

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 2016-17


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

www.fermanaghomagh.com/equality

Signature:



Brendan Hegarty
Chief Executive

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 2016 and March 2017

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 2016-17, 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.

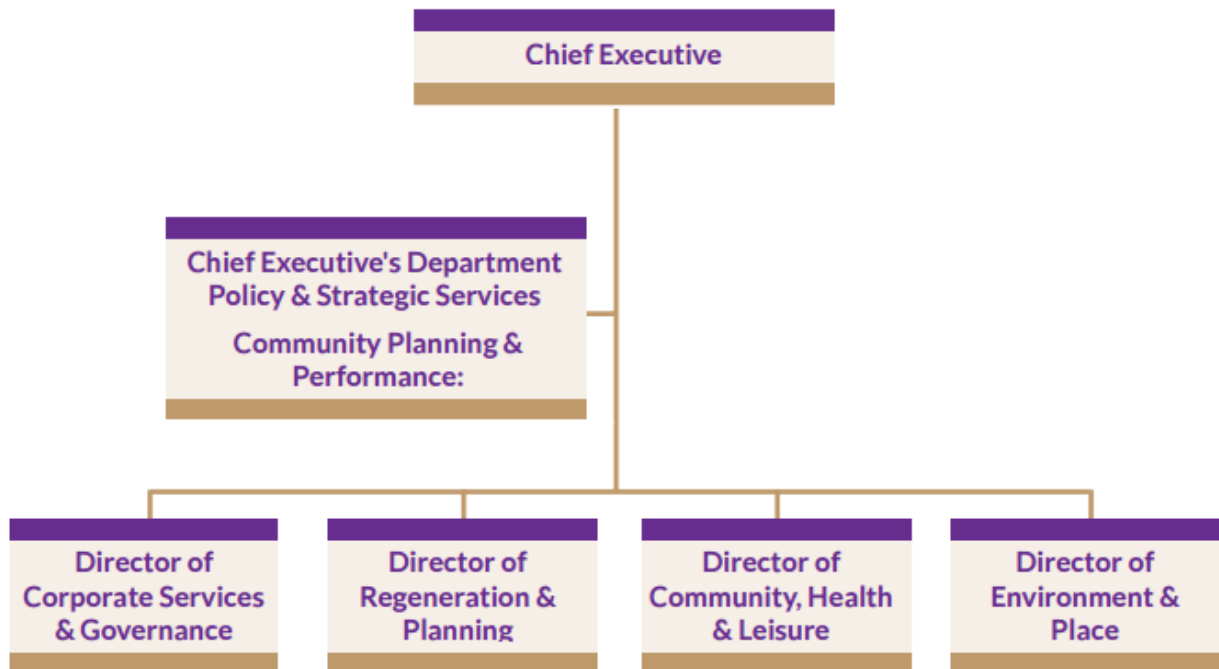
The most recent NISRA statistics show that the Council District is home to 115,799 people (updated on 22 June 2017), and is Northern Ireland's largest region in terms of land mass. However, with a population density of approximately 41 people per km², the Fermanagh and Omagh District is the most sparsely populated Council area in Northern Ireland.

As reported for the 2015/2016 period, since its commencement (April 2015) Fermanagh and Omagh District Council has continued to initiate many key policy and service delivery developments.

The Council has delivered on its responsibilities to ensure that statutory and regulatory functions are delivered to a high standard, whilst also incorporating the new functions that were delegated to Local District Councils on 1 April 2015.

During the 2016-2017 period, Fermanagh and Omagh District 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 regularly with the Senior Management Team, as well as reports being made to the Council's Policy and Resources Committee which are subsequently ratified by Council.

The organisational structure of the Council for the 2016-2017 period remains unchanged, and is demonstrated in the below diagram:



Equality Scheme

A significant amount of work was undertaken by Council Officers in the 2016-2017 period, in relation to finalising the Council’s Equality Scheme. The final Equality Scheme was ratified by the Council’s Elected Members at the full Council meeting on 3 January 2017, and was formally approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland on 22 February 2017.

Going forward, the responsibility for the implementation of the Equality Scheme lies with the Chief Executive, however the Policy and Strategic Services section will have a major role in relation to the co-ordination of the Scheme, for example, implementing training, impact assessments and so forth.

Following the approval of the Council’s Equality Scheme, it was included on the Council website alongside the other Equality information pages as well as being placed on the Employee Intranet for information and reference purposes.

The Equality Scheme sets out how Fermanagh and Omagh District Council proposes to fulfil its Section 75 statutory duties. During the 2016/2017 period, following approval, plans were put in place to facilitate the delivery of a Learning and Development programme for staff and Elected Members in the 2017/2018 period.

Lobbying / Consultation

The Council continued to lobby on a cross-Council, cross-border, basis in relation to many strategic issues. In total over the 2016-2017 period, the Council responded to 43 public consultation processes.

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

- The Northern Ireland Executive’s Draft Programme for Government (July 2016 and December 2016).

- Education Authority for Northern Ireland’s consultation for the ‘Online Application Process for Home to School Transport’.
- Eligibility Criteria for Free School Meals and School Uniform Grants.
- Western Health and Social Care Trust’s draft Corporate Plan (2017-2021).
- Multi-Agency Neglect Strategy (from a Child Safeguarding perspective).
- Local issues which affect various residents of the District for example: reduction in public services (such as a reduction in Library Opening Times, Educational Attainment issues and so forth).

Community Planning

Community Planning is a statutory duty which came into operation on 1 April 2015. Locally, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council is the lead partner and is responsible for making arrangements for Community Planning in the District, ensuring that partners work together with local communities to deliver better public services which meet local needs and improve the lives of local people.

In March 2017, the Community Plan for the District ‘Fermanagh and Omagh 2030’ was launched. It sets out the long-term, shared Vision and eight shared outcomes aimed at delivering improved public services and a better quality of life for all local people.

The ‘Fermanagh and Omagh 2030’ document was developed following an extensive co-design process which included significant community engagement, including a number of presentations and focus groups events within community venues. Community Planning events were very well attended, and presentations and focus groups being held with specifically targeted groups of people (e.g. Members of the Accessibility Steering Group and Disability Advisory Group, amongst others) to ensure sufficient representation.

The shared vision is of: ‘a welcoming, shared and inclusive Fermanagh and Omagh district where people and places are healthy, safe, connected and prosperous and where our outstanding natural, built and cultural heritage is cherished and sustainably managed’.

Corporate Plan Update

Following the development, and launch, of the ‘Fermanagh and Omagh 2030’ Community Plan, the Council has updated its Corporate Plan for the period 2017-2019 to take this into account.

The purpose of the Corporate Plan Update, for the period 2017-2019, is to demonstrate:

- The contribution which the Council will make towards delivery of the Community Plan for the District.
- How the Council will fulfil its statutory and other responsibilities.

The Corporate Plan Update therefore aligns the Council’s corporate priorities to the long-term strategic direction which is set out in the Community Plan.

Accessibility Information Event

In March 2016, the Policy and Strategic Services staff worked with the Access and Inclusion Officer to organise an event aimed specifically at people with disabilities, groups that work with (or represent) people with disabilities and their carers.

The event took place in the Bawnacre Centre (Irvinestown) - a central location within the District.

The event gave people an opportunity to feedback on Council services and facilities and any particular improvements they feel should be made – this feedback could be given anonymously, or by speaking to a member of the Council's Disability Advisory Group. There were also several other organisations, and service deliverers, in attendance to give out information to those in attendance.

Attendance at the event increased from previous events with 40 individuals attending, excluding representatives/staff from the eight organisations in attendance to provide information.

Feedback received included comments on:

- Playpark provision.
- Outdoor equipment.
- Public toilet / changing facilities.
- Car parking.

There was also feedback received on improving the Accessibility Information Event – with suggestions made to changing the time to suit more organisations/groups.

Local Development Plan

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council has responsibility for preparing a Local Development Plan for the District. This Local Development Plan will guide the future use of land in the District, and inform developers, members of the general public, communities, government, public bodies, representative organisations and other interests of the policy framework that is used to determine development proposals.

During the 2016/2017 reporting period substantial work was undertaken in relation to the Local Development Plan, including a substantial consultation process beginning on 3 October 2016 and closing on 28 November 2016. The results of this consultation procedure were then reported to Council in February 2017.

Elected Members and Civic Receptions

Throughout the last 12 months, both the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson have represented the Council at various events, both within and outside the District.

In total, there were approximately 190 events at which the Chairperson and/or Vice Chairperson were in attendance. These included: photo opportunities, launch of Council-organised (and Council-supported) events for example, the Christmas Lights Switch-On in both Enniskillen and Omagh, the Halloween Fireworks Displays in both Enniskillen and Omagh, the Accessibility Information Event in Irvinestown.

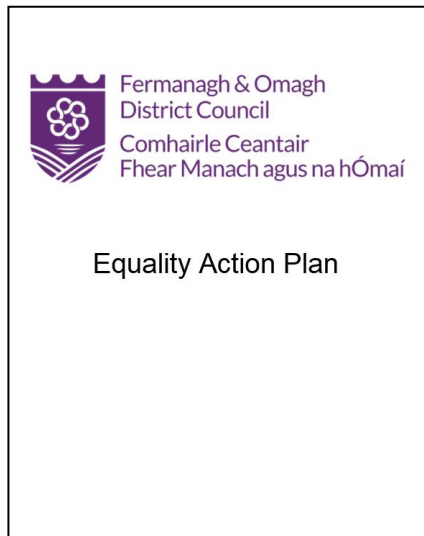
PART A

During the 2016/2017 reporting period, there were 10 Civic Receptions organised to recognise various achievements such as: sporting, cross community, youth, community, and volunteering.

Some examples of Civic Receptions include:

- Reception for Girlguiding Fermanagh.
- Reception for Homestart Staff.
- Reception for Breastfriends, Enniskillen.

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2016-17 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).



During the period 2016/2017, Council officers continued to deliver the actions contained within the Equality Action Plan.

The Council's Equality Action Plan states that the Council is committed to:

- Promoting Inclusivity and Diversity.
- Sustainable Development.
- Collaborative and partnership working (including locally, regionally and cross border).

As a result, the above-mentioned commitments are embedded into all Council Plans, Policies and Actions.

Within the Equality Action Plan, there were essentially five desired outcomes with various performance measures associated with each. The five outcomes include:

1. Establish an appropriate system to include and mainstream equality of opportunity at the strategic level of the council.
2. Put in place appropriate measures to remove barriers to accessing services which affect staff and services users with disabilities.
3. Put in place appropriate mechanisms for integrating both spoken, written and signed language forms in a way that best meets the needs of the local language communities.
4. Put in place appropriate systems to improve Equality Monitoring and Data Collection.
5. Raise levels of awareness and understanding amongst staff of the full range of equality services and activities.

During the 2016/2017 reporting period, there were several improvements and introductions made, in accordance with the outcomes of the Equality Action Plan.

In relation to the first outcome, '**Establish an appropriate system to include and mainstream equality of opportunity at the strategic level of the Council**', it has been met in a number of ways.

Firstly, the Policy and Strategic Services section has responsibility for the Equality function and is situated within the Chief Executives Directorate. The Head of Policy and Strategic Services reports directly to the Chief Executive and attends the Council's Senior Management Team which facilitates input at a key strategic level of Council business.

Equality Screening

The Council requires all Directorates and Services to undertake a Screening Process for all Policies (new and revised). This allows each Policy to be robustly assessed for any impacts upon Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations.

Equality Screening is undertaken for all Policies – whether they be internal Policies, impacting internally only (i.e. on staff), or externally impacting Policies (i.e. on members of the public).

The Equality Screening documentation for each Policy is publicly available as they are reported to the relevant Council Committee. The documentation is placed on the Council Meetings micro-site and this can be accessed at: <http://fermanaghomaggh.public-minutes.com/>

As part of the decision-making process, Elected Members are made aware of the potential impacts on Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations, as well as any mitigating actions that have been taken to overcome these impacts.

Another indicator showing that Equality of Opportunity playing a key strategic role is that fact that 'Assessment of the Implications for Equality and Good Relations' is a mandatory item on all reports which are presented to Council Committees for consideration and/or approval.

Publication of Equality Screening Reports

As stated within the Equality Scheme (approved by the Equality Commission on 22 February 2017), Fermanagh and Omagh District Council is committed to publishing its Equality Screening Reports bi-annually, outlining all Policies that have been Screened for Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations during that six month period.

During the 2016/2017 period, the Council published its Equality Screening Reports for consultation in both May and October 2016, inviting comments, feedback and queries. The information was published as follows:

- Sent to all individuals and organisations listed on the Equality Consultation Database (via email or post as per their preferred method of contact).
- Included on the Council website – within the 'Current Consultation' section.
- Promoted via the Council's Social Media channels (Facebook and Twitter).

Equality Screening Forms

Taking on board comments from Elected Members, Equality Commission and consultees the Council slightly amended its Equality Screening Matrix form to replicate the recently approved Equality Scheme.

The questions now posed in the Screening Document are:

1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 categories?
2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within any of the Section 75 categories?
3. Are there opportunities, without prejudice to the equality of opportunity duty, to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

The document then contains additional considerations including:

- Multiple Identity.
- Is there an opportunity to better promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities by altering the policy or working with others in government or the wider community?
- Is there an opportunity to encourage people with disabilities to participate in public life by altering the policy or working with others in government or the wider community?

In terms of the second outcome within the Council's Equality Action Plan '**Put in place appropriate measures to remove barriers to accessing services which affect staff and service users with disabilities**', there have been several programmes, projects and measures put in place within the 2016/2017 reporting period to aid with the achievement of this outcome.

Firstly, as reported in the 2015/2016 report the Council formed three groups to meet regularly to discuss barriers to, and access to, information and/or services. These three groups are:

- Disability Advisory Group.
- Access and Inclusion Steering Group.
- Arts and Disability Advisory Group (Strule Arts Centre).

These groups have met regularly during the 2016/2017 reporting period, usually on a bi-monthly basis.

The work of the Steering Groups has resulted in several initiatives being implemented over the last 12 months, including:

- 'Mystery Shopper' reviews for both Ardhoven Theatre (Enniskillen) and Strule Arts Centre (Omagh).
- Arts and Disability Equality Charter:
 - Strule Arts Centre receiving a 'Plaque of Excellence'.
 - Enniskillen Castle Museum receiving the Charter Award.
 - Ardhoven Theatre receiving a Certificate of Commencement.
- Extending the Personal Assistance Support Scheme (PASS) to Enniskillen Castle Museums.

In addition to the projects mentioned above, there were several other projects delivered by Fermanagh and Omagh District Council in relation to achieving Outcome 2. These are outlined below.

Accessibility Information Event

In March 2017, the Policy and Strategic Services staff worked with the Access and Inclusion Officer to organise an event aimed specifically at people with disabilities, groups that work with (or represent) people with disabilities and their carers. The event took place in the Bawnacre Centre (Irvinestown) - a central location within the District.

The event gave people an opportunity to feedback on Council services and facilities and any particular improvements they feel should be made. This feedback could be given anonymously, or by speaking to a member of the Council's Disability Advisory Group. There were also several other organisations in attendance to provide information to those in attendance.

Attendance at the event increased from previous years with 40 individuals attending, excluding representatives/staff from the eight organisations in attendance to provide information.

Feedback received included comments on:

- Playpark provision.
- Outdoor equipment.
- Public toilet / changing facilities.
- Car parking.

These comments were then reported to the Disability Advisory Group and forwarded on to the relevant service and/or department.

Improved Accessibility at Annual Council-Organised Events

A number of initiatives were put in place at events, organised by Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, which were aimed at providing better access for people with disabilities and particular access requirements.

These included:

- Areas for people with disabilities and/or access issues.
- 'Quiet Spaces', away from the crowds, for anyone that needed to use them.
- The use of Sign Language Interpreters (both BSL and ISL) – signing the words of speakers, as well as any songs that were being played.

Events which benefited from these provisions included the Christmas Lights Switch On Events (in both Enniskillen and Omagh), the Halloween Fireworks Displays (in both Enniskillen and Omagh), the St Patrick's Day Parade in Omagh and the Summer Carnival in Omagh.

Advice on the route, and accessibility issues, was also given to the Council Officers organising the annual Enniskillen 10K Road Race event – by the Access and Inclusion Officer and an Independent Member of the Council's Disability Advisory Group.

Access to Online Information

Following a consultation process in the 2015/2016 reporting period, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council made a commitment to improve the accessibility to its website. As a result of this consultation process, it became apparent that the

Google Translate function which was on the website, at that time, did not accurately translate large pieces of text into a number of other languages.

As a result, in May 2016 the Council procured a new Accessibility and Translation tool for the Council's website to replace the existing Google Translate function.

The new Accessibility and Translation tool now allows website users to

- Translate entire webpages (accurately) into 97 different languages.
- Read webpages aloud in a human-sounding voice.
- Read PDFs in their accessible formats.
- Highlight each word as it is spoken, to show users where you are on the page.
- Magnify text to a user's preferred font size and font style.
- Convert 'selected text' into MP3 Audio format files.
- Mask information on the screen, in order to help users focus on a particular area.

The improvements assist several groups of people including people who have a visual impairment or sight loss, people with dyslexia as well as those for whom English is not a first language.

The new software enables more individuals to be able to obtain information on the Council's website, as well as being part of the Council's continuous commitment to improving access to information.

Delivery of Disability Awareness Training to Council Employees

During the 2016/2017 period, there were a variety of training sessions arranged for Council employees in terms of awareness raising and accessibility – both in terms of service delivery and venues.

The certified training that was delivered is as follows:

Training Type	Number of Training Sessions Organised	Number of Employees Trained
Sign Language	2	10
Autism Awareness	2	20
Deaf Awareness	2	12

This followed on directly from an extensive programme of Disability Awareness Training in the 2015/2016 period – including Learning Disability Awareness, Visual Awareness, Dementia Awareness.

Going forward into the 2017/2018 reporting period a new Equality Action Plan and Disability Action Plan will be developed, resulting in a new Learning and Development Plan for employees and Elected Members.

Access Guides

In the 2015/2016 Progress Report, the Council outlined that Access Guides were developed for the Ardhowen Theatre, Strule Arts Centre, Enniskillen Castle Museums and the Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark.

Following on from this, during the 2016/2017 reporting period Visual Guides were developed for each of the above venues.

These Visual Guides take the form of video clips, of each venue, and will allow people to obtain a visual understanding of each venue before visiting. They will outline reception areas, where to go and what to expect.

The Visual Guides will be helpful to all Section 75 groups, however they will be of particular assistance to people with disabilities and their carers.

Inclusive Leisure and Everybody Active Programme

The Council's Leisure, Recreation and Sport Section has been delivering an Inclusive Leisure Programme since 2006/2007. The Programme includes a variety of low impact sports and activities which help people with disabilities lead a more active and healthy lifestyle. During the 2016/2017 period, activities that were delivered included: Kurling (a form of the original curling game), Boccia and Chi-Me.

Other activities which have also been delivered through the programme include, archery, golf, canoeing and inclusive walks.

In total during 2016/2017, there have been approximately 799 individuals who have taken part in the Inclusive Leisure Programme.

The Everybody Active Programme, encourages people of all abilities to be more active by offering a wide range of activities in suitable venues and places. Both the Inclusive Leisure Programme and the Everybody Active Programme is for all people, including people with disabilities, and is designed to improve health, wellbeing and quality of life regardless of ability.

Western Home Environmental Assessment Project (WHEAP)

The WHEAP Project, delivered by the Council's Environmental Health Service, aims to reduce home accidents, fuel poverty and fear of crime - as well as improving the physical, and mental, health and well-being of the local community.

There were 623 home safety assessments carried out in 2016/2017. Of these, there were 137 assessments undertaken in the homes of 'at risk' rural dwellers, including people with disabilities.

The WHEAP Team offer practical advice on home safety, home security and energy efficiency. In addition, the WHEAP Team also distributes home safety equipment which is designed to reduce the risk of an accident. This equipment is distributed following an assessment of need. The equipment includes: Stairgates, Fireguards, Blind Cord Safety Devices, Falls Prevention Packs and Carbon Monoxide Alarms.

The WHEAP Team will also signpost to other agencies where relevant, for example to those in need of assistance with benefits..

Affordable Warmth Scheme

The Affordable Warmth Scheme is funded by the Department for Communities (DfC) to assist in tackling fuel poverty, and is delivered in partnership with the Environmental Health Service and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive grant offices.

It targets households identified as being at most risk of living in fuel poverty, delivering energy efficiency improvement measures to qualifying households. Measures include cavity wall and loft insulation. In addition, boiler replacement or upgrades are available for householders who:

- Are over 65 years of age
- Have a child under 16 years of age.
- Receive disability living allowance.
- Have an existing central heating boiler that is over 15 years old.

In 2016/2017, there were 494 surveys completed and forwarded on to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

Outcome three within the Equality Action Plan is: **'Put in place appropriate mechanisms for integrating both the spoken, written and sign language forms in a way that best meets the needs of local language communities'**.

As stated in the 2015/2016 report, the Council developed, consulted upon and ratified two language policies, namely: Irish Language Policy and the Ulster Scots Policy.

During the 2016/2017 period, the Council continued to implement these policies as well as the pre-existing Linguistic Diversity Policy.

A cross-party working group was developed to discuss issues surrounding languages, and this group will meet as required. So far the working group has met to discuss the outcomes from the consultation processes for the Irish Language and Ulster Scots Policies, as well as to advise the aforementioned Website Accessibility Tool which offers a range of services including language translation.

Sign Language Interpreters have been provided at relevant events including:

- Christmas Lights Switch On (Enniskillen and Omagh).
- Halloween Fireworks Display (Enniskillen and Omagh).
- Accessibility Information Event.

The Council's Good Relations and Arts and Heritage Sections have also worked with a number of groups in terms of their linguistic needs and providing programmes/resources to the local communities. Programmes/resources which were provided include:

- Two ten-week courses of ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages).
- A ten-week Irish Language course.
- An eight-week Irish Language Conversation Circle.

- Open Heritage Weekend.
- Two 'Intensive Language Days' for 55 people.

Outcome four of the Equality Action Plan states that the Council will '**Put in place appropriate systems to improve Equality Monitoring and Data Collection**'.

Within the previous reporting period, it was outlined that Officers had undertaken an audit to understand what types of Monitoring Processes were being undertaken by the Council, as well as the types of Monitoring Information was being collected.

During the 2016/2017 period, Officers undertook three projects in terms of Equality Monitoring. These included:

- Undertaking an Equality Monitoring process with Elected Members and reporting (anonymously) on the Section 75 categories.
- Assessing the Equality Monitoring processes in relation to the Council's Grant Aid Funding.
- Undertaking an Equality Monitoring process with Council staff, which will be collated and reported upon in the 2017/2018 period.

Equality Monitoring Procedures

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council fulfilled its commitment to undertake an Equality Monitoring process in the following areas, namely:

- Equality Monitoring of Elected Members.
- Equality Monitoring of Grant Aid Funding.

Each of these processes were completed within the 2016/2017 period and were assessed and reported as appropriate.

The results of the Equality Monitoring of Elected Members is available online, as it was reported to the Council's Policy and Resources Committee in September 2016. The Equality Monitoring Report can be found here: <http://www.fermanaghomagh.com/your-council/equality/equality-monitoring/>

Outcome five of the Council's Equality Action Plan is, '**To raise levels of awareness and understanding among staff of the full range of equality services and activities**'.

During 2016/2017, this outcome was achieved in a variety of ways including through:

- Regular Induction Training (for new employees).
- Use of the Intranet.
- Approval of the Council's Equality Scheme.

The Council, at regular intervals, organises Generic Induction Training for all new employees (during that period). At this training the Head of Policy and Strategic Services delivers a presentation, which includes information on Equality.

Policy and Strategic Services staff also worked to update the Council's Employee Intranet and public-facing website to include up-to-date information on Equality issues – e.g. Equality Screening, Monitoring, Impact Assessment, Events, Case Studies.

Following the approval of the Council's Equality Scheme (February 2017), it was included upon the Council website alongside the other Equality information pages. The Scheme was also included on the Employee Intranet for information and reference purposes.

During the 2016/2017 period, and following the approval of the Council's Equality Scheme, plans were put in place to allow the delivery of a Learning and Development programme for staff and Elected Members in the 2017/2018 period.

PART A

3 Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2016-17 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

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

Please provide any details and examples:

The Council's Equality Scheme was approved by the Equality Commission on 22 February 2017.

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:

N/A

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):*

N/A

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

N/A

Other *(please specify and give details):*

N/A

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 2016-17 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 Duties were integrated within job descriptions and personal specifications across the Council – this was in place for the 2015/2016 reporting period and was continued for the 2016/2017 period.

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2016-17 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 a number of Performance Plans, and Service Delivery and Improvement Plans, throughout Council. Each Plan contains a commitment to “actively engage with customers and potential customers to ensure services delivered are accessible and focused on their needs and preferences.” Below are some examples:

- All Directorates and Services are required to collect and collate Monitoring Information for their programmes, projects, or other, as necessary. This would include Monitoring the Programmes/Projects for Section 75 involvement as well as ensuring that all Section 75 categories needs are being met.

- The Council's Policy and Strategic Services section has the Section 75 Statutory Duties embedded within its Performance Plans to include:
 - Progress Reporting.
 - Equality Scheme.
 - Public Consultations and the Council Equality Consultation Database.
 - Equality Monitoring.
 - Implementing and Monitoring the Council's Equality Action Plan.
 - Equality Screening, as required.
- All performance measure relating to Section 75 statutory duties are integrated into the Corporate Plan Update (2017-2019), as well as playing a key part within strategic planning. The Corporate Plan Update (2017-2019) states that 'Equality, Inclusivity and Diversity' is a shared value which will guide and influence the work of the Council.

In the 2016-17 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 2016-17 report
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Objectives, targets and performance measures relating to the Section 75 statutory duties are integrated into the Corporate Plan Update (2017-2019), as well as playing a key part within strategic planning.

Within the Corporate Plan Update document, it is stated that 'Equality, Inclusivity and Diversity' is a shared value which will guide and influence the work of the Council.

The Equality Scheme, the Equality Action Plan and the responsibility for their implementation lies with the Chief Executives Directorate, however all Directorates and Services have responsibilities for various aspects of Equality and the Equality Scheme going forward.

The fact that the Head of Policy and Strategic Services attends all Senior Management Team Meetings, as well as Equality Screening being mandatory for

all new/revised Policies demonstrates the importance of Section 75 in relation to the Council's Strategic Management and Planning.

Equality action plans/measures

7 Within the 2016-17 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:

1

Actions ongoing:

4

Actions to commence:

0

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

Within the Council's Equality Action Plan there are five outcomes. These are outlined in response to question two. The completed action is in relation to outcome four 'Improving Equality Monitoring and Data Collection'.

The other four outcomes, despite the fact that several projects/initiatives were completed and delivered, the outcomes will remain ongoing until the development of the next Equality Action Plan – within 2017/2018 reporting period.

8 Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2016-17 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

N/A – There were no amendments made to the Council's Equality Action Plan during the 2016/2017 period. A new Equality Action Plan will be developed and consulted upon in the 2017/2018 period.

9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2016-17 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 2016-17 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:

During the 2016/2017 period the Council undertook a number of consultations, including:

- 'Fermanagh and Omagh 2030' Community Plan.
- Local Development Plan Preferred Options Paper.
- Corporate Improvement Objectives for 2017/2018.
- Bi-annual Equality Screening Reports.

During the process of each of these consultations, various methodologies and strategies were used to capture the views of relevant organisations and individuals.

Some examples of good practice in relation to Fermanagh and Omagh District Council are as follows:

- 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.
- 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 and so forth).
- 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.

- 12** In the 2016-17 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
- 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*):

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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 specific groups of people from specific Section 75 Groups we have found that varying the method of consultation is effective. For example, when we specifically need to speak to a group of people who may have a disability, we will use focus groups in by attending and presenting at either the Access and Inclusion Steering Group or the Disability Advisory Group. This ensures that we are speaking to people who either have a disability, or work with people with disabilities.

As part of the Council's Equality Consultation Database, there are individuals and organisations which represent each of the Section 75 Groupings. The Equality Consultation Database is regularly updated throughout the year, both with additions and removing those who no longer wish to be included.

- 13** Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2016-17 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The Council's Equality Scheme was approved in February 2017 and as such all awareness, learning and development opportunities will be undertaken in the 2017/2018 period.

However, information has been made available to all Council employees and Elected Members.

During the 2016/2017 period, regular correspondence was sent to members of the Council's Equality Consultation Database – including for all public consultation procedures, publication of Screening reports.

During all correspondence, the opportunity was given for consultees to provide feedback or to request removal from the database.

- 14** Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2016-17 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)

All Equality Screening Templates for each policy are published on the Council's website. Once the associated Policy is brought to a Council Committee for approval, the Equality Screening Template is attached to it. All Screening Templates are brought to the attention of the Council's Elected Members and can be found on the Council's website alongside all other Committee Reports at: <http://fermanaghomagh.public-minutes.com/>

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All Equality Screening Templates are issued for consultation twice per year. The publication of these Templates appear in the 'current Consultations' section at: <http://www.fermanaghomagh.com/your-council/consultations/>

Further information on Equality is also available to members of the public via the Council website at: <http://www.fermanaghomagh.com/your-council/equality/>

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

13

16 Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2016-17:

2	Policy consultations conducted with screening assessment presented.
0	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:

N/A

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:

N/A

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 2016-17 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

N/A – for 2016/2017 period. All EQIAs undertaken by the Council are published on the Council website. EQIAs that took place in the 2015/2016 are included on the Council website.

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 2016-17 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No, already taken place |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No, scheduled to take place at a later date | <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable |

Please provide any details:

An audit of Monitoring Data held by the Council was undertaken in the 2015/2016 period and as a direct result of this three Monitoring projects were taken forward in the 2016/2017 period, namely:

1. Equality Monitoring of Elected Representatives.
2. Equality monitoring of Council Staff.
3. Equality Monitoring of Council Services i.e. Funding and Investment.

In addition, the Council monitored the various EQIAs that were undertaken in the 2015/2016 period. An EQIA report was developed and presented to the Council's Policy and Resources Committee for consideration. This report document is available online at: <http://www.fermanaghmagh.com/your-council/equality/equality-impact-assessment/>

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

- | | | |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable |
|------------------------------|--|---|

Please provide any details and examples:

N/A

22 Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2016-17 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:

- Equality Monitoring of Elected Members.
- Equality Monitoring of Council Services – i.e. Funding and Investment.

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 2016-17, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

During the 2016/2017 period, several training sessions were arranged for Council employees, including:

- Disability Equality Training.
- Sign Language Training.
- Autism Awareness Training.
- Deaf Awareness Training.
- Code of Conduct Training.
- Sustainable 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:

Examples of training which worked well for staff, during the 2016/2017 period, includes:

Autism Awareness Training: Designed to equip employees and managers with the knowledge and skills to effectively engage with people with autism.

- Building an understanding of Autism – causes, behaviours and so forth.
- Increasing skills / knowledge.
- Increasing employee and customer confidence.

Disability Equality Training: Facilitated by a person with a disability, the training explored the concept of people being disabled by society's barriers and attitudes, highlighting the role of the organisation in the removal of those barriers and in the changing of attitudes.

- Elements of customer care, etiquette, appropriate language.
- Basic Disability Equality.
- Putting policy into best practice.

Sign Language Training: Facilitated by a person with a hearing impairment, the session explored various barriers for people with a hearing impairment, attitudes and an understanding of deaf culture.

- Basic signing – basic words, finger-spelling, phrases, etc.
- Understanding of deaf culture.

- Access to information – formats for people with hearing impairments.

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

- 26 Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2016-17, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

During the 2016/2017 period, there were a number of improvements in relation to Access to Information and Services.

- **Council Website:** The procurement of the Website Translation Tool, has made the website (and Council information) more accessible for people who do not speak English as a first language, as well as for people with visual impairments, dyslexia and so forth.
- **Accessibility Audits:** The completion of Accessibility Audits within Council venues have led to a number of improvements including:
 - Location of information, the organisation of specific areas.
 - Availability of facilities – e.g. larger areas, quiet spaces, accessible areas.
 - Provision of Sign Language Interpreters as required.

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

- 27 How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2016-17?

Insert number here:

0

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

The Council is not aware of any complaints under Section 75, and is not aware of any complaints referred to the Equality Commission under Section 75, during the period 1 April 2016 - 31 March 2017. As stated previously, the Council did not have an approved Equality Scheme for the much of the 2016/2017 period.

Section 3: Looking Forward

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

The Council's Equality Scheme was approved on 22 February 2017, therefore the Five Year Review will not be required until 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*)

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Fermanagh and Omagh District Council will remain focused on all of the above, particularly due to the fact that the Equality Scheme has only been approved for approximately four months.

There will be training, learning and development opportunities arranged for employees and Elected Members in areas such as Equality and Disability, with particular focus on Autism and Dementia. This will be completed within the 2017/2018 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 (2016-17) 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:

12

Fully achieved

2

Partially achieved

0

Not achieved

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	Participation on Disability Advisory Group and Access and Inclusion Steering Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bi-monthly meetings of the Disability Advisory Group. • Bi-monthly meetings of the Access and Inclusion Steering Group. • Organisation of Information Events for people with Disabilities. 	Improved participation by people with disabilities in Public Life.

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

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Autism Awareness Training	<p>Designed to equip employees and managers with the knowledge and skills to effectively engage with people with autism.</p> <p>20 employees took part in the training courses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better understanding of Autism – impacts, behaviours. • Increasing skills / knowledge. • Increasing employee and customer confidence.
2	Disability Equality Training	<p>Facilitated by a person with a disability, the training explored the concept of people being disabled by society’s barriers and attitudes, highlighting the role of the organisation in the removal of those barriers and in the changing of attitudes.</p> <p>18 employees took part in the training session</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better understanding of elements of customer care, etiquette, appropriate language. • Awareness of Basic Disability Equality. • Putting policy into best practice.
3	Sign Language Training	<p>Facilitated by a person with a hearing impairment, the session explored various barriers for people with a hearing impairment, attitudes and an understanding of deaf culture.</p> <p>10 employees took part in the training sessions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic signing – basic words, finger-spelling, phrases, etc. • Understanding of deaf culture. • Access to information – formats for people with hearing impairments.

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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	Leadership and Commitment Publication and promotion of the Disability Action Plan	The plan is published on the Council website, and is available in standard, easy read formats or other formats upon request.	The Plan is reflective of the priorities of people with disabilities and is widely publicised, thereby increasing awareness and confidence.
2	Leadership and Commitment Provide training on the disability	Training occurred for 42 employees in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability Equality Training. • Deaf Awareness Training. • Autism Awareness Training. • Sign Language Training. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase awareness of disability issues. 2. Promotion of Positive attitudes towards people with disabilities.
3	Service Delivery and Customer Care Improve access to the Council website and online information.	The procurement and implementation of the Website Accessibility Software makes online information more accessible for a range of people (from various Section 75 Groups) e.g. people with a visual impairment, people with dyslexia as well as people who may not speak English as a first language.	Improved accessibility for all.
4	Employment and Training Deliver awareness sessions to people with disabilities about job opportunities within the Council, including the application process.	During the reporting period, the Council's Human Resources team made a presentation to the Council's Disability Advisory Group – outlining how to apply for jobs with the Council and the various support mechanisms that can be used, particularly for people	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. People with disabilities are encouraged to apply for posts within the Council. 2. The number of applications for posts within the Council from people with disabilities is increased.

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		<p>with a disability and/or access requirements. This followed on from the other information events.</p> <p>During the reporting period there were a total of 56 applications for positions from people with disabilities. Of these 56 applications, 5 individuals were appointed.</p> <p>The total number of applicants for jobs, within the Council, during 2016/2017 period was 1,493.</p>	
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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	Host events to encourage positive interaction between people with disabilities and those without.	<p>10 Civic Receptions over the course of the 2016/2017 reporting period.</p> <p>There was a Community Recognition Event (February 2017) organised within the District, which recognised the impact individuals play in the local community for people with/without disabilities.</p>	Promotion of positive attitudes towards people with disabilities.
2	<p>Service Delivery and Customer Care</p> <p>Work with volunteering organisations to promote</p>	A new Volunteering Policy was developed for the which will help to safeguard the rights of volunteers –	Increase the number of people with disabilities participating as volunteers

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	volunteering opportunities for people with disabilities.	including those acting as volunteers on Working Groups such as the Disability Advisory group, the Access and Inclusion Steering Group.	
3	<p>Employment and Training Provide advice to both managers and employees about any necessary, reasonable adjustments which may be required.</p>	<p>1. During this reporting period, there were 20 employees who reduced their working hours. This would include employees who had caring arrangements for children, people with disabilities.</p> <p>2. 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>	<p>1. All employees, who require additional assistance to carry out their duties, are provided with adequate support.</p> <p>2. Managers are aware of their legal responsibilities.</p>

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

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1	<p>Service Delivery and Customer Care Monitor funding allocated to voluntary organisations, to ensure that there is equity amongst organisations run by/for people with disabilities.</p>	<p>Equality Monitoring Forms are submitted for each Grant Application. Going forward, Monitoring Forms for organisations that were unsuccessful will be assessed along with those that were successful to ensure that there are no under-represented group.</p>	<p>Support the development of community and voluntary sector organisation run by/for people with disabilities.</p>
2	<p>Involvement in Community Activities Continue to implement the Inclusive Fitness Initiative.</p>	<p>Activities delivered included: Kurling, Boccia and Chi-Me, Archery, Golf, Canoeing and Inclusive Walks. During the 2016/2017 period there were approximately 799 individuals who have taken part in the Inclusive Leisure Programme.</p>	<p>Encourage people with disabilities to partake in fitness initiatives.</p>

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

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestonesvi / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
2	<p>Service Delivery and Customer Care Review access to Council facilities.</p>	<p>Make the Built Environment more accessible for all.</p>	<p>During the 2016/2017 period, the Council's Accommodation Strategy was commenced. This included a survey of staff, buildings, facilities as well as infrastructure needed. This Strategy will</p>	<p>Due to the nature of this action, it is to be carried forward into the 2017/2018 reporting period.</p>

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			<p>continue into the 2017/2018 reporting period.</p> <p>The Accommodation Strategy takes into account the accessibility of venues, buildings and the needs of various customers, staff, and so forth.</p>	
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4. Please outline what action measures **have not been achieved** and the reasons why.

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

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

It is anticipated that Accessibility Audits will continue into the next reporting period. These Accessibility Audits will be undertaken in various Council venues/facilities and will help to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities and/or access requirements are being met, as well as ensuring any underlying issues are picked up.

(b) Quantitative

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Following the Equality Monitoring processes that were undertaken during the 2016/2017 period, the information collated on Council Employees will be collated and reported upon within the 2017/2018 period. This information will be used as a baseline (along with the other Monitoring Information collated) for future Monitoring procedures. The information collated will also be used to assist the Council's Human Resources section to update the HR records of employees, ensuring they are up-to-date and correct.

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 - The Disability Action Plan was developed within the 2015/2016 period. It was subject to a full public consultation process (12 weeks) and was then subject to approval and ratification of the Council's Elected Members.

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council will be reviewing and developing a new Disability Action Plan within the 2017/2018 period. This will be subject to a full public consultation period and approval/ratification by Elected Members. It is anticipated that the new Disability Action Plan will align with the Corporate Plan Update and run until 2019.

If yes please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1	N/A	N/A	N/A
2			
3			
4			

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5			
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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

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council will be reviewing and developing a new Equality Action Plan within the 2017/2018 period. This will be subject to a full public consultation period and approval/ratification by Elected Members. It is anticipated that the new Equality Action Plan will align with the Corporate Plan Update and run until 2019.

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.

^{vi} **Milestones** – Please outline what part progress has been made towards the particular measures; even if full output or outcomes/ impact have not been achieved.