

Title of Report:	Section 75 Annual Progress Report to Equality Commission for NI
Committee Report Submitted To:	Council Meeting
Date of Meeting:	04 August 2026
For Decision or For Information	For Decision

Linkage to Council Strategy (2026-31)	
Strategic Theme	Empowering and Supporting Our People
Outcome	A Council which reflects the diversity of our community and creates an inclusive culture where everyone can thrive
Lead Officer	Director Corporate Services

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES/NO
Capital/Revenue	
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Legal Considerations	
Input of Legal Services Required	NO
Legal Opinion Obtained	NO

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (and included as a commitment in the Council's Equality Scheme) is a requirement that the Council provide an annual report to the Equality Commission for NI on progress in meeting our obligations under the equality and good relations duties.
- 1.2 The report also requires the Council to report on how it is fulfilling its statutory duties under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 by reporting on progress made on the commitments included in the Council's Disability Action Plan.

2.0 Annual Equality Progress Report 2025/26

- 2.1 A copy of the draft Annual Progress Report for 2025/26 is attached for your information.
- 2.2 The format of the report is based on a template provided by the Equality Commission and the report always covers the previous financial year. The period of time this report deals with therefore is from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026.
- 2.3 Part A of the report relates to the Section 75 Equality and Good Relations duties and covers outcomes, impacts and good practice in relation to these areas of work, along with progress on the Council's Equality Action Plan, consultations undertaken, screening and Equality Impact Assessments undertaken, monitoring arrangements, training and complaints made in relation to equality and good relations issues.
- 2.4 Part B outlines actions achieved, partially achieved or not achieved in relation to the Council's Disability Action Plan.

3.0 Recommendation

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Council approve the adoption of the draft Annual Equality Progress Report for 2025/26.

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council



**Causeway
Coast & Glens
Borough Council**

Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties

Annual Progress Report

Contact details:

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Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Action Plan	As above ☒ Name: Click or tap here to enter text. Telephone: Click or tap here to enter text. Email: Click or tap here to enter text.
Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:	Equality, Diversity and the Disability Duties - Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council (causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk)
Signature:	

This report has been prepared using a template circulated by the Equality Commission.

It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and good relations duties and implementing Equality Scheme commitments and Disability Action Plans.

This report reflects progress made between April 2025 and March 2026

PART A – Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Scheme

- 1 In 2025-26, please provide **examples** of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved.

Please relate these to the implementation of your statutory equality and good relations duties and Equality Scheme where appropriate.

During the reporting period April 2025 to March 2026, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council continued to mainstream equality of opportunity and good relations across its functions, services and civic leadership activities. Through the delivery of targeted equality and disability action measures, accessible service improvements, community engagement initiatives, awareness campaigns and inclusive civic programmes, the Council sought to remove barriers to participation, promote positive attitudes towards disabled people, and foster good relations between individuals and communities from different backgrounds. The examples below demonstrate how equality considerations were embedded within policy development, service delivery, community planning, cultural activities and civic engagement, resulting in increased accessibility, enhanced participation in public life, greater awareness of equality issues, and stronger community cohesion across the Borough.

- Ballycastle Leisure Centre: During the reporting period, the Council maintained ongoing engagement with residents through dedicated project updates, frequently asked questions (FAQs) and opportunities for public enquiries as construction of the new Centre progressed. The project continued to embed inclusive design principles identified during earlier consultation, including a Changing Places facility, accessible play park, step-free access and inclusive changing provision, ensuring the new facility will be accessible to a broad range of users, particularly disabled people and families with additional accessibility needs.
- Responding to Emerging Inequalities: The Council strengthened its ability to identify and respond to emerging inequalities through ongoing consultation, equality monitoring and engagement with local communities. This improved understanding of community needs enabled issues to be identified and addressed more effectively, while also informing strategic decision-making. As a result, the Council's Corporate Plan now includes clear and visible equality commitments, reinforcing its commitment to equality, inclusion, good relations and the reduction of disadvantage across the Borough.
- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls: The Council demonstrated visible leadership in support of the Executive's Ending Violence Against Women and

Girls Strategy by using waste collection vehicles to carry key awareness messages across the Borough, reinforcing that violence and abuse have no place in society.

- Car Parking Charges: Following feedback on the potential impact of new car parking arrangements in Ballycastle, the Council reviewed the concerns raised and implemented amendments to mitigate adverse impacts on users and local communities.
- Streamlined Grants Documentation: In response to monitoring and pilot feedback the Funding Unit has introduced shorter forms supporting higher completion rates and improved grant distribution to additional groups.
- Labour Market Partnership – Tackling Employment Inequalities: Monitoring identified that people with disabilities, those with caring responsibilities, unemployed and economically inactive individuals, younger and older people, and some minority ethnic communities continued to face barriers to employment, skills development and economic participation. In response, the Council:
 - Delivered specialised Retrain Plus Academies in sectors including childcare, hospitality, security and transport.
 - Introduced Personal Learning Account Funds to reduce financial barriers to training and upskilling.
 - Undertook targeted outreach with under-represented groups, including participation in disability-focused initiatives such as Talent Knows No Limit.
 - Ensured accessibility through the provision of BSL/ISL interpreters and engagement with disability support organisations.
 - Used flexible delivery models, including evening classes, blended learning and online options, to support participants with caring responsibilities and other commitments.

These initiatives directly linked into the Equality Action Plan and Disability Actions embedding both in Council's everyday work.

Section 1: Equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2025-26 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

In 2025–26, the Council continued to implement a range of actions under its Equality Action Plan, aimed at promoting inclusion, tackling inequalities, and improving access to services across Section 75 protected groups. These measures have led to tangible outcomes in areas such as community engagement, inclusive service delivery, and participation in cultural activities. The following examples illustrate the positive impact of these actions on individuals and communities throughout the Borough.

Action Ref: A - Cohesive Leadership

Issue Identified: 1. Foster deep-rooted equality and inclusion

Desired outcome(s): Section 75 duties integrated and mainstreamed into business planning processes

Actions embedding:

- Equality training for all Elected Members.
- Identification of a suite of equality related training for Elected Members

Building on the Equality and Diversity training undertaken by elected Members last year, this year's programme focused on embedding these principles and learning into practice; supporting Members to apply them in their roles:

- Chair Training enhanced their ability to lead meetings effectively, encourage inclusive participation, and ensured that a range of perspectives are considered during discussions and decision-making. This supported the mainstreaming of Section 75 duties by promoting transparent and inclusive governance processes that facilitate consideration of equality impacts across Council business.
- Planning Committee Training strengthened members' understanding of their statutory responsibilities and decision-making processes. By reinforcing the importance of fair, evidence-based and consistent decision-making, the training supported the integration of equality considerations into planning functions and helped ensure that decisions were taken with due regard to the needs of all Section 75 groups.

- Media Training enhanced members' ability to communicate effectively with diverse audiences and represent Council decisions clearly and responsibly. Improved communication skills support the Council's commitment to inclusive engagement and accessibility, contributing to the wider mainstreaming of equality and good relations considerations across Council activities.
- Code of Conduct Training reinforced the principles of integrity, respect, accountability and equality in public office. The training supported elected members in understanding their responsibilities when interacting with colleagues, stakeholders and the public, helping to foster a culture in which equality and inclusion are embedded within governance, leadership and decision-making processes.
- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls – Shared Island Event increased awareness of gender-based violence, prevention strategies and collaborative approaches to addressing inequalities affecting women and girls. The learning gained from this event supported the Council's commitment to equality and inclusion by strengthening the understanding of issues affecting this Section 75 group and informing future decisions relating to the creation of safer and more inclusive communities.

In addition, 2 Members participated in the NILGA Leadership Development Programme for Elected Members, enhancing their leadership, governance and decision-making skills. The programme strengthened their ability to consider equality and inclusion in community planning, policy development and service delivery.

Equality and inclusion were also embedded by the Mayor through engagement with a diverse range of groups representing Section 75 categories. This included older people through Age Friendly initiatives, U3A groups and community organisations; children and young people through school visits, youth groups and recognition of sporting achievements; disabled people through engagement with Guide Dogs NI, Riding for the Disabled, the Causeway Down Syndrome Support Group and Special Olympics clubs; and minority communities through engagement with the Malayali Association, Ulster Scots and Irish Language Commissioners. The Mayor also supported awareness campaigns including International Women's Day, World Down Syndrome Day and Elder Abuse Awareness initiatives. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor also took part in videos for the Diversity Ambassadors campaign 'Footpaths are for people'. These engagements helped raise awareness, celebrate diversity, promote inclusion and strengthened community cohesion across the Borough.

- Role of Diversity Ambassador reinvigorated within Council.

The Diversity Ambassador acted as a visible champion for equality and inclusion throughout 2025/26, engaging directly with Section 75 groups and advocating for the removal of barriers to participation. This included leading the multi-party disability awareness initiative #DontBlockThePath, which received BBC coverage, highlighting the Council's Disability Action Plan in May 2025, and encouraging residents to engage with and contribute to equality initiatives.

The Diversity Ambassador also promoted accessibility improvements across Council facilities, engaged with the Equality Forum, championed equality and inclusion during the development of the Council's PEACEPLUS Action Plan and participated in the Pupil Voice Project.

Collectively, these activities helped raise awareness of equality issues, encouraged participation from under-represented groups, informed more inclusive service delivery, and demonstrated leadership in mainstreaming Section 75 considerations across Council business.

- All service areas to identify at least one equality or inclusion action in yearly business plans.

In line with the Council's Equality Action Plan, service areas incorporated equality and inclusion actions into their 2025/26 business plans. For example, the Community and Culture Business Plan included actions to promote positive attitudes among young people and support their active role in community relations. The service also committed to delivering projects aligned with the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategic Framework, supporting anti-poverty and food insecurity initiatives, broadening access to arts and culture, and providing funding for community development, community safety and good relations activities. These actions helped mainstream equality and inclusion across Council services.

Equality monitoring was embedded across Labour Market Partnership programmes in line with Department for Communities requirements. Participation data was collected across age, disability, gender, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation and caring responsibilities to understand who was accessing opportunities. This improved understanding of who had benefited from Council-supported employability programmes and enabled evidence-based decisions to address under-represented and emerging inequalities.

Issue Identified: 2. Need to tackle both persistent and emerging inequalities in a strategic manner.

Desired outcome(s): Improved awareness and understanding of inequalities and the potential impact of decision-making on each Section 75 category.

Actions embedding:

- Corporate consultations include specific equality of opportunity and good relations questions.
- Quarterly email sent to each Head of Service asking them to share inequalities which have been identified in their area.
- Emerging inequalities to be reviewed by Senior Leadership Team.

To improve awareness and understanding of inequalities and the potential impact of decision-making on Section 75 groups, the Council continued to embed equality considerations within consultations and service planning. Corporate consultations, including those on the Ballycastle Seafront Car Parking proposals and the Climate Change Action Strategy, included specific equality and good relations questions, enabling respondents to identify barriers, inequalities and areas of concern. Feedback gathered through these consultations, alongside inequalities identified by service areas and reported through quarterly reviews, was considered by the Senior Leadership Team and informed a range of practical actions to improve accessibility and promote equitable service delivery. For example, reducing the complexity of grant application forms could increase accessibility for community groups, allowing a greater number to receive awards and potentially broadening the geographical distribution of funding.

In response to Labour Market Partnership monitoring and research, the Council also delivered targeted initiatives including Retrain Plus academies, programmes for young and older people, inclusive job fairs with BSL/ISL interpretation, flexible scheduling, blended learning approaches and varied communication methods including local radio to widen public reach and reduce barriers to participation. Monitoring also highlighted areas where further promotion may be required to encourage participation from identified under-represented groups. As a result, Job fairs involved disability support organisations which increased disabled participation.

Furthermore, the development of the new Council Plan one adopted (scheduled launch June 2026) will strengthen the strategic approach to equality by embedding equality, inclusion and good relations commitments within the Council's long-term planning framework, ensuring that the needs of Section 75 groups are considered across all areas of service delivery.

Desired outcome(s): Compliance with Equality, Disability and Rural needs legislation

Actions embedding:

- Quarterly reminders to review and undertake both equality screening and rural needs assessment exercises for all new policies or changes to services.

Quarterly reminders continued throughout the reporting period.

Action Ref: B. Improvement and Innovation

Issue Identified: 1. Addressing Access Barriers

Desired outcome(s): Creation of an accessible environment for staff and customers

Actions embedding:

- Raise awareness that Every Customer Counts audit and action plans should be reviewed on a yearly basis.

Every Customer Counts audit programme was enhanced through the introduction of Access Audits. Phase 1 facilities were identified, and external accessibility specialists were commissioned to undertake audits and establish baseline improvement actions, while internal staff received training to build capacity in this area. To progress the recommendations arising from the initial 18 audits, the Estates and Equality teams worked collaboratively to identify actions for delivery through the 2026/27 maintenance budget, with additional funding requirements being considered by the Senior Leadership Team.

- Undertake a consultation process to identify barriers to service inclusion across all service areas.

Heads of Service were again asked to identify barriers to service inclusion, coupled with a review of complaints and requests for service. Accessibility information continues to inform and guide service users.

- Review and identify options for teenager activity/socialisation in the borough.

During 2025/26, the Council supported a range of initiatives aimed at improving opportunities for teenagers to socialise, develop leadership skills and participate in community life. These included the Pupil Voice programme, which engaged secondary

school pupils in civic and democratic activities; the Different Ball, Same Goal cross-community sports programme involving over 140 young people; Good Relations projects promoting active citizenship and cultural awareness; grant funding for community-based youth activities; and consideration of a new Youth Council to strengthen youth participation in local decision-making.

- Review access to Leisure Centres across all Section 75 equality groupings.

During 2025/26, the Council continued to improve access to leisure and wellbeing opportunities across a number of Section 75 groups. Actions included the provision of an Inclusive Cycling Fleet at Joey Dunlop Leisure Centre for people with disabilities, promotion of accessible leisure facilities, affordable Junior Active Memberships for young people aged 12–15 and 16–17, support for age-friendly initiatives and delivery of cross-community sports programmes. In June 2025 Council agreed to participate in the PEACEPLUS Walking for All Partnership to encourage wider community participation in physical activity. Council revamped its booking app based on user feedback to make it more accessible. Collectively, these initiatives helped reduce barriers to participation and promote more inclusive access to leisure services across the Borough.

- Investment in play parks to support inclusion in rural areas.

During 2025/26, the Council continued to invest in play facilities to support inclusion and community participation, particularly in rural areas. A key example was the reinstatement of the play park at Scally Park, Loughguile, funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Green Spaces Programme. The scheme provided new play equipment, surfacing and seating, creating a safe and welcoming space for local children and families. This investment complemented the Council's wider Play Strategy and ongoing commitment to providing accessible and inclusive play opportunities across the Borough. There are a further five projects identified within the Council's Play Park Action Plan for future investment during the lifetime of the Equality Action Plan.

- Ensure all Council run events have changing places toilet provision.

All major Council events continue to have changing places toilet provision.

- Identify support for people living with disabilities to gain work experience and valuable skills through Council.

During 2025/26, the Council supported people living with disabilities to develop skills and improve employability through a range of inclusive initiatives. The Labour Market Partnership team through the Personal Learning Account Fund, supported eligible residents to apply for funding of up to £500 towards accredited training to improve employability and career prospects. The scheme was intended to reduce barriers to skills development and employment.

- Extend the current provision of Easy Read documents across Council.

During 2025/26, the Council continued to extend the availability of Easy Read information across a wider range of services and functions. In addition to maintaining a dedicated Easy Read section on its website, the Council provided Easy Read versions of key consultation and engagement materials, including the Climate Change Action Strategy consultation, the Coleraine Leisure and Well-Being Centre consultation, and Labour Market Partnership Action Plans. This helped ensure that people with learning disabilities and others who benefit from accessible information could engage more effectively with Council services, consultations and opportunities.

- Identify barriers faced by LGBTQIA+ community.

During 2025/26, the Council continued to consider issues affecting LGBTQIA+ people through its wider equality, consultation and policy development processes. In addition, Good Relations and diversity programmes promoted greater awareness, inclusion and respect for diversity across the Borough.

Action Ref: B. Improvement and Innovation

Issue Identified: 2. Identify service improvements

Desired outcome(s): Improved service accessibility for staff and customers

Actions embedding:

- Review and identify targeted actions to encourage younger applicants for positions in Council.

During the last reporting period Council modernised its recruitment advertising approach, reducing reliance on traditional print media and expanding the use of online

recruitment platforms. Monitoring during the 3-month trial determined it was highly successful. Between January and March 2025, 21 advertised vacancies generated 5,295 views, 444 applications and 227 converted applicants; at a significantly reduced cost (62.3%) when compared to previous traditional advertising methods without any negative feedback or adverse impacts on applicants. Consequently, this approach has met the desired outcome and will continue to be used in future recruitment campaigns.

Desired outcome(s): Compliance with Equality, Disability and Rural Needs legislation

The following 4 actions were completed in the last reporting period:

- Transfer the Corporate website to a more stable platform to support increased accessibility.
- Raise understanding through Development of Disability Hate crime lesson plan
- Undertake a review of accessibility at Household Recycling Centres
- Identify the feasibility of GIS to link budget spending in the borough to areas. Thereby supporting transparent budget spending and Elected Member decision making.

- Undertake a review of accessibility of Public Conveniences and analysis of provision

During the reporting period a review was undertaken which has fed into a planned refurbishment programme.

- Reintroduction of 'Just a Minute' (JAM) Awareness Training to Council staff.

Although this action was completed in the last reporting period, Council continued to provide training to new staff.

- Ensure all consultation programmes are filtered through the Equality Forum, Youth Voice and Age-friendly Forum.

Through the reporting period all consultations were sent to these groups.

- Provision of premises mapping to meet the needs of Neurodiverse service users. Pilot in Leisure Centres and then spread out across Council.

Maps co-produced by the Equality Forum, Leisure and Estates Services have been erected during this reporting period. Work continues on pre-visit videos and flip books. In addition the Recycling Centres uploaded virtual tours.

- Develop a trans equality Corporate policy for Elected Members decision.

A trans equality policy has been drafted, however due to continuing legislative uncertainty it remains on hold.

- Improve access through visual signage.

Visual signage improvements have continued in this reporting period in Coleraine Leisure Centre.

- Achieve Autism Impact award at 3 Main Leisure Sites.

Council has achieved these awards, and a publicity event is at planning stage.

- Develop a cycle hire scheme to increase usage and further develop inclusive cycling.

Completed.

- Implement actions from the Local Government Mental Well Being Strategy.

The wellbeing hub on the staff portal continues to inform, educate and signpost staff. As a result of Councils 'Health Check' in the last reporting period a series of Toolbox talks have been developed focused on male depot staff designed to encourage people to seek help and medical advice when needed.

- Review Special Leave Policy to include Bereavement

During 2025/26, the Council reviewed and adopted a revised Special Leave Policy to harmonise legacy terms and conditions and provide a fairer, more consistent approach for all employees. Improvements included enhanced bereavement and dependant's leave entitlements and formalised arrangements for a range of special leave provisions. The revised policy supports equality of opportunity by ensuring equitable access to leave entitlements across the

workforce, irrespective of legacy employment arrangements, and contributes to a more inclusive and supportive working environment.

Action Ref: - C Healthy and Engaged Communication

Issue Identified: 1 Improving Data held in Council

Desired outcome(s): Decision-making based on clear data

Actions embedding:

- Develop a data base of condition surveys for all assets to better prioritise repairs and maintenance work.

The Estates Team has developed a database of Council buildings for which Access Audits have been completed. This database will continue to be expanded as further buildings are audited and will provide a structured evidence base to support the prioritisation of accessibility improvements and repairs during the next reporting period and beyond.

- Measure performance against other NI Councils – Association of Public Sector Excellence.

Council actively participates in a range of local government and public sector networks, forums and partnership groups to share experiences, exchange good practice and learn from the approaches taken by other organisations. Engagement in these collaborative arrangements supports continuous improvement by helping the Council identify new opportunities, assess its own performance, and consider innovative solutions to emerging challenges. This collaborative approach informs policy development and service delivery, strengthens organisational learning, and supports the delivery of fair, inclusive and effective services for all residents.

- Identify Health and Safety Issues which could impact on service provision and develop a repair schedule.

This area has been included as part of the external Audit process.

- Move towards digitisation of full plan building control applications – support the digitisation of 10% in 2024.

During 2025/26 work continued in this area.

- Identify mechanisms to support and improve employment skills for individuals within Section 75 groups.

The Labour Market Partnership supported the improvement of employment skills by developing courses based on identified market gaps and emerging inequalities. Outreach was tailored and included community events and partnership working with statutory and community organisations. Programmes were open to all eligible residents, with participation recorded from different community backgrounds, religions, minority ethnic communities and LGBTQ+ participants.

Action Ref: - C Healthy and Engaged Communication

Issue Identified: 2 Improved consultation

Desired outcome(s): Consultation process reach all groups including those harder to reach groupings.

Compliance with Equality, Disability and Rural needs legislation

- Ensure all consultation programmes are filtered through the Equality Forum, Youth Voice and Age-friendly Forum.

Consultations have been issued to these groups, with the Equality forum being a key co-production resource. The Equality Forum continued work in partnership with Council officers to improve our services and over the reporting period were involved in the following projects:

1. Footpaths are for people campaign - #Dontblockthepath, members opened up on video about their experiences and the impact a blocked path could have on them.
2. Community Plan Review.
3. Climate Change Strategy consultation.
4. Coleraine Future Town Fund, advising the Project leads at pre-consultation stage to ensure hard to reach voices were heard, attending a site visit to identify barriers and various workshops to feedback their views and opinions on options.

5. The Open Accessibility, the Forum provided advice to the Project Lead pre-event on planned accessibility measures and, following the event, offered feedback and recommendations to further improve accessibility and inclusion.

- Continued business and visitor consultation using the Town Centre Forum.

The Town Centre Forums composes of members of the community, business and specialist representatives. This forum continued to be involved in various sustainability and development projects to improve the towns in our Borough.

Action Ref: - D Climate Change and our Environment

Issue Identified: 1 Improved feelings of safety for all Section 75 Groups

- Educate staff about hate crime.

Completed 2024/25.

- Complete LED lighting replacement within identified Car parks.

LED lighting replacement continued within identified car parks.

Action Ref: - D Climate Change and our Environment

Issue Identified: 2 Improve service provision for hard to reach and Section 75 Groups

Desired outcome(s): Citizens and Visitors increased access to natural environments

- Engage young people in non-traditional sporting activities.

During 2025/26, the Council provided opportunities for children and young people to participate in a range of non-traditional sporting and recreational activities. Through The Road to the Open, 150 primary school pupils were introduced to golf through coaching delivered by golf professionals, culminating in participation in a Mini Open event at local golf clubs. The Council also delivered Different Ball, Same Goal, engaging 160 young people in football, rugby and Gaelic games to explore sporting traditions beyond their usual experience while building friendships and cultural understanding. In addition, the Good Relations Darts Project introduced 80 young people to darts as a

shared sporting activity, promoting teamwork, concentration and social interaction. Further opportunities were provided through the Council's Inclusive Cycling Programme, which enabled children and young people of all abilities to access adapted cycles and experience outdoor recreation in an accessible and inclusive environment. These initiatives helped broaden participation, develop new skills and encourage engagement in sporting activities that may not traditionally have been available or accessible to participants.

- Provide Cultural Competency training for schools.

During 2025/26, the Council supported the development of cultural awareness and understanding among school pupils through a range of Good Relations programmes. These included the Diversity Education Programme, which explored cultural diversity and inclusion and culminated in a Diversity Education finale event linked to Chinese New Year 2026, the Pupil Voice Programme, which built citizenship and leadership skills while encouraging engagement with diverse perspectives, and the Different Ball, Same Goal initiative, which introduced young people to different sporting traditions and cultures. Collectively, these programmes helped improve cultural competency, promote respect for diversity and strengthen relationships between young people from different backgrounds.

- Deliver a community arts programme of events/projects which increases engagement in the arts across Section 75 groups.

During 2025/26, the Council delivered a wide-ranging community arts programme that promoted participation, inclusion and equality across the Borough. Through its arts venues, community arts programme and Culture, Arts and Heritage Grant Scheme, the Council supported 105 community arts activities, engaged 1,575 participants, supported 420 creative practitioners and welcomed over 70,000 visitors. Targeted initiatives included children's programmes, arts and wellbeing activities for mothers, projects involving women supported by Women's Aid, and cultural diversity events linked to International Refugee Week and Chinese New Year. These activities helped broaden access to arts and cultural opportunities for a diverse range of communities, including Section 75 groups.

- Deliver a museums programme of events/projects which increases engagement in the arts across Section 75 groups.

Through its five accredited museums, Museum programmes included exhibitions and engagement initiatives such as The Legacy of Sherwood Medical, Joey 25 and other community heritage exhibitions, which celebrated local history, industry and sporting traditions and encouraged participation from people of different ages and backgrounds. The programme included educational and outreach activities for children and young people, opportunities for older people to share and explore local memories and heritage, support for community organisations to develop cultural projects, and accessible exhibitions and interpretation for residents and visitors from diverse backgrounds.

Action Ref: - D Climate Change and our Environment

Issue Identified: 3 Protecting our Environment

Desired outcome(s): Work towards Net Zero energy (Meet NI 2050 Net Zero targets)

- Develop a range of energy reducing programmes to reduce consumption in Council and offset carbon discharge

Council has continued to progress on a range of energy reduction measures across its estate to support the achievement of NI's 2050 net zero targets. During the reporting period, work commenced on implementing the net zero carbon building standard (NZCBS), providing a framework to improve energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions and support sustainable development within council facilities.

In addition, there were other on-going initiatives and examples of good practice which have been outlined in **Appendix 1**.

- 3** Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2025-26 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☒ Yes

☐ No (go to Q.4)

☐ Not applicable (go to Q.4)

Please provide any details and examples:

Through regular monitoring and a growing understanding of the inequalities experienced by different groups across the Borough, the Council recognised the need to strengthen its commitment to equality and inclusion. As a result, Senior Leadership ensured that the new Corporate Plan contains clear and visible equality commitments.

Following a reduction in the number of equality screenings completed during the reporting period, the Council identified an opportunity to strengthen staff knowledge and confidence in the screening process. As a result, refresher training on Policy Development Skills, Consultation Skills, Equality Screening and Rural Needs Assessments was scheduled and delivered to relevant staff towards the end of the reporting period.

The increasing use of Easy Read documentation across consultations and information provided across the borough including rural sites, demonstrates that more accessible communication practices are becoming embedded within Council processes. This has been further supported by the redesign of the Leisure Centre Members' app, informed by user feedback.

Following feedback from grant applicants, the Funding Unit continued to determine accessibility improvements and piloted a reduced grant claims form for the Sports Grant and Bursary Programme, due to the increased number of fully completed claim submissions it extended the roll-out to other grant programmes.

Working in partnership, Trade Unions and the OD/HR Team reviewed, agreed and implemented a revised Special Leave Policy with enhanced provisions. The updated policy was designed to create a more consistent and equitable approach for all employees following Local Government Reform and TUPE transfers, helping to ensure staff have fair access to special leave arrangements regardless of their originating organisation.

3a With regard to the change(s) made to policies, practices or procedures and/or service delivery areas, what **difference was made, or will be made, for individuals**, i.e. the impact on those according to Section 75 category?

Please provide any details and examples:

- Embedding clear equality commitments within the new Corporate Plan will help ensure that the needs of Section 75 groups are considered more consistently in future decision-making, service planning and resource allocation, leading to more inclusive and equitable outcomes for residents and employees.
- The delivery of refresher training on Policy Development Skills, Consultation Skills, Equality Screening and Rural Needs Assessments has improved staff awareness and confidence in identifying potential impacts on Section 75 groups. This is expected to strengthen the quality and consistency of screening, consultation and policy development processes, reducing the risk of unintended adverse impacts and improving opportunities to promote equality and good relations.
- The increasing use of Easy Read documentation and other accessible communication methods has improved access to information and consultation processes for people with learning disabilities, cognitive impairments, lower literacy levels and others who may experience communication barriers. Similarly, improvements to the Leisure Centre Members' app, informed by user feedback, have enhanced accessibility and usability for a broader range of users, including disabled people and older people.
- The Funding Units streamlined form has reduced administrative barriers and improved accessibility for applicants, particularly smaller community organisations, older people, disabled people, young people and groups with limited administrative capacity. This has resulted in a higher rate of fully completed claim submissions and improved access to Council funding opportunities for a wider range of Section 75 groups.
- Targeted employability initiatives delivered through the Labour Market Partnership, including Retrain Plus academies, programmes for young people and older adults, inclusive job fairs with BSL/ISL interpretation, flexible scheduling and varied communication methods, have helped reduce barriers to participation in employment and skills development opportunities for a range of Section 75 groups.

Collectively, these changes have strengthened the Council's ability to identify and respond to inequalities, improve accessibility and participation, and ensure that

services, policies and employment practices are more inclusive and responsive to the diverse needs of people across the Borough.

3b What aspect of the Equality Scheme prompted or led to the change(s)? *(tick all that apply)*

☒ As a result of the organisation's screening of a policy *(please give details):*

Equality Screenings supported the improvement of services and internal staff policies to meet the needs of individuals linked to various Section 75 groupings.

☐ As a result of what was identified through the EQIA and consultation exercise *(please give details):*

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☒ As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact *(please give details):*

This annual review has also highlighted the need for improved monitoring systems.

☒ As a result of changes to access to information and services *(please specify and give details):*

The identification of barriers to information for some citizens and visitors supported increased Easy Read documents and Councils accessible provision will continue in the next reporting period.

☒ Other *(please specify and give details):*

The quality of equality screening documents was reviewed. While refresher training has reduced the number of screenings which cited no mitigation was necessary, the overall reduction in screenings and high reliance on Census data still appears to be an issue. Over the next period this needs to be addressed with education around what needs to be screened, the importance of screening, monitoring and general improvements to the types of data available.

Section 2: Progress on Equality Scheme commitments and action plans/measures

Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)

- 4 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2025-26 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- ☒ Yes, organisation wide
- ☐ Yes, some departments/jobs
- ☐ No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- ☐ No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

All Council job descriptions contain a clear obligation placed on staff to comply with and actively promote the Council's policies and procedures relating to equality and diversity.

- 5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2025-26 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- ☐ Yes, organisation wide
- ☐ Yes, some departments/jobs
- ☒ No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- ☐ No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

N/A

- 6 In the 2025-26 reporting period were **objectives/ targets/ performance measures** relating to the Section 75 statutory duties **integrated** into corporate plans, strategic planning and/or operational business plans? *(tick all that apply)*

- ☐ Yes, through the work to prepare or develop the new corporate plan
- ☒ Yes, through organisation wide annual business planning
- ☒ Yes, in some departments/jobs
- ☐ No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation's corporate plan
- ☐ No, the organisation's planning cycle does not coincide with this 2024-25 report
- ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Equality measures were included in Business Plans, departmental objectives and continued to be addressed within the corporate planning process. Action Plans from Every Customer Counts assessment were incorporated into annual business improvement planning.

Equality action plans/measures

- 7 Within the 2025-26 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:

2 in the reporting period.

Actions ongoing:

32

Actions to commence:

2

Please provide any details and examples *(in addition to question 2)*:

While many of the Equality Action Plan actions are ongoing and longer-term in nature, 2 actions were scheduled for completion during the 2025/26 reporting period. These were the review and implementation of the revised Special Leave Policy and the development

of a database of condition surveys/access audits to support the prioritisation of accessibility improvements. Both actions were successfully completed during the reporting period. In total, eight actions have now been completed over the lifetime of the current Equality Action Plan. Progress continues across the remaining actions, many of which involve sustained organisational change and therefore require implementation over a number of years.

- 8 Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2025-26 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

None.

- 9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2025-26 reporting period, the following have been identified: (*tick all that apply*)

- ☒ Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the known inequality
- ☒ Action(s) to address the known inequality in a different way
- ☒ Action(s) to address newly identified inequalities/recently prioritised inequalities
- ☒ Measures to address a prioritised inequality have been completed

Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)

- 10 Following the initial notification of consultations, a targeted approach was taken – and consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance: (*tick one box only*)

- ☒ All the time
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Never

- 11 Please provide any **details and examples of good practice** in consultation during the 2025-26 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has

been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

- During 2025–26, the Council maintained ongoing engagement with residents through dedicated project updates, FAQs and opportunities for public enquiries as construction of the new Ballycastle Leisure Centre progressed.
- The Council continued to apply a range of good practice measures to ensure consultation processes were accessible, inclusive and responsive to the needs of Section 75 groups. Equality and good relations questions were incorporated into corporate consultations to provide respondents with opportunities to identify barriers, inequalities or community relations issues affecting them or their communities. Feedback received through these processes informed decision-making and helped identify both persistent and emerging inequalities.
- To improve accessibility, consultation documents and supporting information were made available in alternative formats on request, with increasing use of Easy Read materials peer reviewed by the Cedar Foundation and accessible QR codes; to support participation by people with learning disabilities and others who may experience communication barriers. Consultation information was promoted through a range of channels, including the Council website, social media, stakeholder networks, community organisations, Youth Voice and the Equality Forum, helping to reach a broad and diverse audience.
- The Council also continued to engage directly with representative organisations and community groups when developing policies, plans and strategies. Examples included engagement with disability organisations, older people's groups, youth representatives, minority ethnic communities and rural stakeholders. Feedback obtained through these engagements informed the development of services, accessibility improvements and strategic planning initiatives.
- A notable example of good practice was the Council's approach to the development of the new Council Plan, which included extensive engagement and consultation with residents, elected members, community and voluntary organisations, statutory partners and representative groups. The draft Plan contains dedicated commitments relating to equality, inclusion and good relations, demonstrating the use of feedback to strengthen the Council's strategic approach to addressing inequalities and promoting inclusion across the Borough. The Council Plan is scheduled for launch in June 2026.
- The Council also continued to apply Equality Screening and Rural Needs Assessment processes alongside consultation exercises, ensuring that potential impacts on Section 75 groups and people living in rural areas were considered at an early stage of policy development and decision-making.
- Various engagement events were held with members of the public, stakeholders and community representatives at the planning stage of the 153rd Open at Royal

Portrush. This informed traffic and transport, sustainability, business operations and allowed people to find out more about volunteering and being part of this event.

- The Equality Forum continues to work as a consultation medium. Consultation methods in this reporting period included site visits, mock-up reviews, face-to-face/hybrid meetings and focus groups.
- Actions relating to the Autism Action Plan continue to be consulted on with the Northern and Western Health Boards, regional and local autism groups and champions.
- The Diversity Ambassador encouraged consultation involvement through video and social media messages.

12 In the 2025-26 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently used by consultees**: *(tick all that apply)*

- ☒ Face to face meetings
- ☒ Focus groups
- ☒ Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing
- ☒ Questionnaires
- ☒ Information by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation
- ☐ Internet discussions
- ☐ Telephone consultations
- ☒ Other *(please specify)*: Hybrid meetings/ videos and open days

Please provide any details or examples of the uptake of these methods of consultation in relation to the consultees' membership of particular Section 75 categories:

The consultations undertaken were inclusive of all Section 75 categories. The accompanying questionnaires captured detailed equality data, particularly in relation to gender, age, and ethnicity. In general gender breakdown of respondents closely reflected the borough's population, with the majority identifying as either male or female, and the

distribution across categories aligning with local demographic data. In general, greater interest historically is shown by older groups and men and the Planning Application Validation Checklist consultation and Harbours and Marinas Strategy showed this trend, although due to the topics under consideration this was expected.

However, the Climate Change Action Strategy consultation recorded a notably high level of survey engagement from women, who accounted for approximately 70% of respondents. It also attracted participation from younger age groups, with 7.7% of respondents aged 25–34 and a further 7.7% aged 35–44. This provided valuable insight into the views of groups whose voices can sometimes be under-represented in consultation processes and highlighted the importance of ensuring that the perspectives of women and younger people are reflected in the development of climate and sustainability policies.

The development of the Harbours and Marinas Strategy adopted a predominantly face-to-face approach to engagement, using stakeholder meetings, workshops and focus groups to gather detailed information from harbour users, businesses, community representatives and other interested parties. This engagement helped inform the development of the draft Strategy and provided an opportunity to test proposals, ensure they were practical and achievable, and identify any issues or concerns at an early stage. It also enabled meaningful dialogue with stakeholders and helped ensure that the Strategy reflected local needs, priorities and experiences.

Again, the ethnicity data across all the consultations continued to indicate greater diversity among respondents compared to the most recent census.

The Planning Application Validation Checklist consultation used the questionnaire approach while also accepting written submissions from interested parties.

The Planning Application Validation Checklist and Climate Action Strategy consultation included hybrid meetings with the Equality Forum at the outset of the consultation process.

The Coleraine Leisure and Well-Being Centre consultation included an online or paper survey, information provision by telephone and access to an Easy Read version of the consultation materials. In addition, informal community drop-in sessions were held at Coleraine Leisure Centre on 10 September (12pm–2pm and 3pm–5pm) and 18 September (4pm–7pm). These sessions provided opportunities for residents to learn more about the proposals, view design information boards, discuss the project with Council officers, and provide feedback.

Consultations were issued to the Councils corporate equality consultee list which also offered the opportunity to opt in or out of the consultation. All consultations accepted on-line, written, and verbal responses and a freepost option was offered.

- 13** Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2025-26 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Emails, tweets and Facebook messages were sent to equality consultees and community groups within the Council area and flyers/postcards handed out at events/workshops and events to encourage participation in equality either as a consultee or as part of the Councils equality forum.

- 14** Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2025-26 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not applicable – no commitment to review

Arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

[Insert link to any web pages where screening templates and/or other reports associated with Equality Scheme commitments are published]

Screening outcome reports can be found here: [Screening Outcome Reports - Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council \(causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk\)](https://causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk/screening-outcome-reports)

Annual reports can be found here: [Annual Equality Reports - Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council \(causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk\)](https://causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk/annual-equality-reports)

The equality scheme can be found here: [Equality Scheme - Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council \(causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk\)](https://causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk/equality-scheme)

- 15** Please provide the **number** of policies screened during the year (*as recorded in screening reports*):

19

- 16** Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2025-26:

19 Policy consultations conducted with **screening** assessment presented.

0 Policy consultations conducted **with an equality impact assessment** (EQIA) presented.

0 Consultations for an **EQIA** alone.

- 17** Please provide details of the **main consultations** conducted on an assessment (as described above) or other matters relevant to the Section 75 duties:

The Planning Application Validation Checklist consultation (closed 24 April 2025)

- Included an Equality Screening and Rural Needs Assessment.
- Engagement with the elected members, staff, Council's Equality Scheme consultees, agents, members of the public, equality forum and youth voice.
- Direct consultation was carried out with members of the public, Elected Members and staff through a range of methods, including paper and online surveys and written submissions. To ensure accessibility, responses were accepted online, by post, by email and via telephone.

Coleraine Leisure and Well-Being Centre consultation (launched 8 September 2025)

- Included online and paper surveys, an Easy Read version, telephone requests and community drop-in sessions to maximise accessibility.

Climate Change Action Strategy Consultation (launched October 2025)

- Included specific Section 75 consultation, equality questions and an Easy Read survey. Alternative formats were available on request to improve accessibility.

Harbours and Marina Strategy 2026–2036 (Preliminary Consultation -November 2025)

- Included stakeholder workshops in Ballycastle, Rathlin Island and Portrush alongside an online survey, ensuring harbour users, local communities and businesses could contribute to the strategy.

- 18** Were any screening decisions (or equivalent initial assessments of relevance) reviewed following concerns raised by consultees? *(tick one box only)*

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No concerns were raised
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

N/A

Arrangements for publishing the results of assessments (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

- 19** Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2025-26 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No
- ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

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Arrangements for monitoring and publishing the results of monitoring (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

- 20** From the Equality Scheme monitoring arrangements, was there an audit of existing information systems during the 2025-26 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No, already taken place

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☐ No, scheduled to take place at a later date

☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details:

Data sources were updated. Internal staff data was also updated and provided to staff. Communication documents were re-prioritised to support reformatting into easy read.

21 In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies? *(tick one box only)*

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

- The Special Leave Policy was reviewed to ensure it remained fit for purpose and responsive to staff needs.
- As a result of monitoring findings from the Council Health Check, a series of toolbox talks were developed for male depot staff to encourage individuals to seek support and medical advice when required.
- Equality screening monitoring identified a need to enhance staff awareness and understanding, resulting in the delivery of targeted training.
- In addition, following the evaluation of the recruitment advertising pilot, the revised advertising approach was adopted as the standard method for future recruitment campaigns.

22 Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2025-26 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

Reviewing the membership of the Equality Forum a decision was taken to reach out to additional groups. This has resulted in broadening representation from Section 75 groups

and strengthening the Council's ability to identify and address potential equality impacts through policy development, consultation and service planning.

Feedback from the Equality Forum regarding accessibility barriers associated with pavement parking led to the development of the Council's "Footpaths Are for People, Not Parking" (#DontBlockThePath) campaign. Featuring individuals with lived experience and receiving regional media coverage, the campaign increased public awareness of accessibility issues affecting disabled people, older people and parents with young children.

The success of park and ride facilities at major events has led to this being offered on more occasions.

Monitoring of accessibility arrangements for the 153rd Open included engagement between the Equality Forum, Council officers and event organisers before and after the event. Post-event discussions identified lessons learned and opportunities for further improvements, helping to reduce potential barriers for disabled people attending future major events.

A review of Council's actions to reduce social isolation and promote healthy ageing has led to increased Age Friendly initiatives, COAST Wellbeing events and Walking for All programmes demonstrating improved engagement with older people.

Following the identification of communication barriers for people with learning disabilities and others requiring accessible formats, Council has continued to expand its provision of accessible information through the further development of Easy Read materials, Makaton signage in the Staff News and a dedicated Accessibility webpage.

Consideration of a memorial plaque recognising Mark Ashton, the LGBT+ rights activist with connections to Portrush and the Town Hall, reflected a more inclusive approach to civic recognition and representation of diverse communities and histories across the Borough.

- 23** Please provide any details or examples of monitoring that has contributed to the availability of equality and good relations information/data for service delivery planning or policy development:

1. Accessibility Audits of Council Facilities

What was monitored: Physical accessibility across Council buildings and facilities through 18 independent access audits.

Contribution: The audits identified barriers affecting access for disabled people and other users. Findings are informing an Estates Services action plan and future investment

decisions, ensuring accessibility considerations are embedded in service planning and facility improvements.

2. Coleraine Future Town Fund Consultation

What was monitored: Feedback from the Equality Forum and consultation participants regarding accessibility, engagement methods and barriers to participation.

Contribution: Monitoring identified opportunities to improve accessibility and inclusion within the consultation process. Consultation materials, engagement methods and communication channels were adapted to increase participation from under-represented groups and ensure a more representative evidence base for regeneration planning.

3. Equality Forum Engagement and Co-Production

What was monitored: Service user feedback from Section 75 groups through the Equality Forum.

Contribution: The Forum provided valuable equality and good relations information on initiatives including accessibility arrangements for the 153rd Open, the Climate Change Action Strategy, Community Planning Strategy Update and Coleraine Future Town Fund. Feedback informed consultation approaches, accessibility planning and service improvements, ensuring decisions were informed by lived experience and the needs of diverse communities.

4. Accessible Information and Communications Monitoring

What was monitored: Demand for and availability of accessible information formats and communication channels.

Contribution: Monitoring highlighted the need for more accessible communications, resulting in the development of Easy Read materials for Climate Change consultations, Memorial Policy documentation, Memorial Application Forms, Commemoration Name Forms and Easter Sports Camps. A dedicated Accessibility webpage was also developed to improve access to information and support services.

5. Climate Change Action Strategy Development

What was monitored: Equality screening findings, demographic information, consultation responses and potential impacts across Section 75 groups.

Contribution: Monitoring informed targeted engagement measures, accessible consultation materials and communication methods, ensuring the emerging strategy reflected the needs of different communities and promoted equality of opportunity.

6. Footpaths Are for People, Not Parking Campaign

What was monitored: Accessibility concerns raised through the Equality Forum and feedback from people with lived experience of mobility and access barriers.

Contribution: Evidence gathered highlighted the impact of pavement parking on disabled people, older people and parents with young children. This directly informed the development of the #DontBlockThePath campaign, increasing public awareness of accessibility barriers and supporting more inclusive public spaces.

7. Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Programme Monitoring

What was monitored: Participation data, equality monitoring information and barriers to employment and skills development experienced by Section 75 groups.

Contribution: Labour Market Partnership monitoring identified the need for targeted interventions to support people who are unemployed, economically inactive, under-employed or requiring upskilling. Information gathered helped shape inclusive programmes such as Retrain Plus, Work Ready, sector-based academies, apprenticeship initiatives and job fairs. Monitoring also demonstrated participation by people with disabilities, women, younger and older people, and those with caring responsibilities, helping to ensure employment and skills programmes remained responsive to local needs with reduced barriers to participation. The evidence gathered continues to inform local labour market planning and the development of targeted actions to improve employability and access to opportunities across the Borough.

8. Staff Consultation and People Strategy Development

What was monitored: Feedback from staff through consultation exercises, focus groups and engagement activities.

Contribution: Information gathered informed the development of the Council's People Strategy, helped to identify workforce priorities and support the creation of a more inclusive, supportive and equitable working environment.

9. Council Plan 2026–2031 – Equality, Inclusion and Strategic Planning

What was monitored: Engagement and consultation feedback from residents, staff, elected members and partner organisations during the development of the Council Plan 2026–2031, including equality considerations and Section 75 impacts.

Contribution: Monitoring and engagement activity informed the development of the Council Plan, ensuring that equality, inclusion and good relations considerations were embedded within the Council's strategic priorities. Feedback highlighted the importance of accessible services, inclusive engagement and addressing barriers experienced by Section 75 groups. Once launched this will result in a strengthened corporate commitment to mainstreaming equality across all service areas, with the Plan providing a clear framework for future decision-making, service design and resource allocation. The anticipated impact is improved consistency in the consideration of equality implications at the earliest stages of planning, supporting more inclusive and responsive services across the Borough.

Staff Training (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 5)

- 24** Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2025-26, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

During 2025/26, the Council continued to deliver a comprehensive programme of training and staff development activities to support the objectives of its Equality Scheme. The programme aimed to increase awareness and understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion issues, support compliance with Section 75 responsibilities, and promote a positive and inclusive working environment.

Learning and development opportunities included JAM Card Training, Active Bystander Training, Equality Screening and Rural Proofing, Building Resilience and Wellbeing, Mental Health First Aid, and Women in Leadership programmes. In addition, staff completed mandatory e-learning modules on Unconscious Bias, Dignity at Work, Disability Awareness, and the Connect, Contribute, Grow performance and development framework.

A range of supporting initiatives further reinforced the Council's equality and inclusion objectives. These included the continuation of the Council's three-year JAM Card partnership, delivery of Westfield Health Checks across operational sites, depots and leisure centres, continued access to the Westfield Health Cash Plan, implementation of the Work-Related Stress Toolkit for managers, and the rollout of the Connect, Contribute, Grow review process. Staff engagement and awareness were also supported through the monthly HR News newsletter, Equality articles, Makaton signing and information sessions on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG).

Consultation and focus groups were undertaken to inform the development of the Council's People Strategy, providing staff with opportunities to contribute to future workforce priorities.

These activities contributed to the Equality Scheme training objectives by improving staff awareness of equality, disability and inclusion issues; strengthening understanding of equality screening responsibilities; promoting dignity, respect and wellbeing in the workplace; and supporting a culture of inclusion across the organisation. The programme also enhanced the Council's capacity to deliver accessible and responsive services to the diverse communities it serves.

In addition, the Council supported an employee under its Volunteer Policy to undertake a mediation role supporting women affected by conflict across the Commonwealth, including attendance at a mediation seminar in Sri Lanka in February 2026. This opportunity contributed to the Council's Equality Scheme training objectives by enhancing awareness of inequality and the experiences of vulnerable and marginalised groups, particularly women affected by war. It also strengthened the employee's skills in mediation and engagement, supporting the Council's wider commitment to promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, and inclusive practice across its workforce and service delivery.

- 25** Please provide **any examples** of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives:

A number of training and awareness initiatives delivered during 2025–26 demonstrated positive outcomes in building staff knowledge, confidence and understanding of equality, inclusion and accessibility issues.

Equality Screening and Rural Proofing training strengthened officers' understanding of their responsibilities under Section 75 and helped support the consistent application of screening processes across Council services. This was evidenced through the continued integration of equality considerations into policy development, consultation exercises and major projects, including the Coleraine Future Town Fund consultation.

JAM Card training increased new staff awareness of hidden disabilities and improved confidence in recognising and responding appropriately to customers who may require additional support. The Council's continued commitment to its three-year JAM Card partnership further embedded disability awareness across services and facilities.

Mandatory training on Unconscious Bias, Disability Awareness and Dignity at Work helped reinforce a culture of respect, inclusion and equality across the organisation. Staff feedback and ongoing engagement demonstrated increased awareness of the barriers experienced by different groups and the importance of inclusive communication and service delivery.

Mental Health First Aid, Building Resilience and Wellbeing training, together with wider wellbeing initiatives, enhanced staff understanding of mental health issues and promoted a supportive workplace culture. This was complemented by awareness-raising activities and improved signposting to support services.

The effectiveness of training was further demonstrated through the Council's growing focus on accessibility and inclusion, including the development of Easy Read materials, increased engagement with the Equality Forum, the delivery of the #DontBlockThePath campaign, and ongoing efforts to improve accessibility across Council facilities and services.

Public Access to Information and Services (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 6)

- 26** Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2025-26, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

Monitoring and engagement during 2025/26 led to a range of improvements in access to information and services across the Council, including:

- Completion of 18 independent access audits across Council facilities, with findings informing an Estates Services action plan to address accessibility barriers and improve the user experience.
- Development of Easy Read versions of key documents and information, including Climate Change materials, Car Parking, Harbours & Marinas Consultation, and Easter Sports Camps information, improving access for people with learning disabilities and others who benefit from simplified formats.
- Creation of a dedicated Accessibility webpage, providing a centralised “one-stop shop” for information on accessible facilities, services and support available across the Council.
- Increased staff awareness of inclusive service delivery through internal communications on topics including menopause awareness, trauma-informed practice and the importance of policies, helping to embed equality and inclusion across the organisation.
- Ongoing engagement with the Equality Forum to inform Council policies, projects and consultations, including accessibility arrangements for the 153rd Open, the Coleraine Future Town Fund, Climate Change initiatives and the Community Planning Strategy Update.
- Equality Forum input directly influenced the design of the Coleraine Future Town Fund consultation, resulting in more accessible engagement methods, clearer information and increased participation from under-represented groups.

- Issues identified through Equality Forum engagement informed the development of the #DontBlockThePath campaign and wider accessibility initiatives, helping to improve awareness of barriers faced by Section 75 groups and supporting more inclusive service delivery.

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

- 27** How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2025-26?

Insert number here: 0

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

N/A

Section 3: Looking Forward

- 28** Please indicate when the Equality Scheme is due for review:

2030

- 29** Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements (screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? *(please provide details)*

During the next reporting period, the Council will continue to strengthen its Equality Scheme arrangements by focusing on the early integration of equality considerations into policy development, service planning and decision-making. Key actions will include delivering training for officers and elected members, strengthening quality assurance of screening processes, once the draft Council plan is launched embedding its Equality Commitments, increasing early engagement with the Equality Forum, improving consultation accessibility, and making greater use of equality data to inform decision-making.

The Council will also continue to support the Diversity Ambassador role and promote initiatives that raise awareness of equality and inclusion issues through engagement with people with lived experience. In the next reporting period, Council will place a greater emphasis on engaging with and amplifying the voices of groups that are often under-represented or less frequently heard in decision-making processes across the Borough. This will include individuals with learning disabilities, minority ethnic communities and LGBT+ people, ensuring their views, experiences and needs are better reflected in consultation, service delivery and policy development.

These actions will support the Council's ongoing commitment to identifying and addressing persistent and emerging inequalities across the Borough.

30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next reporting period? *(please tick any that apply)*

- ☒ Employment
- ☒ Goods, facilities and services
- ☒ Legislative changes
- ☐ Organisational changes/ new functions
- ☐ Nothing specific, more of the same
- ☒ Other (please state):

Improved data collection, sharing and analysis. Information with regards to Transgender service provision.

PART B - Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and Disability Action Plans

1. Number of action measures for this reporting period that have been:

3	12	0
Fully achieved	Partially achieved	Not achieved

2. Please outline below details 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 ⁱ	Outcomes / Impact ⁱⁱ
National ⁱⁱⁱ	Sharing learning and contributing to wider equality practice.	Continued benchmarking, collaboration and engagement with other public sector organisations to share equality and disability inclusion approaches.	Supported continuous improvement, strengthened consistency of practice and contributed to wider public sector efforts to promote disability equality and participation.
Regional ^{iv}	Participation in disability networks and good practice initiatives.	Council officers and representatives engaged with regional networks, forums and learning opportunities to	Increased organisational learning and strengthened the Council's ability to adopt good practice and improve accessibility.

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	Inclusive employment and skills opportunities through Labour Market Partnership	share approaches to disability inclusion. Delivered targeted employability programmes, disability-focused outreach through initiatives such as Talent Knows No Limit and StartAbility, accessible job fairs with BSL/ISL interpretation and links with disability support organisations.	Reduced barriers to employment and training, increased participation of disabled people in skills development and improved access to employment opportunities.
Local ^v	Disability engagement and representation through Equality Forum, disability organisations and community engagement	Continued engagement with disability groups and representative organisations to gather feedback and identify barriers experienced by disabled people.	Disabled people had opportunities to influence Council services, policies and decisions. Lived experience informed improvements and helped ensure services were more responsive and inclusive.
	Diversity Ambassador leadership and disability inclusion promotion	The Diversity Ambassador engaged with disability organisations and supported awareness initiatives.	Increased visibility of disabled people's achievements and contributions, challenged stereotypes and promoted positive

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	Accessible consultation and communication.	Increased use of Easy Read documentation, alternative formats and accessible communication approaches across Council consultations and information provision.	attitudes towards disability within the Borough.
	Inclusive service design and accessibility improvements	Accessibility feedback informed improvements such as the redesign of the Leisure Centre Members' App and continued development of inclusive public events.	Reduced communication barriers and enabled greater participation by disabled people, people with learning disabilities and others who may require accessible information.
	Inclusive sport, leisure and community participation opportunities	Supported disability-focused activities and inclusive leisure initiatives.	Improved usability and accessibility of Council services, enabling a wider range of residents to participate in leisure and community activities.
			Increased opportunities for disabled people to participate in community life, improve wellbeing and build social connections.

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	Disability awareness and positive attitudes campaigns	Supported awareness campaigns including Footpaths are for People #don'tblockthepath and other disability awareness initiatives.	Improved public understanding of disability, promoted inclusion and contributed to reducing stigma and misconceptions.
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2(b) What **training action measures** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Induction Training Sessions.	Induction training sessions for all new employees of Council. These sessions include a section on equality, diversity and good relations.	New employees awareness of the legislative requirements relating to equality and good relations have been improved and a baseline of skills and knowledge is developed.
2	Training Sessions for staff on: Disability Awareness, Dignity at Work, Unconscious Bias, Health & Wellbeing for Staff, Equality Screening, Rural Needs Assessments, Undertaking Consultations	Training for relevant staff and mandatory training on a range of equality and disability issues continued.	Employees of Council have up-to-date awareness of equality and disability issues affecting people with specific disabilities. Promotion of positive attitudes towards people with a disability.

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3	Awareness raising training for staff and elected members.	Monthly awareness emails to all staff and elected members.	Promotion of positive attitudes towards disabled people through acknowledging the contribution of people with a disability.
4	Members training programme.	Members training programme embedding equality and inclusion into everyday situations: Chair training, Committee training, Media training, Code of Conduct training and Ending Violence against women and girls	Members capacity will be developed to ensure awareness of legal obligations and the need for everyday inclusion across their activities.

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	Continuous improvements supporting accessibility for individuals with a disability to access information about all Council Services.	Extension of Easy Read as an important communication tool.	5 new Easy Read documents were developed.
2	Attendance of Diversity Champion at training and networking events.	Training and networking events for Disability Champions arranged by the Local Government Staff Commission.	Greater awareness and knowledge of issues facing people with disabilities and development of positive attitudes to people with a disability. Sharing of equality and diversity best practice information between elected representatives and Councils.
3	Improve disability awareness of staff via e-briefings, newsletters,	Provision of an awareness programme for staff continued in 2025 - 2026.	There was a continued emphasis on Makaton throughout the reporting period and staff were

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	staff meetings, emails, intranet and internet.	Disability related topics were highlighted to staff.	educated on the Makaton language through Makaton signs and action in each addition of the staff news. This has improved accessible communication used by staff and elected representatives.
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2 (d) What action measures were achieved to '**encourage others**' to promote the two duties:

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Improve disability awareness via information and links on the Council website.	The Diversity Champion continued to raise awareness of equality and inclusion issues through articles shared on social media. In addition, accessibility information was consolidated into a dedicated section of the Council website, making it easier for users to find and access relevant support and guidance.	Information provided to Citizens via the website and social media will raise awareness and acceptance.
2	Encouraging consultation and asking people to feed into Councils decision making process.	Advertisement via social media, newspapers and emails to encourage others to take part in our consultation exercises.	New individuals joined the consultation list. New individuals/representatives joined the equality forum.

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

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	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
1	Review Accessibility of Councils Public Convenience Portfolio	Review and Analysis Completed.	Action plan in place for planned improvements.
2	Deliver a programme of introducing communication boards in play parks	Pilot communication boards in play parks and review their impact.	Pilot completed, feedback was extremely positive and communication boards are now included in improvement schemes.
3	Reduced parking litter	Support SMART phone users to reduce litter and improve the future environment.	Cashless transaction figure of 30% has been exceeded.

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

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
1	Support persons with a disability to attend and fully engage in Council events and programmes.	Provision of inclusive toilets and activities at Council events.	Available at all Council Major events.	Ongoing
2	Continue to progress Every Customer Counts Initiative	Improved support for disabled people to access services.	18 Access audits were carried out on buildings	Ongoing programme of works

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			and an action plan of works developed.	
3	Improve accessibility for individuals with a disability to access information about all Council services	Assess opportunities to present alternative formats in advance. Provision of ALT text in Council Communications Increased number of communication documents in Easy Read. To promote positive attitudes towards disabled people through acknowledging the contribution of people with a disability.	Increase number of alternative formats now occurring. ALT text is improving although the percentage has yet to be reviewed. Easy Read documents have consistently been improved by at least 4 per year. Makaton continues to be included in staff news editions. 2 positive disability related articles have been completed each year so far within the plan.	Ongoing performance indicators.
4	Improve accessibility for individuals with a disability to participate in physical activity and improve well-being.	Individuals with a disability can access specialist equipment to facilitate exercise. Establish a programme of targeted actions to encourage participation among disabled people.	Users are now renting inclusive cycles. Work is ongoing to improve autism friendly exercise sessions.	Ongoing performance indicators.

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5	Improve accessibility at Teir 1 Leisure Facilities.	Individuals can access suitable sport facilities. Develop inclusive initiatives and programmes with local disability groups. Introduce guides and maps to support ease of navigation.	Autism awards have been achieved at 3 main leisure centres. A parent questionnaire for Neuro diverse individuals under 18 years has been developed. Improved signage has been erected in Leisure Centres.	Other ongoing performance indicators.
6	Improve Accessibility to changing places provision within the borough	Increase the number of changing places toilets in the borough by 2.	1 changing place toilet has opened in Megaw Park. 2 other toilets have been commissioned.	Ongoing performance indicator.
7	Improve disability awareness of staff via e-briefings, newsletters, staff meetings, emails, intranet and internet. Improve disability awareness of staff via training.	Staff will be engaged and awareness raised. Continue to deliver a suite of equality and diversity related training for all staff (including disability awareness training)	Staff news features disability related information and periodical direct emails have been issues to staff throughout the reporting period. This has been coupled with specific equality and diversity awareness training.	Ongoing performance indicator.
8	Reinvigorate the role of Diversity ambassador within Council	Tweets/X or Facebook likes and articles or	The Diversity Ambassador continued to represent diversity within the borough, this year she	Ongoing performance indicator.

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		updates from the Diversity Ambassador	lead a disability campaign as well as promoting equality through social media.	
9	Continue to deliver targeted outreach to encourage and support people with disabilities to consider enterprise and start a business.	Disabled people who are considering starting a business are supported	During 2025–26, the Council strengthened support for disabled people wishing to become self-employed by promoting specialist entrepreneurship initiatives, including the StartAbility programme, and by creating a dedicated online resource signposting disabled entrepreneurs to business planning, mentoring, funding and specialist employment support. In addition, mainstream business support programmes such as Go Succeed and the Labour Market Partnership Business Start Up Seed Fund were delivered on an inclusive basis, helping to reduce barriers to enterprise and	Ongoing performance indicator up to the end of the plan.

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			improve access to self-employment opportunities for disabled residents.	
10	Encourage and support inclusivity via relevant PR campaigns	Promotion of positive attitudes towards disabled people. Printed documents and brand campaigns to feature positive images of disabled people	A disability campaign ran this year to highlight pavement parking and showed disabled people as drivers of positive change.	Ongoing performance indicator up to the end of the plan.
11	Complete LED lighting replacement within identified carparks	Improve feelings of safety and update lighting in carparks	Work has commenced in a small number of carparks.	Ongoing performance indicator up to the end of the plan.
12	Work towards Net Zero	Meet NI 2050 Net Zero targets	A range of programmes/actions have commenced.	Ongoing performance indicator up to and past the end of the current action plan.

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

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	Action Measures not met	Reasons
	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

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

- Review of progress against the Disability Action Plan.
- Identification of emerging inequalities, barriers and trends affecting disabled people, including analysis of Labour Market Partnership equality monitoring data.
- Participation figures for disability-focused events, programmes and initiatives.
- Monitoring of requests for alternative formats, interpretation services and accessible communications.
- Accessibility audits, service reviews and Equality Screening processes used to identify opportunities to improve accessibility and inclusion.
- Feedback from complaints, compliments, enquiries, consultations, community engagement activities, the Equality Consultative Forum, service users and disability stakeholder organisations used to inform service improvements and future actions.

(b) Quantitative

- Number of complaints received regarding accessibility and disability related issues.
- Tracking provision of and requests for specific services received, e.g. interpretation services, information in alternative formats, etc.
- Number of training sessions provided and attendance at same
- Audits undertaken as part of the “Every Customer Counts” initiative and number of actions in Action Plans delivered.

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- Monitoring participation and uptake of Council programmes, services, facilities and events by disabled people and other Section 75 groups, including analysis of accessibility-related supports and barriers to engagement.
- Analysis of equality monitoring data collected through initiatives such as the Labour Market Partnership to identify barriers, trends and areas of under-representation.
- Monitoring progress against Disability Action Plan actions.

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?

No

If yes please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
2	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
3	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
4	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
5	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

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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?

No.

ⁱ **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.

ⁱⁱ **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.

ⁱⁱⁱ **National** : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments

^{iv} **Regional**: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level

^v **Local** : Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora.

Appendix 1 - Additional on-going good practice initiatives:

Labour Market Partnership Equality Response 2025/26

Introduction The Causeway Coast and Glens Labour Market Partnership (LMP) is a programme funded by the Department for Communities (DfC) aimed at tackling key challenges in the local labour market. We offer support to individuals who are unemployed, economically inactive, under-employed, or in need of upskilling. In addition, the partnership assists local employers in recruiting and retaining staff. Our work is collaborative by nature. Within the Council, we engage closely with departments such as Economic Development, Community Development, and the Funding Unit. We also maintain strong partnerships with a wide range of external statutory and non-statutory organisations. The Labour Market Partnership aims to promote inclusion and equality in all programmes that we deliver. In 2025-2026 our action plan included programmes that impacted several Section 75 groups. These programmes have been summarised below.	
2025/2026 Action Plan All programmes – We updated our equality monitoring form in line with DFC requirements, so we cannot see what programmes participants took part in just our general statistics across all programmes. Please note there is two data sets as the forms were also changed slightly since January 2026. Combined Section 75 Equality Monitoring Report January 2026 Dataset (166 Respondents) and April 2025 to January 2026 Dataset (255 Respondents).	

Overview

Measure	Jan 2026 Dataset	Apr 2025–Jan 2026 Dataset
Total Participants	166	255
Male	63.9%	68.6%
Female	35.5%	30.6%
Disability	17.5%	16.9%
White Ethnicity	92.8%	97.6%
Protestant	47.6%	49.4%
Catholic/Roman Catholic	25.9%	24.7%
Heterosexual/Straight	94.0%	97.3%

1. Age Profile**January 2026 Dataset (166 Participants)**

Age Group	Number	%
16–24	49	29.5%
25–34	45	27.1%
35–49	36	21.7%
50–64	33	19.9%
65+	3	1.8%

Key Finding: 56.6% of participants were under 35 years old, with 43.4% being older.

April 2025 – January 2026 Dataset (255 Participants)

Age Group	Number	%
18–49	189	74.1%
Over 50	53	20.8%
Under 18	13	5.1%

Key Finding: The programme continues to primarily attract those who are 18 to 49 years of age, with 74.1% aged between 18 and 49.

2. Gender

January 2026 Dataset

Gender	Number	%
Male	106	63.9%
Female	59	35.5%
Prefer not to say	1	0.6%

April 2025 – January 2026 Dataset

Gender	Number	%
Male	175	68.6%
Female	78	30.6%
No Response	2	0.8%

Key Finding: Both datasets demonstrate higher male participation, with men accounting for approximately two-thirds of participants.

3. Disability

January 2026 Dataset

Disability Status	Number	%
No	137	82.5%
Yes	29	17.5%

April 2025 – January 2026 Dataset

Disability Status	Number	%
No	197	77.3%
Yes	43	16.9%
Prefer not to say	15	5.9%

Key Finding: Disability representation remains consistent across both datasets at approximately 17%.

4. Marital Status

January 2026 Dataset

Status	Number	%
Single	98	59.0%
Married	39	23.5%
In a Civil Partnership	10	6.0%
Prefer not to say	9	5.4%
Divorced	5	3.0%
Separated	5	3.0%

April 2025 – January 2026 Dataset

Status	Number	%
Single	145	56.9%
Married	80	31.4%
In a Civil Partnership	12	4.7%
Prefer not to say	7	2.7%
Separated	6	2.4%
Widowed/Surviving Partner	3	1.2%
Divorced	2	0.8%

Key Finding: Single participants remain the largest marital status group, representing over half of all respondents.

5. Religious Belief

January 2026 Dataset

Religion	Number	%
Protestant	79	47.6%
Catholic	43	25.9%
Prefer not to say	10	6.0%
Muslim	4	2.4%
Christian (Other)	2	1.2%
Bahá'í	1	0.6%
Jehovah's Witness	1	0.6%
Blank	26	15.7%

April 2025 – January 2026 Dataset

Religion	Number	%
Protestant	126	49.4%
Roman Catholic	63	24.7%
No Religion	42	16.5%
Prefer not to say	17	6.7%
Other Religion	5	2.0%
Hindu	1	0.4%
Muslim	1	0.4%

Key Finding: Protestants represent the largest religious group in both datasets, followed by Catholics/Roman Catholics.

6. Ethnic Group (Racial Group)

January 2026 Dataset

Ethnic Group	Number	%
White	154	92.8%
Arab	3	1.8%

Mixed Ethnic Group	3	1.8%
Asian	2	1.2%
Mixed	2	1.2%
Black / African / Caribbean	1	0.6%
No Response	1	0.6%

April 2025 – January 2026 Dataset

Ethnic Group	Number	%
White	249	97.6%
Prefer not to say	2	0.8%
Other Nationality	2	0.8%
Mixed Ethnic Group	1	0.4%
Irish Traveller	1	0.4%

Key Finding: Both datasets show participants are predominantly White, with some representation from minority ethnic communities.

7. Sexual Orientation

January 2026 Dataset

Orientation	Number	%
Heterosexual/Straight	156	94.0%
Bisexual	5	3.0%
Prefer not to say	4	2.4%
Gay or Lesbian	1	0.6%

April 2025 – January 2026 Dataset

Orientation	Number	%
Heterosexual/Straight	248	97.3%

Lesbian	3	1.2%
Prefer not to say	2	0.8%
Gay	1	0.4%
Bisexual	1	0.4%

Key Finding: The majority of participants identified as Heterosexual/Straight, with a small but visible LGBTQ+ representation.

8. Persons With or Without Dependants

(Available only in the April 2025 – January 2026 dataset)

Dependants	Number	%
No	133	52.2%
Yes	116	45.5%
Prefer not to say	6	2.4%

Key Finding: Nearly half (45.5%) of participants reported having dependants.

Overall Section 75 Summary

Category	January 2026 Dataset	April 2025 – January 2026 Dataset
Age	56.6% under 35	74.1% aged 18–49
Gender	63.9% Male	68.6% Male
Disability	17.5% Disabled	16.9% Disabled
Marital Status	59.0% Single	56.9% Single
Religion	47.6% Protestant	49.4% Protestant
Ethnicity	92.8% White	97.6% White
Sexual Orientation	94.0% Heterosexual	97.3% Heterosexual
Dependants	Not collected	45.5% have dependants

Overall Conclusion

The combined equality monitoring data indicates that participants are predominantly male, White, Protestant and heterosexual. Both datasets show strong participation from younger and working-age adults, with disability representation remaining consistent at approximately 17%. The later dataset also highlights that almost half of participants have caring responsibilities or dependants.

Business Start Up and Seed Fund – Inclusion (All)

Work is ongoing on this academy and equality monitoring has not been completed by all the applicants, but so far there has been a strong gender mix.

Retrain Plus – Inclusion (All)

The Retrain Plus programme in the year 2025-26 contained the following academies:

- Childcare
- Childminding
- Community Development
- Digital Marketing
- Health and Social Care
- Hospitality
- Lifeguard
- Medical Administrator
- Non-Emergency Care Academy
- Security
- Taxi
- Transport (HGV and Bus Driving).

All academies were open to all residents within the Causeway Coast and Glens area who were over the age of 18, currently unemployed, under-employed or at risk of redundancy. All participants also required a legal right to work in the UK.

Participants represented a diverse range of ages and community backgrounds, including both males and females. The Health and Social Care, Childminding and Childcare Academies primarily attracted female applicants, whereas the Security, HGV and Taxi Academies saw a higher proportion of male participants. Other academies had a more balanced gender distribution.

There was a higher uptake of disabled participants on the Childcare and Security Academies.

Personal Learning Account Fund – Inclusion (All)

The Personal Learning Account Fund can provide up to £500 towards accredited or industry recognised training required for career development. Applicants must be aged 16 and over, have the legal right to work and live in Causeway Coast and Glens Borough.

The aim of this fund was to remove a financial barrier preventing many individuals from upskilling.

Within the borough there was a vast range of ages who applied and a mix of genders. Final monitoring has not been completed yet.

LMP Outreach – Inclusion (All)

The CCG LMP have attended many events to outreach to those who live across the borough. These included a 'Good Relations Thank you' event and 'Talent Knows No Limit' event in June 2026, and a 'StartAbility' event in January 2026.

Two of these events were focused on encouraging those with disabilities to participate in local programmes.

The LMP also part funded and attended a 'Hospitality Takeover Day' in March 2026, which encouraged young people (under the age of 24) in the borough to take up employment in the local hospitality sector.

Job Fairs – Inclusion (All)

In partnership with local Jobs and Benefits Offices, we have supported and funded 6 job fairs across the borough over the past year. There was also a large job fair which took place in May 2026, which will be counted in our 2025 26 funding year outcomes. The large job fair on the 15th May had 253 members of the public in attendance.

Events were held in Coleraine, Limavady and Ballymoney. The job fairs were open to all individuals aged 16 and over, attracting attendees of all ages and backgrounds, including those from ethnic minority communities.

To ensure inclusivity, several support organisations participated in the job fairs to address the needs of residents with disabilities. Additionally, DfC Employer services provided both Irish Sign Language (ISL) and British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters at the large job fair on the 14th May to remove communication barriers for members of the Deaf community.



Graphic 1: Infographic from data compiled for Causeway Coast and Glens Regional Job Fair held 14th May 2026.

Communication

Across all of the LMP programmes, we have consistently emphasised the importance of incorporating flexibility wherever feasible. Aware of the varied barriers participants may encounter, we have embraced a flexible approach ourselves and have strongly encouraged our contractors to do the same wherever possible. To improve accessibility, some programmes offer afternoon or evening classes, while others are delivered through a blended

approach, combining online learning with face-to-face sessions. These options provide greater flexibility for participants who may be unable to attend programmes delivered solely in a classroom environment. Causeway Coast and Glens Labour Market Partnership actively promotes opportunities through a range of communication channels to ensure the widest possible reach across the community. Promotion is undertaken through in-person engagement, distribution of promotional materials in locations such as Jobs and Benefits Offices, local radio advertising, the Council's website, and a variety of social media platforms. This multi-channel approach helps maximise awareness of available opportunities and encourages participation from individuals across all Section 75 groups and communities.	
Conclusion This report demonstrates our ongoing commitment to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion across all areas of our work. While achievements have been made, the report also identifies areas where further action is required to address inequalities and ensure that services remain accessible, fair, and responsive to the needs of all. We wish to continue promoting our programmes to all types of people who live in Causeway Coast and Glens and would like to encourage signups from underrepresented groups as much as possible.	

Sport, Wellbeing & Inclusion Initiatives 2025/26

Programme	Details	Participants
'The Road to the Open'	With the 153 rd British Open Golf Championship coming to Portrush in July 2025 we delivered a Primary School coaching programme encouraging children to try golf as a new sport. Coaching took place in primary schools by golf professionals and coaches. Schools at the end of the programme were invited in to a 'Mini Open' event in June at Roe Valley Resort / Ballyreagh Golf Course and Bushfoot Golf Club. Partners were the R&A, Royal Portrush Golf Club, Bushfoot Golf Club and Roe Valley Resort	150
Causeway Coast and Glens Sports Awards	The Gala Sports Awards event in November celebrated sport throughout the Borough in the last year. Over 200 guests attended the evening in The Lodge Hotel hosted by guest Denise Watson	205
Sports Grant & Bursary Programme	Council's Sports Grant & Bursary Funding programme provides £40,000 of support to local sport for representative athletes, club safety equipment, coach education, seeding grants and a new element added for 2025 / 26 sporting events	103
Health & Wellbeing Grant	Council's Sport and Wellbeing Funding programme provides £40,000 of support to community associations and sports clubs to develop community-based wellbeing initiatives	40
Elite Athlete Scheme	Council's Elite Athlete Scheme provides support to talented athletes at representative level for use of Council gyms and swimming pools	43

Active Summer Recreation Programme 2025	Council provided 20 Sports Camps & 6 Summer Schemes over 7 weeks, involving 15 different sports in conjunction with external partners, local clubs and National Governing Bodies of Sport. Summer Schemes were delivered in community settings throughout the Borough	1021
Inclusive Summer Programme	Council operated inclusive summer programme in with partnership from Mae Murray Foundation. Various activities, music, arts and crafts delivered across summer. 2025 took a slightly different delivery angle in that we delivered 7 events from June to August, 3 Beach events at Benone, 2 at JDLC, 1 at Flowerfield and 1 at Mussenden temple	150
Inclusive Family Events	5 inclusive family events ran across borough in 2025-26. Easter at JDLC, Summer events at Roe Mill Limavady, Portrush Recreation Grounds, Flowerfield Portstewart and Megaw Park Ballymoney. 250 participants across 5 events participating in sensory play, sports, games and inclusive cycling	250
Inclusive Cycling Hire Scheme	Public hire scheme ran weekly from JDLC store from May to September 2025. Utilising the inclusive cycling fleet to offer the public the opportunity to hire bikes and enjoy along the cycle path and riverside park. Delivered weekly on Wednesday evening. Plans to expand in 2026	20
PAN Disability Club	2 x 10 weeks of activities and sports for children and young people with varied disabilities at m JDLC. Delivered September to December 2025 and January to March 2026	220
Causeway Healthy Kids project	Final phase of delivery. Primary School programme encouraging children to make healthy life choices (mental health & wellbeing, physical activity, and nutrition elements); the project was delivered within schools in socially deprived areas of the Borough (partnership with the Northern Trust, PHA, NHLP and GG&GBC) 12 schools took part	332
Active Kids programme	A 20-week Autumn & Spring Programme was delivered in one Community Centre and three Leisure Centre settings across a range of sports, including football, table tennis and gymnastics, offering young children the opportunity to try sports and encouraging them to join a recognised junior club	244

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After Schools programme	A 15-week coaching programme was delivered in various sports in 18 schools (3 x 5-week coaching blocks) throughout the school calendar year, linking and creating a pathway for participants to local recognised junior clubs	860
Shared Education Schools programme	Shared Education sessions were held, involving three schools, utilising sport as a medium to engage communities and create new friendships between schools & pupils	150
Different Ball Same Goal	Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council's Different Ball, Same Goal 2025 programme is a cross-community sports initiative designed to bring young people together through football, rugby and Gaelic games. The project encourages participants to explore different sporting traditions, build friendships, and develop greater understanding and respect for diverse cultures and backgrounds. Delivered through the Council's Sports Development and Good Relations teams, the programme promotes inclusion, teamwork, and positive community relations while supporting the vision of a shared and united future	160
Good Relations Darts Project	The 2026 project above also introduced darts as a shared sporting activity, giving participants another opportunity to engage with different traditions in a fun and inclusive environment. The darts programme helped develop concentration, teamwork and social interaction while encouraging young people from different backgrounds to build friendships and strengthen community connections	80
Pre-school Nursery Programme	This programme, funded by the Northern Trust, delivered 3 fundamental movement skills sessions in 6 schools, which provided children with experience in physical activity and gave them a foundation for participating in sports and recreational physical activities	294
Easter Recreation Programme 2025	3 days of sports camps were provided in various sports throughout the Borough, ranging from football, golf, cricket & hockey, in partnership with National Governing Bodies and local clubs	125
Friendship Football League	The Community Football League celebrated 25 years, with 10 teams from throughout Causeway participating over 20 Friday nights	150

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Active Life	Older adult exercise and sport programme delivered in 5 locations across the borough, Limavady, Dungiven, Coleraine , Ballymoney and Ballycastle	320
Nordic Walking	5 Nordic Walking sessions delivered across Borough (Limavady, Garvagh, Ballycastle, Coleraine, Castlerock)	48
Walking for All	New programme commenced January 2026 2 Walk leader training sessions delivered establishing 2 new walking groups (1 in Portstewart and 1 in Cloughmills)	30
Autism Walks	During May the Public Health Agency promoted walking as a means for people to engage in physical activity and social interaction namely “Walk this May”. Aligned with this campaign the Northern Area Autism Forum and CCGBC developed three walks with a number of partners to facilitate the needs of Autistic citizens their family members, carers and friends	33
Positive Ageing Month 2025	Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council coordinated a borough-wide programme of activities to celebrate Positive Ageing Month throughout October 2025. Working in partnership with over 20 organisations, more than 100 events and activities were promoted and delivered across the Borough, encouraging older people to remain active, connected and engaged in their communities. A dedicated Positive Ageing Month booklet was produced and distributed, with approximately 1,500 copies circulated through community venues, libraries, health settings and partner organisations. To raise awareness of the campaign, Cloonavin Building was illuminated in purple throughout the month	1,500 booklets distributed; 100+ events
'My Happy Place' Intergenerational Art & Photography Competition	Delivered in partnership with the Western Health and Social Care Trust Age Friendly Programme, the competition encouraged older people and young people across the Trust area to capture places that positively impact their wellbeing. The initiative was coordinated by the three Age Friendly Officers alongside Trust staff. Winning entries were featured in a professionally produced calendar, with 1,000 copies distributed across the region. A celebration event was held at Roe Valley Arts and Cultural Centre, bringing together participants, families and partners for an afternoon of music, refreshments and recognition, attended by the Mayor	1,000 calendars distributed

Intergenerational Family Info Fair	Delivered in partnership with the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership and Anti-Poverty Network, this intergenerational event was held at Coleraine Leisure Centre. 15 partner organisations participated, providing activities, information and support services for families. The event promoted community cohesion, family wellbeing and positive intergenerational relationships while signposting attendees to local services and opportunities	100+ participants
Age Friendly Employer Pledge	Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council became a registered Age Friendly Employer through the UK Centre for Ageing Better. The pledge commits the Council to five key actions designed to support age-inclusive recruitment, retention, development and wellbeing of older workers. This demonstrates the Council's commitment to promoting positive ageing within its own workforce and leading by example across the Borough	Organisation-wide commitment
Millburn Intergenerational Health & Wellbeing Project	Funded through the Public Health Agency, this intergenerational project brought together older and younger participants to take part in a programme of outdoor activity, social engagement and wellbeing initiatives. The project supported participants to improve confidence, increase physical activity levels and build meaningful social connections across generations. Evaluation findings demonstrated significant positive outcomes for those involved. 93% of participants reported increased confidence in being outdoors and physically active, while 71% reported feeling more socially connected following participation in the project	18 participants