



Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council
Public Authority Five Year Review Report on Equality Scheme
(2020 – 2025)
Review October 2025

Introduction

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council to comply with two statutory duties:

(1) In carrying out our functions we are required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between

- Persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation
- Men and women generally
- Persons with a disability and persons without
- Persons with dependants and persons without.

(2) In addition, without prejudice to the obligations above, in carrying out our functions we are required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

Equality Scheme

The Act requires Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council as a designated public authority to set out in an Equality Scheme how it proposes to fulfil the duties imposed by Section 75. The Scheme is also a statement of the Council's commitment to meeting its Section 75 obligations including the commitment of the necessary resources to ensure that the Scheme can be implemented effectively.

Review of the Equality Scheme

The Council made a commitment to conduct five-year reviews of our Equality Scheme. The purpose of a five-year review is to examine how the arrangements have been applied and to assess how effective they have been in assisting public authorities to comply with the Section 75 duties. The new Council's first Equality Scheme was approved on 25 March 2015, and the first five-year review was approved by Council in September 2020 when only minor amendments were made. As required the Equality Commission was informed of the outcome of the 2020 review.

The Commission guidance on conducting a five-year review states:

An equality scheme describes certain arrangements that a public authority has set-up and which it is obliged to apply and follow as a means of fulfilling the duties imposed on it by Section 75(1) and (2). i.e. the duties to have-

- Due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity, and
- Regard to the desirability of promoting good relations.

This includes arrangements for (a) training staff, (b) assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity, and (c) monitoring any adverse impact of those policies that have been adopted.

"Public Authorities who have Section 75 equality schemes are obliged to review those schemes periodically-

A public authority shall, before the end of the period of five years beginning with the submission of its current scheme, or the latest review of that scheme under this sub-paragraph, whichever

is later, review that scheme and inform the [Equality] Commission of the outcome of the review.”

The Commission’s guidance states that public authorities are not obliged to make changes to their scheme. They may need to make minor changes such as a change to a name or address but only where the public authority wishes to make substantive changes, is there a requirement to consult and re-submit the scheme to the ECNI.

Following this review the following amendments are proposed

- Who we are and what we do
- Council contact details and address
- Website address
- Contact details for the Equality Commission
- Organisational Chart
- List of consultees
- Timetable for measures proposed

As there are no significant changes to the Council’s scheme, the scheme as approved by the Commission in March 2015 will be updated. Page 36 of the revised Equality Scheme details the amendments.

The Equality Commission advises that a review should be based on evidence. The information below describes how the Council has complied with its scheme commitments from 2020 to 2025

Leadership and the Council’s commitment to the statutory duties

The support from the Senior Leadership Team has ensured that the Section 75 duties are mainstreamed within Council functions and decision-making processes. During the five-year period the Council has produced and published five annual equality progress reports detailing the Council’s progress regarding compliance with the statutory duties. [Equality - Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council](#)

Impact of Covid-19 on the implementation of the Statutory Duties

The Covid-19 Pandemic resulted in the Council playing a key role in responding to the immediate needs of the community and assisting the most vulnerable in society. Equality Scheme commitments were adhered to throughout this period. The Council posted short messages on social distancing which were translated into several languages. Officers were advised of the latest information from the Equality Commission on the impact of Covid-19 on those with disabilities and what steps the Council as a service provider could take to make reasonable adjustments for disabled customers. This new information was subsequently included in the Council’s Equality and Diversity Training Programme.

Staff were also reminded that the Council’s Equality and Good Relations duties could not be suspended because of the Pandemic. This ensured that equality screening exercises were undertaken during this period and training was delivered.

Council Corporate and Business Plans

The Council’s commitment to Equality has been evidenced through the Borough Community Plan as well as our Corporate Plans and within annual Business Plans. Equality remains a cross-cutting theme in the Borough Community Plan which has recently been subject to a mid-point review. One of the values in the Council’s Corporate Plan 2023-2027 is for the

organisation to be People Centred – Inclusive and welcoming, a place where people and staff are valued. The Performance Improvement Plans 2020-21 and 2021-2023 had an objective to improve the availability of more inclusive services for those with Autism and their carers. This led to the development of a Working Group and an Autism Action Plan which as a result of a further Member Notice of Motion has evolved and Council established an Operational staff only and Strategic (with Elected Members) Inclusive ABC Working Groups. Equality actions have been included in relevant business plans over the past 5 years. Equality actions were also included in the Council's Customer Care Action Plan up until 2022/23.

Audit of Inequalities and Equality Action Plan

The Council produced two Equality Action Plans 2020-2023 and 2024-2027 each with an accompanying Audit of Inequalities and feedback from consultees influenced the development of these plans. They were issued for formal consultation on the Council's online Consultation Hub and advertised using social media. Face to Face meetings were held with local groups. Actions within the plans reflected priorities outlined in the relevant Corporate Plan.

Policy Development

The Council's covering reports for Committee include a section where officers must outline equality and good relations implications. Officers are regularly advised on the importance of completing this section.

The following guidance documents were also introduced or reviewed during this period:

Guidance on Developing Council Policy - The Council's own guidance on developing Council policy which was updated during this five-year period has ensured that officers appreciate the importance of subjecting policies to equality screening at an early stage and attaching screening exercises to all Council policies prior to issuing for consultation and getting Council approval.

Strategy Guidance – New guidance for developing Strategy & Action Plans was finalised. The guidance includes a flow diagram which summarises the methodology for developing a Strategy or Action Plan which includes information on when to conduct equality screening.

Public Consultation Guidance - New guidance on how to conduct public consultations was developed and information on the role of section 75 in this process was included.

Summary Equality Scheme and Equality Screening Guidance Notes – These were reviewed and updated with contact details added for both members of staff in the Policy, Equality & Diversity Team.

Procurement Handbook - Amendments were made to the Procurement Handbook to include information on the Section 75 duties.

During this period details of all Council policies were transferred to a Smartsheet with all relevant dates added to include approval date, equality screening and automated review dates. This has created a more efficient procedure for policy review, and it has a traffic light system in place for all ABC Council approved policies. Heads of Department have viewer access.

The Head of Strategy and Performance and the Policy, Equality & Diversity Manager regularly discuss equality initiatives and changes to equality policy at the Council's Head of Department meetings. The Policy, Equality & Diversity Manager attends Council working group/project meetings where initiatives and changes to policy are again discussed.

During the reporting period a new Support Officer joined the Policy, Equality & Diversity Team adding to our capacity to ensure compliance with Section 75 duties.

Internal Working Groups

Autism Working Group - An Autism Working Group met during this period tasked with developing a programme of staff training and to consider other measures that would assist in making Council services more inclusive and the borough more Autism Friendly. The Policy, Equality & Diversity Manager chaired this Group, and several Council departments were represented on this group. There was also representation from the Southern Health and Social Care Trust – Autism Services. An Autism Action Plan was finalised and implemented during this period.

Inclusive ABC Operational Working Group – As mentioned above this group evolved from the Autism Working Group to enable consideration of a range of issues that may affect our disabled customers. The Group also informs the actions included in the Council's Equality and Disability Action Plans.

Inclusive ABC Strategic Working Group – As mentioned above this Group was established following a Notice of Motion and membership is elected members from the Council's Governance, Resources and Strategy Committee (GRSC) and the Inclusive ABC Operational Working Group. The Chair of the GRSC chairs the Group. It informs and supports the work of the Operational Group and engages with local and regional sectoral stakeholders where necessary to inform future service delivery. The Group meets on a quarterly basis and reports to the Governance, Resources and Strategy Committee.

Membership of External Working Groups

Equality & Diversity Group – The Policy, Equality & Diversity Manager attended meetings of this regional group. It was established to prioritise and influence equality, good relations and diversity initiatives across local government and contribute to the development of the regional equality, diversity, and inclusion strategy.

Statutory Duty Network – The Policy, Equality & Diversity Team attended meetings of this regional Group where Equality Officers within local government share good practice regarding the implementation of the statutory duties.

Autism Spectrum Disorder Forum- The Policy, Equality & Diversity Team attended meetings of this group where members from the Southern Health and Social Care Trust – Autism Services and other health professionals share information and good practice.

Diversity Ambassador Initiative

During this period the regional Equality & Diversity Group agreed how best to support this role in Councils. A role specification was finalised and several events arranged by the Local Government Staff Commission for the Ambassadors to attend. The Council's Officer Ambassadors attended these events and met with the Council's elected member Ambassadors to discuss this role and share information about these events.

Local Government Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Award

During this period the Council was shortlisted as a finalist in the NILGA Local Government Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Awards 2025 for its Inclusive ABC initiative. This initiative is designed to promote equality by fostering collaboration both internally among our departments and elected members and externally with our community and the Southern Health and Social Care Trust. This initiative is structured around two pivotal groups: Operational Level Group

chaired by the Policy, Equality & Diversity Manager and Strategic Level Group chaired by the Governance, Resources & Strategy Committee Chair. Together, these groups act as a central resource offering support and expertise on issues relating to equality, diversity, and inclusion. They actively engage with the community enhancing the sharing of information about inclusive facilities, events and initiatives. By working collaboratively, the initiative aims to create a more equitable environment that embraces diversity and inclusion at all levels.

To further support the communication of the Council's statutory duties to Council staff, information is placed on the Council's Intranet such as the equality screening template and guidance notes as well as the many guidance documents referred to above. Updates are also included in the internal staff newsletter The Inside Line and e-mailed to the Council's Heads of Department.

Assessing and Consulting on the Impact of Policies

In the five-year period the Council has produced twelve screening reports and a total of ninety five policies. This included strategies, plans, projects, schemes and policies etc. These are available on the Council website at the following links [Equality - Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council](#) and [Policies - Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council](#) All consultees are informed by e-mail or post of their availability.

There were seventeen consultations with screening exercises attached.

- Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan
- Agriculture Strategy
- Armagh Place Plan
- Banbridge Place Plan
- Banbridge Public Realm
- Changing Places Policy
- Corporate Plan 2023-2027
- Disability Action Plan 2024-2027
- Dromore Place Plan
- Equality Action Plan 2024-2027
- Performance Improvement Objectives 21-23
- Performance Improvement Objectives 23-24
- Performance Improvement Objectives 24-25
- Performance Improvement Objectives 25-26
- Tandragee Public Realm
- Urban Identities Project
- Waringstown Public Realm

Stakeholder engagement was undertaken when developing Council Strategies, Plans and Projects using a variety of methods. These included workshops, surveys, activities arranged for children and young people, meetings with older people's groups, focus groups and launching consultations on the Council's online platform Consultation Hub. Section 75 groups were advised of these consultations and focus groups were held with the groups that registered an interest. Good practice examples include equality issues being identified and used to inform the action plans developed as a result of the Place Plan consultations. Following the screening and consultation of the Agriculture Strategy recommendations were made to support women in farming and the mental health and wellbeing of those in the agriculture sector.

Stakeholder Engagement Events

In March 23 two focus groups were held at South Lake Leisure Centre for those with Autism/other neurodiverse conditions and their carers. Twelve young people and thirteen carers attended. These sessions were jointly facilitated by Council officers and representatives from IncredAble. Participants provided a range of feedback on Council services, and all suggestions were considered by relevant Council departments, and the outcome of these sessions was reported back to the participants.

Three stakeholder engagement events were arranged in December 2024 to mark International Day of Persons with Disabilities on 3 December. Events were held in Loughbrickland, Ardmore Recreation Centre and Craigavon Civic Centre.

At each of the Disability Stakeholder events we asked the participants – in relation to service provision for those with disabilities:

1. What does the Council do well? and
2. Where could Council do better?

There was both positive and constructive feedback received. Just beyond the reporting period participants were advised of the outcome of these stakeholder events and the steps Council had or was planning to take to address their concerns. This information was also made available on the InclusiveABC page of the corporate website.

Equality Impact Assessments

In the reporting period 2020-2025 the mid-point review of the borough Community Plan was undertaken. An Equality Impact Assessment was attached to the consultation which was launched in October 2024 via the Consultation Hub. Several engagement workshops were held. It was shared with Section 75 groups and advertised on social media. The Community Plan serves as the main framework for the Borough, aiming to enhance social, economic, and environmental well-being while connecting local government community plans with the new Programme for Government as a model for funding and investment. The final EQIA was approved just beyond the reporting period.

Monitoring of Adverse Impacts of Policies

In 2024-2025 a report was presented to Heads of Department to advise on the extent of Section 75 monitoring being conducted across Council departments. Discussions were held with Tier 4 Managers and Business Support Officers across most departments to identify data currently collected and consider the potential to collect more detailed section 75 data. Recommendations were set out highlighting the challenges and opportunities in doing so.

By improving monitoring baseline data, the Council will be better able to inform decision making in relation to its services.

Throughout the five-year period several Section 75 questionnaires were issued alongside consultation exercises and surveys, and these are also issued to participants of several funded programmes. Where analysis of these questionnaires showed under representation by some Section 75 groups, these groups were engaged in different ways in order to get their input.

The Council is aware of the importance of monitoring its policies for future adverse impact. The Council's Community Planning, Policy & Research Department has collated a significant amount of data which has been beneficial and has helped to inform the Council's revised Audit of Inequalities. The Council employs a Statistical Data Analysis Officer which greatly assists officers when preparing evidence for screening exercises and Equality Impact Assessments.

Officers are reminded to include arrangements for monitoring in their screening forms and with an increasing availability of data, this should continue to improve. The Council advises staff of the range of qualitative and quantitative data available which includes the Equality Commission's publication Section 75-Using Evidence in Policy Making – A signposting guide.

Staff Training

The Council offers several equality and disability related training programmes to its staff. The following training was delivered.

Training	Numbers who attended each year
Equality and Diversity Training	(20-21) 40 (21-22) 93 staff and 16 members (22-23) 93 staff and 8 elected members (23-24) 197 staff and 19 elected members (24-25) 332 staff and 16 elected members
Equality & Diversity in the workplace e-learning module	(21-22) 10 (22-23) 154 (23-24) 114
Policy Screening, Equality and Rural Needs Impact Assessment Training	(20-21) 12 (21-22) 32 (22-23) 31 (23-24) 34 (24-25) 39
Disability Inclusion with Autism in Sport	(20-21) 33 (23-24) 21
Disability and Inclusion	(23-24) 6
Creating real impact with inclusion at work	(23-24) 1
Dementia Awareness	(20-21) 13 (22-23) 15
Autism Awareness Training	(20-21) 19 (22-23) 6 (23-24) 3
Neurodiversity – Autism, Dyslexia & ADHD/ADD	(24-25) 55
Basic Autism Awareness e-learning module	(20-21) 58 (22-23) 102 (23-24) 113
Empowering Autistic Voices	(23-24) 1
Code of Conduct and Equality training	(22-23) 233 (23=24) 94 (24-25) 374
Introduction to Sighted Guiding	(22-23) 11
How to Guide People with Sight Loss and make your Workplace and Community more inclusive	(22-23) 12
Epilepsy Awareness	(24-25) 10
Dyslexia Awareness	(24-25) 1
Menopause Awareness Training for Managers	(22-23) 30
Mental Health First Aid	(22-23) 22 (23-24) 17
'Every Customer Counts' training	(23-24) 1 session to Facility Managers

	(24-25) 3 sessions (Facility Managers, Managers from Tourism, Arts & Culture and Managers from Outdoor Leisure)
Equality – Core Management Programme	(24-25) -The Policy, Equality & Diversity Manager delivered a 30-minute presentation to Managers on equality and section 75 as part of the Core Management Programme.
Equality – Executive Management Team	(24-25) - A representative from the Equality Commission attended a meeting of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to deliver an awareness session on equality, section 75, and anti-discrimination law.

The Policy, Equality & Diversity Team delivered the Equality and Diversity Training Programme at Induction throughout this period. Other sessions were delivered either face to face or online with specific departments and were tailored to suit frontline staff and managers. Code of Conduct and Equality Training was rolled out to a large number of frontline staff also.

The Policy, Equality & Diversity Manager delivered Equality & Diversity Training to the Council's elected members throughout this period. A representative from the Equality Commission delivered an equality awareness session to the Council's Senior Leadership Team.

The Policy, Equality & Diversity Team delivered Policy Screening, Equality and Rural Needs Impact Assessment Training. This programme provides staff with an opportunity to discuss situations they have encountered and explore real life scenarios through case studies. This ensures they have more confidence in delivering our services to a wide range of customers. Evaluations have shown that staff have benefitted from the training most where practical scenarios were explored and examples used were most closely related to their area of work.

The Equality & Diversity in the Workplace e-learning module and the basic Autism Awareness e-learning module were launched during this period, and significant numbers of staff completed these.

As detailed above the Policy, Equality & Diversity Team delivered 4 sessions of 'Every Customer Counts' training to Facility Managers, Managers from Tourism, Arts & Culture and Managers from Outdoor Leisure. The training covered advice on how to become more disability aware and highlighting the business case for promoting accessible services. The Managers were advised of the 'Every Customer Counts Access Checklist' which they can conduct on their own facility and may assist them in making reasonable adjustments for their disabled customers.

In addition, specific disability related programmes as detailed above have been offered to staff. These ensure that staff understand the need to make reasonable adjustments as required.

Public Access to Information and Services

The Council has ensured that key information and documents have been made available in alternative formats on request.

Translation and Interpretation

The Translation and Interpretation Procedure was updated. This document provides information on how to provide interpretation and translation services as and when required. It also advises staff how to provide documentation in alternative formats.

Examples of some of the Translation & Interpretation provided included the following:

- In 2020-21 the Community Welcome Pack was translated into the six main ethnic minority languages spoken in the Borough (Tetum, Polish, Bulgarian, Lithuanian, Romanian and Portuguese)
- In 2020-21 a series of infographics which provide information on Various Council services and the Policing and Community Safety Partnership were updated and translated into the same six languages.
- In 2020-21 a “Covid-19 property inspections guide” was translated into Romanian, Lithuanian, Bulgarian and Portuguese. This was to assist Environmental Health Officer visits to homes where the Occupier’s first language was not English.
- In 2020-21 the Council availed of the services of a BSL Interpreter to assist a deaf couple resolve an environmental health issue.
- In 2021-22 the green and brown bin collection leaflets were translated into Tetum, Portuguese, Romanian, Polish and Bulgarian.
- In 2022-23 the Council became the first local authority in Northern Ireland to launch a multi-lingual information hub for the area’s migrant newcomer communities.
- In 2023-24 Agri Food Heartland documents were translated into Ukrainian and Portuguese.
- In 2023-24 there was a Portuguese interpreter at one of the Neighbourhood Policing Team’s events covering Road Safety, Crime Prevention, and services available for victims of crime including domestic violence.
- In 2023-24 there was a sign language interpreter at the Community Planning Tak£500 event to ensure Lurgan Deaf Club who were one of the applicant groups could fully participate in the decision-making events.
- In 2024-25 there was Arabic translation at Asylum Seeker Dispersal Workshops.
- In 2024-25 updates to the resident guide were translated into the following languages: Romanian, Bulgarian, Tetum, Ukrainian, Polish, Arabic, Lithuanian, Portuguese.
- In 2024-25 there was also translation of the Community Support hub flyers into five languages
- In 2024-25 a Tetum Interpreting Service was provided at the Community Support Hub

Guides

There were updates to the Accessible Communications and Inclusive Language Guide and the Inclusive and Accessible Events Guide. As well as ensuring compliance with Section 75, accessible communication is central to ensuring the Council provides good customer care. The Events Guide assists event organisers address accessibility at events.

Inclusive ABC

During this period a page was developed on the Corporate Website which is referred to as ‘Inclusive ABC’. It provides information on our accessible facilities, activities, and events. All social media posts that reference inclusive equipment or facilities include #inclusiveABC so that inclusive equipment/facilities can be easily searched. Residents who make enquiries about inclusive activities are encouraged to look at this page for more information.

Recite Me

Recite Me was retained on the Corporate and the GetActive ABC websites which will ensure they are accessible for people with sensory impairments.

Equality Initiatives

AccessAble Initiative

AccessAble is an Access Guide. A range of venues within the Borough have been surveyed which will ensure that disabled people and their families can make informed choices about where they want to visit. The Access Guides are available on www.AccessAble.co.uk.

Autism NI's Impact Award

Both the Navan Centre and the Market Place Theatre achieved Autism NI's Impact Award for another 3 years. It recognises organisations that strive to be more accessible for autistic and neurodivergent customers. Reasonable adjustments in place include Autism Champions, sensory equipment, visual aids for use throughout your visit to the Navan Centre and relaxed educational visits on request. There is also a VIP band system to enable staff to support visitors with hidden disabilities and a quiet room in the Market Place Theatre.

Other adjustments the Market Place Theatre has in place include:

Dementia Friendly Screenings -the films are carefully selected, and the layout of the venue is changed to suit more people with mobility problems.

Accessible Performances for Pantomime – Relaxed performances are organised, for the public and for school audiences. There is a BSL signed performance and a captioned performance.

Relaxed film screenings were introduced to help those who may benefit from a more relaxed environment.

Many activities/workshops are aimed at specific age groups such as young people

Access arrangements for the Council's annual Georgian Festival have improved each year and in 2024 included the following:

The availability of a Mobile Accessible Toilet and portable toilets

Quiet Spaces

Disabled access on the park & Ride Coaches

Light Show pre-bookable Accessible Platform, Sensory areas, disabled parking

Disability Sport NI awarded South Lake Leisure Centre the Excellence level of the Inclusive Sports Facility Accreditation scheme. It is one of the most inclusive sports facilities not only in Northern Ireland but throughout the UK and Ireland.

The **relaxed Christmas experience events** were held from 2021 onwards. These events are specially designed for children with sensory processing difficulties, autism or special educational needs. The experiences offered the opportunity for the children to enjoy the magic of meeting Santa, Mrs Claus, and the Elves, along with other festive activities in a calm and supportive environment.

Throughout the five-year period the Council received **funding from the Department for Communities Access and Inclusion programme** which aims to promote a more inclusive society by enabling people with disabilities to participate more fully in arts, cultural and active recreation activities. This funding was used in the following ways:

- New inclusive equipment at Oxford Island Play Park

- Wheelchair swing at Scarva Park
- Audio described trails including tactile maps and trail features at Lurgan and Solitude Parks
- Sensory pods to create a quiet space for self-regulation at Orchard and Banbridge Leisure and Dromore Community Centres
- A wheelchair access boat at South Lake Leisure Centre
- Powered doors at the Market Place Theatre
- Modular Changing Places toilet facilities at Gosford Forest Park and Lurgan Park
- Mobile accessible toilet which is now available for large scale events

Throughout this period the **Council continued to deliver a range of Sport and Physical Activity Programmes with its Partners.** Examples include an Autism in Sport Programme which was delivered in Dromore and Richhill Community Centres and the All Stars Summer Scheme delivered in Gilford Community Centre. The Inclusive Sport and Leisure Programme which works with children and adults with a disability delivers the Wheelie Active Club, South Lake Disability Sports Club, Inclusive Gym Programme and the Inclusive Cycling Programme. There were also inclusive summer schemes available for children of all abilities.

Quiet Hour swim sessions and soft play Autism Friendly sessions were made available in the Leisure Centres.

These policies and initiatives ensure that our information and services are inclusive.

Section 75 Complaints

In 2021-22 the Council responded to one Section 75 complaint regarding the use of WISE enforcement to issue fixed penalty notices to those who do not speak English and the impact this was likely to have on the Bulgarian Roma and Traveller Community in particular. In response the Council agreed to increase the awareness of the project to our ethnic minority communities. This included the development of a social media post on Facebook which would be translated into the four main languages spoken in the Borough which included Bulgarian as well as the development of a multilingual billboard in the five main urban centres of Armagh, Banbridge, Portadown, Lurgan and Craigavon. The Council's welcome pack would be updated to provide further information on fixed penalty notices and made available in Bulgarian. The complainant was advised that representatives from environmental health and community development were available to discuss the matter further.

The Council did not receive any correspondence from the Equality Commission regarding this matter.

Overall implementation of the Equality Scheme

In the last five years, there has been ongoing commitment from the Council's Executive Management Team and its Elected Members who have supported the implementation of the Scheme.

More policies are being subject to the equality screening process as staff are better informed about the equality screening process due to the ongoing training programme provided and the regular interaction the Policy, Equality & Diversity Team has with the Heads of Department.

Equality actions have been effectively mainstreamed into the corporate and business planning process. The Policy, Equality & Diversity Team has delivered a significant amount of training which has ensured that there is an opportunity to learn about the issues that need to be

addressed within the organisation and a better understanding of the issues that impact on staff and customers

Our customers fall into a range of Section 75 categories with a range of needs. The various policies and initiatives as detailed above recognise the diversity of our customers and help address any barriers to accessing our services.

As a result of this review, the Council will explore other opportunities to engage with staff as new staff are regularly recruited into the organisation and therefore require information on the statutory duties.

It will continue to engage with a range of stakeholders in a variety of ways which will assist us monitor the impact of our policies on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations.