

# **Disability Strategy and Action Plan**

**2015 – 2018**

**Belfast City Council**

**May 2015**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Background

Belfast City Council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity in carrying out our services and functions and in the leadership we provide.

This Strategy is informed by the UNCRPD and outlines the strategic themes and priorities required to address the identified inequalities experienced by disabled people and to tackle the barriers that disabled people continue to face in our society.

The Action Plan shows what we will actually do to improve the lives of children and adults with disability visiting, working or living in Belfast.

## Scope of the Strategy

This Strategy is intended to cover all types of disability and addresses children, young people and adults and, where indicated, the needs of families and carers of people with disabilities.

It is important that the diversity of disability is recognised and that we acknowledge that there are people who will require a greater degree of support than others. All should have the chance to access the goods, services and facilities provided by the council and to participate fully in the social, economic, political and cultural life of Belfast.

We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity in carrying out our services and functions and in the leadership we provide.

We are committed to meeting and proactively seek ways to go beyond the statutory legal requirements that include Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Disability Discrimination Order 2007

## Vision and Purpose

Our vision is:

***To ensure that the council, working with communities and stakeholders, takes a lead role in improving quality of life now and for future generations of disabled people in Belfast by making the***

***city and its neighbourhoods better places to live in, work in, invest in, study in and visit.***

The purpose of the Strategy is to set out a high level framework to give coherence and guidance to the council’s activities across specific areas of policy that impact on disabled people.

The development of the Disability Strategy enables us to further promote our work regarding accessible services, activities, facilities and buildings for disabled people.

## **Strategic Themes and Priorities**

We have drawn up **six** key strategic themes. All of the themes require a strategic approach across the council and actions are developed under each strategic priority. We therefore propose the development of ten Strategic Priorities.

## **Strategic Themes and Priorities**

<b>Theme 1- Participation and Active Citizenship</b>	
<b>Strategic Priority 1</b>	Increase disabled people’s opportunity to influence council policies and programmes including the delivery of this Strategy and the Action Plan.
<b>Theme2 – Awareness Raising</b>	
<b>Strategic Priority 2</b>	Increase awareness among disabled people of their rights and opportunities through a range of communication activities.
<b>Strategic Priority 3</b>	Develop, in partnership with disabled people, a range of awareness raising activities, including those aimed at the general public, to challenge the negative perceptions regarding disabled people.
<b>Theme 3 - Accessibility</b>	
<b>Strategic Priority 4</b>	Eliminate the barriers disabled people face in accessing the physical environment, goods and services so that disabled people can participate fully in all areas of life.
<b>Strategic Priority 5</b>	Increase the level of accessible / inclusive communications so that disabled people can access information as independently as possible and make informed choices.
<b>Theme 4 - Independent Choice and Control</b>	
<b>Strategic</b>	Increase the level of choice, control and freedom that disabled people

<b>Priority 6</b>	have in their daily lives.
<b>Theme 5 - Employment &amp; Employability</b>	
<b>Strategic Priority 7</b>	Work towards increasing the number of disabled people entering all levels of employment and safeguard the rights of our disabled employees.
<b>Strategic Priority 8</b>	Increase opportunities for disabled people to understand the employment opportunities at Belfast City Council by developing a suite of employability outreach projects
<b>Strategic Priority 9</b>	Increase the opportunities for disabled employees and people on work placements to attain skills through access to appropriate training.
<b>Theme 6 - Being Part of the Community</b>	
<b>Strategic Priority 10</b>	Improve access to arts, leisure and other cultural activities so that disabled people can be part of the community.

## **Action Plan**

An Action Plan has been developed to give effect to the Strategy by co-ordinating work across the council departments (see pages 24-38).

## **Monitoring, Reporting, Governance and Delivery**

A monitoring framework will be developed during the first year of the strategy.

# THE DRAFT STRATEGY

## 1. Introduction

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) is a comprehensive human rights treaty with an explicit social development dimension. It reaffirms that all persons with all types of disabilities must enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms. It does not create new rights for disabled people but helps member countries to have a better understanding of existing rights. It identifies areas where adaptations have to be made so that persons with disabilities can effectively exercise their rights.

The United Kingdom ratified the UNCRPD on 8 June 2009. As part of the commitment to implementing the UNCRPD, the NI Executive has developed a Strategy to Improve the Lives of People with Disabilities; this includes a three year action plan for the period 2014-2017. The Executive's Strategy was shaped by the recommendations of the Promoting Social Inclusion (PSI) Working Group published in a report in 2009; this identified the key challenges in terms of improving the lifetime opportunities of disabled people and highlighted the gaps in current service provision.

Belfast City Council has therefore developed this Disability Strategy to make clear our shared vision for disabled people and to direct the future development of council policies. In addition, we will continue to work with our partners and other stakeholders in disability related organisations.

Each department in the council has specific roles and responsibilities that impact on disabled people, their families and carers. This Strategy does not change the nature of these roles and responsibilities, but seeks to create a more cohesive approach across all departments.

The Disability Strategy will be the subject of extensive consultation to ensure that disabled people have every opportunity to help inform the Strategy and the Action Plan. Details of how to respond are set out on page 22 below.

## 2. Overview

### 2.1 Prevalence of disability

The term disability covers such a wide range and combination of conditions that there is no standard method or single source of information which can provide accurate data about the number of people with a disability in NI. Whilst the creation of a register to provide this information has often been proposed, it is unlikely that all disabled people would be in favour of it. The alternative, for researchers and those responsible for planning disability services, has been a reliance on a number of surveys, which provide estimated numbers of disabled people and on sub groups within the relevant survey.

In 1992 the prevalence rate for adults in NI was estimated at 17%, higher than any other region of the UK. The national average prevalence rate was estimated at 14%. The differential is often ascribed to a number of factors such as the impact of the 'Troubles', higher rates of conditions such as Multiple Sclerosis, and deprivation.

More recently the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) in its 2007 report, covering both adults and children, provided the following headline estimates:

- **18%** of all people living in private households in NI have some degree of disability. When broken down this means that **21% of adults and 6% of children have a disability;**
- **37%** of NI households include at least one disabled person; **20%** of these contain more than one disabled person;
- There is a higher prevalence of disability among adult females with **23% of females** indicating that they had some degree of disability compared with **19% of adult males;**
- Prevalence **increases with age:** ranging from **5% among young adults to 67% among those who are older (85+);**
- Male prevalence rates are only higher than female rates amongst the youngest adults (16 to 25): **6% of males compared with 4% of females;**

- **8%** of boys aged 15 and under were found to have a disability, compared with **4%** of girls of the same age.

The 2011 Census showed that 23.5% of residents of Belfast (including those living in areas which will become part of the Belfast City Council area in 2015) reported that they had a long term health problem or disability which limits their day to day activities to some degree, compared with 20.7% of the population of NI as a whole.

NI's over 65 population is set to increase sharply during the next ten years – and more than double in number over the next fifty years. This projected increase will mean that the number of people over 65 could rise by 22% by 2050. It is widely recognised that disability increases with age; the 2011 Census showed that 62% of those aged 85 and over have a long term health problem or disability which limits their day to day activities a lot compared with 36% of those aged 75-79. The number of disabled people will therefore grow significantly in the next decade and beyond.

## **2.2 Needs of disabled people**

We recognise that not all disabled people are alike. They have specific needs, priorities and perspectives based on their personal circumstances, including the type and level of support required, education, sex, age, sexuality, and ethnic or cultural background.

People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds—in particular newly arrived migrants—can be particularly vulnerable.

Disabled people are likely to experience multiple disadvantages. Lack of accessible information, communication difficulties or cultural sensitivities and differences can create barriers to services and support.

Disabled people are more likely to experience:

- Relatively poor health;
- Lower levels of participation in education, training and employment;
- Social exclusion;
- Lack of access to goods, services and facilities ;
- Ongoing discrimination.



Compared with the non-disabled population, disabled people are also more likely to experience disadvantage in their daily lives. This is evidenced in the fact that they are:

- Less likely to reach their maximum educational potential;
- More likely to be unemployed;
- More likely to experience poverty;
- More likely to experience discrimination in relation to housing, employment, transport and leisure services.

These factors can have a significant and lifelong impact on the health and wellbeing of disabled people.

### **2.3 Legislative context**

It is acknowledged that significant changes and positive developments have been achieved over the past two decades in terms of defining and strengthening the rights of disabled people and promoting equality and freedom from discrimination for disabled people.

The **Disability Discrimination Act (1995)** was a landmark piece of legislation focussed on disabled people. It effectively enshrined, in law, disabled people's rights to participate in civil society by placing duties on employers, service providers, landlords, schools and colleges. As a piece of 'rolling' legislation, the final part came into effect in 2004.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 was further strengthened by the **Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006** and required public authorities, when carrying out their statutory functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- Encourage the participation of disabled people in public life.

Section 75 of the **Northern Ireland Act 1998** requires all public bodies in carrying out their functions relating to NI to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:

- Persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;

- Men and women generally;
- Persons with a disability and persons without; and
- Persons with dependants and persons without.

### **3. Vision and Purpose**

#### **3.1 Vision**

The vision of the UNCRPD is defined in Article 1 as:

*To promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.*

The Executive's Strategy incorporates this vision with that articulated by the PSI Working Group:

*To promote a future where disabled people contribute to and benefit from the cultural, social, political and economic life of Northern Ireland on an equal basis as others.*

Taking account of these statements and the council's corporate vision statement we have developed a vision for this strategy:

***To ensure that the council, working with communities and stakeholders, takes a lead role in improving quality of life now and for future generations for disabled people in Belfast by making the city and its neighbourhoods better places to live in, work in, invest in, study in and visit.***

#### **3.2 Corporate objectives**

This Strategy also reflects the council's corporate objectives included within its Corporate Plan 2015-16:

- Investing to deliver;
- Delivering for local people;
- Improving well-being and reducing inequalities;
- A liveable city;

- A sustainable economy;
- Improving community relations;
- Active and empowered citizens;
- Vibrant neighbourhoods;
- A regenerated city centre;
- Partnership working; and
- Organisational improvement and change.

The developing Belfast Agenda outlines an emerging vision for our city and builds upon the themes outlined above. The Belfast Agenda will support a process which will help us work together with other agencies and communities to plan and deliver better services which will make a difference to people's lives.

### **3.3 Purpose**

The purpose of this Strategy is to:

- provide guidance and increase understanding across council about the needs of disabled people so that our activities are designed and delivered with consideration of their impact on disabled people
- enhance our services so that they provide better outcomes for disabled people
- improve the opportunities for people with disabilities to contribute to council business;
- give visibility to disability issues and ensure they are included in the development and implementation of all public policy that impacts on people with disability;
- provide leadership toward greater inclusion of people with disability.

## **4. Strategic Themes and Priorities**

Taking into account the provisions of the UNCRPD and the councils corporate vision statement we have developed ten strategic priorities grouped under six strategic themes.

### **4.1 Theme 1. – Participation and Active Citizenship**

#### **Strategic Priority 1**

**Increase disabled people’s opportunity to influence council policies and programmes including the delivery of this Strategy and the Action Plan.**

The UNCRPD Preamble states that persons with a disability should have the opportunity to be actively involved in decision-making processes about policies and programmes, including those directly concerning them.

The PSI Report identified that, in striving for better service delivery and improved citizen outcomes, there is a need to design and provide services in a value-added way. For disabled people, this means involvement in planning at an early stage so that services can be more personalised and tailored in a way that meets their needs and makes a real difference in their lives.

We are also committed to ensuring that disabled people are actively involved in the decision making process of the council and the development of this Strategy.

We already have in place a Consultative Forum with active participation from organisations representing disabled people. In developing the Action Plan we have considered how we can extend their involvement.

### **4.2 Theme2 – Awareness Raising**

#### **Strategic Priority 2**

**Increase awareness among disabled people of their rights and opportunities through a range of communication activities.**

The PSI Report identified the need for increased awareness of services and programmes that are available for people with disabilities and in

particular children with disabilities and their families. There is a need for disabled people to be made more aware of their rights and how they can exercise those rights. It is essential that when communicating information about services, programmes and rights it is done in a way that is accessible to everyone.

We recognise that we can do more to make disabled people aware of how our services and programmes can support them. In developing the Action Plan we have considered how this can be achieved, particularly in terms of communication with disabled children.

Over the next 3 years, council services will measure and evaluate the difference made to children and young people's lives, enabling children and young people to be:

- i. aspiring, assertive, empowered, enterprising and active citizens, and;
- ii. believe Belfast is where they are equal, safe and prosperous and enjoy it as a place to study, work, live and visit: 'a place to be'.

### **Strategic Priority 3**

**Develop, in partnership with disabled people, a range of awareness raising activities, including those aimed at the general public, to challenge the negative perceptions regarding disabled people.**

Article 8 of the UNCRPD states that countries must raise awareness of the rights, capabilities and contributions of people with disabilities. Countries must take action to challenge stereotypes and prejudices relating to people with disabilities through campaigning, education, media and awareness-raising programmes.

We understand that negative attitudes and perceptions about the lives of disabled people can significantly add to the barriers people with disabilities already face in their everyday lives. Hate crime, bullying and harassment are the outcome of negative attitudes towards disabled people, and therefore we must reinforce the message that this is not acceptable. We are committed to finding innovative ways to raise awareness of the positive contributions disabled people make in all areas of our society and to improve attitudes towards people with disabilities.

Through our Disability Action Plan we have already put in place a range of disability awareness training programmes for our employees and, in

developing the Action Plan; we have considered how this work might be extended beyond the council workforce.

### **4.3 Theme 3 - Accessibility**

#### **Strategic Priority 4**

**Eliminate the barriers disabled people face in accessing the physical environment, goods and services so that disabled people can participate fully in all areas of life.**

Article 9 of the UNCRPD states that people with disabilities have the right to access all aspects of society on an equal basis with others including the physical environment, transportation, information and communications, and other facilities and services provided to the public.

The PSI Report identified that disabled people should be able to pursue whatever activities they choose within an appropriate and supportive environment and that, in particular, providers of arts and sporting venues should take more proactive steps in reaching out to disabled people.

We have already undertaken initiatives to ensure that disabled people are safe and supported when participating in activities, for example, at our parks, leisure and community centres. In developing the Action Plan we have considered whether more can be done to reach out to disabled people and also what we can do to influence other service providers to increase accessibility to their facilities and services.

#### **Strategic Priority 5**

**Increase the level of accessible / inclusive communications so that disabled people can access information as independently as possible and make informed choices.**

Article 21 of the UNCRPD states that people with disabilities have the right to express themselves, including the freedom to give and receive information and ideas through all forms of communication, including through accessible formats and technologies, sign languages, Braille, augmentative and alternative communication, mass media and all other accessible means of communication.

The PSI Report emphasised that information providers should be proactive in meeting the information needs of disabled people and

should take steps to make disabled people more aware of the accessible services that are available.

We routinely make information available in alternative, accessible formats and ensure that the availability of such formats is widely publicised. In developing the Action Plan we have considered methods of improving the availability of alternative formats, particularly in terms of the timeliness of such communications.

## **4.4 Theme 4 - Independent Choice and Control**

### **Strategic Priority 6**

**Increase the level of choice, control and freedom that disabled people have in their daily lives.**

Article 19 of the UNCRPD states that government should recognise the equal right of all persons with disabilities to live in the community, with choices equal to others.

The PSI Report considered the various issues that affect disabled people at all stages of their lives and noted that many of these issues differ during different periods of life. However, the Report concluded that there is one central message that permeates everything – the need to extend to people with disabilities greater control in the decisions that affect their lives. Having the ability to choose from a number of options as opposed to needing to accept the only one that is available is a vital part of being an autonomous, independent person. Good customer service depends very much on targeting the individual and responding to their needs in an appropriate way. Service providers should therefore ensure public services are person-centred in their approach and focused on the rights and inclusion of all citizens, including disabled people. They should also provide support so that disabled people can empower themselves to make choices and to take control over matters affecting them personally.

We have already developed initiatives which provide residents with more options in terms of the way they receive and benefit from council services.

Council seeks, both through partnerships and its own services, to provide opportunity for all ages. For example as a supporting partner with Belfast Health City ‘Child friendly’ initiative, through Council’s own Youth Forum and Age friendly Belfast.

## **4.5 Theme 5 - Employment & Employability**

### **Theme 5 - Employment & Employability**

#### **Strategic Priority 7**

**Work towards increasing the number of disabled people entering all levels of employment and safeguard the rights of those disabled people already in work.**

#### **Strategic Priority 8**

**Increase opportunities for disabled people to understand the employment opportunities at Belfast City Council by developing a suite of employability outreach projects.**

Article 27 of the UNCRPD relates directly to work and employment and recognises the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others.

The PSI Report recognised the need to improve the opportunities for disabled people in the labour market by providing the appropriate support, advice and skills development to enhance employability; and obtain, retain and progress in employment while also supporting employers with the provision of targeted information and practical guidance.

Disabled people of working age are almost three times more likely to be economically inactive than non-disabled people (56.2% compared with 19.3%). The Labour Force Survey showed that, in 2014, just over one third (38.0%) of working age disabled people were in employment compared to 76.4% of non-disabled people.

Employment and employability are issues which require a number of departments to work together to support people with disabilities to gain and retain employment and work placement opportunities. We have initiated a range of programmes to increase the number of disabled people within our workforce and, in developing the Action Plan; we have considered how we can work with our partners to increase opportunities for disabled people to gain employment and workplace opportunities.



## **Strategic Priority 9**

**Increase the opportunities for disabled employees and people on work placements to attain skills through access to appropriate training.**

Article 24 of the UNCRPD relates to education and includes the right of access to an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning.

The PSI Report recognised the importance of encouraging and supporting disabled people to progress whilst in employment. Disabled people are more than twice as likely not to hold any qualifications compared to non-disabled people (32% compared with 13.4%). The Labour Force Survey showed that, in 2014, only 8.4% of disabled people held a degree or equivalent qualification, compared with 23.7% of non-disabled people.

We recognise that an emphasis on qualifications alone has the potential to restrict opportunities and choice for disabled people. Supported work placements, volunteering, mentoring and community learning are additional non-qualification based forms of learning that should have recognition in developing the skills and confidence of people with disabilities in gaining employment.

In developing the Action Plan, we have also set out actions to promote education, vocational training and employment opportunities as well as safeguarding the employment opportunities of those already in work.

## **4.6 Theme - Being Part of the Community**

### **Strategic Priority 10**

**Improve access to arts, leisure and other cultural activities so that disabled people can be part of the community.**

Article 30 of the UNCRPD recognises the right of disabled people to take part on an equal basis with others in cultural life.

Disabled people have indicated that being part of the community means lots of different things and that some people might need support to participate in sport, recreation and leisure activities. Research has

shown that there need to be more places in the community where disabled people can participate in the social and cultural life of the community.

We have already undertaken an extensive programme to make our facilities accessible and supportive of disabled people but, in developing the Action Plan, we have considered how we might extend these principles to other aspects of the social and cultural life of communities.

## **5. Monitoring, Reporting, Governance and Delivery**

### **5.1 Statistics & Data**

The council is committed to ensuring that data sources are identified and developed to measure the outcomes of this Strategy and the Action Plan. Where data sources are not readily available or up-to-date we will work to establish mechanisms to put this data in place. The data will be available publicly (within the constraints of Data Protection legislation) so that a range of partners and organisations can access the information and use it to help inform their policies, services and programmes

### **5.2 Monitoring Framework**

A monitoring framework will be developed during the first year of the Strategy reflecting our overall strategic approach, ensuring that progress is being made against our strategic priorities, and that our actions are making a difference.

All departments will be expected to report annually on the actions they have taken to support the delivery of the strategy and measurement of its impact on the lives of disabled people. The Equality and Diversity Officer will coordinate this work.

### **5.3 Governance**

All work relating to disability is organised through the inter-departmental diversity steering group. The diversity steering group key activities include:

- Establishing key themes to progress on an annual basis;
- Communicating key disability themes across all departments;
- Providing leadership and direction for the delivering of the Disability Strategy and ensuing new Action Plan;
- Ensuring departmental delivery of the Disability Strategy and relevant aspects of disability agenda;
- Agreeing annual objectives and targets;
- Reporting to the relevant committees.

## **6. Consultation**

There are a number of ways we consulted on the development of the council's Disability Strategy.

### **6.1 Consultation Events**

Consultation event held in Belfast City Hall in 2014. In addition the Strategy and Action Plan was presented to the council's consultative forum.

### **6.2 Meet with Us**

We offered opportunities to meet the public or focus groups.

### **6.3 By Post, Email or On-Line**

A consultation questionnaire was developed and posted to all stakeholders.

### **6.4 Availability of Other Formats and Assistance**

The document was available in a range of formats including Braille, easy read, non-formatted text document and audio. We can make it available in other formats; please let us know your requirements.

### **6.5 Legislation**

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with access to information legislation: these are chiefly the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice (section 45) with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence. In view of this, it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information, we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances.

For further information about confidentiality of responses please contact

the Information Commissioner's Office on 028 9026 9380 or email [ni@ico.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ni@ico.gsi.gov.uk) (or see their website at [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)).

**BELFAST CITY COUNCIL DISABILITY STRATEGY ACTION PLAN**

**ACTION PLAN 2015– 2018**

**Theme 1: PARTICIPATION AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP**

<b>Strategic priority</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>Action Framework</b>	<b>Actions / Targets</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Strategic Priority 1 Increase disabled people’s opportunity to influence council policies and programmes including the delivery of this strategy and action plan	Improved opportunities for disabled people to engage with and influence policy makers	Number of disabled people participating in meetings, events and consultation processes  Number of changes made to policies as a result of their input	1.1 Consultative Forum	1.1.1 Review membership of consultative forum and increase representation of disabled people and representing organisations ( DDO)	2016	EDO
				1.1.2 Arrange a minimum of 2 Forum meetings per year and additional meetings as required(DDO)	Annually	EDO
				1.1.3 Consult and engage with the sector as part of the ‘Belfast Conversation’ to help shape the emerging Belfast Agenda – a single, long-term strategic plan for the city.	Annually	Corporate Policy & Strategic Planning
			1.2 Disability Access Group – Waterfront Hall and Ulster Hall	1.2.1 Consult and engage with Access Group as the Waterfront Hall extension development unfolds	Annually	Development Department
				1.3.2 Develop key issues paper for Council Departments on disability related issues and provide annual update	Annually	EDO

Strategic priority	Outcomes	Performance Measures	Action Framework	Actions / Targets	Year	Responsibility
			1.4 Specialist disability event	1.4.1 Facilitate biennial event on a current theme linked to Council priorities( DDO)	2016	EDO and HR
				1.4.2 Evaluate feedback and develop an action plan to improve disability initiatives, where appropriate	2016	EDO and HR

#### Theme 2: AWARENESS RAISING

Strategic priority	Outcomes	Performance Measures	Action Framework	Actions / Targets	Year	Responsibility
<b>Strategic Priority 2</b> Increase awareness among disabled people of their rights and opportunities through a range of communication activities	Disabled people are aware of how Council services can support them	Feedback from disabled people and disability groups on usefulness of information	2.1 Published information	2.1.1 Provide information to disabled people on aspects of Council services which specifically affect them through: minimum of 4 articles per year in City Matters; minimum of 2 targeted information leaflets per year; accessible information on the Council website ( DDO)	Annually	Corporate Communications/Lead Communicators

				2.1.2 Include disability related information in staff e-briefings, staff newsletters/ magazines, staff meetings, email, intranet, internet (internal) (DDO)	Annually	EDO/ HR
				2.1.3 Develop shared bulletin board to post disability related material (internal) (DDO)	2015	HR/Corporate Communications
				2.1.4 Submit Annual Progress Report to Disability Access Group, Consultative Forum, Joint Negotiating Committee, Corporate Management Team, Good Relations Partnership, Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and the Council (internal process) ( DDO)	Annually	EDO/HR
				2.1.5 Submit annual progress report to the Equality Commission for NI, THE Council's Consultative Forum and put on website (external)( DDO)	Annually	EDO
Strategic priority	Outcomes	Performance Measures	Action Framework	Actions / Targets	Year	Responsibility



<b>Strategic Priority 3</b> Develop, in partnership with disabled people, a range of awareness raising activities, including those aimed at the general public, to challenge the negative perceptions regarding disabled people	Public attitudes to disabled people are more positive	Disability event action plan to include specific performance measures	3.1 Specialist disability event	3.1.1 Facilitate biennial event on a current theme linked to Council priorities ( DDO)	2016	EDO and HR
		% of images in printed documents featuring positive images of disabled people		3.1.2 Evaluate event and incorporate learning into future events/activities (with particular attention to challenging negative perceptions) ( DDO)	2016	EDO and HR
			3.2 City Matters	3.2.1 Include articles related to disability and ensure photography of disabled people is included	Annually	Corporate Communications/Lead Communicators
			3.3. Positive imaging in documents	3.3.1 Printed documents to feature positive images of disabled people	Annually	Corporate Communications/Lead Communicators

**Theme 3: ACCESSIBILITY**

Strategic priority	Outcomes	Performance Measures	Action Framework	Actions / Targets	Year	Responsibility
<p><b>Strategic Priority 4</b> Eliminate barriers disabled people face in accessing the physical environment and services so that disabled people can participate fully in all areas of life</p>	<p>Disabled people can participate fully in all activities facilitated by the council and are encouraged to do so</p>	<p>% of activities and events which can be fully accessed by disabled people</p> <p>Changes made to facilities, activities and events to increase accessibility for disabled people</p>	<p>4.1 Access to facilities, activities and events</p>	<p>4.1.1 Increase awareness of Friends Group Policy to encourage new groups to form with the inclusion of disabled people</p>	<p>Annually</p>	<p>Parks &amp; Leisure Department</p>
				<p>4.1.2 Extend sports and leisure development work with a range of schools and clubs to increase the number of disabled participants</p>	<p>Annually</p>	<p>Parks &amp; Leisure Department</p>
				<p>4.1.3 Update disabled friendly equipment in playgrounds and multi-use games areas as part of annual refurbishment programmes</p>	<p>Annually</p>	<p>Parks &amp; Leisure Department</p>
				<p>4.1.4 Ongoing review of the zoo site to explore options for making it more accessible taking into account its challenging terrain and implement recommendations</p>	<p>Annually</p>	<p>Parks &amp; Leisure Department</p>
				<p>4.1.5 Review the disabled access guide to include the Ulster Hall and address relevant issues covering the Waterfront development period</p>	<p>Annually</p>	<p>Development Department</p>

Strategic priority	Outcomes	Performance Measures	Action Framework	Actions / Targets	Year	Responsibility
				4.1.6 Operate carer's policy to assist customers who require essential assistance to attend events	Annually	Development Department
				4.1.7 Secure the Jubilees Sailing Trust's Lord Nelson (a specially designed vessel with a permanent crew trained to work with people with disabilities) to take part in the Tall Ships event	July 2015	Development Department
				4.1.8 Work with Belfast Tall Ships and Visit Belfast Welcome Centre to provide volunteers to offer enhanced services for disabled visitors to the Tall Ships event	July 2015	Development Department
				4.1.9 Promote and extend Play Service sensory project to groups through the 'Morning Project' and one off civic events	Annually	Development Department
			4.2 Access to buildings	4.2.1 Ensure all Council buildings are DDA compliant  4.2.2 Continue to promote / communicate our options for access to information/ forms / people/ services in relation to council buildings	Annually  Annually	Property & Projects Department Lead Communicators/ Corporate communications

Strategic priority	Outcomes	Performance Measures	Action Framework	Actions / Targets	Year	Responsibility
			4.3 Access to toilets and changing places	4.3.1 Commit to work to increase number of accessible toilets and changing places	2015	H&ES Department
				4.3.2 Continue to promote/advertise disabled public toilet access	Annually	H&ES Department
	Positive attitudes towards disabled people and challenging negative attitudes (DDO)		4.4 Training	4.4.1 Diversity awareness training programmes for council employees: continue delivery of disability equality awareness training ; continue providing access to diversity e-learning programme; continue delivery of classroom based diversity training; identify and target awareness raising sessions on specific areas of disability ( DDO)	Annually	HR
				4.4.2 Review the need to provide equality and diversity/ good relations module as part of development activity for managers (DDO)	Annually	HR/EDO

Strategic priority	Outcomes	Performance Measures	Action Framework	Actions / Targets	Year	Responsibility
				4.4.3 Deliver equality/ good relations screening training (DDO)	Bi-annual	EDO
				4.4.4 Facilitate 3 employees to learn and use sign language each year (DDO)	Annually	HR/ Departments
				4.4.5 Create a database of staff who have sign language skills, and update when required (DDO)	2015	HR
				4.4.6 Provide emotional health and wellbeing awareness training for staff and council volunteers (internal ) (DDO)	Annually	HR/ Occ Health
				4.4.7 Provide training for managers in managing stress and mental health issues (internal ) (DDO)	Annually	HR/ Occ Health

Strategic priority	Outcomes	Performance Measures	Action Framework	Actions / Targets	Year	Responsibility
				4.4.8 Develop a dedicated health and wellbeing page on Interlink (internal) (DDO)	Annually	HR/ Corporate Communications/ Envir Health (U Lappin)
<b>Strategic Priority 5</b> Increase the level of accessible/inclusive communications so that disabled people can access information as independently as possible and make informed choices	Disabled people are aware of availability of accessible information and make use of it	Number of documents provided in alternative formats	5.1 Website	5.1.1 Work towards meeting W3G standards	Annually	Corporate Communications and Digital Services
			5.2 Accessible formats	5.2.1 Update list of providers of alternative formats annually ( DDO)	Annually	EDO
				5.2.2 Ensure alternative formats are provided on a timely basis ( DDO)	Annually	All officers

**Theme 4: INDEPENDENT CHOICE AND CONTROL**

Strategic priority	Outcomes	Performance Measures	Action Framework	Actions / Targets	Year	Responsibility
<p><b>Strategic Priority 6</b> Increase the level of choice, control and freedom that disabled people have in their daily lives</p>	<p>Disabled people are able to choose between options in terms of the way they receive and benefit from council services</p>	<p>Feedback from disabled people and disability groups on availability of options</p>	<p>6.1 Engagement with Disabled Go</p>	<p>6.1.1 Ensure all Council facilities are listed on Disabled Go and that information is up to date</p>	<p>Annually</p>	<p>EDO</p>
			<p>6.2 Signage</p>	<p>6.2.1 Increase signage so that all service users can locate services easily: target 5% increase in signage per year</p>	<p>Annually</p>	<p>Property and Projects</p>
			<p>6.3 Leisure Centre programmes</p>	<p>6.3.1 Support the Strategic Operating Partner of our leisure centres to promote the inclusivity of their programmes such as holiday schemes and swimming programmes</p>	<p>Annually</p>	<p>Parks &amp; Leisure Department</p>
			<p>6.4 Active Belfast Ltd</p>	<p>6.4.1 Allocate one of the seats on the Board of Active Belfast Ltd to a stakeholder from the disability sector</p>	<p>Annually</p>	<p>Parks &amp; Leisure Department</p>

**Theme 5: EMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYABILITY**

Strategic priority	Outcomes	Performance Measures	Action Framework	Actions / Targets	Year	Responsibility
<p><b>Strategic Priority 7</b> Work towards increasing the number of disabled people entering all levels of employment and safeguard the rights of those disabled people already in work.</p>	<p>Disabled people are provided with appropriate support to enhance employability and obtain employment</p>	<p>Number of participants going into employment at the end of Workable NI scheme</p> <p>An increase in the number of employees and applicants with a disability</p>	<p>7.1 Employment</p>	<p>7.1.1 Review existing arrangements regarding the Workable NI programme and make recommendations on future implementation ( DDO)</p>	<p>2016</p>	<p>HR</p>
				<p>7.1.2 Identify opportunities to ring fence certain posts to long-term unemployed, including those with a disability and ensure any pre-recruitment and training programme caters for any reasonable adjustments ( DDO)</p>	<p>Annually</p>	<p>HR</p>
				<p>7.1.3 Conduct research into the collection and recording of disability and equality monitoring data across all council departments and establish baseline information on monitoring systems in the council ( DDO)</p>	<p>2016-2017</p>	<p>EDO/HR</p>



				7.1.4. Establish a support network for disabled employees to feed into future action planning ( DDO)	2015	HR/EDO
				7.1.5 Develop and communicate a protocol to assist managers to deal effectively and sensitively with employee relations issues (DDO)	2016-2017	HR
			7.2 Recruitment	7.2.1 Promote and comply with the guaranteed interview scheme ( DDO)	Annually	HR
				7.2.2 Consider all requests for reasonable adjustments as part of the selection process ( DDO)	Annually	HR
<b>Strategic Priority 8</b> Increase opportunities for disabled people to understand the employment opportunities at Belfast City Council by developing a suite of employability outreach projects.	Disabled people are provided with appropriate support to enhance employability and obtain employment	Number of disabled applicants for council posts	8.1 Outreach	8.1.1 Participate in careers events targeted towards disabled people ( DDO)	Annually	HR
				8.1.2 Facilitate at least 30 work experience placements for people with disabilities ( DDO)	Annually	HR
				8.1.3 Facilitate site visits to promote the council as an attractive employer ( DDO)	Annually	HR/ Departments

				8.1.4 Deliver at least two outreach opportunities each year for people with disabilities to engage with/ participate in public life (DDO)	Annually	HR
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Strategic priority	Outcomes	Performance Measures	Action Framework	Actions / Targets	Year	Responsibility
<b>Strategic Priority 9</b> Increase the opportunities for disabled employees and people on work placements to attain skills through access to appropriate training.	Disabled people employed by the council are provided with appropriate support to stay in and progress in employment	Number of disabled employees and people on work placements undertaking training and receiving support	9.1 Absence management	9.1.1 Ensure all managers are aware of the provisions of the Attendance Policy which allow for special consideration of disability issues (DDO)	Annually	HR
			9.2 Reasonable adjustments	9.2.1 Provide ongoing advice and support to employees in relation to reasonable adjustment requirements (DDO)	Annually	HR/ Departments
				9.2.2 Ensure consistent approach to collating and monitoring reasonable adjustments in relation to absence management (DDO)	Annually	HR
			9.3 Access to training	9.3.1 Ensure disabled employees have full access to training and development opportunities (DDO)	Annually	HR/ Departments

				9.3.2 Provide support for managers and employees in completing the PDP process by reviewing PDP form to help identify and record specific needs for disabled employees ( DDO)	Annually	HR/ Departments
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**Theme 6: BEING PART OF THE COMMUNITY**

Strategic priority	Outcomes	Performance Measures	Action Framework	Actions / Targets	Year	Responsibility
<b>Strategic Priority 10</b> Improve access to arts, leisure and other cultural activities so that disabled people can be part of the community	Disabled people have appropriate support so that they can participate in the cultural life of the city on an equal basis	Levels of uptake of activities	10.1 Disability Access Group – Waterfront Hall	10.1.1 Ensure information on how to access facilities and events is up-to-date in the Disabled Access Guide	Annually	Development Department
			10.2 Cultural Framework	10.2.1 Deliver the Inspiring Communities theme which identifies disabled people as a priority area and removing barriers to participation to ensure all sections of the community engage with high quality culture, arts and heritage	2016	Development Department
			10.3 Play Service	10.3.1 Deliver and promote the Play Service Sensory project	Annually	Development Department