

Mid Ulster District Council



Comhairle Ceantair
Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster
District Council

Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties

Annual Progress Report 2016-17

Contact:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and Equality Scheme	Name: Ann McAleer, Corporate Policy & Equality Officer 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:

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

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 2016 and March 2017

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 2016-17, 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.

Mid Ulster District Council ('the Council') was established on 1 April 2015 following the reform of local government. The Council provides local government services in the areas previously administered by the predecessor councils of Cookstown, Dungannon & South Tyrone and Magherafelt. This background provides the context of the Council's return for the reporting period 2016-17.

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:

- An Equality Scheme was approved by the Equality Commission leading up to the end of this reporting period (November 2016)
- A Corporate Policy and Equality Officer to manage the implementation of Council's Equality Scheme was recruited in December 2016 and took up post in January 2017
- The Equality Consultee List was reviewed in February 2017
- All consultees were notified of the Equality Scheme approval within the reporting period which resulted in consultee requests for meetings to discuss same
- Browsealoud was incorporated into Council's website to increase accessibility for all service users of council
- A Good Relations Working Group page was created on Council's website and the meeting reports to date have been uploaded for accessibility
- The Equality Screening reporting document has been embedded across the organisation and made readily available on the Intranet and other means
- The Mid Ulster Community Plan was developed with Equality embedded within same for impact across the District

- 2** Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2016-17 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

Mid Ulster District Council has carried out an Audit of Inequalities which was finalised in April 2016. The main issues identified included an aging population and accessibility to services. The outputs of the Audit of Inequalities along with the information developed to inform the Community Plan have been used to develop a draft Equality Action Plan. The plan has been developed and will be finalised for consultation in the coming weeks. The draft Action Plan contains measurable activities/initiatives relating to both duties, equality of opportunity and good relations, where appropriate. Given the plan is still at a draft stage and has not yet received committee approval it would not be appropriate to include it in this report. The Equality Commission will be included in the formal consultation process.

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3 Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2016-17 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

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

Please provide any details and examples:

The Equality Scheme provides the opportunity to better promote good relations by the establishment of a Good Relations Working Group to allow Councillors to give specific matters further consideration. This change to procedure has provided a mechanism to address issues as and when they arise and in a timely manner within the council business cycle.

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 Good Relations Working Group will result in policies being developed and practices adopted that ensure maximum opportunity to promote good relations as defined by the NI Act 1998 statutory duty.

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):*

Matters have, and will, be referred to the Good Relations Working Group if it is determined, without prejudice to the equality of opportunity duty, to better promote good relations in their development and out-workings.

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*): Through the development of Council's Equality Scheme.

The council has developed its Equality Scheme to meet its equality and good relations statutory duties. This scheme was approved by the Equality Commission for NI within the reporting period 2016-17 (November 2016).

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 2016-17 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:

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 2016-17 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:

This process is now integrated within reporting arrangements to Council and the relevant committee. The Committee reporting template has also been amended to include the

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recording of equality related implications. Consideration will be given to including this information in Performance Plans for 2018/19 as part of the overall planning framework.

In the 2016-17 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 2016-17 report
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The Council's corporate plan was developed throughout 2014-15 and outside scope of this reporting period.

Equality action plans/measures

7 Within the 2016-17 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

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

As referenced in the Council's response to Question 2 above, an action plan with service specific actions is currently being finalised for consultation subject to Policy & Resources Committee consideration and approval.

8 Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2016-17 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

As per the response to Question 7 our Equality Action Plan is not yet finalised but is at an advanced stage of development.

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- 9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2016-17 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

Not applicable. As per the response to Question 7 our Equality Action Plan is currently being developed.

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 2016-17 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 consultation process of Council's Community Plan. The planning processes were publicly advertised, draft versions made available on the website, consultation sessions were held in various accessible locations and a various times in order to facilitate people with caring responsibilities. The public have been made aware that the plan is available in various formats if required.

- 12 In the 2016-17 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

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- Internet discussions
- 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:

No patterns were identified which could be directly attributable to a particular Section 75 group over another.

13 Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2016-17 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Consultees were notified that council's Equality Scheme had been approved by the Equality Commission and made aware of its availability from Council's website. Furthermore, as part of the same consultation process, consultees were canvassed on whether they wished to remain as consultees on the Council's consultee list.

14 Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2016-17 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

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

3

16 Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2016-17:

0	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 consultation carried out in this period was on the Community Plan. However the plan was finalised, screened and launched outside of this reporting period. Consultation on the District's Local Development Plan (Area Plan) commenced within the 2016-17 reporting period but had not been completed within same.

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:

No examples are available.

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 2016-17 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

In the case of the Ulster Scots Language Policy the results of the assessment were made available and published during the 2016-17 reporting period. This assessment commenced in 2015-16 reporting period.

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 2016-17 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes No, already taken place

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No, scheduled to take place at a later date

Not applicable

Please provide any details:

This will form part of the implementation of Council's draft Equality Action Plan which is currently being finalised for consultation following Policy and Resources Committee consideration.

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:

N/A

22 Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2016-17 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

None identified.

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:

The development of the community plan included monitoring of and direct consultation with S75 groups. This information directly informed numerous elements of the community plan and delivery of its themes.

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 2016-17, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

Directors and Heads of Service and other senior officers were made aware that the Equality Scheme was approved by the Equality Commission in November 2016. Once the Equality Action Plan is developed, consulted upon, briefings and training will be provided.

- 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:

Dementia training for front line is continuing to be rolled out. The impact of such training for the customer is difficult to measure but the existence of the number of equality scheme related complaints during the reporting period is an indicator of the impact of training to date and organisational culture towards meeting the needs of Section 75 groupings.

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

- 26** Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2016-17, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

The Audit of Inequalities flagged up accessibility of services as an area for improvement for Council. While this issue will be addressed further by the implementation of an Equality Action Plan to date Council have responded by including Browsealoud on the Council's website to commencing processes to increase accessibility of online services.

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

- 27** How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2016-17?

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:

The scheme will be due for review in 2020 based on 5 years from when the council's scheme was initially submitted with the Equality Commission.

- 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*)

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Policy Screening and training will form the basis for a focus going forward

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

3

Partially achieved

0

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	N/A	-	-
Regional ^{iv}	N/A	-	-
Local ^v	Engage with persons with disabilities (as customers) on the community planning of Mid Ulster District	Meetings attended	People with disabilities involved and engaged within processes through local disability forums.

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

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Dementia Awareness Training provided for frontline staff	Increased levels of awareness amongst staff	Improved customer service
2			

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	Engage with Disability Forums and any other locally based disability organisations	Contact made with disability groups/forums where in existence within the District	Council is engaged with groups that are representative of persons with disabilities
2	Accessible contact details	Accessible contact arrangements in place	All persons/council services are accessible readily contactable
3	Browsealoud has been installed on Mid Ulster District Council's website	Increases the level of accessibility for users	Ensures councils online services are made accessible

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

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Work placements were provided for 3 people with disabilities/Special Educational Needs	Providing people with disabilities with workplace experience and also setting an example to local employers to do the same.	Benefits to both the individuals and to Council. Example provided to local employers and opportunities for experience provided.
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	N/A	N/A	N/A

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	Training for relevant officers in universal accessibility auditing	Relevant Officer trained	Increased awareness of specific needs and requirements	Relevant Officer came into post Jan 17. Training providers currently being identified.

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2	Sign language training for frontline staff	Frontline staff trained and skilled	Improved awareness and improved customer service	Relevant officers to be identified
3	Implementation of principles of BS:8300:2009+a1:2010	Principles of disability access adhered to	Council buildings and facilities which are equitably accessible to relevant standards	This is an ongoing activity of progress with a life span in excess of a year.

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

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1	N/A	N/A
2		

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 qualitative report is provided to the Senior Management team on a quarterly basis. This is to ensure senior management is aware of the processes being made in relation to the implementation of the Equality Scheme and Disability Action Plan. It also allows them to gain information in relation to how aspects of implementation impact their team specifically and provides learning from implementation in other areas of the organisation.

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(b) Quantitative

Quantitative measurements are taken in relation to the numbers of the following:

- No of training sessions provided and associated attendees
- No of engagement sessions attended
- No of requests for specific services

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?

Not applicable within this reporting period 2016-17.

If yes please outline below:

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

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?

Council are currently reviewing/amending the current Disability Action Plan in order to reflect the requirements of the new Council. The original plan was developed in 2015 prior to the formal establishment of the new Mid Ulster Council functions and structure. Advice has been sought from the Equality Commission in relation to the amendments made to the plan. The revised disability action plan will also be subject to a full 12 week consultation, the initiation of which is subject to committee and council approval.

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.

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