

# EQUALITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

## Public Authority 2010 – 2011 Annual Progress Report on Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Order (DDO) 2006

This report template includes a number of self assessment questions regarding implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties from **1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011**. This template also includes a number of questions regarding implementation of Section 49A of the DDO from the **1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011**. Please enter information at the relevant part of each section and ensure that it is submitted electronically (by completing this template) and in hardcopy, with a signed cover letter from the Chief Executive or, in his/her absence, the Deputy Chief Executive to the Commission by **31 August 2011**.

In completing this template it is essential to focus on the application of Section 75 and Section 49. This involves progressing the commitments in your equality scheme or disability action plan which should lead to outcomes and impacts in terms of measurable improvement for individuals from the equality categories. Such outcomes and impacts may include changes in public policy, in service provision and/or in any of the areas within your functional remit.

Name of public authority (Enter details below)

Carrickfergus Borough Council

Equality Officer (Enter name and contact details below)

S75: Lisa Adair  
Carrickfergus Borough Council  
Museum and Civic Centre  
Antrim Street  
Carrickfergus  
BT38 7DL

Email: [lisa.adair@carrickfergus.org](mailto:lisa.adair@carrickfergus.org)

Tel: (028) 93 344 367

DDO (if different from above):

**Please indicate whether you would prefer to receive correspondence from the Commission by:**

**Post**

**Electronically**

## **S75 Executive Summary**

- What were the key policy/service developments made by the authority during this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations and what outcomes were achieved?

**The Council as a whole, throughout all Departments, has now entrenched the principles of the legislation in all aspects of the development of policies and procedures, Business Plans and the Corporate Plan. This has allowed for the seamless inclusion of Section 75 objectives and associated actions in the strategic work undertaken by the Council. The details of these actions are explained within the body of this Report.**

- What are the main initiatives planned in the coming year to ensure the authority improves outcomes in terms of equality of opportunity and good relations for individuals from the nine categories covered by Section 75?

**The Council intends to target training on the revised Equal Opportunity Policy and the Members Code of Conduct to all Elected Members. Further, training on the revised Equal Opportunity Policy will be delivered to all staff, with a copy of the Policy being automatically sent out to all applicants seeking employment with Council.**

**The Council intends to build on all work conducted in previous years, most specifically consolidating training of staff and understanding of the duties generally.**

**The Council will also continue to drive work on Disability related issues by implementing the Disability Action Plan as agreed for the period. This includes, most significantly, the creation of a Disability Forum which will be set up as a local consultation platform.**

**Given that there is a requirement on Council to produce a new Equality Scheme in 2012, emphasis will be placed on consulting on a Draft Scheme using the Guidance from the Commission. Consultation will be conducted with representative bodies as detailed in an updated Consultee List. Further, and complementary to this work, Council will produce an Inequalities Audit and associated Action Plan as required by the Commission.**

- Please give examples of changes to policies or practices which have resulted in outcomes. If the change was a result of an EQIA please tick the appropriate box in column 3 and reference the title of the relevant EQIA in the space provided below:

	Outline change in policy or practice which have resulted in outcomes	Tick if result of EQIA
Persons of different religious belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Council continue to support the Carrickfergus Churches Forum (interdenominational) to promote a greater understanding of and tolerance towards people of different faiths</b></li> <li>• <b>Equal Opportunities Policy has been revised and screened to ensure, at the first instance, senior management understanding of how to manage religious difference within the workplace. This work has been conducted having regard to advice received directly from the Commission and further work will be conducted in the incoming year to ensure understanding across Council generally</b></li> </ul>	
Persons of different political opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Work has been ongoing to address identified sectarian issues within the Borough, most specifically in relation to Bonfires (work conducted through a dedicated Bonfire Committee with representation from interested communities).</b></li> <li>• <b>Council have also tackled single identity issues, with help from Carrickfergus Community Forum who have brokered conversations with local paramilitary representatives who have been considering flags and mural issues with a view to developing a re-</b></li> </ul>	

	<b>imaging strategy</b>	
Persons of different racial groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council continues to distribute a ‘Welcome Pack’ which is available in six different languages. It is now also available to download from the Council website.</li> <li>• Good Relations organized a Cultural Outreach programme for both primary and post primary schools in the Borough with the aim being to learn more about the different cultures that exist within Northern Ireland</li> <li>• The Good Relations Officer worked with Peace III in the delivery of an event to support Racial Equality Month</li> <li>• The Good Relations Sub Committee publicly gave support to the Unite Against Hate campaign</li> <li>• Public events were also delivered to mark Holocaust Memorial Day and the Chinese New Year</li> <li>• The Council’s Environmental Health Department has, in partnership with Newtownabbey Borough Council and Larne Borough Council, delivered Food Hygiene training for owners of Chinese takeaway premises. The Department also produced temperature record books in Cantonese to assist the businesses comply with record keeping requirements of the food hygiene regulations</li> </ul>	
Persons of different age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In reviewing pricing policies for the refurbished Leisure facility, the decision was taken to allow for concessionary rates to be given to those over the age of 60 and under</li> </ul>	

	<p>the age of 16 (also all those who have proof that they continue to be in further education).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council have provided a free of charge Allotment Plot to the YMCA Parents and Kids together project which provides children and their families from less privileged backgrounds opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge</li> </ul>	
Persons with different marital status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None identified</li> </ul>	
Persons of different sexual orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None identified</li> </ul>	
Men and women generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council have provided an Allotment plot 'free of charge' to Women's Aid to assist with promotion of healthy lifestyle alternatives</li> </ul>	
Persons with and without a disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newly refurbished Leisure offering 'The Amphitheatre' opened August 2009 and has since been awarded the William Keown award for Access. It is envisaged that the new facility will attract people with a variety of abilities, with an exit survey being conducted in the next reporting period to establish actual footfall of those who would deem themselves to have a disability.</li> <li>• The Council has provided an Allotment plot 'free of charge' to both SENSE and Mindwise in an attempt to promote health and positive attitudes towards individuals with sensory difficulties and mental health concerns</li> <li>• Council have also provided a 'free of charge' allotment to Conservation Volunteers NI who facilitate a brain injury support group and Carrickfergus Drug and</li> </ul>	

	<p><b>Alcohol Group as part of the ‘Green Gym’ initiative</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Cleansing Section of Council supply an Assisted Lift Service for anyone who can self certify that they have a condition that may effect their ability to move their bin to a suitable collection point</b></li> </ul>	
Persons with and without dependants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Council have provided a ‘free of charge’ allotment plot to Foster Carers NI in order to assist the development of a safe and productive leisure environment for adults and the children who they have in their care</b></li> </ul>	

- Title/s of EQIAs referenced: **N/A**

**Section 1: Strategic Implementation of the Section 75 Duties**

- Please outline evidence of progress made in developing and meeting equality and good relations objectives, performance indicators and targets in corporate and annual operating plans during 2010-11

**Progress on all Section 75 matters is reported to the Corporate Strategy Sub Committee at quarterly meetings, with internal Departmental meetings being held as required**

**Further to this, and key to the Corporate Plan for the period 2005 – 2009 (extended to cover the remaining life of the Council as dictated by the Review of Public Administration), Council has built in the themes of Citizenship, Social Progress, Economy and Environment. Under the theme Citizenship, additional emphasis has been placed on the general principles of Equality by stipulating the following: -**

**‘Citizenship – Enhancing our sense of Civic pride by communicating with our people, encouraging participation, and valuing diversity.’**

**Resourcing of the duty is now dispersed through all Departments of Council, continuing in Council’s attempts to entrench and mainstream the principles. Individual Departments are responsible for estimating their Equality related expenditure for the year whilst receiving**

guidance, where necessary, from the Business Development Manager.

The Council’s Business Development Manager leads and monitors all work conducted under the auspices of Section 75.

With specific regard to the Good Relations duty, Council would now consider that associated work conducted is the proactive arm of the legislative requirement, where work on the ground has made a substantial difference to the lives of many within the Borough. The Good Relations Officer produces a yearly Business Plan which relates directly to budgetary requirements for the service area.

**Section 2: Screening**

- Please provide an update of new/proposed/revised policies screened during the year.

Title of policy subject to screening	Was the <u>F</u> ull Screening Report or the <u>R</u> esult of initial screening issued for consultation? <i>Please enter F or R</i>	Was initial screening decision changed following consultation? <u>Y</u> es/ <u>N</u> o	Is policy being subject to EQIA? <u>Y</u> es/ <u>N</u> o? If yes indicate year for assessment.
Policy on Access to Personnel Files	R	No	No
Petroleum Licensing Conditions	R	No	No
Policy on Financial Donations and Contributions	R	No	No

### Section 3: Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

- Please provide an update of policies subject to EQIA during 2010-11, stage 7 EQIA monitoring activities and an indicative EQIA timetable for 2011-12

#### EQIA Timetable – April 2010 - March 2011

Title of Policy EQIA	EQIA Stage at end March 2011 (Steps 1-6)	Outline adjustments to policy intended to benefit individuals, and the relevant Section 75 categories due to be affected.
N/A		

- Where the EQIA timetable for 2010-11 (as detailed in the previous annual S75 progress report to the Commission) has not been met, please provide details of the factors responsible for delay and details of the timetable for re-scheduling the EQIA/s in question.

**N/A**

#### Ongoing EQIA Monitoring Activities April 2010- March 2011

Title of EQIA subject to Stage 7 monitoring	Indicate if differential impacts previously identified have reduced or increased	Indicate if adverse impacts previously identified have reduced or increased
Parks and Countryside	Differential impacts continue to reduce, with Business target for 2007-2008 stating 'To make the public amenities within Victoria cemetery compliant with the Disability Discrimination legislation' (direct linkage with EQIA carried out). This has resulted in the dropping of kerbs in the old section (on request), the clearing of pathway obstructions, and the routine dropping of kerbs and introduction of accessible pathways in the new section. A toilet for people with	Reduced as stated

	disabilities has also been installed in Cemetery House and can be accessed by any member of the public	
<b>Leisure Centre</b>	The Leisure facility (Amphitheatre) has now re-opened following major refurbishment . Due regard was taken in relation to access issues and the Amphitheatre has been awarded a William Keown Award to recognize the extent to which the Centre now complies with legislative requirements and beyond.	<b>Reduced as stated</b>
<b>Community Development</b>	Both Community Services and Good Relations functions continue to be monitored with the Community Safety function and District Policing Partnership feeding into issues relating to community tension and the identification of solutions.	<b>Adverse impacts decreased</b>

- Please outline any proposals, arising from the authority’s monitoring for adverse impacts, for revision of the policy to achieve better outcomes the relevant equality groups:

**N/A**

2011-12 EQIA Time-table

<b>Title of EQIAs due to be commenced during April 2011 – March 2012</b>	<b>Existing or New policy?</b>	<b>Please indicate expected timescale of Decision Making stage i.e. Stage 6</b>
N/A		

## **Section 4: Training**

- Please outline training provision during the year associated with the Section 75 Duties/Equality Scheme requirements including types of training provision and conclusions from any training evaluations.

**Training of all new staff and newly promoted staff is now being delivered through a Staff Induction Procedure which includes basic training in the rudiments of the Section 75 legislative requirements. The Business Development also provides training on a regular basis when there is identified by Department.**

**It is projected that a full training programme will be delivered to staff within the next reporting period.**

## **Section 5: Communication**

- Please outline how the authority communicated progress on delivery of the Section 75 Duties during the year and evidence of the impact/success of such activities.

**Council has sought to continue to effectively communicate with its stakeholders in a variety of ways. These have included: -**

- **Ensuring that Equality and Good Relations initiatives are reported to the Borough community in our twice yearly Council magazine**
- **Regular press articles to highlight relevant events and promote the interests of Section 75 interest groups**
- **Sourcing of dedicated publications to promote the work of Council**
- **Staff are kept informed of Equality and Good relations by email when required**
- **As previously reported, Council had identified deficiencies with regard to accessing of the website by people with disabilities. During the reporting period, Council continued to monitor the new site and the response (using data from Google analytics) indicates a significantly higher number of users. The new site went live in April 2009 and offers Browsealoud alongside a number of accessibility features which enable W3C status to be achieved.**

## **Section 6: Data Collection & Analysis**

- Please outline any systems that were established during the year to supplement available statistical and qualitative research or any research undertaken/commissioned to obtain information on the needs and

experiences of individuals from the nine categories covered by Section 75, including the needs and experiences of people with multiple identities.

**Information has been collected from a variety of sources (NISRA, Central Government Departments, Public Records Office, Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey), and internal data sources have been modified to allow for more Section 75 analysis.**

**Council also commissioned the production of a Good Relations Audit for the Borough (dealing with issues both internal and external). This provided a quantity of both qualitative and quantitative information which will influence further research projects.**

**In order to build up a generic demographic picture of the Borough, new census figures have been used and collated into easily understood interpretations accessible at the beginning of each future Equality Impact Assessment. Further to this, any data collected within Council as the result of other fields of work has proved of use, including the RES Best Value Survey (2003), the Community Support Plan, individual service questionnaires and satisfaction surveys, and the Community Relations Strategy. A mechanism has also been put in place to ask extra questions on our general computerized complaints form, which should assist in the collection of data for more of the nine category groupings.**

**External data has also been sought from sources such as deprivation studies, published research reports, pressure group data, and statutory agencies. All of the information accumulated has aided in the development of new policies and should prove invaluable during the Equality Impact Assessment process.**

**Council also recognizes that further information will be needed to enable Council Departments to meet their obligations under the Equality Legislation. Therefore, it is committed to the provision of necessary resources such as the commissioning of independent research by consultants when considered appropriate.**

**All new policies, when being examined for possible adverse impact, will be influenced by data previously collected.**

**It should, however, be noted that there remains a noticeable gap in reliable information from certain category groupings which is difficult to supplement either quantitatively or qualitatively. Further**

**progressive, innovative assistance from the Commission would be appreciated, like the introduction of a formal central information unit established into which small interest groups could feed relevant statistics and information for the general use of all public authorities. Given this, Council welcomes the explicit commitment in the Section 75 effectiveness review to ‘develop baseline data and indicators to help local authorities to measure outcomes’.**

- Please outline any use of the Commission’s Section 75 Monitoring Guide.

**Council took cognisance of the monitoring guide when developing a staff monitoring questionnaire as required by our adopted Disability Action Plan and as reported on in the 2007 – 2008 Annual Report.**

#### **Section 7: Information Provision, Access to Information and Services**

- Please provide details of any initiatives/steps taken during the year, including take up, to improve access to services including provision of information in accessible formats.

**Council is collectively more aware of the issues involved when producing information for public consumption. The Marketing department within Council has received briefing on what is expected in this regard, with targeted advice coming from the RNID and Disability Access. In conducting Equality Impact Assessments it was also established that Council did not expressly invite individuals and groups to seek documentation in alternative formats. To this end, Council now includes the following statement in all of it’s Council productions: -**

**“Carrickfergus Borough Council wishes to ensure that all sections of the community have access to all Council documentation. Should you wish to have this documentation made available to you in an alternative format (e.g. Braille, audio cassette), or in another language should you be unable to communicate in English, please contact....”**

**The Council ‘Welcome Pack’ has also been an encouraging addition to Councils’ documents which has demonstrated, through percentage of take-up, the necessity to produce information on Council services**

**in alternative languages. The 'Welcome Pack' has gone into its' third print run during the reporting period.**

**Council also reacts proactively when service requests are received and has, within the reporting period, produced copies of Council-owned documentation in alternative formats e.g. copy of our bin calendar in large print.**

### **Section 8: Complaints**

- Please identify the number of Section 75 related complaints:
  - received and resolved by the authority (including how this was achieved);
  - which were not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant;
  - which were referred to the Equality Commission.

**Following on from the last reporting period, the disability complaint which was pending has gone through a mediation/conciliation process, but no agreement was to be reached. Sufficient adjustments have been made by Council to fulfill all associated obligations. The two cases of alleged religious discrimination are still outstanding and now subject to tribunal proceedings therefore no further details can be reported at this time.**

### **Section 9: Consultation and Engagement**

- Please provide details of the measures taken to enhance the level of engagement with individuals and representative groups during the year.
- Please outline any use of the Commission's guidance on consulting with and involving children and young people.

**Council has continued to employ all methods of consultation referred to in previous progress reports.**

**As different issues dictate, Council has also employed more focused consultative methods. Where, for example, there have been obvious issues with regard to disability access, the appropriate local groups have been contacted and asked for comment. Council has found this to be an extremely effective method to gauge specialist opinion and would suggest that consultees being approached in this direct way is often more rewarding than targeting all groups with little response. It should also be noted that groups being consulted with are more willing to continue to give their views on projected policy issues if**

**they are privy to sound and timely feedback. Council officers are now more aware of this and structures are beginning to form to acknowledge this.**

### **Section 10: The Good Relations Duty**

- Please provide details of additional steps taken to implement or progress the good relations duty during the year. Please indicate any findings or expected outcomes from this work.

**Please see attached Report for the accounting period as compiled by the Councils' Good Relations Officer – Appendix 1**

- Please outline any use of the Commission's Good Relations Guide.

**The Guide has been read by the pertinent Officers and has been disseminated to the Members of the Good Relations Sub Committee**

### **Section 11: New/Revised Equality Schemes**

- If the Commission has notified you of its intention to request a new/revised scheme or formally requested a new/revised scheme and associated action plan, please outline below what progress has been made in this reporting period.

**N/A**

### **Section 12: Additional Comments**

- Please provide any additional information/comments.

**N/A**

Annual Report 1 April 2010 / 31 March 2011  
'Disability Duties' Questions

**1. How many action measures for this reporting period have been**

2  
Fully  
Achieved?

1  
Partially  
Achieved?

3  
Not  
Achieved?

2. Please outline the following detail on **all actions that have been fully achieved** in the reporting period.

2 (a) Please highlight what **public life measures** have been achieved to encourage disabled people to participate in public life at National, Regional and Local levels:

Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs <sup>1</sup>	Outcomes / Impact <sup>2</sup>
National <sup>3</sup>	N/A		
Regional <sup>4</sup>	N/A		
Local <sup>5</sup>	N/A		

2(b) What **training action measures** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	<b>Provide specialist</b>	<b>Consistent understanding of</b>	<b>Relevant staff trained</b>

<sup>1</sup> **Outputs** – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.

<sup>2</sup> **Outcome / Impact** – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action? Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.

<sup>3</sup> **National** : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments

<sup>4</sup> **Regional**: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level

<sup>5</sup> **Local** : Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora.

	<b><i>training for senior managers, recruitment and selection panels, HR professionals and front line staff.</i></b>	<b>the relevant issues by all staff involved in recruitment and selection processes</b>	
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2(c) What Positive attitudes **action measures** in the area of **Communications** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	<b>N/A</b>		

2 (d) What action measures were achieved to ‘**encourage others**’ to promote the two duties:

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	<b>N/A</b>		

2 (e) Please outline **any additional action measures** that were fully achieved other than those listed in the tables above:

	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
1	<b><i>Ensuring that appropriate resources are lobbied for on a Departmental basis during the development of incoming Corporate and Business Plans</i></b>	<b>Adequate emphasis is placed on the duties during planning processes</b>	<b>Correct application of resources are applied where appropriate</b>

**3. Please outline what action measures have been partly achieved as follows:**

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones <sup>6</sup> / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
1	<b><i>Establish uptake by Disabled people of current Leisure provision</i></b>	<b>Appropriate recording mechanisms have been considered and it is anticipated that recording will begin in the incoming reporting period</b>	<b>Increased uptake of Leisure services by Disabled people, with the service catering specifically for users based on defined need</b>	<b>Inadequate time to complete the task</b>

**4. Please outline what action measures have not been achieved and the reasons why?**

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1	<b><i>Work with the other Councils in the East Antrim cluster to ensure complementary service provision is maintained</i></b>	<b>Due to the suspension of the Review of Public Administration this has not been deemed relevant at this time</b>

<sup>6</sup> **Milestones** – Please outline what part progress has been made towards the particular measures; even if full output or outcomes/ impact have not been achieved.

2	<b><i>Host an event to communicate commitment to the principles contained in the Disability Action Plan</i></b>	<b>Due to limited resources being available in the reporting period (both financial and human), it was not possible to meet this target within the reporting period, however, it will be considered during the estimates process in the next reporting period</b>
3	<b><i>Establish a Disability Forum with representation from individuals with Disabilities</i></b>	<b>Individuals key to the establishment of the Forum no longer available. Issue will be looked at again in the next reporting period</b>

**5. What **monitoring tools** have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?**

(a) Qualitative

Staff and elected member monitoring survey, State of the Borough baseline statistical data

(b) Quantitative

Focus groups, collaboration with Carrickfergus Community Forum

6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions, has your organisation either:
- made any **revisions** to your plan during the reporting period or
  - taken any **additional steps** to meet the disability duties which were **not outlined in your original** disability action plan / any other changes?

Please delete: No

If yes please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1	<b>N/A</b>		

7. Do you intend to make any further **revisions to your plan** in light of your organisation's annual review of the plan? If so, please outline proposed changes?

**N/A**