

Disability Action Plan 2018-2019

This Disability Action Plan can be obtained from the Council in alternative formats, including large print, easy to read format, Braille, audio, digital DAISY and signed video. It can also be downloaded from the Council's website at:

www.midandeantrim.gov.uk

If you could like a copy in an alternative format, or have any queries, please contact:

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Foreword

This Disability Action Plan is a statement of the Council's commitment to the promotion of equality of opportunity for disabled people and complements its Equality Scheme under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

This Disability Action Plan has been designed to ensure that the Council fulfils its statutory obligations in compliance with Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006) through to 2016.

The Disability Discrimination Act places duties on public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

As Chairman and Chief Executive of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, we are committed to implementing effectively the disability duties. We will allocate all necessary resources (in terms of people, time and money) in order to implement effectively this plan and where appropriate, build objectives and targets relating to the disability duties into corporate and annual operating plans.

Mayor

Chief Executive

Date:

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Introduction

- 1.1 Under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995)¹ as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006), Mid and East Antrim Borough Council is required, when carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need to:
 - promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
 - encourage participation by disabled people in public life ('the disability duties').
- 1.2 Under section 49B of the DDA 1995, the Council has set out in this plan how it proposes to fulfil these duties in relation to its functions.
- 1.3 This plan, in form and content, must conform to the guidelines contained within the Commission's guide for public authorities.
- 1.4 The Council will ensure the effective communication of the plan to staff and will undertake a planned programme of training and guidance for all staff and elected members.
- 1.5 The Council will commit the necessary resources to deliver the actions within this Disability Action Plan.

2. Purpose of the Disability Action Plan

- 2.1 The Disability Action Plan, through a series of actionable measures, outlines the Council's proposals for fulfilling its statutory obligations in compliance with Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006).

¹ What the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 means 2 by disability "A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities." – Definition of Disability, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, 2007

3. The Council - its role, functions and policies

The roles and responsibilities of councils, established in the Local Government Act 2014 and in other legislation, fall into four types:

Direct - councils are responsible for the provision and management of services

Development - councils have a role in facilitating economic and community development initiatives

Representative - council nominees sit on statutory bodies

Consultative - councils reflect community views and concerns, and provide a challenge function, in a range of issues including education, health and housing.

3.1 From April 2015, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council are responsible for:

- Access to information
- Arts and Entertainment
- Biodiversity
- Building maintenance and contract management
- Building regulation
- Civic functions
- Community Development
- Community Safety
- Consumer Safety
- Control of communicable diseases and food poisoning
- Corporate Health and Safety
- Corporate Planning
- Corporate projects
- Dangerous buildings
- Dog and Pest Control
- Economic Development including local economic development, Start a Business Programme and Enterprise Shows, Youth Entrepreneurship
- Emergency Planning liaison
- Energy performance of buildings
- Environment and Countryside
- Environmental protection
- Equality legislation
- Estate management
- EU Rural Development Programme
- Financial Services

- Food control
- Good Relations
- Grounds maintenance - including horticulture, cemeteries, parks and play areas
- Health and Safety
- Home Safety
- Housing
- Registration of houses in multiple occupation, housing unfitness responsibilities including repair and demolition notices
- Information systems and technology
- Internal Audit
- Leisure Facilities
- Licensing
- Local Tourism including small scale tourism accommodation development; providing business support including business start up advice along with training and delivery of customer care schemes, and providing advice to developers on tourism policies and related issues
- Member services
- Museum Service
- Neighbourhood renewal - enterprise initiatives
- Off street carparking
- Parks and Open spaces
- PCSP - Policing and Community Safety Partnership
- Personnel, training and development
- Planning- to include: local development plan functions, development control and enforcement, postal naming and numbering;
- Property certificates
- Public Health
- Policy development
- Purchasing and Tendering
- Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages
- Sports Development
- Street cleansing - including public conveniences
- Sustainable Development
- Tourism and visitor attractions
- Town Hall facilities
- Urban regeneration and community development including functions associated with physical development
- Vehicle and plant maintenance
- Waste Management - including Recycling & Disposal

- 3.2 To support and implement the above statutory functions and provision of services, the Council has adopted, and will develop, a number of policies.

4. Public life positions over which the Council has responsibility

- 4.1 The Council has responsibility over a number public life positions i.e. committees in which members of the public participate. A full list of these positions is available on our website.

5. Effective implementation of the Disability Action Plan

- 5.1 The Council's Mayor and Chief Executive are committed to the effective implementation of this plan and the disability duties throughout the organisation. They will allocate all available resources (in terms of people, time and finance) in order to achieve this.
- 5.2 As part of its corporate planning process, the Council will build objectives, target setting and monitoring into relevant business plans.
- 5.3 The objectives will be reflected at all levels of strategic planning within the Council including individual staff objectives and annual plans. Progress on meeting the objectives will be monitored and reported to relevant section Managers and the Council Members on an annual basis. Individual performance on these issues will be monitored and reviewed through internal performance review arrangements.
- 5.4 A formal report of progress on meeting the objectives relating to the disability duties will be included in the Council's Annual Report to the Equality Commission.

6. Internal arrangements

- 6.1 The Council consists of 40 elected representatives, each elected for a four year period.

- 6.2 The Chief Executive oversees the work of the departments through the Senior Management Team which, together with the Elected Members, create the corporate body of the Council.
- 6.3 The Chief Executive is the principal advisor to the Council and responsible for the strategic management of the organisation, for the day to day management of services and the longer term planning and allocation of resources.
- 6.4 The organisational structure of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council is available as part of the Council's constitution and is available at www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/constitution
- 6.5 The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation of this plan, with the support of the Senior Management Team.
- 6.7 Responsibility for implementing, reviewing and evaluating this disability action plan, and the point of contact within the Council, will be Sandra McDonald, Policy Manager contact details can be found on page 1)
- 6.8 Upon request, the Council makes all public documents available in a range of alternative formats, including large print, Braille, in easy read format, on audio and on computer disc.
- 6.9 All Equality, Good Relations and Disability Consultation and final documents are produced in Trebuchet MS Font 14, with clear headings per section and limited numbering.
- 6.10 The Council will arrange for translators and/or signers to be present at appropriate meetings, either where a need has been identified in advance, or where a need is anticipated.
- 6.11 Loop systems are installed in the Council Chamber and portable loop systems are available for use in some Council facilities.
- 6.12 The Disability Duties are the responsibility of every employee of the Council, Councillor and any member of a Council Body or Panel.

- 6.13 All employees and Councillors will receive training in the legislation and their responsibility to ensure the Council does not fail to meet its obligations either in their action or inappropriate action.

7. Effective engagement

- 7.1 The Council is committed to engaging with people with disabilities, their families, carers and disability representative groups in the drafting, implementation, monitoring and review of this Plan.
- 7.2 Further information on how this will be achieved is detailed in Section 10 - Consultation.

8. Annual report

- 8.1 The Council will prepare an annual report on the implementation of its Plan. This report will be included as part of the annual report to the Equality Commission which details the Council's progress on the implementation of its equality scheme.
- 8.2 A copy of the annual report will be made available on the Council's website.

9. Review of the Disability Action Plan

- 9.1 The Council will carry out a five year review of its plan, in consultation with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

10. Consultation

- 10.1 The Council is committed to carrying out meaningful consultation in the development of its Disability Action Plan. In doing so the Council is keen to bring about change for people with disabilities by proactively taking measures in response to the disability duties. The Council would therefore like to ensure the

involvement of people who have a range of disabilities and those who care for people with a disability, in the development of this plan.

- 10.2 Consultation on the Disability Action Plan is on-going via engagement with key stakeholders and service users.
- 10.3 Comments and suggestions on the plan are welcomed at any time, with public consultation of this plan due to be advertised in local media.
- 10.4 The Council will seek to ensure the involvement of people with disabilities by consulting with representative groups at both regional and local levels, as well as talking to individuals with a disability.
- 10.5 The Council will consult regularly with a range of local and regional groups of people with disabilities or those representing them.
- 10.6 Consultation with local disability groups is to ensure that disabled people can assist the Council by:
 - Identifying barriers faced by disabled people in participating in public life and specifically how any barriers they have encountered in relation to their dealings with the Council can be overcome
 - identifying circumstances in the past in which the Council has not promoted positive attitudes towards disabled people and identify opportunities in the future for the Council to promote such attitudes
 - assist the Council in identifying key priorities and remedial actions to ensure the application of the disability duties
 - monitoring and making decisions on the revision of the plan as a result of these comments and reviewing the effectiveness of measures taken.
- 10.7 The Council believes it is important that disabled people are involved in the implementation, monitoring and review of the Plan. Consultees will be advised of any changes made.

12. Performance Indicators and actionable measures

- 12.1 Mid and East Antrim Borough Council is committed to monitoring and reviewing policies and practices to ensure that the disability duties are met. This process will be undertaken through the Council's Policy Screening Process.
- 12.2 Further, the Council will undertake a review of the plan on an annual basis. This review process will assist in the drafting of appropriate actions and performance targets for the next period, as well as highlighting the achievements from the period of the Annual Review.

13. How the disability action plan will be published

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

Sandra McDonald, Policy Manager
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The Braid
1-29 Bridge Street
Ballymena
BT43 5EJ

Tel: 028 2563 5984

Email: sandra.mcdonald@midandeantrim.gov.uk

The availability of the Disability Action Plan will be advertised in the following local papers:

Ballymena Guardian
Ballymena Times
Carrick Times
Larne Times
Social media

It may be accessed on the Council's website at:

- 13.2 The Council will, through its work with disabled people, ensure appropriate ways of communicating the Plan. It acknowledges that disabled people may experience different barriers according to their type of impairment. The Plan will be produced in clear print and plain language and it will be made available in accessible formats on request, which may include braille, large print, disc and easy read.
- 13.3 The Plan will be highlighted through press releases, advertisement, mail shots and meeting directly with disability organisations, representative groups and individuals.
- 13.4 Requests to produce the Plan in a minority language will be met.
- 13.5 In addition, employees will be made aware of this Disability Action Plan and how their duties and responsibilities assist the Council to meet its obligations.

Appendix 1 Action Plan

| Measure | Reason for Measure | Key Actions | Performance Indicators |
|---|--|---|--|
| Engagement with local and regional disability groups | To identify creative and innovative ways to meet the increasing and diverse needs of people with a disability living in our Council area | Identify local disability groups; Establish a network to actively engage; Consult with groups in the development of the detailed action plan. | Groups identified; Number of groups engaged; Number of groups involved in consultation |
| Training for Elected members and Staff | To raise awareness of the diverse needs of people living with a disability and to ensure effective service delivery | Build disability awareness training into capacity building/induction programme | Number of Elected Members trained; Number of Staff trained. |
| Equitable access to Council services and facilities | Physical accessibility of council services and facilities promotes equality of opportunity for all | Complete DDA audit of all Council facilities and include budget for remedial action within Capital Programme | DDA Audit completed; Number of complaints received in relation to accessibility |

| Measure | Reason for Measure | Key Actions | Performance Indicators |
|---|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| Improved visibility of disabled people in Council workforce | Staff feel confident in the Council's policies and procedures to make know any disabilities they may have | Awareness rising and support. Ask all employees to complete a S75 monitoring form | % of employees declaring a disability |