



Derry City & Strabane  
District Council  
Comhairle  
Chathair Dhoire &  
Cheantar an tSratha Báin  
Derry Citty & Stràbane  
Destríck Council

## **Disability Action Plan 2024-27**

### **Derry City and Strabane District Council**

This Disability Action Plan can be obtained from the Council in alternative formats, including large print, Braille, easy read, audio alternative format and/or language. It can also be downloaded from the Council's website at: [www.derrystrabane.com](http://www.derrystrabane.com)

If you would like a copy in an alternative format, please contact:

Derry City and Strabane District Council  
Policy Officer (Equality)  
98 Strand Road  
DERRY  
BT48 7NN

Tel: (028) 71 253 253

E: [equality@derrystrabane.com](mailto:equality@derrystrabane.com)

## **Foreword**

This Disability Action Plan is an important document in that it is reaffirming Derry City and Strabane District Council's commitment to and proposals for fulfilling the statutory obligations in compliance with Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006). This Act placed new duties on public authorities, when carrying out their functions to have regard to the need:

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

Derry City and Strabane District Council is committed to the effective implementation of all aspects of this Disability Action Plan throughout the organisation.

The Plan outlines how disability issues can be more effectively mainstreamed within Derry City and Strabane District Council, thus ensuring that they are central to the whole range of policy decision-making within Derry City and Strabane District Council.

Derry City and Strabane District Council is committed to carrying out consultation in a meaningful manner in the review of its disability duties. In doing so Derry City and Strabane District Council is keen to bring about change for disabled people and we are therefore focussing on the issue of involvement and participation in the drafting, implementation, monitoring and review of this Plan.

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**Mayor**

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**Chief Executive**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## 1 Introduction

1.1 Under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006), Derry City and Strabane District Council is required when carrying out its functions to have due regard to the need to:

- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life ('the disability duties').

Under Section 49B of the DDA 1995, Derry City and Strabane District Council is also required to submit to the Equality Commission a **disability action plan** showing how it proposes to fulfill these duties in relation to its functions.

1.2 Derry City and Strabane District Council is committed to implementing effectively the disability duties and this disability action plan. We will allocate all necessary resources (in terms of people, time and money) in order to effectively implement this plan and, where appropriate, build objectives and targets relating to the disability duties into corporate and annual operating plans.

We will also put appropriate internal arrangements in place to ensure that the disability duties are complied with and this disability action plan effectively implemented. We will ensure the effective communication of the plan to staff and provide all necessary training and guidance for staff on the disability duties and the implementation of the plan.

1.3 We confirm our commitment to submitting an annual report to the Equality Commission on the implementation of this plan as well as carrying out regular reviews of the plan.

1.4 Through the initiatives identified in the Disability Action Plan Derry City and Strabane District Council will endeavour to:

- Promote understanding
- Raise awareness
- Challenge stereotypes
- Encourage respect

- 1.5 We are committed to consulting with disabled people when implementing and reviewing our plans.
- 1.6 A copy of this plan and our annual progress reports to the Equality Commission will be made available on our website [www.derrystrabane.com](http://www.derrystrabane.com) and are available in other formats, on request.
- 1.7 The point of contact within Derry City and Strabane District Council will be:

Policy Officer (Equality)  
Harbour House, Custom House St, Derry.  
Telephone: 02871 253 253 ext. 6705  
Email: [equality@derrystrabane.com](mailto:equality@derrystrabane.com)

If you require this plan in an alternative format (such as in large print, in Braille, on audio cassette, easy read or on computer disc) and/or language, please contact the above person to discuss your requirements.

## **2 Purpose of the disability action plan**

This Plan sets out how Derry City and Strabane District Council proposes to continue to fulfil the disability duties in relation to its functions.

## **3 Derry City & Strabane District Council – its role and functions**

- 3.1 Derry City and Strabane District Council performs principal roles within its local area and district:
  - The direct provision of a number of services and facilities,
  - The promotion of the arts, tourism, community and economic development,
  - The promotion of equality and good relations in carrying out all its functions,
  - The regulation and licensing of certain activities relating to environmental health, consumer protection and public safety,
  - A representative role on a number of bodies and Boards,
  - A consultative role in relation to functions conducted by other Government bodies and agencies.

3.2 In the performance of the above roles Derry City and Strabane District Council carries out functions in the following areas:

- the provision of facilities for recreation, social and cultural activities, including leisure centres, community centres, parks, open spaces, sports grounds and places of entertainment
- street cleansing
- waste collection and disposal
- the provision of burial grounds
- the provision of grant aid to support the arts, community development and the promotion of tourism and economic development
- the administration and regulation of certain matters relating to the environment, public health and public safety, including building control, food safety, statutory nuisance, houses of multiple occupancy, dangerous buildings, air pollution, noise pollution, dog control, consumer protection and health and safety
- the licensing and regulation of street trading, places of entertainment, amusement centres, sex establishments, societies lotteries, cinemas, the storage of petroleum spirit and mixtures and the regulation of off-street parking.
- The making of Bye-laws and regulation of same.
- Planning Services
- Urban Regeneration Schemes
- Community Planning.

#### **4 Public life positions over which Derry City and Strabane District Council has responsibility**

4.1 Derry City and Strabane District Council has responsibility over the a number of public life positions inc:

- Strategic Growth Partnership Thematic Working Groups
- Local Area Growth Planning Groups
- Village Renewal Working Groups
- Equality Assurance and Oversight Group

We may also have other short-term or task based consultative groups such as co-design groups that are established for a particular purpose in line with business planning.

## **5 Derry City and Strabane District Council's commitment to the effective implementation of the disability action plan**

- 5.1 Derry City and Strabane District Council is committed to the effective implementation of all aspects of this Plan. Overall responsibility for determining policy on how this will be achieved lies with the Elected Members. Day to day responsibility for carrying out the policy determined by the Elected Members lies with the Chief Executive and he will be responsible for the implementation of administrative arrangements to ensure that Derry City and Strabane District Council complies with the disability duties in carrying out its functions.
- 5.2 As part of its planning process, Derry City and Strabane District Council will build objectives, target setting and monitoring relating to the disability duties into corporate and business plans.

## **6 Internal arrangements**

- 6.1 The Council consists of 40 elected representatives who are elected for a four-year period. These representatives meet monthly in full session (except in August) and on a regular basis as members of the Council's various Committees.
- 6.2 The Council currently has six Committees: -
- Governance and Strategic Planning
  - Planning
  - Assurance, Audit and Risk
  - Business and Culture
  - Environment and Regeneration
  - Health and Community
- 6.3 Council Staff who provide support to the Council and its Committees and implement its policies are organised into Directorates / Service Areas.
- 6.4 The Chief Executive oversees the work of Directorates through Directors who are also responsible for the Corporate Management of the Council.

## **7 Annual report on Disability Duties**

- 7.1 Derry City and Strabane District Council will submit an annual report on the implementation of its Plan. The annual report will be included as part of Derry City and Strabane District Council's annual report to the Equality Commission on the implementation of our equality scheme.
- 7.2 The annual report will be made available on Derry City and Strabane District Council's website and, on request, in alternative formats such as Braille, large print, audio formats and in minority languages to meet the needs of those not fluent in English.

## **8 Effective engagement**

- 8.1 Derry City and Strabane District Council is committed to engaging effectively with disabled people in the drafting, implementation, monitoring and review of this Plan.

## **9 Consultation**

- 9.1 Derry City and Strabane District Council is keen to bring about change for disabled people and we will actively engage at both regional and local levels to obtain the views of groups and individuals with a disability.
- 9.2 Council will engage directly with its Equality Assurance and Oversight Group in the development of this plan.
- 9.3 As part of the consultation process, barriers to proper consultation will be addressed by ensuring accessibility of documents in appropriate formats. Information will be made available on request in accessible formats. Such information will be made available in a timely fashion.

Public consultation will include an invitation for consultees to submit their views in whatever format they find most accessible, for example, in writing, by telephone or in a face-to-face meeting with the Policy Officer (Equality).



## **10 Action measures**

- 10.1 Derry City and Strabane District Council has detailed the measures it intends to take in order to implement the disability duties. Full details of these are given in the table below.
- 10.2 The Action Plan lays out the initiatives Derry City and Strabane District Council wishes to implement. Council will consider amending them or including additional ones following review and/or feedback.

## **11 Timescale for the Implementation of the Action Measures**

- 11.1 The Action Plan outlines the actions and the timescale for the implementation of the action measures we intend to take in order to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and to encourage the participation of disabled people in public life. This timetable outlines the actions, which Derry City and Strabane District Council will take until 31 March 2027.

## **12 Performance Indicators or Targets**

- 12.1 Derry City and Strabane District Council is committed to monitoring and reviewing policies and practices to ensure that disability equality duties are being met. Monitoring the progress of this Plan itself is a significant element.
- 12.2 As part of this process, the Annual Review of the Plan will contribute towards the monitoring and review process and assist in drafting appropriate targets and performance indicators (PIs) for the next period, whilst reporting on the achievement, or otherwise, of those set for the current period of the Annual Review.
- 12.3 Derry City and Strabane District Council has included performance indicators and targets in the form of 'Output /Measure' as an integral part of this Plan.
- 12.4 Some targets are very specific, whilst other are of a more general nature, thus ensuring the Plan is a realistic and proactive plan, not solely reactive. Some targets are not related to a specific time, as over period of the Plan, we want to ensure that Derry City and Strabane District Council meets the practical needs of disabled persons and their carers on a timely basis.

12.5 The purpose of these measures of success is to provide an indication of how Derry City and Strabane District Council is implementing their disability duties and to ensure we are focusing on their needs at a time when it is appropriate to have them addressed.

### **13 How the disability action plan will be published**

13.1 Following submission to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, this Plan will be available on Council's website or a copy can be obtained by contacting:

Name: Policy Officer (Equality)  
Derry City and Strabane District Council  
98 Strand Road  
DERRY BT48 7NN

Phone number: 028 71 253253

Email: [equality@derrystrabane.com](mailto:equality@derrystrabane.com)

13.2 Our Disability Action Plan is also available on request in alternative formats such as Braille, large print, audio formats and in minority languages to meet the needs of those not fluent in English.



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# Disability Action Plan 2024-2027

## Disability Action Plan

The Disability Action Plan is broken down into the following areas:

1. Mainstreaming
2. Promoting Positive Attitudes towards Disabled People
3. Encouraging Participation in Public Life
4. Monitoring

<b>Mainstreaming</b>				
To ensure that staff consider the disability perspective in the organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of all Council policies and functions				
<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Output/Measure</b>	<b>Impact</b>
<b>1.1</b> Hold at least 2 Equality Assurance and Oversight Group (EAOG) meetings per year to discuss policy and service development in Council. Rebuild/enhance membership of people with a disability/representative groups.	January 2024 onwards	Policy Officer (Equality)	At least 2 Meetings with EAOG which includes representative groups for people with a disability – feedback received on Council policy and decisions	All services will be more accessible  People with a disability will be more involved in decision-making
<b>1.2</b> Continue to screen all new policies to assess the significance of the policy on the disability duties	January 2024 onwards	Chief Officers/Heads of Department/ Human Resources Manager and Policy Officer (Equality)	100% of new and revised policies screened for impact on disability duties	Better promotion of equality for those with a disability

<p><b>1.3</b> Involve people with a disability in service planning and predevelopment exercises</p>	<p>January 2024 onwards</p>	<p>All officers responsible for service planning and policy making</p>	<p>All disability groups within the Derry City and Strabane District Council area will be included on established/tailored communication channels</p>	<p>Better services for people with a disability - Issues which may affect people with a disability will be sorted out at the earliest possible juncture.</p>
<p><b>1.4</b> Review and report on progress of the Disability Action Plan annually</p>	<p>January 2024 onwards</p>	<p>Policy Officer (Equality)</p>	<p>Annual progress report completed and forwarded to the Equality Commission</p>	<p>Increased awareness of Employee's responsibility towards Council's compliance and achievements in relation to disability duties</p>
<p><b>1.5</b> Ensure that training on screening includes Disability Duties</p>	<p>January 2024 onwards</p>	<p>Policy Officer (Equality)</p>	<p>Improved screening process</p>	<p>Increased awareness of employees' responsibility towards Council's compliance and achievements in relation to disability duties</p>
<p><b>1.6</b> Feedback encouraged from people with a disability and their representative groups on the disability duties</p>	<p>2024 and annually thereafter</p>	<p>EAOG/Policy Officer (Equality)</p>	<p>People with a disability have an opportunity to have their voice heard</p>	<p>Needs and issues highlighted by disabled people reflected in plan and council initiatives.</p>

## 2. Promoting Positive Attitudes towards Disabled People

To take measures to portray (and encourage others to portray) disabled people in a positive role as well as take steps to eliminate ignorance and prejudice towards disabled people in the wider community and the workplace.

Key Activities	Milestone	Responsibility	Output/ Measure of Success	Impact
<b>2.1 Celebratory / Training Event</b> Host and organise awareness event in association with disability group(s) and key stakeholder/public sector partners	2024 onwards	Policy Officer (Equality)	At least one event held per year (complement Access and Inclusion and other initiatives)	Increased awareness of disability issues and improved attitudes towards people with a disability
<b>2.2 Participate in Diversity Ambassador Programme</b>	2024 onwards	Diversity Ambassadors (Elected Members and Officer)	Attendance at meetings	Better understanding of disability issues both internal and external by Ambassadors Best Practice initiatives introduced into Council.
<b>2.3 Staff Training and Awareness Raising</b>	January 2024 onwards	HR Unit	Disability awareness delivered to all new staff within 3 months of commencing employment through online resource or face to face training	Increased awareness of disability issues Promotion of positive attitudes towards those with a disability

<p><b>2.4 Staff Training and Awareness Raising</b> Training assets developed for use virtually or in person (includes complaint handling and target topic areas)</p>	<p>January 2024</p>	<p>Policy Officer (Equality)</p>	<p>Number of staff having participated in training area of interest</p>	<p>Increased awareness of disability issues Promotion of positive attitudes towards those with a disability</p>
<p><b>2.5</b> Ensure front line staff have received awareness training in areas such as Autism, JAM Card, Learning Disability (as well as physical disabilities).</p>	<p>June 2024 onwards</p>	<p>Line Management</p>	<p>Number of staff who complete training</p>	<p>Improved customer care for service users with autism and/or communication difficulties or learning disabilities</p>
<p><b>2.6 Awareness Raising</b> Work with representative Disability organisations to provide opportunities for job shadowing/work experience</p>	<p>2024 onwards</p>	<p>HR Unit</p>	<p>Increased participation of people with a disability in the workplace</p>	<p>People with a disability will have improved sense of achievement, confidence and value</p>
<p><b>2.7 Sharing</b> Best Practice with and learning from other Councils through the Statutory Duty Network</p>	<p>2024 onwards</p>	<p>Policy Officer (Equality)</p>	<p>Sharing of initiatives which have been successful in promoting positive attitudes towards People with a Disability</p>	<p>Improvement of opportunities through sharing best practice for people with a disability not only locally but regionally as they get access to similar initiatives</p>

<b>Employment</b> <b>2.8</b> Ring-fence at least 2 posts per annum for people with a disability. Target to be reviewed in yr 2 with a view to increasing.	From 2024	HR Unit	Increased participation of people with a disability in the workplace	Person with a disability will have improved feeling of confidence and value – raise awareness of existing staff of disability related issues
<b>2.9</b> To avail of NIUSE and Employers for Disability Job Bulletin Board to advertise ring-fenced job vacancies throughout the Disability community	2024 onwards	HR Unit	Advertise at least 2 posts per year	People with a disability have the opportunity to find out about what jobs are available to them
<b>2.10 Attend</b> Job Fairs and Job Shadow Days to raise awareness of Council's progress and opportunities in employing people with a disability	2024 onwards	HR Unit	Attend at least 2 events per year	People with a disability have the opportunity to talk to Council staff about opportunities within Council and what types of reasonable adjustments can be made to support them
<b>2.11</b> Provide staff on selection panels for ring-fenced posts with enhanced disability awareness training	2024 onwards	HR Unit	All panel members will be appropriately trained	All applicants who have a disability will be treated with respect and dignity during selection process

### 3. Encouraging participation in public life

To secure the participation of people with a disability in groups which extend beyond those largely concerned with disability issues

Key Activities	Milestone	Responsibility	Output/ Measure	Impact
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<p><b>Decision Making &amp; Involvement</b>  <b>3.1</b> Host meetings of the Equality Assurance and Oversight Group (EAOG) to enable people with a disability from Council area to influence Council decision-making</p>	2024 onwards	Policy Officer (Equality)	Pan-disability engagement through the EAOG At least 2 meetings per annum	Increased participation of disabled people in public life and views of disabled people taken into account in council business planning
<p><b>3.2 Encourage</b> involvement and participation in the development of Local Area Growth Plans including the Cluster Village Plans</p>	Ongoing	Community Development Team	Representation from people with a disability on development groups	People with a disability are more involved with decision making
<p><b>Capacity and Confidence Building</b>  <b>3.3</b> Re-introduce a shadowing initiative to allow people with a disability to spend a day with Mayor/Deputy Mayor</p>	Start 2024/5 Mayoral year	Elected Members, Mayor & Members Service Officer and Policy Officer (Equality)	At least 4 people with a disability per year will spend a day with the Mayor/Deputy Mayor (1 per quarter)	Increased awareness for People with a disability about the everyday work of Elected Members Local Democracy and how they can help them
<p><b>3.4</b> People with a disability are actively involved in devising a checklist and guidance on accessibility of Council facilities and open spaces</p>	By Dec 2025	Service Managers Policy Officer (Equality)	Number of Service Areas examined / reviewed	People with a disability are involved in service review/design/accessibility
<p><b>3.5</b> Involve people with a disability in the delivery of disability related training to elected members and staff</p>	January 2024 Onwards	Human Resources/ Chief Officers/ Heads of Departments/ Member Services Officer	At least 50% of face to face programmes to be delivered by people with a disability or representative groups	Increased awareness of disability issues  Participation by people with a disability makes

				<p>them feel valued and visible</p> <p>Promotion of positive attitudes towards those with a disability.</p>
<p><b>Events</b></p> <p><b>3.6</b> Involve people with a disability in the planning &amp; development stage of events.</p>	Ongoing	Festivals and Events team – Access and Inclusion Officer	All Council events are accessible to people with a disability and their families	Increased participation of people with a disability and their carers
<p><b>3.7</b> Develop bespoke initiatives for targeted disability needs (including autism, dementia and mental health)</p>	Ongoing	Staff within the Arts and Culture directorate & Health and Community directorate	Initiatives, programmes and events will meet the needs of the person with a disability	Increased participation of people with a disability in initiatives and performances – this will also enhance confidence
<p><b>3.8</b> Put in place reasonable adjustments to support people with a disability to access and participate in Council events</p>	Ongoing	Festivals and Events team – Access and Inclusion Officer	Accessible guidelines for large public events issued to raise public awareness	Ensure that all Council events are accessible to people with a disability and their families
<p><b>3.9 Services and Facilities</b> - Consult with and scope out the needs of the local d/Deaf community to meet their access needs in line with the commitment to the BDA Sign Language Charter / in line with introduction of new sign language Bill</p>	2025 onwards	Policy Officer (Equality)	Appropriate measures in place to ensure d/Deaf community can communicate with Council and participate in activities and services	Involvement of d/Deaf community with Council – (access to information and services and also feedback to Council on concerns and recommendations)

<b>3.10</b> Work in partnership with representative groups and statutory bodies to develop initiatives and explore funding opportunities which will enhance the lives of people with a disability	2024 onwards	Relevant Heads of Service/Managers	At Least one new initiative rolled out	Improve the confidence of people with a disability to participate in public life
<b>3.11 Programme</b> in at least one show per annum which is delivered by/include performers who have a disability	Ongoing	Festivals and Events team – Access and Inclusion Officer	At least one show will be held per year	Increased participation of people with a disability in initiatives and performances – this will also enhance confidence
<b>3.12</b> Ensure leisure services provide inclusive services for disabled users	Ongoing	Health and Community directorate staff	Higher satisfaction with accessibility of services/facilities	Increased participation of people with a disability in sports and leisure – leads to improved mental health
<b>3.13</b> Programmes and services are promoted to people with a disability using suitable channels/media	From 2024	Marketing Officers/Press Officer/Policy Officer (Equality)	% participants in services/activities/programmes who have a disability	Participation encouraged via effective communication and access to information for people with a disability.

<b>Monitoring</b>				
<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Output/ Measure</b>	<b>Impact</b>

<p><b>4.1</b> Conduct a confidential employee survey to determine the number of staff with a disability - As per LGSC Initiative</p>	<p>By 2026</p>	<p>Head of Human Resources</p>	<p>To establish a baseline for the number of staff declaring that they have a disability</p>	<p>Able to identify any reasonable adjustments required by staff with a disability</p>
<p><b>4.2</b> Review/ Develop monitoring arrangements to audit access to communication arrangements for people with a disability (Internally for staff members and externally for members of the community)</p>	<p>June 2025</p>	<p>Design and Publications Officer and Equality Officer All officers responsible for the preparation of information emanating from Derry City and Strabane District Council</p>	<p>100% of information emanating from new Council will be accessible to all</p>	<p>All Council information will be accessible to all residents including people with a disability.</p>