

# EQUALITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

## Public Authority 2010 – 2011 Annual Progress Report on Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Order (DDO) 2006

This report template includes a number of self assessment questions regarding implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties from **1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011**. This template also includes a number of questions regarding implementation of Section 49A of the DDO from the **1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011**. Please enter information at the relevant part of each section and ensure that it is submitted electronically (by completing this template) and in hardcopy, with a signed cover letter from the Chief Executive or, in his/her absence, the Deputy Chief Executive to the Commission by **31 August 2011**.

In completing this template it is essential to focus on the application of Section 75 and Section 49. This involves progressing the commitments in your equality scheme or disability action plan which should lead to outcomes and impacts in terms of measurable improvement for individuals from the equality categories. Such outcomes and impacts may include changes in public policy, in service provision and/or in any of the areas within your functional remit.

Name of public authority

<b>Belfast City Council</b>
<b>Equality Officer, Michelle Hand</b> <b>Good Relations Unit</b> <b>Chief Executive's Department</b> <b>City Hall</b> <b>Belfast</b> <b>BT1 5GS</b> <b>Tel: 02890 270511</b> E-mail: <a href="mailto:handm@belfastcity.gov.uk">handm@belfastcity.gov.uk</a>

Please indicate whether you would prefer to receive correspondence from the Commission by:

Post

Electronically

## **S75 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**What were the key policy/service developments made by the authority during this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations and what outcomes were achieved?**

### **DISABILITY ISSUES**

The Disabled Access Group, chaired by Director of Parks & Leisure, meets quarterly to assess the Council's arrangement for meeting the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995.

#### **Disability Action Plan**

Under the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006, two new duties took effect from 1 January 2007 requiring public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

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

The Belfast City Council Disability Action Plan was submitted to the Equality Commission on 30 June 2007. We continue to review and update on an annual basis those action plans and will submit a revised Disability Action Plan next year in tandem with the Revised Equality Scheme.

#### **Annual Disability Event**

Council held its 2010 Annual Disability Event on 16<sup>th</sup> June in the City Hall. The theme for the event was 'Equality for people with disabilities in employment'. Speakers from the Local Government Staff Commission, Fleming Fulton School, Belfast Special Schools – Business Education Partnership, Disability Action and employees of Belfast City Council spoke on a range of initiatives on offer to secure employment and work placements for those people with disabilities.

### **CONSULTATION**

In support of our commitment to equality Council continues to provide consultees with information concerning the screening of our policies in the reporting year as well as updated information on our Disability Action Plan. Council hosts two Equality Consultative Fora a year and makes all screened documents available on the website for consultation and feedback.

### **OLDER PEOPLE**

Council continues to provide a range of services specifically targeted at older people, such as the provision of Home Safety Checks, Safety of Seniors events, concessionary pricing on entry to Council facilities and a range of activities delivered through our Community Centres.

Council's All-Party Reference Group on Older People continues to meet on a quarterly basis to examine issues affecting older persons and recently hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Seniors' Convention.

There is also a Council-wide Officer Group and the Belfast Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership comprising of Council, NIHE, Belfast Trust, Belfast Healthy Cities, EHSSB and Translink.

Council continues to deliver on its commitment towards the equality and well-being of older people through the following initiatives:

### **Information and Advice**

#### **Web Site & City Matters**

The officers group continues to work with the council web editors to improve the senior section on the Council's web site. These improvements will continue into 2011 with a revamp of the 'seniors info' pages to make them more user friendly. These improvements are being undertaken as the result of feedback from the training provided on using the 'seniors info' website from professionals and older people. The events calendar on our website is well used and continues to provide details of seniors' events across the City.

The seniors' pages continue to be a feature of every edition of City matters. Amongst the most popular articles this year were the Grundvig European Exchange and the list of talks available to older people's groups. The magazine has provided a great advertising tool for targeting more isolated older people to attend our events such as the Annual Convention.

#### **Benefits Guide**

At the 2009 Convention, older people had expressed their confusion over the availability and entitlement of benefits. The Council worked in partnership with a number of key agencies including Advice NI, Age Concern, Help the Aged and the Law Centre to produce a user friendly benefits guide for older people which appeared as a pull out in the

February 2010 City Matters. The guide is still made available as a separate leaflet on request.

### **Cold Caller leaflet**

In the most recent edition of City Matters we inserted a pullout leaflet on how to identify and deal with cold callers (people who call at the door to sell something or offer services). This was produced in response to older citizens expressing concerns on how to deal with this and also because our Building Control Service highlighted rogue traders as an issue.

### **Fuel Poverty – Fuel Stamp scheme**

Fuel poverty is an issue for low income families and especially older and vulnerable people in Belfast. The number of people living in fuel poverty in Belfast has gone up and older people are now more likely to be affected with oil prices having soared by 150%.

In seeking to help people in fuel poverty, Belfast City Council has been running the Be Warm oil stamp saving scheme since January 2009 and, since that time, Belfast residents have bought over £180,000 worth of stamps to help budget their home heating bills. £5 stamps can be bought from over 50 outlets across the city. Stamps are accepted by 25 oil companies as payment or part payment for oil.

## **EVENTS & ENGAGEMENT**

### **Convention**

Last year's Convention which was hosted in the City Hall on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2010 was supported and sponsored through Belfast Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership. The theme of 'Living Longer, Living Better' was suggested through the partnership and **230** delegates attended the convention, 209 of whom were older people.

### **EU event**

An event called "Opportunity Europe" was held in St George's Market in October 2010 promoting opportunities for older people in Europe, workshops included language, dancing etc. The event was successful and it is hoped that it will be bigger and better next year.

### **Tea dances**

Over 800 older people attended a tea dance in the Ulster Hall on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2010. The older people of Belfast danced and enjoyed the

festive celebrations in the renovated Ulster Hall and welcomed the re-introduction of the tea dances once again. Due to further requests for tea dances a St Patrick's tea dance was arranged in Belfast City Hall at 3.00 pm on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2011. As well as a lively band and St Patrick's Day refreshments a showcase of traditional dancing opened the event.

### **Slipper amnesty**

Belfast City Council, in conjunction with Investing for Health and Belfast Trust, under the umbrella group Home Accident Prevention, Belfast Area, hosted two Home Safety awareness days in 2010/11. This was an opportunity for seniors to visit a number of stalls providing advice on a range of topics before taking part in workshops on Home Safety, Winter Warmth, Fire Prevention and Falls Prevention.

These two days also provided an opportunity for seniors to have their electric blankets tested before the onset of winter. 78 electric blankets were tested with 60 blankets failing the test and being replaced with new blankets free of charge. (77% of blankets failing the test)

Seniors also brought their old bedroom slippers and had them replaced by a podiatrist, again free of charge, as part of the Falls Prevention initiative. Over 200 pairs of slippers were replaced on both days and over 200 winter warmth packs consisting of a blanket, flask and gloves were distributed to all those attending.

### **Good Morning Service**

The Good Morning Service aims to deliver a vital core service for older and vulnerable people by providing reassurance to people within the community, through free confidential daily telephone calls and support. There are currently 3 Good Morning Services in operation covering all Belfast.

A Good Morning Network has been established to provide support for the regional network and to act as a forum for sharing and disseminating good practice.

### **Good Neighbour Award**

In early 2010, a competition was designed to encourage good neighbourliness in Belfast, in particular to older people. The idea behind the project came from the review of the assisted bin lift and bulky waste collections service in the 2008/9 action plan. The Lord Mayor launched the

“Good Neighbour Awards” and it is anticipated that these awards will be repeated in 2011.

### **Grundvig European Exchange**

A programme specifically for seniors in Belfast to volunteer in Madrid has been initiated through a European Exchange Grant. The volunteers were appointed in January 2011. Belfast hosted its first 2 volunteers from Madrid for 6 weeks from 1st March 2011 until April 2011. The volunteers worked in Sandy Row Community Centre, Fleming Fulton School and the Council parks. Updates from the Spanish volunteers and the Belfast volunteers are published weekly on the Belfast City Council website.

### **Shopmobility**

We have been working with Shopmobility to improve access to Council facilities. There are currently 3 scooters in operation in the Zoo and 2 in Ormeau Park which are well used. We are exploring the possibility of mobile units which can be used for different events on different locations and could possibly be used within the Parks on specified days.

## **YOUNG PEOPLE**

### **Young Persons Employment Initiative**

The Council has recently worked in partnership with DEL and North City Training -Bryson Charitable Group’s Training and Employment Unit on a pilot of the Young Person Employment Initiative (YPEI). The programme provided young people (aged 18-24), who had been unemployed for more than one year, temporary waged work experience over a 26 week period. The Council facilitated 36 placement opportunities, five of which were graduate opportunities. The young people worked on a range of projects which are of value to the ratepayers of Belfast. They carried out a range of work in recycling and cleansing services and worked in various locations across the city such as Musgrave Park, Belfast Castle and Connswater Community Greenway.

The aim of the programme was to potentially provide a pathway into the labour market by offering paid work experience, employability training and personal development. 17 (47%) of the young people moved into employment. We are committed to engaging in this programme for a further 3 years, offering 10 placement opportunities each year.

## Youth Forum

The 2010-2012 Belfast City Council Youth Forum is made up of 36 young people representing Belfast's nine electoral areas. Current forum members come from an assortment of religions, abilities, backgrounds and cultures across Belfast.

The current Youth Forum has been active since its recruitment in August 2010 by participating in consultations, both external and internal, and by networking with and supporting other youth groups.

The content of all youth forum engagement can be broken down into three themes **D**emocracy, **P**articipation and **R**epresentation. Some examples of the diversity and richness of the youth forums outreach work can be demonstrated through the projects listed below:

- The Youth Forum sponsors a category of the annual Community Safety Young Peoples Awards.
- Organising the 'Belfast- How We see It' event in City hall which this year gave young Travellers the opportunity to share their opinions on issues affecting their lives with the Lord Mayor, the Youth Champions and a panel of representatives from statutory agencies.
- Assembling a working group to work closely with the Children & Young People's Co-ordinator in organising the Party in the Park, an inclusive summer outdoor event for 600 young people aged 12-17 from youth organisations, clubs and summer schemes from across the city.
- Working with BCC Culture & Arts section in facilitating focus groups with local youth groups from South and West Belfast around the RISE public art at Broadway.
- Continued involvement with the Northern Ireland Youth Assembly panel and supporting the proposal for the establishment of a Northern Ireland Youth Assembly at Stormont.

The Youth Forum regularly engages with the Council's six political party Youth Champions to ensure that the views and opinions of Belfast's young citizens are sought, recognised and considered in the Council's democratic processes of policy making and decision taking.

## **Public Employment Partnership (PEP)**

The Council engaged with the Citywide Employability Consortium (CEC) to develop a pre-employment training programme for the long term unemployed<sup>1</sup>. Other public sector partners working on the programme were the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

The aim of the programme was to assist the long term unemployed gain the necessary skills and experience to support them in gaining employment. As part of the programme, the Council facilitated site visits, work experience placements and mock interview sessions.

The Council facilitated 19 placements across various disciplines e.g. refuse collection, street sweeping, gardening, cleaning, community services and administration. Of the 19 placement participants, 7 (36.8%) have gained employment. Eleven site visits and 3 mock interview sessions also took place.

### **Work experience placements, careers fairs etc.**

In addition to the outreach activity outlined above, the Council provided 126 placement opportunities for students from schools, further education colleges and universities. 29 placement opportunities were also offered to people with disabilities.

The Council participated in 9 mock interview sessions with schools (2 of which were for Special Educational Needs Schools (SEN)), conducted 5 site visits including 4 SEN, and attended 12 careers fairs including 1 SEN.

## **GENDER**

### **Women's Steering Group and Gender Action Plan**

The Council's Women's Steering Group is chaired by the Council's gender champion and oversees the review and development of the Gender Action Plan (GAP).

The plan concentrates on the following main priorities:

1. equal pay
2. work-life balance/health and well-being;
3. gender stereotyping

---

<sup>1</sup> Long- term unemployed is defined as those being without work for over 1 year (International Labour Organisation)

4. women and leadership
5. violence against women
6. communication.

Activity this year included the delivery of another Women Leaders Programme in which 8 senior Council officers and 3 elected members participated. Three events were held in March 2011 to celebrate International Women's Day and covered topics such as women in leadership, health and well being and managing finances. Two sub groups of the WSG were also established during the year to focus particularly on communication and women in non-traditional roles. The recommendations from these two working groups will feed into the review of the GAP. The Council has been asked on a number of occasions to share our best practice with other organisations. In November 2010 the Council was invited to speak at a conference in Lyon, France on what BCC has done to address the under representation of women.

### **Opportunity Now Benchmark - awarded Gold level**

In December 2010 the Council completed the Opportunity Now diversity and gender diversity benchmarking questionnaire and has since been successful in attaining the gold level award.

### **Current activity and plans for 2011.**

We are currently in the process of developing a workforce diversity strategy which is due to be completed by March 2012. Organisational analysis and best practice research is ongoing and another voluntary monitoring exercise will be carried before the end of 2011.

### **What are the main initiatives planned in the coming year to ensure the authority improves outcomes in terms of equality of opportunity and good relations for individuals from the nine categories covered by Section 75?**

#### **Equality and Good Relations**

- Produce and consult on Revised Equality Scheme
- Complete Audit of Inequalities and Equality Action Plan
- Implement actions from Equality Consultative Forum planning session
- Review Equality and Good Relations training

- Provide Equality and Good Relations training for new elected Members
- Host Equality briefings for senior managers and Directors
- Continue to mainstream equality issues within Council and in partnership with other agencies
- Continue to deliver support to Departments in relation to equality screening, consultation and policy development
- Continuing good relations inputs into a range of Council initiatives

### **A new voice for older people in Belfast**

This autumn will see the official launch of a new representative body, specially for older people in Belfast called the Greater Belfast Seniors' Forum.

The forum is a voluntary group of 12 older people, made up of 2 people from each of the 6 local seniors' forums across Belfast, namely:

- Shankill Senior Citizens' Forum and West Belfast 50+
- North Belfast Senior Citizens' Forum
- Castlereagh Lifestyle Forum, Belfast East Seniors' Forum and South Belfast Lifestyle Forum

The aim of the forum is to work together to try to make life better for older people in Belfast. The current issues are:

- Improving the transport service for older people in the Greater Belfast area
- Asking energy companies to give older people a better deal
- Having regular meetings with the Council's All Party Reference Group on older people and Belfast Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership

**Please give examples of changes to policies or practices which have resulted in outcomes. If the change was a result of an EQIA please tick the appropriate box in column 3 and reference the title of the relevant EQIA in the space provided below:**

	Outline change in policy or practice which have resulted in outcomes	Tick if result of EQIA
Persons of different religious belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faith Forum</li> </ul>	

Persons of different political opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ending Hate in our Communities</li> </ul>	
Persons of different racial groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Migrant Awareness training</li> </ul>	
Persons of different age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 x Seniors Fora</li> <li>• Youth Forum</li> <li>• Seniors' Convention</li> </ul>	
Persons with different marital status		
Persons of different sexual orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGBT engagement seminar</li> </ul>	
Men and women generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender Action Plan</li> </ul>	
Persons with and without a disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability Action Plan</li> <li>• Annual Disability event</li> <li>• Disability Awareness training</li> </ul>	
Persons with and without dependants		

## **Section 1: Strategic Implementation of the Section 75 Duties**

**Please outline evidence of progress made in developing and meeting equality and good relations objectives, performance indicators and targets in corporate and annual operating plans during 2010-11**

The Council's Corporate Plan 2008-2011 had 6 strategic themes:

- City Leadership – strong, fair, together
- Better opportunities for success across the city
- Better care for Belfast's environment
- Better support for people and communities
- Better services – listening and delivering
- Better value for money

Our corporate values underpin everything that our Councillors and employees do and the way we deliver the objectives in the plan. A key corporate value is:

- Respect each other, be fair, promote equality and good relations – through improving access to our services, valuing diversity, ensuring that everyone shares in the city's success and tackling discrimination in all its forms by treating all communities and people equally.

Key objectives within the strategic themes included:

- Leading the development of good relations in the city
- Working towards reducing health and social inequalities
- Improved accessibility to council services
- Improved flexibility of council services

The Council has introduced an integrated performance management system that enables regular, up to date reporting to be undertaken at corporate, departmental and service level. Key performance indicators have been identified for all services and a relevant Departmental indicator is:

- Number of equality complaints      Target 0      Actual 0

In all other cases, we exceeded our targets, including e.g., those relating to:

- No. of staff receiving good relations training
- No. of staff receiving anti-hate crime and migrant awareness training
- No. of cultural diversity events held
- No. of community groups accessing Good Relations funding
- No. of paramilitary murals removed.

**Section 2: Screening - Please provide an update of new/proposed /revised policies screened during the year.**

<b>Title of policy subject to screening</b>	<b>Was the <u>F</u>ull Screening Report or the <u>R</u>esult of initial screening issued for consultation? Please enter <u>F</u> or <u>R</u></b>	<b>Was initial screening decision changed following consultation? <u>Y</u>es/<u>N</u>o</b>	<b>Is policy being subject to EQIA? <u>Y</u>es/<u>N</u>o? If yes indicate year for assessment.</b>
Policy and Procedures for the protection of children and vulnerable young adults	<u>R</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA)	<u>R</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
OPENCities Local Action Plan	<u>R</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
Loughside Redevelopment	<u>R</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
City Hall Memorabilia	<u>R</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>
Council Interim Corporate Plan 2011/12	<u>R</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>

### Section 3: Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

Please provide an update of policies subject to EQIA during 2010-11, stage 7 EQIA monitoring activities and an indicative EQIA timetable for 2011-12

#### EQIA Timetable – April 2010 - March 2011

Title of Policy EQIA	EQIA Stage at end March 2011 (Steps 1-6)	Outline adjustments to policy intended to benefit individuals, and the relevant Section 75 categories due to be affected.
Pitches Strategy	Stage 3	The strategy will address the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inequality re: provision of Gaelic pitches in Belfast: <b>political opinion; religious belief</b></li> <li>• facilities for junior associate football: <b>age</b></li> <li>• target sports activities at under-represented groups: <b>gender; age; disability and sexual orientation</b></li> </ul>

Where the EQIA timetable for 2010-11 (as detailed in the previous annual S75 progress report to the Commission) has not been met, please provide details of the factors responsible for delay and details of the timetable for re-scheduling the EQIA/s in question.

Not applicable

Please outline any proposals, arising from the authority's monitoring for adverse impacts, for revision of the policy to achieve better outcomes for the relevant equality groups:

#### 2011-12 EQIA Time-table

Title of EQIAs due to be commenced during April 2011 – March 2012	Existing or New policy?	Please indicate expected timescale of Decision Making stage i.e. Stage 6
Update to Flags EQIA	Existing	November 2011
Good and Harmonious Environment	New	November 2011

## Section 4: Training

Please outline training provision during the year associated with the Section 75 Duties/Equality Scheme requirements including types of training provision and conclusions from any training evaluations.

4.1 The number of courses delivered and delegates trained from April 2010 to March 2011.

<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Nos. trained</b>
Equal Opportunities and Good Relations for employees	151
Equal Opportunities and Good Relations for managers and supervisors	41

4.2 Between April 2010 and March 2011 the Council implemented a number of key elements of the equality and good relations training strategy under the aims of awareness, challenge and capacity building:

- Delivery of Ending Hate Crime training: 10 sessions
- Delivery of the Migration Awareness training: 11 sessions

## **Section 5: Communication**

**Please outline how the authority communicated progress on delivery of the Section 75 Duties during the year and evidence of the impact/success of such activities.**

- 5.1** The work of the Good Relations Unit which comprises both Equality and Good Relations work is directed by the Good Relations Partnership. The Partnership meets monthly and is responsible for monitoring budgets, work plans and policy development. The Partnership is comprised of Councillors and representatives of the main Churches, Trade Unions, the CRC, the business sector and the minority ethnic groups and meets monthly.
- 5.2** The Equality Officer and Good Relations Officers report on the progress of the implementation of Section 75 to the Chief Officers' Management Team at officer level and to the Good Relations Partnership at political level; the Good Relations Partnership is a Working Group of the principal Committee of the Council, the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee.
- 5.3** Progress reports are submitted to meetings of the Good Relations Partnership and Strategic Policy and Resources Committee biannually before adoption by full Council. The minutes of these meetings are available to the public via public libraries, on request and the Council's website.
- 5.4** The Council has a continued commitment towards Equality and Good Relations, demonstrated by the willingness of elected Members and senior officers to contribute to seminars, conferences and events, both internal and external, highlighting a commitment to equality at the highest level of the Council's business.
- 5.5** As evidenced by the Corporate Plan, the Council is committed to civic leadership and promoting equality and good relations. Opportunities are taken where possible to communicate the Council's commitment to equality and good relations. These include speeches given by the Lord Mayor and Committee Chairmen. On a more informal basis, the Equality Officer and Good Relations Team give advice to various Departments on a range of issues.
- 5.7** Internal Council newsletters are used as a vehicle to provide up-dates to inform employees of equality/good relations developments and future issues. The website is also continually updated on equality matters.

- 5.8** The external Council newsletter – *City Matters* – includes articles and updates to inform the wider population about developments in the field of equality and good relations. *City Matters* is currently circulated to 130,000 households in Belfast. We promote the fact that it is available in Braille and audio; production in other formats is also available on request.
- 5.9** We maintain communication with our consultees on the AA list. We consult with user groups, targeted stakeholders and Section 75 groups in the early stages of development of new policies and service reviews.
- 5.10** Screening consultations are conducted with our AA list, focus groups and are presented on our website. The external communication of our commitment to the statutory duties and communicating progress has been enhanced with the creation of our Equality Consultative Forum.
- 5.11** The Lord Mayor’s Office is in frequent dialogue with the staff from the Unit on a range of issues relating to equality and good relations. The previous Lord Mayor, Councillor Patrick Convery, took the theme of ‘Working for Belfast’ for his year in office.
- 5.12** A Youth Forum, established by the Council, has continued to provide a platform for young people in the City to consider Council policy and initiatives, as well as highlighting issues that they felt were important and of which the Council should be made aware.

## **Section 6: Data Collection & Analysis**

**Please outline any systems that were established during the year to supplement available statistical and qualitative research or any research undertaken/commissioned to obtain information on the needs and experiences of individuals from the nine categories covered by Section 75, including the needs and experiences of people with multiple identities.**

- 6.1** The Council holds statistical information, such as the Baseline Profile of Belfast, which is up-dated annually and used in the development of the Council's Corporate Planning process.
- 6.2** The Council carries out a major Public Consultation exercise every two years. The purpose of the survey is to find out what people in Belfast think about living in Belfast and Council services.
- 6.3** Each Council department conducts appropriate surveys and focus groups related to their own requirements.
- 6.4** The Council monitors uptake of services as part of its normal procedure but details and standards vary. Consultation with service users is also common with many services having user forums, customer panels etc.
- 6.5** The Council has developed a comprehensive monitoring system for all employees.

**Section 7: Information Provision, Access to Information and Services**  
**Please provide details of any initiatives/steps taken during the year, including take up, to improve access to services including provision of information in accessible formats.**

- 7.1** The Council is committed to providing information in alternative formats as stated in its Equality Scheme. Links have been made and arrangements are in place with key agencies and organisations to produce work in alternative formats and languages as required.
- 7.2** We have consulted on making all our documents available in alternative formats and have added plain English, easy read, digital daisy and signed video to our list of alternative formats.
- 7.3** The Council has adopted the BS 8300 standard in relation to compliance with the DDA 1995. It has also registered with Disability Action's Business Support Scheme. The Business Support Scheme is a partnership between companies and Disability Action in their approach towards good practice on disability issues. The aim of the scheme is to encourage companies to be forward thinking in their approach to disability issues within the workplace, to improve their services for people with disabilities and to acknowledge their efforts.
- 7.4** All Council Departments have been requested to include the text-phone number on their stationery and other publications.
- 7.5** The Council's major public documents, such as *City Matters*, are made available in alternative formats on request, i.e. in other languages, on disc or audio cassette, large print or in Braille, plain English, easy read, digital daisy and signed video.
- 7.6** Corporate Communications is committed to making the Council's website accessible. The Council's website is maintained at level AA of the W3C web content accessibility guidelines 1.0.
- 7.7** The Council's website is reviewed annually in relation to the plain English campaign. The Council's website plain English crystal mark has been maintained.
- 7.8** Signers have been employed at focus group meetings, seminars, interviews and launches as appropriate.

- 7.9** The council is committed to increasing our representation of disabled people in the workforce. We have successfully implemented the Human Resource actions identified in the Disability Action Plan for 2010/2011 and have facilitated 29 work placements. In addition we conducted 2 mock interview sessions with St Gerard's and Park School and also attended 4 site visits (in conjunction with other sections) and 1 careers fair. These involved talking to schools re job opportunities.
- 7.10** The council is currently working with partner organisations to develop and implement pre-employment training programmes and work experience for the long-term unemployed.
- 7.11** The Human Resources team is continuing to develop the community outreach initiatives and is currently working with the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) and the Youth Justice Agency (YJA) to provide work experience placements for ex-offenders who are required to carry out community service orders.
- 7.12** The Council has established an accessible 'council job' facility which will assist applicants in completing application forms.
- 7.13** The council is aware of the need to continue to develop robust monitoring systems. To this end, we are committed to improving our monitoring systems. A comprehensive monitoring system to monitor our employees across all Section 75 groups was introduced. We have completed two voluntary monitoring surveys and have established internal equality groups as a result of these surveys. We will conduct the monitoring of all our employees on a 2-3 yearly basis.

## **Section 8: Complaints**

**Please identify the number of Section 75 related complaints:**

- **received and resolved by the authority (including how this was achieved);**
- **which were not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant;**
- **which were referred to the Equality Commission.**

None received 2010/11

## **Section 9: Consultation and Engagement**

**Please provide details of the measures taken to enhance the level of engagement with individuals and representative groups during the year. Please outline any use of the Commission's guidance on consulting with and involving children and young people.**

- 9.1** The Council remains committed to effective consultation and conducts its consultation in accordance with the guidelines set out in its Equality Scheme, which lists over 200 groups and organisations with whom the Council consults during the EQIA Process. This AA list is updated annually.
- 9.2** The Council places fundamental importance on listening to and responding to the views of Belfast residents. Our last public consultation survey to find out what people in Belfast think about living in Belfast was conducted in 2010. The findings from this survey will help us to renew our service commitment and shape our priorities as we enter the corporate planning process for 2011-15.
- 9.3** The Council has developed its own set of Consultation Guidelines, informed by a consultation exercise with Section 75 groups to determine how they wished to be consulted. The major methods of engaging with Section 75 groups include focus groups, stakeholders groups, section 75 group panel, disability organisations, youth organisations and surveys. A new Consultation & Engagement Strategy and Action Plan will be developed in 2011/12 and will link with the forthcoming Community Development Strategy.
- 9.4** Consultation processes during this current year 2010/11 included:
- Face to face meetings with section 75 groups
  - Residents' survey
  - Employees' survey
  - Focus groups with stakeholders groups across Departments
  - Documentation circulation (section 75 screening forms, policy documents)
  - Seniors Fora consultation
  - Section 75 review
  - Consultation on DisabledGo website
  - Annual Disability event
  - Equality Consultative Forum (twice a year)
  - Youth Forum consultation

## **Section 10: The Good Relations Duty**

**Please provide details of additional steps taken to implement or progress the good relations duty during the year. Please indicate any findings or expected outcomes from this work.**

### **10.1 Good Relations Partnership**

The Council's work in the areas of equality and good relations is directed by the Good Relations Partnership, made up of one Councillor from each of the party political groups on the Council, plus representatives from the main churches, trade unions, business sector, minority ethnic groups and the Community Relations Council. The Partnership has the additional responsibility of managing the Council's work in delivering the Peace III Programme.

### **10.2 EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation – Peace III Programme: Belfast's Local Peace & Reconciliation Plan**

The Good Relations Partnership is also responsible for the delivery of the Council's substantial Peace III Programme, which aims to build positive relations and tackle sectarian and racist attitudes with a focus on conflict resolution and mediation at the local level.

In the current Phase of the Programme, over £6,000,000 has been allocated to Belfast. There are 23 programmes and 51 locally led projects under the following four themes:

#### ***Building Shared City Space***

To secure and expand the public places of the city, from which no citizen feels excluded and through which all citizens can travel freely and safely.

#### ***Transforming Contested Spaces***

To reduce intercommunity tensions and conflict and to support the integrated regeneration of those communities at the interface, having dealt with the legacies of conflict.

#### ***Building Shared Cultural Space***

To celebrate and give place to the different backgrounds and traditions of the citizens of Belfast and build a collective responsibility to ensure there is a place for identities other than our own.

#### ***Building Shared Organisational Space***

To build and sustain institutions which are fair and accessible to all, are

committed to change through dialogue and in which every citizen knows they are represented and can participate.

Belfast’s Peace & Reconciliation Action Plan (Peace Plan) is one of 14 plans led by local authorities in NI and the Border Counties and is 100% funded under Priority 1.1 of the PEACE III Programme for NI and the Border Counties of Republic of Ireland by the European Regional Development Fund. The aim of the Belfast Plan is to build positive relations at the local level and tackle sectarian and racist attitudes with a focus on conflict resolution and mediation at the local community level.

Phase I of the Belfast Peace Plan has been running since January 2009. To date the Plan has seen the establishment of over 81 new Partnerships with over 12,000 participants on the projects and over 60,000 people attending events supported through the programme.

The current Belfast PEACE Plan has significantly exceeded its key targets around both participation and partnership.

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Progress to Date</b>
Programmes & projects	22	22 Strategic programmes and 58 grant aided community led projects
Number of Participants	2,500	12,000+
Participation by ethnic minorities	5%	10%
Participation of young people	40%	54% of participants are under 25
No of organisations working in partnership on PIII Plan programmes	24	81 organisations involved in formal partnership working

The independent external evaluation commissioned by SEUPB found that the Good Relations Partnership included established Peace and Reconciliation policy partners. It stated that models of inter-agency collaboration were very evident from the Plan and that it was encouraging intra and inter community collaboration successfully. The evaluation also found extensive evidence of the bottom-up approach through the use of community bodies for delivery and community involvement in planning.

Among the many projects delivered over the last 18 months are:

- A mediation skills capacity building course

- Local dialogue initiatives and planning workshops on regenerating interface areas
- A citywide youth intervention programme based upon a citizenship model
- A community based sporting programme including diversity training and intervention elements
- A capacity building programme for individuals with no previous experience of peace building programmes to develop tools and strategies for engaging with statutory bodies and other agencies.

In addition to lead organisations delivering projects, we have identified over 600 other groups and organisations involved in projects as stakeholders. Outputs from the programme include over 80 publications and thousands of individual training sessions. Under this current phase of the Peace Plan, 41 posts have been created or supported within projects.

### **10.3 Peace III Programme – 2.2**

The Council has been successful in securing additional funding from the PEACE III Programme, under the theme which aims to build the key institutional capacities required for a shared society. The project, entitled *Growing a Shared City*, has a budget of £305k and will run until June 2012.

It is a learning and development programme which will explore the policy and capacity required in the Council and its partner agencies, to effect change in Belfast's divided society through collaboration and engagement. To date, 14 events in total have been delivered through the project, attracting over 500 participants.

Most notable was the series of Shared City Lunchtime Seminars, which ran from November 2010 to April 2011, offering attendees the opportunity to hear current thinking on various issues which impact on social development and economic growth.

### **10.4 Key Initiatives led by the Good Relations Unit**

In partnership with other organisations in the city, both statutory and voluntary, the Council has made considerable progress in some of the most difficult and sensitive areas of good relations work. Apart from our ongoing core work, we feel it is important to highlight some key current initiatives and innovative projects, led by our own Good Relations Officers.

The Good Relations Partnership met monthly and considered a wide range of items of business. The following summarises the key projects/events during the year.

### **10.5 Bonfires Management Project**

The Council continues to make progress on the issue of bonfires. In 2010, there were 42 groups involved in the programme, representing 55% of bonfires in Belfast. This compares with 8 groups in 2005 when the programme began, or 7% of bonfires in the city.

Some of the key statistics of the programme in 2010 are as follows:

- Call-outs recorded by the PSNI were again down on previous years. Fewer than a quarter of incidents (58 or 22.4%) were related to the 42 sites on the programme compared with 65 incidents for 33 sites in 2009 (19%).
- Call-outs from the NI Fire & Rescue Service were also down again. Of the 33 calls received on the 10 and 11 July, 21 only 2 related to bonfires and neither required any action taken. This compares with an overall 200 call-outs in 2007 and 80 in 2009.
- DRD Roads Service recorded a 50% reduction in clear-up and repair costs in 2010 compared with 2009, reporting a comparable saving of roughly £18,000
- 14 of the 42 sites (33%) participating on the programme did not burn any Nationalist or Republican flags or symbols in 2010, compared with 8 in 2009 (24%).

An independent evaluation report on the Bonfires Management Project was presented to the Good Relations Partnership in November 2010. Among other findings, the report noted that the programme has been the single biggest engagement tool for developing good relations work with working class loyalist communities, one of few investments in the people, culture and traditions of such communities, in areas where the 'peace dividend' is not apparent.

Among other things, spin-offs from the programme have resulted in increased up-take by these groups in related Council initiatives in good relations/community safety/interface intervention/mural removal work.

### **10.6 Interfaces work**

Good Relations Unit staff continue to be involved with both the Interface Working Group and the Belfast Conflict Resolution Consortium, in efforts

to support talks around beginning to discuss seriously removing or reducing interface divisions.

It is a stark health statistic that people who live in and around interfaces will die earlier than others in the city. Levels of deprivation remain high and many people in interface neighbourhoods are reliant on state benefits; current cuts in welfare will result in further marginalisation and exclusion.

The Council has established its own internal officer-based inter-Departmental Interface Working Group to co-ordinate our own work at a service delivery level. We are currently mapping our own service provision in all 88 recognised 'interface' areas throughout the City and are seeking to ensure that our services are delivered in a way that supports citizens in improvements in quality of life issues.

In particular, the Council is actively considering practical ways to support those areas that are seeking the removal of barriers. Central to this work will be the creation of a Council policy on interface areas as well as a better co-ordinated approach to Council service provision in these areas.

The Council is an active partner in the Interface Working Group, convened by the Community Relations Council.

## **10.7 Belfast Migrant Forum**

The Council's Migrant Forum continued to meet regularly throughout the 2010-2011 year. As part of our Migrant and Minority Ethnic Support Project, the Unit commissioned the development and delivery of a capacity building training programme to provide advice workers with the specialist knowledge required to advise migrants on related issues. The training generated significant interest and was delivered to over 40 participants. As part of the same project, the Good Relations Partnership agreed to print and distribute a directory documenting the services which were available in Belfast to migrant workers. That need had been identified during discussions with both migrant workers and with members of the Council's Migrant Forum, who were of the view that practitioners, community organisations and migrant workers would benefit from a guide which documented all of the services and projects available to migrants in Belfast.

Funding was also set aside to support the development and delivery of a training programme for post-primary schools, to build the capacity of young people and school staff to have the skills and strategies to challenge

sectarian and racist behaviour among their peer groups. Six schools and a youth group were involved in the 5-month project

### **10.8 Engagement with ex-combatants**

The Good Relations programme of the Council continues to support the work of the ex-prisoner communities in their process of transformation. The Good Relations Unit is represented on the Conflict Transformation Sub-Group of the *From Prison to Peace* programme, led by the Community Foundation of NI.

In addition our Grant Aid programme has supported a number of initiatives being led by ex-combatants such as the *Preventing a Return to Conflict* programme with young people, which was led by Teach Na Fáilte, An Eochair and Prisoners in Partnership. We also funded the *Barriers and Mindsets* programme being led by Coiste and the Blitz anniversary commemorations organised by the HUBB on the Shore Road. As well as this practical assistance, an additional important resource consists of on-going informal engagement and support and networking with individuals and organisations connected with ex-prisoners.

The Unit liaises regularly with officers from OFM/DFM and assisted with the recent jobs fair for ex-prisoners held by OFM/DFM in Conway Mill.

### **10.9 Cohesion, Sharing and Integration proposals**

The Good Relations Unit participated in the public consultation exercise organised by the OFDM/DFM on the proposed programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration and in October 2012 the Good Relations Partnership approved the Council's formal response to the proposal.

### **10.10 Junior Ministers' Group**

The Good Relations Manager represented the Council at a number of meetings chaired by the Junior Ministers, formerly termed the North Belfast Community Action Group. These have now extended to cover general community relations issues across the city and NI.

### **10.11 Faith Forum**

The Faith Forum, established at the instigation of the Good Relations Partnership to consider, not only Good Relations issues, but all matters relating to the Council, continued to meet on a quarterly basis. In the period concerned, the Forum discussed issues around the Council's work with

migrant & minority ethnic groups, volunteering and older people, and the Belfast District Policing Partnership.

#### **10.12 Good Relations Plan 2011/2013**

The Good Relations Partnership approved the updated Good Relations Plan for Belfast for the period 2011-2013, aligned to the Council's current corporate plan. The core assumption behind this refreshed Good Relations Plan and framework is that good relations and community cohesion remain fundamental elements within the city's future development. The framework will be retained for 3 years and the action plan element updated on a regular basis.

#### **10.13 Islamic Cultural Centre**

The Good Relations Partnership supported in principle a proposed major cultural centre for Muslims living in Belfast, to be sponsored by a benefactor in Saudi Arabia, on a large site between the Boucher and Lisburn Roads.

#### **10.14 Community Safety**

In order to continue to mainstream good relations principles into the wider work of the Council, the Good Relations Unit staff have continued to work closely with the staff of the Council's Community Safety Unit, in a number of key areas, including tension monitoring, youth engagement, anti-hate crime training and conflict mediation. A number of joint staff meetings have been held to reinforce this joint approach.

This year the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Hate Crime convention was held in the City Hall and staff from the Good Relations Unit worked with the Community Safety Unit in the planning of this event.

### **EUROPEAN ISSUES**

#### **10.15 European Union Open Days 2010**

The Chairman of the Good Relations Partnership visited Brussels in October 2010 on behalf of the Council to address one of the European Union Open Days events, organised by the European Commission. Councillor Máire Hendron outlined how the Council had used Peace III funding allocated via the Special European Union Programmes Body in the delivery of good relations and in the celebration of cultural diversity in Belfast.

#### **10.16 Eurocities Mixities Project**

In December 2010 the Good Relations Partnership approved the Unit's participation in the Eurocities MIXTIES Project and the Council's signing of the EUROCITIES Integrating Cities Charter. The objective of the MIXTIES project is to equip EU cities with methods by which local authorities, migrant community associations and other civil society organisations can work together to deliver a number of commitments, thus enhancing their future ability to achieve migrants' integration, with a focus on the areas of antidiscrimination and diversity.

## **TRAINING**

### **10.17 Training for Staff**

The Good Relations Unit continues to provide training for Council staff in equality and good relations. Over the year in question, 20 sessions were held and over 100 staff participated. Feedback has been very positive and comments received include:

*“The training was very relevant to my role in the Council”*  
*..“This training has helped me understand the Council’s commitment to good relations and how it is relevant to us all”.*

### **10.18 Diversity Awareness Programme for Employees**

The Good Relations Unit organised another Diversity Awareness Programme for officers. The aim of the programme is to encourage and increase awareness amongst officers of issues around diversity and to provide them with an opportunity to engage with representatives from other minority ethnic or minority faith-based communities.

As part of the programme, visits were undertaken to organisations such as the An Munia Tober Traveller Support Group, the Belfast Islamic Centre, the Jewish Synagogue and the Chinese Welfare Association. These visits provided officers with a greater understanding of the culture and traditions within other communities living in Belfast.

In addition, a half-day workshop entitled “Ending Hate Crime” was provided in order to provide participants with an understanding of the extent of bias, harassment and hate crimes within their community and a further half-day session raised awareness of migration issues, including the rights of migrant workers in Northern Ireland.

Feedback has been very positive and comments received include:

*“Great experience, without it I would never have had the opportunity to visit the Jewish Synagogue”*

*Visit and Training at An Munia Tober: “This was a fascinating discussion, could have gone on much longer”*

*“Extremely enjoyable and enlightening. Fascinating seemed to go too quickly”*

*Ending Hate in Our Communities: “This is key training for everyone, it made me think”.*

### **10.19 Training for external organisations**

The Good Relations Unit continued to provide Migration Awareness training and Ending Hate in our Communities training for external organisations. During the year 12 migration awareness training sessions and 10 Ending Hate in our Communities sessions were delivered, with over 250 participants attending.

Feedback has again been very positive and comments received include:

*“From this training I have more awareness of different levels of prejudice”*

What will you do differently as a result of this training: *“I will be more prepared to address racist behaviour / attitudes in others”*

*“I feel the workshop has equipped me with information to challenge some of the myths and stereotypes that abound about migrant workers”.*

During the year the Good Relations Unit developed a *Training for Trainers* programme with 12 people trained to deliver the migration awareness training.

### **10.20 NI Local Government Association (NILGA) Awards**

The Northern Ireland Local Government Awards ceremony was held at the La Mon Hotel in February 2011. This awards scheme acknowledges the best examples of service provision, new initiatives and personal commitment from both Members and officers in local government across Northern Ireland. The awards scheme also recognises innovation, individual commitment and highlights the best working practices in local government.

The Council's joint Good Relations & Equality and Human Resources Training Team won an award in the category of 'Workforce Equality & Good Relations Award'. The judging panel found evidence of best practice and innovation along with improved outcomes for users of Council services.

## **GRANT AID**

### **10.21 Good Relations Grant Aid Fund**

The Good Relations Grant Aid fund was opened on a quarterly basis in the 2010-2011 year. Four calls for applications were made and the Good Relations Partnership allocated a total of £371,975 in Good Relations Grant Aid funding to 155 groups (see enclosed list of awards).

The Grant Aid fund is always heavily over-subscribed and the range of groups supported illustrates the increasing importance of and dependence on the Council's grant aid scheme by the city's voluntary and community sector.

### **10.22 Summer Intervention Fund**

In May 2010, the Good Relations Partnership granted approval for the Good Relations Unit of the Council to take on the management and administration of the annual Summer Intervention Fund on behalf of the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister. The Community Safety Unit of the City Council also contributed an additional £6,000 from its Summer Splash scheme to be allocated under the same criteria.

Following assessment, 65 groups were recommended for funding of varying levels, according to the quality of their applications. The total amount of awarded by the Partnership was £103,500.

### **10.23 St. Patrick's Day Small Grants 2011**

The Good Relations Partnership had allocated funding of up to £33,374 to 93 groups for St. Patrick's events in March 2011.

### **10.24 Community Relations Week**

Community Relations Week, co-ordinated by the Community Relations Council, took place in 2010 from 27 April – 2 May. The Good Relations Unit organised an event to launch *Walking a line*, a photographic exhibition by Paul Hutchinson (Centre Director of Corrymeela) which was on display at the East exhibition space of City Hall. The exhibition included images from the margins/edge of Belfast, with the aim of exploring what Belfast looks like

from the margins and to encourage people to reflect on the various boundaries. The event included a facilitated conversation, poetry and music.

### **10.25 Good Relations Programme – Audit and Evaluation**

In line with the procedure required by the OFM/DFM, the Good Relations Unit commissioned an audit of good relations in Belfast and an evaluation of its current programme. After a standard procurement exercise, Blueprint Consulting were appointed, and a representative attended a meeting of the Good Relations Partnership in March 2011 to outline in detail the aims and objectives of the audit and evaluation process to be undertaken.

The audit and evaluation will seek to measure how the Council's Good Relations Programme had contributed to the development of a safe, welcoming, peaceful and open City through tackling sectarianism and racism. The work to be undertaken will aim to examine the difference the programme has made; to identify the added value and lessons learned; and to make recommendations regarding the allocation of future resources to support a further relevant programme.

## **CITY HALL MEMORABILIA ISSUES**

### **10.26 Irish artwork**

As part of our ongoing work to address the issue of balance within the City Hall, the Good Relations Unit commissioned a new piece of artwork to celebrate Irish history and heritage in Belfast. In a competitive process, artists were invited to submit original ideas and drawings and over 50 submissions from an international field were received, including proposals for art, sculpture and fabric installations. The successful artwork, painted by Keith Drury, was unveiled in the City Hall on 24 June 2010 at a very successful Irish evening event which included talks, music and dance.

### **10.27 Extension of the Somme Resolution**

The Good Relations Unit was involved in providing ongoing support to the Council's Memorabilia Working Group. As a result, the Council agreed to extend the text of the resolution, used at its annual Special Meeting on 1 July to mark the anniversary of the Battle of the Somme, to include the 16<sup>th</sup> Irish Division and other forces.

### **10.28 Donation of plaques**

Following the refurbishment of the City Hall, the Good Relations Unit was requested to examine the large number of plaques donated to the Council

over many years. We were involved in the selection of the plaques which were of greatest importance or which had the closest relationship to Belfast. As a result, the Council agreed to donate a number of regimental and naval plaques to the 38<sup>th</sup> Irish Brigade HQ (Thiepval) and the Royal Naval Association respectively. The Unit organised a formal handover of the naval plaques by the Lord Mayor to the Royal Naval Association on Trafalgar Day 21 October 2010.

### **10.29 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Belfast Blitz**

Work was undertaken throughout the year in question in preparation for a major exhibition and lecture by Dr Brian Barton on the Belfast Blitz. In liaison with the Department of Foreign Affairs in Dublin, firemen from Dublin, Dundalk and Drogheda attended the event and brought with them a vintage 1940s fire engine, one of those that had travelled north in April 1941 in support of their Belfast colleagues. This was a very successful event and received much local media coverage.

### **10.30 Centenaries Working Group**

The Good Relations Unit is also involved in providing support to the Council's Centenaries Working Group and in developing principles and a programme of events for the forthcoming Decade of Centenaries from 2012-2022. These will include the centenaries of a number of significant historical events, such as the Signing of the Ulster Covenant in 1912, the outbreak of World War I in 1914 and the Easter Rising of 1916. The Council is keen to see that these are marked in a manner which is appropriate and respectful and that such anniversaries should not be regarded as contentious.

## **EVENTS AND VISITS**

### **10.31 International Day of Peace**

As in the previous year, the Lord Mayor led the Council in marking the UN International Day of Peace on 21 September 2010 in a short ceremony in the City Hall. The Good Relations Partnership's recognition of the Day was intended to send out a powerful message that the Council condemns the use of violence and supports peacemaking. Information on International Peace Day was included on our Council's website and circulated to around 2,600 staff on that date, through our internal *Interlink* site.

### **10.32 Networking Event**

The Unit held a reception and networking event in December 2010 for all those groups from the voluntary and community sector who had worked with or received grant-aid from the Unit during the year.

### **10.33 Royal visits to City Hall**

The Good Relations Unit was involved in both the visit of Prince Charles in May 2010 and that of Prince William and (then) Catherine Middleton in March 2011. On both occasions the Royal visitors showed great interest in the work of the unit and spent time discussing issues with Unit staff.

### **10.34 Visits to City Hall**

The Unit has hosted a number of visits from international visitors who have expressed an interest in the Council's work in good relations. These have ranged from politicians to university students and included representatives from such countries as Norway, the United States, Poland and Russia.

### **10.35 Lord Mayor and civic events**

The Unit worked closely again with the Lord Mayor's Office and assisted in providing support for a number of high profile events. These included:

- the launch of Orangefest in July 2010;
- the launch of the Irish Churches' Affirmations on Migration, Diversity and Interculturalism in September 2010;
- the launch of a major report on the Hazelwood/Whitewell area in October 2010;
- the Jewish Hanukah event in December 2010; and
- an international Chinese New Year event in February 2011.

The Good Relations Unit supported a specific initiative of the Lord Mayor, Councillor Pat Convery, which was run over 3 mornings in March 2011. A range of groups representing the voluntary and community sectors were invited into the City Hall to meet the Lord Mayor and discuss a number of issues related to the promotion of good community and race relations in the city. The feedback from these sessions, which was very positive, will be used as part of the current evaluation of the work of the Unit.

## **Section 11: New/Revised Equality Schemes**

**If the Commission has notified you of its intention to request a new/revised scheme or formally requested a new/revised scheme and associated action plan, please outline below what progress has been made in this reporting period.**

- The Good Relations Manager and Equality and Diversity Officer (EDO) have completed a series of presentations on the new Equality and S75 guidelines to all 6 Departmental Management Teams (DMTs);
- DMTs have agreed that the Policy Officers' group will have the main responsibility in ensuring compliance with equality and good relations duties within departments;
- The role of the Equality Consultative Forum has been reviewed and revised and the Council's external consultee list revised and updated;
- Equality and good relations comments included in all Committee reports;
- An officer working group comprising Council officers with responsibility for equality and good relations was established to scope areas for the Audit of Inequalities and the group has produced some regional data for comparison with local council information.

## **Section 12: Additional Comments**

**Please provide any additional information/comments.**

n/a

Annual Report 1 April 2010 / 31 March 2011  
'Disability Duties' Questions

**1. How many action measures** for this **reporting period** have been

35

Fully  
Achieved?

4

Partially  
Achieved?

2

Not  
Achieved?

2. Please outline the following detail 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>2</sup>	Outcomes / Impact <sup>3</sup>
National <sup>4</sup>			
Regional <sup>5</sup>			
Local <sup>6</sup>	Annual Disability Event in June 2010 – Equality for people with disabilities in employment'	Launch of updates to Disability Action Plan. Number of speakers from a range of disability, employment and education organisations.	Increased awareness of Council's commitment to equality of opportunity for people with disabilities

<sup>2</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>3</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>4</sup> **National** : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments

<sup>5</sup> **Regional**: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level

<sup>6</sup> **Local** : Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora.

	Disability Access Group	Coordination and implementation of Disability Action Plan	Ongoing review and monitoring of disability issues for staff and service-users across council
	Ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled employees when required	Monitoring system regularly updated	More accessible working environment.
	Monitor job applicants, short-listed applicants and appointees with a disability		Accurate quantitative data
	Provide a minimum of 30 work experience placements for disabled people	Target achieved	Improved opportunities for people with disabilities
	Attend career fairs, interview skills training and site visits to promote job opportunities for disabled people	Increased number of applicants/employees with disabilities	Increased awareness of range of jobs available within council and qualifications required
	Service specific refresher training for departments	Attendance of e	Departments will have considered disability issues which are specific to the services they provide
	Develop policy re: transfer for people from 'Workable' scheme to 'open' employment	Agreed procedures in place through partnership approach and policy developed	Improved transfer opportunities
	Continue engagement with Government's new 'Workable' programme	Number of employees transferred into 'open' employment – pending	Improved opportunities

		outcome	
	Continue to monitor reasonable adjustments made for disabled employees	5 employees have had a reasonable adjustment made between April '10 and Mar '11. 1 employee has had more than 1 reasonable adjustment made	Monitoring system regularly updated
	Continue with delivery of disability awareness training to all outstanding employees	Training will commence for new starts and promotees from Oct 2011. 7 people trained in 2010/11	Improved knowledge of disability legislation and employees' roles and responsibilities
	Liaise with the Disablement Advisory Service re: future communication mechanisms for providing publicly advertised council vacancies to disability organisations	Increased number of disabled applicants	Effective communication mechanism in place
	Consider conducting a voluntary monitoring survey relating to Section 75 categories	Accurate employee information available	Accurate quantitative data
	Monitor reasonable adjustments made for disabled applicants	Reasonable adjustments monitored on database-2 interviews guaranteed	More accessible interview process
	Commence review of Community	Consider widening the	Increased awareness of

	Outreach Programme	scope of work experience scheme.  Wider community outreach programme being reviewed as part of the new diversity strategy	employment opportunities with BCC
	Promote council's Play for All summer scheme throughout our Community and Play facilities	100 children with a disability attended summer schemes in community and play centres across the city and were supported through the 'Play or All' project	Inclusive summer schemes providing educational and recreational activities for children of all abilities
	Facilitate access and participation at community facilities for people with learning and physical disability	The Community Facilities Unit continued to ensure that its 22 community centres were accessible to people with disabilities, providing free use of halls, access to office space, use of equipment and development programmes	Greater participation by people with learning and physical disability

	To ensure that all City events and venues staff have either completed Disability Awareness Training or completed relevant refresher courses	Disability training was reviewed as part of the personal development plan of all play workers and training provided as required.  Additional sign language training will be made available in 2011 for front-line staff	Continue to provide high levels of service delivery across all events
	Apply for Arts & Disability Equality Charter status (A standard for Arts Venues on disability access)	Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall staff working to meet strict criteria set for awards (achieved June 2011)	Clear standards of accessibility for disabled people accessing the arts
	Maintain Waterfront Access group	Group is continuing with ongoing programme of activity	Effective and focused forum for consultation on the Hall's services and arts issues specifically and related to people with disabilities
	Work with cultural groups to encourage involvement of their members with disabilities in all events	Five disability groups were involved in events during 2010/11	Higher level of participation from people with disabilities
	To continue to maintain high levels of access across all events	Drafted an audience participation plan to be implemented in 2011/12	Increasingly high levels of service delivery

	<p>Implement actions within the Safer Belfast plan, specifically under theme of Hate Crime</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unite against Hate convention held Sept 2010</li> <li>• Strategic policy framework launched at Convention</li> <li>• Hate Crime training delivered to community-based organisations through 'Healing through Remembering'</li> <li>• 5% reduction in reported incidents of hate crime</li> <li>• Financial assistance to advocacy programmes encouraging reporting of crime</li> <li>• Hate crime training completed</li> <li>• Supported advocacy work in</li> </ul>	<p>Increased engagement and representation in community safety issues by people with disabilities</p>
--	--	--	---

		LGBT sector, Roma community, Chinese/Polish bilingual Community Safety Scheme	
	Support delivery of local policing plans and community engagement with local policing through District Policing Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 public meetings per year in venues with suitable disability access across the city</li> <li>• DPP annual equality reports in accordance with Ni Policing Board guidelines</li> </ul>	To support access to local policing accountability mechanisms for people with disabilities
	Safety of Seniors events – targeting older people and ensuring access for those with disabilities	<p>Series of events held across the city in 2010/11</p> <p>Increase of 3% of people reporting that they feel safe in the City Centre (Council consultation)</p>	Reducing crime, fear of crime at a local level
	Implement action plan for improving services for older people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Seniors Convention held</li> </ul>	

		<p>in 2010 on topic of health &amp; well-being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Seniors Info' directory and website updates</li> <li>• Free bus service for older people travelling to Roselawn Cemetery – includes wheelchair users</li> <li>• GIVE volunteer project extended to include older people with disabilities</li> </ul>	
	Produce and distribute promotional materials for the Home Safety Check Scheme targeting the visually impaired	Promotional materials distributed through various centres throughout 2010/11	Improved scheme – more targeted and accounts for needs of older people and people with disabilities
	Provide support for Glenveagh School Health Day-for parents, carers and families of pupils who have severe learning difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council stand present on the Health Day – more than 200 visitors</li> <li>• HAP monies to</li> </ul>	Raise awareness of support available from council

		assist with transport for those pupils from outside Belfast	
	Raise awareness of the facilities for disabled people at council public toilets through programme of advertising and promotion to include promotion of RADAR keys for all Belfast City Council toilets	<p>Provided annual information updates to all citizens of Belfast using City Matters, website and RADAR national publication</p> <p>Advertisement placed in RADAR magazine and promotion on Council website – 53 RADAR keys issues 2010/11</p>	Increased awareness of accessibility of public toilets
	Promote facilities at Recycling Centres specifically designed for use by disabled people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Easy Access’ provision at recycling centres with revised signage installed at centres</li> <li>• Promotional DVD produced</li> </ul>	Increased awareness and use of Recycling Centres by people with and without disabilities
	Outreach programme to disability organisations and groups to better understand their particular needs	Over 50 meetings facilitated with disability groups, schools and individuals	Increased customer satisfaction

	Provide site visits to Cleansing Services on request by disability organisations	No requests received in 2010/11	Improved information on accessibility
	Continue to support council's Disability Access Group providing advice on access audits etc...to council properties	Work of technical sub-group on physical access completed.	Improved access to council buildings; sharing of knowledge and wider promotion of access issues
	Ensure that technical staff are fully updated on current building regulations concerning access to and use of buildings including DDA training	All technical staff have attended training on Part R and DDA – refresher training is ongoing	All building work within Belfast is compliant with DDA building regulations and technical staff are fully trained

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

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Contract with Disability Action to provide Disability Awareness Training to staff across Council	Training delivered to all Council staff	All new staff will receive Disability awareness training and refresher training will be provided to all current staff after three years
2	Promote Disability Awareness as part of the induction programme for Councillors	Improved Induction training for Councillors	Improved understanding among Councillors
3	Ensure that all frontline staff are specifically trained on providing services for persons with disabilities	Specific training sessions provided including training in sign language	Positive attitudes, skills and confidence developed for staff working with disabled people

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	Review Council's Intranet site to ensure accessibility	Regular reviews of site re: accessibility	Improved accessibility re: website
2	Include regular features about disability in City Matters (city-wide magazine for residents of Belfast)	4 articles featuring disability per year in City Matters	Better informed residents
3	Include regular features in Intercomm (internal staff magazine)	3 articles per year in Intercomm	Better informed staff
4	Review and improve the Belfast Waterfront Hall access Guide in respect of new duties	Guide updated and available in different formats	Improved information on access to Belfast Waterfront Hall

5.	Apply for Arts and Disability Charter	Development of targets and regular progress reports. Charter launched 2010.	Clear standards of accessibility for disabled people accessing the Arts
6.	Renewal of contract with DisabledGo	Continually developing accessibility information online	Improved accessibility information for visitors and residents

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

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Develop an action plan for improving services to older people in the City including those with Disabilities	Hosting of a Convention for Older People 27 <sup>th</sup> May 2010 Health & Well-Being events	Improved services for older people
2	Support delivery of local policing plans and community engagement with local policing through District Policing Partnership	Held 12 public meetings per year in venues with suitable disabled access	Supported access to meetings
3	Delivery of Safety of Seniors events	Series of events targeting seniors and disabled persons across the city	Reducing crime and fear of crime at a local level amongst older people
4	Continuation of the synergistic programme for Grove Well Being Centre (GWBC)	GWBC still working in partnership with Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and Library Boards. Currently delivering courses with a Council provided coach.	Greater opportunity for disabled customers and patients to participate in leisure services in an environment that promotes positive images to disabled people
5	Development of class programmes in centres to encourage participation from disabled customers.	Ongoing.	Increased attendance at centres and greater participation by disabled people and representative groups.

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			
2			
3			

3. Please outline what action measures have been **partly achieved** as follows:

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones <sup>7</sup> / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
1				
2	Increase the number of work placements for disabled people	No of available work placements for people with disabilities increases	Improved job experience	Discussions ongoing with Orchardville Society – no final decision reached
3	In 2010/11 council will undertake an initial feasibility study into the location of a Changing Places facility.	Construction of Changing Places facility within council building	Improved city-centre access and connectivity for Belfast	Study not yet completed. Outline costs submitted for consideration under Council Capital programme
4	Investigate facilities at recycling centres to increase use by people with disabilities. All new staff receive training in this area	All staff trained and programme of improvement implemented	Improved services and increased access for people with disabilities	3 out of 4 centres have introduced improvements e.g. sunken bottle banks - ongoing

<sup>7</sup> **Milestones** – Please outline what part progress has been made towards the particular measures; even if full output or outcomes/ impact have not been achieved.

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

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1	Deliver bespoke training on disability issues specific to particular venues	Postponed until 2011
2	Provide work placements in Health and Environmental Services for one person with disabilities per year	Decant of EHS staff between council buildings in 2010/11 – rescheduled for 2011/12
3		
4		

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

Disability Access Group meets every two months and sub-groups re: Annual Disability Event; Communications etc.as required.

Bi-Annual Equality Consultative Forum; face-to-face meetings; DisabledGo Steering Group meetings; publication of documentation on internet and written correspondence to representative disability organisations; Community Forum on the DisabledGo website.

(b) Quantitative

Customer Survey data collected and used by Council to measure its overall success in the delivery of its services. Employee Survey data collected and used by Council to inform internal organisational development work.

6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions, has your organisation either:
- made any **revisions** to your plan during the reporting period or
  - taken any **additional steps** to meet the disability duties which were **not outlined in your original** disability action plan / any other changes?

No

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

A new Disability Action Plan will be launched alongside the Revised Equality Scheme.