

Disability Action Plan 2016-21: Six-monthly update - November 2020

1. Staff Training

Action Measure	Planned outcome/measurement	Origin of Measure	Progress update
1(a) Ensure staff receive training and guidance on disability equality legislation and disability awareness	Design or acquire online e-disability training for staff through the Assembly's Moodle system.	Builds upon a previous action with new measures added.	<p>Lead: Learning and Development Team By when: May 2017 Status: Overdue</p> <p>The L&D team is awaiting the development of a joint e-learning module between the NICS and CAL for delivery on the LInKs platform which Secretariat staff can access. This module will cover section 75 and DDA awareness for staff. The Equality Unit has been involved in this work since 2018 when they redrafted the NICS section 75 and DDA training content to ensure it was up to date for Secretariat staff. Content revisions were issued to the NICS E-Learning working group in 2019. Presently CAL is working with partners to take the revised training forward, although system delays in the NICS and COVID-19 restrictions have delayed this work. As an interim measure, the L&D team is now working with the Equality Manager to develop an e-learning awareness programme for delivery on the Moodle platform. It should be noted that all staff will be undertaking Dignity at Work e-learning training before December 2020 which will build a foundation for further work on disability awareness.</p>
	Mandatory training provided to all staff following establishment of e-disability training programme.	Builds upon a previous measure	<p>Lead: Learning and Development Team By when: Sept 2017</p>

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			<p>Status: Overdue</p> <p>Following development of the e-learning module, all staff will be required to undertake the training and a quiz will be developed to demonstrate understanding. The revised timeline for this action is January 2021, however this is based on CAL introducing the e-learning programme into the NICS system.</p>
	Monitoring of records to ensure that each member of staff receives training	Builds upon a previous measure	<p>Lead: Learning and Development Team By when: Sept-Dec 2016 Status: Overdue</p> <p>All e-learning completed on Moodle will be logged and grades awarded to the quiz. All staff will be required to obtain an 80% pass rate. The revised timeline for this action is February 2021.</p>
	All staff made aware of the revised Equality Scheme and Disability Action Plan through e-learning training and direct communication to staff via intranet and email. Key awareness messages delivered through a range of information materials, e.g., leaflets, flyers and posters.	Builds upon a previous measure	<p>Lead: Learning and Development Team and Equality and Good Relations Unit By when: Sept – Dec 2017 Status: Complete</p> <p>Training on Section 75 duties and an introduction to screening was delivered to all Heads of Business in December 2018/January 2019. The L&D team continue to highlight key Section 75 issues through a range of mediums including the Well-being Wednesday E-zine which has been issued 19 times during this reporting period. During the period of this report, a new health & wellbeing framework has been developed and associated resource pages have been created on AsslSt.</p>

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	Quality assurance of equality training packages and provision of feedback on any equality training courses.	Builds upon a previous measure	<p>Lead: Learning and Development Team By when: Jan – March 2018 Status: Complete</p> <p>The Equality Manager, L&D team and Head of HR provide quality assurance on all equality training courses. Evaluation data is collected from all courses to support further development.</p>
	Evaluate training to determine if course objectives were met and staff knowledge of the disability duties has increased through the staff iTrent system, through, for example, completed questionnaires.	Builds upon a previous measure	<p>Lead: Learning and Development Team By when: Jan – March 2018 Status: Complete</p>
	<p>Provide specific training sessions for staff on mental health issues. Examples of training programmes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Building Personal Resilience; ○ Mood Matters; and ○ Living Life to the Full. 	Builds upon a previous measure	<p>Lead: Learning and Development Team By when: Ongoing Status: Complete</p> <p>The Assembly Commission has seventeen staff trained as Mental Health First Aiders to recognise the symptoms and signs associated with mental health problems and signpost staff to the appropriate support. During the period of this report, additional training was offered to all Mental Health First Aiders in relation to the psychological impact of COVID-19. Specific virtual training opportunities have also been highlighted to staff as part of the Health & Wellbeing E-Zines. These have been across a range of well-being areas including physical, psychological and social.</p>
	<p>Provide auditory and visual awareness programmes to front-line staff (2016-17) Provide opportunities for staff to obtain Level 1 sign language training (2016-17) Consider scope for provision of level 2 sign language training (2016-18)</p>	Builds upon a previous measure	<p>Lead: Learning and Development Team By when: See target dates in 'Planned outcome/measurement' column Status: Complete</p>

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	<p>Provide a masterclass for staff to improve their skills in working with people with communication difficulties, with a focus on the needs of people with acquired brain injury</p>	<p>New measure</p>	<p>Lead: Learning and Development Team By when: 2016-17 Status: Complete The Masterclass was delivered in 2017 by Brain Injury Matters and was aimed at staff who wished to improve their skills in working with people who have communication difficulties. The session focused on the needs of people with Acquired Brain Injury (ABI), reviewed a range of ways in which people communicate and raised awareness to improve the effectiveness of communication with individuals with ABI.</p>
	<p>Deaf awareness training to be provided to all frontline staff as required. Autism awareness training to be provided to relevant staff, including refresher training for the Assembly's appointed Autism Champions as required. (See Louder Than Words Charter Mark and Access Award (NAS) Standards and at annexes 2 and 3)</p>	<p>Builds upon a previous measure</p>	<p>Lead: Learning and Development Team By when: As required Status: Complete Twenty-seven staff attended a masterclass on deaf awareness at the end of March 2017. The masterclass was open to all staff. Three staff completed BSL Level 3 in 2019. During the period of this report, all Assembly Autism Champions were offered virtual training on Autism through the FutureLearn site.</p>

2. Representation

Action Measure	Planned Outcome/Measurement	Origin of Measure	Progress update
<p>2(a) Continue to hold meetings of the external Disability Advisory Group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to hold meetings twice a year, or as agreed by the group. Review current membership with a view to developing a list of additional representatives to be invited to participate on the group. 	<p>Group established in 2009</p>	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit By when: Ongoing/September 2016 Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>The group has not met in recent years as agendas were limited over the period when the Assembly was not sitting. The last group meeting was due to be held in May 2017, but, given the lack of agenda items, and following correspondence with group members, a tour of the building was offered to members instead. The Equality and Good Relations Unit has continued to engage with individual group members on policy issues as required.</p> <p>No meetings have been scheduled for this reporting period; the group will be contacted in the coming months as part of the pre-consultation on the draft Disability Action Plan 2021-26.</p> <p>Membership of the group was reviewed in September 2016, when a number of new bodies joined the group, bringing the total number to 14.</p>
<p>2(b) Erasmus+ Application for future youth engagement project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply to Erasmus+ for funding for a second youth engagement project. If successful in securing funding, design recruitment process to promote the opportunity to people with a disability. If successful in securing funding, set target for number of participants with disabilities 	<p>New but builds on previous initiative</p>	<p>Lead: Education Service By when: 2016 Status: Complete.</p> <p>The application to Erasmus+ was unsuccessful.</p>

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<p>2(c) Explore concept of Parliament for People with Disabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop concept with Disability Groups • Hold regional Parliaments • Submit Paper to Speaker • Final Parliament to be held in Assembly Senate Chamber • Consider hosting yearly event 	<p>New</p>	<p>Lead: Engagement By when: 2017 Status: In progress</p> <p>Discussions to develop the concept of a disability parliament took place with representatives of the Assembly Commission’s Disability Advisory Group in September 2016. It was decided that regional parliaments would be led by the disability groups, with the concepts developed at these events feeding into the final event at Parliament Buildings (to be led by Engagement). The disability parliament was not progressed due to the political situation from 2017-2020 and the public health situation and associated Regulations and guidelines in 2020. The issue will be raised with the Disability Advisory Group at its next meeting to see if this is still a project members wish to progress.</p>

3. Communication, Consultation and Engagement

Action Measure	Planned Outcome/Measurement	Origin of Measure	Progress Update
3(a) Provide guidance for visitors and staff on further disability access arrangements in relation to participation in Assembly business and events, eg, Committees, Plenary Session, seminars.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver regular Committee Witness Training (4 per year) Incorporate familiarisation of Parliament Buildings access arrangements 	New	<p>Lead: Engagement By when: Ongoing Status: In progress.</p> <p>Due to the public health situation and associated Regulations and guidelines, and the closure of Parliament Buildings to the public in March 2020, no Committee Witness Training was held during the reporting period.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Q&A guide for disability arrangements for visitors to Parliament Buildings, covering events, Committee meetings, Plenary sittings, Gallery rules, etc. Issue guidance to Disability Advisory Group for feedback 	New	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations to lead, with input from Events, RaISe and Committees By when: December 2016 Status: Complete</p> <p>The Inclusive Customer Service Policy, which was developed in consultation with the Equality Commission, was approved by SMG in December 2016. The policy highlights the facilities available at Parliament Buildings for customers with a disability, and includes a Q&A section on how they can engage with the work of the Assembly, including Committees, Plenary sessions, etc.:</p> <p>http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/about-the-assembly/corporate-information/policies/inclusive-customer-service-policy</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop guidance for staff organising events, including Committee stakeholder events, seminars, receptions, etc. 	New	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations to lead, with input from Events, RaISe and Committees By when: June 2017 Status: Complete</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include checklist of issues to consider, including signage, accessibility, presentation, etc. • Issue guidance to Disability Advisory Group for feedback 		<p>Following consideration of research and good practice locally and internationally, guidance and a checklist were prepared in consultation with business areas, and feedback was sought from the External Disability Advisory Group. A postmaster was issued to staff advising them of the availability of the approved guidance and checklist, which was published on AssISt, the Assembly intranet: http://assist.assemblyni.gov.uk/business-areas/equality-and-good-relations-unit/</p>
3(b) Sign language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop proposals to progress a sign language policy, and include consideration of DCAL's work on sign language • Work with relevant agencies in the development of this policy and stakeholders • Present proposals to the Assembly Commission 	New	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit By when: 2016 Status: Complete</p> <p>Sign language guidance was approved by SMG in 2016. Staff were informed of the availability of guidance by postmaster. The guidance, which includes details of how to book a sign language interpreter, is available on AssISt, the Assembly intranet: http://assist.assemblyni.gov.uk/media/1872/sign-language-guidance.pdf</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather information on practice in other legislatures as regards sign language provision for Plenary debates and Committee meetings 	New	<p>Lead: Parliamentary Services By when: 30 April 2016 Status: Complete</p> <p>Information sought when developing the sign language guidance for staff.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to arrange, where appropriate and by prior arrangement, for a sign language interpreter to be in the Public Gallery to provide service during a relevant debate • Continue to arrange, where appropriate and by prior arrangement, 	Builds on an existing measure	<p>Lead: Parliamentary Services By when: Ongoing Status: Complete for reporting period.</p> <p>No requests for a sign language interpreter were received during this reporting period.</p>

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	<p>for a sign language interpreter to attend relevant committee meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop guidance on when it is appropriate to arrange the services of a sign language interpreter for use in the Public Gallery (in line with the scheduled development of a sign language policy) 		<p>Guidance on when staff should arrange the services of a sign language interpreter is covered in the sign language guidance issued to staff in 2017.</p>
<p>3(c) Provision of Braille business cards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide the Speaker and Deputy Speakers with Braille business cards. 	<p>Builds on an existing measure</p>	<p>Lead: Speaker's Office By when: For next mandate (2016-21) Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>Braille business cards provided for the Speaker and all Deputy Speakers</p>
<p>3(d) Committee Gallery Rules</p>	<p>In January 2016, rules for visitors to Committee Galleries were amended to enable building users with a disability to use electrical devices if required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep rules under review 	<p>New</p>	<p>Lead: Committees By when: Annually Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>Will be kept under review going forward to ensure visitors' needs are met.</p>
<p>3(e) Continue Assembly Community Connect training to people with disabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver bespoke 'How the Assembly Works' sessions to disability groups on request Deliver training regionally on request 	<p>Builds on an existing measure</p>	<p>Lead: Engagement By when: Ongoing Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>Due to the public health situation and associated Regulations and guidelines, and the closure of Parliament Buildings to the public in March 2020, no training was held specifically for people with disabilities during the reporting period. However, work was undertaken to design outputs for remote engagement and those outputs are gradually being rolled out. Discussions began in September with Disability Action about how to engage with people with disabilities during COVID-19.</p> <p>All organisations on the Engagement Unit database, including organisations representing disability groups,</p>

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			have been made aware of the virtual facility. Approximately 50 requests, for such engagement activities will be facilitated before Christmas 2020, with four disability group presentations currently scheduled.
3(f) Continue to use web-based material to promote positive attitudes towards disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide web-based videos showing how to access Parliament Buildings Monitor/respond to any customer complaints/compliments in relation to access to information about services 	Builds on an existing measure	Lead: Building Services By when: Ongoing Status: Complete for reporting period
3(g) Employer-supported volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with Business in the Community to identify and offer volunteering opportunities to staff 	Introduced in 2012	Lead: Human Resources Office By when: Continuous Status: Ongoing The Human Resources Office continues to work with Business in the Community to identify and offer volunteering opportunities to staff. However, COVID-19 severely impacted on the availability of opportunities during this reporting period.
3(h) Conduct annual exercise to encourage staff to provide anonymous information to assist with monitoring and reporting on disabilities in the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual disability survey issued each year to collect statistical data in order to calculate numbers and percentages of staff who have a disability 	Builds on an existing measure	Lead: Human Resources Office By when: March 2016 and annually thereafter Status: Complete The Human Resources Office received a number of completed forms from Commission staff for the 2020/21 annual disability survey. None of the staff requested any action to be taken or to meet with the Equal Opportunities Manager to discuss their disability or reasonable adjustments.
3(i) Ensure that customer satisfaction surveys are carried out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitor survey to include an additional question on access Survey to be issued three times a year 	Builds on an existing measure	Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit, in conjunction with RaSe, Events and Engagement By when: Survey conducted three times a year

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<p>that allow for a review of findings by disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor survey responses for compliments/complaints • Identify action points as required 		<p>Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>The visitor survey asks respondents about physical access to and within Parliament Buildings. Any compliments/complaints on any issues raised in the survey responses are fed back to the relevant business areas.</p> <p>SMG agreed at its March 2018 meeting that the survey should be reduced in frequency from three times a year to an annual survey until the resumption of full Assembly business, at which point a full review of the survey would be carried out.</p> <p>While full Assembly business resumed in January 2020, the building was closed to the public in March due to the coronavirus pandemic. A small number of surveys were carried out in February, before the building closed, and RaSe carried out an analysis of these surveys. Findings were tabled at the October SMG meeting as part of the six-monthly Good Relations Action Plan update. An issue was raised by survey respondents in relation to the acoustics in the Great Hall.</p> <p>A review of the survey is under way, in consultation with the relevant business areas, and a revised survey will be presented to SMG in the March 2021 update.</p>
<p>3(j) Increase the level of accessible/inclusive information so that users with a disability can access digital services and information as independently as possible and make informed choices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Outcome:</u> Users with a disability are aware of the availability of accessible information and services and can make use of them (Ongoing) • Develop and implement an accessible information guidance to improve access to information for users who have a disability. The guidance will accompany the Digital First Strategy. (Sept 2016) 	<p>Builds on an existing measure</p>	<p>Lead: Communications Office / IS Office By when: See target dates in 'Planned outcome/measurement' column Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>An Accessibility Statement has been added to the website that follows the format recommended by UK Government Digital Services. It includes details on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical information about our website's accessibility

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Measurement:</u> Feedback from users via website feedback mechanisms, surveys, and feedback from other partnerships and networks. • The above will be published in the NI Assembly Commission's (the Commission) annual Section 75 report to the Equality Commission. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Compliance Status • What areas are non-compliant and what we are doing about them • Any content that's not within the scope of the accessibility regulations • What to do if you cannot access parts of our website • Reporting accessibility problems with this website <p>The web team continues to seek feedback, formal and informal to assist with changes needed to improve accessibility and inclusivity for users if the Assembly website.</p>
3(k) Digital First EQIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Outcome:</u> Improve our understanding of any issues and needs that may impact Digital First • <u>Measurement:</u> Regular consultation with and feedback from partnerships, formal and informal networks that will assist us in assessing and monitoring products and services in relation to equality issues and their impact. • Compliments and complaints received about services will also be used to help identify the impact of good practices and any adverse impact of existing practices. • The above will be published in the NI Assembly Commission's (the Commission) annual Section 75 report to the Equality Commission. 	Digital First EQIA undertaken from July to October 2015	<p>Lead: Communications Office By when: Ongoing Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>The team continues to seek feedback, formal and informal to assist the Assembly in assessing and monitoring information, products and services in relation to equality or accessibility issues and their impact.</p> <p>To date, we have received one complaint relating to the live streaming player on our TV site for people using accessibility features on Mac and iOS which has been resolved.</p>

4. Outreach and Education

Action Measure	Planned Outcome/Measurement	Origin of Measure	Progress update
<p>4(a) Education for Special Needs Schools</p>	<p>The Education Service conducts focus groups on behalf of Assembly Committees. The Research and Information Service (RaISe) has developed a framework for selecting a broad cross-section of the youth population. The framework will continue to ensure that children who attend special schools participate in every focus group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to engage with special schools through focus groups. (At least one special school will always be included in the focus group sample) 	<p>Builds on an existing measure</p>	<p>Lead: Education Service/RaISe By when: Ongoing Status: In progress</p> <p>The Education Service is currently working with the Ad Hoc Committee on a Bill of Rights, to plan a consultation with young people by focus group. Two special schools – one primary, one secondary – will take part. Invitations were issued to 3 schools in early October. The ES is awaiting responses and will follow-up in early November, following the mid-term break.</p>
	<p>The Education Service has a continued engagement with special schools, several of which make repeat bookings to visit the Assembly. Staff from the service also conduct outreach visits to several of these schools. Services are advertised to every special school in Northern Ireland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to engage with special schools Continue to advertise Education Service to every special school in Northern Ireland and encourage an increase in the number of special schools participating in the Education programme each year. (12.5% of special schools participated in the Education programme in 2014-15 – 5 out of 40) Monitor the number of outreach and inward visits involving special schools. 	<p>Builds on an existing measure</p>	<p>Lead: Education Service By when: Ongoing Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>Due to the public health situation and associated Regulations and guidelines, and the closure of Parliament Buildings to the public in March 2020, the Education Service's Visits Programme was suspended for most of the reporting period. However, online sessions are now available. A live online programme was delivered to a group of 16 young people from Mencap's Heroes Project (19 Oct), with a second event planned for 9 December. Three special schools have been invited to participate in a focus group consultation for the Ad Hoc Committee on a Bill of Rights. The ES will be contacting all schools in early November, including special schools, to inform them of available services and resources, including live programme to be delivered through Collaborate Ultra, or MS Teams. Events will be tailored to suit the needs of individual classes. One special school (Clifton</p>

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			School, Bangor) has already expressed interest in a live, online programme.
4(b) Youth Congress	<p>Approximately 90 young people took part in the annual sitting of the Northern Ireland Youth Congress in the Assembly Chamber on 25 November 2015. Participants came from across Northern Ireland and included young people with a range of special educational needs (ADHD, Asperger's syndrome, autism). Young people from Mencap also participated in the debate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore possibility of hosting another Youth Congress at Parliament Buildings (subject to necessary approvals). 	New	<p>Lead: Education Service By when: 2016/17 Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>No such events were scheduled during the reporting period. However, on 22 July 2020, the Assembly commission announced proposals to establish a Youth assembly. Work is now well under way on the practical arrangements to establish that Assembly.</p>
4(c) Films	<p>The Education Service has created a number of short films which aim to explain the work of the Assembly to young people and encourage them to engage with its work. Videos have been subtitled to broaden the appeal of the resources to young people who have hearing impairments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to make available subtitled short films Subtitle any future short films 	Builds on an existing measure	<p>Lead: Education Service By when: Ongoing/As required Status: In progress</p> <p>The Education Service updated the 'Assembly and Executive' animation. It has agreed with CCEA to complete 4 new animations by end January 2021, on Committees, Making Laws, Getting Involved and the 'Belfast Agreement'. Scripts have been produced and sent to CCEA. All new animations will be subtitled.</p>
4(d) Continue to provide support to Assembly Charity of the Year	<p>The Assembly's Charity Policy notes the charitable purposes listed in the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, which include relief of those in need by reason of disability.</p> <p>Positive Futures, the leading local charity for people with a learning disability, acquired brain injury or autistic spectrum condition, is the chosen charity for the Sept 2015-June 2016 period</p>	Builds on an existing measure	<p>Lead: Engagement By when: Ongoing. New charity year begins September every year. Status: In progress</p> <p>Due to the political situation 2017 to January 2020 and more recently the public health situation and associated Regulations and guidelines, and the closure of Parliament Buildings to the public in March 2020, no Charity of the Year has been in place since</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate regular meetings of Charity Fundraising Group Facilitate regular meetings with Charity of the Year Host minimum of two events per year involving Assembly and Charity of the Year. Facilitate year-round collection points to raise money for charity 		<p>2018. However, the Charity Policy is currently being reviewed, with a view to seeking approval before the 2021 Charity of the Year selection begins. However, a virtual fundraising event for the Children's Hospice was held in June 2020, raising £1,230.</p>
<p>4(e) Regular meetings with Section 75 groups to inform reviews of Engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement Strategy reviewed with Disability Action Group 	<p>Builds on an existing measure</p>	<p>Lead: Engagement By when: Annually Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>A focus group took place with s75 groups in September 2020 to discuss how to engage with marginalised and hard to reach groups following the impact of COVID-19 restrictions. The Engagement Team also met with AGE NI and Disability Action in September and October to tailor the virtual education programmes for older people and people with disabilities. Requests for such engagement activities will be facilitated before Christmas 2020, with four disability groups presentations currently scheduled.</p>
<p>4(f) Continue to work with disability organisations through Assembly Community Connect</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver accessible training within Parliament Buildings and around NI (Monthly 'How the Assembly Works' and 'Insight into' training during session, and four regional 'Get Involved' conferences across NI) Develop bespoke programmes and projects for disability groups by working with disability groups to tailor 	<p>Builds on an existing measure</p>	<p>Lead: Engagement By when: Ongoing Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>Due to the public health situation and associated Regulations and guidelines, and the closure of Parliament Buildings to the public in March 2020, no training was held specifically for people with disabilities during the reporting period. However, work was undertaken to design outputs for remote engagement and those outputs are gradually being rolled out.</p>

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	<p>training and resources to make them more accessible</p>		<p>Discussions began in September with Disability Action about how to engage with people with disabilities during COVID-19.</p> <p>All organisations on the Engagement Unit database, including organisations representing disability groups, have been made aware of the virtual facility. Approximately 50 requests for such engagement activities will be facilitated before Christmas 2020, with four disability group presentations currently scheduled.</p>
<p>4(g) Mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (3 December)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host an event at Parliament Buildings to mark International Day of Persons with Disabilities 	<p>New measure</p>	<p>Lead: Engagement By when: 2016 Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>International Day of Persons with Disabilities takes place on 3 December, and not within this reporting period. Planning for a virtual event is under way.</p>

5. Structural changes to increase participation and accessibility

Action Measure	Planned Outcome/Measurement	Origin of Measure	Progress update
5(a) Review of access audits as per standards 4, 5 and 8 of Access Award (NAS) Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review access audits as per standards 4, 5 and 8 of Access Award (NAS) Standards (see annexe 3) Continue to follow and review health and safety procedure 	Builds on an existing measure.	<p>Lead: Building Services By when: Ongoing Status: Complete for reporting period. Will be kept under review.</p>
5(b) Fire Evacuation - explore potential options to provide or upgrade lift(s).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial meetings with Architect and Fire Officer have taken place to explore options. Alternative proposals will be provided for consideration at a future meeting of the Commission. 	New	<p>Lead: Building Services By when: Work to be completed during 2016, subject to approval Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>One fire lift has been installed and staff trained in its use.</p>
5(c) Maintain signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain quality of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pictorial signage images; Braille signage and other signage in Parliament Buildings Tactile 'tour map' of Parliament Buildings; Add additional signage as required (including at reception) 	Builds on an existing measure	<p>Lead: Building Services By when: Ongoing Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>Appropriate signage is in place, tactile tour and signed tour are available for visitors upon request at reception</p>
5(d) Web publishing training for staff - Training is provided to Assembly Staff on the use of the content management system used to publish to the Assembly website. Part of this training includes accessibility issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Outcome:</u> Improved accessibility of information/content on the Assembly website for all users. <u>Measurement:</u> Monitor and assess accessibility of information/content on the Assembly website. <p>The above will be published in the NI Assembly Commission's (the Commission) annual Section 75 report to the Equality Commission.</p>	Builds on an existing measure	<p>Lead: Communications Office By when: Ongoing Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>Complete for this reporting period Staff training and guidance is provided by the web team on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>A guide to creating accessible documents has recently been issued to Committee staff and will be rolled out across the organisation in the next 6 weeks (November 2020).</p>

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Action Measure	Planned Outcome/Measurement	Origin of Measure	Progress update
<p>5(e) Accessibility web publishing guidance for staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome: Improved accessibility of information/content on the Assembly website for all users. (Ongoing) <p>Formal guidance will be developed by the Web Manager (Sept 2016)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measurement: Monitor and assess accessibility on our website. <p>The above will be published in the NI Assembly Commission's annual Section 75 report to the Equality Commission.</p>	<p>Builds on an existing measure</p>	<p>Lead: Communications Office By when: See target timelines in 'Planned outcome/measurement' column Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>A guide to creating accessible documents has recently been issued to Committee staff and will be rolled out across the organisation in the next 6 weeks (November 2020).</p> <p>Updating of this guidance will be required on an ongoing basis.</p>
<p>5(f) Monitor and assess accessibility of our website</p> <p>Undertake assessment exercise and address issues of inaccessibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome: Improved accessibility • Measurement: Website accessibility of recognised standard. (Level AAA of the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0) • Monitor and assess accessibility on our website. • The above will be published in the NI Assembly Commission's annual Section 75 report to the Equality Commission 	<p>Builds on a previous measure</p>	<p>Lead: Communications Office By when: Ongoing Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>As a minimum, the Northern Ireland Assembly website and TV site were designed to meet level AA of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 and, where possible, AAA standards. From January 2016 to January 2020, only limited work, basic maintenance and some content updates were undertaken as staff were redeployed while the Assembly was not sitting. Work has been completed on an audit of key pages and content on the site with a view to taking remedial action necessary to meet the new requirements for public sector guidelines namely level AA of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1.</p> <p>As per the new legislation, we have published an Accessibility statement following the format recommended by UK Government Digital Services. It includes details on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical information about our website's accessibility • Our Compliance Status

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What areas are non-compliant and what we are doing about them • Any content that's not within the scope of the accessibility regulations • What to do if you cannot access parts of our website • Reporting accessibility problems with this website <p>This will be an ongoing part of maintenance on the website.</p>
5(g) Increase the number of disabled parking bays in upper car parks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of upper car park disabled parking bays above the required minimum under DDA. Extra spaces were provided in December 2015. 	Builds on an existing measure	<p>Lead: Building Services By when: Keep under review Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>Will be kept under review.</p>
5(h) Consideration of access/egress requirements from ground floor to lower ground floor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate potential options to provide ramped access from ground floor to lower ground floor level and removal of current lift. 	Builds on an existing measure	<p>Lead: Building Services By when: Work to be undertaken in 2016, subject to approval Status: Complete</p> <p>New ramped access has been installed from the front entrance to Ground Floor level.</p>
5(i) Review existing layout of Assembly Chamber and previous options to improve accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential options provided for consideration by the Assembly Commission 	Builds on an existing measure	<p>Lead: Building Services By when: Keep under review Status: Complete for reporting period</p>
5(j) Consideration of options for provision of automatic opening of corridor doors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate options and clarify the requirements in relation to escape routes, potential for access control, etc. Option study to be provided for consideration by the Assembly Commission 	New	<p>Lead: Building Services By when: Work to be undertaken in 2016 (subject to approval) Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>Automatic door opening has been provided on basement, ground and first floors.</p>

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5(k) Consideration of alterations to counter in Members' Bar to provide serving area for wheelchair users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential layout with provision for wheelchair users at low level to be provided for the Assembly Commission 	New	<p>Lead: Building Services By when: Work to be undertaken in 2016 (subject to approval) Status: Complete</p> <p>Alterations have taken place to the counters in the Members' Bar, the Business Office, Reception and Office Resources.</p>
5(l) Maintenance of access items for members of the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular checks throughout the year on items, including iPad, Braille tour map and changing places facility. Continue to promote accessible tours and facilities (including at reception) 	Builds on an existing measure	<p>Lead: Events By when: As required Status: Action suspended</p> <p>The public health situation and associated Regulations and guidelines, and the closure of Parliament Buildings to the public in March 2020, have meant that there was no public access to Parliament Buildings during the reporting period. Promotion of tours and checking of all associated equipment and facilities will resume as soon as the public health situation permits.</p>
5(m) Continue to participate in Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS), which offers a guaranteed interview to applicants with a disability who meet the essential criteria for the post.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to offer scheme for internal and external recruitment exercises. Continued provision of disability section in application form whereby an applicant can indicate whether they wish to apply under the Guaranteed Interview Scheme for that particular role and the basis on which they qualify for the scheme. (NB, the scheme will only apply if there are shortlisting criteria for the post.) 	Introduced in December 2011	<p>Lead: Human Resources Office By when: Continuous Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>A number of applicants applied under the Guaranteed Interview Scheme during recruitment competitions over the reporting period.</p>

6. Awards and Accreditation

Action Measure	Planned Outcome/Measurement	Origin of Measure	Progress update
6(a) Maintain Action on Hearing Loss Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undergo assessment as required to indicate that standards have been met (See standards attached at annexe 2) 	Award first received in 2011	Lead: Building Services By when: As required Status: Complete for reporting period.
6(b) Maintain Autism Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to meet standards as outlined at annexe 3) 	Award first received in 2012	Lead: Building Services By when: As required Status: Complete for reporting period.
6(c) Continue to proactively raise awareness of work of the Assembly through Equality Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued participation in speaking events, and contribution to any relevant articles/activity by Equality Commission 	Builds on an existing measure	Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit By when: As required Status: Complete for reporting period No activity over this reporting period.

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Reporting and Monitoring

Issue Identified	Action	Planned outcome/measurement	Progress update
7) Regular monitoring of progress against identified actions	7(a) Provide progress update to SMG and the Assembly Commission every year	Every year, following liaison with business areas, provide summary of directorate activity to SMG/Commission, charting progress against targets and including any additional actions.	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit By when: Annually Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>Progress update provided to SMG and the Assembly Commission in the Annual Report to the Equality Commission, which SMG considered on 3 July 20.</p>
	7(b) Report to the Equality Commission annually on progress	As part of annual report to the Equality Commission, provide full update of directorate activity against action plan targets.	<p>Lead: Equality and Good Relations Unit By when: 31 August every year Status: Complete for reporting period</p> <p>Update on actions in the Disability Action Plan has been included in the Annual Report for 2019-20, which has been submitted to the Equality Commission.</p>