

ANGUS COUNCIL
DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

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DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

Angus Council is delighted to introduce our latest Disability Equality Scheme (“the Scheme”), covering the period up to 2012.

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 2012 (**Appendix G**). 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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1 INTRODUCTION

Background

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 amended the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA). The DDA 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 DDA (as amended), Angus Council, as a public 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. This is called the Disability Equality Duty ('the duty'). The duty places two types of duty on public authorities, namely the General Duty and the Specific Duty as detailed further below.

The duty imports the concept of mainstreaming disability rights issues into public authority decision-making and requires the involvement of people with, or affected by, disabilities in improving council policies and service delivery. 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 members of society'. ('Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People') The Scheme was developed with the involvement of services users and employees with disabilities, relevant voluntary organisations and carers. The Scheme also explains how Angus Council as a public authority, will promote equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

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 public authority required to comply with the duty, 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 DDA places a General Duty on public authorities to have 'due regard' to the need to:

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

This last point recognises that equality of opportunity cannot simply 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.

Angus Council is expected to have 'due regard' to the General Duty. '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 involving people with disabilities.

The Specific Duties

The council, in addition to being subject to the General Duty, must also 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 the following:

- a) A statement of 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 Education Authorities to prepare a separate Disability Equality Scheme, for schools. This is available separately through the Education Department. If you wish a copy, please contact the ACCESSline on: 08452 777 778.

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 the duty 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 initiatives undertaken in some services, as detailed in Appendix H, Service Developments, and in the progress of our action plan (Appendix G).

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

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.

It is also important to be aware of the disability related demographics as follows:

i. *Population*

Out of an Angus population of 108,400, 18.56% of the population has a limiting long term illness. This covers any long-term illness, health problem or disability which limits daily activities or work.¹ This reflects national statistics which state the overall proportion of people reporting a disability and/or a long term illness and disability is 18%.²

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 equated 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 number of people reporting a disability increases with age and most sharply for those in older age groups.

ii. *Households*

Nationally, in 2005, 29% of households containing at least one member with a limiting long term illness, resided in a property rented from the Local Authority/Scottish Homes, compared to just 11% of households containing no members with a limiting long term illness.

The Scottish Household Survey estimates that 32% of households containing at least one member with a limiting long term illness reside in a property which is owned outright. This compares to 27% of households which contain no members with a limiting long term illness.³

iii. *Health and Caring*

In Angus, out of 1,839 home care 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.

¹ 2001 Census – KS08 – Health and Provision of Unpaid Care

² Scottish Household Survey – 2005 in Summary Report in High Level Summary of Equality Statistics – Key Trends for Scotland 2006

³ *ibid*

Nationally, since 2000, the number of residents in care homes for adults with learning disabilities has fallen by 24%. During the same period, the number of residents in care homes for adults with physical disabilities has also dropped by 33%. However, the number of residents in care homes for adults with mental health issues increased slightly by 3%.

From 2000 to 2005, the number of adults with learning disabilities receiving home care rose by 96%, and the number of adults with mental health issues receiving home care increased by 32%.

iv. Education and Training

Nationally, between 2001 and 2006, the number of higher education students with a disability increased by 67%, compared to an increase of 8% for students without a disability.

v. Labour Market Supply

Nationally, in 2006, the employment rate for adults without a disability is significantly higher than for adults with a disability: employment inactivity rates are almost four times as high for adults with a disability (48%), than for those without (13%).

In Angus Council, out of a total of 5,665 employees 1.7% had declared a disability, as at December 2008. The number of employees who stated they have a disability is well below the population estimate of people with a disability (18%). The low number may be as a result of employees' reluctance to declare a disability, or employees may not understand the definition of disability and consider that they do not have one.

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 updating the Policy, the council now 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. We oppose all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, age, sexual orientation, gender, 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 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. There have also been significant developments with the Angus Association of Voluntary Organisations, Angus Volunteer Centre, the Citizens' Advice Bureau, Angus College and other local authorities.

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 duty to promote 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 and the Scheme.

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 DDA (as amended) and other legislation
- Ensuring that companies applying for inclusion in select or approved lists, bidding for contracts and working under contracts 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 and reviewing the 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 (Section 7 of the Scheme)
- 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.
- Providing 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 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 enabling people rather than focusing on their disability.

To ensure we comply with the duty, we have developed an Action Plan (**Appendix G**), 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. From these interested parties, the council's Disability Forum emerged.

Questionnaires regarding the suitability of our service provision were also discussed with relevant stakeholders, including members of the Disability Forum.

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 corporate employee intranet to inform employees of the disability equality obligations, and to encourage employees with disabilities to be involved in the development of the Scheme. We have also requested volunteers from friends, family and carers of people with disabilities, and those interested in disability issues.

Through involvement with people with disabilities, we will ensure that we develop and maintain effective methods of communication and consultation with employees. Issues affecting employees are also raised and addressed through the council's Disability Forum, which meets regularly.

(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, functions and procedures, or their likely impact, on equality for people with disabilities. In 2007, the council adopted a combined equality assessment template for disability, gender and race.

Policies, functions 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, functions and practices do not disadvantage people with disabilities, and also to identify where equality of opportunity could be enhanced.

We recognise that undertaking an impact assessment should be a corporate responsibility, embedded within our culture and mainstreamed throughout the council.

We conduct several types of Equality Impact Assessments as follows:

- New/reviewed policies, practices or functions
- Existing policies, practices and functions.
- Committee Reports. Unless a report is a regular one, or technical in nature or similar, all committee reports are equality impact assessed, with effect from May 2009.
- Potential Budget Savings. Following guidance from the EHRC regarding proposed budget cuts, Equality Impact Assessments commenced in November 2008, and is undertaken annually for each proposed saving.

It may be necessary for the council, for example due to other legislation, and 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 Equalities Group will monitor any policies, functions or procedures which fall into this category.

We aim to complete all screening and impact assessments as part of the three year programme in 2010.

(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 our Equal Opportunities Policy which is attached as Appendix E.

We aim to adhere to the terms of that Code of Practice in implementing the duty.

(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 in implementing the duty.

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.

1.5 Procurement

Although the Specific Duties do not override other laws or regulations in public procurement, procurement may be relevant to the duty to promote equality in regard to:

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

We will:

- revise standard contracts to require that suppliers are compliant with equality legislation
- ensure potential contractors are aware that any service they provide must be without unlawful discrimination
- revise contracts and service level agreements to require service providers to be compliant with equality legislation. New suppliers will be made aware that any service they provide must promote equal opportunities.
- 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 the Duties.

Angus Council's Corporate Procurement Strategy 2007-2011 and the Tayside Procurement Strategy 2008-2011 both refer to the council's policy commitment to supporting its equality and diversity duties in its procurement activity. Contractor's compliance will be checked in two ways:

Prior to contract award – by asking equalities questions and if responses do not satisfy the council's criteria, the firm may not be short listed or awarded the contract.

After contract award – by including contract conditions on equality in all council contracts, and by monitoring a contractor's performance and compliance with those conditions.

Certain departments/divisions (notably Roads and Property) utilise industry standard procurement documentation, which make their own provision for equalities issues.

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, we are committed to ensuring more comprehensive disability monitoring to assess our performance in relation to key aspects of employment.

A range of reports is available regarding employees and disabilities, and the most recent figures are available at <http://www.angus.gov.uk/ac/documents/employmentmonitoringstats09.pdf> Monitoring reports will not include any individual's personal details and confidentiality is a priority. The information is only be used to create statistical data.

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. By 2008 we had conducted an employee survey to gain more accurate information, by asking employees to complete a confidential monitoring form, explaining what disability means and how the information would be used for statistical purposes only. The response to the survey resulted in the number of employees declaring a disability more than doubled.

The council uses 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.

(ii) Recruitment

We are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all applicants for employment including employees with a disability.

In respect of disability equality, the council 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 a candidate meets the minimum essential criteria for a job, people with disabilities will be guaranteed an interview for a council post.

Angus Council's Department of Social Work and Health have a specialist Supported Employment Team who assist and support people who have a learning disability into work. The Team provide work tasters, work experience placements, vocational training and in to paid employment. The Supported Employment Team is currently piloting an initiative within Social Work and Health which promotes the employment of people who have a learning disability. This includes promoting the concept of a working interview which removes some of the barriers to gaining employment. The Team also works closely with Job Centre Plus, Access to Work and other employment agencies.

We are committed to taking more action 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. Alterations are provided to improve physical access.

Any employee who feels a reasonable adjustment is necessary, can raise the matter initially with their line manager at any time. It may be necessary for the council's Medical Adviser to give advice, or for the EU to become involved, but all requests will be investigated. In 2009, as a result of a recommendation from the council's disability forum, it was agreed that for an employee with a progressive condition in particular, any employee could request, as a minimum, an annual assessment of their needs, due to the potential for a change in reasonable adjustments required.

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. From 2010, the course will involve people with disabilities.

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

- Induction – there is now e-induction which includes a substantial section on equalities
- 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 raising disability awareness by developing a section on equalities on the council's website, as part of our action plan.

7 COMPLAINTS

While the council will do its best to meet the duties placed upon it under the DDA (as amended) 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. A formal response will be given within 10 days. If a response cannot be given within that time, the complainant will be notified and given the reason for the delay, and when a response can be provided.
- Stage 2 If at the end of stage one the complainant is not satisfied, 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.

Under the duty, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) can take legal action against the council where we have failed to carry out our responsibilities under the duty, by issuing compliance notices. Along with individual disabled people, the EHRC can also challenge the council's failure to meet the general duty by seeking a judicial review in the Court of Session in Scotland.

8 ACTION PLAN

As part of this Scheme, we have adopted an action plan for the next three years.

Responsibility for the action plan lies with the council's Corporate Equalities Group, consisting of senior employees from each council department, and members are ultimately responsible for monitoring that individual departments are fulfilling their targets as stated in the action plan.

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

Appendix G outlines our action plan for the period up to 2012.

9 REPORTING ON PROGRESS

Appendix F outlines actions completed during 2006-2009. An annual report on progress against the action plan will be submitted to our Strategic Policy Committee and placed on the council's website (www.angus.gov.uk).

10 REVIEW OF SCHEME

This Disability Equality Scheme covers the period up to 2012. The scheme is a living document and will reflect the changes in circumstances or further legislation which occurs.

Defining Disability

The aim of the DDA is to prevent discrimination of people who would generally be regarded as having a disability. This is why the DDA 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 DDA: 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 (Appendix C).

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 (Section 7 of the Scheme).

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.

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.

APPENDIX F

DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME ACTION PLAN 2006 – 2009; COMPLETED ACTIONS

| Action | How we will do it | How will we know we have done it? | By when | What we hope to achieve | Lead Department | Progress |
|--|--|---|---------------|--|----------------------|---|
| Equality Impact Assessments | | | | | | |
| Implement the reviewed template which includes the three strands (race, disability and gender) | Ensure all managers completing the new template are trained in the process | Impact Assessments training completed | Autumn 2009 | Implement an appropriate impact assessment of policies and procedures when created or reviewed | All | Dept equalities groups have been established to ensure these are taken forward on a consistent basis. |
| Ensure elected members are fully aware of their responsibilities regarding impact assessments of proposed budget savings | Training provided by the Equalities Officer | Training completed | November 2009 | Ensure elected members understand the legislative requirements under the equality Duties | Chief Executive's | Committee report produced Nov 2009, which detailed legislation and their responsibilities |
| Publish the outcomes from the assessment | For committee reports: on website | Assessments published | 2009 | Results published for feedback | Chief Executive's | Completed |
| Communication | | | | | | |
| Improve communication between the council and members of the public. | Ensure language is free from jargon | Literature is easily understood | | Improved service to members of the public including those with hearing impairments, learning disabilities, young people, older people etc, who wish to contact the council. Crystal Mark for publications | Social Work & Health | A number of Social Work & Health publications in particular, are already Crystal Marked. |
| 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 2010 | Encourage involvement to help the council achieve its disability equality aims. | Chief Executive's | Completed |

| Action | How we will do it | How will we know we have done it? | By when | What we hope to achieve | Lead Department | Progress |
|--|--|--|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------|--|
| 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 e.g. Angus Access Panel, Learning Disability Team etc | Updated Strategy | March 2010 | Strategy including targets for the next ten years to meet the needs of public transport users | Infrastructure Services | Completed |
| Integration of public transport requirements for people with learning disabilities with local bus service provision and increase patronage | Liaison with officers from Social Work & Health, people with learning disabilities and their parents and carers to identify and integrate public transport requirements. Existing services continue to be well used and the project extends across Angus | Availability of bus services and journeys being undertaken by people with learning disabilities | 2009 | Increased Independent travel for people with learning disabilities | Infrastructure Services | Completed |
| Employment | | | | | | |
| 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 | | As above | Chief Executive's | Completed |
| Employees with disabilities who are on sick leave continue to feel valued | Train managers in absence procedures | Feedback from employees | 2009 | Improved morale | Chief Executive's | A significant increase in the number of managers already trained and mainly positive feedback from questionnaire |
| 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 2010 | Retention of skilled employees | Chief Executive's | Managers trained |
| Develop support mechanisms offered to employees with disabilities | Obtain employees' views through advisory forum Forum recommended minimum annual reviews be offered to people with disabilities | Increased numbers requesting reasonable adjustments or more flexible working hours Article in Angus Matters, and memo to managers issued. Reviews take place | Summer 2009 Spring 2010 | Increase in morale. Greater employee involvement Identify additional support needs/further reasonable adjustments if employees have progressive disabilities | Chief Executive's | Achieved |

| Action | How we will do it | How will we know we have done it? | By when | What we hope to achieve | Lead Department | Progress |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|---------|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| Communication | | | | | | |
| Promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities | Use positive images of people with disabilities in publicity | Widely promoted | Ongoing | People with disabilities seen in a positive light | All | Completed but in Leisure, the active development of people with disabilities is being pursued. In Print & Design, the selection of positive images by customers is encouraged |
| Procurement | | | | | | |
| Equality Officers involvement with Tayside Procurement Group | Angus, Dundee and Perth & Kinross Officers to establish a short-term working group | Feedback into Tayside Group | 2009 | A consistent approach agreed by all 3 councils | Chief Executive's/Corporate Services | First meeting held in 2009. Meetings now ongoing. |
| Service Delivery | | | | | | |
| Establish monitoring systems for people with disabilities, and share data from monitoring already in place | Collate information on users of our services wherever possible | Data available to produce report | 2009 | Information to assist in the most appropriate delivery of services to people with disabilities | All | Systems are in place. Data is collected as part of ongoing self-evaluation within Social Work and Health. All areas provide and analyse data to inform the effective delivery of services. In Housing, the single share assessment is a holistic approach to the needs of the vulnerable and homeless, enabling the council to provide a single gateway with referral on to appropriate service providers. People with disabilities are benefiting significantly through this process. Figures will be published when available. |

| Action | How we will do it | How will we know we have done it? | By when | What we hope to achieve | Lead Department | Progress |
|---|---|---|------------|---|-------------------------|--|
| Provide contracted local bus services using vehicles meeting the DDA requirements | Tender for the provision of vehicles to this standard, subject to budgetary constraints | DDA compliant vehicles being used on contracts | March 2009 | Improved accessibility to vehicles by people with mobility issues | Infrastructure Services | Completed |
| Improve roads including developer led schemes | Carry out improvements to the existing road network e.g. 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 | Infrastructure Services | Roads standards include requirements for disabled access, dropped kerbs, tactile paving etc. In addition, the Roads Division has utilised some £230K of Regional Transport Partnership funding in 2006/07 to 2007/08 to provide dropped closings and tactile paving at numerous locations throughout Angus. This programme will continue. |
| Review pedestrian crossings | Comply with relevant legislation and national guidance when designing road improvements, pedestrian crossings etc | As above | Ongoing | As above | Infrastructure Services | Report 95/08 detailed proposals for the assessment and provision of pedestrian crossings, which takes into account national best practice on issues such as mobility-impaired users. During 2007/08, two new crossings were proposed, Barry Road and Keptie Street, recognising use by people with disabilities |
| Raise awareness of the problems of dog fouling for people with disabilities | Publish article in newsletters. | Article published | 2009 | Less dog fouling in public areas | Chief Executive's | Completed |
| | | | | | | |

| Action | How we will do it | How will we know we have done it? | By when | What we hope to achieve | Lead Department | Progress |
|--|--|--|---------|---|--|-----------------|
| Physical Access | | | | | | |
| 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 | 2009 | Improved access and to meet standards | Corporate Services | System in place |
| Audit of parking at bus stops | To be tackled by audit of yellow 'boxes' and providing more at problem locations after consultation with Tayside Police | Audit completed | 2009 | An improvement in the overall accessibility of bus stops | Bus boxes installed where issues identified. | Completed |
| Railway stations | Working with TACTRAN Regional Transport Partnership, Transport Scotland and Network Rail to provide disabled access for passengers at Montrose railway station. | Successful transfer of northbound train services to southbound platform, removing the need to cross bridge | 2009 | Improved accessibility to train services by mobility impaired people and wheelchair user passengers | Infrastructure Services | Completed |
| | Improvements already undertaken at Carnoustie and Arbroath (improved parking for people with disabilities, Arbroath provision of passenger lifts to all platforms) and CCTV provision | Increasing facilities for people with disabilities | 2010 | Improved access and security | Infrastructure Services | Completed |

APPENDIX G

DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME ACTION PLAN ⇒ 2012

| What we will do | How we will do it | How will we know we have done it? | By when | What we hope to achieve | Lead Department | Progress |
|--|--|--|---------|---|---|----------|
| Leadership | | | | | | |
| Ensure that there is a systematic management regime in place in each department | Via the corporate Equalities Group | Actions will be identified, monitored and reported on, regarding the implementation of departmental action plans | 2010 | Accountability at a departmental level | Chief Executive's with corporate Equality Group members | |
| Establish 'equalities champions' in each service | Via the corporate Equalities Group | Equality issues in the business processes for each service highlighted | 2010 | To effectively integrate equality into mainstream policy management, and service delivery processes | Chief Executive's with corporate Equality Group members | |
| Procurement | | | | | | |
| Review current Procurement Guidance to reflect equality legislation | Tayside Procurement Forum to agree guidance as necessary | Guidance document amended | 2010 | Ensure contractors/supervisors aware of equalities legislation | Corporate Services with Chief Executive's | |
| 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 | 2010 | Proactive promotion of equality within organisations providing services to and on behalf of the council | Corporate Services | |
| Procurement employees aware of Equality Duties | Provide training to relevant employees to ensure their awareness of the legislation and their responsibilities | Prepare briefing material and deliver training | 2010 | Increased equalities knowledge and practical application of procurement | Corporate Services | |

| What we will do | How we will do it | How will we know we have done it? | By when | What we hope to achieve | Lead Department | Progress |
|--|--|--|-------------|---|-------------------|---|
| Impact Assessment | | | | | | |
| Complete the programme of impact assessing relevant policies, procedures and functions | Using combined template for screening or for completing a full impact assessment | Impact Assessments completed | 2010 | Meet our legislative obligations | All | |
| Publish the outcomes from the assessment | For policies and functions; in three-yearly report and on website once equalities section developed. | Assessments published | 2010 | Results published for feedback | Chief Executive's | Ongoing when assessments have been completed |
| Employment | | | | | | |
| Improve monitoring and recording of employment data | Review process of recording statistical information in relation to applicants to the council since the introduction of the national jobs' portal | Through the accurate retention of statistical information which meets legislative requirements | Summer 2010 | Alignment of data for all equality strands Accurate data to ensure employment policies are effective and eliminate unlawful discrimination | Chief Executive's | |
| Ensure we have accurate data regarding employees with disabilities | By distribution of a questionnaire to all employees | Volume of response received | 2010 | Greater recruitment and retention of people with disabilities | Chief Executive's | |
| Positive promotion of job opportunities within Angus Council | Review job outlines to ensure unnecessary criteria are removed | More people with disabilities enquiring about employment | Summer 2010 | More applications from people with disabilities | Chief Executive's | Ongoing. It is recognised from that more work still needs to be done to increase the numbers of people with disabilities, and ethnic minorities applying for, and succeeding, in attaining employment with the council. |

| What we will do | How we will do it | How will we know we have done it? | By when | What we hope to achieve | Lead Department | Progress |
|---|--|---|---------------|---|---|---|
| Adapt the working environment and accessibility to suit the needs of employees with disabilities to ensure maximum recruitment and retention. | Increase awareness of reasonable adjustment options | Increase advice regarding reasonable adjustments and the number of adjustments made | Summer 2010 | Increase in levels of job satisfaction for employees with disabilities, who are able to work to their potential | Chief Executive's Corporate Services | Achieved and ongoing. Feedback from 2007 employee questionnaire acted on |
| Increase employee awareness of disability issues | Review Disability Awareness training Train people with disabilities to deliver some disability awareness training | Deliver training with any amendments | December 2010 | More relevant training especially for front-line employees | Chief Executive's | |
| Communication | | | | | | |
| Report on progress of Disability Equality Scheme annually | Via the corporate Equalities Group | Production of targets achieved | Annually | Assessment of progress and identification of any remedial actions needed | Chief Executive's | |
| Improve communication between the council and members of the public. | 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. | Receive AAA level accreditation | Ongoing | Ensure people with disabilities can access information effectively | Corporate Services | Shaw Trust conducts automated tests to confirm accessibility. |
| | Typetalk introduced and SMS texting is under investigation. Feedback from Disability Forum | Both have been introduced | 2010 | Improved service to members of the public including those with hearing impairments, learning disabilities, young people, older people etc, who wish to contact the council. | Neighbourhood Services | Meetings have taken place, but further action pending in respect of SMS texting |
| Review council code of practice on consultation and involvement | Ensure code is relevant and meaningful to a diverse range of people | Amendments required if necessary | 2010 | Ensure consultation process allows equal access of people with different types of disabilities, ethnicities and genders to participate | Chief Executive's | |
| Enable people with disabilities to communicate at all reception points | Train receptionists in communication skills | Training delivered | November 2010 | Better access to services | | Ongoing. Some training in sign language already undertaken |

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|-----------------------|--|------------------------|---|
| | Provide specialist equipment, to supplement hearing induction loops | Audit of relevant areas Portable hearing loops made available if requested | | | Neighbourhood Services | Outstanding reception areas requiring induction loops information sent to Property to include in disability plans |
| | Provide an effective interpreter | Review service provision. Ensure electronic information on intranet is accurate | | | Chief Executive's | |
| Involve People | | | | | | |
| Involve people with disabilities, in the decision-making process | Develop Disability Forum | Record meetings and contacts made | Ongoing | Ensure relevant stakeholders are fully involved in decisions affecting them | Chief Executive's | Ongoing |
| Attempt to assess the level of harassment and barriers experienced by disabled people | Involve people with disabilities through questionnaires and sharing information with partners Develop hate crime remote reporting | Data collated Council is a remote reporting site | 2010 | Identify problems and seek to address them | Chief Executive's | Questionnaires were issued and work is ongoing |
| Consultative meetings to be held in accessible venues | Utilise current accessibility data for council buildings | List of acceptable venues | Ongoing | To ensure accessibility of venues for people with disabilities | Corporate Services | Ongoing |
| Engage with Angus Access Panel to ensure that significant projects are subject to their advice | A set of project drawings is 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 | Annually | Implementation of best practice, local needs and effective partnership working | Corporate Services | Ongoing |
| 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 | Corporate Services | Achieved and ongoing |
| Service Delivery | | | | | | |
| 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 | Social Work & Health | Care group strategies which monitor and guide the future development of services are in place and are updated annually. |
| Provide demand | Survey users in defined local areas to | Services will be operated to meet the | Ongoing | Strategy including | Infrastructure | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|------------------------------|--|---|---|
| responsive services to meet the needs of specific users e.g. Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) | identify needs, such as those conducted in Glenisla and the rural hinterland to the north-west of Arbroath | demand identified assuming they are within budgetary constraints, and represent best value. | | targets for the next ten years to meet the needs of male and female public transport users, and those with specific needs | Services | |
| Review disabled car parking provision in light of 2009 legislation. | Consult with Angus Access Panel and Disability Forum where appropriate | As above | 2010 | As above | Infrastructure Services Corporate Services | |
| Audits of proposed road schemes | By ensuring that the needs of people with disabilities are catered for | Audits completed | 2010 | Remedial action taken where appropriate. | Infrastructure Services | Audit being developed |
| Review leisure facilities in light of the new legislation Promote leisure pursuits for people with disabilities | Involve people with disabilities and Access Panel in assessing the suitability of facilities provided Via the Disability Forum | Physical adaptations made or amended processes in place Awareness of leisure pursuits raised | Ongoing 2009 | Equality of opportunity to leisure services which meet the needs of people with disabilities wherever possible Disabled people able to participate in outdoor pursuits (eg lochside walks with rangers) | Neighbourhood Services | The ongoing investments in improving access through the DDA plan actioned through Property Services. Still work to be done in terms of access to facilities at first floor level across Sports and Culture. |
| Raise awareness of the problems of dog fouling for people with disabilities | Request reference made to issue in Dog Warden's booklet. | Booklet amended | 2011 | Less dog fouling in public areas | Chief Executive's | Awaiting review of booklet |
| Physical Access | | | | | | |
| Improve access onto buses | Subject to funding and financial regulations, operate contracted services with low floor, wheelchair accessible vehicles | An increase in the number of this type of vehicle on council contracts | March 2010 | An increase in this type of vehicle on council contracts | Infrastructure Services | Ongoing |
| 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 by low floor wheelchair accessible vehicles. | Bus stops provided to meet DDA requirements. An increase in bus stops with raised | March 2011 March 2011 | Increase in the number of bus stops with bus boarders easing access to buses | Infrastructure Services | . |

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|-------|--|------------------------------------|--|--|
| | Construct additional raised kerbs on the strategic Monifieth-Arbroath corridor to complement the 125 already in place across Angus. Dropped kerbs are also associated in these locations. | kerbs | | Increase in number of raised kerbs | | |
|--|---|-------|--|------------------------------------|--|--|

Social Work & Health:

(i) In September 2008 a physical disabilities collaborative event was held to consult on what the priorities for physical disabilities service improvement should be. It was also an opportunity to establish a wider reference group for physical disabilities. Particularly, it was intended to reach people whose voices are not often heard due to the degree of difficulty in accessing “mainstream” consultation events.

In order for outcomes and targets to be set, we needed to know what the priorities are for people who use or have used our services, so that the focus could be on the aspects of the services that would have most impact. 120 people were invited from statutory and voluntary organisations, people with physical disabilities and carers/supporters. An effort was made to invite as many or more people with disabilities and carers/supporters than professionals in order that their voices could be heard. Ninety delegates attended a fully accessible venue.

The vision for people with disabilities in Angus is:

- People are involved and included in their own communities
- People are supported to take control of their own lives, and manage their own conditions
- People with complex needs are enabled to live safely and independently in their own homes wherever possible

From previous consultations, ten themes were identified (see below).

The Ten Themes:

- ACCESS TO SERVICES
- SELF MANAGEMENT
- CARERS/SUPPORTERS
- MEANINGFUL ACTIVITY
- COMPLEX HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE NEEDS
- WORKING TOGETHER
- TRANSITIONS
- CARE AT HOME
- INDEPENDENT MOBILITY
- REHABILITATION

We asked people to be specific about the changes they would like to see. From people's "stories" and experiences, lessons will be learned about what needs to change to ensure that people get a quality service which meets their needs.

(ii) The department has also been winners of the Angus Council Excellence Awards in 2007 and 2008 with two projects. In 2007, this was a project in partnership with transport which aimed to improve access to public transport for people with a learning disability. In 2008, the winner was a bio-diverse garden project which engaged with the local community to promote public awareness and reduce the stigma associated with learning disability. This project was also awarded a silver medal at a national gardening competition.

(iii) All Social Work & Health operational instructions have been reviewed and re-issued in July 2008. The reviewed instructions have taken into account issues relating to disability, gender or race.

(iv) In respect of progressing redesign of services for people with learning disabilities, the final resettlement of long stay patients with learning disabilities and the enhancement of service provision for young people with profound and multiple learning disabilities, have both been completed during 2007/08. The review of commissioning arrangements for private and voluntary providers for people with learning disabilities, has also been completed.

(v) In employment-related issues:

- Recruitment and selection training was provided to people with learning disabilities (9 service users have been involved in interviewing for 24 posts)
- People with learning disabilities were included on interview panels for staff in learning disability services
- A system whereby posts can be considered for job carving to allow part time employment opportunities to be developed for people with learning disabilities was introduced
- An employment support service for people with learning disabilities which includes support to become job ready, support to make applications, and support once in employment was provided.

(vi) Information in pictures and signs has been produced.

(vii) Support has been given to the Recruit volunteers with disabilities to volunteer within social work services.

(viii) The development of an organisation for people with learning disabilities who wish to speak on behalf of people with learning disabilities and become active citizens has been supported.

(ix) Respite care arrangements for people with progressive neurological disabilities was reviewed in 2007/08.

(x) The council became part of the DisabledGo network, which provides people with disabilities information, via a website, regarding premises and their accessibility. Buildings etc in Angus are included, and in 2009, following a review, the number of premises listed was increased.

Chief Executive's:

The Department is the operational base for the council's corporate equalities support. The work during 2007/08 focused on continuing compliance with legislation as well as promoting equalities across the whole council. The department has led on various corporate disability initiatives during the last year, including:

- The establishment of a disability forum, covering a wide range of disabilities, and involving carers groups, individuals with disabilities, disability organisations, and relevant officers of the council. This group drives forward disability action plans, helps us investigate harassment experienced by people with disabilities, and the barriers people with disabilities face in respect of public life.

A questionnaire was issued to members of the disability forum and high priority areas members felt the council should focus on included:

- (i) increasing the provision of parking spaces for people with disabilities
- (ii) increasing gym capacity for people with disabilities, especially as a result of GP referrals
- (iii) working to educate children and young people about disability issues, and encourage their involvement with people with different types of disabilities

Members also felt it was important for the council to listen directly to people with disabilities, and as a consequence, meetings will take place at a local level with several specific disability groups.

- The establishment of a voluntary sector equalities forum, including representation from disability groups as well as gender, race and other under-represented groups. The aim of the forum is to look at equalities' priorities, review the equality action plans, and be used to develop a single equality scheme for the council. The forum also facilitates the sharing of good practice as well as opening additional channels for community involvement, consultation and research.
- Issuing a questionnaire on disability to all employees and investigating relevant issues raised. The aim is to work with those employees who have volunteered to become involved in progressing workplace issues.
- Ensuring DeafBlind training was provided and open to all employees to apply for it.
- Reviewing the recruitment manual and contents of the training course to ensure that managers are more aware of their responsibilities to disabled people in respect of essential and desirable criteria when recruiting for posts.

Infrastructure Services:

From the Disability Scheme's action plan, the following is reported:

- (i) ***Review Public Transport Information Strategy***

This review will now be undertaken in 2009/2010 and will still involve key service users such as the Learning Disabilities team from Social Work & Health and the Angus ACCESS Panel. The outcome of the review will set deliverable targets up until 2020 in the provision of public transport information.

(ii) *Integration of public transport requirements for people with learning disabilities with local bus service provision*

Public transport requirements have been integrated into local service provision in Montrose, Forfar and Arbroath. The service provision is now considered an integral part of the Angus local bus service network. The project was the recipient of an Angus Council Excellence Award in 2007.

The Division's work with Social Work and Health staff to integrate the public transport requirements of people with learning disabilities and to encourage independent public transport use continued in 2009. In late May, Planning and Transport and Social Work and Health staff attended a review of healthcare services for people with learning disabilities; this was organised by the NHS Scotland Quality Improvement Service Council staff explained the work that had been done and were highly commended in the Improvement Service's subsequent report.

(iii) *Service Delivery*

Provide contracted local bus services by vehicles meeting the DDA requirements

The Transport Team continue to tender for DDA/DpTAC compliant vehicles and award contracts subject to budgetary constraints.

Local bus operator Stagecoach Strathtay has a fleet renewal programme in place and older vehicles are being replaced over time with low floor, wheelchair accessible vehicles on both tendered and commercial services.

Provide services tailored to meet the needs of specific users e.g. demand responsive services

The consultation referred to in the 2006-2009 Action Plan was carried out and a demand responsive service introduced based on the information provided.

Further consultation has since taken place in Glenisla and the rural area to the north of Arbroath where revised local bus services were introduced as a result in August 2007.

The Transport Team will continue to consult in this way where appropriate.

Process concessionary travel applications for blind persons

This is still done by the Transport Team on an on-going basis.

(iv) **Physical Access**

Bus Access

The Transport Team continue to tender for DDA/DpTAC compliant vehicles and award contracts subject to budgetary constraints.

On-bus surveys were carried out in 2009 on every local bus service contract in Angus in order to identify travel patterns, journey purpose and also the particular transport needs of people with disabilities. The results of these surveys will help shape the future supported local bus service network and allow the Division, where budgets permit, to respond to such needs.

Bus Stops

In early 2009, Planning and Transport staff worked in partnership with colleagues in both the Roads Division and from BEAR Scotland to deliver additional raised kerbs at bus stops. This work meant that in total, 324 bus stops across the local authority area were equipped with these kerbs, which was 41% of all fixed stops in our local authority area. A further 53 sites are expected to have raised kerbs installed by late March 2010, including key stops on the Forfar – Friockheim – Arbroath corridor. Kerbs are also in place at other well used stops across the local authority area.

Neighbourhood Services:

(i) In *Cultural Services*, key aspects of the refurbishment of the Webster Theatre in Arbroath were disabled access and facilities' improvements.

(ii) In *Leisure*, there have been developments in the council's Disability Sports programme. In 2008, through the council's disability forum, awareness was raised regarding the availability of countryside rangers to guide people with disabilities around designated areas in the Angus countryside.

(iii) In *Housing*, in Year 2007/08 the budget for Aids and Adaptations was £405K and the budget for complex extensions etc was £80K. Actual spends were £405K and £133K respectively.

The £405 K was spent as follows :

External Ramp – 15, External Step Alterations – 19, Handrails – 44, Door Entry Systems – 9, Internal Door Alterations – 5, Door Threshold Alterations – 17, Closomat Toilets – 2, Easy Access Shower – 8, Over Bath Shower – 8, Level Access Shower – 72, Lever Taps – 21, Hard of Hearing Smoke Alarms – 5, Miscellaneous Alterations- 42

The £133K was spent as follows :

Bedroom Extension and Ensuite at a property in Carnoustie
New Ramp, Specialist Kitchen, Shower Room and Carer Room at one property in Montrose
Specialist Kitchen Extension and Ensuite bathroom at another property in Montrose.

(iv) In 2008 the Typetalk service was introduced in the council to enable people with hearing impairments to communicate more easily with us if they have text phone. Use of SMS texting is under investigation to allow further choice for people with disabilities and also to promote integration with the wider population, due to the increasing usage of text messaging generally.

Corporate Services:

(i) In addition to the statutory review of all polling stations in 2007 to ensure the accessibility needs of people with disabilities were met when designating polling places, the needs of the community were addressed for election purposes in a number of ways. These included: providing large hand held ballot papers, leaflets in Braille and Makaton, voting devices for people with visual impairments, and guidance notes for employees dealing with people with hearing impairments. Disability issues were also discussed during training sessions held with all polling staff.

(ii) A review of disabled parking facilities at Angus House, the council's main administrative headquarters, was completed in 2007/08.

Education:

Good progress was made on all priority action points within the Education Department Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan.

(i) Involving Disabled People

A Disability Focus Group was established to inform and monitor the promotion of Disability Equality within the Education Department. The intended outcome being, that education policies, processes and planned activities would be informed, influenced and monitored by the people who are most likely to be affected by them.

The Accessibility Strategy Group (ASG) was established at the beginning of 2007. Membership of the group was drawn largely from the broadly-based steering group which produced the Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan and supplemented by other representatives. A very particular focus of the ASG has been its involvement in the development of six new primary schools and one secondary school as part of the Council's PPP development. In addition, the ASG has been closely involved in three separate capital projects – the building of three replacement primary schools – Newtyle, Seaview and Tealing.

Procedures have been established to gather the opinions of those affected by disability. This has included the use of VIEWPOINT. Good working links have been established with the Access Panel Angus.

(ii) Impact Assessments

To support the implementation of impact assessment, a series of specific meetings took place in respect of individual pupils and staff members. All meetings are multi-agency and have a clear emphasis on solution-focused outcomes. This task is ongoing, and results will be incorporated in a new unified equalities policy. Arrangements have been made to train key staff in the more rigorous use of impact assessment processes.

(iii) Employment

The employment policies, practices and procedures of the Education Department are all carefully designed to avoid any unfair discrimination.

(iv) Communication

Arrangements are in place to publish regular departmental bulletins to offer information on the progress of the action plan and highlight legislation.

(v) Service Delivery

Education staff regularly monitor the effectiveness of schools in complying with their responsibilities. School progress in meeting the general duty is reported annually. This matter has now become a routine item in discussions between Head Teachers and Quality Improvement Officers. The admissions, attendance, exclusions and attainment of disabled pupils is recorded and monitored through the central management information system.

A positive attitude towards disabled people is actively promoted throughout the school curriculum and in choices of resources. This continues to be a focus for improvement. Disability and race related bullying is identified and addressed in school anti-bullying procedures. Recording of bullying incidents is being reviewed to consider a wider range of equalities issues.

(vi) Buildings Access

Those affected by disability are routinely involved in planning for adaptation to existing buildings and for new buildings. Good working links have been established with all relevant agencies and particular attention is given to pupils and parents throughout the process. Work is in progress to ensure all school buildings and properties meet British Standard 8300.

(vii) Procurement and Partnerships

All service level agreements include accessibility and equality requirements. Service level agreements place obligations on providers to comply with all statutory requirements.

(vii) Disability Equality Scheme/Unified Equality Scheme

The Department's Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan were both developed and published in December 2006. A short-life working group was established to complete a unified equality scheme. The Department's Single Equality Scheme was endorsed by committee in June 2009.