment presented.
1	Policy consultations conducted <b>with an equality impact assessment (EQIA)</b> presented.
	Consultations for an <b>EQIA</b> 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:

Age Friendly Belfast Plan 2022 -2026

In 2012, Belfast City Council All Party Reference Group on Older People provided the initial leadership to explore Belfast becoming an Age Friendly City. Subsequently, in May 2012, the Lord Mayor signed a declaration committing Belfast to this process, that commitment was reconfirmed within the Belfast Agenda.

Following An Age Friendly City must:

1. Establish mechanisms to involve older people throughout the Age Friendly process
2. Develop a baseline assessment of the age-friendliness of the city under eight domains:



### 3. Develop a 3-year city-wide action plan

It was clear that to consider and develop these domains we would have to work in partnership with a wide range of voluntary, community and public organisations providing services for older people. These have been continually developed since 2012. Many of the organisations were already members of the then Belfast Strategic Partnership (BSP) which had identified healthy ageing as a priority within its Framework for Action to reduce life inequalities in Belfast. It was therefore agreed by Council that BSP should lead the Age Friendly process supported by the existing Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership. The Belfast Strategic Partnership no longer exists so HASP is the governance lead.

HASP have been using a range of mechanisms to engage with older people and key stakeholders across the city with a view to identifying priority areas for the next 4 years and updating the baseline assessment. These have included working with community planning and partner organisations to utilise existing data sets.

Consultants were commissioned (Eos Community Consulting CIC) to develop a revised baseline report, an impact report with key stakeholders and to co-ordinate a consultation process and ensure links to other Belfast and regional strategies e.g., refreshed Belfast Agenda and co-designing the new regional Active Ageing Strategy.

Consultation events and partnership workshops/meetings took place:

- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| • Shankill Older People's Forum  | 10 people       |
| • South and East Belfast Older Peoples Forums  | 8 people        |
| • West Belfast Seniors Forum   | 28 people       |
| • Healthy Living Centres   | 2 organisations |
| • Dementia Friendly Neighbourhood Groups   | 20 people/orgs  |
| • Age Friendly Workshop in Belfast City Hall (older people/representative groups from north, south, east and west of the city) | 80 people       |
| • Public and Voluntary Sector Stakeholders   | 40 people/orgs  |
| • Postcard surveys at men's health day, tea dances and other events  | 300 people      |

#### Belfast Stories

Belfast Stories, a new world-class visitor attraction planned for the city centre in 2028, will be a success if the people of Belfast love it, are proud of it and feel that it is truly theirs. In February 2022, Belfast City Council appointed Smith and Kent Consulting to develop a consultation and engagement plan for the next stage of the project and provide specific equality, diversity and inclusion expertise.

The Belfast Stories Engagement Plan brings together a range of consultation, engagement and involvement approaches built on best practice, statutory requirements and stakeholder expectations. Engagement around the concept of Belfast Stories (previously known as Belfast Destination Hub) has been ongoing since 2014 when the need for a new major visitor attraction in the city was identified. It has subsequently been formally consulted on during public consultations on the council’s Belfast Agenda, Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy and the A City Imagining and Make Yourself at Home culture and tourism strategies.<sup>3</sup> Belfast’s residents and stakeholders have a legitimate expectation of continuing to be consulted about Belfast Stories.

Public consultation, including an EQIA, for Belfast Stories commenced on 10 August 2022 and continued to 14 November 2022. As public consultation document explained:

Belfast Stories is the life and times of a legendary city, told exclusively by the people who call it home. The term ‘visitor attraction’ describes its intention, but hardly does it justice, because this is an opportunity for everyone connected with this vibrant, brilliant and complicated place to have their story recorded and recounted. It’s a celebration of untold tales and unsung heroes. It’s a new angle on the familiar, a different perspective on what we thought we already knew.

Question used included: • If Belfast was a dog, what would it be and why?  
• What is the most Belfast thing you’ve ever seen or heard? • What is your first memory of Belfast? • Why are you here? • What is your favourite place in Belfast?

Consultation key indicators included:

2,755 visits and 2,495 unique visitors to Belfast Stories online consultation hub

234 unique visitors viewed or downloaded the consultation documents and videos

149 responses to online survey and polls 65 consultation workshops

1,148 participants engaged through consultation workshops and events

**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      x      No                       Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

**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 2022-23 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

PART A

Yes

x No

Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

**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 2022-23 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

Yes

No, already taken place

x No, scheduled to take place at a later date

Not applicable

Please provide any details:

The need for data on inequalities for Section 75 groups is monitored at policy level. Data gaps for S75 groups continue to exist across domains.

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

x Yes

Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

- 22 Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2022-23 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

N/A

- 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:

The monitoring of data, including quantitative and qualitative is ongoing in relation to major policy areas, such as economic development and leisure.

### 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 2022-23, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

The majority of training activities are delivered primarily by staff in Human Resources, with a smaller number of bespoke courses on Section 75 delivered by the Equality and Diversity Officer. Training is developed based on the needs of services and to contribute to the training objectives as defined in our Equality Scheme.

Listed below are the various courses delivered in this reporting period:

Menopause Awareness, 7 December 2022 – **18**

Creating a Bi Inclusive Organisation, 23 September 2022 – **1**

LGBTQ+ Mental Health: Supporting your colleagues, 10 October 2022 – **5**

Understanding and Reflecting the Experiences of LGBTQ+ People with Disabilities – 1 December 2022 – **3**

Transgender Awareness, 20 October 2022 – **8**

Bi-Awareness Training, 29 September 2022 – **7**

LGBTQI+ Awareness Training, 8 June 2022 – **8**

LGBTQI+ Awareness Training, 7 September 2022 – **15**

Sighted Guiding Training, 17 January 2023 – **12**

Sighted Guiding Training, 24 January 2023 – **14**

Diversity for Employees (Classroom), 5 October 22 – **6**

Diversity for Employees (Classroom), 8 December 22 – **10**

Diversity for Employees (Classroom), 23 February 23 – **6**

Diversity for Managers and Supervisors (Classroom), 13 September 22 – **4**

Diversity for Managers and Supervisors (Classroom), 11 January 23 – **2**

Diversity for Managers and Supervisors (Classroom), 14 March 23 – **7**

Diversity E-learning for Employees, April 22 – March 23 – **191**

Diversity E-learning for Managers. April 22 – March 23 – **82**

Disability Awareness for Employees, 6 October 22 – **8**

Disability Awareness for Employees, 7 December 22 – **6**

Disability Awareness for Employees, 9 February 23 – **10**

Disability Awareness for Managers, 9 November 22 – **19**

Disability Awareness for Managers, 12 January 23 – **11**

Disability Awareness for Managers, 9 March 23 – **2**

Equality Scheme training delivered from April 22 to March 23 - **9**

- 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- Diversity for Employees**

“Section 75 – Hadn’t heard of it before and it was great to find out about it”

“Great course very interesting”

“Useful session for internal and external interaction”

“Trainer very clear, informative, helpful and knowledgeable “

“Well presented and informative”

**Overall Comments- Diversity for Managers**

“Excellent examples and engagement with attendees”

“Engaging, informative and good open discussions and debate”

“Really interesting with great examples”

“Very knowledgeable and engaging trainer”

“Well delivered, with good discussion and talking points”

“Really enjoyed the session, the trainer was an excellent communicator and answered all the questions we had”

“Neutral and harmonious policy, didn’t know this existed, good to know

**Overall Comments- Disability Awareness for Employees**

“I really enjoyed the training, more than I expected

“Most useful seeing how people with disabilities are treated and seeing how you should really treat people”

“Most useful were the videos, putting learning into context with real life scenarios”

“Very interesting and educational course”

**Overall Comments- Disability Awareness for Managers**

“Good general overview”

“Good to see case studies / videos as they challenged thoughts and good to know support is there”.

**Overall Comments- Menopause Awareness**

“Overall the session was very useful and good discussion hearing others experience”

**Overall Comments- LGBTQI+ Awareness**

“I thought this was a really useful course for me personally. I can take some of the learning and apply it to my professional practice. It might be an idea in future to offer the training to a specific group of people eg how to make communications more diverse and inclusive – there was a lot of different backgrounds on the call so some of the content/conversations may not have been relevant to everyone on the call”

“Excellent course and would recommend that as many colleagues as possible attend”.

“I thought the course was very informative- I learnt a lot and hope to be able to pass on what I have learnt to other colleagues and family members”.

“Trainer gave a great course. The time just flew in. The pace and content were fantastic and were presented in a really nice way that was easy to understand. It was also great that people could ask questions and discuss issues”.

“Would definitely recommend this training”.

“Really useful course which I learned a lot from, especially about areas that I knew a little about but not enough. Trainer was excellent & course was delivered in a way that encouraged people to ask questions and have open discussions. Should be a mandatory course for all Council employees”.

“Good course and would encourage others to attend future sessions”.

**Overall Comments- Equality Scheme**

“Good to tie the legislation to our work.”

“Knowledge and understanding of inequalities is complex but so needed”.



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

**26** Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2022-23, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

As part of our adherence to The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018, we carry out ongoing monitoring of council websites, using an accessibility and quality assurance tool, Silktide. This allows us to monitor levels of accessibility and make daily improvement to the sites. Our average score is high 90% for these sites:

- [www.belfastcity.gov.uk](http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk)
- [www.belfastzoo.co.uk](http://www.belfastzoo.co.uk)
- [www.investinbelfast.co.uk](http://www.investinbelfast.co.uk)
- [www.belfastcity.gov.uk/belfaststories](http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/belfaststories)

This highlights skills barriers user may have with;

- motor
- visual
- cognitive
- auditory

In addition, we carry out manual accessibility testing, every other year, of council websites with an external specialist. The outputs help identify any barriers for users of our sites and allow us to implement a remedial implementation plan.

We have been monitored by the Cabinet Office, which is responsible for the enforcement of The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. We passed this audit in 2022 and can be subject to future audits.

In July 2022 the Physical Hub reception in Cecil Ward Building was reopened following renovation during the enforced closure due to coronavirus. Facilities available include wheelchair accessible reception desk, induction loop and video remote interpreting via Sign Video.

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

**27** How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2022-23?

Insert number here:

1
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Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

PART A

One complaint of non-compliance with our Equality Scheme regarding the Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund was received by email.

This complaint was made under Schedule 9, Paragraph 10 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and was received by email on Monday 13 March 2023. The basis of the complaint was:

1. An equality screening exercise is required by legislation, to be carried out at the onset of any policy or programme. An email issued confirmed that a screening has not been done and that the Council is in breach of legislation and guidance as outlined by the Equality Commission. Consequently, the Council is in breach of its own Equality Scheme.
2. An investigation as to why Belfast City Council are above the law and able to breach legislation should be undertaken.

Following an internal investigation, it was found there was no basis to the complaint.

**Section 3: Looking Forward**

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

March 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)*

Training and communication

**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

**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:**

27

Fully achieved

15

Partially achieved

26

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>			
Regional <sup>iv</sup>			
Local <sup>v</sup>			

PART B

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

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Provide emotional health and awareness training for staff (internal)	Deliver at least 4 Positive Mental Health sessions	6 Positive Mental Health sessions delivered 96.3% of attendees completed an evaluation form – 100% found the course useful
2	Provide training for managers in managing stress and mental health issues (internal)	Deliver 4 stress awareness training sessions	7 stress awareness training sessions delivered 86.4% of attended completed an evaluation form – 97.4% of them found the course useful
3	Provision of specific targeted courses to employees	Deliver 2 tailor made disability courses to employees	2 Sighted Guided training sessions delivered. 26 employees attended

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	Improve accessibility in contacting and communication for Sign Language Users	Deliver a Sign Language Video Relay Service and Video Remote Interpreting Service. VRS on website and VRI at Cecil Ward building, Belfast Zoo, City Hall, Tropical Ravine and at all Belfast Leisure Centres  Ensure a continued Sign Language Users App is available at all leisure	Sign Language video assistance is now available at reception in all BCC leisure centres and at council venues including Cecil Ward, City Hall, Belfast Zoo and Tropical Ravine. All relevant staff have been trained to operate the system and assist users.  Tropical Ravine has tour information available in British, Irish and International Sign Language on YouTube.

PART B

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
		centres reception points (via electronic tablet). Continue to ensure relevant GLL staff in each centre have been trained in the use and promotion of the service	
2	To support departments in the consideration of accessibility to Council documents, services, and facilities from a disability perspective	Several identified BCC online material and electronic documents to be produced in accessible formats	PDFs are discouraged online and strategy documents are translated to HTML as default  Online content is written to Plain English standards and achieves Crystal Mark
3	Increased provision of an accessible City Matters magazine for disabled people	Audio version of each City Matters magazine to be produced	Audio version of each City Matters magazine produced
4	Printed documents and brand campaigns to feature positive images of disabled people	Documents/campaigns which features positive images of disabled people	Disabled people featured in the Disability Action Plan 2022-25 document
5	Ensure that digital platforms benefit all customers with a disability and disability stakeholders, including through assisting user with webform training and provision of computer facilities for public use where possible	People with disabilities will have access to a point-of-service supported on-line resource within the Customer Hub	This service is provided ongoing at the reception at Cecil Ward

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	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
6	Continual of accessibility tools in place when accessing the on-line YourSay platform.	An accessible consultation platform in place	The platform includes the Reachdesk digital inclusion bar, Reachdesk provides speech, reading and translation support tools to help ensure information is easier and accessible for people
7	Include disability related information on staff e-briefings, staff newsletters/magazines, staff meetings, email, intranet (internal)	Internal communication documents to feature disability related information	A number of articles related to health and well-being/disability featured on the staff intranet and Staywell
8	Maintain dedicated health and well-being page on interlink	Include monthly updates on Interlink	This action is on-going with new articles every month on the Staywell (online wellbeing hub)

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 to meet 4 times– on a quarterly basis.	The Disability Advisory Panel met on 4 occasions Improved opportunities for people with disabilities to engage with and influence policy makers and to educate employees.

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	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
2	Facilitate a Sign Language Users Forum.	A Sign Language Users Forum to meet 2 times	The Sign Language Users Forum met on 2 occasions  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.	Disability Staff Network to meet at least 3 times a year. Disabled employees input into action planning	4 staff network meetings held  Employees with a disability have input into action planning
4	Disabled people to participate in the Employers for Disability NI (EFDNI) Disability Positive Audit	Participation in the Disability NI (EFDNI) Disability Positive Audit	The Disability NI (EFDNI) Disability Positive Audit has been completed. The Council achieved AAA* accreditation status
5	Consult and engage with Disability Advisory Panel in relation to the physical programme/capital projects of the council	Number of changes made to policies/services as a result of their input	Projects were brought to the Disability Advisory Panel on a rolling basis. Example of projects included the Shared Space projects, Black Mountain, and Shankill Shared Women's Centre
6	The Disability Advisory Panel (DAP) to attend and participate in consultation processes	4 projects per year to receive advice and guidance from DAP  Number of changes to be made to policies/services as a result of their input	The Disability Advisory Panel participated in the following consultations:  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Belfast Stories</li> <li>2. Accessible Tourism</li> <li>3. Music Strategy</li> <li>4. Disability Action Plan 2022-25</li> <li>5. Economic Strategy</li> <li>6. Tree Strategy</li> <li>7. Active Belfast</li> </ol>

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	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
			The DAP has provided vital input in the above consultations to ensure accessibility and inclusion of disabled people is considered
7	The Sign Language Users Forum to attend and participate in consultation processes	4 projects per year to receive advice and guidance from the Sign Language Users Forum	<p>The Sign Language User Forum participate in the following consultations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Belfast Stories</li> <li>2. Disability Action Plan 2022-25</li> <li>3. Language Action Plan</li> <li>4. Accessible Tourism</li> </ol>



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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	Facilitate biennial event on a current theme linked to council priorities e.g., International Day for People with Disabilities and Sign Language Week	<p>1 event to be held with external press and communications</p> <p>Attendance by a wide range of relevant organisations and disabled people</p>	<p>2 events were held</p> <p>International Day for People with Disabilities on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2022. The theme for this event was 'Employability for Everyone'. Sign Language Week event on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023. This event was a partnership with the British Deaf Association, promoting accessibility for Sign Language users</p> <p>Both events were attended by disability organisations, disabled activists, and disabled people</p> <p>Press releases were issued. Articles featured on the BCC website and on social media</p>
2	Effective partnership working with the British Deaf Association	Implement actions listed in the BSL and ISL Charter action plan in partnership with the British Deaf Association	We have committed to delivering a Sign Language Users Forum, providing an accessible service for Sign Language Users via SignVideo and the inclusion of a Sign Languages strand in our language strategy
3	Liaise with AccessAble to monitor provision of App for people with disabilities accessing facilities and services in the City of Belfast	Increased satisfaction accessing facilities and services in the City of Belfast	AccessAble updated 18 venues on their app and website. 23 access guides were re-surveyed and 3 new access guides were added. Feedback from the

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	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
			Disability Advisory Panel was carried out. A new meeting with the Disability Advisory Panel has been scheduled for June 2023
4	Consider all requests for reasonable adjustments as part of the selection process – disabled people are provided with appropriate support to enhance employability and obtain employment	Reasonable adjustments requested, considered, and provided	10 reasonable adjustment requests at interview stage requested. No requests were denied
5	Provide ongoing advice and support to employees in relation to reasonable adjustment requirements	Monitor number of reasonable requests and those subsequently provided Create a database of types of reasonable adjustments made	206 reasonable adjustments have been provided during 2022-23. Of these 94 were DDA related. 18 were permanent adjustments/arrangements and 188 were temporary. Examples of adjustments included phased return to work; time out for medical appointments; reduced hours; manual handling restrictions; extended trigger points; removal from phone rota; lighter duties; manual handling restrictions; flexible retirement; change of working hours; no night shift working
6	Engage with under-represented groups via umbrella organisations to raise awareness of enterprise supports and put in place mechanisms to support disabled people access support programmes designed to help them start a business	Hold 2 meetings per year minimum with representatives' bodies	Delivery of an Inclusive Enterprise Workshop took place during Global Entrepreneur Week titled Inspire, Inform, Include. Focusing specifically on encouraging people with disabilities into enterprise. 23 Representatives from a variety of organisations

PART B

	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
			<p>were present at the live engagement session, including Belfast City Council, DfC, NIUSE, Mencap, APPG for Inclusive Entrepreneurship, GEN UK and The Mind Tribe UK. Discussions and recommendations from this session will inform future activity.</p> <p>Prior to delivery of above workshop, meetings were held with NIUSE - NIUSE advocates for and collectively provides employment support to 6635 disabled people with a disability in Northern Ireland (in the last two years) across 22 organisations. - and DfC's Strategic Employment Branch and specifically with team working on their "Disability and Work Strategy" to include information on additional support available to people with disabilities who avail of Council Enterprise support.</p>
7	Work with disability support organisations to address barriers to access to council interventions and increase engagement by those with disabilities	Number of yearly engagements held with disability organisations to promote new employment initiatives, mentoring support and work placements	The Employability & Skills team co-ordinate a provider network for those working with under-represented groups in the city which has membership of over 209 people working in

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	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
			<p>Employability &amp; Skills across every part of the city, all Belfast JBOs and different target groups including those with disabilities.</p> <p>Regular 'newsletter' and workshops are held for the Employability &amp; Skills Provider Network on upcoming academies – and provision of 'the year ahead' with key details on employers, jobs, eligibility, pre-requisites, programme content, duration, additional support offered (childcare, sign-language interpreters, travel, subsistence etc.).</p>
8	Provide specific adaptations/support to enable participants to take part in council employability initiatives	<p>Number of engagements with disabled people.</p> <p>6 monthly retrospective measurement of participant numbers on disability focused employment initiatives</p>	<p>The Employability &amp; Skills team hosted on average 10 events and roadshows across the city to engage under-represented groups for Employment Academies and directly link organisations such as, Women's Tec, Action Mental Health, JBOs, Harmoni Homeless Hostel, Shankill Shared Women Centre, City Life Projects, Revolution Youth, NOW Group, USEL, Orchardville, Extern etc</p>

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	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
			<p>Through our membership of RSA Cities of Learning, we have also designed digital badges for all those completing Employment Academies that recognise the skills being developed through a digital award. We also offer this to 20 organisations in the city, including those supporting those with disabilities (such as Orchardville) who have created a suite of digital badges for their participants</p> <p>We have also ring-fenced 25% of places for those with disabilities Employment Academies leading to vacancies within Belfast City Council for Business Support roles and General Operative roles</p> <p>We strive to ensure that we offer Employment Academies in jobs and sectors suitable and attractive to the range of those under-represented in the labour market and have found that the newest Employment Academies in Tech and Professional Service (e.g., admin) is naturally attracting average of 40% of participants having a disability. This is a significant increase from an average of 4% in more practical sectors within</p>

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	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
			which we also deliver, and it is planned that leaning into these new sectors will increase the overall participation rate for those with disabilities
9	Deliver the Inspiring Communities theme which identifies disabled people as a priority area and removing barriers to participation to ensure all sections of the community engage with high quality culture, arts, and heritage	Deliver small capital enhancement projects that will increase access for disabled people to quality cultural product and experiences Deliver partnership programme with University of Atypical.	4 Access & Inclusion grants were issued in 2022/23. A partnership programme began in Q4 with University of Atypical which specifically builds skills and capacity of disabled artists and disabled people seeking to engage with arts organisations or visit venues. This includes training, mentoring, and ambassador -focused projects.  Ensured that council venues are disability compliant and include assets such as Changing Places facilities

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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	Identify opportunities to ring-fence certain BCC job to long-term unemployed, including those with a disability and ensure any pre-recruitment and training programme caters for any reasonable adjustments	Consider suitability of campaigns for pre-recruitment and training programmes  Ring-fence 20% of places and training programmes to people with disabilities	Worked with employability partners across the city to deliver - pre-employment training academies to support ring fenced opportunities for the long-term employed, for Business Support and General Operative posts and made 16 permanent appointments from these exercises. Supported the DfC job start programme with 9 placements. Work is ongoing to consider how we can develop and fund apprenticeships roles across the Council	There is an area of work to complete including how the Council can develop and fund apprenticeships roles across the Council.
2	Disabled people to participate in careers/employability activity targeted towards disabled people i.e. career fairs, mock interviews, site visits, employability talks	Attend 4 events a year. This will be dependent on a full lifting of restrictions	No careers/employability activity undertaken. Activity has not been fully recovered post covid. Attended a Belfast Special Schools Education	It was not possible to attend this type of event post covid.

PART B

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
			Partnership meeting and advise that BCC is available to help provide employability/careers support to students. An outreach plan will be developed in 2023/24	
3	Work with disability organisations to develop targeted outreach to encourage and support disabled people to consider enterprise and start a business	Number of events, attendees at events and referrals to business support	<p>There were 10 separate events completed in 22/23 that included significant outreach and engagement with several organisations working with people currently underrepresented in Enterprise including people with disabilities.</p> <p>Work continues to ensure all business start activities are accessible and promotion of activities are visible to all with all events being promoted through organisations that include:</p>	This is still work in progress



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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action Mental Health</li> <li>- Now Group</li> <li>- Orchardville</li> <li>- RNIB</li> <li>- Ulster Supported Employment Limited (USEL)</li> <li>- Mencap</li> <li>- NIUSE.</li> </ul> <p>A further significant focus on engaging with people underrepresented in Enterprise took place with a “Braking Boundaries” event with aims of increasing confidence in taking next steps to business start-up. Over the 4 different sessions that took place 7 of the 46 attendees</p>	

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
			(@15%) disclosed they had a disability.	
4	Engage with city stakeholders to put in place mechanisms to encourage businesses to support accessibility for disabled people.	Number of stakeholders engaged/activities delivered	We are currently undertaking some targeted outreach to engage businesses in the retail sector to build on their on their disability awareness, plans and address any queries. The Enterprise and Business Growth Team have recently delivered 2 retail bootcamps with a view to not only support retailers but build long term relationships that will enable us to form focus groups with this sector when needed. We will build our knowledge on the BCC action plan so businesses can be signposted to the relevant	This is still work in progress.

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
			<p>person/organisation for advice and guidance.</p> <p>We are focused more than ever on making our business mentoring support more accessible as well as our workshop venues to people with disabilities. At our last team meeting we invited a colleague from our Governance and Compliance team to present details of the draft 'Making Communications Accessible guide' so we comply with the correct guidelines and procedures. This guidance can also be shared with retailers at future workshops that we plan to shape</p> <p>We have also been engaging directly through the BIDs to put in place a</p>	

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
			series of activities to support their members, this also includes understanding their needs in relation to accessibility and disability awareness.	
5	Raise awareness of council's Disability Event Plan	Number of completed event action plans received	We have developed a Making Communications Accessible guide which includes guidance on how to make events inclusive. The next steps are to share the Making Communication Accessible Guide online on the Council internet website. A Disability page will be developed to ensure staff are supported in completing event actions plans.	This is still work in progress and this work will be completed in 2023/24

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
6	To provide a clear description on website and City Matters of what services are available in Sign Languages to members of the public. This includes how to request documents/forms in Sign Language, how to request an interpreter/translator and how to call the council using the SignVideo relay service	Accessible material in Sign Language	SignVideo signage is in place at Cecil Ward reception and within the Accessibility section on website. Accessibility section on website also details how to request forms etc in alternative formats	This is still work in progress. Accessible material in Sign Language is to be developed for the website
7	Provide information to disabled people on aspects of council services which specifically affect them through a minimum of 4 articles per year in the City Matters; a minimum of 2 targeted information leaflets per year; accessible information on the website	<p>Images in printed documents featuring positive images of disabled people</p> <p>Number of documents provided in alternative formats</p> <p>People who found information relevant and useful assessed by appropriate evaluation tool</p>	<p>Images printed in new Disability Action Plan 22-25 documents</p> <p>Several documents are provided in alternative formats</p> <p>Accessible information can be found on the Accessible section on the website</p>	An appropriate evaluation tool to be carried out to assess whether accessible information provided is relevant and useful

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
8	Develop an annual disability awareness calendar and deliver associated awareness raising/communication	Calendar in place and awareness delivered	A calendar continues to be developed. Several awareness articles have been introduced on the staff intranet. For example, promoting International Day for People with Disabilities and Sign Language Week	This is work in progress
9	Provision of Sign Language courses for employees	1 BSL course 12 employees	A BSL course has been arranged for delivery as from May 2023. 18 employees have registered	The course has been arranged but it is due to be delivered and completed in 2023/24
10	Roll-out Diversity Awareness training programme for council employees	Deliver 12 disability awareness training sessions to managers and employees  Deliver 12 diversity awareness sessions to managers and employees  All new staff to attend training within 6 months	In-person training resumed in September 2022.  6 disability awareness sessions delivered- 3 for managers and 3 for employees.	In-person training has resumed because of employees returning back to the workplace after Covid. A proactive approach to deal with the backlog is underway and this is work in progress for 2023/24  Equality and Diversity Module training for Tier 3 manager still to be progressed

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
		<p>of commencing employment</p> <p>All Tier 3 managers to attend Equality and Diversity Module training</p>	<p>6 diversity sessions delivered- 3 for managers and 3 for employees</p> <p>17.4% of new staff in 2022/2023 attended diversity awareness training within 6 months of commencing employment</p> <p>14.0% of new staff attended disability awareness training within 6 months of commencing employment</p> <p>Whilst the percentage of those attending training within six months of commencing employment is low, this can be partly attributed to the fact that classroom-based training only recommenced in September 2022, following the pandemic.</p>	

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
			Frontline/ operational staff would not have had access to on-line training and therefore they had to wait until classroom-based training resumed.	
11	To promote and review disabled toilet access and engage with disability groups to encourage wider use. To promote the Changing Places facilities across the city and review the existing process	Report on the review of existing process and the number of stakeholder organisations engaged for 22/23. We have accessible changing and toilet facilities in all leisure centres  Continue to increase choice of available Changing Places facilities across the city, now	Six leisure centre based Changing Places facilities in Andersonstown, Brook, Girdwood, Lisnasharragh, Olympia and Templemore to registered on the Changing Places website  BCC working with GLL to ensure leisure centre programmes continue to develop inclusivity through increased booking allocations and more inclusive group activity sessions and lessons	This is still work in progress, working with GLL to ensure leisure centre programmes develops inclusivity including use of disabled toilets



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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
		available in 5 leisure centres		
12	To provide information and training (where necessary) to front-line staff about RADAR key, including its use and how to apply for it	Ensuring a continuing presence of Changing Places facilities are available on BCC and Changing Places website. We work with age friendly Belfast/community services, to promote the distribution of Radar Keys, with details all on the website. Also, with regards to the training of front-line staff, it will be part of the Hub knowledge base	Waste Management continues to oversee the distribution of RADAR keys  A list of Changing Places facilities is listed in the Accessibility section of the website	To train front-line staff regarding the Radar key is still to be implemented
13	To provide more accessible and inclusive play facilities across the city.	Ensure the annual Playground Improvement Programme (PIP) provides more accessible and	PIP is an annual programme that has been running now for 12 years, each year we endeavour	We are now seeking committee approval for PIP 2023-2024, site selection is again based on a suite of annual quality inspections, undertaken by an external

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
		<p>inclusive play facilities across the city. Existing sites are refurbished under the programme and will include a greater range of inclusive equipment. We are now planning for PIP 2022-23 which will deliver similar outcomes in terms of inclusive playground design</p>	<p>to make selected playgrounds more accessible and inclusive by using equipment from our corporate supply contract, as noted before over 60% of the equipment available is deemed as inclusive. We also undertake civil engineering works to ensure entrances, surfacing and circulation spaces are also accessible, this goes beyond replacement of play equipment.</p> <p>Under PIP 2022-23 – completed refurbishment works at Westlands playground (Upper Waterworks Park) – Alongside traditional equipment, the new</p>	<p>consultant. As part of next year’s programme further discussions and site visits are planned with organisations who advocate the need to provide more accessible play facilities</p>

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
			<p>playground at Westlands (Waterworks Park Upper) also includes an accessible wheelchair swing, accessible/inclusive roundabout, accessible picnic table and acoustic equipment for sensory play. The existing path network, used to access the play facility was also re-engineered to improve accessibility</p> <p>Commenced construction works at Sally Gardens playground (handover mid- May 2023) – At Sally Gardens playground many of the existing items of play equipment were retained and refurbished, however, with limited space</p>	

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
			<p>available, we installed a new special-needs cradle swing seat and a new accessible roundabout</p> <p>Completed design work for Areema playground (construction work started mid - May 2023) – Areema playground refurbishment works are currently underway, we plan to install a new accessible roundabout, new inclusive play panels and two sensory items for acoustic play, new spring rockers have also been specified with additional side and back supports</p>	
14	Improve accessibility within shared spaces programmes	To deliver a physical programme under the PIV	Construction of the Forth Meadow Community	Support from the PEACE IV Programme finishes in June / July 2023 with the completion of the Capital Build work on

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
		Shared Spaces and Services Theme	Greenway is estimated to be completed in 2022/23	the Springvale site with hand-over to Council. Responsibility for the Greenway and its connected parks and sites, will therefore fall with OSS.
15	Persons with a disability are able to attend and fully engage in events and programmes delivered by council	Ensure that the Inclusive Events Checklist is completed for all events that are being held in council facilities	Large events held with an inclusive events checklist completed	<p>Events delivered by the Council's Parks Events and Outreach team make use of the Council's inclusive events guide and are required to undertake an accessibility audit as part of the overall event management plan. Provision of a changing places facility will made available at events where necessary and on some cases where available.</p> <p>This is not fully achieved because more work needs to be done to encourage all 3<sup>rd</sup> party event organisers to use the Council's inclusive events guide when planning their events and complete and return the planning checklist at section E with the other required documentation</p>

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

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	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1	Review membership of Equality Consultative Forum and increase representation of disabled people and representing organisations	The Equality Consultative Forum is under review with actions planned for October 2023
2	Arrange a minimum of 3 Equality Consultative Forum meetings per year and additional meetings as required	This action has been delayed due to internal re-structuring
3	Carrying out a targeted consultation to identify the potential impact of living in a rural area for those with a disability within the Council area	This action has been delayed due to internal re-structuring
4	Discussion on the proposed development of a corporate disability communications policy based on advice from the Disability Advisory Forum and relevant stakeholders	This action has been delayed due to the Language Action Plan not being finalised
5	Consult and engage with Disability Advisory Panel in relation to the physical programmes/capital projects of the council	Projects will be brought to the Disability Advisory Panel in 2023/24. Examples of projects to be consulted are the Shared Space projects, Black Mountain, and Shankill Shared Women's Centre
6	The Sign Language Users Forum to provide advice and guidance on various capital projects	Projects will be brought to the Sign Language Users Forum in 2023/24. Examples of projects to be consulted are the Shared Space projects, Black Mountain, and Shankill Shared Women's Centre
7	Discussion on the proposed development of a corporate disability communications policy based on advice from the Sign Language Users Forum and relevant stakeholders	This action has been delayed due to the Language Action Plan not being finalised
8	Seek approval to appoint a senior Disability Champion	This action will be progressed in 2023/24.

## PART B

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
9	Appropriate accessible measure will be in place for those wishing to attend VCSE (Voluntary Community Social Enterprise Groups) Panel meetings	This action will be progressed by 2024
10	The VCSE Panel to be refreshed. We will ensure that the recruitment process is accessible to sector representatives with a disability and in addition, consideration will be given to engaging the sector as part of the VCSE Citywide network to ensure that the views of people with a disability are included as part of the community planning process	This action will be progressed by 2024
11	Review recruitment process in respect of adjustments provided to applicants with autism and learning difficulties	Not progressed to date. We will conduct benchmarking in 2023/24 to explore best practice in respect of adjustments provided to applicants with autism and learning difficulties during the recruitment process and review findings. In 2024/25, we will consider options and implement changes to recruitment, where feasible/appropriate
12	Facilitate at least 30 work experience placements for people with disabilities including participation in annual job shadowing initiative promoted by NIUSE (internal)	No placements were provided for people with disabilities to date. All placements currently on hold – processes under review
13	Conduct a voluntary monitoring exercise and investigate how disclosure in declaring a disability can be encouraged	This is an action for 2023/24 therefore it does not apply to this annual report
14	Review the temporary pavement café licensing scheme and associated guidance with a particular focus on its impact on disabled people and considering opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity	At the Council meeting on 3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2022, Members agreed to extend the current temporary pavement café licensing scheme for a further 12 months and Council Officers have been tasked to consult with business on a proposed permanent scheme and associated guidance. The Council also agreed that the operation and

PART B

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
		enforcement of pavement cafes would be an agenda item on the Working Group on Disability.
15	Consult with internal staff and stakeholders to explore the introduction of appropriate communication tools for people with learning disabilities at customer centres e.g., City Hall, Belfast Zoo	This is an action for 2023/24 therefore it does not apply to this annual report
16	Develop an approach to translated Sign Language “welcome” information at identified council venues	This is an action for 2023/24 therefore it does not apply to this annual report
17	To expand the provision of Sign Language translation on popular pages on the website	This is an action for 2023/24 therefore it does not apply to this annual report
18	To promote Disability Communication tools on social media and the Council internal and external websites	This is an action for 2023/24. This action will be implemented once we have introduced appropriate communication tools. This will be subjected to completion of identified training including Jam Card and Autism NI training
19	To include articles related to disability and ensure photography of disabled people is included in the City Matters magazine	This is an action for 2023/24 therefore it does not apply to this annual report
20	Develop an approach to signage across the Council facilities liaising with relevant departments on the installation and procurement of new Disability signages e.g., braille, tactile maps	This is an action for 2023/24 therefore it does not apply to this annual report
21	Include disability awareness sessions for Members in the Members Training Programme and include Disability Action Plan in the members induction programme. The Disability Action Plan to be uploaded to the Members Portal	As from May 2023, newly elected members will receive disability awareness training and a copy of the Disability Action Plan. This is an action for 2023/24



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	Action Measures not met	Reasons
22	Printed documents and brand campaigns to feature positive images of disabled people	This is an action for 2023/24. The design work of the new Disability Action Plan including new positive images of disabled people is work in progress The document will be printed in 2023/24
23	Organise specialist training/workshop for Project Sponsors/Project Managers/APMs regarding the relevant DDA issues on capital build scheme	This training will be organised in the 2023/24 year
24	To promote Disability Communications tools on social media and the council internal and external websites.	This is an action for 2023/24 therefore it does not apply to this annual report
25	Provide information to disabled people on aspects of council services which specifically affect them through a minimum of 4 articles per year in City Matters; minimum of 2 targeted information leaflets per year; accessible information on the council website	This is an action for 2023/24 therefore it does not apply to this annual report
26	Printed documents and brand campaigns to feature positive images of disabled people	This is an action for 2023/24 therefore it does not apply to this annual report

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 2022-25 was monitored during this reporting period. We are able to monitor progress from feedback provided by departmental representatives.

(b) Quantitative

PART B

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?

Please select

If yes, please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1	Develop a Reasonable Adjustment Passport to record an employee agreed workplace adjustments	A Reasonable Adjustment Passport to be developed Develop the capacity of the organisation to support staff with disabilities	2023/24
2			
3			
4			
5			

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

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No, we do not intend to make any further revisions to our plan.

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

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

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

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

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