**Mid Ulster District Council**

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

# **Annual Progress Report**

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| * Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and Equality Scheme
 | Name: Ann McAleer Telephone: 03000 132 132 Email: ann.mcaleer@midulstercouncil.org |
| * Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Action Plan
 | As above [x] Name: Click or tap here to enter text.Telephone: Click or tap here to enter text.Email: Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at: | <https://www.midulstercouncil.org/your-council/equality>  |
| **Signature:** | Officer signature  |

**Contact details:**

 **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 2024 and March 2025**

**PART A – Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Scheme**

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| **1** | In 2024-25, 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 and 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](http://www.midulstercouncil.org/equality)
* One Good Relations Working Group meeting was held during this reporting period.
* 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 local government as attempts are made to emulate best practice from across the sector and in order to integrate the priorities of the Equality and Diversity Group throughout the organisation.
* During the 24/25 financial year, the council invested over £1.2m across 800 grant applications with key elements of support for Good Relations, Social Inclusion, Tackling Social Need. These initiatives provided positive impacts across Section 75 categories.
* The Council has contracted Mid Ulster Advice Services that supports approx. 30,000 clients across a wide range of issues focusing on Welfare, Employment and Migration. This initiative has also provided positive impacts across Section 75 categories.
* The Council has provided focused programme delivery in relation to Women, Youth, Poverty, Disability, Seniors, Environment, Arts & Culture, Health & Wellbeing with each programme providing positive impacts across Section 75 categories.
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**Section 1: Equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice**

**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 2024/25 to mark numerous events, disabilities and conditions.
* 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 to develop and implement an Age Friendly Strategy for the District. Her actions and activities during the reporting period are detailed below:
	+ The vision of the age friendly strategy and action plan is that Mid Ulster is an Age-Friendly district where older people are valued, engaged and supported to live healthy, active, fulfilling lives. The strategy and action plan addresses issues with regards to digital inclusion, rural transport, loneliness and social isolation, and housing options all which impact on disadvantaged communities.
	+ The Age friendly co-ordinator is involved in numerous networks and steering groups to identify the needs within the community and to support inclusive and collective working. Networks and groups include Mid Ulster Agewell, Mid Ulster Seniors Network, Mid Ulster Age Friendly Alliance, Mid Ulster Loneliness Network and Mid ulster Disability Forum. At meetings members are given the opportunity to voice matters including issues, challenges and experiences within their communities.
	+ The Age friendly co-ordinator works with community groups throughout the year to provide projects and activities. Groups have the opportunity to liaise with the Age friendly co-ordinator to determine what projects/activities meet their needs. Evaluations, feedback and OBAs are used to monitor and evaluate community development activities.
	+ The Age friendly co-ordinator is a member of the Mid Ulster Loneliness network steering group. The network aims to engage, raise awareness, initiates actions and opportunities to address loneliness and increase opportunities for socialisation particularly for those living in rural areas. It has been highlighted in the network the number of residents in Mid Ulster living in a rural area and the need to provide more projects/activities in rural areas so the recent small grants programme encouraged applications from rural areas, however all members no matter where they’re located should consider this when applying. As well as this two larger Take 5 Celebration events have taken place in very rural areas within the district.
	+ Sport NI funding this year was used to support 3 rural areas in the district to enable those who have specific needs in rural areas including transport to avail of a 5-week physical activity programme.
	+ 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, 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 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.
	+ 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 age friendly communication channels including news articles and social media channels.
		- The Age friendly co-ordinator has worked alongside the Equality officer and an Accessibility Guidance Principles document has been developed. Training has been provided internally to staff.
		- Sessions have been delivered by the Equality officer to the seniors network on the Digital Accessibility work.
		- Age friendly co-ordinator is making service users aware of the Councils Corporate Improvement Objectives Consultation 2025 – 2026 as part of the public sessions that are taking place.
	+ Age friendly co-ordinator liaises and attends sessions provided by the Digital transformation team within council to keep older people up to date regarding services that are going digital including dog licensing/registrations of births/deaths etc
	+ Other achievements/work throughout the reporting year included:
		- An opportunity arose through the Centre for Ageing Better to offer up to 14 participants from rural Age-friendly Communities, to engage in an Action Learning set, to connect and problem-solve peers. The Age friendly co-ordinator took part and completed six 2.5hr online sessions, as part of a group meeting every 3–5 weeks. The sessions where action-oriented, problem-solving approach rooted in the idea that people learn best from what they are doing and that they have an unlimited capacity to learn from experience. Action learning promotes fresh thinking and new ways of looking at and dealing with situations and is, as the name suggests, action-orientated. Learning and reflection happens in a small, facilitated group or ‘set’ of people with the intention of moving issues forward. Individuals learn with and from each other by working on their own particular situations and reflecting on their experience.
	+ The Age friendly co-ordinator presented the Mid Ulster Age Friendly Action Plan Yearly Impact report to the members including the below highlights:
		- 19 members on the Age Friendly Alliance, with 4 task groups, 100 + engagement with others.
		- £18,000 additional funding brought in for activities and projects.
		- Weekly Walks and Chats – 35 members, along with chatty benches.
		- 30th September walk leader training available.
		- Deaf-positive library – books for additional needs.
		- Winter and Spring Copies of Newsletters.
	+ Additional PHA slippage monies identified to support older people. The monies contributed to the design, print and distribution of 1000 x MUDC quarterly Age Friendly newsletters per quarter. Support greater participation in Council-led Older People’s events through provision of venue hire and catering. The Delivery of 4 x arts and crafts workshops for older people during Positive Ageing Month 2024.
	+ Funding secured through the Northern Health and Social Care Trust to run 3 afternoon tea dances including a Christmas event to support the over 50’s forum.
	+ The Age-Friendly co-ordinator continues to support the Age Friendly Alliance meetings, reporting to senior management and elected members with updates on progress. The Age-Friendly co-ordinator continues to facilitate quarterly Age-Friendly Alliance meetings ensuring all relevant stakeholders and the over 50’s forum remain engaged, including having internal meetings with Council strategic leads to deliver on the Age Friendly agenda.
	+ The Age Friendly co-ordinator has consulted and communicated with older people giving them the opportunity to link up to generate ideas and interest for programming of content for October. The programme was published in the Autumn edition of the “Live Happy” newsletter and copies distributed to older people using a variety of communication methods including a published booklet and online/socials. Positive feedback has been received throughout the month of October on activities provided including: “very successful tea dance, good food, great dancing and just brilliant, lovely, friendly and had everything well organised”,“more events like these please” and “met new friends”
	+ Age friendly co-ordinator attended the Age-friendly Communities Conference on 26th-27th March 2025 at Chamber Space, Manchester. This conference aimed at practitioners within the UK Network offered an invaluable space to build collaboration and share learning in the creation of Age-Friendly Communities. Themes for the event included diversity and inclusion, measuring impact, the built environment and enabling older people's voice. The event featured a dynamic programme of panels, workshops and networking opportunities.

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| **2** | Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2024-25 (*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**During the reporting period, a screening was carried out in relation to delivery of corporate events. As a result of the mitigation requirements identified via the screening (which was also informed by the monitoring of participation at previous events) the following accessibility arrangements have been put in place:Accessibility requirements have become a key consideration in the planning and delivery of all Council events. Where appropriate space can be made available, a designated quiet space is provided to support the needs of neurodivergent individuals, with a selection of sensory equipment available for those who wish to make use of the space.Accessible car parking is offered at event sites, and at two events, an accessible community bus service was provided to assist with the transportation of attendees to and from the venue. Accessible toilet facilities are available at each event, with pre-event promotional media also directing attendees to the nearest Changing Places facility.Site accessibility is carefully considered, including the location of dropped kerbs and other measures to improve ease of movement throughout the area. At one event, a wheelchair-accessible ramp was installed to enable a local choir member to access the stage.Through our pre-event marketing, we communicate expected peak times to help attendees plan their visit. In the case of fireworks displays, the scheduled firing times are promoted in advance to support families who may wish to attend only for the display, or alternatively, to participate in the event and leave before the display begins.During this reporting period, Mid Ulster District Council have been successful in obtaining funding from Department for Communities to develop and produce a Plan Shaping Plan for Cookstown (2025-2040). The aim of the Place Shaping Plan is to improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of Cookstown. Following extensive research and collaborative engagement with the people who live, work, invest and visit Cookstown, the Plan will outline a vision for the town, and set out a tangible, achievable roadmap of actions up to 2040. This Plan will inform the responsibilities of key stakeholders on the delivery of initiatives over the next fifteen years, subject to funding. This project has been equality screened at an early stage to ensure that it provides positives outcomes for all S75 groups. Protected groupings will be encouraged to participate in the project design and implementation.**Theme 3: Participation Levels**  |

**Theme 3c: Provide a Digital First but not Digital Only Approach to Service Delivery**

A 2024/25 Council Corporate Improvement Objective was to: ‘Develop digital accessibility and digital inclusion by design guidance and training materials for Council’s transformational team’. This project resulted in the development of: Mid Ulster District Council’s Accessible Communications Guidance Principles: Making Accessible Practice, Common Practice. This guidance was developed in consultation with the Mid Ulster Disability Forum (MUDF). The local Age Alliance Forum was also consulted in person. The guidance inclusive practice in relation to fonts, design and layouts, images, digital communication practices, videos and appropriate language.

**Theme 4: Partnership Working**

**Theme 4a: Explore partnerships working opportunities that place a focus on Good Relations**

During the reporting period the Council’s Good Relations team delivered the following programmes for children and young people; Youth Engagement Programme (223 participants), Shared Youth Resilience Development Programme (676 participants) and the Mid Ulster Youth Voice which was delivered in partnership with Education Authority Youth Service (16 participants). A Cultural Diversity Programme was also developed during this reporting period.

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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 2024-25 reporting period? *(tick one box only)* |
|  | [x]  Yes [ ]  No (go to Q.4)[ ]  Not applicable (go to Q.4) |
|  | Please provide any details and examples: |
|  | The Council’s new Volunteering Policy which received Council approval in January 2025.  |
|  |  |
| **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?  |
|  | During the reporting period a new Volunteering Policy was developed by the Council. An equality screening was developed at an early stage in the process. During the information gathering and equality screening of the policy, it was clear that the policy needed to be flexible and also address barriers to volunteering that are experienced by some Section 75 groupings. Amendments made to the policy included the development of a section of the policy guidance which highlights common barriers to volunteering and how to address them e.g. accommodating a lack of knowledge or experience, providing flexibility in relation to levels of time commitments and ensuring to create various type of opportunities.  |
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| **3b** | What aspect of the Equality Scheme prompted or led to the change(s)? *(tick all that apply)* |
|  | [x]  As a result of the organisation’s screening of a policy *(please give details):* |
|  | The screening highlighted that to create equality of opportunity, people from all section 75 groups  |
|  | [ ]  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**

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|  | **Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)** |
| **4** | Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2024-25 reporting period? *(tick one box only)* |
|  | [x]  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. |
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| **5** | Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2024-25 reporting period? *(tick one box only)* |
|  | [x]  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. |
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| **6** | In the 2024-25 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)* |
|  | [x]  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 2024-25 report[ ]  Not applicable |
|  | Please provide any details and examples: |
|  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
|  |  |
|  | **Equality action plans/measures** |
| **7** | Within the 2024-25 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of: |
|  | Actions completed:5Actions ongoing:9Actions to commence:0 |
|  | Please provide any details and examples (*in addition to question 2*): |
|  | **Theme 4: Partnership Working** **Theme 4a: Explore Partnership Opportunities that place a focus on health and wellbeing**The Council’s Labour Market Partnership also delivered a Neurodiversity in the Workplace Training Event, on Thurs 20th March in Magherafelt. This event was delivered in conjunction with the Partnership’s Disability and Health Awareness Working Group. The Labour Market Partnership also provided an Employer-led Disability Inclusion Programme during the reporting period, it resulted in 16 participants being enrolled, 16 employers being engaged and 9 programme completers successfully securing employment.In addition the Council’s Chairperson attended the following events to promote the valuable work being carried out within the Community and Voluntary sector:* Tourette’s Support NI Information in Parliament Buildings, Stormont
* The Official opening of new sensory provision at the Tobin Centre,
* Promotional events for Good Relations Week
* The Launch of the Youth Voice
* The Launch of Dyslexia and Dyspraxia Support new Transitions Project
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| **8** | Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2024-25 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 2024-25 reporting period, the following have been identified: *(tick all that apply)* |
|  | [x]  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)* |
|  | [x]  All the time[ ]  Sometimes[ ]  Never |
|  |  |
| **11** | Please provide any details and examples of good practice in consultation during the 2024-25 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 Maghera Public Realm demonstrated good practice in relation to public consultation via the use of the following method using the following engagement methods to communicate with the user, residents and business community in Maghera:1. Town Centre Forum MeetingsThe Maghera Town centre forum is a strategic body that provides advice and guidance to Strategic Bodies and others regarding the growth of Maghera Town Centre. The Membership of the Town Centre Forum will be made up as follows:• Carntogher DEA Members (5)• Maghera Development Association Representative (1)• Transport NI (1)• Department for Communities (1)• Community Development Representative (1)• Planning Service (1)• Translink (1)• PSNI (1)• Maghera Town Centre Traders (5)• Mid Ulster Disability Forum (1)• Maghera Community Groups Representative (2)Throughout the planning and work of the Public Realm Scheme engagement with this group has been paramount. Scheduled meeting took place on the following dates:• 15 April 2024• 4 September 2024• 23 January 2025• 20 March 2025• 4 June 2025During each meeting the Contractor CivCo presented an update on the progress and were available to answer any queries from the members. 2. Shared Communication Register online – A Maghera Public Realm Scheme email address and 24hr hotline number were developed for the public to raise any issues or concerns. Each query raised through this system was registered on a shared register between the Contractor / Council / Consultants. The register logged information relating to the query, who dealt with the issue, how it was to be resolved and the follow up required. From time to time this necessitated one to one meetings with various members of the public to discuss the issue to find a suitable solution. 3. Contractor Monthly Newsletter Each month the contractor developed an update for the business and community in Maghera. This was issued to the Maghera Town Centre Forum members, businesses and residents within the town centre and profiled on the Council’s Social Channels4. Meet the Contractor Event – 29 May 2024Significant community and stakeholder engagement was undertaken before the scheme commenced to update key groups on implementation plans including Carntogher DEA members, Maghera Town Centre Forum, and Disability groups. An all-day “Meet the Contractor” event also took place on 29th May 2024. It provided an opportunity for the public to drop in and see images of the scheme on a street-by-street basis, and provided them with an opportunity to discuss any queries or concerns with both the Contractor and Council. Most attendees were from the business community, and the next largest grouping were residents. It improved awareness around site specific issues such as deliveries to premises and access issues that will need to be managed as part of implementation arrangements. 5. One to One meeting – LandownersWork needed to take place in relation to land matters where consents or legal agreements were required. The aim to close these out prior to construction commencement in the relevant work phases required engagement with numerous property owners prior to commencement of works. One to one meetings and conversations took place to get agreement of works that would take place in private areas and ensure that the legal agreements were drafted and signed prior to works commencing.  |
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| **12** | In the 2024-25 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently used by consultees**: *(tick all that apply)* |
|  | [x]  Face to face meetings[x]  Focus groups[x]  Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing[x]  Questionnaires[ ]  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: |
|  | In addition to the consultative methods detailed in Question 11 An Accessibility Site Assessment was also held in relation to this project. A site walkover of Maghera Public Realm Scheme for various Disability Groups to review the current measures in place for people using the town was planned at various stages of the project. The first site walkover took place on Wednesday 18 September at 4pm and representatives from the Mid Ulster Disability Forum, Town Centre Forum and additional Disability Groups were invited to attend. Following on from this a further site walkover was carried out on Friday 4 April 2025 to review the current measures in place for people using the town. Notes from each site walkover were developed and adaptations were made in areas where the surface or mechanisms in place were challenging for users.  |
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| **13** | Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2024-25 reporting period? *(tick one box only)* |
|  | [x]  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 2024-25 reporting period? *(tick one box only)* |
|  | [ ]  Yes[x]  No[ ]  Not applicable – no commitment to review |
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|  | **Arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)** |
|  | <https://www.midulstercouncil.org/your-council/equality> |
| **15** | Please provide the **number** of policies screened during the year (*as recorded in screening reports*): |
|  | 33 |
|  |  |
| **16** | Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2024-25: |
|  | Click or tap here to enter text. Policy consultations conducted with **screening** assessment presented0 Policy consultations conducted **with an** **equality impact assessment** (EQIA) presented.0 Consultations for an **EQIA** alone. |
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| **17** | Please provide details of the **main consultations** conducted on an assessment (as described above) or other matters relevant to the Section 75 duties: |
|  | Consultation on Draft Sustainability Strategy and Climate Action Plan Consultation on the Addendum to The Waste Management Plan Proposed Changes to Household Waste Recycling Centres |
|  |  |
| **18** | Were any screening decisions (or equivalent initial assessments of relevance) reviewed following concerns raised by consultees? *(tick one box only)* |
|  | [ ]  Yes[x]  No concerns were raised [ ]  No [ ]  Not applicable  |
|  | Please provide any details and examples: |
|  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
|  | **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 2024-25 reporting period? *(tick one box only)* |
|  | [ ]  Yes[x]  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 2024-25 reporting period? *(tick one box only)* |
|  | [ ]  Yes[ ]  No, already taken place [x]  No, scheduled to take place at a later date[ ]  Not applicable  |
|  | Please provide any details: |
|  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
|  |  |
| **21** | In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies? *(tick one box only)* |
|  | [x]  Yes[ ]  No [ ]  Not applicable  |
|  | Please provide any details and examples: |
|  | Digital Accessibility Guidance document development  |
|  |  |
| **22** | Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2024-25 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed: |
|  | During this reporting period, no differential/adverse impacts have been identified via monitoring arrangements.  |
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| **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 Council’s Good Relations and Health and Wellbeing Teams have both completed detailed monitoring of their programmes. This data collected was examined and has informed their programme planning and strategy development for future initiatives.  |
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|  | **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 2024-25, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme. |
|  | During this period the Council delivered the following training relating to the requirements of 5.4. of the Equality Scheme:* 21 members of staff received Level 2 Equality and Diversity Awareness training.
* 6 Senior Officers were trained in Equality and Diversity Level 3 by John Kremer.
* 30 members of staff received Monitoring training.
* 8 members of staff received equality screening training.
* 14 members of the Senior Management and Senior Executive team received Race Relations training.
* 12 members of staff received Policy Development and Review training.

During this period 23 managers and 16 officers attended Dignity at Work Training. |
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| **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: |
|  | 14 members of the Senior Management and Senior Executive team received Race Relations training in January 2025. The session was pre-empted by fact finding questionnaires regarding how the managers perceived their department’s management of race relations requirements. The face-to-face training was followed up on with a distribution of the outputs of the questionnaires and a connected relevance to each service area.  |
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|  | **Public Access to Information and Services (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 6)** |
| **26** | Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2024-25, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**: |
|  | The usage of the Council’s accessibility communication tools that are available on the Council’s website are monitored to ensure regular uptake by the public. These services include online translation and sign language via a virtual relay service. The website itself is monitored weekly to ensure it remains accessibility compliant. The Council has also developed accessible guidance for communications practices as detailed on page 8.  |
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|  | **Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)** |
| **27** | How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2024-25? |
|  | Insert number here: 1  |
|  | Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome: |
|  | The Council was the subject of an unlawful discrimination case which related to accessing the Council’s Registration services. The case was settled without admission of liability.  |

**Section 3: Looking Forward**

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| **28** | Please indicate when the Equality Scheme is due for review: |
|  | 2026 |
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| **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 will continue to focus on ensuring all relevant training is provided to Officers. The Council will also be preparing information gathering and scoping methods in preparation for the review of its Equality Scheme, DAP and EAP which will occur during the next reporting period.  |
|  |  |
| **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[x]  Goods, facilities and services[ ]  Legislative changes[ ]  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:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **7** | **4** | **-** |
| 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[[1]](#endnote-1) | Outcomes / Impact[[2]](#endnote-2) |
| National[[3]](#endnote-3) | Council responses to public consultations | The Council has responded to numerous public consultations on issues that will impact upon people with disabilities.  | Lobbying for better provision of service of S75 groups including people with disabilities. |
| Regional[[4]](#endnote-4) | Mid Ulster Sports Arena Disability Hub  | Access activities provided to disability support organisations and individuals from across the region who have a disability.  | Tailored inclusive activities.  |
| Local[[5]](#endnote-5) | Inclusive Leisure Service Activities  | During the reporting period the following leisure activities were: 1. Neurodivergent Summer Scheme 2. Chair Based Aerobics 3. Teen Intervention 4. All Stars 5. Move More: or now cancer free | Neurodivergent Summer Scheme Outcome: Inclusive provision of a multi-activity club focusing on facilitating children and young people with Neurodivergent needs to do things at their own pace, and to enjoy movement and fun games. Chair Based Aerobics Outcomes: Provision of accessible exercise for individuals with mobility or balance issues to exercise whilst seated. Teen Intervention: the delivery of a multisport activities for children with a learning disability or physical disability. The sessions promote inclusion and offering alternative social outlets to those not requiring respite or befriending services. All Stars: A multi-activity club focusing on facilitating primary school aged children with SEN to do things at their own pace and to enjoy movement and fun games. Move More: Provides a programme for all people who have had a cancer diagnosis and are at any stage of their cancer journey or now cancer free.  |

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  | The following training/awareness raising sessions we delivered for staff during 2024/25: * 16 members of staff received Autism Impact Award training
* 6 Equality and Diversity Level 2 sessions were delivered, training 48 members of staff
* 17 Senior Officers were trained in Equality and Diversity Level 3 by John Kremer
* 19 members of staff received Disability Awareness Training
* 8 members of staff received Equality Screening Training
 | These sessions covered various topics/types and aspects relating to disability. The overall impact from the sessions was to increase awareness of disability and 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.  |
| 2 | Develop, deliver and implement a programme of awareness training for Elected Members | Relevant training that members attended an Equality and Good Relations training session and Safeguarding training.  | Increased awareness of the Council’s statutory Equality and GR duties.  |

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.  | The website also continues to provide accessibility functions e.g. via the provision of audio format, larger font, accessible colour contrasting. An officer and service delivery guidance document has also been developed to promote the highest levels of digital accessibility possible. It is attached as Appendix 1.  |
| 2 | Develop and implement effective means of communication for people who have hearing loss | The Council continues to monitor and promote the provision of support systems for people who have hearing loss.  | The provision of video relay system for sign language users, speak capability, hearing loop system continues to ensure increased accessibility of Council communications. |

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 areas 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.  |

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 in the previous 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.  |

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 is an ongoing activity that will be delivered as part of the Public Parks and Play Five Year Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025. The figure has also not increased to the levels expected during the reporting period because a number of sites where closed due to planned maintenance / upgrade and unfortunately vandalism at the time of these inspections.  |

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. |

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. |
| 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

1. **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. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. **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. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. **National** : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. **Regional**: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. **Local :** Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora.

Appendix 1: [↑](#endnote-ref-5)