

Mid Ulster District Council



Comhairle Ceantair
Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster
District Council

Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties

Annual Progress Report

Contact details:

| | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and Equality Scheme | Name: Ann McAleer Telephone: 03000 132 132 Email: ann.mcaleer@midulstercouncil.org |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Action Plan | As above <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Name: Telephone: Email: ann.mcaleer@midulstercouncil.org |
| Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at: | https://www.midulstercouncil.org/your-council/equality/equality-scheme |
| 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 2023 and March 2024

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 2023-24, 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.

Equality Scheme & Equality Action Plan:

- Council continues to implement its Equality Scheme which directly influences policies, practices, and service delivery. Details of Policy screening completed during the reporting period are available on www.midulstercouncil.org/equality
- During the reporting period the Organisational Development Department have continued to introduce new policies and review existing policies. This includes the review of the Council's Learning and Development Policy.
- A Good Relations Working Group Training session was held during this reporting period. An independent GR facilitator delivered the training with the aim of informing members elected in the 2021 Local Government elections of their Equality Scheme commitments.
- Mid Ulster Council was also represented at NILGA and the Local Government Local Government Diversity Ambassador Programme events that have been held during the reporting period. Via these events, the Council's Diversity Ambassadors are encouraged and equipped to actively promote the equality and diversity agenda across the local government attempts and to emulate best practice from across the sector and in order to integrate the priorities of the Equality and Diversity Group throughout the organisation.
- The Council is also represented on a NI Local Government Partnership on Travellers Issues Forum. This is a regional forum comprised members from every Council in Northern Ireland with support from relevant council officers. The group deals with specific issues affecting Local Government and informs strategy and practice of the work with Traveller Communities.

Policy & Service Delivery:

- The Council continues to encourage the use of JAM (Just A Minute) Cards at Council facilities.
- Council buildings were lit up on numerous occasions during 2023/24 to mark numerous events e.g. International Kawasaki Disease Awareness Day (Red), Holocaust Memorial Day (Purple), World Encephalitis (Inflammation of the Brain), British Porphyria Association: Rare Disease (Purple).
- The Council continues to deliver the Mid Ulster Labour Market Partnership (LMP). It has been established as part of the Department for Communities' (DfC) Employability NI programme, which aims to design, procure and implement a fresh suite of employability initiatives to support people into meaningful employment. During this reporting period the LMP has reported the following achievements:
 - In 2022 the Mid Ulster employment rate for disabled people was 42.3%, which was a considerable improvement on the 2021 rate of 24%. This has meant that Mid Ulster has moved from having the largest disability employment rate gap in Northern Ireland of 54.9pps to one of the lowest in 2022 of 37.7pps
 - In 2022 Mid-Ulster had the largest employment rate gap for women in Northern Ireland. However, the female employment rate at 68.3% is now only just below the Northern Ireland average female employment rate of 69.2%.
- Mid Ulster District Council's Age Friendly Co-ordinator has continued the development of an Age Friendly Strategy for the District during this reporting period. Support was also provided via the following initiatives:
 - The development of Over 50's forum – first meeting held on 25th April 2023. Meetings continue on a quarterly basis to consult with over 50's in the district.
 - Chair of Mid Ulster District Council Councillor launched the Mid Ulster Age-friendly Strategy and Action Plan for the next three years at the Mid Ulster Loneliness Network first annual celebration ahead of Positive Ageing Month. The event was attended by a collaboration of over 120 key stakeholders from public, community, and voluntary sectors, the new strategy and three-year action plan will work to ensure all residents in the district can live in security, enjoy good health, continue to participate fully in society, and feel valued and respected – regardless of age. The Agewell Partnership ensured that the most vulnerable & isolated members living in rural areas were included at the event by working alongside Community Transport. Network members provided stands on the day with information on accessing services. This was the first social event that many of our guests had attended since before Covid and were so appreciative of it saying it has now given them the confidence to attend further activities.
 - The development of Mid Ulster Agewell Monday Clubs with Libraries NI. 2 clubs have been established in Dungannon, Magherafelt and Cookstown library every week with groups of older people who are meeting from 1-3pm to have a coffee

and chat. Guest speakers have also been organised to come along to the sessions.

- The Centre for Ageing Better carried out a research project around the current funding situation for Age-friendly Communities around the UK, to map how communities are currently funded and to identify opportunities for future funding. The aim with this work is to identify models of Age-friendly funding across different places to share, as well as helping direct how we might influence the funding landscape more widely. The Mid Ulster Age well model has been included within this report as a good practice case study example.
- Age friendly Co-ordinator secured funding through the Northern Healthy Lifestyle partnership and NHSCT to help implement Age friendly initiatives. The following sessions were delivered with urban and rural groups throughout the district:
 - Moneymore activity group- 4 weeks of boccia
 - Magherafelt parish centre- 3 weeks line dancing
 - Lissan Leisure club- 4 weeks Bowls
 - Loughshore community services- 4 weeks chair Yoga
 - Spring tea dance
- A performance management workshop was delivered to Age Friendly Alliance members on 14th June 2023.
- A successful Positive Ageing month took place in October where the Age friendly co-ordinator linked with stakeholders and all sectors to provide sessions for the programme of events.
- Centre for Ageing Better UK Conference London 2023. Eight representatives from N. Ireland including MUDC attended this great Age Friendly conference in London on 22nd and 23rd November with inspiring topics to ensure Northern Ireland is Making Later Lives better! A report was produced to highlight some of the key learning/shared practice from the conference.
- Presented to Northern Healthy Lifestyle partnership. Opportunity to present on the Choose to Live project to the members of the Northern Healthy Lifestyle partnership that the Age Friendly co-ordinator delivered on throughout the quarter.
- After the success and feedback from last years 1st Christmas tea dance and other events throughout positive ageing month the age friendly co-ordinator and the Chair of Mid Ulster District Council Councillor Dominic Molloy launched a Christmas tea dance event 4/12/23. The afternoon was a fun way to get people out and about, engage, connect and to keep active. There was an intergenerational element to the event, the kids from AuSome Kids came along and delivered Christmas cards that they had handmade for the older people. The event was attended by over 100 older people.

- Mid Ulster Loneliness network small grants & calendars. The steering group awarded 9 grants to members in December who delivered projects/activities throughout this quarter that aimed to prevent and address loneliness across the generations and reduce barriers to participation and to enable them to become more connected. Some of the projects included: Herbal Walks, History Of Upperlands Linen, Agewell Monday & Tuesday Group Get Active, Grow Together, Candle Making Workshop, Prepare For Spring, Winter Wellbeing Forever Young Project. The network have also worked together and involved members/service users in planning, developing and delivering the 2024 calendars. The calendar was used to promote member organisations/community groups services amongst the community.
- The Age Friendly Coordinator was invited to speak about Age Friendly at a Making Life Better (online) event, which took place on 21st February to showcase Age Friendly from a locality level perspective and what has been happening on the ground in the Mid Ulster Council area.
- A Crime Prevention Awareness & Information Event for Older People was held in The Valley Hotel, Main Street, Fivemiletown on Thursday 7th March 2024. The Programme of events included: Refreshments on arrival along with a range of Information Stands before the opening Address, Mid Ulster PCSP Scams and Crime Prevention Advice – PSNI Crime Prevention Officer, Mid Ulster Agewell Partnership- Information on Services including Good Morning Calls & Home Maintenance Update, some Chair-based and breath work activities, information on the councils Health & Wellbeing Programmes, Recycling Advice & Information and Trading Standards information services. There was also a Question & Answer Session opportunity for attendees as well as a hot lunch provided.
- To mark Age Without Limits Action Day, 20 March 2024, Mid Ulster District Council and Radius Housing delivered a ‘one stop shop’ event providing information on a range of organisations to help over 50’s get, and stay, connected within their community. The free drop-in event took place on Wednesday 20 March at the Burnavon, Cookstown from 10am-3pm. Tea/coffee and light refreshments will be provided throughout the day. Approximately 30 organisations took part in the event to help encourage older people to reach out and connect, reduce social isolation and loneliness, and to support them to live long healthy lives Some of the comments/outcomes included: Would like more events like this, I’ve learned a lot, All very informative in a relaxed environment- very well ran!, Blind/Deaf very informative, as they all were, Very good information, I really enjoyed the information- great morning meeting new people.
- Cost-of-living, benefit uptake and financial well-being workshops. Along with Step NI the first Workshop to support community and voluntary sector organisation to help older people with financial wellbeing was delivered on 14th

March. There are plans for further workshop with older people in the next quarter.

- The Age friendly co-ordinator works closely with a range of organisations and groups to meet the accessibility needs for older adults including Mid Ulster Disability Forum, Mid Ulster Loneliness network, Mid Ulster Seniors network, Council's Corporate Policy & Equality Officer, Shopmobility, Gobility, RNID, Deafblind NI, Dementia and Alzheimer's NI and STEP NI to influence and improve practice in delivering the age friendly agenda.
- The Age Friendly co-ordinator continues to work closely with other council departments including: Communication department to share Age Friendly information via a variety of communication channels including news articles and social media channels. A communication and information task group has been put in place to create an oversee the Age friendly work. Positive ageing month booklet and newsletter contains positive age friendly imagery. The Age friendly co-ordinator works alongside Equality officer and an Accessibility Guidance Principles document has been developed. Training has been provided internally to staff. Age friendly co-ordinator is planning sessions with Equality officer to link with service User on a Digital Accessibility Questionnaire. Age friendly co-ordinator is making services users aware of the Councils Corporate Improvement Objectives Consultation 2024 – 2025 and the public sessions that are taking place. Liaising with regeneration manager and senior networks to plan sessions to keep updated on the closure of the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) which may affect vulnerable with landline telecare alarms and any other issues.
- Council services provided information stalls at a 'Navigating Neurodiversity' event held in Magherafelt in November 2023. The aim of the event was to signpost neurodivergent individuals and their families to inclusive organisations and services that are available in the District. The Council used the opportunity to raise awareness of our facilities that have achieved the Autism Impact Award and inclusive practices within the Council's leisure services.
- In relation to Health and Wellbeing service delivery during this reporting period, the following programmes and activities were undertaken:
 - Summer schemes and camps were delivered to 9057 participants aged under 18years old
 - £1 summer activities were introduced for under 18s during the school summer holidays
 - Summer schemes designed to meet the needs of neurodivergent children were also delivered in Summer 2023. They were delivered in sites in Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt and were attended by 60 children
 - 10 children with physical disabilities have accessed assisted swimming lessons
 - 10 individuals with learning disabilities engaged in the Fit4U programme

PART A

- 3209 individuals took part in the Active Lifestyle Programme which included activities such as:
 - Active Aging, Strength Balance, Active Aging, Autism Club, Beginners Yoga, Water Aerobics, Strength Balance, Post Natal Pilates, Mums & Tums, Ti Chi / Chi MI, Beginners Yoga, Postnatal Yoga, Autism Club, Water Aerobics, Tuesday Club and Fit 4 U
 - Swim
- Health and Wellbeing service delivery during this reporting period also included:
 - Home Accident Prevention-302 Home checks
 - Energy Efficiency- 1618 Household interactions
 - An Eat Well During Menopause Seminar was delivered
 - World Mental Health was highlighted on the Council Social Media accounts
 - A Positive Planning for Retirement session was held

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2023-24 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

Theme 1: Accessibility of Council Services, Facilities and Events

Action 1b: Increased accessibility at Council facilities for parents and carers

Accessible and user friendly spaces created for parents and carers within Council facilities

A 2023/24 Council Corporate Improvement Objective was to: 'Create Standardised Accessibility and Inclusivity guidance materials for Council's Capital Projects'. This project resulted in the development of: Mid Ulster District Council's Accessibility Principles Guidance: Making Accessible Practice, Common Practice. This guidance was developed in consultation with the Mid Ulster Disability Forum (MUDF). The guidance ensures measures that encourage the independence of people who require care but also ensure that accessibility is incorporated into capital builds and events planning so these services are also accessible to parents and carers.

Theme 1: Accessibility of Council Services, Facilities and Events

Action 1c: Staff Training

19 Members of staff attended a briefing session in relation to how to practically implement Mid Ulster District Council's Accessibility Principles Guidance: Making Accessible Practice, Common Practice guidance. This session was also attended by and contributed to by the Vice-Chair of MUDF. Evaluations for the session showed that staff found the practical guidance helpful for project and events. Staff attending from the following services: Building Control, Parks, Technical Services, Community Development and Health, Leisure and Wellbeing

Theme 2: Corporate Practices

Inclusive delivery of the Corporate Plan

Planning and internal consultation processes for the Council's new Corporate Plan for 2024-2028 took place during the 23/24 financial year. The internal consultation included consultation across the Council's functions to ensure that an inclusive plan with an adherence to the commitment to promote equality of opportunity and good relations was developed and approved.

Theme 4: Partnership Working

Explore partnership working opportunities that place a focus on Good Relations

Sperrinview School is a co-educational, inter-denominational school that caters for 145 pupils with severe learning difficulties, from 3 to 19 years. In 2023 the Council's Committee and Member Services Manager took part in a visit to the School and delivered presentation on; What Council does? Who Councillors are? The school Election. The Children running for School Election shared their manifesto statements. In order to facilitate their election, the school borrowed voting booth for the elections. The Council Chairperson and Dungannon DEA Councillors were invited to Sperrinview to announce the results of the elections. To follow up on their election, Sperrinview School pupils visited the Council Chamber and raised issues with Elected Members to raise at relevant committee meetings.

3 Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2023-24 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

Yes

No (go to Q.4)

Not applicable (go to Q.4)

Please provide any details and examples:

During this reporting period the Council's Chair used his term of office to engage with S75 groupings across the District via participation in the following events, initiatives and promotional activities:

- Attendance at Oakridge Social Education Centre to mark Learning Disability week Celebration Attendance at a reception for Integrated College Dungannon
- Celebration of Gold Early Years Centre Of Excellence
- Took part in a School uniform reuse scheme photocall to promote this opportunity to reuse schools uniforms
- Took part in Mid Ulster Pride Parade and provided a speech to mark the event
- Positive life meeting
- Photocall to promote and mark Good Relations week
- Attended an event to mark Chinese National Day
- Hosted a visit from the East Timorise Ambassador Visit to Dungannon
- Attended Sperrinview School Council Elections
- Provided a speech to mark Culture Day
- Attended Mid Ulster Loneliness Network celebration event and the launch of the 1st age friendly strategy
- Attended the Tourette's Support NI Conference 2023
- Attended the Disability Action Empower Roadshow Event
- Arthritis light up a Building – photocall
- Enterprise women's event 2023
- Attendance at First Steps Women's Centre - Human Library event for contribution to discussions with migrant people about their lives, cultures and traditions
- Photocall to promote Foster Caring
- Provided a speech at a Youth Resilience Celebration Event

PART A

- 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

The Council has been working towards the implementation of an Age Friendly Strategy. Part of the strategy development process involved engaging with residents over the age of 50 to find out how it feels to grow older in their communities and what their needs are for the future. The draft Strategic Plan went out for public consultation for 12 weeks (Thursday 16 February 2023- Friday 12 May 2023). The Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan outlines ways in which accessibility needs for older adults can be addressed. The plan looks at the need for more opportunities to support and promote active ageing, removing barriers to older people to ensure they are more respected, valued and included. The plan aims to increase involvement, respect and inclusion with older people feeling more valued. The plan also addresses ways in which to have an effective communication system that enhances well-being, so that as we age, we can continue to be informed and engage in our community with the confidence of support.

- 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 the reporting period, the Council adopted an Assets Management Strategy. The Strategy includes regard for current statutory and corporate priorities is a practical tool to assist Council:

- In making its investment decisions
- In maintaining and improving its assets
- In increasing the cost effectiveness and value of its portfolio
- In promoting transformation and development in asset management
- In listening and responding to customers and property users
- In promoting Environmental Sustainability in how we manage and use our assets.

Equality screening of the strategy ensured that the final adopted strategy features mechanisms for consultation with customers and property users and that accessibility or the lack of accessibility and equality of opportunity are both fully considered in relation to any assets disposal linked to the strategy.

PART A

As a result of what was identified through the EQIA and consultation exercise
(please give details):

Click or tap here to enter text.

As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact *(please give details):*

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

Other *(please specify and give details):*

Click or tap here to enter text.

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 2023-24 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:

Click or tap here to enter text.

PART A

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2023-24 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:

Click or tap here to enter text.

6 In the 2023-24 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 corporate plan
- No, the organisation's planning cycle does not coincide with this 2023-24 report
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Equality action plans/measures

7 Within the 2023-24 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:

4

Actions ongoing:

10

Actions to commence:

0

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

Action 4a: Explore partnership working opportunities that place a focus on Health and Wellbeing of S75 groups

To celebrate International Women’s Day in March 2024, the Council hosted two events to incorporating the theme of ‘Inspire Inclusion’. The events took place on 6th March in Cookstown and 3rd March in Moy. Money raised from the events went to Women’s Aid. The events addressed various topics including empowerment through inclusion, mindset and personal development, as well as lifestyle, fitness and nutrition.

8 Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2023-24 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

No amendments were made to the equality action plan/measures during this reporting period.

9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2023-24 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 2023-24 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

The proposed rationalisation of waste and recycling services was documented in the rates estimates for 23/24. The outcome of the screening for the rationalisation identified minor negatives. Therefore, the initial rationalisation was amended partially as a result of the equality screening documentation which documented the needs of older people, larger families and people with disabilities and caring responsibilities. A consultation for the ‘Proposed Changes to Household Waste Recycling Centres’ is scheduled for the 24/25 financial year.

12 In the 2023-24 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

PART A

- Information by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation
- Internet discussions
- Telephone consultations
- Other (*please specify*): Click or tap here to enter text.

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:

Mid Ulster District Council continues to liaise with Mid Ulster Disability Forum in relation to access and inclusion practices, particularly new capital build projects. One example of this was in January 2023 when the Design Team contracted by the Council to deliver a new pitch at Mid Ulster Sports Arena were invited to a Council facilitated Focus Group session with members of the Forum. The outcome of the meeting was that the designs were amended to increased inclusion at all stand levels, gradients were re-examined and additional seating, rest areas etc were included in the amended plans as a result of the information received at the focus group session.

13 Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2023-24 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Click or tap here to enter text.

14 Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2023-24 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- Yes

PART A

No

Not applicable – no commitment to review

Arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

<https://www.midulstercouncil.org/your-council/equality>

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

24

16 Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2023-24:

Click or tap here to enter text. Policy consultations conducted with **screening** assessment presented.

0 Policy consultations conducted **with an equality impact assessment** (EQIA) presented.

0 Consultations for an **EQIA** alone.

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

The main consultations carried out during this period was the Coalisland Canal Improvement and Active Travel carried out in March 2024. While this consultation was not linked directly to screening assessments, focused consultation was carried out with Mid Ulster Disability Forum to ensure due regard was paid to accessibility of the plans.

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

Yes

PART A

No concerns were raised

No

Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

N/A

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

19 Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2023-24 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

Yes

No

Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Arrangements for monitoring and publishing the results of monitoring (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

20 From the Equality Scheme monitoring arrangements, was there an audit of existing information systems during the 2023-24 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

Yes

No, already taken place

No, scheduled to take place at a later date

Not applicable

Please provide any details:

PART A

Mid Ulster DC continues to implement a new Digital Transformation Strategy, the implementation of this strategy continues to explore new monitoring techniques to be implemented over the course of the delivery of the strategy.

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

Yes

No

Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Information on policies are gathered during the life-cycle of a policy. This information is used to identify amendments required during the policy review process.

22 Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2023-24 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

No differential/adverse impacts have been identified via monitoring arrangements in 22/23.

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:

None of the policies screened during this period identified the requirement of extensive monitoring. Service planning does take account of information gathered for policy development and reviews and service planning team meetings.

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 2023-24, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

During this period the Council online training module 'Level 1 Equality and Diversity Awareness' training was available to all staff. To date 26% of staff members have completed the learning module, this is since it's introduction in 22/23. 45 members of staff received Level 2 Equality and Diversity Awareness' training. While 11 Senior Officers were trained in Equality and Diversity Level 3 by John Kremer.

During this period 10 managers and 16 officers attended Dignity at Work Training.

The Council also hosted the Autism Bus at Cookstown Leisure Centre in April 2023. This experience provided 7 members of staff and 1 elected member with the opportunity to experience the sensory challenges experienced by some autistic individuals.

Training evaluations received from the participants after the training sessions evidenced how beneficial and practically helpful that they found the sessions to be. The majority of staff indicated that the training had provided practical and useful information.

- 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:

New capital project accessibility guidance was developed during this period, it was supported by an Officer training session. The session provided 19 relevant members of staff with the skills and knowledge to ensure that projects commissioned or designed by the Council are compliant with best practice in relation to physical and general accessibility principles.

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

- 26** Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2023-24, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

The Council monitors the use of the online language translations provision on the Council's website. In order to increase these usage figures, an additional page has been

added to the website. The aim was to create additional awareness that the services are available and to ensure that the public are given direction to access online translation.

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

- 27 How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2023-24?

Insert number here: 0

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:

2026

- 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 Council is currently developing accessible guidance for communications practices, with the aim of ensuring inclusivity in relation to new and existing digital platforms. This guidance is an addition to the guidance required by the EAP in relation to translation & interpretive requirements.

- 30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next reporting period? *(please tick any that apply)*

Employment

Goods, facilities and services

Legislative changes

PART A

Organisational changes/ new functions

Nothing specific, more of the same

Other (please state):

Click or tap here to enter text.

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:

| | | |
|----------------|--------------------|--------------|
| 8 | 3 | 0 |
| Fully achieved | Partially achieved | Not achieved |

2. Please outline below details on all actions that have been fully achieved in the reporting period.

2 (a) Please highlight what **public life measures** have been achieved to encourage disabled people to participate in public life at National, Regional and Local levels:

| Level | Public Life Action Measures | Outputs ⁱ | Outcomes / Impact ⁱⁱ |
|-------------------------|---|--|---|
| National ⁱⁱⁱ | Council responses to public consultations | The Council has responded to numerous public consultations on issues that will impact upon people with disabilities. During this reporting period, numerous consultations were held by central government in relation to budget cutting and rationalisation of services. | Lobbying for better provision of service of S75 groups including people with disabilities. |
| Regional ^{iv} | Navigating Neurodiversity Event | In November 2023 the Council’s Arts and Leisure services were represented at a | The aim of attending the event was to make parents and carers from across Northern Ireland and autistic |

PART B

| | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|--|---|
| | | Navigating Neurodiversity Event held in the District | individuals themselves aware of the Council's services that have been adjusted in order to ensure ease of accessibility for autistic individuals |
| Local ^v | Neurodivergent Clubs | Neurodivergent Clubs were offered across the District to ensure Neurodivergent children and young people are encouraged to attend Council based facilities and activities. | The Clubs are multi-activity and focus on facilitating children and young people with Neurodivergent needs to do things at their own pace, and to enjoy movement and fun games. |

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

| | Training Action Measures | Outputs | Outcome / Impact |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Develop, deliver and implement a programme of awareness training for Council Officers | <p>The following training/awareness raising sessions we delivered for staff during 2023/24:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Equality and Diversity Level 2 sessions were delivered, training 45 members of staff • 11 Senior Officers were trained in Equality and Diversity Level 3 by John Kremer • 21 members of staff received Autism Awareness Training • 9 members of staff received Sight Loss Awareness Training | <p>These sessions covered various topics/types and aspects relating to disability. The overall impact from the sessions was to increase awareness of disability and the associated reasonable adjustments. Evaluations received following these sessions were extremely positive and indicated that the majority of attendees would immediately be able to apply the skills and knowledge acquired during the sessions.</p> |

PART B

| | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 members of staff received Deafblind Awareness Training • 22 members of staff received Equality Screening Training • 6 members of staff and 1 elected member were trained via the Autism bus | |
| 2 | Develop, deliver and implement a programme of awareness training for Elected Members | Members attended an Equality and Good Relations training session and an Tourette's Awareness Session delivered by Tourette's Support NI. | Increased awareness of the Council's statutory Equality and GR duties as well as additional information on specific conditions. |

NB- Action Measure 8- Accessibility Audit Training was fully delivered during the 2021/22 reporting period.

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 | Integrate our Disability duties into policies, programmes, plans and strategies | Improved accessibility of Council's website. The Council's website continues to adhere to the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. | A number of inaccessible documents have been replaced/removed from Council's website and replaced with accessible formatting. The website also continues to provide accessibility functions e.g. via the provision of audio format, larger font, accessible colour contrasting. |
| 2 | Develop and implement effective means of | The Council continues to work towards being awarded DeafBlind UK Friendly status. | The Council has undertaken a self assessment of the civic reception space in order to address any elements of inaccessibility for people who are |

PART B

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | communication for people who have hearing loss | | deafblind. This has resulted in practical feedback from DeafBlind UK that has allowed the Council to make this public space more accessible. |
|--|--|--|--|

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

| | Encourage others Action Measures | Outputs | Outcome / Impact |
|---|---|--|--|
| 1 | Illumination of Council buildings | Council buildings were illuminated numerous times throughout the year in order to raise awareness of various types of disabilities and the organisations who support them. | Illuminating Council facilities raises awareness in relation to various types of disabilities and encourages others to do likewise. It also recognises the impact particular disabilities have on residents of the District. |
| 2 | ‘Changing Places’ facilities included in capital build projects (where a need is established). | Increased accessibility at Council facilities. | 6 Changing Places to be registered by Mid Ulster District Council ahead of the 2026 deadline. This achievement has made a mix of rural and urban more accessible to visitors who require the enhancements included changing places facilities. |
| 3 | Appoint a Disability Champion at officer and elected member level to progress the disability duties | Both Officer and Elected Member roles have been filled. | The Council is working with LGSC to promote diversity in inclusion in relation to both internal and external Council matters. |

PART B

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 | Equality Proof our Community Plan | The Council's Community Plan has been equality screened again during this reporting period. | Intermittent screening of the Community Plan ensures that there is continued promotion of equality of opportunity. |
| 2 | Maintain Council's Partnership working with MUDF and with other Disability Support Services/Groups | During the period enhance the direct consultation information provided to the Council. | Focussed consultation has been achieved with MUDF amongst other organisations. |
| 3 | Provide flexible work placements/taster placements for individuals with disabilities with a view to preparing them for paid employment | The Council has provided 5 flexible work placements/taster placements for individuals with disabilities during this period. | Services including Leisure, ICT and Finance have facilitated work placements/taster placements for individuals with disabilities, thus benefitting these services and the individuals who have participated. |

PART B

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

| | Action Measures partly achieved | Milestones/ Outputs | Outcomes/Impacts | Reasons not fully achieved |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| 1 | Any new/substantially renovated play areas meet the highest possible standards of accessibility. | Improved accessible play facilities. | Improved services for children and young people who have a disability and their siblings/friends. 34% of the Council’s park equipment is now accessible. This represents a 10% increase from 22/23. | This is an ongoing activity that will be delivered as part of the Public Parks and Play Five Year Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025. |
| 2 | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |

4. Please outline what action measures **have not been achieved** and the reasons why. N/A

| | Action Measures not met | Reasons |
|---|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 2 | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |

PART B

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

Elected members are informed annually of the progress made in relation to the implementation of the Equality Action Plan and Disability Action Plan. Mid Ulster Disability Forum are updated regularly on specific actions being undertaken to meet DAP commitments.

(b) Quantitative

The details of the equality screenings outcomes are recorded and are circulated three times per year (as per Equality Scheme commitments).

6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions has your organisation either:

- made any **revisions** to your plan during the reporting period or
- taken any **additional steps** to meet the disability duties which were **not outlined in your original** disability action plan / any other changes?

No changes have been made.

If yes please outline below: N/A

| | Revised/Additional Action Measures | Performance Indicator | Timescale |
|---|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 2 | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 3 | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |

PART B

| | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 4 | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 5 | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

ⁱ **Outputs** – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.

ⁱⁱ **Outcome / Impact** – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action? Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.

ⁱⁱⁱ **National** : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments

^{iv} **Regional**: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level

^v **Local** : Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora.