



Derry City & Strabane
District Council

Comhairle
Chathair Dhoire &
Cheantar an tSratha Báin

Derry Cittie & Stràbane
Destrìck Cooncil

Code of Practice on Producing Information

(Revised – July 2021)

Approved on:

Minute Reference:

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Code of Practice on Producing Information

1. Purpose

Derry City and Strabane District Council's Policy unit is responsible for driving forward and providing guidance on Section 75 obligations to all service areas including the commitment to ensure that all information emanating from Derry City and Strabane District Council is made as accessible and equitable as possible.

The purpose of this Code of Practice is to strive to achieve best practice in ensuring that Derry City and Strabane District Council provides its customers with accessible information as quickly and effectively as possible.

2. Scope

The Code of Practice will be forwarded to all Council employees and is intended for use by those members of staff who are responsible for producing information on behalf of Derry City and Strabane District Council. Consequently, publication design service provided (internal or external) will be required to comply with this code of practice.

3. Definitions

Accessibility refers to the ability to get information and services by minimising the communication barriers some people face due to issues such as;

- First language not being English
- Visual impairment
- Learning disability or literacy issues.
- Age

Equality of Opportunity The promotion of equality of opportunity entails more than the elimination of discrimination. It requires proactive measures to be taken to secure equality of opportunity and access to Council services for all the Section 75 categories.

Reasonable Adjustments - The duty to make reasonable adjustments is a legal responsibility under the Disability Discrimination Act. It applies to people such as employers, service providers and education providers and is intended to make sure that people with a disability do not face substantial difficulties in employment, education or when using services.

The DDA defines a reasonable adjustment as a reasonable step taken to prevent a person with a disability suffering a substantial disadvantage compared with people who do not have a disability.

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages: The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML) is a European treaty (CETS 148) adopted in 1992 under the auspices of the Council of Europe to protect and promote historical regional and minority languages in Europe.

4. Policy Statement

Derry City and Strabane District Council recognizes that there is a risk that some sections of the community will not enjoy equality of opportunity in accessing information from Council.

These people have the right to expect a level of service consistent with that offered to the rest of the community by Derry City and Strabane District Council.

It is paramount therefore that Council staff consider the requirements of the target audience when deciding how information should be made available. This Code of Practice is aimed at ensuring that all Council information is accessible to as wide a range of people as possible, including those individuals who belong to any of the Section 75 equality categories.

The Code will provide advice relating to:

- **Information in alternative formats and languages other than English**
 - Languages other than English
 - Braille, Large Print, Tape and Disc

- **Style**
 - Size/Format of Text
 - Layout
 - Tables/Text Boxes
 - Colour
 - Overprinting
- **Use of Images**
 - Symbols
 - Pictures/Illustrations
 - Positive Images
- **Plain English**
- **Printing/Binding**
 - Printing
 - Binding
- **Web Site Accessibility**
- **Telephone Accessibility**

4.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the effective implementation of this Code of Practice.

Heads of Service are responsible for ensuring that the Code of Practice on Producing Information is adhered to by the staff within each Department and that they make provision within departmental budgets to meet requests for information in alternative formats should they arise.

Staff within the Policy Unit have responsibility for disseminating the information contained within this Code of Practice to staff with responsibility for preparing and developing Council related information and publication to ensure compliance.

The Policy Unit staff are also responsible for the coordination and monitoring of the provision of Council Information in alternative formats in line with Council's

Code of Practice on Producing Information and to oversee the procurement and appointment of a select list of interpreters/translators to provide alternative formats as required.

Council Staff: All staff are required to put the customers' needs at the centre of the services they deliver. Staff to be aware of the Code of Practice so that they may implement policy within their service area as required.

4.2 General Principles

The principles which have guided the development of the Code of Practice on Producing Information are:

- Accessibility
- Equality of Opportunity
- Reasonable Adjustments

5. Legal and Policy Framework

5.1 Governing Legislation

Under Section 75 Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (2) (a)) – public authorities are required to ensure that the accessibility and the language and format of all documentation should be considered to ensure that there are no barriers for any person. Further recommendations state that public authorities should have systems in place to make Information available in alternative formats on request in a timely manner.

Article 10 – 'Administrative Authorities and Public Services' of The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages 1992 requires that local district councils in Northern Ireland are required to accept and respond to written applications in Irish and interpretation services must be provided on request.

The statutory requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (including subsequent amendments as a result of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006) also states all service providers to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that people with a disability can access information and services

On an international level the UK has ratified the UN Convention in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Article 9 states that government should take action to ensure accessibility, equal to that of non-disabled people, including information and communications services.

5.2 Guidance issued by Advisory Bodies

Council is guided by advisory groups bodies such as the Equality Commission who have stated that:

“information should be made available on request in accessible formats and that systems are in place in order that information can be made available in accessible formats in a timely fashion. In addition, we recommend that specific consideration is given to how best to communicate information to children and young people, people with learning disabilities and minority ethnic communities.’ (Equality Commission NI)

The Equality and Human Rights Commission have also issued guidance to public authorities on this matter stating:

“In many cases, a service provider will need to consider providing auxiliary aids or services to improve communication with people with a sensory impairment (such as those affecting hearing or sight), a speech impairment, or learning disabilities. The type of auxiliary aid or service will vary according to the importance, length, complexity, or frequency of the communication involved. In some cases, more than one type of auxiliary aid or service might be appropriate, as different people have different communication requirements. Account should also be taken of people with multiple communication disabilities, such as deaf-blindness or combined speech and hearing”.

In compiling this policy expert advice and guidance has been sought from RNIB on the provision of accessible formats. In their ‘Clear Print Guidance’ they have made the following recommendations which have been incorporated into this Code of Practice: -

- Document text size should be 12-14 pt., preferably 14 pt.
- The font you choose should be clear, avoiding anything stylized
- All body text should be left aligned
- Use bold sparingly, only highlight a few words rather than a paragraph

- Keep the text layout clear, simple and consistent
- Don't use blocks of capitalised letters, and try not to use any italics or underlining
- Text shouldn't be overlaid on images
- The substrate or coatings should not be glossy or reflective
- Ensure the paper is thick enough to prevent show through
- The contrast between the text and background is as high as possible
- All text should be the same orientation on the page
- Space between columns of text is large enough to be distinct
- Any information conveyed in colour or through images is also described

This information is available in full from the website:

http://www.rnib.org.uk/professionals/accessibleinformation/text/Pages/clear_print.aspx

6 Impact Assessment

6.1 Screening and Equality Impact Assessment

This draft policy has been screened out for equality impact assessment. A copy of the screening questionnaire is available from the Policy Unit within the Democratic Services and Improvement Section.

6.2 Impact on Staff and Financial Resources

This policy will impact on all staff and will require awareness training particularly for those at the public customer care interface.

There will be some resource implications in order to fully implement this policy however as this is based on an 'on request' basis it is difficult to quantify budget allocation to cover translation, interpretation, publication, design and associated costs. It is important however to make some allowance for this at beginning of financial year.

Whilst there may be a need for some financial outlay to deliver this policy the benefits of ensuring that **all** residents have equality of opportunity to access

Council services and information may aid increased participation and uptake of services and remove the likelihood of discrimination cases being taken against Council.

6.3 Sustainable Development

Sustainable development influences decision-making within organisations and can go towards forming principles and business values. An example of business values influenced by sustainable development principles could be through providing information to the public in an open and accessible way and through involving people and communities who are affected by business. (NIDirect)

7 Implementation

7.1 Support and Advice

Overall responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Practice lies with the Town Clerk and Chief Executive's Department. The officers within the Policy Unit will assist in the operational implementation of the policy. Design advice and compliance assurance will be provided by the Design and Publications Officer for all internal publications.

7.2 Training

All Council staff will be offered awareness training. All Heads of Service must ensure that they and their staff are aware of the obligations relating to their service areas under the Code of Practice. New staff will receive awareness training as part of their induction.

7.3 Procedures

7.3.1 In-House Design

All in-house written information must be clearly identifiable, displaying the Derry City and Strabane District Council logo on the front cover. It is important that staff liaise with the Design and Publications Officer to ensure that the most up-to-date version of the logo is being used.

The Design and Publications Officer should be consulted on the design, layout and printing methods of all internally produced information materials to ensure compliance with the Code of Practice

7.3.2 Preparing Documentation

When preparing documentation or information relevant to Derry City and Strabane District Council facilities and services the following practices should be implemented: -

7.3.3 Languages other than English

Derry City and Strabane District Council has a select list of translators and interpreters which is updated every 3 years. If you receive a request for a document to be translated into an alternative format you should inform the Policy Officer (Equality) (Tel: 028 71 365151 Ext 6705, or email: equality@derrystrabane.com). The Policy Officer (Equality) will process your request normally within 5 working days – although this may vary slightly depending on the size of the document and format being requested.

Translating information into different languages shows everybody that the services of the Council are for all the people of the Derry City and Strabane District Council area.

It is not always useful to translate into written form because many people can speak their first languages but cannot read it. You should therefore consider producing audio or video recordings (CD/DVD).

Videos are one of the most effective ways of getting information to BSL (British Sign Language) or ISL (Irish Sign Languages) users since their knowledge of written English is often very limited.

If you have a document translated into a language other than English, remember to put this statement on the front cover of the English version:

This leaflet on (subject) is available in Irish, Ulster Scots, Chinese, Urdu (or whatever the language is required).

Contact: Policy Unit,

Tel: 028 71 253253 Ext 6705,or

E-mail : equality@derrystrabane.com for copies.

Also, on each of the translated leaflets, put the leaflet's title **in English** on the back cover. This will help all staff know what the translated leaflets are and where to display them.

Where practicable staff should endeavour to anticipate need/demand for information in alternative formats to ensure that all publications are available at the same time and in the same design format as the original English version.

For further information or to make arrangements for a document to be translated or to arrange for interpretation services (including sign language), please contact the Policy Officer (Equality).

7.3.4 Braille, Large Print, Tape & Disc

Under the Disability Discrimination Act, disabled people are entitled to receive information in whatever format they require.

For many visually impaired people, print is not their preferred method of receiving information. The Council will provide information in Braille, in audio format and on disc etc., upon request.

There may still be a need for a small number of large print copies of documents to be made to cater for severely partially sighted people, upon request. In these circumstances **18-point text** is recommended for documentation.

The letters should be set within a “leading” or spacing which is at least 2 points bigger than the letters themselves. **The Style guidelines set out in the next section should also be followed.**

An increasing number of visually impaired people wish to be sent information on computer disc, so they can enlarge it and print it to their own requirements on their home computers.

7.3.5 Style

The guidelines below are aimed at making information easier to read and may be of assistance in communicating young people, those people who have a visual impairment and people with a learning disability.

The following recommendations should be followed for written information:

Size/ format of Text

- A minimum of 14 point is recommended for use in leaflets and any public document that is less than two pages.
- Longer documents should be produced in a minimum of 12 point (14 point is recommended to reach more people with sight problems).
- Where summary documents are prepared to improve accessibility, these should be produced in a minimum of 14 point.
- Where a request is received for a large print version of a document this should be prepared in a minimum of 18 point (or in the individual’s preferred font, if specified)
- Always use a clear typeface – such as Arial, Helvetica, Univers or Swiss 721 Roman. Choose a font with easily distinguishable characters. In some fonts it may be easy to confuse certain characters, for example (capital i) with l (lower case L). Also you must ensure numbers are distinct – in certain typefaces 0 and 6 can be confused. (Accessible Media)
- Avoid the use of italics

- Do not use block capitals, for example, in headings. People recognise words by their shape. Using block capitals particularly affects people with reading difficulties.
- Underlining should also be avoided as it makes it more difficult for people with a visual impairment to recognise the shape of the words as the underline intersects with the letter descenders (tails of letters like p and g).
- If there is a need to add emphasis to text it is recommended that a bolder font weight is used.
- Use “ragged right” and not “fully justified” text. Fully justified text (justified on both sides) creates uneven spaces in text that makes it difficult to read.
- Avoid splitting words over two lines by using hyphens as this disrupts reading flow.
- Generally, all text should be set horizontally. Text set at an angle or following a curved line is more difficult to locate and read. Text set vertically is extremely difficult for a reader with low vision to follow, and should not be used.
- Avoid fitting text around images if this means that lines of text start in a different place and are therefore difficult to read.
- Sentence and paragraph length should also be kept as short as possible.
- The space between lines of text needs to be adequate - If it is too narrow, the print can be difficult to read, making it difficult for people with visual impairment to recognise word shapes. For larger fonts, more spacing is required between lines.
- Make sure the margin between columns clearly separates them. If space is limited, use a vertical rule.

7.3.6 Colour

- Using different colours in a publication can help people find relevant information quickly - but do not use too many.
- Ensure that there is as much contrast as possible between paper colour and print colour so that text is easy to read. High contrast between colours is crucial to legibility and this can be achieved by enhancing the difference between the lightness and darkness of colours
- Black and white produces the highest possible contrast.

- To help features stand out, exaggerate the lightness of light colours and darkness of dark colours when used next to each other as this will enhance contrast.
- Avoid using colours which are similar in lightness or similar in darkness next to one another, even if they differ in colour, for example light green and light red, as some people with low vision or colour vision deficiencies may not be able to tell the difference between these colours. Ensure that you choose colours that have a good differentiation for people with colour deficiency. You can find out more on the Vischeck website - <http://www.vischeck.com/vischeck/vischeckURL.php>
- Avoid using similar colours together, for example red and orange, or green and blue-green particularly if they do not vary in lightness as they will not be easy to distinguish.
- Avoid using achromatic colours (black, white, grey) against colours of similar lightness or darkness, for example dark grey against black
- Use matt paper that has a good contrast between the print colour and the paper colour – black print on off-white or yellow shades is best.

7.3.7 Overprinting

- Avoid using text on an image or patterned background as the colour contrast will vary and the shapes of the letters will be harder to identify or find - background should be solid.

7.3.8 Layout

- Use a clear, standard layout with headings that stand out from the general text.
- Be consistent and logical in laying out text and illustrations. It should be clear in which order blocks of text should be read and which illustration relates to which block of text.
- Users with a visual impairment may use magnification technology to read the document therefore only a small part of the page is visible at a time. It is therefore best to avoid placing information on the right hand side of the page without connecting it visually to the left margin.

- Where text or tables run on to two or more pages ensure that all headings continue onto all pages to ensure the reader can relate information back to the appropriate topic.
- Write all addresses as they appear on an envelope, not on one line separated by commas.

7.3.9 Tables, Text boxes etc.

- Tables/text boxes should be located between paragraphs and should not interrupt the flow of text.
- Tables/text boxes need to have sufficient space around text or information contained within the cell so that the contents do not merge visually with the borders of the table.
- Information within the cell should ideally be left aligned.
- Border lines in tables should be used to make it easier for the reader to locate information.

7.3.10 Using symbols

- If used properly, symbols can show what is available at a glance.
- Symbols should be clear and easy to recognise. Use a key to explain what symbols represent.
- Use symbols to represent only key words or phrases as too many symbols on a page can be confusing.
- Place symbols alongside text rather than above the words.

7.3.11 Pictures/Illustrations

- Pictures and illustrations should be simple and easy to understand and relevant to the message that is being presented.
- As with text, repetition reinforces messages, so there is no harm in using the same picture/illustration several times.
- Don't use the same picture/illustration to convey two different messages.

7.3.12 Positive Images:

Photographs, cartoons or drawing are often used in publicity material. When using images in publications it is important to use them positively. It is important that your publicity includes rather than excludes.

Take care what images you use:

- Avoid stereotypes e.g. photos of disabled people as objects of pity, older people carrying walking sticks.
- Use images of people from other races, disabled people or women which show them as dignified and/or actively participating in activities.
- Show people doing non-traditional jobs; sporting/leisure activities; etc.
- Avoid depicting the family as mother, father and two children only. Remember households in Derry City and Strabane District Council are made up of a wide range of people in terms of race, gender, sexuality, age, and disability with or without children.
- It is often useful to ask a sample of the groups concerned for comments on draft artwork before you prepare your final art work

7.3.13 Plain English

In order to ensure more effective communication with young people, people with learning disabilities and the community generally, the Council has committed itself to using approaches such as “Plain English “.

Plain English makes your writing more friendly, direct and easy to understand.

The points below should be followed and will help you use language more effectively:

Plan your writing. Ensure that the points you want to make are in a logical order.

- Think about what you want to achieve in the document

- Gather all the information you need. Make a short note of the key points you want to make leaving out any unnecessary detail.
- Plan the document so that the content will be in the order your readers will find clearest to understand.

Write in a tone and style that is appropriate to the reader.

- Think of the document from the reader's point of view
- Be direct and friendly. For example, use 'I', 'we' and 'you'.
- When publication is being made available to the public it is more appropriate to use full words instead of shortened versions – i.e. do not instead of don't, is not instead of isn't.
- Avoid patronising or insincere phrases
- Avoid phrases in documents that may worry the reader

Get to the point quickly. Make the document interesting.

- The first few sentences should be the essence of the document, covering who, what, why where, when and how. They need to interest your readers enough for them to continue reading.
- Think carefully about the title of your document.

Be understood. Everyday language is more likely to help people understand your ideas or message.

- Use words that most people will know. Using obscure, foreign, technical or legal words and phrases will be a barrier to understanding.
- Explain any technical terms.
- Be consistent, use the same words and phrases consistently even if it sounds repetitive. For example, don't begin writing about the 'delegates' and then refer to them as 'attendees' or 'participants'.

Don't use jargon unless your readers will understand it.

- Use familiar words whenever possible.

Where possible, make only one main point in a sentence. Be concise.

- Readers have difficulty in understanding long sentences.
- An average sentence should be no more than 15 to 20 words.
- Check to see if any sentences using commas or joined with 'and' could be broken in two.
- Remove unnecessary words and phrases.
- For example, instead of saying: "If there are any points on which you require further information or clarification we shall be glad to furnish such additional details as may be required by telephone", say; "If you have any questions, please ring".
- Make only one main point in a sentence.

Be direct – for example, say "we will do it" and not "it will be done by us".

- Use commands when writing instructions – with 'please' and 'thank you' as necessary.
- Indirect language may cause confusion and can appear impersonal and pompous.

Be clear. Do not stray from the main point or message. Do not use ambiguous or vague words or phrases.

- Do not use unnecessary words.
- Don't overuse qualifying words e.g. 'definitely', 'very', 'completely', 'really'.

Design clear and helpful leaflets and forms.

- Leaflets and forms should be helpful, polite and as friendly as the subject allows.
- All Council literature helps determine the public's view of this organisation.
- Use the Council crest / corporate image to identify the source of the leaflet or form.
- Do not cram too many questions into one form or too much information into a leaflet;

- Direct the reader through the questions and point them to relevant parts of any accompanying document
- Use clear headings so that readers can find the information they need. Do not use CAPITALS as these can seem unfriendly. Use bold, rather than underlining, to emphasise headings – it is easier to read
- Provide a telephone number, address and e-mail address where the reader can get more information

Read and check everything you write.

- Check that the grammar is correct. The Plain English Campaign has a useful guidance on grammar at www.plainenglish.co.uk.
- Make sure that the document reads clearly.
- Ask yourself if the reader will understand it.
- Delete anything that you can do without.

7.3.14 Printing

There are three important factors to consider when choosing paper for printing documentation:

- **How much light the paper reflects.** Avoid glossy papers as light will reflect off the surface and obscure the print. Matt laminated covers look very impressive and avoid this problem.
- **Amount of 'show through'.** It is important to choose paper that is thick enough so that the text printed on one side cannot be seen on the other side to the extent that it interferes with legibility. If it is not possible to choose paper thick enough to prevent show-through, print single-sided. Using a paper colour of 10% - 15% tint can both help reduce glare and the writing on the other side will not show through.
- **Colour of paper.** Choose a paper colour that will give an adequate contrast between the text and background. Generally, white paper with black produces the best contrast. However, for some readers this produces too much contrast so an off-white colour may be preferred.

7.3.15 Binding

Documents should be bound on the left to enable them to be opened out flat for use with magnification technology.

Staples work well for shorter documents. Wire binding allows a larger document to be bound and still be opened out flat.

7.3.16 Alternative Formats Message

All Council publications should contain the following alternative formats statement:

This document is available upon request in a number of formats including large print, Braille, PDF, audio formats and minority languages.

For further information on alternative formats please contact the Policy Unit by:

Telephone: 028 71 253253 (Ext 6705)

Email: equality@derrystرابane.com

7.3.17 External Sub-Contractors for Design and Publication of Council Information

All members of staff who procure the services of external sub-contractors to design and/or publish information relating to Derry City and Strabane District Council must provide the selected sub-contractor with a copy of this Code of Practice. This aims to ensure compliance with Council's commitment to provide equal and accessible services to all.

7.3.18 Web Site Accessibility

Whilst a number of the above guidelines are relevant to the content of the Council's web-site, there are a number of particular design considerations which must be addressed to facilitate the accessibility of the information to those individuals with a disability or who have particular needs., For example, the following users should be able to access the web-site content using adaptive strategies and appropriate technologies:

- Someone who cannot hear will want to see the information;
- Someone who cannot see will want to hear or touch the information
- Someone who does not have the strength to move quickly or easily will want to use as little movement as possible to see or hear or feel the information;
- Someone who does not read well may want to hear the information and see words highlighted as they read.

Accordingly, all Council web sites / pages should comply with established guidelines such as the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines and /or be approved by recognised accreditation organisations such as CAST* ("Bobby Approved")

***Centre for Applied Special Technology**

It should be noted that Council has the BrowseAloud facility on its website as an auxiliary aid to facilitate accessibility. BrowseAloud is assistive technology that adds text-to-speech functionality to websites

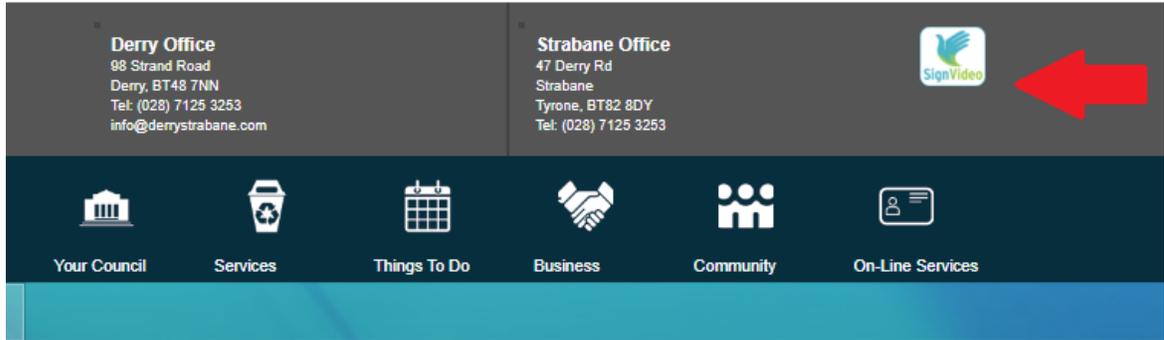
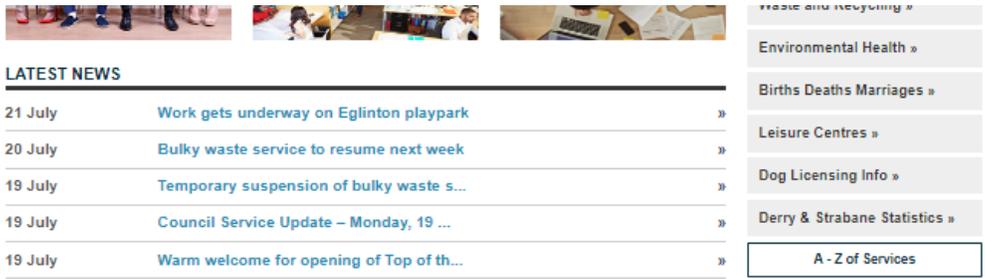
7.3.19 Telephone Accessibility for d/Deaf Community

Derry City and Strabane District Council have introduced a dedicated video sign language service for deaf community. This is called a Video Relay Service (VRS) and it allows hearing and Deaf people to communicate directly with Council officers via the telephone.

A hearing person can use a mobile or landline telephone to call a Deaf person on their smartphone or tablet. The hearing person will hear the interpreter over the phone.

How it works for Council Officers:

- The Council Officer can click on the icon on the Council webpage where is it displayed alongside contact details (see below) and they will be put through to a fully qualified interpreter



- The officer asks the interpreter to connect them to the Deaf person using the Deaf person’s number.
- The Deaf person will see the interpreter on their smartphone or tablet.
- The interpreter will sign what the officer is saying to the deaf person and voice back to the officer what the Deaf person is signing.

A Deaf person can use their smartphone or tablet to call about a Council service on their mobile or landline.

How it works for a Deaf person

- The Deaf person opens the VRS application and is connected to a fully qualified interpreter, who they can see on their smartphone or tablet.
- The Deaf person signs to the interpreter, asking them to connect to the particular Council service they require.

- The interpreter calls the Council and they will relay the conversation between the Deaf person and the Council officer. The interpreter will voice what the Deaf person signs and signs what the officer says.

The VRS facility will be available at four council venues during the pilot scheme namely: -

- Council Offices, Strand Road
- Council Offices, Derry Road
- Foyle Arena
- Alley Theatre

This is another positive step to ensuring services are as inclusive and accessible for everyone.

8 Guidelines and Forms

See Appendix 1 for checklist of considerations when preparing information and documentation

9 Communications Strategy

Responsibility for the communication of this policy lies with the officer within the Policy Unit. Awareness training will be arranged in conjunction with the Training Officer.

10. Risk Management

Failure to implement this policy may lead to Council failing to meet its legislative obligations, customer-service obligations and equal opportunities obligations.

11. Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be subject to review every two years or earlier as may be required by legislative changes or good-practice adaptations.

12. Useful References and Sources of Advice

Websites: -

Accessible Media - <http://www.accessiblemedia.co.uk/>

British Dyslexia Association – Dyslexia Friendly Style Guide - www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/parent/resources-of-parents

Direct.gov.uk -

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Environmentandgreenerliving/Thewiderenvironment/Lookingafternature/DG_069735

Equality Commission NI -

<http://www.equalityni.org/archive/pdf/S75GuideforPublicAuthoritiesApril2010.pdf>
[page 38](#)

Equality and Human Rights Commission –

http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/code_of_practice_rights_of_access_services_to_the_public_public_authority_functions_private_clubs_and_premises.pdf

Organisations: -

Action on hearing Loss - NI (RNID), Wilton House, 5 College Square North, Belfast, BT1 6AR. Contact - Cilla Mullen, Communication Services Unit. Tel: 028 9023 9619, Fax: 028 9031 2032, Text phone: 028 9023 9619. Email: ruth.stewart@rnid.org.uk, information.nireland@hearingloss.org.uk, Website: www.hearingloss.org.uk

Northern Ireland Dyslexia Association, 17A Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast, BT4 3HT Tel: 028 9065 9212. Email: help@nida.org.uk Website: www.nida.org.uk

RNIB (NI) Accessible Media, 159 Durham Street, Belfast, BT12 4GB
Tel: 028 9050 1888, Fax: 028 9065 0001, Email: accessiblemediანი@rnib.org.uk
Website: www.rnib.org.uk

(The Blind Centre NI merged with RNIB in April 2007)

RNIB Helpline: 0845 766 9999

Sense NI, Manor House, 51 Mallusk Road, Mallusk, Newtownabbey, BT36 4RU.
Contact – Collette Gray, Tel: 028 9083 3430, Fax: 028 9084 4232, Email:
nienquiries@sense.org.uk, Website: www.sense.org.uk

Stroke Association NI, Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Belfast, BT8 8BH, Tel: 028 9050 8020 Email: northernireland@stroke.org.uk Website: www.stroke.org.uk
Address – Rushmere House, 46 Cadogan House, Cadogan Park, Belfast, BT9 6HH

Publications: -

Let's make it accessible – Improving Government Information for Disabled People – by Wendy Gregory (COI Communications) February 2001. MISC J006133.

Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as modified by Schedule 8 for application in Northern Ireland) – NI Disability Council Code of Practice: Rights of Access – Goods, Facilities, Services and Premises. Published by the Stationery Office (1999) ISBN 0-337-08453-X. £12.95. For mail, telephone and fax orders only contact: PO Box 276, London SW8 5DT. General enquiries 020 873 0011; Tel: 020 873 9090; Fax: 020 873 8200

Open for Business: a best practice guide on access by David Bonnett and Patrick Tolfree. Available from Employers' Forum on Disability, Tel/Text phone 020 7403 3020. £13.00 (£10.00 members)

Sign Design Guide, RNIB Customer Services. Tel: 0845 702 3153; e-mail cservices@rnib.org.uk.

“Access First: a guide on how to give written information for people with learning difficulties” by People First.

“Make it Simple: European Easy-to-Read Guidelines”, ILSMH European Association.

“Guidelines to making meetings accessible”, Men cap Communications, available at: <http://www.mencap.org.uk/document.asp?id=1766>. POL/854MM/JW 37

“Plain English Guide” by Martin Cutts, Oxford £3.99.

“Am I making myself Clear?” – Mencap Communications March 2000.

“Guidelines for Effective Consultation with Older People and Disabled People” – Imtac guidelines on making printed information more accessible. Copies available at: www.imtac.org.uk/publications.php?pid=120.

“Eight Easy Steps to Inclusive Marketing” – Imtac checklist on developing information about transport services. Copies available at: <http://www.imtac.org.uk/publications.php?pid=131>

“A Fair Chance Report” – best practice approach to consultation with people with learning disabilities, copies of report available at: www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/publications.

Report of the Promoting Social Inclusion Working Group on Disability, December 2009 – available at: http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/report_of_the_promoting_social_inclusion_working_group_on_disability_pdf_1.38mb.pdf

“See it Right”, by RNID, Customer Services, Tel: 0845 702 3153; £30.00 (£22.50 for non-profit organisations). www.rnib.org.uk/professionals/accessibleinformation/Pages/see_it_right.aspx

Local Talking Newspapers, Association of Talking Newspapers (ATNNI) - contact local libraries.

Sound Vision Ulster magazine by Blind Centre for Northern Ireland, Tel: 028 90 500999, Website: www.bcni.co.uk/communication.html (Blind Centre NI merged with RNIB in April 2007).

Good Practice Checklist

Consult your audience and customers as to their needs;

Anticipate the needs of your various audiences in advance of being asked and assess which, if any, accessible format versions are likely to be required. The Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB), which incorporates the Blind Centre NI, can advise on Braille, large print and audio versions. MENCAP can advise on versions for people with a learning disability;

Budget for producing information in accessible formats at the beginning of the financial year, or at the outset of each project/campaign;

Involve the Marketing and Communications section from the earliest planning stage and discuss needs with the Design and Publications Officer;

Plan ahead. If you are publicising the availability of accessible formats, it is good practice to make sure that they are available at the same time and in the same quality as the standard print;

Keep it easy to understand. If your document is written in plain language, it will be accessible to a greater number of people and may reduce demand for alternative versions. Avoid the use of acronyms, and explain any technical terms used;

Think about type size and font. 14 point is the minimum size recommended for people with a visual impairment and people with a learning disability and you should use a clear sans serif font such as MS Arial;

Consider using illustrations. Photographs, illustrations and diagrams all aid understanding of information. When using these care should be taken to portray a positive image of disability rather than reinforcing stereotypes. People with learning disabilities will benefit particularly from relevant illustrations and, in some cases, the use of symbols which help to explain the text. (This may also be true for many people

for whom English is not their first language). However, care should be taken to avoid a presentation becoming complicated for people with significant sight loss;

Consider language issues. For instance, if you are planning minority ethnic language print versions, you should consider, as a matter of good practice, whether you should produce other formats, such as audio formats, in minority ethnic languages. The target group may not always be literate, so it is worth considering if audio formats may be more effective than printed versions;

Be helpful. If you cannot provide exactly what the customer has asked for, explore other possible solutions with the person concerned;

Inform customers what to expect. If there is likely to be a delay in providing a service, explain why and apologise;

Publicise availability of accessible format versions, in any general publicity material, in all standard and accessible versions and in publications and media appropriate for the particular audiences. Include directions for obtaining accessible formats prominently at the **beginning** of a document or form, so that people are immediately alerted to their availability.

Provide a telephone, fax number, a text phone number or mobile number for people with hearing or speech impairments;

Provide e-mail and website addresses whenever possible. Put documents onto a website designed to be easily accessible;

Encourage feedback from your audience, and respond to it. Reply to your audience in the same format that they use to contact you;

Keep records of the demands made upon your service and what the uptake of accessible formats is, including the number of people accessing information on websites. This will help you when planning future projects;

Training. Ensure that all staff responsible for developing and producing information in relation to Council facilities and services receive awareness training in the Code of Practice on Producing Information.

Code of Practice on Producing Information

DCSDC Policy	
Document Number	
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive
Contact Officer	Policy Officer (Equality) Tel: 028 71 253253 Ext 6705 Email: kay.mcivor@derrystrabane.com
Approval	
Effective Date	September 2021
Modifications	
Superseded Documents	
Review Date	To be reviewed every 2 years. However, the Policy will be reviewed sooner in the event of any one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure or weakness in the policy is highlighted • Changes in legislative requirements • Changes in Government/Council or other directives and requirements
File Number	
Associated Documents	Equality Scheme 2020-2023 Corporate and Performance Improvement Plan 2021-2022 Good Relations Strategy 2018-2021