



Fermanagh & Omagh
District Council

Comhairle Ceantair
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

Disability Action Plan

2017 - 2019

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Foreword by Chairperson and Chief Executive

The Disability Action Plan is a statement of the Council's commitment to the promotion of Equality of Opportunity for people with disabilities, as well as complementing its Equality Scheme (approved in February 2017) under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

This is Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's second Disability Action Plan, outlining the commitment to the fulfilment of its Disability Duties in all parts of the organisation.

The Council has a duty to tackle discrimination and disadvantage, so that people feel safe from harassment and ensuring that everyone has access to high quality services. Our aim is not just to meet our legal duties, but to make disability equality a reality, by putting it at the centre of policy-making, service delivery and employment practice.

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council is committed to achieving the objectives set out within this Plan, and will allocate the necessary resources in order to implement this Disability Action Plan effectively.

The successful implementation of the Disability Action Plan will assist the Council in delivering the vision outlined within the 'Fermanagh and Omagh 2030' Community Plan: **'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'**.

Chairperson

Chief Executive

Contents

	Page Number
Introduction	3
Purpose of the Disability Action Plan	3
The Council – its role and functions	3
Public life positions over which the Council has responsibility	6
Commitment to the effective implementation of the Disability Action Plan	7
Internal arrangements	7
Effective engagement	9
Annual Report	9
Review	9
Consultation	9
Action measures	11
How the Disability Action Plan will be published	17

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006) requires Fermanagh and Omagh District Council [Council], in carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need to:
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people, and
 - Encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

These are collectively referred to as the 'Disability Duties'.

- 1.2 The Council is committed to the fulfilment of its Disability Duties in all parts of the organisation, and as required (under Section 49B of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995) the Council has set out in this plan how it proposes to fulfil these duties in relation to its functions.

This plan, in form and content, must conform to the guidelines contained within the Commission's guide for public authorities.

Under Section 49B of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council is also required to submit to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland a Disability Action Plan showing how it proposes to fulfil these duties in relation to its functions.

- 1.3 The Council will ensure the effective communication of the Disability Action Plan to staff and will undertake a planned programme of training and guidance on the Disability Duties for staff and Elected Members.
- 1.4 The Council will commit the necessary resources (in terms of staff, time and financially) to implement and deliver the actions within this Disability Action Plan.

2. Purpose of the Disability Action Plan

- 2.1 The Council's Disability Action Plan is a series of actionable measures outlines the Council's proposals for fulfilling its statutory obligations in compliance with Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006).

3. The Council – Its role and its functions

- 3.1 The roles and functions of Local Government in Northern Ireland are set out in the Local Government Act (NI) 1972 , the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 and other Miscellaneous Acts and Regulations. As a result of Local Government Reform, the Council has acquired a range of transferring functions including: Planning, Local Economic and Tourism Development,

Off-Street Parking and management of water recreational sites.

- 3.2 The Council also leads on the Community Planning Process, which will be done in partnership with a number of other public service providers in order to collectively address local problems within the District.
- 3.3 The General Power of Competence allows the Council to act with a similar freedom to that of an individual, unless there is a law preventing it from doing so. This subsequently allows the Council to act in its own interest in developing innovative approaches to addressing local issues.
- 3.4 The responsibilities of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council fall into four main areas, namely:
 - **Direct Service Provision** – Councils provide a range of local services in response to community needs and legislative requirements (e.g. setting priorities for the area and for the Council, as well as being accountable for the choices made).
 - **Representation** – Council nominees sit as representatives on the Boards of various statutory bodies (i.e. Health, Education and so forth).
 - **Civic Leadership and Development** – The Council aims to reflect the views of their community in relation to the planning and delivery of certain regional services – enabling and empowering local people, setting out the vision for local strategies in partnership with other agencies.
 - **Consultation** – Providing a challenge to the performance of all delivery Agencies in the District, and those which could impact upon the District (for example in relation to issues such as water, roads, housing, etc).
- 3.5 Since its establishment (April 2015), Fermanagh and Omagh District Council has (and will continue to) carry out functions in the following areas:
 - Arts and Entertainment
 - Bio-Diversity
 - Building Maintenance and Contract Management
 - Building Regulation
 - Civic Functions
 - Community Development
 - Community Planning
 - Community Safety
 - Consumer Safety Control of Communicable Diseases and Food Poisoning
 - Corporate Health & Safety
 - Corporate Planning

- Corporate Projects
- Dangerous Buildings
- Policing and Community Safety Partnership
- Dog Control Services
- Economic Development
- Local Economic Development: Start a Business Programme and Enterprise Shows; Youth Entrepreneurship (such as Prince's Trust and Shell Livewire); Social Entrepreneurship; Investing for Women,
- Emergency Planning
- Energy Performance of Buildings
- Environment and Countryside
- Environmental Protection
- Equality
- Estate Management
- EU Rural Development Programme
- Financial Services
- Food Control
- Good Relations
- Grounds Maintenance – inc Horticulture, Cemeteries, Parks and Play areas
- Health and Safety
- Home Safety
- Housing: Registration of houses in multiple occupation, and Housing unfitness responsibilities, including repair and demolition notices
- Information Systems & Technology
- Internal Audit
- Leisure Facilities
- Licensing
- Local Tourism: Small scale tourism accommodation development; Providing business support including business start up advice along with training and delivery of customer care schemes, and Providing advice to developers on tourism policies and related issues.
- Local water recreational facilities
- Member Services
- Museum Services
- Neighbourhood Renewal - enterprises initiatives
- Off Street Car Parking
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Personnel, Training & Development

- Planning to include: Local development plan functions, and Development control and enforcement.
- Postal Naming and Numbering
- Property Certificates
- Public Health
- Purchasing & Tendering
- Registration of Births, Deaths & Marriages
- Sports Development
- Street Cleansing – including Public Conveniences
- Sustainable Development
- Tourism and Visitor Attractions
- Townhall Facilities
- Urban Regeneration and Community Development including: Functions associated with physical development (e.g. environmental improvement schemes); Area based regeneration (such as Neighbourhood Renewal), and Some community development programmes for the voluntary and community sectors
- Vehicle and Plant Maintenance
- Waste Management - including Recycling & Disposal

- 3.6 To enable the Council to provide the above services and perform its other functions, the Council must levy an annual rate and has the power to:
- Acquire and dispose of land.
 - Borrow money.
 - Employ staff.
 - Procure goods and services.

- 3.7 To support and implement the above statutory functions and provision of services and facilities, the Council has adopted a wide range of policies.

4. Public life positions over which the Council has responsibility

- 4.1 A key duty is to encourage participation by people with disabilities in public life.
- 4.2 The Council has a responsibility over several 'Public Life' positions, including:
- Independent Members of the Council's Disability Advisory Group.
 - Independent Members of the Fermanagh and Omagh Sports Forum.
 - Independent Members of the Fermanagh and Omagh Arts Advisory Committee.

- Independent Members of the Arts and Disability Advisory Group for the Strule Arts Centre.
- 4.3 By promoting general awareness of the duties, the Council will encourage other bodies such as community associations and user groups to take more positive steps to include people with disabilities and take account of their views.

5. The Council's Commitment to the Effective Implementation of the Disability Action Plan

- 5.1 The Council is committed to the effective implementation of all aspects of the Disability Action Plan, in all parts of the organisation. The Council will allocate all available resources (in terms of people, time and finance) in order to achieve this.
- 5.2 Overall responsibility for determining Policy on how this will be achieved lies with the Council's Elected Members.
- 5.3 Day-to-day responsibility for carrying out the Policy, determined by the Elected Members, lies with the Chief Executive who is also responsible for the implementation of administrative arrangements to ensure that the Disability Duties are complied with by the Council in carrying out its functions.
- 5.4 As part of the Council's Corporate Planning process, the Council will build objectives and targets relating to the Disability Duties and Disability Action Plan into its Corporate and Business Plans. These will be reflected at all levels of Strategic Planning within the Council including individual staff objectives and annual plans.
- 5.5 Progress on meeting the objectives within the Disability Action Plan will be monitored and reported upon at the Disability Advisory Group, bi-annually.
- 5.6 Individual performance will be monitored and reviewed through internal performance review arrangements.
- 5.7 A formal report will be submitted annually to the Council, which will then be forwarded on to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

6. Internal Arrangements

- 6.1 The Council has 40 Elected Members, elected for four year periods, who meet monthly at full Council meetings.

- 6.2 Council business is conducted via a Committee system. Currently, there are four Standing Committees, all of which meet every month. The Committees are:
- Environmental Services Committee.
 - Regeneration and Community Committee.
 - Policy and Resources Committee.
 - Planning Committee (consists of 13 Elected Members and has full decision-making powers in Planning matters that fall within its remit).
- 6.3 The Council has the power to establish Sub-Committee and Working Groups, as required.
- 6.4 The Chief Executive oversees the work of the Directorates, through the Senior Management Team. The Council's Senior Management Team, along with the Elected Members, create the corporate body of the Council.
- 6.5 The Chief Executive is the principal advisor to the Council and is responsible for the strategic management of the organisation, for the day to day management of services and the longer-term planning and allocation of resources.
- 6.6 Further information on the Council's Departmental Structure is available online at: <http://www.fermanaghomagh.com/your-council/directorate/>, or upon request.
- 6.7 The Chief Executive is responsible for the ensuring the effective implementation of this Disability Action Plan, with the support of the Senior Management Team and Heads of Service.
- The responsibility for implementing, reviewing and evaluating the Disability Action Plan will rest with the Policy and Strategic Services section.
- 6.8 The main points of contact for the Disability Action Plan will be Margaret McMahon (Head of Policy and Strategic Services) and Finbar Maguire (Policy Officer). All contact details can be found on page 1.
- 6.9 Upon request, the Council will make all public documents available in a range of alternative formats – including: large print, Braille, easy read format, audio disk.

7. Effective Engagement

- 7.1 The Council is committed to engaging with people with disabilities, their families, carers and disability representative groups in the drafting, implementation, monitoring and review of this Disability Action Plan. Further information on how this will be achieved is detailed in **Section 10 – Consultation**.

8. Annual Report

- 8.1 The Council will prepare an annual report on the implementation of its Disability Action Plan. This report will be included as part of the Council's annual report to the Equality Commission which details the Council's progress on the implementation of its Equality Scheme.
- 8.2 Once drafted, the Annual Report will be considered by the Council's Policy and Resources Committee, and forwarded to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland when fully approved by Council.
- 8.3 A copy of the Annual Report will be made available on the Council's website, as well as being available on request from the Policy and Strategic Service section (as per the contact details in Section 12).

9. Review of the Disability Action Plan

- 9.1 The Council will carry out a five-year review, on this Disability Action Plan as well as other Plans submitted over the five-year review period.

10. Consultation

- 10.1 The Council is committed to bringing about change for people with disabilities and is therefore focused on involvement and participation in the preparation of the Disability Action Plan.
- 10.2 The Council will therefore, seek to actively engage (both regionally and locally) to obtain the views of people with disabilities.
- 10.3 The Council will formally consult on this Disability Action Plan with local groups, representing a broad range of disabilities. The draft Disability Action Plan will be placed on the Council website as well as being advertised in the local press, seeking views from individuals and organisations.

The consultation process on the draft Disability Action Plan will be advertised in four local papers, namely:

- Fermanagh Herald.
- Impartial Reporter.

- Ulster Herald.
- Tyrone Constitution.

- 10.4 When consulting on any matter relating to any of the Duties, the Council will strive to use a range of appropriate methods which might include surveys, focus group meetings (for example with the Disability Advisory Group and the Access and Inclusion Steering Group) and one-to-one meetings where appropriate. Consultee comments and our responses to them will be recorded and made available to all consultees.
- 10.5 The Council believes that it is important that people with disabilities are involved in the implementation, monitoring and review of the Disability Action Plan. Appendix 1 of this document lays out the initiatives that the Council will implement.
- 10.6 Six monthly updates on the Disability Action Plan will be made to the Council's Disability Advisory Group, which is made up of both Elected Members and individuals who have disabilities.
- 10.7 Consultees will be advised of any changes that are made.

11. Previous Actions

- 11.1 Since the commencement of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, several actions have been completed which help to promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities, as well as encouraging their participation in public life. Some of these examples include:
- Key information and documents being made available in alternative formats, upon request.
 - The creation of the Disability Advisory Group.
 - Various training initiatives to increase staff awareness including: Sign Language Training, Deaf Awareness Training, Disability Equality Training and so forth.
 - The achievement of the Disability Equality Charter Mark for the Strule Arts Centre (Omagh).
 - The Council's Leisure Services, and Leisure Centres, providing a range of activities for people with varying ability levels.
- 11.2 The table, included overleaf, outlines the additional measures which the Council intends to take in order to promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities and encourage the participation of people with disabilities in public life.

Community Plan Theme 1 – People and Communities
Aim: To improve the wellbeing of all our citizens and develop thriving rural and urban communities

Community Plan Outcome 3 – Our Communities are safe, resilient and empowered.
Priority (as identified in Community Plan) – Strong, Safe, Shared and Inclusive Communities.

Corporate Plan Action 3.2 Implement Equality Scheme Actions

Action(s)	Performance Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility
Disability Action Plan			
Undertake Consultation on the 2017-2019 Disability Action Plan	Disability Action Plan reviewed to reflect outcome of consultative process.	October 2017	Policy Officer (Equality)
	Disability Action Plan to be approved by Council	November 2017	
Review the Disability Action Plan	Report bi-annually to the Disability Advisory Group.	Bi-annually	Policy Officer (Equality)
Report on the progress of the Disability Action Plan	Annual Progress Report	August (annually)	Policy Officer (Equality)
Increased Awareness and Understanding of the Needs of People with Disabilities.			
Review learning and development for employees and Elected Members in order to improve awareness in relation to their responsibilities for the provision of services for people with disabilities.	Up-to-date information is included on the Council's Intranet	September 2017	Policy Officer (Equality)
	Number of training and/or awareness raising sessions organised.	March 2018	

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Action(s)	Performance Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility
	Number of attendees and post-event feedback	March 2018	Policy Officer (Equality)
Launch of the Mental Health Champion initiative on World Mental Health Day on 10 October 2017	Launch of initiative Endorsement of a Mental Health Charter which will provide the framework for working towards the promotion of a mentally healthy workplaces within the Council.	October 2017	Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development Policy Officer (Equality)
Provision of Responsive and Accessible Services to Increase opportunities for People with Disabilities to Participate in Public Life			
Achieve accreditation as an Autism Friendly Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Awareness raising sessions organised • Number of employees in attendance. • Post-event evaluations 	November 2017	Policy Officer (Equality)
	Venue audit evaluations presented to Manager / Head of Service.	January 2018	Access and Inclusion Officer

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Action(s)	Performance Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility
	Award by Autism NI	March 2018	Policy Officer (Equality) Access and Inclusion Officer
Support the Council to be Dementia Friendly in its facilities and activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Awareness raising sessions organised • Number of employees in attendance. • Post-event evaluations 	November 2017	Policy Officer (Equality) Access and Inclusion Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue evaluations presented to Manager / Head of Service. 	January 2018	
Ensure that information for residents of, and visitors to, the District is available in alternative formats, as requested e.g. Audio, Larger Text, Electronic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of requests received • Number of requests facilitated. • Time taken for request to be facilitated. 	Ongoing	All Heads of Service
Assess website accessibility.	Obtain feedback from website users.	Ongoing	Head of Democratic Services

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Action(s)	Performance Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility
Assess physical access to Council venues.	Accessibility Audits	Ongoing	Venue Managers
Work with external organisations to provide relevant volunteering and work placement opportunities, where possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Volunteers registered. • Number of Volunteering Opportunities. • Number of Work Placement Opportunities offered. 	31 March (annually)	Heads of Service
Work with local disability groups to identify potential improvements (e.g. access points, walking routes, etc.) in order to improve accessibility to the countryside.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number if improvements identified. • Number of improvements delivered. 	Ongoing	Director of Community, Health and Leisure
Deliver inclusive fitness/leisure activities for people with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of activities organised. • Number of attendees. • Post-event evaluation. 	Ongoing	Director of Community, Health and Leisure
Raise awareness of the Personal Assistance Support Scheme (PASS), and review as required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of individuals registered for the PASS Scheme. • Number of times the PASS Scheme has been used 	31 March (annually)	Access and Inclusion Officer

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Corporate Plan Action 3.2 Implement Equality Scheme Actions

Action(s)	Performance Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility
Organise 'Captioned' Performances within Council Venues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of performances. • Number of attendees. 	March (annually)	Policy Officer (Equality) Access and Inclusion Officer
Organise events / workshops for people with disabilities to build capacity to participate in civic life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of individuals attending • Post-event evaluations. 	Annually	Policy Officer (Equality) Access and Inclusion Officer
Improved Effectiveness of the Disability Advisory Group and Access and Inclusion Groups.			
Review the effectiveness of the Governance arrangements for accessibility and advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed terms of Reference for Disability Advisory Group • Increased membership of individuals/representative groups 	December 2017	Head of Arts and Culture Head of Policy and Strategic Services
Prepare Update Reports to Committee	Reports to be made to Committee	Bi-monthly	Head of Policy and Strategic Services

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Corporate Plan Action 3.2 Implement Equality Scheme Actions

Action(s)	Performance Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility
Information to be included on Council Intranet and website to increase awareness of the work and remit of the Accessibility and Advisory Groups	Number of 'hits' on the relevant webpages.	December 2017	Policy Officer (Equality)
Information to be sent to all Council staff to increase awareness of the work and remit of the Accessibility and Advisory Groups	Single action achievement.	October 2017	Policy Officer (Equality)
Internal interactions with the Disability Advisory Group (e.g. presentations)	Number of interactions.	31 March (annually)	Access and Inclusion Officer

12. How the Disability Action Plan will be published

- 12.1 Following submission to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, this Plan will be available by contacting the Policy and Strategic Services sections:

Finbar Maguire
Policy Officer
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council
Townhall
2 Townhall Street
Enniskillen
County Fermanagh
BT74 7BA

Telephone: 0300 303 1777 ext. 21178

Email: finbar.maguire@fermanaghomagh.com

The approved Disability Action Plan will also be available for download from the Council's website: www.fermanaghomagh.com

- 12.2 The consultation process on the Council's Disability Action Plan will be advertised in the following local newspapers:

- Fermanagh Herald
- Impartial Reporter
- Tyrone Constitution
- Ulster Herald

It may also be accessed via the Council's website at:

www.fermanaghomagh.com

- 12.3 The Council will, through our on-going work with people with disabilities and learning disabilities, find appropriate ways of communicating the Disability Action Plan. It will be produced in clear print and plain languages as well as being available in alternative formats on request.
- 12.4 The Disability Action Plan will be highlighted through press releases, mail shots and meetings with a variety of groups including: disability organisations, representative groups and people with disabilities.
- 12.5 In accordance with the Council's Equality Scheme, consideration will also be given to requests to produce the Disability Action Plan for people who speak a minority language.

12.6 All Council employees will receive a summary of the Disability Action Plan, and will be provided with a full Disability Action Plan upon request.