

## Disability Action Plan Status at end of 2021/22 fully achieved

## Appendix 3

### Strategic Priority 1

#### Encouraging the participation of disabled people in public life

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| <p>Improved opportunities for disabled people to engage with and influence policy makers</p>                              | <p>The Disability Advisory Panel (DAP) attend and participate in consultation processes</p> | <p>2019</p> | <p>EDO/Language Officer<br/><br/>EDO/Language Officer</p> | <p>4 projects per year to receive advice and guidance from the DAP<br/><br/>Number of changes made to policies/services as a result of their input</p> | <p>Quarterly meetings, including consultations, completed on at least 4 projects.<br/><br/>Changes were made to various services, due to advice and input from the DAP.<br/><br/>Improved opportunities for disabled people to engage with and influence policy makers.<br/><br/>The following topics were discussed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Forth Meadow Greenway consultation</li> <li>2. Street Signage consultation</li> <li>3. Making Yourself at Home consultation</li> <li>4. Access &amp; Inclusion Funding</li> <li>5. Air Quality consultation</li> </ol> |
| <p>Improved opportunities for Sign Language Users to engage with and influence policy makers and to educate employees</p> | <p>Establish and facilitate a Sign Language Users Forum</p>                                 | <p>2019</p> | <p>Language Officer</p>                                   | <p>A Sign Language Users Forum to meet at least twice a year</p>   | <p>Sign Language Users' Forum met 3 times during 2021/22. Improved opportunities for Sign Language Users to engage with and influence policy makers and to educate employees.</p>  |
| <p>Disabled people are provided with appropriate support to enhance employability and obtain employment</p>               | <p>The Disability Staff Network to provide support on future action planning</p>            | <p>2019</p> | <p>HR</p>   | <p>Disability Staff Network to meet at least 3 times a year</p>  | <p>Four Disability Staff Network meetings took place.<br/><br/>Disabled people are provided with appropriate support to enhance</p>  |

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|  |   |      |                |   | employability and obtain employment.   |
| Develop the capacity of the organisation to support staff with disabilities  | Provide ongoing advice and support to employees in relation to reasonable adjustment requirements | 2019 | HR/Departments | Monitor number of reasonable adjustments requests and those subsequently provided | Number of reasonable adjustments requested completed.<br><br>Develop the capacity of the organisation to support people with disabilities in the workplace.  |
| Feedback encouraged from disabled people and their representative groups in how we can encourage greater participation by disabled people in public life and we can prove that we act on this feedback | Arrange a minimum of 3 Forum meetings per year and additional meetings as required                | 2019 | EDO            | Minimum of 3 Forum meetings held  | The Disability Advisory Panel met 4 times during 2021/22, on the following dates:<br><br>17 June 2021<br><br>7 <sup>th</sup> September 2021<br><br>7 <sup>th</sup> December 2021<br><br>8 <sup>th</sup> March 2022<br><br>Feedback encouraged from council departments in how we can encourage greater participation by disabled people and how we can improve our services. |

## Disability Action Plan Status at end of 2021/22 partially achieved

### Strategic Priority 1

#### Encouraging the participation of disabled people in public life

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| Feedback encouraged from disabled people and their representative groups in how we can encourage greater participation by disabled people in public life and we can prove that we act on this feedback | Review membership of Equality Consultative Forum (ECF) and increase representation of disabled people and representing organisations                                     | 2019 | EDO                          | <p>New ECF Terms of Reference established</p> <p>% attendance at each meeting from cross section of disability organisations/individuals</p> <p>% of staff/members who understand purpose of the ECF and find it useful</p> <p>Effective feedback mechanism established, and used by members</p> | <p>The Equality Consultative Forum has been taking place virtually since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Forum met twice on the following dates: 17th June 2021 &amp; 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021. Attendance at meetings was low.</p> <p>A review of the forum and commitment to group has not taken place.</p> |
| Disabled people are provided with appropriate support to enhance employability and obtain employment   | Review recruitment process in respect of adjustments provided to applicants with autism and learning difficulties  | 2019 | HR                           | % of changes implemented   | Resource not available to progress.   |
| Disabled people are provided with appropriate support to enhance employability and obtain employment   | Consider all requests for reasonable adjustments as part of the selection process  | 2019 | HR                           | % of reasonable adjustments requested and provided   | Three requests received. One was provided at interview stage.   |
| Disabled people have the opportunity to participate in work experience   | <p>Facilitate at least 30 work experience placements for people with disabilities</p> <p>Participate in annual job shadowing initiative promoted by NIUSE (internal)</p> | 2019 | HR                           | 30 placement opportunities facilitated, including three via the job shadowing initiative   | No placements provided for people with disabilities to date. Majority still on hold due to Covid-19 (a few virtual, project-based placements have been offered).  |
| Disabled people who are considering starting a business are supported  | Identify opportunities for disabled people to start a business.  | 2019 | Place and Economy Department | Increase in % participants with disability on enterprise awareness initiatives   | The Enterprise and Business Growth team encourage business owners from all backgrounds to participate in their support programmes and in  |

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|   |   |      |                              |  | <p>the past, with cooperation from disability support groups, have worked to deliver events specifically for business owners with disabilities.</p> <p>Where required, additional measures are taken to ensure support is accessible to persons with a disability, based on referrals from disability organisations. We often extend our support services to provide additional time and adjust to ensure individuals are accessing support to meet their needs.</p>  |
| Disabled people are supported to access employability initiatives | <p>Review and consider opportunities to engage disabled people in the Belfast Employability Pathway (Belfast Workplace)</p> <p>Provide specific adaptations/support to enable participants to take part in council employability initiatives.</p> | 2020 | Place and Economy Department | 6 monthly retrospective measurement of participant numbers on disability focused employment initiatives. | As part of the Business Growth Programme, the Enterprise and Business Growth team facilitate and organise several workshops and skills development opportunities for business owners as part of mentoring support. At recent workshops, we encouraged participation from the NI Union of Supported Employment (NIUSE) to help address disability exclusion. This has proven difficult to expand upon due to all networking and workshops being online. It is the intention of the Business Growth team to continue to work with organisations, such as NIUSE, and provide disability awareness support as part of future mentoring workshops. |
| Liaise with organisations to support staff with disabilities.     | Engage with under-represented groups via umbrella organisation representation on the Enterprise and Business Growth Working Group Put in place reasonable adjustments to support disabled   | 2019 | Place and Economy Department | Hold 2 meetings per year minimum with representative bodies/stakeholder groups.                          | The team regularly engage with Disability Action, as one of our key stakeholders, to ensure that communication on our support is distributed to their client groups.  |

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|  | people access support programmes designed to help them start a business.  |      |                               |  | Where appropriate, we also engage with the Council's Disability Forum.  |
| Disabled people are provided with appropriate support to enhance employability and obtain employment                     | Identify opportunities to ring-fence certain posts to long-term unemployed, including those with a disability and ensure any pre-recruitment and training programme caters for any reasonable adjustments                             | 2019 | HR                            | Consider suitability of campaigns for pre-recruitment and training programmes<br><br>Ring-fence 20% of places available on pre-recruitment and training programmes to people with disabilities   | No pre-recruitment and training programmes delivered to date.<br><br>Work is ongoing to identify suitable opportunities to ring-fence places as part of the Open Space and Streetscene review.<br><br>Work is ongoing to identify opportunities as part of the Government's Job Start Initiative.<br><br>Engagement will take place with disability sector regarding available opportunities.   |
| Develop the capacity of the organisation to support staff with disabilities  | Provide ongoing advice and support to employees in relation to reasonable adjustment requirements<br><br>Investigate options around how staff could be encouraged and feel confident in declaring a disability via internal HR system | 2019 | HR/Departments                | Monitor number of reasonable adjustments requests and those subsequently provided<br><br>Create database of types of reasonable adjustments made<br><br>Publish results from investigation /voluntary monitoring and make recommendations as appropriate | No six-monthly update figures. Reasonable adjustment information is requested from departments at end of year.  |
| Disabled people have appropriate support so that they can participate in the cultural life of the city on an equal basis | Address licensing of Pavement Cafes when the council receives guidance from the Department for Infrastructure   | TBC  | Planning and Building Control | Monitor implementation of licensing Pavement Cafes   | During the course of the pandemic, the Council introduced a temporary Pavement Café licensing scheme <sup>1</sup> to assist with business recovery. This was equality screened and it was recently reviewed and updated. A key consideration prior to issuing a licence includes an assessment to ensure the pavement café does not obstruct the footpath or footway and does not present a hazard for pedestrians, particularly those with a |

<sup>1</sup> [Pavement cafe licence \(belfastcity.gov.uk\)](http://belfastcity.gov.uk)

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|  |  |      |                              |  | physical/mobility disability or visual sight loss or who are blind. Through the course of the temporary scheme, Building Control will continue to review the guidance and licensing process and its impact on disabled people to consider opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity.  |
| City centre retailers are encouraged to support accessibility for disabled people  | Engage with city centre retailers to consider how to support disabled people as part of customer focus support programmes.   | 2019 | Place and Economy Department | Number of businesses that participate.   | As a result of the impact of Covid 19 Shop Mobility has been closed for much of 2020/21.<br><br>The Enterprise and Business Growth Team will work with city centre organisations/stakeholders to support them to engage city retailers to better support accessibility for disabled people in the city centre   |
| Disabled people have appropriate support so that they can participate in the cultural life of the city on an equal basis | Deliver the Inspiring Communities theme which identifies disabled people as a priority area and removing barriers to participation to ensure all sections of the community engage with high quality culture, arts and heritage | 2019 | Place and Economy Department | Deliver small capital enhancement projects that will increase access for disabled people to quality cultural product and experiences | After year-long research and preparation, the newly launched Gig Buddies programme (See Black Box example; <a href="http://blackboxbelfast.com">The Black Box (blackboxbelfast.com)</a> is a multi-year initiative. Gig Buddies is a project that pairs adults with learning disabilities and/or autism with a volunteer, based on their shared interests, to build a friendship and attend monthly events together. The aim is to ensure adults with learning disabilities and/or autism feel confident when attending local venues so that they can enjoy all the great events happening in their community and be actively involved in making decisions about their own social lives. The project also endeavours to make volunteering easier as volunteers attend gigs they'd probably already be going to, |

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|   |   |      |  |   | but with their Gig Buddy. This allows volunteers to share their interests with their Buddy and easily manage volunteering alongside their other commitments. TCHA are aiming to develop an initial strong cohort of volunteers and ambassadors.   |
| Persons with a disability are able to attend and fully engage in events and programmes delivered by council | Scope and research the accessibility of Belfast City Centre to identify gaps and opportunities, to enable disabled people to participate fully in city centre life. This will include initiatives to promote accessibility in the city centre from an economic development perspective. | 2020 | City & Neighbourhood Services Department | Conclusion of research and determine next steps in delivery to target hard to reach groups. | Cathedral Gardens <sup>2</sup> is the first multifunctional play area of its kind in Belfast City Centre. It was featured as best practice in the Royal Town Planning Institute Practice Advice on engaging children and young people, Urban Land Institute report on innovative responses to COVID-19 in the public realm, Belfast Healthy Cities “Designing Places for Children & Young People” and in the Los Angeles Times: 14 clever COVID-19 design solutions from around the world). <sup>3</sup> Designed by toddlers and primary school children, it has the following disabled friendly sensory play equipment/features: A giant spinning ‘hamster’ wheel (the first to be installed in any Council park), musical play equipment (xylophone, outdoor drums, a sound wheel and a cavatina) and a tactile hazard paving and a handrail to steps of an upper level. This engages children’s visual stimulation, hearing, touch and vestibular senses. Inclusive physical disability features are improved ramped access to the play area and installation of wheelchair accessible picnic tables. |

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|  |  |  |  |  | <p><sup>1</sup> <a href="http://belfastcity.gov.uk">Toddler-designed park 'popping up' at Cathedral Gardens (belfastcity.gov.uk)</a></p> <p><sup>1</sup> <a href="http://latimes.com">14 clever COVID-19 design solutions from around the world - Los Angeles Times (latimes.com)</a></p> |
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## Strategic Priority 2

### Promoting positive attitudes towards Disabled People

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| Public attitudes to disabled people are more positive and negative attitudes are challenged                              | Effective partnership working with the British Deaf Association  | 2019      | Language Officer | Develop and implement a 3 year BSL and ISL Charter Action Plan in partnership with the British Deaf Association | Implementation of BSL and ISL Charter is work in progress. A procurement exercise for a new video Relay Service contract was completed. We offer a Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) service at all leisure centres, City Hall, Cecil Ward Building, Tropical Ravine and Belfast Zoo. We continue to engage with the Sign Language community via our Sign Language Users' Forum. |
| Disabled people have appropriate support so that they can participate in the cultural life of the city on an equal basis | Consult with internal staff and Mencap to explore the introduction of appropriate communication tools for people with learning disabilities at customer centres e.g., City Hall, Belfast Zoo | 2019      | Language Officer | A number of communication tools for people with learning disabilities at customer centres                       | Covid-19 has put this action point on hold.  |
| Persons with a disability are able to easily access relevant council information   | Promote the range of alternative formats that are available  | 2019-2022 | All Departments  | Evaluation of accessibility of council information via various formats  | This is work in progress. We want as many people as possible to be able to use the website and involve people with disabilities in our User  |

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|   |   |      |                  |  | <p>Experience stage of our new website development. Website accessibility scores are as 'excellent' by SilkTide. We have committed to annual manual testing of our site, by users with a range of disabilities to ensure we see how others access our information.</p> <p>We've also made the website text as simple as possible to understand and it is approved by the Plain English Campaign on an annual basis.</p> <p>Recently introduced customer service standards actively promoting staff training in the use of Plain English.</p> |
| Sign Language Users are aware of accessible communication within the council  | Create a translation protocol document for Sign Language Users and disabled people accessing council's online material and electronic documents   | 2020 | Language Officer | A number of identified BCC online material and electronic documents to be produced in accessible formats   | The 'Making Communications Accessible' Guide is completed and circulated, to support staff to provide accessible material.   |
| Develop the capacity of staff to ensure awareness of the legal obligations in relation to employment and service delivery | <p>Roll-out Diversity Awareness training programmes for council employees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- continue delivery of disability equality awareness training;</li> <li>- continue to seek nominations from staff with disabilities to provide specific awareness raising session around disability;</li> </ul> | 2019 | HR               | <p>Deliver 12 disability awareness training sessions to managers and employees</p> <p>Deliver 12 diversity awareness training sessions to managers and employees</p> | <p>3 sessions delivered- 2 employee sessions and 1 manager session.</p> <p>No diversity sessions have been delivered.</p> <p>The e-learning programme is being rolled out to</p>   |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- continue providing access to diversity e-learning programme;</li> <li>- continue delivery of classroom-based diversity training;</li> <li>- identify and target awareness raising sessions on specific areas of disability</li> <li>- incorporate equality and diversity module into Tier 3 Training</li> <li>- Unconscious bias training will be rolled out to Corporate Management Team</li> </ul> |  |  | <p>All new staff to attend training within 6 months of commencing employment</p> <p>All Tier 3 Managers to attend Equality and Diversity module</p> <p>All Corporate Management Team to attend Unconscious Bias training</p> | <p>everyone, including new starts, and as a refresher as face-to-face training not yet possible.</p> <p>One Mental Health First Aid training programme was delivered (3x half day sessions)</p> <p>Stress Awareness for Managers session on 26th Jan 2022 - 148 managers attended.</p> <p>A new Health and Wellbeing Hub, 'Staywell', was launched providing advice and guidance on a range of health and wellbeing issues.</p> <p>A number of personal stories outlining how hobbies and interests help to protect and improve mental health have been included on Interlink.</p> <p>Delivery of awareness raising sessions - prostate cancer; dementia awareness, breast and bowel screening awareness; men's mental health webinar (delivered</p> |
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|  |  |                              |  |   | by Aware NI to celebrate International Men's Day)<br><br>Yoga/ mindfulness sessions delivered.  |
| Develop the capacity of Members to ensure awareness of the legal obligations in relation to employment and service delivery  | Research the possibility of including disability awareness sessions for Members in the Members Training Programme and include Disability Action Plan in the members Induction Programme<br><br>Upload the Disability Action Plan to the Members Portal   | 2019                         | HR                                       | Communicate outcomes of research and plan next steps if applicable<br><br>Disability Action Plan uploaded to the Members Portal   | Disability Awareness training for members is still under consideration.   |
| Promotion of positive attitudes towards disabled people  | Organise specialist training/workshop for Project Sponsors/Project Managers/APMs regarding the relevant DDA issues on capital build scheme   | 2019                         | Property and Projects Department         | Deliver 2 training sessions<br><br>% of staff who found the training useful   | A one-day DDA training course has taken place within the Project Management Unit.<br><br>.  |
| Improve awareness of disabled toilet facilities for people with disabilities<br><br>Improve accessibility to Changing Places facilities across the City<br><br>Improve social inclusion for people with disabilities | To promote and review disabled toilet access and engage with disability groups to encourage wider use<br><br>To promote the Changing Places facilities across the City and review the existing process<br><br>To provide information and training (where necessary) to front-line staff about RADAR key, including its use and how to apply for it | 2019<br><br>2019<br><br>2019 | City & Neighbourhood Services Department | Report on the review of existing process and the number of stakeholder organisations engaged for 19/20<br><br>Increase in choice of available Changing Places facilities across the city from 3 to 5 over the next 24 months<br><br>Ensuring a continuing presence of Changing Places facilities are available on BCC and Changing Places website | A changing places facility was first introduced to the City Hall in 2018 and, as a result, further changing places facilities are in place at Belfast City Hall, Belfast Zoo and at following leisure centres; Olympia, Lisnasharragh, Andersonstown, Brook and Girdwood. Plans to introduce further changing places facilities are underway. |

## Disability Action Plan Status at end of 2021/22 not achieved

### Strategic Priority 1

Encouraging the participation of disabled people in public life

### Strategic Priority 2

Promoting positive attitudes towards Disabled People

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| Public attitudes to disabled people are more positive and negative attitudes are challenged        | Language Officer to represent council at the Coalition on Deafness  | 2019 | Language Officer         | Attend at least 1 Coalition on Deafness meeting.   | No invitation to a Coalition meeting during 2021/22.   |
| Disabled people are able to access the information they need in the format most accessible to them | Continue to promote/communicate our options for access to information/forms/ people/services in relation to council buildings | 2019 | Corporate Communications | Survey the number of departments who do this successfully and report on findings   | Due to the Covid -19, this action has been delayed.  |
| Develop the capacity of the organisation to support staff with disabilities                        | Conduct a voluntary monitoring exercise   | 2019 | HR/Departments           | Monitor number of reasonable adjustments requests and those subsequently provided<br>Create database of types of reasonable adjustments made<br>Publish results from investigation /voluntary monitoring and make recommendations as appropriate | No six-monthly update figures. Reasonable adjustment information is requested from departments at end of year.<br><br>C/F to next year |