

# Fermanagh and Omagh District Council



## Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties Annual Progress Report

### Contact:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and Equality Scheme</li></ul>	<p><b>Name:</b> Margaret McMahon (Head of Policy and Strategic Services) or Finbar Maguire (Policy Officer)</p> <p><b>Telephone:</b> 0300 303 1777</p> <p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:margaret.mcmahon@fermanaghomagh.com">margaret.mcmahon@fermanaghomagh.com</a> or <a href="mailto:finbar.maguire@fermanaghomagh.com">finbar.maguire@fermanaghomagh.com</a></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Action Plan</li></ul>	<p>As above <input type="checkbox"/> (double click to open)</p> <p><b>Name:</b></p> <p><b>Telephone:</b></p> <p><b>Email:</b></p>

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

Please insert link or details here

### 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 2020 and March 2021**

## **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 2020-21, 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 (mid-year population estimates released in June 2020) demonstrate that the Council District was home to 117,397 people on 30 June 2019. This represents a growth of 600 individuals from the previous set of statistics, or 0.5%. This growth in population could be driven by:

- A natural change of 487 (1,413 births and 926 deaths).
- Net migration of 41 people.
- Other changes of +34 individuals.

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 (3,000km<sup>2</sup>) and the smallest in terms of population density (38.8 people per km<sup>2</sup>).

As reported in the four previous Annual Progress Reports (2015/2016, 2016/2017, 2017/2018, 2018/2019 and 2019/2020), 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 2020/2020 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 Council).

A review of the organisational structure of the Council commenced during the reporting period and the implementation of that reorganisation will be carried through to 2021/22 when a more detailed description will be given.

#### **Delivery and Policy Developments**

During the 2020/2021 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'.

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

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

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

#### **Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan**



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

The Council's Equality Action Plan not only contributes to the Council's compliance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, but it also provides framework guidance to Council actions - setting out how the Council plans to address inequalities as it strives to create a District where people choose to live, work and visit.

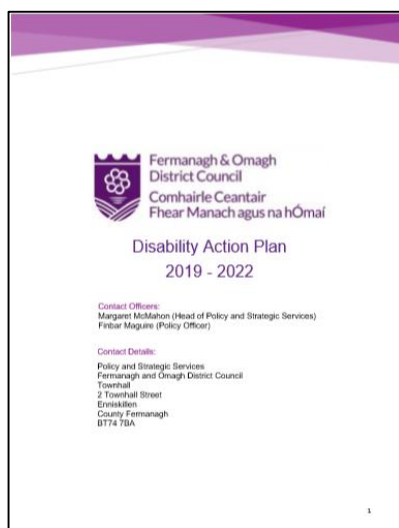
Further information on the Council's Equality Action Plan and its actions, will be referenced in detail later within this report.

Officers have planned to review the Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan within the next reporting period, and this will include developing a new document and consulting widely for 12 weeks.

As outlined within the Equality Scheme, Screening Reports were issued on a bi-annual basis outlining the various policies which had been screened during the previous six-month period.

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

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

The Council also plans to review and undertake a 12-week consultation period to develop a new Disability Action Plan in the next reporting period. This new Disability Action Plan will complement the new Equality Scheme and the new Equality Action Plan.

### Equality Screening

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

- Fleet Strategy
- Play Park Strategy
- Corporate Sponsorship Policy
- Procurement Policy

For a full list of the policies screened over the 2020/2021 reporting period, please visit: <https://www.fermanaghomagh.com/your-council/policies/equality/policy-screening/>

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

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

#### **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 2020/2021 period, the Council responded to 6 public consultation processes.

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

- The Programme for Government Outcomes Framework.
- The Regulations and Codes of Practice for Special Educational Needs.
- The Call for Evidence on the Review of the PIP Process.
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive's Older People's Housing Strategy.

#### **Elected Members and Civic Receptions**



2020/2021 was the second reporting period of the four-year Council term, and the term 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 no Civic Receptions held during the period.

However, throughout the year the Chairs and Vice Chair represented the Council at many events. In total, there approximately 92 events and these comprised of both online and in-person events and photo opportunities.

Examples of these include:

- Raising awareness of Dementia on World Alzheimer's Day and Month.
- Visiting local Vaccination Centres to see, first hand, those that are on the front line of the pandemic.
- Recognising the work of local community organisations in response to the pandemic as well as various requests to the public to continue to follow public health guidelines.
- Publicising the various grant and funding schemes available.

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

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

- Supporting local businesses, particularly in light of the impact of the pandemic.
- Launching the Council's Walking Challenge.



### Disability Advisory Group



There were four meetings of the Disability Advisory Group during the 2020/2021 reporting period. The Chair of the Disability Advisory Group for the period was Councillor Victor Warrington and the Vice Chair was Dermot Devlin (a volunteer Member).

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

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

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 2020/2021 reporting period, the Disability Advisory Group undertook some key pieces of work including:

- Providing feedback on access to Council facilities and venues for people with disabilities including:
  - Riverside Walkway in Omagh.
  - Enniskillen Public Realm Scheme
  - Renovations to Council facilities
  - Accessible changing facilities within Omagh Leisure Complex
  - Advising on the equipment, and placing of equipment, for the Councils new Changing Places facilities.
- Developing an annual Action Plan for the Group and its Members.
- Advising on and delivering Awareness Raising Training to Council employees and Elected Members.
- Piloting, and continuing, a 12-month trial for a Sign Video Relay System – both online and for individuals when they visit Council offices.

### International Day for People with Disabilities



To celebrate International Day for people with Disabilities in December 2020, the Council organised a week long series of events including a virtual conference, six virtual awareness raising events and five virtual workshops. All events coincided with the theme 'not all disabilities are visible'.

The conference related to Mental Health During the Pandemic - it consisted of a series of presentations including the Mental Health Champion for Northern Ireland and the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.



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

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

The six awareness raising sessions were:

- Brain Injury Awareness Raising
- Overcoming Communication Barriers with RNID
- Visual Impairment Awareness Raising with RNIB
- Learning Disability Awareness
- Deafblind Awareness
- Autism Awareness

In total, there were 198 participants throughout the week.

#### **Changing Places Facilities**

During the reporting period (2020/2021), the Council continued to progress work in relation to providing Changing Places facilities in refurbished Council venues where possible.

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.

Members of the Disability Advisory Group were consulted on all of these facilities and the works were completed in the next reporting period.

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2020-21 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

As mentioned previously, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council consulted upon a new Equality Action Plan between September 2019 and December 2019. The new Equality Action Plan was approved and ratified by Council in January 2020.

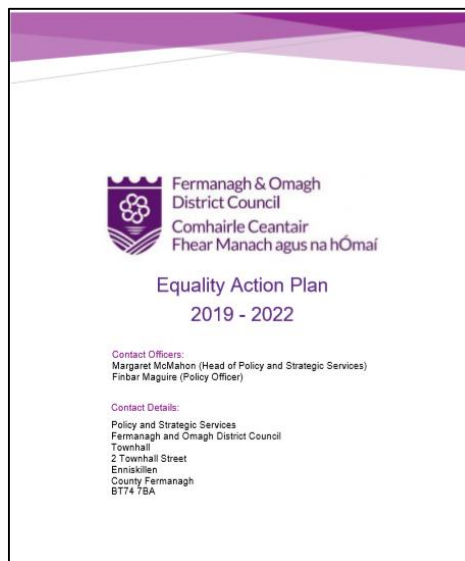
**Link to the Committee Report:** <https://fermanaghomagh.public-minutes.com/#0c24ee4684a4324ff310cf2449121a59>

**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.

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2020-21 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

**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.

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.

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, significant changes were made to the way in which the Council undertakes consultation in response to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent restrictions on face-to-face meetings. As a result, for the first time, online consultation events were arranged, targeted sessions with young people were organised and primary school pupils were targeted with events/competitions. Consultees who would usually provide feedback on a one-to-one basis, were encouraged to give their feedback whether by telephone or by virtual meetings.

There is one action within this theme which has yet to commence; this related to the review process and the subsequent development/consultation for a new Equality Scheme for the Council. This is scheduled to take place in the next reporting period - 2021/2022.

### **Strategic Theme 2: Accessible Services**

This theme contained four actions, two of which have been completed and a further two which are ongoing into the next reporting period (2021/2022).

Action **B1**, follows on from action **A6** in terms of consultation processes and making sure that they are open and accessible to all – 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 early in the pandemic 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.

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

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2020-21 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

needs of people with disabilities are taken into consideration at an early stage of the policy development or project design stage.



Action **B2** relates to scoping the need for an inclusive communication channel, and the Council completed this action in April 2020. The Council procured the Sign Video Relay service for a period of 12-months and this service was used throughout the 2020/2021 reporting period by people with hearing impairments and those who are deaf. In total, the system was used eight times during the 12-month period and as a result the contract was renewed for another 12-month period – albeit the renewal occurred in the next reporting period (April 2021).



Action **B3** and **B4** are actions which related to LGBTQ+, and these actions are ongoing, with training having been delivered on Gender Identity Awareness Training to six Council employees. More information on this training is contained within the response to question 25 of this Annual Report.

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic restrictions, we have had to postpone the Trans Awareness Training that was scheduled to take place, but we hope to rearrange this in the next reporting period.

### **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

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2020-21 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

C3. Assist individuals who have limited, or no, English speaking ability to communicate with the Council.

In terms of action **C1**, part of this is complete. An audit has been completed of all Service Areas within the Council to understand the need for translation and interpreting services. Following this audit, a report will be taken to SMT (in the next reporting period) to suggest a procedure for all translation and interpreting requirements going forward.

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 have been achieved and both plans are being consulted upon in the next reporting period – 2021/2022.

Comhairlíúchán Poiblí | Public Consultation

Beatha teanga í a labhairt



#### **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 meetings recommence on a face-to-face basis, this action will be completed within the 2021/2022 reporting period.

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2020-21 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

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 revolves mainly around awareness raising for both our employees and Elected Members. As a result, the four actions are ongoing and will be ongoing for the duration of the 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 2020/2021 reporting period. These awareness raising sessions have included:

- Equality and Section 75 Awareness Raising and the implications for Councillors.
- Deaf Awareness Training.
- Basic Sign Language Awareness Training.
- Learning Disability Awareness Training.
- Gender identity Awareness Training.
- Mental Health Awareness Training.



As part of the International Day for People with Disabilities, the Council organised a week of workshops to raise awareness of hidden disabilities. These included:

- Mental Health During the Pandemic
- Brain Injury Awareness Raising
- Overcoming Communication Barriers with RNID

2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2020-21 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

- Visual Impairment Awareness Raising with RNIB
- Learning Disability Awareness
- Deafblind Awareness
- Autism Awareness



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 2020-21 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

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

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.:

- Establishing an appropriate system to include and mainstream equality of opportunity at a strategic level of the Council.
- 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 – although continued screening of all policies continues.

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 monitoring and data collection.

- 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 2020-21 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 has continued for the 2020/2021 reporting period.

PART A

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2020-21 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 several Performance Plans, and Service Delivery and Improvement Plans, throughout the Council. Each Plan contains a commitment to 'actively engage with customers, and potential customers, to ensure that services delivered are accessible and focused on their needs and preferences'. Some examples of Services achieving this are included below:

- 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 within 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.
- The Head of Policy and Strategic Services attends Senior Management Team meetings and regularly discusses impacts upon the Section 75 Categories with the Chief Executive and Directors.
- 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.

6 In the 2020-21 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 2020-21 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 – through the Corporate Plan Update as well as playing a key part within the Council’s strategic planning.

The Corporate Plan 2020-2024 document states that the vision for Fermanagh and Omagh is ‘a welcoming, shared and inclusive district, where people and places are health, safe, connected and prosperous...’

The Council’s Equality Scheme, Equality Action Plan, Disability Action Plan, as well as the responsibility for their implementation lies within the Chief Executive’s Directorate. However, all Directorates and Services have responsibilities for various aspects of Equality and the Equality Scheme going forward. Section 75 is of particular importance to the Council and particularly in relation to the Council’s Strategic Management and Planning – for example, the Head of Policy and Strategic Services attends all Senior Management Team Meetings, as well as Equality Screening being mandatory for all new/revised Council Policies.

**Equality action plans/measures**

**7** Within the 2020-21 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:

Actions ongoing:

Actions to commence:

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

All actions have been referenced in response to question 2, and all ‘ongoing’ actions will be ongoing for the duration of the Plan. The one action yet to commence is scheduled to take place in the next reporting period – October 2021 – and it is the development of a new Equality Scheme.

**8** Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2020-21 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

This Equality Action Plan is a new plan for this reporting period. Last year’s Annual Progress report consisted of actions for the 2017-2019 Equality Action Plan. The current plan was consulted upon for a process of 12-weeks and was ratified by Council in January 2020.

9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2020-21 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 2020-21 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 2020/2021 reporting period. These include:

- Performance Improvement Plan for 2021/2022.
- Climate Change and Sustainable Development Strategy 2020-2030.
- Corporate Improvement Objectives 2020-2021.

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.

PART A

- Facility to provide feedback via telephone – again due to the onset of the Covid-9 pandemic and restrictions on face-to-face meetings.
- Events, activities and meetings for particular targeted groups (i.e. young people) – Zoom Meetings inviting local youth group and schools as well as competitions for local primary schools.

12 In the 2020-21 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*):

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 Policy 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 throughout the year to ensure it is up-to-date and compliant with the General Data Protection Regulations.

PART A

**13** Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2020-21 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes       No       Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Following the approval of the Council's Equality Scheme in February 2017 by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, various learning and development opportunities have been identified.

Further training and awareness raising initiatives were organised for the 2019/2020 reporting period, and these were undertaken for both Elected Members and Employees.

During the 2020/2021 reporting period regular correspondence was also sent to Members of the Equality Consultation Database for matters relating to public consultation, procedures, etc.

**14** Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2020-21 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)**

[<https://www.fermanaghomagham.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 2020-21:

0	Policy consultations conducted with <b>screening</b> assessment presented.
0	Policy consultations conducted <b>with an equality impact assessment (EQIA)</b> presented.
0	Consultations for an <b>EQIA</b> alone.



PART A

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 2020-21 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 2020-21, 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.

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 2020. 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:

- Equality and Section 75 Awareness Raising – Implications for you as a Councillor.
- Deaf Awareness Training.
- Learning Disability Awareness Training.
- Gender identity 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:

### **Equality and Section 75 Training for Elected Members**

Outcomes:

- Increased knowledge of the Equality and Disability Duties.
- Increased knowledge of Discrimination.
- Understanding the need for Equality Screening and when to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment.
- How this impacts on their role as an Elected Members.

### **Deaf Awareness Training**

Outcomes:

- Improve confidence and communication skills.
- Improve awareness of deafness and hearing loss.
- Identify situations where people who are deaf or have hearing loss may face communication barriers.
- Identify a range of ways to communicate with people who are deaf or have hearing loss.

### **Learning Disability Awareness Training**

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.

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

**26** Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2020-21, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

During the 2020/2021 reporting period, there were a number of improvements in relation to Access to Information and Services. Due to the fact that all Council buildings were closed for much of the reporting period, much of the improvements were made to outside facilities (i.e. parks and open spaces) as well as the Council website. Some of these improvements include:

Following the procurement of a 12-month pilot of the Sign Video Relay system, to assist people who are deaf or hard of hearing, the system was used by 8 individuals and was deemed a huge success. As a result the system will be renewed for a further 12-months for the next reporting period.

Website, and content, accessibility was improved for people with disabilities in line with the new WCAG guidelines. The Council procured a service to demonstrate where on the website work was required and as such accessibility has improved. Work on this is ongoing into the next reporting period, with much of the remaining work revolving around accessible PDFs.

Advice and guidance was obtained from Members of the Disability Advisory Group in terms of new changing Places facilities, walkways and other outdoor facilities.

**Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)**

**27** How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2020-21?

Insert number here:

0
---

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

Although no complaints were received in relation to the Equality Scheme itself, there was one complaint received which referenced the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006. This complaint was received in relation to plans for a refurbishment project at the Gortin Glen Forest Park and the fact that there was no provision for a Changing Places facility included.

The complaint was dealt with in accordance with the agreed complaints resolution processes, and the situation was resolved by including a reduced-size Changing Places facility. Feedback and advice on the placement of equipment within the facility was received from the Disability Advisory Group Members

### 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 the next reporting period (2021/2022).

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 only been approved for four full calendar years.

There will be a particular focus on training, learning and development opportunities for 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.

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:**

**10**

Fully achieved

**16**

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 <sup>i</sup>	Outcomes / Impact <sup>ii</sup>
National <sup>iii</sup>			
Regional <sup>iv</sup>			
Local <sup>v</sup>	Following the Local Government Elections in May 2019, the membership of the Disability Advisory Group was further reviewed – increasing in numbers and participation. The number of Elected Members on the Group increased from five to seven to take account of the political makeup of the new Council, with the number of Volunteer Members	During this reporting period, there were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 meetings of Disability Advisory Group</li> <li>• There was 1 joint meeting of the DAG, and both Access Advisory Groups (Enniskillen and Omagh).</li> <li>• Reports presented to the Council's Policy and</li> </ul>	Improved participation by people with disabilities, in Public Life.

PART B

Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs <sup>i</sup>	Outcomes / Impact <sup>ii</sup>
	<p>increasing from six to eight, in line with the increase in Elected Members.</p>	<p>Resources Committee – for information and action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A change to online Meetings in response to the pandemic - ensuring that work could continue.</li> </ul>	
	<p>Organisation, and delivery, of a series of Accessibility Information to coincide with International Day for People with Disabilities (December 2020)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 198 participants in total (121 of these for the awareness raising events).</li> <li>• Seven awareness raising sessions (on hidden disabilities) outlined elsewhere in this progress report (question 2 and question 25).</li> <li>• Five (1 hour) workshops on improving health and mood during the pandemic.</li> </ul>	<p>Encouraged people with disabilities to participate in public life.</p>

PART B

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

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Equality and Disability Training for Elected Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased knowledge of the Equality and Disability Duties.</li> <li>• Increased knowledge of Discrimination.</li> <li>• Understanding the need for Equality Screening and when to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment.</li> <li>• How this impacts on their role as an Elected Members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased awareness of the important role that Section 75, Equality of Opportunity and the Disability Duties play within the Council and on the role of Elected Members.</li> <li>• 14 Elected Members participated in the training.</li> </ul>
2	Deaf Awareness Training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve confidence and communication skills.</li> <li>• Improve awareness of deafness and hearing loss.</li> <li>• Identify situations where people who are deaf or have hearing loss may face communication barriers.</li> <li>• Identify a range of ways to communicate with people who are deaf or have hearing loss.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased awareness of hearing loss and deafness.</li> <li>• 12 employees participated in the training.</li> </ul>
3	Mental Health Awareness Training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the meaning of mental health and mental ill health.</li> <li>• Identify the most common mental health illnesses/symptoms/behaviours/myths.</li> <li>• Challenge some of the stereotypes and stigma associated with the term mental illness.</li> </ul>	<p>8 Elected Members participated in the session.</p> <p>2 Confidential Advisors participated in the session.</p> <p>1 other employee participated in the session.</p>

PART B

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify possible causes for common mental illnesses.</li> <li>• Identify personal skills/limitations to support someone with a mental illness.</li> <li>• Identify ways to sustain good mental health.</li> <li>• Access support for themselves and/or for others.</li> </ul>	

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><b>Increased Awareness and Understanding</b></p> <p>Provision of training to employees and Elected Members on matters relating to Equality and Disability.</p>	<p>During the 2020/2021 reporting period, several training sessions and awareness raising session were organised for employees, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental Health During the Pandemic</li> <li>• Brain Injury Awareness Raising</li> <li>• Overcoming Communication Barriers with RNID</li> <li>• Visual Impairment Awareness Raising with RNIB</li> <li>• Learning Disability Awareness</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increased awareness (amongst employees and Elected Members) of disability issues.</li> <li>2. Promotion of positive attitudes towards people with disabilities, as well as outlining potential adjustments which could be made.</li> </ol>

PART B

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deafblind Awareness</li> <li>• Autism Awareness</li> </ul>	
2	<p><b>Provision of responsive and accessible services</b></p> <p>Provision of a Sign Video Relay service for a pilot period of 12 months</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>
	<p><b>Provision of responsive and accessible services</b></p> <p>Ensuring that the Council website continues to become more accessible for everyone, particularly those with disabilities.</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>



PART B

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

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	<p>Organisation, and delivery, of a series of Accessibility Information to coincide with International Day for People with Disabilities (December 2020)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 198 participants in total (121 of these for the awareness raising events).</li> <li>• Seven awareness raising sessions (on hidden disabilities) outlined elsewhere in this progress report (question 2 and question 25).</li> <li>• Five (1 hour) workshops on improving health and mood during the pandemic.</li> </ul>	<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> <p>Social media reach of 50,212 people.</p>
2	<p><b>Employment and Training</b></p> <p>Managers and employees were informed in relation to reasonable adjustments available, when required.</p>	<p>During the 2020/2021 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 was also five employees who was 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</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All employees, who require additional assistance to carry out their duties, are provided with adequate support.</li> <li>2. Managers are aware of their legal responsibilities.</li> </ol>

PART B

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
		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).	

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	Provision of the 2020 Ican Fest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of a series of activities that were open to people with disabilities, and carers, of all abilities and ages.</li> <li>• Activities ranged from dancing and jewellery making to DJ training and crafts.</li> </ul>	<p>Encourage people with disabilities to partake in fun activities and events.</p> <p>Encourage people with disabilities learn new skills.</p>
2	Provision of 'Festive Fun', an Online Activity Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The aim of the programme was to provide opportunities for children, young people and adults with disabilities to take part in fun activities over the festive period.</li> <li>• The online activities organised included:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Create your own Juggling Balls;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Encourage people with disabilities to partake in fun activities and events.</p> <p>Encourage people with disabilities learn new skills.</p>

PART B

	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Learning to Juggle;</li> <li>○ Christmas Tree Baubles;</li> <li>○ Christmas Mosaics;</li> <li>○ Christmas Weaving;</li> <li>○ Jumping Clay Gingerbread Men;</li> <li>○ Create your own Mug;</li> <li>○ T-Shirt Printing.</li> </ul>	
	Continue to deliver inclusive fitness/leisure programmes for everyone, including people with disabilities.	During the 2020/2021 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 partake in fitness initiatives.

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

	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 send to the Equality Commission for NI, when approved by Council.	Report was sent to the Equality Commission (on time) in 2020.	Due to the nature of this action, it will always carry forward into the next financial year i.e. 2021/2022.

PART B

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
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).	<p>During the 2020/2021 reporting period, several initiatives were continued to improve access to Council venues for example, venue audits of Council venues for people with disabilities, etc.</p> <p>There were also consultation events with members of the DAG on specific Council projects including: Changing Places facilities, Equestrian Mounting Blocks and development of community garden area (Omagh).</p>	Due to the nature of this action, it will always carry forward into the next reporting period.
	Ensuring a consistent approach to the provision of translation and interpreting services	<p>Auditing the current council services and what type of translation/interpreting services that have been used previously.</p> <p>Developing a set of procedures and</p>	To improve access to council services and facilities for people with disabilities or those with limited/no English.	<p>An audit of services was completed during the reporting period.</p> <p>The development of the procedures was intended to be achieved in the next reporting period (2021/2022).</p>

PART B

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
		procuring a translation/interpreting service which can be used by everyone within the Council.		

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

PART B

- Attendance at events / training.
- Participation figures.

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 new Disability Action Plan was drafted, following a full 12-week public consultation process. The Disability Action Plan was presented to Elected Members in December 2019 along with the summary of the consultation process and responses received. The plan was subsequently ratified at the full Council meeting in January 2020

If yes please outline below:

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

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

## PART B

---

- <sup>i</sup> **Outputs** – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.
- <sup>ii</sup> **Outcome / Impact** – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action? Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.
- <sup>iii</sup> **National** : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments
- <sup>iv</sup> **Regional**: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level
- <sup>v</sup> **Local** : Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora.