

**Mid Ulster District Council**



Comhairle Ceantair  
**Lár Uladh**  
**Mid Ulster**  
District Council

**Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties**

**Annual Progress Report 2017-18**

**Contact:**

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

[www.midulstercouncil.org/equality](http://www.midulstercouncil.org/equality)

**Signature:**

**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 2017 and March 2018**

## **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 2017-18, 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.*

With specific reference to key policy/service delivery developments made, activities have been undertaken in the context of Mid Ulster District Council making arrangements to meet its statutory equality and good relations duties include:

#### **Equality Scheme & Equality Action Plan:**

- Council continues to implement its Equality Scheme which directly influences policies, practices and service delivery. Policy screening reports were issued in April 2017, September 2017 and December 2017. These reports are available on [www.midulstercouncil.org/equality](http://www.midulstercouncil.org/equality)
- An Equality Action plan was developed, externally consulted upon and subsequently adopted by Council in September 2017. This plan will be in place until 2020. The plan was based upon an Audit of Inequalities carried out in 2014. The plan includes 4 themes (1. Accessibility, Corporate Practices, Participation Level and Partnership Working). Each theme has a number of outcomes for delivery. During the reporting period a number of action measures within the Equality Action Plan were completed. For details see question 2 below.
- In June 2017 a revised and updated Disability Action Plan was issued for a 14 week consultation. One consultee requested hard copies of the plan. Follow up e-mails and telephone calls were made upon request to a number of other consultees.
- Council's Equality Consultee List was updated in October 2017
- Mid Ulster Disability Forum is now named as Council's primary consultee in relation to the implementation of Council's Disability Action Plan. The Corporate Policy and Equality Officer attends monthly meetings of the Mid Ulster Disability Forum. Secretariat support is also provided by Council. This provides an opportunity to liaise directly with people with disabilities and with people who represent groups of people with specific disabilities. This includes shop mobility, RNIB, Sure start, Education Authority and Health Trust representatives.

**Policy & Service Delivery:**

- Council's Everybody Active Programme targets women and girls, people with a disability and people living in areas of high social need. The programme has a dedicated officer offers and courses and programmes of activity in different areas, from Boccia Club, Wheelie Active Club (for children aged 4-12 years with a physical disability), multi-sport holiday camps, dodgeball and buggy fit. The programme recognises that, 'for some of us, it's more difficult to find opportunities to be active and activities that we can participate in'. During the 17/18 period 170 people with a disability were also supported via Everybody Active small grants programme.
- Language Line telephone interpretation service for customers who do not speak English is now operational at the three civic receptions and the leisure centre receptions.
- The Mid Ulster Disability Forum's Access Mid Ulster website is now hosted on the equality section of Council's website.
- Community Development has provided support for funding applications for a range of organisations including; Disability, Seniors and Women.
- Council has continued to support the Oil stamp scheme.
- Ongoing good relations activity across the Council area in partnership with the community and voluntary sector.
- Ranfurly House Arts & Visitor Centre 11 outreach groups participated in a variety of arts projects throughout the 17/18 period. The Members/trustees (representatives from groups) hold their meetings in Ranfurly House Arts & Visitor Centre in Dungannon four times throughout the year. Each group is offered an eight week arts project of their choice, if they wish they can run with two, four week projects as opposed to one eight week project. Members/trustees agree on arts projects for their groups, the project is delivered at their centre, it is evaluated and feedback on how projects were received by their participants is shared at management meetings. This information allows other members to make informed decisions in regard to the suitability of the various art forms for their group. Activities have included dance, storytelling, pottery and candle making.
- Council is represented on the Day Opportunities Multi-Agency Forum.
- 'Autism Hour' was held throughout all Council facilities from 10am-11am on Monday (2nd October). Actions required include the following:
  - Significantly reducing or turning off background music. PA announcements were only made when necessary
  - Switching off, reducing or dimming lights
  - Staff were briefed and made aware of practical ways of accommodating customers with Autism

**Training:**

- Disability Awareness Training was provided for staff and elected members at Council locations throughout the District. This resulted in 40 members of staff and 5 elected members receiving the training.
- Council's Senior Management Team also received Disability Awareness Training (provided by Employers for Disability NI) in November 2017.
- Equality Screening training was provided to staff at two separate Council locations in September 2017 and October 2017.
- 10 staff received Just A Minute training. 44 more staff will receive online training with a view to the training being rolled out Council wide during the 2018/19 period.
- Council in partnership with the Southern Health Trust, the Public Health Agency and provided two Dementia Awareness Skills Workshop in May 2017. The workshops were open to any members of the public who have contact with people with dementia. The session was an opportunity for businesses, services providers, community organisations, carers and individuals who would like to broaden their knowledge about dementia, to help improve how services can be delivered for people and their carers living with Dementia locally.
- Elected Members were provided with Good Relations Training on 18 May 2018. This training was provided by the Equality Commission in partnership with NILGA.

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2017-18 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

Mid Ulster District Council's Equality Action Plan is attached as Appendix A. The current status of the measures are set out below:

Action 3a: Everybody Active sample and it demonstrated varying times and locations (indoor and outdoor) and seasonal activities.

Action 3b: Locations throughout the District have been utilised for events and programmes. This will be further examined in 2018.

Action 3c: Examples include buggy-fit where carers can exercise and bring along a child in their care. 105 carers attended these sessions with children in their care during the 17/18 period. Family Fun Night Swim is another activity where parents/guardians and the children can enjoy activities together.

Action 3d: This information currently unavailable.

Action 3e: Examples of this include:

- As part of Dementia Awareness Week in April 2017 Council staff were provided with a Factsheet on Dementia and Details on Supporting a Person with Dementia. Details of the dementia awareness helpline were also provided to staff.
- In December 2017 staff were informed of a new Education Authority initiative for young people with disabilities based in the Dungannon area.
- Carers Trust information was also circulated to staff in February 2018 regarding where and how support could be sought from the Health Trust.

Action 4a: Partnership working for 2018 is linked to Council's involvement in the Mid Ulster Disability Forum.

Action 4b: This action is now to be carried out in 2019 following local government elections-Options are being assessed for the best way to provide opportunities for residents, visitors and customers with elected members.

**3** Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2017-18 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

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

Please provide any details and examples:

One example of a change to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas is the processes involved in relation to consultation in relation to Public Realm Scheme implementation. As a result of lessons learned from previous similar projects the decision was taken to involve the Mid Ulster Disability Forum (MUDF) at an early stage in order to ensure that equality of opportunity was integrated into the planning process at the earliest possible opportunity. The group took part in a 'walk through' in the town to point out aspects of the development that could be amended in order to make the town more accessible and pointed out practical issues to the capital development team who facilitated the process.

Changes to practices in bin collection have also been made (upon request) in order to make the service more accessible. A sign language interpreter was also used at a civic recognition event in order to provide equality of opportunity for attendees who required sign language interpretation.

**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:

With regard to the public realm, consultation with members of the MUDF provided feedback to suggest that they found this exercise in relation to the public realm development really useful and informative and that they found it beneficial to point out potential issues directly to the team delivering the project. This process of direct consultation with people with various disabilities in relation to capital developments is something that Council hopes to replicate on new projects going forward. From the viewpoint of Council it is invaluable to receive relevant information on what differences can be made that will benefit individuals who will be direct users.

**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):*  
  
During 2017/18 23 plan/policies and strategies were screened of these 23 required mitigating measures which included provision of alternative formats, addressing language barriers and providing pictorial signage.
- As a result of what was identified through the EQIA and consultation exercise *(please give details):*
- As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact *(please give details):*
- As a result of changes to access to information and services *(please specify and give details):*
- Other *(please specify and give details):*

## **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 2017-18 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

PART A

Please provide any details and examples:

These have been integrated in line with all employees being bound by all Council policies, procedures, statutory duties and local government competency framework.

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2017-18 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:

N/A for 2017/18, however Council's Performance Team are working towards inclusion of Section 75 statutory duties for the 2018/19 Corporate Improvement Plan.

In the 2017-18 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 2017-18 report
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Council's Corporate Plan received a midterm review during the 2017/18 period. The mainstreaming of Section 75 statutory duties was unaffected.

**Equality action plans/measures**

**7** Within the 2017-18 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:	2	Actions ongoing:	11	Actions to commence:	2
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Please provide any details and examples (*in addition to question 2*):

One example relates to Action 1c which sits under the theme of accessibility in the Equality Action Plan. The action is titled, 'Awareness sessions regarding the specific needs of S75 groups'. This process commenced during the 2017/18 process with Council's commitment to roll out the Just A Minute (JAM) initiative within Council facilities.

Another example relates Action 3e of the Equality Action Plan- This action fits under the area of participation of carers. Staff have been provided with signposting information (via email) in relation to where they can access support for either themselves or members of their family who may act as an unpaid or voluntary carers for family members, neighbours or friends.

**8** Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2017-18 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

The Equality Action was developed during the 2017/18 period. A 14 week public consultation was held in relation to the development of the Action Plan. The finalised Equality Action Plan is attached as Appendix A.

**9** In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2017-18 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 2017-17 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

Good practice was carried out in relation to the public consultation held in relation to the development of the Equality Action Plan and the reviewed Disability Action Plans. The process was publically advertised, information was available on Council’s website and consultation events were held in varying locations and at various times of day.

Good practice was also displayed in relation to the development of the new Gateway Signage that was rolled out throughout the District in December 2017. RNIB were consulted with directly in relation to the format and font included in the signage. The feedback was taken on board and the sample signage was amended to reflect the suggestions provided.

- 12** In the 2017-18 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

PART A

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:

Council's Corporate Policy & Equality Officer met with the Dungannon based Lobbying Activism Research Group (upon their request) as a focus group session. The aim was to consult the group in relation to implementing Council's Equality Duties and provide them with answers to their queries in relation to specific issues. The members raised issue in relation to consultation techniques, leisure development in Dungannon, bin collections and Our Community Plan. The Corporate Policy & Equality Officer also met with Loup Women's Group in April 2017 (upon their request) to advise them of what Council does/implements to accommodate/support S75 groups.

**13** Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2017-18 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

Yes

No

Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Equality Consultees were notified that the Equality Action Plan and Revised Disability Action Plan was approved in October 2017. Awareness-raising activities were also included as part of internal and external functions such as the Equality Officer's attendance at meetings and generally championing the disability duties.

**14** Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2017-18 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)**

Information on council’s statutory duty arrangements can be found at:-

[www.midulstercouncil.org/Council/Equality](http://www.midulstercouncil.org/Council/Equality)

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

23
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**16** Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2017-18:

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.

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

N/A Council did not undertake any assessments during 17/18.

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

Yes                       No concerns were raised                       No                       Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

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

**19** Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2017-18 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)



No information is currently available. Following the audit (as referenced in the response to No. 20) methods of collection will be put in place following SMT approval.

- 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:

Increased monitoring identified and recommended via screening has led to an improvement of service improvement in relation to policy implementation and revision.

### **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 2017-18, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

- Disability Awareness Training was provided for staff and elected members at Council locations throughout the District. This resulted in 40 members of staff and 5 elected members receiving the training
- Council's Senior Management Team also received Disability Awareness Training in November 2017
- Equality Screening training was provided to staff at two separate Council locations in September 2017 and October 2017.
- 10 staff received Just A Minute training. 45 more staff will receive online training with a view to the training being rolled out Council wide during the 2018/19 period.
- Council in partnership with the Southern Health Trust, the Public Health Agency and provided two Dementia Awareness Skills Workshop in May 2017 These workshops are open to anyone who may comes into contact with people with dementia. This is an opportunity for businesses, services providers, community organisations, carers and individuals who would like to broaden their knowledge about dementia, to help improve how services can be delivered for people and their carers living with Dementia locally.
- Elected Members were provided with Good Relations Training on 18 May 2018. This training was provided by the Equality Commission in partnership with NILGA.

While the training set out above has met some of the commitments made in Section 5.4 of the Equality Scheme the development and implementation of an equality training plan

PART A

will be delivered during the remaining period of the current equality scheme i.e. 2018-2020.

- 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 Screening training was provided to staff at two separate Council locations in September 2017 and October 2017. This training has equipped staff with the confidence and awareness to complete equality screening. The benefits of the training were reflected in the evaluations sheets completed by the participants and were also reflected in increase in the number of equality screenings.

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

- 26** Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2017-18, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

The Equality Action Plan influenced the Equality Action Plan to address accessibility of services as an area of improvement for Council. Language Line telephone interpretation service for customers who do not speak English is now available to become operational at the three civic receptions and the leisure centre receptions.

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

- 27** How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2017-18?

Insert number here:

0
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Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

N/A

**Section 3: Looking Forward**

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

2020

- 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)*

The focus of the Equality Scheme arrangements for 2018/19 year will be implementing additional monitoring and the development of an equality training programme.

- 30** In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next (2017-18) 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:

**5**

Fully achieved

**6**

Partially achieved

**2**

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>	The Chair of Mid Ulster Disability Forum who is a wheel chair user was appointed as the Vice-Chair of the PCSP. She is also a member of the Mid Ulster Disability Forum.	First hand experiences and priorities of people with a disability are championed as part	Times and locations of meetings have been made flexible in order to meet the needs of people with various disabilities.

PART B

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

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Disability Awareness Training was provided for staff and elected members at Council locations throughout the District. This resulted in 35 members of staff and 4 elected members receiving the training	Increased knowledge and awareness for staff and elected members.	Increased awareness of disability legislation and the development of a greater understanding of the issues relating to service users.
2	Council's Senior Management Team also received Disability Awareness Training in November 2017	Increased knowledge and awareness for Council's management, particularly in relation to reasonable adjustments.	Demonstration of Council's commitment to the implementation of our Equality Scheme and Disability Action Plan.
3	Equality Screening training was provided to staff at two separate Council locations in September 2017 and October 2017. This resulted in 22 (including 7 Heads of Service)	Increased awareness of disability legislation and the need for mitigation and monitoring.	Increased number of Equality Screenings being carried out. Amended process has been put in place for Public Realm developments.

PART B

	members of staff receiving the training.		
4	10 staff received Just A Minute training. 45 more staff will receive online training with a view to the training being rolled out Council wide during the 2018/19 period.	Commencement of the rolling out an improved customers service process for access Council's facilities and services.	Improved accessibility of Council services.

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	Implementation of Language Line	Improved access to services for people whose first language is not English.	Improved customer services and communication arrangements.
2	Development of a draft Translation and Interpretation Policy	A clear process for how council services can be made accessible for people who require translation and/or interpretation.	It is intended that publications and events will be accessible people regardless of their disability.

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	Providing the honour of a Civic Reception to people with disabilities	Two recipients of Civic Receptions had disabilities.	Civic receptions celebrate the achievements of people within the District and as a result raises awareness of disability in sport.
2			

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	Condensed Disability Action Plan- a condensed version of the revised Disability Action Plan was provided to members of staff and made available on the intranet	Increased awareness of Council’s Disability Action Plan amongst staff from all departments.	Effective joined up working to deliver on Equality Scheme Commitments.
2			

PART B

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

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestonesvi / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
1	Integrate our disability duties into new Policies	Amended policies in place	Improvement of mitigating measure, identified via the equality screening process.	This is an ongoing activity.
2	Working towards the BS: 8300:2009 +a1:2010	Principles of disability access to be adhered to.	Council buildings and facilities which are equitability.	This is an ongoing activity.
3	'Equality Proof' our Community Plan	Screening completed.	Better promotion of equality and services for people with a disability.	This screening will be completed by May 2018.
4	Develop and implement a set of accessible information protocols for Corporate Communications	Policy Adopted.	Protocols implemented.	Will be completed during the 2017/18 period.
5	Continue to assess and improve accessibility of website and other communication materials	Improved accessibility of Council materials/publications.	Improved communication with service users.	This is an ongoing activity.
6.	Provide up to 6 work placements per year for individuals with disabilities. These placements should last approximately 10weeks.	Opportunities provided for people with a disability.	6 placements were provided during 17/18. The placements ranged from the following periods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing once per week from 2013</li> </ul>	Placements were provided on the basis of the length of time that was suitable to the needs of the person undertaking the placement as well as the associated needs of the service.

PART B

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing once per week from 2015</li> <li>• 1x 13 weeks (July to Oct)</li> <li>• 1x1 week</li> <li>• 1x 4 weeks</li> <li>• 1x 13 weeks</li> </ul>	
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4. Please outline what action measures **have not been achieved** and the reasons why.

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1	Any new/substantially renovated play areas meet the highest possible	Information not available.
2	Training provided on accessibility on universal accessibility auditing	Difficultly sourcing the training within Northern Ireland.

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

A quarterly report is sent to SMT in order to inform the members of progress in relation to the Equality Action Plan & Disability Action Plan.

(b) Quantitative

The number of equality screenings carried out each quarter is recorded.

PART B

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?

Please select

If yes please outline below:

The Disability Action Plan was revised during the reporting period. The plan was revised in order to allocate timescales, performance indicators and responsibility. The revision also reflected the changes that occurred in the transition from the legacy Councils into Mid Ulster District Council, including the approval of Council's Equality Scheme and the development of an Equality Action Plan. The revisions streamlined some of the original action, bringing similar actions together. The revision made were subject to public consultation.

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

## PART B

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?

No the current plan was revised via public consultation in 2017. There are currently no plans for any further amendments.

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<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.

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

**Annex A-** Equality Action Plan

**Annex B-** Disability Action Plan

# Equality Action Plan 2015-2020

[www.midulstercouncil.org](http://www.midulstercouncil.org)

**Mid Ulster District Council**



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## **Mid Ulster District Council** Council Equality Action Plan (2015-2020)

1. **Introduction**
2. **The Community Plan- A 10 Year Action Plan for Mid Ulster**
3. **Corporate Vision and Values**
4. **Purpose**
5. **Action Plan**
6. **Review and Evaluation**
7. **Conclusion**

### **1. Introduction**

**Mid Ulster District Council is required to comply with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act). The act relates specifically to two statutory duties set out below:**

In carrying out our functions relating to Northern Ireland we are required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:

- Persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation
- Men and women generally
- Persons with a disability and persons without
- Persons with dependants and persons without

In addition, without prejudice to the obligations above, in carrying out our functions in relation to Northern Ireland we are required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

## 2. The Community Plan - A 10 Year Action Plan for Mid Ulster

The Community Plan has identified the following themes and associated outcomes:

- **Economic Growth**
  - We prosper in a stronger and competitive economy
  - We have more people working in a diverse economy
  - Our towns and villages are vibrant and competitive
- **Infrastructure**
  - We are better connected through appropriate infrastructure
  - We increasingly value our environment and enhance it for our children
  - We enjoy increased access to affordable quality housing
- **Education and Skills**
  - Our people are better qualified and more skilled
  - We give our children and young people the best chance in life
  - We are more entrepreneurial, innovative and creative
- **Health & Wellbeing**
  - We are better enabled to live longer healthier and more active lives
  - We have availability to the right service, in the right place at the right time
  - We care more for those most vulnerable and in need
- **Vibrant & Safe Communities**
  - We are a safer community
  - We have a greater value and respect for diversity
  - We have fewer people living in poverty and fewer areas of disadvantage

The **vision** set out in the Community Plan is:

*'Mid Ulster...a welcoming place where our people are content, healthy and safe; educated and skilled; where our economy is thriving; our environment and heritage are sustained; and where our public service excel'.*

## 3. Corporate Vision and Values

Mid Ulster District Council have also agreed a Corporate Plan 2015-2019. The plan sets out Council's priorities for the four year period it covers.

Council's **Vision** is:

*'Mid Ulster District Council aspires to be at the heart of our community'*

This vision is underpinned by the following **values**:

- **Professional**-consistently striving to exceed our expectations of our customers by knowing what to do, how to do it, when to do it and why we do it

- **Trustworthy**-working for our communities in a spirit of friendliness and openness by delivering fair, transparent, equitable and ethical services to all customers
- **Quality Driven**-delivering the best services we can, making the best use of the resources we have
- **Team-focussed**- Working together to deliver the best results possible for Mid Ulster
- **Innovative**- New and better ways of doing what we do
- **Customer-focussed**-designing and delivering our services in response to and around the needs of our customers and within our resources.

**The Corporate Plan has identified four themes:**

- **Delivering:** Delivering for our People
- **Growth:** Creating Growth
- **Environment:** Sustaining our Environment
- **Unity:** Building Unity

These guiding principles are the cornerstones of our action plans, policies and strategies.

The Corporate Plan also commits to embedding a, *‘culture of continuous improvement which ensures the effective, efficient and sustained delivery of Council services to the people of the Mid Ulster district’*.

In order to achieve these successful outcomes it is clear that a partnership approach is required. This partnership approach can, in the most part, be delivered through the work being implemented as a result of the Community Plan.

## **4. Purpose**

This Equality Action Plan (2015-2020) contributes to Mid Ulster District Council’s compliance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The Equality Action plan (‘The Plan’) outlines how Council will address the key inequalities identified within our District. The Plan has been informed by an Audit of Inequalities carried out in 2015/16. Themes identified for inclusion in The Plan from the Audit of Inequalities included the following:

- Accessibility
- Corporate practices
- Participation levels
- Partnership working

Council is working to implement its Equality Scheme and to ensure that there are equitable opportunities provided as a direct result of its implementation. This draft Equality Action Plan is designed to support Council to meet its equality requirements and the full implementation of Council’s Equality Scheme.

## 5. Action Plan

The table below sets out how the four themes identified by the Audit of Inequalities and how Council will deliver to address each area. Each theme can be addressed in an item by item basis by what the desired of each action will be, how performance will be monitored and who has responsibility for its implementation. A timeframe for its implementation is also included:

Action No.	Theme 1: Accessibility	Key Inequalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residents from ethnic minority backgrounds feel perceived inaccessibility to local democracy</li> <li>Older people feel they cannot access Council facilities</li> </ul>		
			Desired Outcome	Performance Indicator	Responsibility
1a	Increased accessibility of Council services available online and in other requested formats while incorporating of multi-channel communication tools	Improved accessibility of Council services	Level of increase of online transactions	Chief Executive and Directors	2017-2020
1b	Staff Training	Improved awareness. Reduce number of complaints	No. of staff provided with awareness training	Chief Executive and Directors	2017/2018 and ongoing thereafter
1c	Awareness Sessions regarding the specific needs of s75 groups	Improved awareness and informed decision making	No. of sessions held and No. of participants	Chief Executive and Directors	2017/2018 and ongoing thereafter

1d	Hold Civic Open days involving Elected Members (linked to action 4b)	Create an opportunity for people to feel involved	No of events provided and No of attendees	Chief Executive and Directors	2018
<b>Action No.</b>	<b>Theme 2: Corporate Practices</b>	<b>Key Inequality</b>	• There are opportunities within corporate practices to mainstream improve inequalities		
		<b>Desired Outcome</b>	<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
2a	Any gaps in monitoring information identified	More robust monitoring arrangements	Monitoring reports examined/reviewed on an annual basis	Chief Executive and Directors	2018
2b	Development of a policy in relation to communicating with disabled people, older people, younger people and different racial groups	Increase in requests for alternative communication methods	Policy developed and approved by Council for implementation	Corporate Policy & Equality Officer/ Head of Marketing and Communication	2018
2c	Develop procedural arrangements for translation and interpretation	Clear guidance in relation to translation & interpretive requirements	Procedures developed and approved by Council for implementation	Corporate Policy & Equality Officer	2018
2d	Mainstreaming equality of opportunity and Good Relations through	Improved systems and procedures	No. of Screening Documents completed and examples of	Chief Executive and Directors	2017 and ongoing thereafter

	business planning and policy development		mainstreaming developed		
<b>Action No.</b>	<b>Theme 3: Participation Levels</b>	<b>Key Inequality</b>	<b>• There are barriers to Participation for carers</b>		
		<b>Desired Outcome</b>	<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
3a	Explore the timing of events/courses	Create Equality of Opportunity for carers/ working people	Samples taken of the timing of various events/guidance developed	Heads of Service	2017
3b	Location of activities	Creates Equality of Opportunity for located across the District	Samples taken of the timing of various events/ guidance developed	Heads of Service	2018
3c	Provision of child inclusive activities for parents/carers	Creates Equality opportunity for carers to participate	No. events provided No. of attendees	Head of Leisure	2017/18 on a pilot basis
3d	Increased employment opportunities	Opportunity to equality develop skills set	No of carers employed by Council	Director of Organisational Development	2017 and ongoing thereafter
3e	Provide information and signposting to staff who	Increased support for staff who have a caring responsibility	Types of information provided and frequency of the	Corporate Policy & Equality Officer	2017 and ongoing thereafter

	have caring responsibilities		information being provided		
<b>Action No.</b>	<b>Theme 4: Partnership Working</b>	<b>Key Inequalities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Partnership working between Council and Community &amp; Voluntary support organisations</b></li> <li>• <b>Council being more proactive by creating linkages and networking opportunities for the Community &amp; Voluntary sector</b></li> </ul>		
		<b>Desired Outcome</b>	<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
4a	Explore partnership working opportunities	Increased opportunities for partnership working between Council and relevant C&V organisations	No. of joint partnership projects being delivered	Heads of Service	2017-2020
4b	Provide opportunities for residents, customers and visitors to engage directly with Elected Members. Include outreach sessions with Elected Members and Officers.	Create opportunities for people to get involved	No. of events and opportunities provided No. of attendees	Heads of Service	2018

## **6. Review and Evaluation**

This action plan will be reviewed on an annual basis and progress will be monitored and reported upon within Council's annual submission to the Equality Commission.

## **7. Conclusion**

The implementation of this action plan will support the overall implementation of the Equality Scheme and Disability Action Plan and the mainstreaming of equality throughout the organisation. This plan will be re-examined as priorities emerge following the commencement of the implementation of our community plan.

## **Contacting Us**

Council is committed to improving its services and welcomes your comments or suggestions at any time of the year. If you, have any comments, feedback, would like any further information or would like a copy of this action plan in an alternative format please contact:

**Corporate Policy & Equality Officer  
Council Offices  
Circular Road  
Dungannon BT71 6DT**

**Call: 03000 132 132  
Email: [info@midulstercouncil.org](mailto:info@midulstercouncil.org)**

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**Equality Action Plan**  
[www.midulstercouncil.org/equality](http://www.midulstercouncil.org/equality)

# Disability Action Plan 2015-2020

[www.midulstercouncil.org](http://www.midulstercouncil.org)

**Mid Ulster District Council**



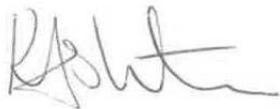
Comhairle Ceantair  
**Lár Uladh**  
**Mid Ulster**  
District Council

## Foreword

Welcome to the mid-term review of the Mid Ulster District Council Disability Action Plan (the Plan) for 2017 – 2020. The Plan sets out Council's commitment to the promotion of equality of opportunity for all people with disabilities who live in, work in or visit our district.

As a Council, we have a duty via The Disability Discrimination Act to pay due regard to the need to; promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage the participation by disabled people in public life. These are collectively referred to as 'the disability duties'. This plan sets out how Mid Ulster District Council intends to fulfil its statutory obligations to a high standard.

Chair of Council and Chief Executive, we would like to express our full commitment to the objectives set out in the Plan. We will fully support our employees towards the successful implementation and promotion of Council's disability duties.



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Councillor Kim Ashton  
Chair



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Anthony Tohill  
Chief Executive

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## **1. Introduction**

**1.1** Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the) Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006 requires the Council, in carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need:

- to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- to encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

These are collectively referred to as ‘the disability duties’.

**1.2** Under Section 49B of the DDA 1995, Mid Ulster District Council is also required to submit to the Equality Commission a Disability Action Plan showing how it proposes to fulfil these duties in relation to its functions.

**1.3** The Council is committed to the fulfilment of its disability duties in all parts of its organisation and has set out how it intends to do so in this Plan.

## **2. The Purpose of the Disability Action Plan**

**2.1** The purpose of this Plan is to set out how Mid Ulster District Council in relation to the delivery of its functions.

## **3. The Council – its role and functions**

**3.1** The roles and functions of Local Government in Northern Ireland are provided by the Local Government Act (NI) 1972, the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 and other Miscellaneous Acts and Regulations.

**3.2** As a result of Local Government Reform, the Council has been given a wide range of transferring functions including functions relating to planning, roads, regeneration and community development, economic development and local tourism. Council now also has a leading role the Community Planning implementation process. The Council will facilitate and coordinate a joined up approach to the delivery of key projects and services which will address and improve local issues and challenges identified via the Community Planning development process.

**3.3** The Council performs four principal roles within its local area and district:

- Direct service provision in response to community needs and legislative requirements – setting priorities for the area and for the Council and being accountable for the choices made.
- A development role as enabler/facilitator on economic and community development initiatives enabling and empowering local people; setting out the vision for local strategies in partnership with other agencies.
- A representative role on boards such as health and education – championing the district.
- A consultative role on issues such as water, roads and housing, by providing a challenge to the performance of all of the delivery agencies in the district.

**3.4** In the performance of the above roles the Council will carry out functions in the following areas:

- Refuse Collection and Disposal
- Recycling and Waste Management
- Civic Amenity Provision
- Grounds Maintenance
- Street Cleansing
- Cemeteries
- Public Conveniences
- Food Safety
- Health & Safety
- Environmental Protection
- Environmental Improvement
- Estates Management Building Design and Maintenance
- Building Control
- Inspection/Regulation of New Construction
- Dog Control
- Enforcement Byelaws Litter etc.
- Licensing
- Sports and Leisure Services
- Sports and Recreational facilities
- Parks, Open Spaces, Playgrounds
- Community facilities

- Arts, Heritage and Cultural Facilities
- Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages
- Spatial Planning & Regeneration
- Community Planning
- Off Street Car Parking

The Council also has a role in:

- Economic Development
- Community Development
- Community Safety
- Sports Development
- Tourism

**3.5** 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

**3.6** To support and implement the above statutory functions and provision of services and facilities, the Council will adopt a wide range of policies.

#### **4. Public life positions over which the Council has responsibility**

**4.1** A key aspect of the disability duties is to encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

**4.2** The Review Report on the Effectiveness of the Disability Duties (Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, December 2009) identified a misunderstanding among public authorities regarding the definition of the public life with some authorities defining public life positions as public appointments. The Commission's guide makes it clear that the definition of public life is wider than this and includes:

- participation in focus groups or working groups
- participation in community group or fora

- local partnerships

**4.3** Mid Ulster District Council does not have a responsibility for the membership of many such groups. However, Council is committed to ensuring that disabled people have the choice to be fully participative in groups/organisations that it has a responsibility for.

**4.4** Council will also encourage other bodies such as community associations and user groups to take more positive steps towards including people with a disability and take accounts of their views.

## **5. The Council's commitment to the effective implementation of the disability action plan**

**5.1** Mid Ulster District Council is committed to implementing effectively the disability duties and this Disability Action Plan. In order to do so Council will put appropriate internal arrangements in place in order to ensure that the disability duties are complied with and this Disability Action Plan is effectively implemented.

**5.2** We will ensure the effective communication of the Plan to employees and provide all necessary training and guidance for employees and elected members on the disability duties and the implementation of the Plan.

**5.3** Overall responsibility for determining policy on how this will be achieved lies with the Elected Members, and day to day responsibility for carrying out the policy with the Chief Executive. As part of its corporate planning process, the Council will set objectives and targets relating to the disability duties. These will be reflected at all levels of planning within the Council including individual staff objectives.

**5.4** A formal report of progress on meeting the objectives relating to the disability duties will be included in the Council's annual report to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

## **6. Internal Arrangements**

- 6.1** The Council consists of 40 Elected Representatives, elected for four years periods meeting monthly at full Council. The Council has selected a traditional committee structure as its form of decision making.
- 6.2** The Council organises its business through 5 statutory committees that meet on a monthly basis and each of the Committees consists of 16 members. This is with the exception of the Audit Committee which has 8 members.
- 6.3** The Council also has the power to establish working groups.
- 6.4** The list below sets out current committees:
- Planning
  - Development
  - Environment
  - Policy and Resources
  - Audit
- 6.5** The Full Council meeting meets in full session on the last Thursday of every month when it receives and decides on reports and recommendations from the various committees.
- 6.6** The work of the Council operates under the leadership of the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive is responsible for giving the strategic direction and advice to the Council and oversees the preparatory work to ensure it is ready to deliver its services.
- 6.7** The Chief Executive will have the overall responsibility for the implementation of the Disability Duties and the Action Plan.
- 6.8** The point of contact for those seeking further information on the Action Plan is the Corporate Policy and Equality Officer (see page 2 for contact details) who will take specific responsibility for co-ordinating the day to day requirements for the delivery of the Action plan.

## **7. Effective Engagement and Consultation**

- 7.1** Mid Ulster District Council is committed to engaging effectively with disabled people in the drafting, implementation, monitoring and review of this Plan.
- 7.2** The Council is committed to carrying out consultation in a meaningful manner in the development of its disability duties. In doing so the Council is keen to bring about change with and for people with disabilities and will therefore be focussing on the issue of involvement and participation in preparing and reviewing its Plan.
- 7.3** The Council's consultation process will be designed to ensure that people with disabilities are consulted at as early a stage as possible so that they can assist and inform the development of the Plan.
- 7.4** The Council will make every effort to remove any potential barriers to proper consultation by ensuring accessibility of documents in appropriate formats and in a timely fashion. Information will be made available on request in alternative formats. It will also be important to establish with people with a disability, the basis for dialogue and engagement during the life of the Plan. A variety of methods of discussion will be used such as meetings, one to one discussions, telephone and text phone discussions. Consideration will also be given to how best to communicate information to young people with a disability, as well as considering additional dimensions such as ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation and religious belief.
- 7.5** The Council believes it is important that people with disabilities are involved in the implementation, monitoring and review of the Plan. The Council will seek views and comments on the specific actions when they are developed and will consider amending them or including additional ones following the comments received.

## **8. Annual Report and Review**

- 8.1** The Council will prepare report annually on the implementation of its Plan. The report will be included as part of the Council's annual report to the Equality Commission on the implementation of our equality scheme.
- 8.2** A copy of the full annual report and further reviews will be made available on the Council's website.

## **9. Action Measures**

- 9.1** The Council continues to complete a number of actions which help promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage their participation in public life. These action measures include committing to:

**Action Measure 1:** Equality proof our Community Plan

**Action Measure 2:** Integrate Disability duties into new policies

**Action Measure 3:** Council will work towards the BS:8300:2009 +A1:2010 in its buildings and facilities, subject to practical implementation

**Action Measure 4:** Prepare an annual report on progress on meeting the Disability Action Plan and publish this on its website

**Action measure 5:** Keep in contact with disability support services/groups within the District in order to gauge their views and opinions. Focussed consultation and engagement with people with disabilities will be carried out in order to understand their needs and requirements

**Action measure 6:** Any new/substantially renovated play areas meet the highest possible standards

**Action measure 7:** Appoint a Disability Champion at officer and elected member level to progress the disability duties

**Action measure 8:** Provide up to 6 work placements per year for individuals with disabilities

**Action measure 9:** Training on universal accessibility auditing

**Action measure 10:** Develop, deliver and implement a programme of awareness training for Council Officers

**Action measure 11:** Develop, deliver and implement a programme of awareness training for Elected Member

**Action measure 12:** Develop and implement and a set of Accessible Information Protocols

**Action measure 13:** Continue to assess and improve accessibility of website and other communications materials

**9.2** The table below sets out the measures that Council intends to undertake to take in order to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage the participation:

<b>Action measure 1: 'Equality proof' our Community Plan</b>		
<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Senior Management Team & Head of Community Development	Better promotion of equality and services for people with a disability	2017-2020 (will be continued for the duration of the community plan)
<b>Action measure 2: Integrate our Disability duties into new policies</b>		
<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
All Policy Authors	All new and revised policies screened for impact on disability duties	Ongoing
<b>Action measure 3: Work towards the BS:8300:2009 +A1:2010 in its buildings and facilities, subject to practical implementation</b>		
<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Senior Management Team Head of Property Services	Issues which may affect people with a disability will be sorted out at the earliest possible juncture	Ongoing

<b>Action measure 4: Report annually on the progress of the Disability Action Plan and publish this on Council's website</b>		
<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Corporate Policy & Equality Officer	Annual progress report completed and forwarded to the Equality Commission. Increased awareness of Employee's responsibility towards Council's compliance and achievements in relation to disability duties	Annually
<b>Action measure 5: Maintain/continue Council involvement with Mid Ulster Disability Forum and other with disability support services/ groups within the District in order to gauge their views and opinions. Focussed consultation and engagement with people with disabilities will be carried out in order to understand their needs and requirements</b>		
<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Corporate Policy & Equality Officer	Improved engagement with the disability sector	Ongoing
<b>Action measure 6: Any new/substantially renovated play areas meet the highest possible standards of accessibility</b>		
<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Head of Leisure Head of Parks Head of Technical Services	Better services for people with a disability	When required
<b>Action measure 7: Appoint a Disability Champion at officer and elected member level to progress the disability duties</b>		
<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Head of Democratic Services Corporate Policy & Equality Officer	Disability champions appointed to promote disability issues both internal and external to Council	Complete
<b>Action measure 8: Provide up to 6 work placements per year for individuals with disabilities. These placements should last approximately 10 weeks each</b>		

<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Director of Organisational Development Corporate Learning & Development Manager	Opportunity provided for people with a disability	Ongoing
<b>Action measure 9: Training provided on universal accessibility auditing</b>		
<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Director of Organisational Development Corporate Learning & Development Manager	Corporate Policy & Equality Officer will be skilled to advise	Training being sourced for 2017/18
<b>Action measure 10: Develop, deliver and implement a programme of awareness training for Council Officers including members of the Senior Management Team</b>		
<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Corporate Policy & Equality Officer/Heads of Service	Increased awareness of disability legislation and understanding of the issues relating to the service users	Training being sourced for 2017/18
<b>Action measure 11: Develop, deliver and implement a programme of awareness training for Elected Members</b>		
<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Head of Democratic Services Corporate Policy & Equality Officer	Increased awareness of disability legislation and understanding of the issues relating to the service users	Training being sourced for 2017/18
<b>Action measure 12: Develop and implement and a set of Accessible Information Protocols for Corporate Communications</b>		
<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Head of Marketing & Communications Corporate Policy & Equality Officer	Improved accessibility of Council materials/publications	2018

**Action measure 13: Continue to assess and improve accessibility of website and other communications materials**

<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Head of Marketing & Communications Head of ICT Corporate Policy & Equality Officer	Improved accessibility of Council online information and services	Ongoing

**10. How the disability action plan will be published**

**10.1** Following submission to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, this Plan will be available by contacting:

**Ann McAleer  
Corporate Policy & Equality Officer  
Mid Ulster District Council  
Dungannon Office  
Circular Road  
Dungannon BT71 6DT**

**Tel: 03000 132 132**

**E: [ann.mcaleer@midulstercouncil.org](mailto:ann.mcaleer@midulstercouncil.org)**

**10.2** The availability of the Disability Action Plan will be advertised in the press and can be accessed on Council's website:

**[www.midulstercouncil.org/equality](http://www.midulstercouncil.org/equality)**

**10.3** The Council will, through our on-going work with people with disabilities and people with learning disabilities, find appropriate ways of communicating the Plan. The Plan will be produced in clear print and plain language, and will be available in alternative formats on request.

**10.4** The contents of the Disability Action Plan will be highlighted through press releases, advertisements, Council literature and by meeting directly with disability organisations, representative groups and individuals.

**10.5** In addition, a summary Plan as well as a full version of the Plan will be available on the intranet or in alternative formats upon request.

## **Contacting Us**

This Disability Action Plan can be obtained from the Council in alternative formats, including large print, Braille, easy read, audio alternative format and/or language. It can also be downloaded from the Council's website at: [www.midulstercouncil.org](http://www.midulstercouncil.org). If you would like a copy in an alternative format, please contact:

**Corporate Policy & Equality Officer**  
**Council Offices**  
**Circular Road**  
**Dungannon**  
**BT71 6DT**

**Call: 03000 132 132**  
**Email: [info@midulstercouncil.org](mailto:info@midulstercouncil.org)**

## Annual Monitoring Return Template: 2017-18

*(To be completed and included in relevant public authorities' own annual reports and submitted to DAERA for inclusion in annual report on Rural Needs Act to be laid before the Assembly)*

**Name of Public Authority: Mid Ulster District Council**

**Reporting Period: June17- March 18**

**1. Describe how your organisation has had due regard to rural needs when  
a. developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans:**

Following the introduction of the Rural Needs Act (NI), Mid Ulster District Council provided training sessions for both staff and elected members.

Council also formally adopted the definition of rural as settlements (areas) of 5,000 residents or less. Consideration will however continue to be given to the funding and investment scenarios when implementing the required 'rural needs' arrangements. As such there are 4 settlements within the District that as classed as urban

Due regard for rural areas has been demonstrated in the following policies, strategies and plans:

- Community Plan
- Corporate Plan
- Corporate Improvement Plan
- Air Quality Action Plan
- Public Realm Schemes
- Village Renewals

## **b. designing and delivering services:**

During the 2017/18 period, Mid Ulster District Council hosted public consultations in relation to the development of the Community Plan. The five themes identified within the Community Plan place an emphasis on:

- Economic Growth
- Infrastructure
- Education and Skills
- Health and Wellbeing
- Vibrant and Safe Communities

The community plan provides a long-term strategic direction for Mid Ulster District Council. In relation to designing and delivering services for Mid Ulster, the plan recognises that two thirds of the Mid Ulster District Council residents living in rural areas (approx. 91,500 people). As such the implementation of the Community Plan is likely to have a positive impact by supporting initiatives and recognising themes and activities that will contribute to a balanced growth and development across the council area, promoting community cohesion and safety, tackling disadvantage and poverty; supporting regeneration (including rural regeneration) and aiding sustainability and well-being. The plan focuses on people, communities and organisations coming together (from both a rural and urban setting) to improve local well-being and quality of life, and making sure that all plans, strategies, priorities and programmes integrate at all levels. For example the plan identifies the poor broadband and mobile phone coverage within the district's rural areas, recognises the significant role that manufacturing, construction and agriculture play within the area, along with the lack of public transport and the reliance on the road network. The plan not only recognises the role of the larger towns but also the role of the area's smaller towns and villages and how these will support many of the rural dwellers and workers within the area. The plan recognises equity across the district acknowledging the differing circumstances in rural areas, communities and groupings in terms of the issues that each may experience.

Community planning also places a strong emphasis on the role of many of the district's smaller towns and villages with an innovative approach taken to local village planning that sees many actions (identified by local rural communities) fulfilling and meeting the needs of local residents and businesses.

**2. Please provide a list of policies, strategies, plans and/or services for which your organisation has completed a rural needs impact assessment or has otherwise taken rural needs into account:**

The following policies had a Rural Needs Impact Assessment in relation during the June 2017-March18:

- ICT Policy
- CCTV Policy
- Maintenance of Un-adopted Roads\*
- Air Quality Action Plan

\*Developed with the backdrop of the *General Power of Competence*