

DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

2023/24 - 2025/26

NORTHERN IRELAND
LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICERS'
SUPERANNUATION COMMITTEE



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This Plan shows what we are doing to have due regard to Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006).

If you require this plan in an alternative format (such as in large print, in Braille, on audio cassette, easy read or on computer disc) and/or language, please let us know using the following contact details:

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 NILGOSC is committed to ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded throughout all its functions. In compliance with its obligations under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006), NILGOSC is required, when carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need to:
- promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities; and
 - encourage participation by people with disabilities in public life ('the disability duties').
- 1.2 Under Section 49B of the DDA 1995, NILGOSC is also required to submit to the Equality Commission a disability action plan showing how it proposes to fulfil these duties in relation to its functions. The following Disability Action Plan sets out the actions we will take to meet these obligations.

2. COMMITMENT

- 2.1 To ensure our Disability Action plan is implemented effectively, we will:
- continue to allocate appropriate resources in terms of people, time and money;
 - where appropriate, build objectives and targets relating to the disability duties into the corporate plan;
 - put appropriate internal arrangements in place to ensure that the disability duties are complied with;
 - ensure the plan is communicated to staff; and
 - provide any necessary training and guidance for staff on the disability duties.
- 2.2 NILGOSC also commits to submitting an annual report to the Equality Commission on the implementation of this plan and to carrying out a three-year review of the plan, or plans submitted to the Equality Commission over the three year review period.
- 2.3 Furthermore, NILGOSC is also committed to consulting with appropriate representative groups during the implementation and review of this plan, in order that the views and needs of people with disabilities are taken into consideration.
- 2.4 Responsibility for implementing, reviewing and evaluating this Disability Action Plan and the point of contact within NILGOSC for anyone seeking further information will be the Equality Officer, who can be contacted at equality@nilgosc.org.uk or using the contact details at the start of the Plan.
- 2.5 A copy of this plan, the annual progress report to the Equality Commission and the three-year review of this plan will be made available on our website www.nilgosc.org.uk.

3. WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

- 3.1 NILGOSC is the Non-Departmental Public Body responsible for administering the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) in Northern Ireland. NILGOSC was set up by the Government in April 1950 to operate a pension scheme for the local councils and other similar bodies in Northern Ireland. The pension scheme is a defined benefit Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) Scheme.
- 3.2 The pension scheme is managed by the Committee which consists of a chairperson, five members nominated by employers' organisations, five members nominated by employees' organisations and two independent members. Committee members are appointed by the Minister for Communities for a four year term and may be reappointed for a second four year term at the Minister's discretion.
- 3.3 The Committee meets 9 times per year and its authority to manage the scheme is set out in the LGPS Regulations (NI) 2014. The day to day administration of the pension scheme is carried out by the Secretary, supported by a staff of approximately 80.
- 3.4 The Secretary, as Accounting Officer and Chief Executive, is responsible for the operational management of the organisation and for providing strategic advice to the Committee. The Secretary is not a member of the Committee. NILGOSC has six business departments, led by a manager reporting to the Deputy Secretary. These departments are Pensions Administration; Pensions Development; Investment; Finance; IT; and Governance and HR.
- 3.5 NILGOSC has two main functions:
 - To administer the Local Government Pension Scheme in compliance with the LGPS Regulations (NI) 2014.
 - To manage and maintain a fund out of which the benefits of the scheme are met.
- 3.6 In the discharge of its functions, NILGOSC carries out the following key sub-functions:
 - The admittance of eligible employing organisations to the Scheme
 - The collection and investment of contributions made by Scheme employers and their employees
 - The calculation and payment of Scheme benefits
 - Provision of information to all stakeholders.
- 3.7 To support and implement the above functions and provision of services, NILGOSC has discretion within a number of policy areas:
 - Administration of the LGPS within the framework set out in the legislation.
 - Investment of net income in accordance with a suitable long term investment strategy
 - Matters relating to employment
 - Procurement of goods and services.
- 3.8 NILGOSC has no discretion over the terms of the pension scheme as set out in the Regulations, which are the responsibility of the Department for Communities. Further information on the role of NILGOSC can be found on our website www.nilgosc.org.uk.

4. PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS

- 4.1 NILGOSC has no direct control of public appointments, as members of the Management Committee are appointed by the Minister for Communities. NILGOSC acknowledges that the disability duties relate to more than formal appointments but also to the way in which it carries out its functions.

5. PREVIOUS DISABILITY ACTION MEASURES

- 5.1 The Disability Action Plan has taken into account prior activities undertaken by NILGOSC to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and to encourage their full participation in public life. Below are examples of some of the action measures NILGOSC has taken:
- Under NILGOSC's Equality Scheme, all policies are screened to identify if a policy in any way fails to promote positive attitudes towards persons with disabilities and if there are any opportunities to better promote positive attitudes towards persons with disabilities.
 - Staff involved in recruitment and selection receive training which includes awareness of the relevant disability duties to enable fair participation of people with disabilities in recruitment.
 - NILGOSC is working to increase the usability and accessibility of its website whilst ensuring that the website is accessible to all, and aims to make the site Double-A Compliant [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG 2.1\)](#) following best-practice accessibility guidelines.
 - Improved accessibility to NILGOSC's services for people with a disability through communications which are clear and easy to understand, are accessible and available in alternative formats. Positive images of people with a disability are used in communications, on the website and in publications.
 - Adjustments have been identified and made for job applicants – for example provision of an interpreter, materials produced in large print, timing adjustments at testing/assessment.
 - Equality training and briefings (including disability awareness and customer care with a disability focus) have taken place at various staff events. An equality and diversity e-learning module is completed annually by all staff and Committee members.
 - Car park signage and markings have been improved to ensure the accessible parking spaces can be more easily identified. All refurbishment work that has been undertaken to date has followed the best-practice accessibility guidelines.
 - The statement on recruitment advertising has been revised to target underrepresented groups and this now specifically welcomes applications from people with a disability.

6. ACTION MEASURES

- 6.1 This Disability Action Plan and associated measures covers a three year period, which aligns with NILGOSC's corporate planning cycle.
- 6.2 Outlined below are the measures NILGOSC propose to take over the period of this disability action plan, together with performance indicators or targets. These measures are designed to promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities and encourage the participation of people with disabilities in public life.

Ref	Objective	Action	Performance Indicator/s:	Timescale	Owner
1	Raise awareness of staff and Committee Members in relation to disability equality legislation	1.1 Deliver disability equality legislation induction training to all staff and Committee Members to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding employer and employee duties and responsibilities under DDA; Information on NILGOSC's commitment to the Disability Duties. 	All staff and Committee members receive induction training on disability equality legislation and are aware of their responsibilities under the Disability Duties. <hr/> Report on the percentage of staff and Committee members that have received the training.	Within 1 month of taking up post	HR Manager (Staff) Governance Manager (Committee)
		1.2 Deliver external refresher/update training on disability equality legislation for staff and Committee Members (e.g. from ECNI, Employers for Disability NI).	Expert delivers training to staff and Committee Members every three years on disability equality legislation. <hr/> Report on the percentage of staff and Committee members that have received the training.	31 October 2025	HR Manager (Staff) Governance Manager (Committee)
2	Raise awareness of staff and Committee Members in relation to specific barriers faced by people with disabilities	2.1 Deliver disability awareness and etiquette training to all staff and Committee Members that will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities; Explain the barriers faced by people with disabilities in society; Promote an understanding of the social model of disability; Address issues around inappropriate language; Challenge stereotypes and misconceptions about people with disabilities. 	All staff and Committee members receive disability awareness and etiquette training every three years. Report on the percentage of staff and Committee members that have received the training.	31 October 2025	HR Manager (Staff) Governance Manager (Committee)
		2.2 Highlight Disability Awareness days/weeks to promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each day to focus on raising awareness of a specific disability; Where possible, the days will be scheduled to link in with National Awareness days/weeks; The day/week will be publicised on NILGOSC's website and through Templeton Times. 	At least one awareness day/weeks scheduled each year.	31 December 2023	HR Manager

Ref	Objective	Action	Performance Indicator/s:	Timescale	Owner
3	Take positive action to help staff with disabilities to feel more supported in the workplace	3.1 Encourage staff to declare that they have a disability or care for a person with a disability through awareness raising and providing guidance to staff on the importance of monitoring.	Increase in % of staff who declare they have a disability.	30 June 2023	HR Manager
		3.2 Develop guidance for action to be taken when a member of staff declares a disability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop guidance for managers to use when a staff member declares a disability; Review and update guidance on reasonable adjustments; Include reference to the above in relevant policies and training for managers, e.g. absence management training. 	Flowchart developed and shared with supervisors/ line managers. Guidance on reasonable adjustments reviewed, updated and shared with line managers. Review and update of policies and training agendas to reflect new process.	30 Sept 2023	HR Manager
		3.3 Collate (anonymised) information on reasonable adjustments that have been made for staff to use as a central resource for other supervisors/managers.	Spreadsheet set-up and access shared with supervisors/ line managers.	30 September 2023	HR Manager
		3.4 Provide health checks/MOTs for staff to identify any potential health issues at an early stage.	Report on the number of staff completing the health checks/MOTs.	31 December 2023	HR Manager
4	Improve accessibility to NILGOSC's services for people with a disability	4.1 Complete ECNI's Accessible Business Checklist (Every Customer Counts Initiative) to review how accessible NILGOSC's premises/services are and to identify any gaps or potential areas for improvement.	Self-audit checklist completed and follow-up actions identified.	30 September 2023	Premises Officer
		4.2 Improve the accessibility of Templeton House for staff and the public. Consider best practice guidance and any follow up actions/areas for improvement identified in Accessible Business Checklist (see above).	Number of improvements made to accessibility during the refurbishment.	In line with refurbishment project plan – 31 March 2026	Premises Officer
		4.3 Ensure NILGOSC's communications are clear and easy to understand, accessible and available in alternative formats.	Communications Policy is compliant with disability legislation and duties.	Ongoing – as new documents are produced	Communications Officer
		4.4 Ensure NILGOSC's website is accessible for people with a disability.	Website and My NILGOSC Pension Online complies with the Public Sector Bodies (Website & Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018.	31 December 2023	Communications Officer
		4.5 Promote positive images and statements about people in section 75 groups, including people with a disability.	Positive images of people with a disability used in communications, on the website and in publications.	Ongoing – as new documents are produced	Communications Officer

Ref	Objective	Action	Performance Indicator/s:	Timescale	Owner
5	Ensure fair participation in the recruitment and selection process for people with a disability	5.1 Make applicants for vacancies aware that reasonable adjustments can be made for those with a disability at all stages of the recruitment and selection process.	Number of applicants from people with disabilities. Number of people with disabilities employed.	30 June 2023	HR Manager
		5.2 Make recruitment and selection documentation available in an accessible format as standard practice rather than by request.	Documentation available via the new HR System.	In line with the implementation of the new HR System.	HR Manager
6	Ensure the procurement process complies with all aspects of the DDA, including the disability duties	6.1 Include criteria in procurement tenders and contracts to encourage suppliers to comply with disability legislation and their disability duties.	Procurement Policy and Procedures is compliant with disability legislation. Procurement Procedures include the reference to inclusion of the disability criteria.	31 December 2023	Procurement Manager
7	Monitor and review the impact of positive action and progress against implementation of actions	7.1 Publish the Disability Action Plan, following consultation.	Publication of plan on NILGOSC website and circulation to staff, Committee Members and consultees.	31 August 2023	Governance Manager
		7.2 The SMT reviews progress against implementation of the DAP on an annual basis.	Annual progress report presented to SMT.	Every April	Governance Manager
		7.3 The biennial staff survey will include questions on staff attitudes towards disability and opinions on NILGOSC's actions to promote accessibility and positive attitudes towards people with a disability.	SMT review of the outcome of the staff survey feedback.	Every two years	HR Manager
		7.4 Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the disability related training.	Positive feedback from evaluation forms.	After each training session	HR Manager
		7.5 Include an update in the Annual Progress Report to the ECNI on progress against implementation of the plan.	Report submitted to ECNI within deadline.	Annually by 31 August	Governance Manager