

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council



Fermanagh & Omagh
District Council
Comhairle Ceantair
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties Annual Progress Report

Contact:

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Action Plan	As above <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (double click to open) Name: Telephone: Email:

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

www.fermanaghomagh.com

Signature:

Finbar Maguire
Policy Officer

**This report has been prepared using a template circulated by the
Equality Commission.**

**It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and good
relations duties, and implementing Equality Scheme commitments and
Disability Action Plans.**

This report reflects progress made between April 2021 and March 2022

PART A – Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Scheme

Section 1: Equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice

- 1 In 2021-22, please provide **examples** of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved.

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

The most recent NISRA statistics demonstrate that the Council District was home to an estimated 118,677 people in 2022. This represents a growth of 1,200 individuals from 2019, or 1.09%.

The population aged 65 and over increased by 500 people (or 2.4%) to 20,100, whilst the working age population over the year remained stable at 71,900 people. The number of children (aged 0 - 15 years) also remained stable at 25,400.

The District is Northern Ireland largest in terms of land mass (3,000km²) and the smallest in terms of population density (38.8 people per km²).

As reported in the six previous Annual Progress Reports (2015/2016, 2016/2017, 2017/2018, 2018/2019, 2019/2020 and 2020/2021), the Council has continued to initiate many key policy and service delivery developments. Additionally, the Council has continually delivered on its responsibilities to ensure that statutory and regulatory functions are delivered to a high standard.

During the 2021/2022 reporting period, the Council continued to promote and mainstream Equality of Opportunity across all Directorates and Services. The implementation of the Statutory Duties was kept under regular review – being discussed by Senior Management Team (as required), as well as being included within all reports made to the Council's Committee meetings (which are subsequently ratified by the full Council at the next meeting).

A review of the organisational structure of the Council commenced in previous years, and although this reorganisation will continue into the next reporting period, each Directorate and service has a responsibility to ensure Equality of Opportunity.

Delivery and Policy Developments

During the 2021/2022 reporting period, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council developed several policy and service delivery areas aimed at better promoting equality of opportunity and good relations. The Council views a number of these developments as 'in progress' and 'ongoing'.

Some of the key policy and service delivery developments for Fermanagh and Omagh District Council are outlined below.

Equality Scheme – Five Year Review



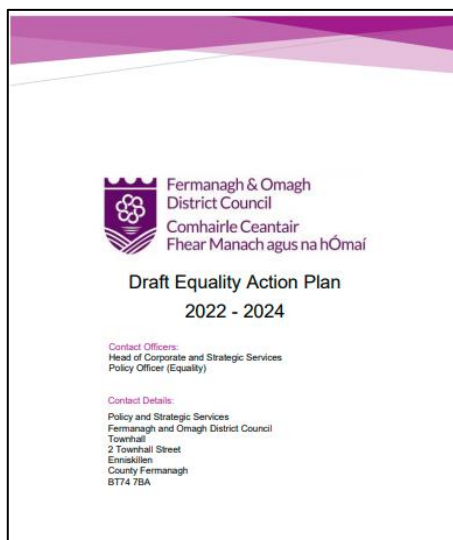
The Council continued to fulfil its commitments outlined within the Equality Scheme, which was approved by the Equality Commission in February 2017.

During the 2021/2022 reporting period, the Council undertook its five-year review and this review was presented to Elected Members in December 2021 for approval. This review was then subsequently ratified at the next full meeting of the Council on 11 January 2022.

This review has also been forwarded to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

More information on the revised Equality Scheme and the Five Year Review can be found online here: <https://www.fermanaghomagh.com/your-council/policies/equality/equality-scheme/>

Equality Action Plan



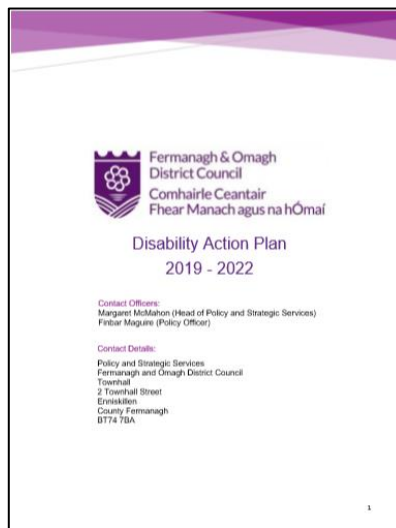
The Council's Equality Action Plan contributes to the Council's compliance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998) as well as setting out how the Council plans to address key inequalities as it strives to create a District where people choose to live, work and visit.

During the 2021/2022 reporting period, the Council undertook a 12-week consultation process on a new Equality Action Plan for the 2022-2024 period.

The consultation period commenced on 10 January 2022 and closed on 4 April

2022. More information on the updated Equality Action Plan can be found online here: <https://www.fermanaghomagh.com/your-council/policies/equality/equality-action-plan-2020-2022/>

Disability Action Plan



The Council's Disability Action Plan outlines how the Council will fulfil its statutory obligations in compliance with Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006).

Further information on the Council's Disability Action Plan will also be referenced later within this Progress Report.

During the reporting period, the Council undertook a 12-week consultation period to develop a new Disability Action Plan for the 2022-2024 period.

The consultation period commenced on Monday 10 January and closed on Monday 4 April 2022.

Equality Screening

There were several key Council policies screened for potential impacts on Equality of Opportunity. These included:

- FODC Council Budget for 2022/2023;
- Labour Market Partnership Action Plan;
- Assisted and Additional Bin Collection Policy;
- Digital Strategy; and
- Street Naming and Numbering Policy (including Dual Language Street Signs).

For a full list of the policies screened during the reporting period, please visit: <https://www.fermanaghomagh.com/your-council/policies/equality/policy-screening/>

Lobbying and Consultation

The Council continued to lobby on a cross-Council, cross-border basis in relation to many strategic issues. In total, over the 2021/2022 period, the Council responded to 22 public consultation processes.

Some examples of the responses that have been submitted by Fermanagh and Omagh District Council over the past 12 months include:

- Reaching Rural – NI Housing Executive’s Rural Strategy 2021-2025.
- Health and Disability Green Paper.
- DfC Housing Supply Strategy.
- DAERA Agricultural Policy Proposals.

Elected Members and Civic Receptions



2021/2022, again, brought with it some significant challenges in relation to responding to the Covid-19 pandemic. As a result of the restrictions in place for much of the term, there were a reduced number of Civic Receptions as opposed to previous years. In total, there were 22 Civic Receptions from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

Throughout the year the Chairs and Vice Chair also represented the Council at many events. In total, there approximately 248 civic engagements and these comprised of both online and in-person events and photo opportunities.

Examples of these include:

- Raising awareness of International Day for People with Disabilities.
- Launching and attending Age Friendly events.
- Recognising the work of local community organisations.
- Publicising the various grant and funding schemes available.
- Celebrating the work, and achievements, of members of the Fermanagh and Omagh District.



Disability Advisory Group



During the 2021/2022 reporting period, there were six meetings of the Disability Advisory Group.

The Chair, and Vice Chair, of the Disability Advisory Group for the period remained unchanged for the reporting period:

Chair: Councillor Victor Warrington

Vice Chair: Dermot Devlin (Volunteer Member).

Again, due to the nature of restrictions all meetings of the Group during the reporting period were held virtually, allowing all Members to engage and participate fully in meetings.

During the 2021/2022 reporting period, the Disability Advisory Group undertook some key pieces of work including:

- Liaising with external organisations to share information on the needs of people with disabilities across the District.
- Providing feedback on access to Council facilities and venues for people with disabilities such as:
 - Leisure Services and Leisure Complexes.
 - Advertising boards on pavements, as well as other street furniture.
 - Difficulty accessing services.

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- Providing advice and guidance on the development of new, and revised, Policies (for example, the new Assisted and Additional Bin Collection Service, the Linguistic Diversity Policy, amongst others).
- Providing advice on the training and awareness raising being offered to Council employees and Elected Members.
- Undertaking Accessibility Audits of Council-owned parks, and walkways, throughout the District.
- Mystery shopper audits of various Council venues.
- Developing a Work Placement Project for people with disabilities to obtain work experience within different areas of the Council. Placements with FODC from Leonard Cheshire Disability (an organisation which provides support to people with disabilities to live and work independently) commenced in April 2022.

International Day for People with Disabilities



To celebrate International Day for people with Disabilities in December 2021, the Council organised a week-long series of events – in partnership with colleagues from Derry City and Strabane District Council.

The week of events began on 26 November and concluded on 3 December – International Day for People with Disabilities. Throughout the course of the week, a wide variety of activities were organised to include:

- A virtual conference.
- Various awareness raising events.
- 63 workshops and information sessions.
- 1,600 participants throughout the programme across both Districts.

Changing Places Facilities



During the reporting period (2021/2022), the Council continued to progress work in relation to providing Changing Places facilities in refurbished Council venues where possible.

As reported in the previous annual report, funding was secured to include a full-size Changing Places facility in the Strule Arts Centre as well as two reduced-size facilities in Enniskillen Castle Museums and at the Gortin Glen Forest Park. During the 2021/2022 reporting period, these facilities were completed and publicised.

Another reduced size Changing Places facility was also installed in the Fermanagh Lakeland Forum Leisure Centre in Enniskillen.

As ever, the members of the Disability Advisory Group were consulted on all of these facilities and the works were completed.

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2021-22 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

As mentioned previously, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council consulted upon an Equality Action Plan for 2020-2022 between September 2019 and December 2019.

This Equality Action Plan was approved and ratified by Council in January 2020 and forms the basis for this Progress Report. The report and Plan can be found:

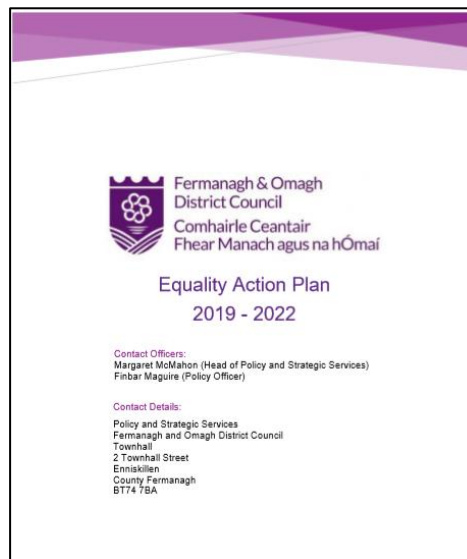
Link to the Committee Report: <https://fermanaghomagh.public-minutes.com/#0c24ee4684a4324ff310cf2449121a59>

Link to the Equality Action Plan 2020 - 2022: <https://www.fermanaghomagh.com/your-council/policies/equality/equality-action-plan-2020-2022/>

The actions within the Equality Action Plan are identified and split into five strategic themes and these are:

- A. Equality of Opportunity.
- B. Accessible Services.
- C. Spoken, written and signed language forms.
- D. Equality Monitoring and Data Collection.
- E. Employees and Elected Members

Strategic Theme One: Equality of Opportunity



In relation to this theme, there are 10 actions identified and five of these are ongoing actions, which will be ongoing for the duration of the Equality Action Plan. These include:

- A3.** Ensure that Equality and Good Relations is embedded to all key Council documents e.g. Corporate Plan (2019-2023), Community Plan.
- A5.** Implement a Disability Action Plan for the Council which meets the objectives of the Disability Discrimination Act
- A8.** All new, and revised, policies will be approved subject to screening outcomes for Equality of Opportunity.

A9. Deliver an approved Good Relations Action Plan.

A10. Raise the profile of underrepresented Section 75 Groups (and other protected groups) within the District.

In terms of completed actions **A1** was completed following the consultation on the new Equality Action Plan for 2020-2022 and **A2** is completed on an annual basis with the Council submitting its Annual Equality Progress Report.

Furthermore, the Council undertook its five-year review of its Equality Scheme and presented this to Elected Members in December 2021. Following ratification at January's Council Meeting this was then submitted to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. CHECK ACTION

A 12-week public consultation period was also commenced for a new Equality Action Plan for the 2022-2024 reporting period. This commenced in January, closing in April 2022.

Action **A4** relates to the development and consultation for the Council's Disability Action Plan, and this has also been completed at the same time as the development and consultation of the Equality Action Plan - outlined above.

Action **A6** relates to reviewing the consultation processes in relation to groups/individuals with disabilities. These were reviewed throughout the year as the Council was consulting on various issues/policies. During this reporting period, the Council continued to monitor the significant changes that were made to the way in which the Council consults following the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent restrictions on face-to-face meetings. As a result, the Council continued to use online consultation events, targeted sessions with relevant groups were organised. Consultees who would usually provide feedback on a one-to-one basis, were encouraged to give their feedback by telephone and by virtual meetings.

Strategic Theme 2: Accessible Services

This theme contained four actions, two of which have been completed and a further two which are ongoing for the duration of this Equality Action Plan.

Action **B1**, follows on from action **A6** in terms of consultation processes and making sure that they are open and accessible to everyone – including those with disabilities.

The changes outlined in response to action **A6** have also had a positive impact on people with disabilities – allowing more participation in consultation processes, despite their being advised to stay at home for much of the past 2 years, as well as ensuring that those who were required to shield were able to remain safe. The online consultation events have worked very well for people with disabilities, and as such will be considered for all consultations going forward as restrictions are removed.

Another development in terms of action **B1** is developing the capacity of the Disability Advisory Group and its members to play key roles in the development of Council projects and strategies. Council Officers are now more aware of the Group and its importance, with many actively seeking opportunities to consult with the Group. This has been an important development in ensuring that the needs of people with disabilities are taken into consideration at an early stage

of the policy development or project design stage. Some of the projects that the Members of the Disability Advisory Group have advised on include:

- Leisure Services and Leisure Complexes.
- Advertising boards on pavements, as well as other street furniture.
- Difficulty accessing services

The Members of the Group have also liaised with other external organisations to obtain a feel for their work, and concerns that the people they represent may have throughout the District.

Action **B2** relates to scoping the need for an inclusive communication channel, and the Council completed this action in April 2020, as stated in last year's Progress Report. However, following the successful trial period the Council continued with this service for a further 12-month period ensuring that the service is available for people with hearing impairments.



Strategic Theme Three: Spoken, Written and Signed Language Forms

This theme consists of five actions, three of which are ongoing (and will be ongoing for the duration of this plan) and two of which are completed.

The actions which are ongoing are:

- C1. Ensure a consistent approach to the provision of translation and interpretation services.
- C2. Ensure that meetings and events have appropriate interpreters and/or other assistance in attendance as required
- C3. Assist individuals who have limited, or no, English speaking ability to communicate with the Council.

In relation to actions **C2** and **C3**, these are both ongoing. Sign Language interpreters have been arranged for meetings when required, and indeed for meetings of the Omagh Access Advisory Group, sign language interpreters are automatically arranged. The Council has continued to make reasonable adjustments for customers who have little or no ability to speak English – making documents available in other languages and arranging for interpreting when needed.



Actions **C4** and **C5** related to the reviewing the Irish Language Policy and Action Plan and the Ulster Scots Policy and Action Plan. Both of these actions were achieved in the previous reporting period however, both plans were consulted upon this year.

Additionally, the Council undertook a review of its Linguistic Diversity Policy during this reporting period.

Strategic Theme Four: Monitoring and Data Collection

There are three actions included within this theme and all three are identified as ongoing.

These actions are:

- D1. Establish the Section 75 breakdown of the Council's Elected Members.
- D2. Update the existing Section 75 records for Council employees.
- D3. Review the monitoring information being collected by Council, to identify any potential gaps, or opportunities to capture additional monitoring data.

In terms of action **D1**, a significant amount of work was undertaken however this was postponed when face-to-face meetings were stopped because of pandemic restrictions. As full face-to-face meetings have yet to resume, this action will be completed with the next reporting period.

Actions **D2** and **D3** are also ongoing and will remain ongoing for the duration of this Plan. Action **D2** is completed by the Council's HR section on an annual basis and action **D3** is undertaken by all Council services when they are collecting monitoring information.

Strategic Theme Five: Employees and Elected Members

This theme revolved mainly around awareness raising for both our employees and Elected Members. As a result, the four actions are ongoing and have been for the duration of this Plan.

The actions are:

- E1. Increase the awareness of Elected Members in relation to the promotion of Equality of Opportunity, Good Relations and the Disability

duties.

E2. Increase the awareness of Council employees in relation to the promotion of Equality of Opportunity, Good Relations and the Disability duties.

E3. Increase the awareness of developments in good practice and concerns/issues raised with Council services.

E4. Diversity Champion will participate in training and networking events, as required.

In terms of actions **E1** and **E2**, both Elected Members and Council employees have participated in a significant number of awareness raising sessions since the start of this Equality Action Plan and throughout the 2021/2022 reporting period.

These awareness raising sessions have included:

- F. Mental Health First Aid Training
- G. Basic Sign Language Awareness Training.
- H. Learning Disability Awareness Presentation.
- I. Presentations from organisations such as: RNID, RNIB, Guide Dogs NI, DfC Disability Policy Team.
- J. Mental Health Awareness Training.



As part of the International Day for People with Disabilities, the Council (in partnership with Derry City and Strabane District Council) organised a weeklong series of workshops, events and conferences to raise awareness of disabilities (both visible and invisible). Some of the outcomes from this week of events include:

- A virtual conference.
- Various awareness raising events.
- 63 workshops and information sessions.
- 1,600 participants throughout the programme across both Districts.

3 Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2021-22 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

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

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Please provide any details and examples:

Examples, and further details, are contained within the Council's response to question 2 in this document.

- 3a** With regard to the change(s) made to policies, practices or procedures and/or service delivery areas, what **difference was made, or will be made, for individuals**, i.e. the impact on those according to Section 75 category?

Please provide any details and examples:

Details and examples are included within the Council's response to question 2, i.e.:

- Putting in place appropriate measures to remove barriers to accessing services which affect staff and service users with disabilities.
- Putting in place appropriate mechanisms for integrating both spoken, written and signed language forms in a way that best meets the needs of local language communities.
- Putting in place appropriate systems to improve equality monitoring and data collection.
- Raising levels of awareness and understanding among staff of the full range of equality services and activities.

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

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

N/A

As a result of what was identified through the EQIA and consultation exercise (*please give details*):

N/A

As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact (*please give details*):

Putting in place appropriate systems to improve equality of opportunity and data collection (for example, the new Assisted and Additional Bin Collection Policy).

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

Putting in place appropriate measures to remove barriers to accessing services

Other (*please specify and give details*):

- Establishing an appropriate system to include and mainstream equality of opportunity at a strategic level of the Council.
- Putting in place appropriate mechanisms for integrating both spoken, written and signed language forms in a way that best meets the needs of local language communities.
- Raising levels of awareness and understanding among staff of the full range of equality services and activities.

Section 2: Progress on Equality Scheme commitments and action plans/measures

Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)

4 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2021-22 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- Yes, organisation wide
- Yes, some departments/jobs
- No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Since the formation of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council (April 2015), the Section 75 Duties have been integrated within job descriptions and personal specifications across the Council. This continued for the 2021/2022 reporting period.

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2021-22 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- Yes, organisation wide
- Yes, some departments/jobs
- No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The Section 75 Statutory Duties were integrated across the Council within several Performance Plans, and Service Delivery and Improvement Plans, during the year.

Some examples of services achieving this include:

- Services/Directorates collecting, and collating, Monitoring Information for programmes, projects, etc. This helps to ensure that the needs of all Section Categories are being met.
- The Council's Policy and Strategic Services section has the Section 75 Statutory Duties embedded throughout its Performance Plans including: Progress Reporting. Equality Screening. Equality Consultation Database and Public Consultations. Equality Monitoring. Implementation and Monitoring of the Council's Equality Action Plan.
- All Committee Reports, before being presented to Elected Members, must consider the Section 75 impacts and include details of this on the report being presented.

Performance measures relating to the Section 75 Statutory Duties have been integrated into the Corporate Plan, as well as playing a key part within strategic planning. For example, within the Corporate Plan 2020-2024 stating that the vision for Fermanagh and Omagh is 'a welcoming, shared and inclusive district, where people and places are health, safe, connected and prosperous...' Ultimately, this is the shared vision which will influence the work of the Council until 2024.

Furthermore, within the Community Plan 2030, 'Equality, Inclusivity and Diversity' is noted as one of the shared values and key principles. It states that:

'Equality, inclusivity and diversity are placed at the core of all of our services and actions, as we work towards achieving a shared future for all'.

6 In the 2021-22 reporting period were **objectives/ targets/ performance measures** relating to the Section 75 statutory duties **integrated** into corporate plans, strategic planning and/or operational business plans? (*tick all that apply*)

- Yes, through the work to prepare or develop the new corporate plan
- Yes, through organisation wide annual business planning
- Yes, in some departments/jobs
- No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation's ongoing corporate plan
- No, the organisation's planning cycle does not coincide with this 2021-22 report
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Objectives, targets and performance measures relating to the Section 75 statutory duties have been integrated throughout the organisation. This has been done via the Corporate Plan Update as well as through other key pieces of work including the Performance Improvement Plan and strategic planning.

The Corporate Plan 2020-2024 document states that the vision for Fermanagh and

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Omagh is 'a welcoming, shared and inclusive district, where people and places are health, safe, connected and prosperous...'

The Council's updated Equality Scheme, Equality Action Plan, Disability Action Plan, as well as the responsibility for their implementation lies within the Corporate Service and Governance Directorate. These documents set out how all Council Directorates and Services should comply with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998).

All Directorates and Services have responsibilities for various aspects of Equality and the Equality Scheme. Section 75 is of particular importance to the Council and particularly in relation to the Council's Strategic Management and Planning. For example, Equality Screening is mandatory for all new/revised Council Policies, Strategies and Plans.

Equality action plans/measures

7 Within the 2021-22 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:

17

Actions ongoing:

9

Actions to commence:

0

Please provide any details and examples (*in addition to question 2*):

All actions, with the Council's Equality Action Plan, have been referenced in response to question 2. All 'ongoing' actions were ongoing for the duration of the Plan and will be carried forward into the next reporting period.

8 Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2021-22 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

The Equality Action Plan for this reporting period is the final year of this plan. As noted elsewhere within this report, a 12-week consultation period on a new Equality Action Plan commenced in January 2022 and this Plan will form the basis of next year's report.

9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2021-22 reporting period, the following have been identified: (*tick all that apply*)

- Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the known inequality
- Action(s) to address the known inequality in a different way
- Action(s) to address newly identified inequalities/recently prioritised inequalities
- Measures to address a prioritised inequality have been completed

Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)

10 Following the initial notification of consultations, a targeted approach was taken – and consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance: (*tick one box only*)

- All the time Sometimes Never

11 Please provide any **details and examples of good practice** in consultation during the 2021-22 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

The Council has undertaken several public consultations over the course of the 2021/2022 reporting period. These include:

- Performance Improvement Plan for 2021/2022.
- Consultation on the Draft Equality Action Plan for 2022 – 2024
- Consultation on the Draft Disability Action Plan for 2022 – 2024
- Consultation on the draft Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2022 – 2027

The Council also undertook one Equality Impact Assessment on the Revised Street Naming and Numbering Policy (including Dual Language Street Signs).

Some examples of the good practice undertaken by the Council include:

- Public advertisement in the local newspapers.
- Publishing articles on the ‘Latest News’ section of the Council’s website.
- Making documents available in alternative formats/languages upon request.
- Arranging focus groups for specific consultations (e.g. Community Planning).
- Presenting relevant Policies to appropriate Council Committees/Sub Groups (e.g. Access and Inclusion Steering Group, Disability Advisory Group).
- All consultations are communicated via the Council’s Social Media channels (Facebook and Twitter). Reminder messages in relation to consultations are also communicated via Social Media in addition to the Council website.
- Online consultation arrangements (i.e. Zoom Meetings, and Webex Meetings), due to the Covid-19 pandemic and restrictions on the potential for face-to-face meetings.
- Facility to provide feedback via telephone – again due to the restrictions on face-to-face meetings.

12 In the 2021-22 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently used by consultees**: (*tick all that apply*)

- Face to face meetings
- Focus groups

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- Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing
- Questionnaires
- Information/notification by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation
- Internet discussions
- Telephone consultations
- Other (*please specify*): Online meetings i.e. through Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc.

Please provide any details or examples of the uptake of these methods of consultation in relation to the consultees' membership of particular Section 75 categories:

In relation to targeting groups of people, or individuals, from specific Section 75 categories, the Council has found that varying the method of consultation is most effective. For example, when a service/directorate would like to interact with individuals who may have a disability (or groups that work with people who have a disability) then focus groups may be most effective. This can be facilitated by meeting with the Disability Advisory Group of one of the Access Advisory Groups (based in either Enniskillen or Omagh). This ensures that services/directorates have confidence that they are speaking to people who have a disability or work with people who have disabilities.

The Council's Corporate and Strategic Services section manages the Equality Consultation Database and aims to have representation from each of the Section 75 Categories. This Consultation Database is updated regularly to ensure it is up-to-date and compliant with the General Data Protection Regulations.

- 13** Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2021-22 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

- 14** Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2021-22 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

Yes No Not applicable – no commitment to review

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

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[<https://www.fermanaghomagh.com/your-council/policies/equality/policy-screening/>]

15 Please provide the **number** of policies screened during the year (*as recorded in screening reports*):

10

16 Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2021-22:

0	Policy consultations conducted with screening assessment presented.
1	Policy consultations conducted with an equality impact assessment (EQIA) presented.
0	Consultations for an EQIA alone.

17 Please provide details of the **main consultations** conducted on an assessment (as described above) or other matters relevant to the Section 75 duties:

EQIA on the Revised Street Naming and Numbering Policy (including Dual Language Street Signs).

18 Were any screening decisions (or equivalent initial assessments of relevance) reviewed following concerns raised by consultees? (*tick one box only*)

Yes No concerns were raised No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Arrangements for publishing the results of assessments (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

19 Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2021-22 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The results of the EQIA, named above, was published on the Council website as well as being publicly presented at a meeting of the Environmental Services Committee. This meeting can be viewed online (in video), and all meeting documents can also be publicly downloaded.

Arrangements for monitoring and publishing the results of monitoring (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

20 From the Equality Scheme monitoring arrangements, was there an audit of existing information systems during the 2021-22 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- Yes No, already taken place
 No, scheduled to take place at a later date Not applicable

Please provide any details:

No – an audit of the previous monitoring data collected will be undertaken as part of a Performance Improvement Objective for the 2022/2023 reporting period.

There will also be an Equality Monitoring Process undertaken following the next election – 2023.

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

- Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

N/A - as yet. The data collected from previous Employee Monitoring and Elected Member processes will act as a baseline for future data collection processes.

22 Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2021-22 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

N/A

23 Please provide any details or examples of monitoring that has contributed to the availability of equality and good relations information/data for service delivery planning or policy development:

N/A

Staff Training (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 5)

24 Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2021-22, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

As mentioned in response to question 2 of this Progress Report, there were several training sessions and awareness raising sessions for Elected Members and employees.

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A series of awareness raising sessions were organised as part of the week of celebration events to mark International Day for People with Disabilities in December 2021. In total there were, seven awareness raising sessions, including:

Mental Health During the Pandemic

Brain Injury Awareness Raising

Overcoming Communication Barriers with RNID

Visual Impairment Awareness Raising with RNIB

Learning Disability Awareness

Deafblind Awareness

Autism Awareness

The total number that attended these awareness raising events was 121 participants including employees, Elected Members and local stakeholders.

Also included within the response to question 2, there were several other sessions organised for Council employees and Elected Members. Some of those arranged as part of this Equality Action Plan (2020-2022) include:

- Various Awareness Raising Presentations for the DAG – RNID, RNIB, Guide Dogs NI, Mencap, etc.
- Mental Health First Aid.
- Learning Disability Awareness Training.
- Mental Health Awareness Training.

- 25** Please provide **any examples** of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives:

Learning Disability Awareness Presentation

Outcomes:

- Understanding of the range of learning disabilities.
- Identification of potential barriers for people with learning disabilities.
- Effective communication skills with someone with a learning disability.
- Identification of potential reasonable adjustments for people with learning disabilities.

Mental Health Awareness Training

Outcomes:

- Understanding the meaning of mental health and mental ill health.
- Identification of the most common mental health illnesses/symptoms/behaviours/myths.
- Challenging some of the stereotypes and stigma associated with the term mental illness.
- Identification of possible causes for common mental illnesses.

- Identification of personal skills/limitations to support someone with a mental illness.
- Identification of ways to sustain good mental health.
- Improved knowledge for participants in relation to accessing support for themselves and/or for others.

Sign Language Awareness Training

- Identify the barriers that deaf and hard of hearing people face
- List the ways in which deaf and hard of hearing people communicate
- Understand and demonstrate how to implement positive methods of communication and offer an equal service to deaf and hard of hearing people.
- Apply the finger-spelling alphabet

Mental Health First Aid Training

A 12-hour course, delivered by PHA-accredited Instructors, which teaches participants how to recognise the symptoms of different illnesses and mental health crises, how to offer and provide initial help, and how to guide a person towards appropriate treatments and other supportive help.

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

- 26** Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2021-22, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

During the reporting period, there were a number of improvements in relation to Access to Information and Services. Due to the nature of the restrictions in place, again many of these improvements were made to outside facilities (i.e. parks, open spaces and walkways). These have included a variety of improvements made following advice and Accessibility Audits undertaken by Disability Advisory group Members at:

- Forthill Park (Enniskillen).
- Riverside Walk (Omagh).
- Gortin Glens Forest Park.

Other improvements include the provision of Changing Places facilities to:

- Strule Arts Centre.
- Fermanagh Lakeland Forum (reduced size).
- Enniskillen Castle (reduced size).
- Gortin Glens Forest Park (reduced size).

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

- 27** How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2021-22?

Insert number here:

0

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

N/A

Section 3: Looking Forward

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

2027 – the Five-Year Review was completed during this reporting period and forwarded to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland in February 2022.

29 Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements (screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? *(please provide details)*

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council will remain focused on all of the above, particularly due to the fact that the Equality Scheme has just been reviewed.

There will be a particular focus on training, learning and development opportunities for both employees and Elected Members in areas such as Equality and Disability as well as in the awareness raising for the new Equality Action Plan and Disability Action Plan – both of which are new for the 2022/2023 reporting period.

30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next reporting period? *(please tick any that apply)*

- Employment
- Goods, facilities and services
- Legislative changes
- Organisational changes/ new functions
- Nothing specific, more of the same
- Other (please state):

PART B - Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and Disability Action Plans**1. Number of action measures for this reporting period that have been:**

15

Fully achieved

13 *

Partially achieved

0

Not achieved

* Actions outlined as 'partially achieved' are identified as ongoing actions that will be carried forward each year / reporting period.

2. Please outline below details on all actions that have been fully achieved in the reporting period.

2 (a) Please highlight what **public life measures** have been achieved to encourage disabled people to participate in public life at National, Regional and Local levels:

Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs ⁱ	Outcomes / Impact ⁱⁱ
National ⁱⁱⁱ			
Regional ^{iv}			
Local ^v	<p>Most recently, the number of voluntary members on the Disability Advisory Groups in line with the increase in numbers of the Elected Member representatives on the Disability Advisory Group.</p> <p>During the reporting period, efforts were also made to increase the membership of both Access and</p>	<p>During this reporting period, there were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 meetings of the Disability Advisory Group. • 2 meetings of the Omagh and Fermanagh Access and Inclusion Steering Groups. • Bi-monthly reports presented to the Council's Policy and Resources Committee – for information and 	Improved participation by people with disabilities, in Public Life.

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	Inclusion Steering Groups – increasing participation within each group as well as the variety of disabilities represented.	<p>action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online meetings in response to the pandemic, continued throughout this reporting period - ensuring that work could continue. 	
	Organisation, and delivery, of a series of Accessibility Information to coincide with International Day for People with Disabilities	<p>Worked in partnership with colleagues from Derry City and Strabane District Council to deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A virtual conference. • A variety of awareness raising events. • 63 workshops and information sessions. • 1,600 participants throughout the programme across both Districts. 	Encouraged people with disabilities to participate in public life.

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

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Sign Language Awareness Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the barriers that deaf and hard of hearing people face • List the ways in which deaf and hard of hearing people communicate • Understand and demonstrate how to implement positive methods of communication and offer an equal service to deaf and hard of hearing people. • Apply the finger-spelling alphabet 	10 members of staff trained.
2	Mental Health Awareness Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the meaning of mental health and mental ill health. • Identify the most common mental health illnesses/symptoms/behaviours/myths. 	12 members of staff trained.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge some of the stereotypes and stigma associated with the term mental illness. • Identify possible causes for common mental illnesses. • Identify personal skills/limitations to support someone with a mental illness. • Identify ways to sustain good mental health. • Access support for themselves and/or for others. 	
	Mental Health First Aid Training	A 12-hour course, delivered by PHA-accredited Instructors, which teaches participants how to recognise the symptoms of different illnesses and mental health crises, how to offer and provide initial help, and how to guide a person towards appropriate treatments and other supportive help.	6 employees trained.

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	<p>Provision of responsive and accessible services</p> <p>Following the pilot of a Sign Video Relay service for 12 months, the service was continued for a further 12-month period.</p>	<p>To assist people who are deaf, or hard of hearing, to access Council services by providing immediate access to a Sign Language Interpreter.</p> <p>The service was used by eight individuals during the pilot period and as such was deemed success. The service will be renewed for the next reporting period.</p>	<p>Ensuring that all Council services and facilities are accessible to people who are deaf or hard of hearing.</p> <p>Improving participation in public life.</p>
2	<p>Provision of responsive and accessible services</p> <p>Ensuring that the Council website continues to become more accessible</p>	<p>Procurement of a software to highlight areas of concern, in relation to the new WCAG website accessibility guidelines.</p> <p>Commencement of training with Council 'Web Editors'.</p>	<p>Improving access to online information for people with disabilities.</p> <p>Improving participation in public life.</p>

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	for everyone, particularly those with disabilities.		
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2 (d) What action measures were achieved to '**encourage others**' to promote the two duties:

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Organisation, and delivery, of a series of Accessibility Information to coincide with International Day for People with Disabilities	<p>Worked in partnership with colleagues from Derry City and Strabane District Council to deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A virtual conference. • A variety of awareness raising events. • 63 workshops and information sessions. • 1,600 participants throughout the programme across both Districts. 	<p>Improved understanding of the needs of people with hidden disabilities.</p> <p>Additional publicity on the events and the needs of people with hidden disabilities.</p>
2	<p>Employment and Training</p> <p>Managers and employees were informed in relation to reasonable adjustments available, when required.</p>	<p>During the 2021/2022 reporting period, there were eight employees who reduced their working hours (or went part-time, etc). This would include employees who have caring responsibilities for children and people with disabilities.</p> <p>There were also seven employees who were assisted in taking a career break.</p> <p>The Council continued its work within its Human Resources Department and the Occupational Therapy Service. This ongoing work ensures that staff have the appropriate services in place to meet their individual needs. (This advisory role takes place on an ad hoc basis - as and when needed - however, it does happen a number of times per year).</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All employees, who require additional assistance to carry out their duties, are provided with adequate support. 2. Managers are aware of their legal responsibilities.

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		In terms of applications, the total number of applications for Council jobs/positions was 1,350 for the reporting period. Of these applications, 57 were from people with disabilities. This resulted in four people with disabilities being successful in obtaining work with the Council.	
	Screen all new/revised policies to assess the significance of the policy on the disability duties	100% of new and revised policies screened for impact on disability duties	Council's proactive approach would ensure that all policies and services are accessible and inclusive to people with a disability.

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	Continue to deliver inclusive fitness/leisure programmes for everyone, including people with disabilities.	During the 2021/2022 reporting period, the Council continued to promote activities that are inclusive for all, including people with disabilities and/or access requirements.	Encourage people with disabilities to participate in fitness initiatives.
2	Improve facilities in Council parks and open spaces to ensure access and inclusion for children of all abilities	Consultation took place with the members of the Disability Advisory Group on the implementation of the Council's Play Park Strategy.	To promote inclusive play between children with and without a disability. Additionally this should allow more young people to avail of the play facilities within the District.

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

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
1	Report on the progress of the Disability Action Plan annually through the submission of an Annual Progress Report.	Annual Progress Report which is sent to the Equality Commission for NI, when approved by Council.	Report was sent to the Equality Commission (on time) in 2021.	Due to the nature of this action, it will always carry forward into the next financial year i.e. 2022/2023.
2	Assess physical access to Council venues.	This will primarily be achieved through Accessibility Audits and discussion with relevant groups (i.e. Disability Advisory Group and the Access Advisory Groups).	During the 2021/2022 reporting period, several initiatives were continued to improve access to Council venues for example, venue audits of Council venues for people with disabilities, etc. There were also consultation events with members of the DAG on specific Council projects including: town centre revitalisation, Assisted and Additional Bin Collection Services, development of a community garden area in Enniskillen, development of signage, amongst others.	Due to the nature of this action, it will always carry forward into the next reporting period.

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

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1	N/A	N/A
2		

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

- Annual Progress Reports.
- Updates provided to the Council's Disability Advisory Group.
- Reports presented to the Council's Policy and Resources Committee.

(b) Quantitative

- Participation figures for workshops.
- Attendance figures at events/training.

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 - However, a 12-week public consultation on the new Disability Action Plan commenced in January 2022. This new Disability Action Plan will be referenced in the Progress Report for the 2022/2023 period.

If yes please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1	N/A	N/A	N/A

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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?

N/A

ⁱ **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.

ⁱⁱ **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.

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

^{iv} **Regional**: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level

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