



# DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

2026-2030



# INTRODUCTION

**This Disability Action Plan sets out the Council's commitments to promoting positive attitudes towards Disabled people and to encouraging their participation in public life.**

It forms a core component of the Council's overall equality, diversity and inclusion framework and reflects our statutory obligations under disability legislation. Through this Plan, the Council reaffirms its dedication to fostering an environment in which Disabled people are respected, valued, and able to access services and opportunities on an equitable basis.

The actions contained within the Plan outline the Council's intended programme of work for the coming years. They provide a structured approach to strengthening inclusion across services, supporting staff, and ensuring that the needs and experiences of Disabled people are meaningfully considered in the planning, development and delivery of Council functions.



## PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

**The purpose of this Disability Action Plan is to demonstrate how the Council intends to fulfil its duties to:**

- **Promote positive attitudes towards Disabled people, and**
- **Encourage the participation of Disabled people in public life.**

The Plan sets out key activities designed to improve accessibility, enhance organisational awareness, support inclusive communication, and advance the participation of Disabled people in civic and community life. It complements the Council's Equality Scheme, will be delivered alongside the Equality Action Plan, and contributes directly to wider organisational objectives relating to fairness, inclusion, wellbeing and good relations.

# DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

**The development of this Plan has involved a broad process of reflection, engagement and review.**

In preparing the Plan, the Council considered a range of evidence, insights and recognised good practice. This included learning from previous Disability Action Plans, benchmarking exercises, feedback gathered through engagement activities, and discussions with Elected Member, relevant Council services and internal equality leads. Statutory guidance and local contextual information were also taken into account to ensure the Plan is both relevant and proportionate.

This approach has enabled the Council to identify areas where further progress can be made, as well as opportunities to enhance the inclusivity of our services and organisational culture. While the Plan establishes a clear direction of travel, it remains sufficiently flexible to respond to emerging needs and evolving priorities.

# STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

**The Disability Action Plan is aligned with the Council's corporate values and with our commitment to advancing equality, accessibility and inclusion.**

It supports the development of the Council's equality, diversity and inclusion identity, "We See You", which emphasises visibility, dignity and belonging. The Plan also complements related areas of Council activity, including digital accessibility, inclusive design, community engagement and staff development.

Collectively, these strategic connections ensure that disability inclusion is considered systematically across all aspects of Council decision making and service delivery.



# MONITORING, REPORTING AND REVIEW

**Delivery of this Action Plan will be overseen by the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) governance framework, ensuring clear accountability across all departments.**

**Progress will be:**

- Monitored quarterly through the EDI Staff Operational Group
- Reported to and steered bi-annually by the EDI Elected Member Working Group
- Reported annually to the Corporate Leadership Team
- Published in line with our Equality Scheme commitments
- Submitted to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland as required
- Informed by ongoing engagement with communities, staff and stakeholders

The Plan is intended as a living document and may be updated to reflect new needs, emerging priorities, or statutory guidance.



## CONTACT INFORMATION

**If you require this document in an alternative format or would like more information about the Equality Action Plan, please contact:**

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Alternative formats available on request, including braille, audio, large print, Easy Read, and translations.

# SECTION A: ACTIONS TO PROMOTE POSITIVE ATTITUDES TOWARDS DISABLED PEOPLE

## 1. TRAINING

Table 1: The action plan is set out under the following headings: action, responsibility lead, timescale, outcomes, measures and targets.

Ref	Action	Responsibility Lead	Timescale	Outcomes	Measures	Targets
1.1	Continue to deliver disability equality awareness training for staff	Organisation Development	Years 1-4	Increased capacity to promote equality and positive attitudes in relation to recruitment and service delivery	Number trained Number of sessions	All staff trained within 6 months of starting
1.2	Roll out disability equality awareness training for Elected Members	Organisation Development	Years 1-2	Improved knowledge of disability legislation, increased capacity to ensure awareness of disability related issues in Council decision Positive attitudes towards Disabled people	Number trained Number of sessions	All members trained by 2028
1.3	Training on best practice in relation to inclusive recruitment and selection	Organisation Development	As appropriate	Staff have improved knowledge of best practice and enhanced awareness of disability inclusion	Training requirements reviewed at initial stage of recruitment	All staff involved in recruitment and selection trained before sitting on recruitment panel
1.4	Enhance staff training to ensure effective first-point-of-contact support in leisure centres, including British Sign Language (BSL) Level 1, disability awareness, less visible disabilities, neurodiversity and inclusive customer-service modules	Leisure; Organisation Development	Years 1-4	Improved staff confidence and ability to meet diverse needs of Deaf, Disabled and Neurodivergent customers	Number of staff trained; training modules delivered; customer satisfaction feedback	Minimum two staff per centre trained to BSL Level 1; all frontline staff to complete inclusive-service training by 2030

# SECTION A: ACTIONS TO PROMOTE POSITIVE ATTITUDES TOWARDS DISABLED PEOPLE

## 2. COMMUNICATION

Ref	Action	Responsibility Lead	Timescale	Outcomes	Measures	Targets
2.1	Develop EDI brand, 'We See You' for disability inclusion initiatives	Communications & Marketing; Organisation Development	Years 1-2	Council visibly promotes positive attitudes towards Disabled people	Brand usage across materials; staff awareness	Brand used in disability inclusion initiatives by 2028
2.2	Increase awareness of disability related campaigns and celebrations	Community Development, Accessibility & Inclusion	Year 2	Increased public awareness of disability inclusion initiatives	Number of campaigns and events. Engagement metrics	Increased engagement in disability related campaigns by 2028
2.3	Review and improve digital accessibility to ensure Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) <sup>1</sup> compliant)	IT, Communications	Year 4	Improved accessibility of online services	Website compliance rating	100% compliance by 2030
2.4	Develop Inclusive and Accessible Communications (plain English, Easy Read	Communications & Marketing, Customer Services	Years 3-4	Council information is accessible to all residents	Staff trained; Accessible content outputs; website accessibility tools usage	100% Communications staff trained by 2028; compliance with WCAG 2.2 Level AA standards by 2030
2.5	Increase awareness of equality and diversity themes of national awareness dates and campaigns, particularly in terms of disability	Community Development; Marketing; Accessibility & Inclusion	Year 2	Increased public and staff awareness of disability inclusion	Number of campaigns/events; Engagement metrics	Increased engagement in disability related campaigns by 2028

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.w3.org/>

## SECTION B: ENCOURAGING AND SUPPORTING FULL PARTICIPATION OF DISABLED PEOPLE IN PUBLIC LIFE

Ref	Action	Responsibility Lead	Timescale	Outcomes	Measures	Targets
3.1	Maintain and promote EDI charters, accreditations and memberships (British Sign Language & Irish Sign Language Charter <sup>2</sup> , Autism Impact Award <sup>3</sup> , JAM Card <sup>4</sup> , Dementia Friendly <sup>5</sup> )	Accessibility & Inclusion; Organisation Development	Years 1-4	Council demonstrates commitment to disability inclusion	Number of charters, accreditations and memberships maintained; Training carried out	Annual review and action plans
3.2	Continue to assess and manage all reasonable adjustments for new Members and Staff at point of entry	Human Resources	Years 1-4	Council demonstrates commitment to accessibility and disability inclusion; council ensures that Disabled Members and Disabled staff not substantially disadvantaged	Number of requests; number of accommodations	Increase in number of new entrants feeling comfortable to share they are Deaf, Disabled or Neurodivergent
3.3	Explore development of Reasonable Adjustments Policy and Procedure	Human Resources; Accessibility & Inclusion	Years 2-3	Council reduces/removes barriers for people with disabilities (visible and less visible)	Training carried out; engagement with disability experts and people with lived experience; benchmarking exercises	Increase in disability data regarding Members and Staff that share they are Deaf, Disabled or Neurodivergent
3.4	Work towards Disability Positive Employer <sup>6</sup> accreditation	Accessibility & Inclusion; Human Resources	Years 3-4	Recognition as disability-inclusive employer	Audit results	AAA status achieved by 2030

<sup>2</sup> <https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/council/accessibility/british-irish-sign-language-charter/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/council/accessibility/autism-impact-award/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/jam/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-involved/dementia-friends/dementia-friendly-resources>

<sup>6</sup> <https://efdni.org/disability-positive-accreditation/>

## SECTION B: ENCOURAGING AND SUPPORTING FULL PARTICIPATION OF DISABLED PEOPLE IN PUBLIC LIFE

Ref	Action	Responsibility Lead	Timescale	Outcomes	Measures	Targets
3.5	Promote staff health and wellbeing, including mental ill health by developing opportunities to sign Equality commission Mental Health Charter and other wellbeing accreditations	Organisation Development	Year 2-3	Enhanced understanding of mental health issues; supportive work environment	Number of charters signed and maintained; Training carried out	Annual review and action plans
3.6	Establish staff impact group and engagement channels for Deaf, Disabled and Neurodivergent staff	Accessibility & Inclusion; Human Resources	Years 2-3	Staff voice informs inclusion initiatives; recruitment and retention benefits	Number of staff participating; Number of meetings	Impact group for Deaf, Disabled and Neurodivergent staff established by 2028
3.7	Analyse workforce disability and neurodiversity data	Disability	Years 1-3	Understanding of disability representation in workforce	Staff diversity data	Baseline by 2027 & workforce target developed by 2029
3.8	Develop Inclusive Recruitment and Selection Plan	Accessibility & Inclusion; Human Resources	Years 3-4	Fair and inclusive recruitment processes; improved access to jobs for Disabled people	Recruitment outcomes with disability representation	Increase in Disabled candidates and appointments by 2030
3.9	Establish disability lived experience consultation groups (Friends of Council)	Community Development, Customer Services, Accessibility & Inclusion	Year 2	Meaningful input into decision-making	Meetings held; events delivered; consultee list updates	Group established Year 2; biannual consultee updates

Note: where a timeframe is specified, this means end of year

## SECTION B: ENCOURAGING AND SUPPORTING FULL PARTICIPATION OF DISABLED PEOPLE IN PUBLIC LIFE

Ref	Action	Responsibility Lead	Timescale	Outcomes	Measures	Targets
3.10	To build disability inclusion in Council workforce, support work experience and employment pathways for Disabled people	Human Resources; Accessibility & Inclusion	Years 2-3	More Disabled people applying for positions; supporting full participation of Disabled people in public life positions	Number of placements and ring-fenced posts	Minimum annual placements and entry-level roles
3.11	Participate in employability programmes for people with disabilities	Economic Development	Years 2-3	Providing opportunities for Disabled people to test and learn about careers and career routes	Number of participants enrolled, number completing project, satisfaction with project	70% participants completing project and reporting increased confidence regarding employability
3.12	Continue to roll out work experience programmes	Economic Development	Years 1-4	Providing work experience to Disabled children from SEN schools in the borough	Number of work placements, satisfaction data	80 participants completing the programme with minimum 50% from Special Educational Needs
3.13	Develop an accessibility event guide for all staff	Accessibility & Inclusion	Years 3-4	Supporting full participation of Disabled people in public life	Staff trained Customer experience Number of inclusive events; number of accessible features	Increase in number of inclusive events and accessible features by 2030



