



**Belfast**  
City Council

## **Equality Action Plan 2015- 2016**

**Our Corporate Values and Supporting Principles:** We are committed to promoting equality and good relations and believe these are key to improving the quality of life for everyone. We are committed to respecting each other, to being fair, promoting equality and good relations - 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. *Please note this is a strategic level action plan. The Council has more detailed activities outlined in action plans that specifically address gender, disability, race, and LGB&T issues.*

## Equality Action Plan 2015 - 2016

Action Ref. Number	Issue identified	S75 Category affected									Desired outcome	Action	Timescale
		Age	Dependents	Disability	Gender	Marital status	Political opinion	Race	Religious belief	Sexual orientation			
<b>A</b>	<b>STRATEGY, POLICY, IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES: Impacting on the organisation as a whole</b>												
<b>1</b>	<i>Need for a processes and structures to ensure that equality of opportunity and good relations are incorporated and mainstreamed at the strategic level of the Council</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<i>Improved planning and decision-making</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete timely and thorough screening exercises of all new and revised policies for equality and good relations implications</li> <li>Establish an internal Equality and Diversity Network</li> <li>Develop and deliver guidance on EQIA process</li> </ul>	2016 (ongoing)  September 2015  September 2015
<b>2</b>	<i>Need to identify and tackle both persistent and emerging inequalities in a strategic manner</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<i>Improved awareness and understanding of inequalities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor and report on the progress and implementation of Action Plan</li> <li>Carry out a comprehensive Audit of Inequalities to inform Equality Action Plan from 2016</li> </ul>	2016 (ongoing)  January 2016

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A	<b>STRATEGY, POLICY, IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES: Impacting on the organisation as a whole</b>												
3	Need to remain continually vigilant of issues affecting disabled staff and customers			✓							A more accessible environment for staff and customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor and regularly report on progress of the new Disability Action Plan</li> <li>Revise and publish Disability Strategy</li> </ul>	2016 (ongoing)  September 2015
4	Need to improve equality monitoring and data collection	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<p>Improved decision making through availability of :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>accessible monitoring information</li> <li>up to date monitoring information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop methods to record and analyse data on the equality categories</li> <li>Outcomes from equality monitoring to inform future screening and decision – making processes through collation of mitigations</li> </ul>	2016 (ongoing)  2016 (ongoing)

5	Need to ensure that equality and good relations underpin delivery of the Council's Investment Programme	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A fair and inclusive Investment Programme for everyone in the city.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complete timely and thorough equality screening exercises of all Corporate plans and future Investment Programme activity</li> <li>▪ Ensure the employability initiatives contained in the Corporate plans and future Investment Programme are all-inclusive and reach out to those furthest removed from the labour market.</li> </ul>	<p>2016 (ongoing)</p> <p>2016 (ongoing)</p>
6	Need to promote good relations						✓	✓	✓		Improve community relations in Belfast	Develop and deliver a Good Relations Action Plan	September 2015

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<b>B</b>	<b>COMMUNICATION, INFORMATION AND ENGAGEMENT ISSUES: Impacting on levels of interaction among and between staff and customers of the Council</b>												
1	Need to improve communication and engagement with customers across all S75 groups	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<p>A better informed decision-making process and improved relations</p> <p>Better communication and engagement with staff and customers across all Section 75 groups</p> <p>Better networking and support opportunities for staff across all Section 75 groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complete stakeholder analysis for all S75 groups in new boundary area</li> <li>▪ Engagement with S75 groups in policy making processes through bi-annual meeting of Equality Consultative Forum</li> <li>▪ Integrate measures in public consultation and engagement strategies to increase participation among 'seldom heard' groups</li> <li>▪ Establish staff forums to improve engagement, communication, networking and support for staff</li> </ul>	<p>October 2015</p> <p>November 2015</p> <p>February 2016</p> <p>March 2016</p>

2	Need to raise levels of awareness and understanding among staff of the full range of equality and good relations services and activities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<p><i>Improved knowledge and understanding of Equality and Good Relations activity</i></p> <p><i>Better understanding among staff of available support services</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Develop and implement a communications programme for staff including:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⤴ <b>Induction &amp; regular training,</b></li> <li>⤴ <b>Planned events &amp; speakers</b></li> <li>⤴ <b>Use of interlink &amp; team briefs</b></li> </ul> </li>   <li>▪ <b>Continue to develop and distribute an Equality Toolkit for staff</b></li> </ul>	<p>2016 (ongoing)</p> <p>November 2015</p>
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C	<i>TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES: Impacting on levels of understanding among our own staff</i>												
1	Need to ensure all staff are fully trained to deal with the range of equality and good relations issues affecting the Council's business	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<p><i>Better informed policy development and decision-making</i></p> <p><i>Improved awareness of the particular needs of S75 groups</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Continue to deliver a suite of equality and good relations training to all staff</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⤴ <b>Equality awareness training,</b></li> <li>⤴ <b>Disability awareness training,</b></li> <li>⤴ <b>Good relations awareness training</b></li> <li>⤴ <b>Screening training (relevant staff only)</b></li> <li>⤴ <b>EQIA training (relevant staff only)</b></li> <li>⤴ <b>Online diversity training targeted awareness raising</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>2016 (ongoing)</p>



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<b>D</b>	<b>REPRESENTATION ISSUES: Impacting on the composition of the Council and its related bodies</b>												
1	Need to review levels of representation on Councils forums and partnerships	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Improved representation on forums and associated partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review all aspects of recruitment to forums, boards and groups to identify and remove barriers</li> </ul>	2016 (ongoing)
2	The need for a diverse workforce which is broadly representative of the community it serves	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Improved representation within the workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify gaps in community and employability outreach activity to ensure all Section 75 groups are aware of employment opportunities with the council and that they have access to any employability initiatives</li> </ul>	2016 (ongoing)
<b>E</b>	<b>PARTICIPATION ISSUES: Impacting on people seeking to use our services</b>												
1	Need to improve participation levels among under-represented groups in a range of the Council activities and Services	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<p>Improved Service use and reduced risk of exclusion among marginalised groups</p> <p>Improved relationships with relevant S75 representative organisations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a programme of targeted actions to encourage participation among identified under-represented groups</li> </ul>	2016 (ongoing)