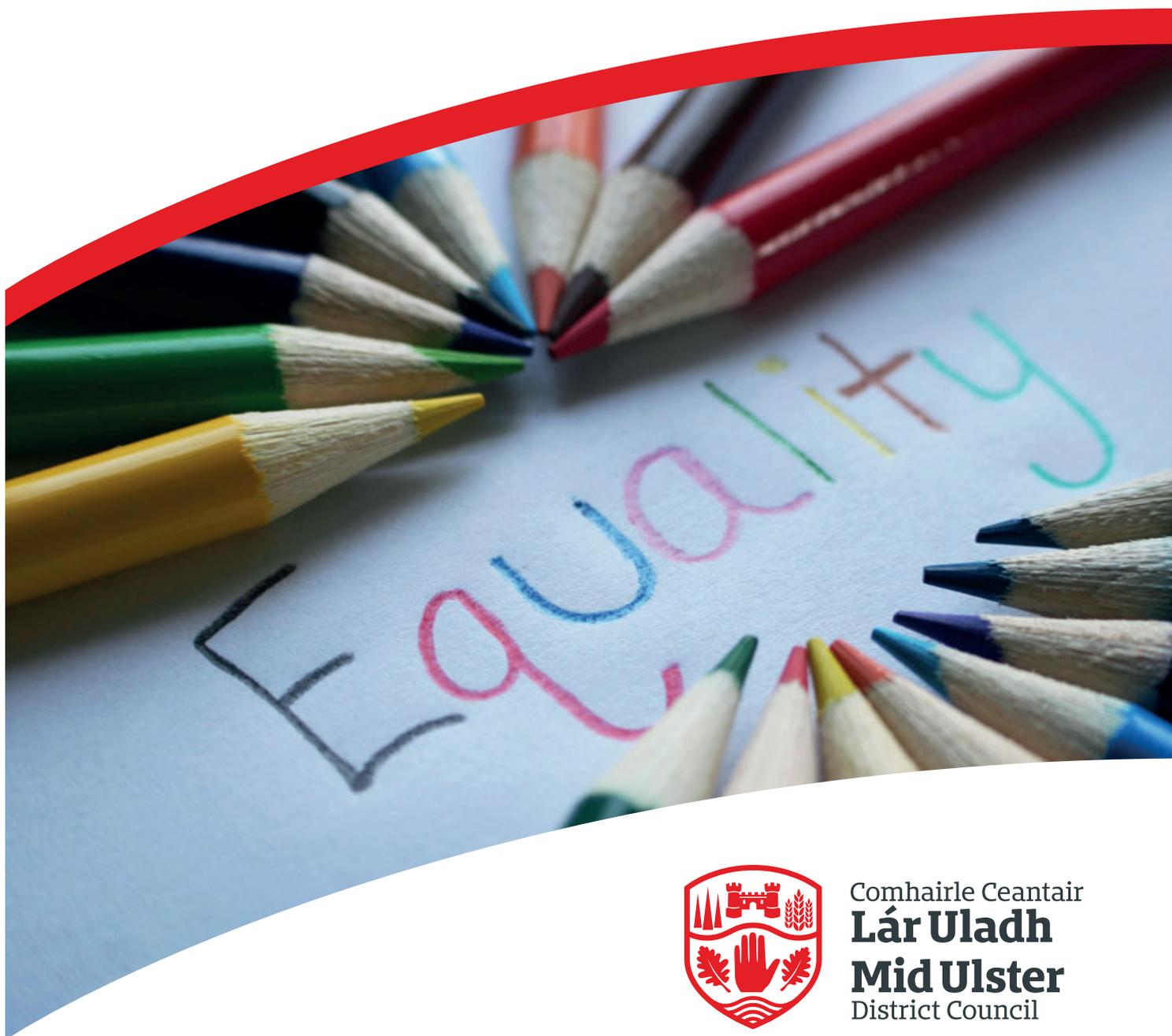


# Equality Action Plan

2015-2020

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

**Mid Ulster District Council**



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



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

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### **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	Timeframe
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:

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