



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

Draft

Disability Action Plan

2025 – 2028

Access

Inclusion

Equality

Foreword by the Chairperson and Chief Executive

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council is committed to ensuring that all our residents and visitors have access to good quality services, including those with disabilities.

To support this, we will continue to examine how inclusive our venues, services and projects are for people with disabilities, as well as taking action to implement the necessary support and improvements. We aim to make these improvements through meaningful engagement and consultation with people with disabilities, who have the lived experience and can provide the most effective feedback to the Council.

The Disability Action Plan is a statement of commitment to the promotion of equality of opportunity for people with disabilities and how we will fulfil our statutory obligations in compliance with Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006).

Through the plan we aim to ensure that we put 'disability', 'accessibility' and 'inclusion' at the centre of employment practice, service delivery and policy development.

By successfully implementing this plan will help to achieve the vision as 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.'

and the Council's mission as stated in the Corporate Plan 2024 -2028:

'To work in partnership to improve the lives and wellbeing of our communities and to provide the best quality experience for those who visit our district.'

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

Chairperson

Cllr John McClaughry



Chief Executive

Alison McCullagh



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1. Background Statistics



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27967



people have their day
to day limited either a
little or a lot due to a
long term health
problem or disability

2295



residents are blind or
have partial sight loss

1747



people have Autism or
Asperger Syndrome

FODC Statistics

6667



residents are deaf or
have partial hearing
loss

1726



people require the use
of a wheelchair

1158



people have an
intellectual or learning
disability

12640



residents aged 5 and
over who provide
unpaid care

Figures from Census 2021 in NI - NISRA - www.nisra.gov.uk

2. Introduction

1.1 Disability Duties

Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006) requires Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, in carrying out its function, to give 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'.

2.2 Council Commitment

Under Section 49B of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council is required to submit this Disability Action Plan to the Equality Commission showing how it proposes to fulfil the duties.

The Council is committed to fulfilling the Disability Duties in all parts of the organisation, including policy development, access to venues and service delivery. This plan sets out how the Council proposes to meet these duties in relation to its functions.

The plan has been developed to ensure that it conforms to the guidelines as set out in the Equality Commission's guide for public authorities.

The Council is also committed to consulting with people with disabilities when implementing and reviewing the plan.

The Council will ensure the plan is effectively communicated to staff and elected members, and will undertake a programme of training and guidance on the Disability Duties for both groups. It will also commit the necessary resources, including staff, time and finances, to implement and deliver the actions within this plan.

3. Purpose of the Disability Action Plan

The Disability Action Plan contains a series of actional measures outlining 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 Discriminations (Northern Ireland) Order 2006).

4. The Council – Its Role and Function

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.

The responsibilities of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council fall into four main areas:

- **Direct Service Provision** – Council provides a range of local services in response to community needs and legislative requirements
- **Representation** – Council nominees sit as representatives on various statutory bodies
- **Civic Leadership and Development** – Council aims to reflect the views of their community in relation to the planning and delivery of certain regional services
- **Consultation** – Council provides a challenge to the performance of all delivery agencies in the District and those that could impact upon the district.

Since the establishment of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council in April 2015, the Council performs the following principal roles within its local area and district:

- Direct provision of a range of services and facilities,
- Delivery of and promotion of the arts, tourism, community, leisure and economic development,
- Promotion of equality and good relations in carrying out its functions,
- Regulation, enforcement and licensing of certain activities,
- Elected Members represent the Council on a number of public bodies,
- Leading the Community Planning process in partnership with other public service providers and community groups to address local issues,
- Performing a consultative role in relation to functions conducted by other government bodies and agencies.

In the performance of the above roles the Council carries out functions in the following areas:

- Climate change and sustainable development
- Waste collection and disposal
- Street cleansing
- Off-street parking
- Public conveniences
- Burial grounds
- Registration of births, deaths and marriages
- Emergency planning
- Administration and regulation of matters relating to the environment, planning, public health and public safety – including building control, property

certificates, building regulations, housing unfitness, food safety, statutory nuisance, dangerous buildings, air pollution, noise pollution, dog control, animal welfare, consumer protection and health and safety

- Provision of venues and programmes for recreation, health and wellbeing, social and cultural activities – including community centres, leisure centres, art centres, museums, parks, open spaces, sports grounds and visitor centres
- Provision of grant aid/ financial assistance to local groups
- Delivery and administration of funded and non-funded capital programmes which enhance the economy and environment

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

To support and implement the above statutory functions and provisions of services and facilities, the Council has adopted a wide range of policies. These can be accessed by visiting the Council's website – www.fermanaghomaggh.com

5. Public Life Positions over which Fermanagh and Omagh District Council has Responsibility

A key duty for the Council is to encourage participation.

The Council has responsibility over the following public life positions:

- Access and Inclusion Advisory Group
- Community Planning Strategic Partnership Board
- Enniskillen & Omagh Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership
- Fermanagh and Omagh PEACEPLUS Partnership
- Visitor Experience Development Plan Steering Group

6. Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's commitment to the Effective Implementation of the Disability Action Plan

The Council is committed to the effective implementation of all aspects of the Disability Action Plan across all parts of the organisation.

The overall responsibility for determining the policy on how this will be achieved lies with the Council's Elected Members.

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 when carrying out its functions.

As part of its corporate planning function, the Council will set objectives and targets relating to the Disability Duties and Disability Action Plan into business plans and other strategic delivery/ action plans.

Progress on meeting the objectives within the Disability Action Plan will be monitored and reported upon regularly at the Access and Inclusion Advisory Group.

Individual performance will be monitored and reviewed through internal performance review arrangements.

7. Internal Arrangements

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

Council business is conducted via a Committee System. Currently there are four Standing Committees, all of which meet every month. The committees are as follows:

- Environmental Services;
- Regeneration and Community
- Policy and Resources; and
- Planning (consists of 13 Elected Members and has full decision-making powers in planning matters that fall within its remit).

The Council has the power to establish Sub-Committee and Working Groups, as required.

The Chief Executive oversees the work of the Directorates, through the Corporate Leadership Team. The Corporate Leadership Team along with the Elected Members create the corporate body of the Council.

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.

The Chief Executive has overall responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of this Disability Action Plan, with the support of the Corporate Leadership Team and Heads of Service.

The responsibility for implementing, reviewing and evaluating the Disability Action Plan will rest with the Corporate and Strategic Services section.

8. Annual Report

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council will prepare and submit an annual report on the implementation of its Disability Action Plan. The report will be included as part of the Council's annual report to the Equality Commission on the progress of the implementation of the Equality Scheme.

A draft Annual Report will be considered at the Council's Policy and Resources Committee and once approved will be returned to the Equality Commission.

A copy of the Annual Report will be made available on the Councils website or by contacting the Corporate and Strategic Services section.

9. Review

The Council will carry out a five-year review on this Disability Action Plan, as part of the Equality Scheme, and provide a report to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

10. Effective Engagement & Consultation

The Council is committed to engaging with people with disabilities, their families, carers and representatives from support groups in the drafting, implementation, monitoring and review of this Disability Action Plan.

The Council is dedicated to bringing about meaningful change for people with disabilities and is therefore focused on ensuring effective involvement and engagement takes place with people with disabilities to inform the Disability Action Plan.

To do this the Council will actively engage at both regional and local levels to obtain the views of groups and individuals with a disability.

The Council will formally consult on this Disability Action Plan with members of the Access and Inclusion Advisory Group, as well as local individuals and groups.

When consulting on the draft Disability Action Plan, the Council will use a variety of appropriate consultation methods to reach people with a range of disabilities. This will include surveys, telephone calls, physical information sessions and online workshops. All necessary adjustments will be made to ensure that any barriers to participation are removed and people feel supported to engage with the consultation.

The draft plan will be provided in alternative formats (on request), placed on the Council website, as well as being advertised through social media and the local press.

A summary of the consultees' comments and the Councils responses will be collated and made available on our website. All consultees will also be made aware of this document.

11. Actions, Performance Measures, Timeframe and Responsibility

The Disability Action Plan will focus on the following strategic themes:

- Theme A: Accessibility of Services
- Theme B: Inclusive Consultation and Engagement
- Theme C: Inclusive Programmes and Projects
- Theme D: Awareness Raising and Capacity Building
- Theme E: Diversity in the Workplace
- Theme F: Implementation, Review and Screening

For each of the six themes, there will be a range of key actions that will be monitored using the associated performance measure. Each theme will also be attributed to the appropriate individuals who have responsibility for leading on the action, monitoring and reporting on it.

This plan will cover the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2028, however each action within the plan will have a specific timeline for implementation.

12.



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Draft Disability Action Plan

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Theme A: Accessibility of Services

Improving the level of accessibility for people with disabilities across the Council Estate

Residents with a disability lead more independent, engaged and connected lives

Actions	Expected Outcome	Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibility
1. Continue to review the levels of physical access to Council facilities and make improvements where possible.	People with disabilities have greater access to services and are able to fully participate in public life.	Number of Access Reviews carried out by people with disabilities/ officers per year. Number of improvements made per year.	2025 - 2028	Head of Parks, Estates & Property Capital Projects Lead Officer Facilities Manager Access Inclusion Officer
2. Create and implement a Changing Places Policy.	People with disabilities are more aware of the Council's position on Changing Places.	The implementation of the policy.	2025 - 2026	Director of Corporate Services & Governance Head of Corporate & Strategic Services Access & Inclusion Officer

3. Develop inclusive environments in our venues to support the needs of neurodiverse people.	Autistic people and their family/carers have more opportunities to use Council services, facilities and programmes. Improved levels of health and wellbeing. Reduced levels of social isolation.	Number of internal and external meetings relating to improving autism friendly provision. Number of new initiatives implemented. Number of participants using quiet spaces and attending inclusive activities.	2025 - 2028	Director of Community & Wellbeing Head of Corporate & Strategic Services Access Inclusion Officer
4. Continually review the Council's website to ensure it is compatible with the Website Accessibility Regulations.	People with disabilities have improved access to online information.	Number of improvements made to the website.	2025 - 2028	Head of Corporate & Strategic Services Digital ICT and Cybersecurity Lead Officer
5. Review communication methods for people with sensory disabilities, including Deaf, deaf, hard of hearing and visual impairment.	People with disabilities have improved ways to communicate with the Council. Better customer service for people with disabilities.	Number of communication methods available to people who are Deaf, deaf, hard of hearing, blind or have a visual impairment.	2025 - 2028	Director of Corporate Services & Governance Head of Corporate & Strategic Services Access & Inclusion Officer
6. To increase the number of policies and procedures available in easy-read format.	People with disabilities have better understanding of the Council's policies and procedures.	Number of easy-read documents provided.	2025 - 2028	Head of Corporate & Strategic Services Access Inclusion Officer

Theme B: Inclusive Consultation & Engagement

Improving the levels of engagement with people with disabilities and ensuring they can effectively influence policy and provision

People with disabilities feel empowered and included in decision making processes

Actions	Expected Outcome	Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibility
1. Hold at least 4 Access & Inclusion Advisory Group meetings per year to discuss Council policies, procedures, facilities and programmes.	People with disabilities have more influence in decision making. Services better reflect the needs of people with lived experience.	Number of meetings per year. Number of actions completed by the group per year.	2025 - 2028	Director of Corporate Services & Governance Head of Corporate & Strategic Services Access Inclusion Officer
2. Engage with the Access Advisory Group in relation to new developments, procedures and programmes.	People with disabilities have an opportunity to shape new plans, developments and programmes. Services offer higher levels of accessibility. Increase in the number of people with disabilities using services.	Number of engagement meetings per year. Number of actions completed.	2025 - 2028	Head of Corporate & Strategic Services Access Inclusion Officer
3. Use inclusion engagement strategies to effectively consult with people with disabilities on new Council policies and plans.	People with disabilities have an opportunity to shape new policies and plans. The Councils strategic approach is more inclusive.	Number of policies and plans where people with disabilities have been consulted with.	2025 - 2028	All Service Areas

4. Seek feedback from people with disabilities to inform external consultation responses.	The views of people with disabilities are accurately reflected in consultation responses. Regional and local service providers are more aware of the views of local people with disabilities.	Number of consultations that people with disabilities and support organisations have been asked to feedback on.	2025 - 2028	Head of Corporate & Strategic Services Policy Officer (Equality)
5. Continue to consult with people with disabilities on Café Pavement Licence Applications.	People with disabilities have their feedback incorporated into decisions. Towns and villages are more accessible.	Number of consultations on Café Pavement Licence Applications.	2025 - 2028	Senior Licensing Officer Access Inclusion Officer
6. Work in partnership with other statutory and community organisations to engage with people with disabilities.	People with disabilities have more opportunities to engage in projects and activities. Wider potential to share good practice. Increase in the sharing of resources and reducing duplication.	Number of external groups engaged with. Number of meetings attended by officers. Number of new partnership groups established.	2025 - 2028	All Service Areas Head of Corporate & Strategic Services Access Inclusion Officer

Theme C: Inclusive Programmes & Projects

Improving the uptake of inclusive activities by people with disabilities

People with disabilities experience improved health and wellbeing

Levels of social isolation are reduced throughout the district

Actions	Expected Outcome	Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibility
1. Deliver a range of inclusive projects through 'Access & Inclusion' (partly externally funded).	People with disabilities have access to a range of activities throughout the district. Reduced social isolation and improved levels of wellbeing.	Number of participants attending the activities. Participant feedback.	2025 - 2028	Head of Corporate & Strategic Services Access Inclusion Officer
2. Deliver a range of inclusive activities through 'Community & Wellbeing' (partly externally funded).	People with disabilities have access to a range of activities throughout the district. Reduced social isolation and improved levels of wellbeing.	Number of participants attending the activities. Participant feedback.	2025 - 2028	Head of Community Services Community Wellbeing Manager
3. Deliver a range of inclusive activities in Council Arts & Heritage venues.	People with disabilities have access to a range of arts, heritage and cultural activities. Reduced social isolation and improved levels of wellbeing.	Number of participants using the PASS Scheme and attending any specific inclusive workshops. Participant feedback.	2025 - 2028	Head of Wellbeing and Cultural Services Arts & Culture Venue Managers

4. Deliver a range of 'Climate Change & Biodiversity' initiatives tailored for people with disabilities.	People with disabilities have access to a range of climate and biodiversity related activities throughout the district. Improved understanding of the natural environment and promoting actions to mitigate the effects of climate change. Reduced social isolation and improved levels of wellbeing.	Number of participants attending the activities. Participant feedback.	2025 - 2028	Climate Change & Sustainable Development Lead Officer Climate Project Officer
5. Deliver a range of inclusive activities in Council Leisure Centres.	People with disabilities have access to a range of leisure and recreational activities. Reduced social isolation and improved levels of wellbeing.	Number of participants attending the activities. Participant feedback.	2025 - 2028	Head of Wellbeing & Cultural Services Leisure Centre Managers

6. Improve engagement with children and young people with disabilities. Explore links with the local SEN Schools.	Children and Young People with disabilities have better opportunities to engage in programmes. Increase in the number of showcase events to highlight the abilities of the children and young people. Greater disability awareness within the community.	Number of engagement projects with local SEN Schools. Number of pupils involved in the projects. Number of showcase events.	2025 - 2028	Head of Corporate & Strategic Services Access Inclusion Officer
7. Deliver a range of programmes to support people with disabilities to improve their employment skills (partly externally funded).	People with disabilities increase their skill sets. Increase in the number of people with disabilities entering employment. Workplaces are more diverse and better reflect society.	Number of programmes delivered. Number of participants.	2025 - 2028	Head of Economic Development and Investment Employability & Skills Coordinator

Theme D: Awareness Raising and Capacity Building

Increased awareness levels around 'disability', 'accessibility' and 'inclusion'

Encourage people with disabilities to build on their skills and deliver events to support this

Actions	Expected Outcome	Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibility
1. Officers, through the Access & Inclusion Advisory Group, to deliver a Blue Badge Parking awareness campaign.	Residents and visitors to the district are more aware of Blue Badge Parking and their importance. People with disabilities are empowered.	Number of campaign actions i.e. social media posts/ press releases/ videos. Number of engagements through social media.	2025 - 2026	Head of Corporate & Strategic Services Access Inclusion Officer
2. Encourage all staff members to complete eLearning modules to help improve disability awareness within the workplace.	Staff members are more informed of disabilities and how to support colleagues with disabilities. Increased diversity within the workplace.	Number of staff members who have completed the eLearning modules. Participant feedback.	2025-2028	Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development HR Manager
3. Provide training and information sessions on specific disabilities or general disability awareness for front line staff.	Increased awareness of disability, inclusion and accessibility among staff. People with disabilities have access to more services.	Number of training requests met. Participant feedback.	2025 - 2028	Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development Head of Corporate & Strategic Services Access Inclusion Officer

4. Continue to develop events to celebrate International Day of Persons with Disabilities.	Increased knowledge of different disabilities, inclusion and accessibility. People with disabilities feel recognised and empowered.	Number of participants. Number of events/ activities. Event Feedback.	December 2025, December 2026 & December 2027	Head of Corporate & Strategic Services Access Inclusion Officer
5. Increase the number of 'Inclusive Images' used in printed and online marketing and communication materials.	Improved visibility of people with disabilities. Greater awareness of different disabilities. Marketing is more representative of society.	Number of new inclusive images captured. Number of inclusive images used.	2025 - 2028	Head of Corporate & Strategic Services Communications Manager Access Inclusion Officer
6. Establish a 'Shadowing Event' to support a small group of people with disabilities to shadow the Chair of the Council.	Provide opportunities for people with disabilities to experience political life. Increased awareness of disability and their contribution to public life.	Number of participants. Participant feedback.	2025	Chief Executive Democratic Services Manager Access Inclusion Officer

Theme E: Diversity in the Workplace

Encourage people with disabilities to apply for jobs and volunteer opportunities

Ensure that employees and volunteers are happy and supported in their roles

Engage with people with disabilities through work placements

Actions	Expected Outcome	Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibility
1. To work in partnership with 'Disability Groups' to help support employees with disabilities remain at work.	Employees with disabilities are better equipped to carry out their duties. Employees with disabilities feel valued in their jobs.	Number of employees with a disability. Number of referrals to support organisations. Number of employees participating in programmes.	2025 - 2028	Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development HR Manager
2. Provide volunteering opportunities for people with disabilities.	Increased number of opportunities for people with disabilities to give back to their community. People with disabilities learn new skills. Volunteering is more representative of society.	Number of inclusive volunteer opportunities provided. Participant feedback.	2025 - 2028	Head of Corporate & Strategic Services Access Inclusion Officer

3. Review the Work Experience/ Placement Procedure.	The Council provides an accessible experience for people with disabilities to be involved in work experience/ placements. People with disabilities have more opportunities to experience what it is like to work in local government.	Number of people with disabilities involved in work experience/ placements. Participant and staff feedback.	2025 - 2028	Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development HR Manager
4. Continue to provide work placements for people with disabilities.	People with disabilities have increased opportunities to gain valuable work experience. People with disabilities build on their skill sets. Service areas have more experience of working with people with various disabilities.	Number of work placements provided. Participant and staff feedback.	2025 - 2028	Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development HR Manager Access Inclusion Officer

Theme F: Implementation, Review and Screening

Ensure the effective implementation of the Disability Action Plan and that all policies and procedures are screened appropriately
Annually review the progress of the plan

Actions	Expected Outcome	Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibility
1. Implement the approved Disability Action Plan.	Better quality of services for residents and visitors with disabilities.	Disability Action Plan approved by Council.	February 2025	Head of Corporate & Strategic Services
2. Review and report on progress of the Disability Action Plan annually.	Employees are more aware of their responsibility in relation to disability duties. Improved levels of 'access', 'inclusion' and 'equality' across all service delivery areas.	Annual progress report completed and forwarded to the Equality Commission. Progress on each action/ number of completed actions.	August 2025, August 2026 & August 2027	Head of Corporate & Strategic Services Access Inclusion Officer
3. Continue to screen all new policies to assess the significance of the policy on the disability duties.	Improved levels of accessibility across all service areas.	100% of new and revised policies screened for impact on disability duties.	2025 -2028	All service areas

13. How the Plan will be Published

Following the plan being submitted to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, it will be published on the Council's website:

www.fermanaghomagh.com

14. Alternative Formats

If you require a copy of the plan in an alternative format please contact Corporate and Strategic Services using any of the following contact details:

Email: disability@fermanaghomagh.com

Telephone: 0300 303 1777

SignVideo: for people who are deaf or are hard of hearing

Live Web Chat: available on our website during office hours, Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm.

Post: FAO Corporate & Strategic Services, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, Townhall, 2 Townhall Street, Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh, BT74 7BA.

15. Contact Details

If you have any queries relating to the Disability Action Plan please contact:

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Head of Corporate and Strategic Services

Email: louise.horner@fermanaghomagh.com

Or

Matthew Nevin

Access Inclusion Officer

Email: matthew.nevin@fermanaghomagh.com