

ANGUS COUNCIL  
DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

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Contact our ACCESSline on: 08452 777 778.

## **DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME**

Angus Council is delighted to introduce our first Disability Equality Scheme, covering the period up to 2009.

In the council, we recognise people are different and have different needs. We also recognise that people with disabilities have experienced different barriers during their lifetime.

Within our Disability Equality Scheme there are principles and standards which we will apply internally, in partnerships and in contractual arrangements. As a service provider, we need to be sensitive to differences and tailor services to be fair and accessible to people with disabilities.

As an employer, these principles and standards will advance equality issues so that our workforce reflects the diversity of the community. We recognise our accountability to the public, and our hope is to promote equality of opportunity and positive attitudes towards people with disabilities, and to eliminate any unlawful discrimination and harassment they may experience.

The action plan sets out our priorities up to 2009. We will ensure that over this period, our action plans, guidance and arrangements set out in the scheme are monitored through the involvement of people with disabilities, and their carers or representatives.

Our overall aim is to create practical improvements in the day to day lives and experiences of people with disabilities.

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David Sawers  
Chief Executive

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Councillor Bill Middleton  
Provost

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## Background

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 amended the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA). The original DDA 1995 established the legislative requirement for the prevention of discrimination against people with disabilities, and for improving physical access to buildings and goods and services. Under the new Act, Angus Council, as a local authority, must now also actively promote equality of opportunity for people with disabilities, through action plans for tackling discrimination, and by involving them in policy making.

The new duties import the concept of mainstreaming disability rights issues into public authority decision-making. The Westminster government's vision for disability equality is that by 2025, people with disabilities in Britain 'should have full opportunities and choices to improve their quality of life and will be respected and included as equal embers of society'. ('Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People')

Many people with disabilities experience poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion due to others' attitudes or physical barriers, (ie the 'social model of disability') rather than their impairments or medical conditions. Some attitudes are unintentionally discriminatory, such as expressing pity, fear, or contempt, but these attitudes can still place restrictions on people with disabilities.

As a local authority, we need to be aware of these issues and contribute to removing environmental and attitudinal barriers by looking at how we run our services and employ people, and encourage best practice within the community.

## Definition of Disability

Disability is legally defined as a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect upon a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

A further explanation of these terms is detailed in Appendix A.

## The General Duty

The Act places a General Duty on public authorities to have due regard to:

- a) The need to eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under this Act.
- b) The need to eliminate harassment of people with disabilities that is related to their disabilities.
- c) The need to promote equality of opportunity between people with disabilities and others.
- d) The need to promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities.
- e) The need to encourage participation by people with disabilities in public life.
- f) The need to take steps to take account of an individuals disabilities, even where that involves treating people with disabilities more favourably than others.

This last clause recognises that equality of opportunity cannot be achieved by treating disabled and non-disabled people the same. It is different from other anti-discrimination laws because it does not prohibit positive discrimination in favour of people with disabilities.

'Due regard' means giving appropriate weight to promote disability equality in proportion to its relevance.

Angus Council recognises that the general duty requires us to have due regard to past decisions, as well as future ones. We will work towards addressing any gaps in service delivery or employment in respect of disability equality, through consultation with people with disabilities.

## The Specific Duties

The council, as a public body, must adopt a series of specific duties to comply with the General Duty.

The key element is that we are required to produce a disability equality scheme. The scheme must include a statement of the following:

- a) The ways in which people with disabilities have been involved in its development.

- b) The method for assessing the impact of our policies and practices, or the likely impact of our proposed policies and practices, on equality for people with disabilities.
- c) The steps which we propose to take towards the fulfilment of the general duty i.e. an 'action plan'.
- d) The arrangements for gathering information on the effect of our policies and practices on those with disabilities, and in particular our arrangements for gathering information on:
  - i) The effect of the recruitment, development and retention of our employees with disabilities.
  - ii) The effect on the educational opportunities available to, and on the achievements of, pupils and students with disabilities.
- e) Our arrangements for making use of such information to assist in the performance of the General Duty and, in particular, our arrangements for:
  - i) Reviewing on a regular basis the effectiveness of the steps referred to in (c) above, and,
  - ii) Preparing subsequent disability equality schemes.

There is also a duty upon councils as education authorities to prepare a separate Disability Equality Scheme, for schools. This is available separately through the Education Department.

The specific duties as stated serve as a means to an end. They are steps, methods or arrangements, not an end in themselves. Meeting the general duty is the main objective.

Fulfilling this objective should help make equality central to policy making and service delivery, and help us consider the effects of disability equality in all our activities.

### **Angus Council – Our Intentions**

Angus Council employs approximately 5,500 employees. We have six departments, namely Chief Executive's, Corporate Services, Education, Infrastructure Services, Neighbourhood Services and Social Work and Health. Some departments have a high level of contact with people with disabilities already, such as in Social Work and Health, Education and the Housing division of Neighbourhood Services. Other departments, such as Corporate Services, have limited contact, however, the council will ensure that all departments are uniformly committed to disability equality from senior management downwards.

There has already been a significant amount of work undertaken in some services, for example:

- anyone whose GP confirms their disability will have their household waste wheeled out for them.
- an ACCESS Officer is in place and there is ongoing involvement of the Angus ACCESS Panel in building standards.
- much work has been undertaken regarding the lowering of kerbs etc.
- there has been a huge amount of partnership working with NHS Tayside, and consultation events, such as Service Users – Day Opportunities which people with learning disabilities were involved in. Five meetings over the summer 2006 were held and there was one video interview. More than 130 people attended the events.

The Action Plan (Appendix F) details other work already undertaken and requiring to be reviewed in light of the new legislation.

Our intentions in terms of disability equality are to:

- comply with legislative requirements
- take account of the Disability Rights Commission's (DRC) Code of Practice.
- recognise that people with disabilities are not a homogenous group. We acknowledge that people with different impairments have fundamentally different barriers, and very different experiences. We also recognise that people with disabilities can be of any gender, sexual orientation, race, religion or faith and age.

## 2 CONTEXT

To set the context for Angus Council's Disability Equality Scheme, it is useful to consider:

- The population and number of people with disabilities living in Angus
- The council's Corporate Plan and duties in connection with Community Planning
- The council's Equal Opportunities Policy
- Working in partnership.

### Population

Angus is predominantly a rural area covering approximately 2,200 square kilometres. It is bordered by Aberdeenshire, Perth & Kinross and Dundee City councils. The 2001 Census shows that Angus has a population of over 108,000, largely concentrated in seven principal settlements: Arbroath, Brechin, Carnoustie, Forfar, Kirriemuir, Monifieth and Montrose, although there are significant numbers of residents in the Angus Glens and rural locations.

Of the 108,000 people living in the area, approximately 20,500 are aged over 65. In terms of disability equality, it is important to know the age demographics in the Angus area, as it is acknowledged that as age increases, disabilities increase. For example, approximately 80% of hearing impaired people are aged over 60 and demographic projections suggest there will be a 20% increase in people with hearing impairments in Scotland over the next twenty years, due to the aging population.

In terms of adults unable to work due to illness or disability, the numbers can be measured by those claiming **Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disablement Allowance**. In Angus (February 2006) this number equates to approx 4,500 (source NOMIS).

**Disability Living Allowance** is payable to people who have a disability and who have personal care needs, mobility needs or both. In Angus (February 2006) approximately 4,900 people claimed this allowance. The following table shows the breakdown of claims in Angus:

| <u>Reason</u>      | <u>Percentage of Claims</u> |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| Arthritis          | 21%                         |
| Mental health      | 19%                         |
| Hearing difficulty | 12%                         |
| Other              | 12%                         |
| Muscle/bone/joint  | 8%                          |
| Back ailments      | 6%                          |
| Chest disease      | 4%                          |
| Heart disease      | 4%                          |
| Diabetes           | 4%                          |
| Blindness          | 2%                          |
| Deafness           | 2%                          |
| Epilepsy           | 2%                          |
| Malignant disease  | 2%                          |
| Stroke related     | 2%                          |

It is useful for us to consider the above breakdown of disabilities in respect of the services we provide.

In **Home Care**, for example support, personal care and practical help is provided to enable people to live as independent a life as possible. Out of 1,839 clients in 2005, the majority received a service because of physical disabilities and for eight out of 10 people this is due to frailty as a result of aging. Approximately 80% of home care clients are aged 65 or over.

The above profile highlights that there are a considerable number of people in Angus living with a disability. The implications for us as a service provider are significant. We need to consider the resources required for people with disabilities, for example, the physical environment, and in particular, their communication and information needs.

## **Corporate Plan**

The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 gives the council and other organisations – specific duties in connection with Community Planning, with the council being given the lead role.

The concept of Community Planning provides a way in which all public services affecting citizens within a particular local authority area can work together at a local level to develop strategies which achieve clear benefits for all citizens within that area.

The council's Corporate Plan reflects this concept aiming to build on the council's achievements to date, laying more emphasis on working in partnership with other statutory agencies and with communities, and paying particular attention to the views of our citizens and to parts of Angus where significant development may take place.

The Corporate Plan lays out the vision of the Council:

*“We will focus our attention on, and be led by our customers and residents. We will work to deliver effective and efficient services that are available to everyone. We will promote the following:*

- *Active involvement in society*
- *Equal opportunities for everyone*
- *Developments that last*
- *A thriving economy*
- *Lifelong learning*
- *Healthy, safe and caring communities*
- *Quality in our environment*

The Council's approach to promoting disability equality therefore has to be considered against our three major roles as community leader, service provider and employer.

To a great extent each of these roles is inter-dependent. The role of community leader will only be credible with diverse disability groups if the Council is taking their service needs seriously. The Council can only improve service delivery if we have a workforce which reflects, recognises and responds to the diversity needs of communities. The emphasis on the workforce reinforces the Council's credibility in its role as a community leader.

## **The Council's Equal Opportunities Policy**

In February 2001 the Council adopted a comprehensive Equal Opportunities Policy.

This Policy outlines the Council's intent in respect of equal opportunities and incorporates specific Codes of Practice on Service Delivery, Access to Council Information, Communication and Consultation with members of the community and Monitoring. It also incorporates a Code of Practice on Equal Opportunities and Employment which had been previously agreed by the Council.

In that Policy the Council includes the following within its Statement of Intent:

*“Angus Council supports the principle of equal opportunities in the provision of its services to the community and in relation to employment. The Council opposes all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnic or national origin, religion, age, sexual and marital status and disability.”*

The Council believes that our Equal Opportunities Policy forms a sound basis and provides the strategic framework for our Disability Equality Scheme.

## **Partnership Working**

The Council in its role as community leader recognises the importance of working with partners in reviewing overall strategy and direction and ensuring that strategy can be implemented in cost effective ways to the benefit of all Angus citizens.

In respect of disability issues, there are already established and effective links with other partners, in respect of disability issues in particular with the community care forum, and NHS Tayside, as well as having service level agreements in place within the voluntary sector, for example with Tayside Association for the Deaf.

We aim to work with our partners, sharing information regarding disability issues as appropriate to improve the quality and means of service delivery and to ensure that consultation is undertaken efficiently and with minimum intrusion, in order to avoid consultation fatigue for those individuals.

Within this spirit of partnership working, the council will ensure that jointly with our partner agencies, the General Duty to provide disability equality is met.

### 3 DISABILITY EQUALITY STRATEGIC AIMS

The Council's approach to disability equality is based on the principles outlined in our Equal Opportunities Policy.

As outlined in that Policy's Statement of Intent:

*"Angus Council supports the principle of equal opportunities in the provision of its services to the community and in relation to employment. The council opposes all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnic or national origin, religion, age, sexual and marital status and disability."*

The Council will strive to ensure that disability equality is achieved through:

- Ensuring that the Equal Opportunities Policy is effective, properly applied and monitored
- Consulting with all sectors of the community regarding the planning and delivery of services, especially those groups whose views may be underrepresented
- Consulting with employees with disabilities in respect of policy-making processes
- Compliance with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) as amended by the DDA 2005
- Ensuring that companies applying for inclusion in select or approved lists, bidding for contracts and working under contracts take reasonable steps to comply with the above legislation
- Training employees in their responsibilities to promote disability equality
- Working towards a more diverse workforce and ensuring that employment policies promote a non discriminatory working environment
- Monitoring the council's Disability Equality Scheme
- Using the council's complaints procedure to process complaints from members of the community who feel they have been treated unfairly on the grounds of their disability
- Removing harassment of people with disabilities which is as a result of their disability, and encouraging best practice within the community by promoting disability equality.
- Provide fair and accessible services by looking at the way we provide information, our communication systems, as well as continuing to improve physical access to relevant areas of council buildings.

The above together with the rest of this Disability Equality Scheme, builds upon the Statement of Intent as contained within the Equal Opportunities Policy.

## 4 SPECIFIC DUTIES: SERVICE DELIVERY

The council will use the 'social' model of disability, which focuses less on the person's medical condition or impairment, and more on the social barriers and/or attitudes of others. We aim to concentrate on empowering or enabling people rather than focusing on their disability.

To ensure we meet our legislative obligation under the General Duty, we have developed an Action Plan (Appendix F), focusing on the core areas of:

- i) involving people with disabilities
- ii) impact assessing policies and practices
- iii) service delivery
- iv) communication
- v) physical access
- vi) procurement

Our Action Plan also includes a section on Employment. This area is dealt with separately under the Specific Duties: Employment, section.

### **(i) Involving people with Disabilities**

#### *The Angus Community*

In order to ensure that we accurately reflect the views of people with disabilities, we have involved a range of people from the Angus community who have a disability or who are caring for someone who has a disability, or who have an involvement with disability issues in the development of this Scheme, and the Action Plan in particular.

We used existing links via the community care forum, and local voluntary organisations. We involved service users from Social Work and Health and also placed a request for volunteers on our website which was successful. We met with a broad range of disabled people at a consultation event in order to develop the Disability Equality Scheme.

Questionnaires regarding the suitability of our service provision were also discussed with relevant stakeholders. The template is attached as Appendix H.

The council has adopted a Code of Practice on Communication and Consultation with Members of the Community as part of our Equal Opportunities Policy and which is attached as Appendix B and we are looking to have long-term engagement with relevant stakeholders, through establishing an advisory group.

In order to avoid consultation overload or fatigue for participants, the council co-ordinates consultation exercises and also makes use of 'citizens' panels and Angus Access Panel. Where appropriate the council also aims to build on existing collaboration with external parties such as NHS Tayside, other local authorities and Tayside Police, in order to share knowledge and experience with regard to the needs and aspirations of people with disabilities.

#### *Employee Involvement*

An article was placed on the council's employee intranet to inform employees of the disability equality obligations, and to encourage employees with disabilities to consult with us. We have also requested volunteers from friends, family and carers of people with disabilities, and those interested in disability issues.

We will continue to use volunteers on an ongoing basis regarding our impact assessment of policies/future developments.

Through involvement with people with disabilities, we will ensure that we develop and maintain effective methods of communication and consultation with employees. We will meet regularly with them, and develop questionnaires for feedback on how we are performing.

## **(ii) Impact Assessing Policies and Practices**

The council is required to include in our scheme a statement of our methods for assessing the impact of our policies and procedures, or their likely impact, on equality for people with disabilities.

Policies and procedures covers all proposed and current activities, both written and unwritten e.g. custom and practice.

The purpose of undertaking impact assessments is to ensure that our policies and practices do not disadvantage people with disabilities, and also to identify where equality of opportunity could be enhanced.

We recognise that impact assessing disability equality should be a corporate responsibility, embedded within our culture and mainstreamed throughout the organisation.

We have adopted a basic template called a Policy Control Document (Appendix G) to review existing policies and procedures and assess all proposed ones.

The Policy Control Document will ensure a corporate approach is adopted and that there is a standard clear process to be followed for the review, development and adoption of all policies and procedures, relevant to disability equality.

The law requires that a policy with potential for major impact on people with disabilities, should undergo a full impact assessment.

Judgement will be made against relevant policies and practices as to how significant the impact could be on people with disabilities.

A high, medium, or low level of prioritisation system will be used as follows:

**High Impact:** views will be sought from employees with disabilities, local community stakeholders, and relevant national organisations. Other public bodies may be approached who have similar policies, in order to share experiences.

**Medium Impact:** consultation with employees with disabilities and local community stakeholders will take place.

**Low impact:** no formal consultation will take place.

By following the steps as indicated in the Policy Control Document process, we will look to identify evidence or research findings to show that the policy may be affecting people with disabilities in an unfair manner, and may need to be changed.

Each department will prioritise their policies and procedures in terms of the relevance to the General Duty.

It may be necessary for the council, for example due to other legislation, having considered alternatives, to implement a policy which may have an adverse impact on people with disabilities. If so, monitoring mechanisms and regular reviews will be put in place with changes made, as appropriate to lessen the adverse impact wherever possible. The corporate Equal Opportunities Officer Group will monitor any policies or procedures which fall into this category.

We aim to complete all screening and impact assessments by 2009.

## **(iii) Public Access to Services**

The council is committed to the provision of quality services to the Angus community and opposes any discrimination in relation to the delivery of these services.

We have adopted a Code of Practice on Equal Opportunities and Service Delivery as part of its Equal Opportunities Policy which is attached as Appendix E.

We aim to adhere to the terms of that Code of Practice.

## **(iv) Public Access to Information**

The council aims to ensure that all members of the community have equal access to information regarding our services.

As indicated earlier we have adopted a Code of Practice on Equal Opportunities and Access to Council Information as part of its Equal Opportunities Policy, Appendix D refers.

We aim to adhere to the terms of that Code of Practice.

For both access to services and information the public are made aware of the availability of alternative formats through posters, the internet and through our staff who are trained in disabilities awareness and the need to promote equal opportunities.

#### **(v) Procurement**

Although the General Duty does not override other laws or regulations in public procurement, procurement may be relevant to the General Duty to promote disability equality in regard to:

- services provided under contract or agreement
- contractors equal opportunities policies and practices

We will:

- revise standard contracts to ensure suppliers are compliant with disability legislation. Potential contractors will be made aware that any service they provide must be without disability discrimination
- revise contracts and service level agreements to ensure service providers are compliant with disability legislation. New suppliers will be made aware that any service they provide must promote disability equality
- provide support, for example with alternative format facilities, to any business requiring such assistance to enable it to tender for contracts
- give guidance and support, where necessary, to contractors to aid their understanding in order to comply with their duties.

## 5 SPECIFIC DUTIES: EMPLOYMENT

### (i) Monitoring

We are committed to creating a workforce which reflects the diversity of the community and acknowledges the benefits of employing a diverse workforce. Accordingly, more comprehensive disability monitoring is necessary to assess our performance in relation to key aspects of employment.

In recent years, we have introduced a new HR database, Resourcelink, which is increasingly able to provide appropriate equal opportunities' statistics. However, the need for further development in some areas remains, for example, the collation of statistics for employees with disabilities attending training.

At present, reports are available in respect of the numbers of people with disabilities applying for posts, and subsequently offered employment, and for the percentage of employees with a declared disability.

We acknowledge that there may be many employees who have not declared a disability, either through fear/suspicion; or because they do not regard themselves as having a disability; or because they have become disabled during the period of their employment. It is our aim by Summer 2007, to gain more accurate information by asking employees to complete a confidential monitoring form, explaining what disability means and how the information will be used for statistical purposes only.

We will also develop systems to monitor those employees with declared disabilities who:

- i) apply for and undertake training
- ii) apply for promotion
- iii) raise a grievance
- iv) are subject to disciplinary procedure
- v) leave the council

Monitoring reports will not include any individual's personal details and confidentiality will be a priority.

In addition, we monitor claims of harassment/bullying under the Harassment at Work Policy. During the period 2005/06 no one indicated harassment/bullying due to their disability.

The council will use the results of its disability monitoring to determine whether:

- our Equal Opportunities Policy is working
- there are inappropriate differences between employees with disabilities and those without and will
- investigate the reasons for any differences and deal with unfairness, disadvantage and discrimination

We consider the most appropriate means of reporting such information is annually each Spring with other annual reports, which are accessible on the internet, and the internal employee website.

### (ii) Recruitment

We are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all applicants for employment.

In respect of disability equality, the organisation is recognised as having a positive attitude towards people with disabilities by subscribing to the principles of the Employment Service Double Tick symbol. This ensures that as long as they meet the minimum essential criteria for a job, people with disabilities will be guaranteed an interview for a council post.

The council, along with Perth & Kinross and Dundee City, jointly funds an Employment Disability Unit (EDU), which provides work experience placements for people with disabilities looking to either enter or re-enter employment. We also refer enquiries to the EDU regarding reasonable adjustments to the working environment, and take advice from them in respect of the latest, most appropriate aids and devices for people to become or remain employed by the council. In addition, we have accessed resources through the Jobcentre's Access to Work, financing a number of reasonable adjustments to help people with disabilities work in the council.

We do acknowledge, however, that more action is necessary to attract people with disabilities as employees. We will consult relevant stakeholders to further develop appropriate actions in this important area.

### **(iii) Reasonable Adjustments**

During the course of their employment, an employee may become disabled. It may be that a reasonable adjustment is required for them to be able to continue in their current position, for example chairs designed for back problems have been purchased, or specialised workstations for using the computer more effectively have been designed, as well as alterations to provide improved physical access.

Any employee who feels a reasonable adjustment is necessary, can raise the matter initially with their line manager. It may be necessary for the council's Medical Adviser to give advice, or for the EDU to become involved, but all requests will be investigated.

## 6 EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND AWARENESS RAISING

For a considerable number of years, the council has provided Disability Awareness training which is open to all employees, but particularly for all front-line employees. Several hundred employees have attended the course, from managers to receptionists. In light of disability equality, we will review the training course and amend as appropriate.

In recent years other training courses have been revised to ensure equality compatibility, as follows:

- Induction
- Management Training
- Customer Care
- Recruitment and Selection

Compulsory diversity training for senior managers commenced in 2004, and a diversity course open to all employees, was launched in 2006. A significant number of elected members also attended a diversity awareness session in 2006.

Harassment training for the council's Harassment Contacts has been ongoing over the years and will be continued.

As a result of race equality legislation the following standard paragraphs are now included in letters to external trainers commissioned by the council and which are sent when training arrangements for courses are confirmed. These paragraphs will now be amended to include disability equality as well as racial equality.

".....Angus Council must ensure that any organisation providing us with goods or services has due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful [racial] discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different [racial] groups. Any materials used in the delivery of services must also comply with these duties.

This clearly includes the content of training courses and any associated supporting material. Can you please confirm that your organisation complies with this?"

Departmental training co-ordinators will also be advised of their obligations for training commissioned directly by them.

We will endeavour to make all employees aware of the contents of the Disability Equality Scheme through the council's intranet facility, the employee newsletter and departmental briefing arrangements.

We are also committed to producing a disability awareness booklet, to be issued to all staff, as part of our action plan.

## 7 COMPLAINTS

While the council will do its best to meet the duties placed upon it under the Disability Discrimination Act it is recognised that on occasion people may be dissatisfied.

We will attempt to deal with any complaints received in relation to this duty through the Council's Complaints Procedure which allows service users to make complaints about any aspect of the council's service or policies.

Under this procedure the service provider will deal with the complaint initially and attempt to resolve the problem at the first point of contact

If the complainant is still not satisfied, there is a three stage procedure to be followed:

- Stage 1 The complaint will be electronically logged with a unique reference number to the complainant. The complainant will be responded to within ten working days.
- Stage 2 If the complainant wishes to take the matter further, they must lodge a written complaint to the service director, who will appoint a senior manager to investigate the complaint. The service director will respond within 15 working days.  
  
If the complainant is still not satisfied with the outcome of the Stage 2 investigation, they can complain to the Chief Executive.
- Stage 3 The complainant should write to the Chief Executive setting out why they are still dissatisfied. The Chief Executive will conduct a full review of their complaint and will provide a full report on the outcome of the review within 20 working days.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the council's response, they will be advised of their right to refer the matter to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

Leaflets about the Corporate Complaints Procedure are available to the public.

Some council services are the subject of statutory complaints procedures which may vary from this system.

The council will inform individuals of this right as part of the above procedures.

The Act does not give individuals a right to take legal action against the Council for failing to fulfil its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act but individuals can inform the Disability Rights Commission, as the body responsible for enforcing compliance, if they have concerns or complaints about whether the duties have been met by the council.

## **8 ACTION PLAN**

To complement this Disability Equality Scheme, we have adopted an action plan for the first three years. Progress will be reported annually.

Responsibility for the action plan lies with the council's Disability Working Group, consisting of senior employees from each council department. Ultimately it is the Equal Opportunities Officers Group's responsibility to monitor that individual departments are fulfilling their targets.

The Education Department has produced its Action Plan in its own Disability Equality Scheme.

Appendix F outlines an action plan for the period up to 2009.

## **9 ADVISING THE PUBLIC AND EMPLOYEES OF PROGRESS**

We will review and monitor progress against our Disability Equality Scheme on an annual basis.

A report on progress will be submitted to Committee and put on the council's web site. Progress will also be reported in the council paper "Angus Life" which is distributed to every Angus household.

In accordance with our Code of Practice on Equal Opportunities and Access to Council Information, facilities to provide this report into alternative formats, such as audio, larger print or Braille, are available wherever a need is identified.

The mechanisms for advising employees and trade unions of progress are under review. Currently employees are advised of progress by means of information contained in:

- the employee newsletter, Angus Matters, and
- the corporate internal website.

## **10 REVIEW OF SCHEME**

This initial Disability Equality Scheme covers the period up to 2009. We will work with our employees and members of the community to produce a revised scheme by November 2009 and every three years thereafter. Policies and functions which have been identified and prioritised are subject to annual review and action plan targets for each year will also be reviewed annually. The scheme is a living document and changes in circumstances or further legislation may occur.

The review of the Scheme within the council is delegated to the Equal Opportunities Officer Group which comprises senior representatives from each council department.

We are committed to annually reviewing our progress of the Scheme prior to the comprehensive review in 2009.

## Defining Disability

The aim of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) is that it should protect people who would generally be regarded as having a disability. This is why the Act defined disability as a **physical** or **mental impairment** which has a **substantial** and **long-term adverse effect** on a person's ability to carry out **normal day to day activities**.

*Physical impairment:* this includes, for instance, a weakening of part of the body (eyes, ears, limbs, internal organs etc.) caused through illness, by accident or congenitally. Examples would be blindness or visual impairment, deafness or hearing impairment, paralysis of a leg and heart disease.

*Mental impairment:* this includes mental illness and what is commonly known as a learning disability.

*Substantial:* this means the effect of the physical or mental impairment on ability to carry out normal day to day activities is more than minor or trivial. It does not have to be a severe effect.

*Long-term adverse effect:* the effect has to have lasted, or be likely to last, overall for at least 12 months and the effect must be a detrimental one. A person with a life expectancy of less than 12 months is, of course, covered.

*A normal day to day activity:* this is something which is carried out by most people on a fairly regular and frequent basis, such as washing, eating, catching a bus or turning on a television. It does not mean something as individual as playing a musical instrument to a professional standard or threading a needle.

*What sort of effect must there be?*

The person must be affected in at least one of the respects listed in the Act: mobility; manual dexterity; physical co-ordination; continence; ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects; speech, hearing or eyesight; memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand; or perception of risk of physical danger.

*What happens if the effects are reduced by medication or other treatment?*

The effects that matter are those that would be present if there was no medication or treatment taking place. The exception is people who wear spectacles or contact lenses when what matters are the effects that remain while the spectacles or contact lenses are being used.

## **CODE OF PRACTICE ON COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION WITH MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY**

### **Aims**

The Council aims to ensure that it develops and maintains effective methods of communication and consultation with all members of the community regardless of race, ethnic or national origin, religion, age, sexual and marital status and disability.

### **Guiding Principles**

- Area Forums and Citizens Panels will be used to encourage representation from the whole spectrum of the Community to develop and maintain communication and consultative links with the Council. These methods of communication will be regularly reviewed to ensure that they continue to promote equality of participation by the whole community.
- Community interest groups including external Equalities Groups will be encouraged to attend various Council meetings where relevant.
- Service level agreements will be established with equalities groups and the voluntary sector where appropriate.
- Funding criteria for voluntary bodies and community organisations will stipulate that they must have an equal opportunities policy.
- Specialist and interpretation facilities will be provided at Area Forums, Citizens Panels, Council meetings and departmental meetings where a need is identified to assist participation by all staff and members of the community involved.
- A database will be established of staff within the Council who have sign language, foreign languages etc and who can contribute to interpretation facilities
- Council Departments will ensure that all relevant community groups are included in consultation exercises on issues affecting the community.
- Communication and Consultative links established between the Council and the community will be advertised within the community.
- Where appropriate, this code will form an integral part of Council training to provide employees with an awareness and an appreciation of the importance of establishing effective communication and consultative links with members of the community and customers of Angus Council.

### **Implementation**

- Responsibility for the initial implementation, day to day operation and continuous development of this code lies with the Council's Department Directors and Heads of Service.

### **Monitoring**

All aspects of this code will be monitored in accordance with the Council's Code of Practice on Monitoring Equal Opportunities.

### **Complaints**

Any member of the community who considers that they have been treated unfairly or discriminated against in relation to this Code of Practice may raise a complaint through the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure.

## **CODE OF PRACTICE ON MONITORING**

### **Aims**

The Council believes that to ensure effective and meaningful equal opportunities its policies and practices must be monitored on a continuous basis.

This Code of Practice aims to ensure that monitoring procedures are carried out to assess the effectiveness of the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and to provide factual information and a base line from which strategies and initiatives can be developed specific to the Council's needs.

### **Guiding Principles**

#### **Service Delivery/Access to Services and Council Information**

- Each Department will put in place appropriate monitoring arrangements in relation to their own specific services.

#### **Communication and Consultation with Citizens/Customers**

- Each Department will put in place appropriate monitoring arrangements to ensure effective and meaningful communication and consultation is carried out.

#### **Recruitment and Retention**

- All job applicants will be asked to provide information relating to their sex, marital status, disability, race, ethnic and national origin, and current employment status. This information will be treated confidentially and used for monitoring purposes only.

#### **Training and Development**

- All Council training will be assessed to ensure that its content and delivery is in accordance with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.

#### **Conditions of Employment**

- Conditions of Employment within the Council will be continuously analysed with a view to assessing their fair application.

### **Implementation**

Responsibility for implementing this Code lies with Council's Departmental Directors and Heads of Service. Monitoring will also be incorporated within the Council's Performance Management System, the "balanced scorecard" at Corporate and Departmental level.

### **Monitoring**

The effectiveness of this Code will be monitored by the standards of service delivered to the community and the level of progress achieved by women, ethnic groups, people with disabilities, unemployed people etc in relation to their access to Council services, employment opportunities and development and career progression within the Council. The Code will also be monitored by the level of assistance it provides in response to complaints raised through the Council's procedure for investigating complaints of unfair discrimination or treatment.

## **CODE OF PRACTICE ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND ACCESS TO COUNCIL INFORMATION**

### **Aims**

The Council aims to ensure that all members of the community have equal access to information regarding Council services regardless of race, ethnic or national origin, religion, age, sexual and marital status, disability, or other status.

### **Guiding Principles**

- All members of the community will be able to access information on Council services available through local Access Offices or through the Access Line. In addition, members of rural communities can have access to information on the Council's website through information and communications technology facilities located within community halls.
- Facilities to interpret Council information will be made available wherever a need is identified ie translation into other languages, audio tapes, signing support, facilities for the blind and sight impaired.
- Where appropriate, this Code of Practice will form an integral part of Council training to provide employees with an awareness and an appreciation of the importance of ensuring that the whole community have access to Council information.

### **Implementation**

Responsibility for the initial implementation, day to day operation and continuous development of this code lies with the Council's Departmental Directors and Heads of Service.

### **Monitoring**

All aspects of this Code will be monitored in accordance with the Council's Code of Practice on Monitoring Equal Opportunities.

### **Complaints**

Any member of the community who considers that they have been treated unfairly or discriminated against in relation to this Code of Practice may raise a complaint through the Council's corporate complaints procedure.

## **CODE OF PRACTICE ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND SERVICE DELIVERY**

### **Aims**

The Council is committed to the provision of quality services to the Angus community and opposes any discrimination in relation to the delivery of these services on the grounds of race, ethnic or national origin, religion, age, sexual and marital status and disability.

### **Guiding Principles**

- All members of the community will have equal access to service provision regardless of race, ethnic or national origin, religion, age, sexual and marital status and disability.
- Where appropriate this Code will form an integral part of the Council's training and induction processes to provide employees with an awareness and an appreciation of the importance of ensuring that all users of Council services receive quality service provision regardless of their race, ethnic or national origin, religion, age, sexual or marital status, disability, geographic location and/or employment status.
- The Council will comply with statutory obligations placed on it by anti-discriminatory legislation.
- The Council will endeavour to apply equality of opportunity in relation to applications for grant assistance and grant aid for partnership organisations.

### **Implementation**

Responsibility for the initial implementation, day to day operation and continuous development of this Code lies with the Council's Department Directors and Heads of Service.

### **Monitoring**

All aspects of this Code will be monitored in accordance with the Council's Code of Practice on Monitoring Equal Opportunities.

### **Complaints**

Any service user who considers that they have been treated unfairly or discriminated against in relation to this Code of Practice may raise a complaint through the Council's corporate complaints procedure.

## ACTION PLAN 2006 - 2009

| What we will do  | How we will do it  | How will we know we have done it?                         | By when     | What we hope to achieve   |
|--|--|---|-------------|---|
| <b>Disability Equality</b>   |  |   |             |   |
| Report on progress annually  | Via the Equal Opportunities Officers Group   | Production of targets achieved                            | Annually    | Assessment of progress and identification of any remedial actions needed  |
| Establish emergency evacuation arrangements which fully accommodate the needs of people with disabilities                                  | Development, approval and implementation of standardised arrangements for the evacuation of people with disabilities and the provision of equipment and training   | Operational arrangements                                  | March 2007  | Fully encompassing management arrangements for the safe emergency evacuation of people with disabilities from council buildings |
| Develop information for people with disabilities about the accessibility of facilities and services  | Develop an Angus element to the Disabledgo website   | Angus information live on the Disabledgo website          | Summer 2007 | Ensure that people with disabilities have sufficient information about services and facilities                                  |
| Liaise with partner agencies   | Gather information on other disability equality schemes  | Council scheme reviewed after comparison with others      | Spring 2009 | Encourage communication with other local public bodies  |
| <b>Involve People with Disabilities</b>  |  |   |             |   |
| Involve people with disabilities in the decision-making process  | Develop advisory group   | Record meetings and contacts made                         | Ongoing     | Ensure relevant stakeholders are fully involved in decisions affecting them   |
|  | Angus Citizens' Panel recruit people with disabilities. The Panel is regularly consulted on  | Surveys often monitor the personal circumstances          | Ongoing     | Opportunities for people with disabilities to become involved and influence council decision-making                             |
|  | Corporate Planning provide guidance on planning and conducting research and consultation exercises on the corporate intranet and in one-to-one advice. This guidance stresses the need to consider stakeholder needs, including people with disabilities | Those conducting the exercises are asked to evaluate them | Ongoing     |   |
|  | The corporate intranet and one-to-one guidance refer to methods that facilitate the involvement of people with disabilities, including phone surveys, e-surveys and tailored forms of communication  | Those conducting exercises are asked to evaluate them     | Ongoing     | As above  |
| Involve people with disabilities in the planning process and assist with public meetings. Identify partners in the decision-making process | Identify partners who need to be involved in the process   | Records of meetings/outcomes from meetings                | 2007        | A robust DES  |
| Review council code of practice on consultation and involvement  | Ensure code is relevant and meaningful to people with different disabilities   | Amendments required if necessary                          | Summer 2007 | Ensure consultation process allows equal access of people with different types of disabilities to participate                   |
| Attempt to assess the level of harassment and barriers experienced by disabled people  | Involve people with disabilities through questionnaires and sharing information with partners  | Data collated   | 2008        | Identify problems and seek to address them  |

| What we will do   | How we will do it  | How will we know we have done it?   | By when               | What we hope to achieve  |
|---|--|---|-----------------------|--|
| Consultative meetings to be held in accessible venues   | Utilise current accessibility data for council buildings   | List of acceptable venues   | January 2007          | To ensure accessibility of venues for people with mobility difficulties  |
| Widening participation  | Ensure other interested parties have opportunity to offer feedback if not on formal advisory group   | Develop a database of individuals/organisations to contact                | Summer 2007           | Encourage involvement to help the council achieve its disability equality aims.  |
| Assess the communication strategies already in place in social Work & Health services                               | A range of consultation opportunities will be put in place across Social Work & Health services. This will include user satisfaction surveys, individual discussions and a variety of meetings   | Reports produced following consultation                                   | Ongoing               | To identify comments, compliments and complaints about services. To contribute to continuous service improvement                         |
| Review Public Transport Information Strategy  | Consultation undertaken in developing the Strategy which was adopted in 2005. The Strategy will be reviewed in consultation with user groups eg Angus Access Panel, Learning Disability Team etc   | Updated Strategy  | March 2008            | Strategy including targets for the next ten years to meet the needs of public transport users  |
| Integration of public transport requirements for people with learning disabilities with local bus service provision | Liaison with officers from Social Work & Health, people with learning disabilities and their carers to identify public transport requirements and integrate those with local bus service provision. Some services are already operational and well used. The pilot scheme in Montrose is now being rolled out in Angus | Bus services being available and used                                     | March 2008            | Independent travel for people with learning disabilities   |
| To involve people with disabilities in initiatives in the print and design operations in the council                | The Print and Design Unit to continue to produce Christmas and other cards from paintings by groups of people with disabilities for selling by these groups. On occasion to invite members of these groups to meet with Print and Design to encourage input into the look of the finished product                      | To record details of these meetings                                       | To be reviewed        | To involve people with disabilities in the production of cards and other such services/initiatives where possible                        |
| Engage with Angus Access Panel to ensure that significant projects are subject to their advice                      | A set of project drawings are submitted for comment and advice. A post-completion visit is arranged to check for any errors and omissions  | Comments received and actioned. Success in the Rod McFarlane Award scheme | Ongoing programme     | Implementation of best practice, local needs and effective partnership working   |
| To respond to requests from the public to improve physical access to buildings to meet DDA obligations              | Receive request from the public regarding the need for specific accessibility adaptation improvements and adjust the programme of works to fulfil these requests   | Specific requirements fulfilled   | As and when requested | Respond to individual needs expressed by disabled people or their carers. Improve the physical access and facilities for disabled people |
| <b>Impact Assessment</b>  |  |   |                       |  |
| Adopt effective disability equality impact assessment process   | Through consultation of advisory group review framework and guidance   | Evidence of review and amendments   | Spring 2007           | Implement an appropriate impact assessment of policies and procedures when created or reviewed   |
| Identify policies and practices to impact assess  | Allocate a 'High', 'Medium' or 'Low' relevance   | List of all relevant policies/procedures                                  | Spring 2007           | Identify policies/procedures requiring priority assessment   |
| Publish the outcomes from the   | In annual report   | Report published  | Ongoing               | Results published for feedback   |

| What we will do   | How we will do it   | How will we know we have done it?   | By when               | What we hope to achieve  |
|---|---|---|-----------------------|--|
| assessment  |   |   | annually              |  |
| <b>Employment</b>   |   |   |                       |  |
| Improve monitoring and recording of employment data   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) review process of recording statistical information in relation to applicants to the council to encourage the completion of EO monitoring forms</li> <li>ii) ensure we have accurate data regarding employees with disabilities, by distribution of a questionnaire to all employees</li> </ul> | <p>Through the accurate retention of statistical information</p> <p>Volume of response received</p>                             | Spring 2007           | Accurate data to ensure employment policies are effective for the recruitment and retention of people with disabilities  |
| Positive promotion of job opportunities within Angus Council  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Review job outlines to ensure unnecessary criteria are removed</li> <li>ii) Review where adverts are placed to ensure as many people with disabilities receive information as possible</li> <li>iii) Actively promote availability of information in alternative formats</li> </ul>             | More people with disabilities enquiring about employment  | Summer 2007           | More applications from applicants with disabilities  |
| Remove any unnecessary barriers in the recruitment process  | Allow people with disabilities to fully demonstrate their potential   | Feedback from selection processes   | Spring 2007           | Enabling people with disabilities an equal opportunity to employment   |
| Ensure employees recruiting understand their legal obligations  | Train recruiters and update guidance notes  | Feedback from selection processes   | ongoing               | Promotion of positive attitudes towards people with disabilities   |
| Ensure interview venues are accessible  | Utilise current accessibility data. Continue to ask applicants if they have a particular need in respect of interview arrangements.   | Feedback from recruitment process   | Summer 2007           | As above   |
| Adapt the working environment and a accessibility to suit the needs of employees with disabilities to ensure maximum recruitment and retention. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Increase awareness of reasonable adjustment options</li> <li>ii) Managers to review employees needs in the appraisal process</li> </ul>   | <p>Increase advice regarding reasonable adjustments and the number of adjustments made</p> <p>Employees satisfaction survey</p> | Summer 2007           | <p>Increase in levels of job satisfaction for employees with disabilities, who are able to work to their potential</p> <p>Development of a disability friendly working environment</p>               |
| Increase employee awareness of disability issues  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Review disability awareness</li> <li>ii) Issue information booklet to all employees</li> </ul>  | <p>Deliver training with any amendments</p> <p>Booklet issued</p>   | Spring 2007           | <p>More relevant training especially for front-line employees</p> <p>Provision of a better service to people with disabilities. Promotion of positive attitudes towards people with disabilities</p> |
| Develop support mechanisms offered to employees with  | i) Obtain employees' views through advisory group   | Increased numbers requesting reasonable adjustments or more   | Summer 2007 + ongoing | Increase in morale. Greater employee involvement   |

| <b>What we will do</b>   | <b>How we will do it</b>  | <b>How will we know we have done it?</b>   | <b>By when</b>                     | <b>What we hope to achieve</b>   |
|--|---|--|------------------------------------|--|
| disabilities   | ii) Promote the availability of the Employment Disability Unit (EDU)  | flexible working hours   |                                    |  |
| Employees with disabilities who are on sick leave continue to feel valued                            | Train managers in absence procedures  | Feedback from employees  | Spring 2007                        | Improved morale  |
| Manage employees who become disabled in a manner that recognises that employee retention is expected | Train managers in taking a responsible attitude towards employees who become disabled by recognising their need for employment, as well as giving support and making reasonable adjustments to working arrangements, as appropriate | High retention levels of employees who become disabled.  | Summer 2007                        | Retention of skilled employees   |
| <b>Communication</b>   |   |  |                                    |  |
| Improve communication between Angus Council and people with disabilities                             | Review current methods used   | Feedback from advisory group. Increased communication between people with disabilities and the council                                   | Spring 2007                        | Greater satisfaction from service users  |
| Enable people with disabilities to communicate at all reception points                               | Train receptionists in communication skills<br><br>Provide specialist equipment, to supplement hearing induction loops<br><br>Provide an effective interpreter  | Training delivered<br><br>Audit of relevant areas<br><br>Review service provision. Ensure electronic information on intranet is accurate | November 2007<br><br>November 2007 | Better access to services  |
| Improve accessibility of the council website   | Review accessibility  | Feedback from users of the systems   | November 2007                      | Improve external communications  |
| All council publications and information is available in large print and other formats on request    | Ensure all publications and information can be easily changed into other formats such as large print, audio, CD Rom, Braille etc  | Reports and leaflets appearing in alternative formats  | Ongoing                            | Meet the needs of people with disabilities by providing information in alternative formats         |
| Improve communication between the council and members of the public who have a hearing impairment    | ACCESSline already considering the use of a service called Typetalk and Text Direct which will allow them to communicate with hearing impaired people, speech impaired and deaf/blind people  | Record details of meetings   | 2007                               | Improved service to members of the public who are hearing impaired and wish to contact the council |
| Promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities  | Use positive images of people with disabilities in publicity  | Widely promoted  | December 2007                      | People with disabilities seen in a positive light  |
| Promote the council's Disability Equality Scheme   | i) Usage of the internet, intranet, employee newsletter, voluntary organisations, advisory group<br><br>ii) Produce a booklet regarding disability awareness for all employees  | Booklet distributed  | Spring 2007                        | Increase employee's awareness  |
| Review communication strategies in place across all Social Work &                                    | A range of consultation strategies will be put in place. This will include user satisfaction surveys,   | Reports following consultation   | Ongoing                            | To contribute to continuous service improvement  |

| What we will do   | How we will do it  | How will we know we have done it?  | By when        | What we hope to achieve   |
|---|--|--|----------------|---|
| Health services   | individual discussions and a variety of meetings   |  |                |   |
| Ensure that public information meets the corporate and departmental standards and Plain English guidelines  | All public information will be overseen by departmental officer responsible for information and communications   | In Social Work & Health for example, there is an Information annual report | Annual         | To ensure accessibility of public information   |
| Ensure that public information can be made available in alternative formats to meet the needs of the individual (for written and verbal communications)                             | <p>i) To be addressed on an individual basis as requested</p> <p>ii) Develop procedures, taking account of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources</li> <li>• Quality</li> <li>• Contracting services (financial regulations)</li> <li>• Best Value/Value for Money</li> </ul>                             | Information annual report  | Annual         | To ensure accessibility of information  |
| Ensure all employees use agreed standards for communicating with people with disabilities   | Corporate House Style – Translational Guidance is available on the council's intranet. Ensure that all publications and information produced by the council can be easily changed into alternative formats such as LARGE PRIN, audio, CD ROM, and Braille etc  | Inclusion on intranet and examination of publications                      | To be reviewed | A standard approach to accessibility issues and employee awareness of the need for suitable formats for material produced |
| Develop our information technology to ensure: it is accessible as possible to people with disabilities; it conforms to national standards; and it is in line with latest technology | <p>Angus Council has already passed Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 1.0 level A and many AAA checkpoints. We would aim to develop accessibility to achieve AAA.</p> <p>Speech-enabling of the council website is under consideration and BrowseAloud has been tested. Other products are under examination</p> | <p>Receive AAA level accreditation</p> <p>Speech enabling is in place</p>  | Ongoing        | Ensure people with disabilities can access information effectively  |
| <b>Service Delivery</b>   |  |  |                |   |
| Ensure that a range of support services exist that meet the needs of people with disabilities   | Undertake a needs assessment as part of the development of care group strategies. Ensure that existing and planned services meet the needs identified through needs assessment. Ensure that systems exist to undertake needs assessment of individuals.  | Care group strategies produced and updated                                 | Annually       | Identify and meet the needs of people with disabilities living in Angus   |
| Establish monitoring systems for people with disabilities, and share data from monitoring already in place, for example in Social Work & Health, in light of new Duty               | Collate information on users of our services wherever possible   | Data available to produce report   | Ongoing        | Information to assist in the most appropriate delivery of services to people with disabilities                            |
| Provide contracted local bus services by vehicles meeting the DDA requirements  | Tender for the provision of vehicles to this standard, subject to budgetary constraints  | Vehicles operating in service to this standard                             | April 2007     | Accessibility of vehicles by people with mobility difficulties  |

| What we will do  | How we will do it   | How will we know we have done it?  | By when         | What we hope to achieve   |
|--|---|--|-----------------|---|
| Provide services tailored to meet the needs of specific users eg Demand Responsive Services  | Consult with communities eg 600 households consulted in an exercise in rural area south and west of Brechin and Pitkenney area. Further exercises are ongoing               | Demand responsive services being operational and meeting requirements of users with disabilities | April 2007      | Public transport opportunities for people with mobility difficulties  |
| Process concessionary travel applications for blind persons  | Forfarshire Society for the Blind assist in the vetting process for blind and partially sighted applicants  | Applicants being issued with passes  | From April 2006 | Entitlement cards being issued to blind and partially sighted individuals, entitling them to free bus travel (and for blind people also free rail travel) throughout Scotland               |
| Ensure appropriate publications are produced for people with disabilities  | Pint and Design Unit to continue to work with and for groups involved with projects and documents such as Same As You books, Buzz newsletter, display posters and leaflets  | Record details of these publications   | To be reviewed  | Publication of appropriate documentation for people with disabilities living in Angus   |
| Identify those service delivery processes which might adversely affect people with disabilities. Improve employee awareness of the new processes | Assess how we currently deliver services and plan to adapt delivery to suit people with disabilities. Work with partners to improve current practices                       | Evidence of assessments and work with our partners   | June 2007       | Improved service delivery to people with disabilities   |
| Improve roads including developer led schemes  | Carry out improvements to the existing road network eg the provision of new dropped kerbs   | The Quality Management System covers disabled provision  | Ongoing         | A road network and car parking provision that is accessible as possible to all potential disabled users   |
| Review disabled car parking provision  | Consult with Angus Access Panel where appropriate   | As above   | Ongoing         | As above  |
| Review pedestrian crossings  | Comply with relevant legislation and national guidance when designing road improvements, pedestrian crossings etc   | As above   | Ongoing         | As above  |
|  | Overall, we will seek to carry out audits of proposed road schemes to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities are catered for                                     |  |                 |   |
| Review leisure facilities in light of the new legislation  | Involve people with disabilities and Access Panel in assessing the suitability of facilities provided   | Physical adaptations made or amended processes in place  | Ongoing         | Equality of opportunity to leisure services which meet the needs of people with disabilities wherever possible  |
| <b>Physical Access</b>   |   |  |                 |   |
| Carry out works to improve access in council buildings to meet DDA requirements  | Use relevant audit reports. A programme of minor and major accessibility adaptation projects as well as the latest best practice in each new build or refurbishment project | Internal assessment for the Public Access SPI Feedback from Angus Access Panel                   | Ongoing         | Continuous improvements continued in a rolling programme to improve physical access to council buildings to ensure equality of physical public access to council services wherever possible |
| Continue to improve the physical access to council educational buildings to meet DDA requirements  | A programme of medium and major accessibility programmes  | Programme complete   | Ongoing         | All council educational buildings providing equality of physical public access wherever possible  |

| What we will do  | How we will do it   | How will we know we have done it?   | By when                         | What we hope to achieve  |
|--|---|---|---------------------------------|--|
| Identify areas where physical access is difficult and alert Property Services, with a view to resolving any issues     | View and if necessary test current access to buildings used by the public, as occupied by the division. Management to familiarise themselves with current standards. Raise issues with Property Services  | Any report to Property Services which requires work to be done  | March 2007                      | Improved access and to meet standards  |
| Ensure employees and public safety in council buildings  | Provide safety-related guidance to ensure disability issues addressed   | Communications with Property  | To be decided                   | Comply with Health & Safety regulations and suitable access for employees and members of the public  |
| Bus access   | Contracted services operated by low floor/wheelchair accessible vehicles, subject to the availability of funding  | More services provided by accessible vehicles   | April 2007                      | More accessible vehicles in fleet  |
| Bus stops  | Bus boarders provided to ease access onto buses for wheelchair users and mobility impaired passengers. Work already ongoing at 30 bus stops in Angus and stops at new developments have to meet accessibility requirements. Further Regional Transport Partnership funding to be used to expand the number of such sites across Angus with priority routes operated by low floor wheelchair accessible vehicles. Drop kerbs are also associated with these locations<br><br>Indiscriminate parking at bus stops tackled through the provision of bus boxes, raised at Traffic Co-ordination meetings and involvement of the police. | Bus stops provided to meet DDA requirements   | March 2007                      | Increase in number of bus stops with bus boarders easing access to buses   |
| Railway stations   | Working with TACTRAN Regional Transport Partnership, Transport Scotland and Network Rail to provide disabled access for passengers at Montrose railway station<br><br>Improvements already undertaken at Carnoustie and Arbroath (improved parking for disabled people, Arbroath provision of passenger lifts to all platforms) and CCTV provision  | Trains accessible to mobility impaired passengers<br><br>Increasing facilities for people with disabilities | March 2008<br><br>March 2005/06 | Accessibility of trains to wheelchair and mobility impaired passengers<br><br>Improved access and security                                 |
| <b>Procurement</b>   |   |   |                                 |  |
| Develop relevant disability equality and build into current procurement processes                                      | Review current process  | Amendment made  | Spring 2007                     | Ensure contractors/supervisors comply with disability legislation  |
| Review current procurement guidance to reflect disability equality legislation   | Amend guidance if necessary   | Guidance document amended   | Summer 2007                     | As above   |
| Develop procurement processes which take people with disabilities' needs into account, and amend guidance as necessary | Review current processes to assess what impact they have on people with disabilities, and address any issues which arise with for example, contractors/suppliers. Amend guidance and place  | Changes to procurement procedures. Amend templates and documents and guidance                               | June 2007                       | Encourage all who are involved in the procurement process to comply with legal requirements. Employee compliance with statutory provisions |

| What we will do  | How we will do it  | How will we know we have done it? | By when       | What we hope to achieve  |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|---------------|--|
|  | on the intranet  |                                   |               |  |
| Ensure successful contractor is aware of the importance of compliance with the above | Angus council policy on equality issues given to successful contractor/supplier at initial pre-award meeting   | Amend/update current policy       | December 2006 | Proactive promotion of disability equality within organisations providing services to and on behalf of the council |
| Procurement employees aware of Disability Equality Duty                              | Briefing materials to be prepared and provide training to relevant employees to ensure their awareness of the legislation and their responsibilities | Prepare briefing material         | December 2006 | Increased knowledge and practical application of procurement   |

**DISABILITY EQUALITY SCREENING/IMPACT ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE  
Policy Control Document**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Name of Policy/Procedure</b>   |  |
| <b>Lead department/service</b>  |  |
| Is this a new, or a review of an existing policy/procedure?   |  |
| <p><b><u>Screening Process</u></b></p> <p>Has the document been screened for relevance.</p> <p>If no, screen now</p> <p>Does the policy/procedure involve or have consequences for the people the council serves or employs?</p> <p>If no, please state why not.</p> <p>The policy/procedure is not relevant and no further action is required.</p> <p>Please sign and date immediately and keep page 1 for reference.</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Signature _____</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>If yes, proceed to Step 1 of the Full Impact Assessment.</p> |  |
| <p><b><u>Full Impact Assessment</u></b></p> <p><b>Step 1</b></p> <p>Check if the policy/procedure previously been impact assessed in terms of the Disability Equality Duty.</p> <p>If so, unless there have been significant changes, no further action is required. Please sign and date immediately below and retain for reference.</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Signature _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>  |  |
| <p><b>Step 2</b></p> <p>Are there any legal requirements affecting this policy/procedure? If so please describe.</p>  |  |
| <p><b>Step 3</b></p> <p>Determine the aim of the policy or procedure.</p>   |  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Step 4</b></p> <p>Consider and detail the data/research available to assess the likely impact of the policy/procedure.</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Step 5</b></p> <p>(i) Determine the level of relevance being allocated to this policy/procedure ie <u>high</u>, <u>medium</u>, <u>low</u> or <u>not relevant</u>?</p> <p>(ii) Is there any reason to believe the policy/procedure could affect people differently due to their disability? If so, how?</p> <p>(iii) Is there evidence to suggest that any part of the procedure/policy could unlawfully discriminate against people with disabilities? If so how?</p> <p>(iv) Can the policy/procedure be seen to favour one section of the community or deny opportunities to another? If yes, give details.</p> <p>(v) Does the policy/procedure advance or restrict equality? If yes, give details.</p> |  |
| <p><b>Step 6</b></p> <p>Are there any other actions which could have been taken to enhance equality of opportunity? If so please state.</p>  |  |
| <p><b>Step 7</b></p> <p>Consider if any adverse impact can be justified. If yes, give details.</p>   |  |
| <p>If no, consider alternative ways of delivering the policy/procedure to minimise negative impact or eliminate unlawful discrimination. Give details of the changes to be made to the policy/procedure.</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Step 8</b></p> <p>Consult relevant stakeholders:</p> <p>(i) Internally</p> <p>(ii) Externally</p> <p>Describe stakeholders consulted.</p> <p>Indicate which methods of consultation were used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• constructive comments after circulation of documents</li> <li>• meetings</li> <li>• interviews</li> <li>• questionnaires</li> <li>• telephone survey</li> </ul>  |  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• on line survey</li> <li>• other (please state)</li> </ul> <p>If external consultants used, give details</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Step 9</b></p> <p>Consider if policy/procedure should be piloted first. If not, will the policy/procedure be adopted now?</p>  |  |
| <p><b>Step 10</b></p> <p>Make arrangements to monitor and review the impact.</p> <p>(i) Who will be responsible for monitoring?</p> <p>(ii) How will it be monitored and analysed?</p> <p>(iii) How often will the policy/procedure be reviewed and by whom?</p> |  |
| <p><b>Step 11</b></p> <p>Publish results of the Impact Assessment</p> <p>(i) How will the results be recorded and reported?</p>  |  |
| <p><b>Step 12</b></p> <p>Completion of impact assessment:</p> <p>Please complete the section below and forward to your Head of Service.</p>  |  |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>(Please Print)</b></p> <p>Date completed _____</p> <p>Completed by _____</p> <p>Policy Owner _____</p>   |  |
| <p>For additional information and advice please contact Doreen Phillips, Human Resources, tel 01307 473342, email <a href="mailto:PhillipsD@angus.gov.uk">PhillipsD@angus.gov.uk</a>.</p>  |  |

## ANGUS COUNCIL DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

### COMMUNITY CONSULTATION/INVOLVEMENT

As part of our duties under new disability legislation, we are looking for the involvement of people with disabilities in order to tailor services to best meet the needs of disabled people living in Angus.

As a starting point, we are looking for answers to the following questions:

- 1 Would you be prepared to be involved with us in respect of disability equality issues on an ongoing basis? If so, in what way?
  - Meetings
  - Receiving annual reports
  - Email
  - Other (please state)
  
- 2 How can we make it easier for you to tell us what you think about services?
  - Alternative formats
  - Plain English
  - Other (please state)
  
- 3 What kind of information do you need?

- 4 What would make it easier for you to use our services?
  
- 5 What should we do to encourage people who are disabled to come and work for us?
  
- 6 List things that you feel Angus Council should change in order to meet your needs?
  
- 7 List anything that you feel the Council is doing well and should not change.

Please respond to Doreen Phillips, Human Resources, County Buildings, Market Street, Forfar DD8 3LG, email [PhillipsD@angus.gov.uk](mailto:PhillipsD@angus.gov.uk), tel 01307 473342.