



Department of  
**Enterprise, Trade  
and Investment**  
[www.detini.gov.uk](http://www.detini.gov.uk)

## **DISABILITY ACTION PLAN**

### **5 YEAR REVIEW**

**OCTOBER 2013**

This report covers a review of the Disability Action Plans (DAPs) published by DETI during the period 2007-2013.

This document is available in an accessible format if required, eg Braille, large print, audio cassette or in a minority ethnic language.

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## **1. BACKGROUND**

1.1 Since 1 January 2007, an amendment to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) has required public authorities, when carrying out their functions to have due regard to the need to:

- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

1.2 Under Section 49B of the DDA 1995, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) is also required to submit to the Equality Commission a disability action plan showing how it proposes to fulfill these duties in relation to its functions.

1.3 Since 2007, DETI has submitted annual Disability Action Plans (DAPs) to the Equality Commission to show how it planned to fulfill these duties. These plans contain a commitment for the Department to carry out a 5-year review of its DAPs.

## **2. DEVELOPMENT OF DAPs**

2.1 In all cases, the Department's DAPs were developed in liaison with the Equality Commission and DETI's business areas.

- 2.2 The plans followed the Equality Commission guidance, in particular the 2007 Equality Commission Guide for Public Authorities and the December 2009 Review Report on the Effectiveness of the Disability Duties.
- 2.3 All plans were signed off by the DETI Minister and Permanent Secretary. They contained a range of measures to fulfill the Disability Duties with timescales and performance indicators.
- 2.4 The final plans were circulated to staff and consultees and published on the Department's website.
- 2.5 Annual Progress Reports on the measures identified were provided to the Equality Commission.

### **3 PURPOSE OF REVIEW**

- 3.1 The purpose of this review is to identify whether or not the Department, through its DAPs, has met its statutory requirements to encourage persons with a disability to participate in public life and promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities.
- 3.2 The Department has conducted a review process under 4 core headings laid out by the Equality Commission. These headings are:

- What the plans have achieved.
- What remains to be done.
- How to build on success.
- How to meet the challenges identified.

Each of these is explored below.

## **4 WHAT THE PLANS HAVE ACHIEVED**

- 4.1 The DAPs contained a range of measures which focused on the provision of training and guidance to employees and stakeholders on disability and equality legislation, and on disability awareness. Achievements to date in these areas are as follows:
- 4.2 DETI HR Training Unit now provides induction training for all new entrants to the Department, which includes information on the Disability Duties. A sample of new entrants is monitored and feedback sought on the disability aspects of training provided. This feedback has been positive.
- 4.3 The NICS introduced a mandatory Diversity Awareness Training package during 2010. This training promotes an inclusive working environment and stresses the importance of valuing differences. The package also includes material on the duty to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people on current disability equality legislation. All DETI staff have now completed the Diversity on-line programme or the classroom-based Diversity programme as appropriate. The Centre for Applied Learning

continues to provide classroom based training for all new recruits on Diversity Awareness.

- 4.4 The Department has also produced a series of factsheets to promote understanding amongst staff of the needs of people with disabilities and to encourage best practice within DETI. These factsheets include topics such as mental health, hearing difficulties, dyslexia, autism and other hidden disabilities. Further factsheets will be developed as appropriate.
- 4.5 DHSSPS is leading on the development of a cross-departmental Autism Strategy. DETI's autism factsheet may be made available to all NICS Departments and their NDPBs/ALBs as a reference guide to raise autism awareness as part of this Strategy.
- 4.6 The DETI Diversity Group established an internal network of staff with disabilities whom the Department consults on a regular basis regarding policies and proposed changes or actions which may affect them. DETI utilizes this internal network of staff as and when factsheets on disability are developed to help ensure accuracy and relevance.
- 4.7 The Diversity Group also held a lunchtime event on Mental Health Awareness, presented by a Psychiatric Nurse Advisor from the Occupational Health Service. This was open to all staff and the aim was to raise awareness of different disabilities, promote positive attitudes and encourage integration in working life.

- 4.8 Regular articles about disability issues have featured in departmental magazines and communication bulletins such as Staff Brief and Ezine and on the DETI website.
- 4.9 DETI Public Appointments Unit undertook outreach activity with disability groups to raise awareness of public appointments and seek assistance in identifying potential candidates who may be approached directly regarding upcoming vacancies.
- 4.10 An 'Equality of Opportunity' statement is included in all public appointment advertisements and other competition material highlighting that special arrangements can be made to accommodate the needs of candidates with a disability.
- 4.11 As the Department is committed to communicating effectively with the public, DETI's Equality & Diversity Unit revised our Equality Communication Guide in 2011. The objective of this guide is to help DETI staff ensure that the information and services which they provide are as accessible as possible.

## **5 WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE**

- 5.1 As a further measure towards encouraging participation by disabled people in public life, the Department, where opportunities arise, will seek to revise its current website to enhance accessibility for all its customers, including those with disabilities.

5.2 DETI Consumer Affairs Branch will continue to undertake outreach activity to disability groups to raise awareness of the service provided by 'Consumerline'. Results of annual surveys carried out by Trading Standards Service reveal that whilst there has been a slight increase in the number of people with a disability who contacted Consumerline in 2011/2012 compared with 2010/11, more could still be done. It is important to consult widely with local disability groups to identify any barriers which may still exist and prevent people with disabilities from using the Consumerline service.

## **6 HOW TO BUILD ON SUCCESS**

6.1 While substantial steps have been made in increasing staff knowledge and awareness of disability, we must not become complacent. We must continue to train and inform staff and stakeholders about relevant issues and to report progress. Continued high level commitment and good communication are central to building on the successes of previous Disability Action Plans.

6.2 This review has helped to inform the development of the new DAP 2013-2014 and several new initiatives have been added e.g. the exploration of a text relay system to replace the current textphone service . This plan has been communicated to all staff and uploaded onto the Department's web pages ([http://www.detini.gov.uk/2013\\_2014\\_disability\\_action\\_plan.pdf](http://www.detini.gov.uk/2013_2014_disability_action_plan.pdf))

## **7 HOW TO MEET THE CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED**

- 7.1** In order to meet the challenges identified the Department will remain committed to implementing effectively the disability duties through future Disability Action Plans, effective monitoring, regular review and reporting of progress.
- 7.2** We will strive to meet the ongoing challenge of ensuring that our services and information remain accessible to both staff and customers with a disability and are improved wherever possible.

## **8 CONCLUSION**

**8.1** The Department has made good progress during the period of this review. We must ensure that our services are as effective and efficient as possible in meeting the needs of disabled people going forward. We must also continue to work with our staff and stakeholders to:

- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life.



