

## REPORT TO FORMARTINE AREA COMMITTEE – 10 DECEMBER 2019

### BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2018-2024 PROGRESS REPORT

#### 1 Reason for Report

This report is to update Committee on progress made towards the actions in the British Sign Language Implementation Plan 2018-2024.

#### 2 Recommendations

**The Committee is recommended to:**

**2.1 Consider, discuss and provide comment to the service on progress made towards the Aberdeenshire British Sign Language (BSL) Implementation Plan 2018-2024 (Appendix 1) as part of the update report requested by Business Services Committee.**

#### 3 Purpose and Decision Making Route

3.1 Aberdeenshire Council's British Sign Language (BSL) Local Plan 2018-2024 was approved by Business Services Committee on 13 September 2018. The Committee requested the development of an implementation plan to support the delivery of the BSL Local Plan.

3.2 The BSL Implementation Plan (**Appendix1**) was approved at the Business Services Committee meeting on 10 January 2019. Furthermore, the Committee also instructed officers to monitor and feedback on progress in a year to the Area Committees and the Business Services Committee.

#### 4 Discussion

4.1 Last year services were asked to identify how actions will be monitored in terms of their impact and difference they will make on BSL service users' lives. The majority of actions in the plan are already embedded in service plans, therefore services were not reporting any additional costs.

4.2 This report covers progress made by services during the first year of the six-year action plan. Examples of progress include work in schools on expanding the BSL support and learning to non BSL staff and pupils. For example, where there was a deaf pupil going to the same academy, all P7 pupils in primary schools were given deaf awareness sessions. The Deaf Culture Programme to increase pupil's knowledge about deaf culture /role models is now available for use by schools. The support work for families continues through the 'Family Sign' programme, with one family from Banff & Buchan finishing the course recently.

- 4.3 Currently one school in Formartine is teaching BSL as an additional language and they already have a signing pupil. Since the introduction of the plan, all new school staff across all schools are encouraged to embark on introductory and Level 1 BSL courses and another Teacher of the Deaf has gained Level 2 BSL qualification.
- 4.4 Our HR&OD team continue to raise awareness of the UK Government's 'Access to Work' (AtW) scheme to ensure support for internal and external candidates with Sensory Loss and Deafness. The *Recruiting and Retaining Individuals with Sensory Loss and Deafness* training videos are nearly completed. They incorporate information on Access to Work, but also offer guidance on supporting people with Sensory Loss and Deafness to succeed in the workplace, from attracting diverse talent to retaining experienced staff.
- 4.5 Work is being initiated to promote efforts that Aberdeenshire Council has undertaken with Project SEARCH on increasing employability chances for people with Sensory Loss and Deafness. Project SEARCH is a programme which enables young people with learning disabilities, between the ages of 17-24, to increase their employability skills and successful transition from intern to employee.
- 4.6 Work continues to promote Aberdeenshire Council as an employer of choice through displaying our Disability Confident (Employer) logo. Following an assessment by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), Aberdeenshire Council has been awarded Disability Confident (Employer) status for a further 2 years.

## 5 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

- 5.1 This report helps deliver the following Council Priorities:  
 Council Priority 3 - Providing the best life chances for all our children and young people by raising levels of attainment and achievement.  
 Council Priority 4 - Work with parents and carers to support children through every stage of their development.  
 Council Priority 7 - Support the delivery of the Health and Social Care Strategic Plan.  
 Council Priority 10 - Having the right people, in the right place, doing the right thing, at the right time.
- 5.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is (are) agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial		X	
Staffing		X	
Equalities	EIA attached as appendix 2		
Fairer Scotland Duty	EIA attached as appendix 2		
Town Centre First		X	
Sustainability		X	

Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing	x		
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5.3 An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out in 2018 when developing the Aberdeenshire Council British Sign Language (BSL) Local Plan 2018-2024 (**Appendix 2**) where positive impacts were identified in terms of the plan's benefits for BSL users in Aberdeenshire by improving access to council services. However, as part of reviewing the EIA the content has been transferred to the new EIA format which includes a section that meets the Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment requirements. As the BSL Local Plan is a strategic document the attached EIA has been updated to reflect the outcome of the Fairer Scotland Assessment.

5.4 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level:

- ACORP006 – Reputation management (including social media): The actions within the British Sign Language Implementation Plan are in line with action of the Aberdeenshire Council British Sign Language (BSL) Local plan 2018-2024 which aims to improve equality of access to council services.

## 6 Scheme of Governance

6.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated within the report and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

6.2 The Committee is able to consider this item in terms of Sections B.1.2 and B.11.2 of Part 2A of the List of Committee Powers in the Scheme of Governance as it relates to the Committee's powers to consider, comment on and make recommendations to Services and any other appropriate Committee on any matter or policy which impacts its Area; and review the effectiveness of Council policy implementation and Council service delivery within the Area and also in terms of the Committee Review Process and to identify potential improvements and make recommendations to the relevant Policy Committee

### Ritchie Johnson, Director of Business Services

Report prepared by Lynne Gravener, Strategic Policy Lead (Engagement & Equalities)  
Date 5 November 2019



**Aberdeenshire Council  
BSL Implementation plan**

**Appendix 1**

**Across all our Services**

Action	Cost implication and how the action will be funded	Proposals for monitoring delivery progress	Impact on users – how will we measure the success?	Progress by Sept. 2019
Promote the use of the Scottish Government’s nationally funded BSL online interpreting video relay services called ‘contactSCOTLAND-BSL’ to staff and to local BSL users.	No cost implication as this is a free service for public sector organisations to help with first point of contact meetings.	Work with ICT to see if a link can be used on the Interpretation and Translation pages which can be tracked to show how often it is clicked/potentially used	Review the number of clicks to identify if services are aware of the ContactSCOTLAND-BSL service.	The ContactScotland link is included in our external and internal webpages. Since the ContactScotland link is an external link, we are unable to monitor the number of clicks on the link, but we are monitoring the number of clicks on our websites where the link is on. Since January 2019 there were 37188 views on <a href="http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/contact-us/contact-by-phone">www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/contact-us/contact-by-phone</a> and 199 views on <a href="http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/council-andveiws-democracy/equaities/about-equalities">www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/council-andveiws-democracy/equaities/about-equalities</a>
Promote dedicated Sensory awareness training by North East Sensory Services to staff as part of our Equality and Diversity Seminars.	No cost implications. This is free training offered to the council occasionally which will be offered to frontline staff.	When training becomes available ensure information is widely accessible to all staff	As part of an evaluation process staff will be asked about the impact of this in terms of improving service delivery.	There has not been any free training offered to date.
Promote provision of “face to face” BSL interpretation across our services	No cost implications as this action is in conjunction with already established line of business. Information on BSL interpreting services is available on Arcadia and will be further promoted via	To schedule frequent reminders via different channels available as appropriate.	We will work monitor the requests for BSL interpreters and seek feedback from services to ensure service provided meets requirements.	Information on BSL Interpreting services is available to all staff on our dedicated <a href="#">webpage</a> on Arcadia. There were six requests for BSL interpreters from services since January 2019.  An ALDO Course is to be launched which aims to provide guidance on reasonable

	Arcadia news articles and Yammer posts			adjustments. It will highlight factors to be considered when assessing the implementation of reasonable adjustments, support that is available and practical examples that help provide context.
We ensure new website content is accessible to all users by following best practice guidelines as detailed by the Government Digital Service (GDS). Our website is tested annually by the Digital Accessibility Centre (DAC) as part of the Better Connected review. The DAC tests cover BSL accessibility.	The Better Connected review currently costs £995 per year and is funded by the existing ICT budget.	We consider any issues identified during the review and action as appropriate. If another review is required we can request this through Better Connected, at extra cost	We ask for feedback at the end of most transactions on the website. We can add accessibility related questions to measure our performance.	Aberdeenshire Council website is continuously checked for accessibility by SiteImprove toolkit. ICT action on any issues and update the website. Better Connected are reviewing the website every quarter and we are acting on improvements when notified of them. The impact of the WCAG 2.1 conformance with our online services and actioned appropriate "accessibility statements" is currently under revision as per GDS guidance.

## Family Support, Early Learning and Childcare

Action	Cost implication and how the action will be funded	Proposals for monitoring delivery progress	Impact on users – how will we measure the success?	Progress by Sept.2019
Continue to provide early years staff with information about BSL and Deaf culture, and resources that are available in BSL including introducing a BSL card for staff.	Currently part of Teacher of the Deaf or Teacher of Deaf Children (ToD) & Early Years Deaf Support Worker (EYDSW ) remit As pupil numbers stand there is currently no cost implication. BSL cards are currently provided by NHS via See Hear group and currently these are not charged for, so no cost implication	Discussion as part of ToD caseload review Part of planning process for staff Initial manager contact to gauge need and ongoing dialogue between ToD, Early Years (EY) staff and manager	Biannual questionnaire to parents and partner  Providers, schools etc. Ongoing dialogue with EY staff and partner agencies  Pupil Health and Wellbeing (H & WB) records to monitor what has been delivered	The bank of questions for parents, pupils and other professionals developed for the Survey Monkey questionnaire will be available for distribution in January 2020. Top Tips card were produced by the See Hear group and are available in Student Support base for distribution when necessary or requested.
Continue to deliver deaf awareness and basic signing classes to ALL staff i.e. teachers, nursery nurses/assistants, office staff, kitchen staff etc. prior to a BSL pupil going to the early years setting	Currently part of ToD remit with no added cost implication.	Records of Deaf awareness are kept by service Monitor delivery of DA being delivered by ongoing dialogue with teachers	Work towards all school staff are able to use some basic BSL signs to communicate with pupils using BSL within a school. Staff are more deaf aware and behave accordingly. Staff ask for more signs and evidence of their using sign with pupil. Peers using sign to interact with pupils. Pupil accessing the curriculum using sign.	Staff are currently working with Early Years settings in Peterhead & Fraserburgh area to deliver Deaf Awareness and signing for pupils.  Staff are taking on board some signs and are aware of pupil needs and is using signs to communicate with pupils. Peers are starting to use signs for key words to help in play and communication.
In settings where there are BSL users' continue to roll out extensive BSL signage in nurseries i.e. toilet, cloakroom, and facilitate the use of visual timetables using BSL signs.	Currently part of ToD remit with no cost implication.	ToD's in schools monitor the use of signage and visual timetables	Pupils operating more independently using signs and visual timetables	Visual timetables are produced by schools where a BSL pupil attends. The use of signage and visual timetable is

		Obvious use of BSL signage throughout school	Pupil can show evidence of using signs to access activities / curriculum	encouraged as early as nursery age.
Where appropriate, provide equipment to help the child access the curriculum.	<p>Costs that are currently taken from existing budget and are generally managed annually are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cost of providing equipment,</li> <li>• ongoing cost of renewing &amp; updating equipment</li> <li>• Ongoing cost of replacing lost and broken equipment</li> </ul>	<p>Regular service audit of equipment Staff aware of new developments with technology and link with providers i.e. Phonak Links / networking with other authorities to keep up to date with current innovations in equipment Advising school /EY staff on equipment and how to use it effectively</p>	<p>Pupils using equipment in schools /EY settings Pupils effectively accessing the curriculum School / EY staff confident using equipment Pupils attending better during lessons</p>	<p>Continued use of Soundfields (amplification system which provides an even spread of sound around the room) in EY settings. Radio aids provided for pupils as appropriate. Records are kept of which pupils and settings have what equipment. Ongoing discussion with Crosshouse and Phonak regarding new equipment such as new hearing aids or cochlear implants and assistive hearing technology. Teacher personal development and reading with regard to new and updated equipment is being recorded. Regular meetings with colleagues from Aberdeen city and Equipment Reps are taking place. Regular deaf awareness sessions and ongoing informal discussion with class teachers are taking place on how to improve learning experience for pupils using radio aids and Soundfield systems.</p>
Continue the induction programme introducing families to the service. That includes: initial call from a manager, visit from teacher of deaf children, sending a service leaflet or a DVD	Currently part of the ToD and Manager remit so no additional costs	Manager has record of initial referral / contact with parent and actions related to this.	Families contacted within stated timescales	Work continues on time scales for contact with parents and is monitored through managers and teachers' records.

and any information relevant to the child from other sources that might be helpful.		Allocated teacher contacts family. Record of information sent out kept in base. Individual pupil record of significant events/contacts. Service leaflets reviewed and updated regularly. Service folder with useful information given to family on initial visit from ToD. Information collated and stored in database.	Informal feedback from families if satisfied / dissatisfied with timescale for initial contact and initial meetings  Formal feedback from parents through biannual questionnaire  Individual pupil records reflect contacts and significant events  Service booklets available for distribution Service folders available for distribution and comments requested	Initial referrals and information sent out is recorded for monitoring purpose in service administrator record. Pupil friendly booklets about service are now available for distribution. Service Folder was set up and given to families with babies.
Continue to offer regular visits to build up a relationship with parents/families, offer basic family signs, signed resources and offer deaf awareness to extended family i.e. grandparents	Currently part of the ToD remit so no additional costs while pupil numbers remain at current levels	Teachers' plans and records to reflect visits and what has been done with the family. Teacher plans, records, observations and evaluations of sessions. Ongoing dialogue between ToD, families and where appropriate manager and other agencies.	Feedback gathered from families about sessions. Sessions tailored to needs of family. Evidence within family of sign being used observations and interactions. Pupil using sign to communicate with family and peers. Pupil has extended sign vocabulary and uses longer more complex language to communicate.	Support and planning continues for individual as appropriate, including resources being given to family, where appropriate, to support signing, including sign dictionary, posters, flash cards. ToD's continue to monitor on increased pupil sign vocabulary and use of age appropriate language.
Continue to promote Deaf culture and to address social isolation by working with school, nurseries and families in a similar situation.	Extending the scope of coffee afternoons/ activity afternoons i.e. inviting pupils from other authorities to try and combat the isolation felt by deaf pupils	Currently working group tasked, as part of Service Development Plan, to extend and enhance the area of Deaf Culture within pupils Health & Well Being (H&WB) section of planning.	Evidence in pupil profiles of use of H & WB / Deaf Studies programme Increased pupil knowledge about deaf culture /role models Programme and resources available for teachers to work on with pupils	Programme of Deaf Culture was developed and introduced to Health and Wellbeing section. The programme was rolled out and record areas tackled in individual pupil records for

		Produce programme about Deaf culture to slot into current H & WB programme. Monitoring of Teacher's planning and pupils output.	Links with other pupils in other authorities	H&WB and is evaluated as it progresses.
Support parents who wish to access formal signing classes but cannot afford to, through the collaboration with the partner organisations.	<p>Already links with National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) / Grampian Deaf Children's Society (GDCS) to help promote sign courses and family sign within the area</p> <p>Links with NESCOL – but would be a cost implication if the Service were to assist parents with these courses. The cost is be between £100-£200 per course. There are very few requests for this assistance – at least 10 years since the last request.</p> <p>An alternative may be to purchase an online / DVD course just produced by Highland which teaches sign, extends signing but this would have a cost implication as they are hoping to market it. Cost is unknown as not on the market yet.</p>	<p>Ongoing dialogue between families, service and NDCS tutors to monitor progress and uptake.</p> <p>College send report on uptake and usage of course.</p> <p>Review and discuss with Hearing Support (HS) team, parents, families etc how to best use course.</p> <p>Purchase course and pilot if families request sign input but cannot afford it</p> <p>Review courses and results</p>	<p>Uptake of course by families, regular attendance at course / programme certification on completion.</p> <p>Increased confidence to use sign by family members.</p> <p>Increased use of sign within family.</p> <p>Increased language skills of child.</p> <p>Extended vocabulary and complexity of communication by child / family.</p>	<p>One family finished the 'Family Sign' programme.</p> <p>No other families currently needing to access family sign programme by NDCS.</p> <p>NESCOL BSL course is running regularly with deaf tutor and families can access the NDCS link for help with funding: <a href="https://www.ndcs.org.uk/our-services/services-for-families/apply-for-a-grant/">https://www.ndcs.org.uk/our-services/services-for-families/apply-for-a-grant/</a></p> <p>The BSL distance learning course developed by the Highland Council is available to use with families on request if can't afford NESCOL courses and can't access funding.</p>

**School Education**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Cost implication and how the action will be funded</b>	<b>Proposals for monitoring delivery progress</b>	<b>Impact on users – how will we measure the success?</b>	<b>Progress by Sept.2019</b>
<p>Contribute to the Scottish Government's investigation of the level of BSL held by teachers and support staff working with D/deaf and Deafblind pupils in schools, and take account of any new guidance for teachers or support staff working with pupils who use BSL</p>	<p>As keeping up to date with current curricular developments is part of ongoing teacher CPD, contributing to the investigation of BSL levels would incur no cost implication.</p>	<p>Await guidance from central government / authority Staff attend courses and continuing dialogue with tutors and manager</p>	<p>Staff access higher BSL qualification if required.  Staff able to use more complex signing and vocabulary.</p>	<p>Another Teacher of the Deaf has gained Level 2 BSL qualification. New staff embarking on introductory and Level 1 BSL courses.</p>
<p>Continue to contribute to the government's investigation into supporting BSL users in the early years of their education. This would mean where possible staff holding BSL level 2 or above would work with pupils and families who use BSL and making sure schools are aware of the communication needs of any pupils or parents who use BSL and where to source these.</p>	<p>Contributing to the Government investigation would incur no cost. Within the service ToD's who hold level 2 BSL are, where possible, allocated to work with children who require BSL or may use it as their first language. This is not always possible due to the geographical area of Aberdeenshire and where new referrals occur, but on the whole is something we try to do. As the ToD's remit includes working with families and schools, making them aware of the communication needs of families etc sits within that remit and so would not incur any cost implication</p>	<p>Await guidance from central government / authority. Researching availability and location of BSL tutors in the area and costs of courses. Ongoing discussion relating to funding for course. Staff undertaking courses and being certificated in BSL at higher levels. Schools participating in deaf awareness. ToD's planning and recording input with families, schools and pupils.</p>	<p>Staff access higher BSL qualification if required.  Staff able to use more complex signing and vocabulary.  Staff who already hold L2 BSL or above assigned, where possible, to work with families or pupils who use BSL as first language.  Feedback from families.  More engagement with families who use BSL as their first language.</p>	<p>A BSL communicator completed the BSL Level 6 course in Glasgow.  The Sensory Support Service / Aberdeenshire provides funding or part funding courses for staff. New staff are also taking on Introductory and Level1 qualification. One member of staff gained Level 2 BSL certificate.  All P7 pupils in primary schools given deaf awareness sessions where there is a Deaf pupil going to the same academy. Deaf awareness sessions were also delivered to new staff / schools where pupil attending.</p>

				<p>Parents are consulted and have opportunity to add comments on plans, targets and reports Record of communication with parents in pupil files is kept for reference. Early years coffee mornings are available to encourage more engagement continuing. Pupil comment section added to new report and planning forms.</p>
<p>Contribute to support the learning of BSL in schools for hearing pupils as part of the 1+2 language programme, including sharing best practice and guidance.</p>	<p>If schools were to take up the option of having BSL as one of their +2 languages there would be staff implications however it was done. While ToD's can manage this type of input in schools where there is a pupil using BSL, the numbers are so small it can currently be included as part of their ToD remit. To offer BSL on a larger scale, this could not be done using the current level of staffing as it would impact on the other, Deaf pupils, who also need input from the service. As with other languages, it could be done by having courses delivered by ToD's in central locations and having BSL ambassadors come to take part in the courses and then cascade the BSL in</p>	<p>ToD's could deliver initial sign to BSL ambassadors and then monitor progress by visiting schools – but there would have to be more ToD's or signing staff. Deaf tutors, if available, could be employed to deliver sign to schools. Communicators / hearing adults who are proficient in sign could deliver and monitor progress in schools. Purchase course developed by Highland and roll out across schools wanting to do BSL with qualified staff to oversee.</p>	<p>Greater uptake of schools wanting to engage with BSL as +2 language. More pupils / staff able to use BSL in schools. Pupils who use BSL feeling more included in schools. More widespread use of BSL in communities.</p>	<p>Currently 1 school is taking up the 1 + 2 option and they already have a signing pupil. No other schools have requested the BSL as +1 language. BSL/ SSE (Sign Supported English) available to be used to support language and communication in variety of settings with babies and young children. The Highland Council have now released information on distance learning course which is available to deliver BSL as 1+2 language where there are no tutors etc. Decision was made to purchase the course.</p>

	<p>schools. However, as a manual language, this can lead to inconsistencies and misunderstandings, so would have to be done with care. Highland Council have developed a model to deliver BSL by DVD / online whereby deaf tutors are showing signs and videoed talking etc. There are lesson plans and resources to accompany the course which can be used in delivering it. In this way there could be an initial delivery to a BSL Ambassador and then they would take it out to schools to cascade. The cost of the DVD from Highland Council is currently unknown.</p>	<p>Have forum, similar to those developed for modern languages, where staff share practice and can get guidance, resources and ideas for teaching.</p>		<p>Currently the number of Deaf pupils is too low and they are too widespread to facilitate forum or to gather as a group. This will be revised if circumstance change.</p> <p>A meeting took place to discuss / liaise with SLT (Speech and Learn therapists) needs for BSL recognition and information when pupil diagnosed as deaf. As Makaton is already rolled out in Aberdeenshire, there is a need to liaise with SLT to establish BSL option when pupils diagnosed as deaf and with no obvious additional need.</p>
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**Training, Work and Social Security**

Action	Cost implication and how the action will be funded	Proposals for monitoring delivery progress	Impact on users – how will we measure the success?	Progress by Sept.2019
<p>Continue to monitor the information provided in the Equality and Diversity monitoring form by all new employees. If the employee selects Hearing Impairment (Deaf, partially deaf, hard of hearing) then they have the option to be contacted by Human Resources regarding further support.</p>	<p>No additional cost as already embedded in service operation.</p>	<p>Monitor numbers of individuals that indicate they have a hearing impairment and the number of individuals that ask to be contacted by HR for further support</p>	<p>By monitoring the number of individual that indicate they have a hearing impairment and the number of individuals that contact HR for further support in this area.</p> <p>Limitations – increase in number of individuals contact HR for further support may not indicate success – a decrease may indicate success where individuals feel fully supported by their line manager in addition to guidance and advice available as a matter of course.</p> <p>Success may be measured by anecdotal or qualitative data collected through an employee survey.</p> <p>Action can be reviewed depending on how successful it is demonstrated to be.</p>	<p>Monitoring arrangements are in place through AskHR. No requests for additional support have been made.</p> <p>No increase or decrease observed as yet.</p> <p>No employee survey has yet been issued to incorporate the question on hearing impairment.</p>
<p>Raise awareness locally of the UK Government’s ‘Access to Work’ (AtW) scheme with employers and with employees who are BSL users so that they can benefit from the support it provides.</p>	<p>No additional cost as already embedded in service operation. Raising awareness for employees who are BSL users:</p>	<p>Raising awareness for employees who are BSL users: Review how many individuals access ALDO courses</p>	<p>Raising awareness for employees who are BSL users: Significant proportion of employees accessing ALDO course.</p>	<p>ALDO Course under construction and draft to be reviewed by Employability Team and Equalities Team. Feedback will be incorporated into final release.</p>

	<p>Through implementation of Reasonable Adjustment ALDO course and Recruiting and Retaining people with Sensory Loss or Deafness ALDO course. Promotion through article on Arcadia. Promotion of scheme through social media. Recently Access to Work training was negotiated for the Council's Employability support teams and third sector organisations to upskill them and reappraise them on the current application process. HR can also be invited to attend this training if appropriate.</p> <p>This move will support both internal and external employers. (Carol Balcombe will co-ordinate Access to Work training)</p>	<p>Review how many people click into the article for further information</p> <p>Review number of views or shares on social media</p>	<p>High number of employees accessing article for further information. High number of views and shares on social media.</p> <p>Limitations – employees and individuals who already have a good understanding of Access to Work may not feel the need to find out further information about the scheme – therefore low numbers may not reflect lack of awareness across organisation and beyond.</p> <p>Success may be measured by anecdotal or qualitative data collected through an employee survey.</p> <p>Action can be reviewed depending on how successful it is demonstrated to be.</p>	<p>When Reasonable Adjustment course is published, further promotional work will commence.</p> <p>Recruiting and Retaining Individuals with Sensory Loss and Deafness training videos have been created and are nearly finalised (which incorporates information and signposting to Access to Work). Awaiting confirmation of launch date.</p> <p>Social media promotion of Access to Work drafted - to be finalised and actioned at the end of October.</p> <p>Following an assessment by DWP, Aberdeenshire Council has been awarded Disability Confident (Employer) status for a further 2 years.</p> <p>Work is being initiated to promote work Aberdeenshire Council has undertaken with Project SEARCH and successful transition of intern to employee.</p> <p>Recruiting and Retaining Individuals with Sensory Loss and Deafness training videos have been created and are nearly finalised (which incorporates information and signposting to Access to Work). Awaiting confirmation of launch date. Article for social media promotion under construction.</p> <p>When Reasonable Adjustment course is published, further promotional work will commence.</p>
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<p>Continue to promote Aberdeenshire Council as an employer of choice through displaying our Disability Confident (Employer) logo.</p>	<p>No additional cost</p> <p>On Home page for MJS (My Job Scotland). Currently looking into process to ensure included on adverts.</p> <p>Will be included on Careers Equality and Diversity.</p> <p>Will be promoting our accreditation through social media.</p>	<p>Monitor equality and diversity across applications and appointments</p>	<p>Increased proportion of applicants and appointments from people with disabilities.</p> <p>Limitations – if no increase is seen in this proportion it may not reflect lack of success in Aberdeenshire Council being viewed as an employer of choice for people with disabilities.</p> <p>Action can be reviewed depending on how successful it is demonstrated to be.</p>	<p>Following an assessment by DWP, Aberdeenshire Council has been awarded Disability Confident (Employer) status for a further 2 years.</p> <p>Work is being initiated to promote work Aberdeenshire Council has undertaken with Project SEARCH and successful transition of intern to employee. Article for social media promotion under construction.</p>
<p>Aberdeenshire Council will continue to signpost elected members who use BSL to Access to Work scheme for information on support available to undertake their role as an elected member.</p>	<p>HR Operational Adviser Team propose that this action is encompassed within raising awareness and signposting specified at second action point above.</p>	<p>Review how many individuals access ALDO course.</p> <p>Review how many people click into the article for further information.</p> <p>Review number of views or shares on social media.</p>	<p>Significant proportion of elected members accessing ALDO course.</p> <p>Limitations – elected members who use BSL and already have a good understanding of Access to Work may not feel the need to find out further information about the scheme – therefore low numbers may not reflect lack of awareness across organisation and beyond.</p> <p>Success may be measured by anecdotal or qualitative data collected through an employee survey.</p> <p>Action can be reviewed depending on how successful it is demonstrated to be.</p>	<p>Promotional work will commence following release of Reasonable Adjustment ALDO course &amp; Recruiting and Retaining individuals with Sensory Loss and Deafness ALDO course.</p>

<p>Continue making full use of the information and support provided through Skills Development Scotland to assist pupils and students in their career choices through attendance and promotion at school and university career fayres.</p>	<p>Cost of staff to attend is covered within existing budgets.</p>	<p>Number of career events attended</p>	<p>Increase in number of school leavers or students joining the organisation</p> <p>Limitations – an increase in number may not be directly attributed to attendance at school or university career fairs. Decrease may also not reflect attendance unsuccessful – it is anticipated the population will become proportionately older, with less individuals of school leaving age/university age entering the workforce – therefore results could be influenced by this.</p> <p>Action can be reviewed depending on how successful it is demonstrated to be.</p>	<p>Where attending events, available information is signposted to attendees where required.</p> <p>Reasonable Adjustment ALDO course has been shared with Employability Team and Sensory Impairment for feedback. This should help ensure content is relevant to support identified by the team.</p>
<p>Work with partners who deliver employment services, and with employer groups already supporting employability to help signpost them to specific advice on the needs of BSL users</p>	<p>No additional cost Aberdeenshire Council's Employability Partnership can become involved in the promotion of any useful data that needs to be shared with the employer community.</p> <p>Advice provided as and if required</p>	<p>Anecdotal evidence could be provided from the Resourcing Team regarding queries received over time (types of queries are not recorded day-to-day, therefore it would not be possible to monitor number of queries relating to this</p>	<p>Anecdotal evidence to demonstrate if employment services have required support or signposting to advice on the needs of BSL users.</p> <p>Limitation – it would be difficult to ensure this type of measurement is accurate. However, due to limitations in recording queries, and the number of queries received by HROD on a daily basis – it would not be possible to monitor by any other method currently.</p>	<p>The Resourcing Team will continue to work closely with employability partners and continue to be an active member of the Council Virtual Employability Hub.</p>

			Action can be reviewed depending on how successful it is demonstrated to be.	
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**Health (including social care), Mental Health and Wellbeing**

Action	Cost implication and how the action will be funded	Proposals for monitoring delivery progress	Impact on users – how will we measure the success?	Progress by Sept 2019
Engage the Aberdeenshire See Hear Implementation Group to review information produced by NHS Scotland and NHS 24 to assess the need for additional local information. We will support the development of this information if required	Where information is assessed to require local information produced in BSL it will be produced through See Hear Group funding. BSL users can request translation of current leaflets through interpretation services available with Aberdeenshire Council and NHSG.	This action will be discussed at See Hear Implementation group by Dec 2018. Timescales for implementation, completions and monitoring will be agreed.	Feedback from service users – using complaint/comments/feedback systems. Discussion with DeafAction a commissioned service of Aberdeenshire Council and member of the See Hear Implementation Group.	Information about services provided by the Health & Social Care Partnership can be translated into BSL on request as part of our equality duty.
Review existing psychological therapies to ensure that BSL users are able to access these on a fair and equal basis.	No cost	Action will be monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure BSL users have equal access to psychological therapies. Translation services can be accessed if required.	Provision is in place to ensure BSL users have access to signing services as when required.	Provision is in place to ensure BSL users have access to signing services as when required.
Work with NHS Inform and the local third and community sectors to identify and promote the range of community opportunities available for physical activity to BSL users. We will also work with Aberdeenshire Culture and Sport and Physical Activity	Project officer time for 6 months (for wider National service directory development) that includes services for BSL users.	NSD live website by June 2019.  Increase in the number of physical activity opportunities suitable for	Live website monitoring data on usage/ access.	

Service to support people who are deaf to be physically active.	Approx. £20k which is from existing staff budget.	BSL users posted on ALISS.		
Develop a Social Isolation Strategy to ensure the needs of BSL users are considered and addressed. We will publish any parts of the strategy which are specific to BSL users in BSL.	Currently awaiting publication of the Scottish Government's Social Isolation strategy which will inform the Aberdeenshire approach. No further details re BSL aspects can be provided at this point.	See previous response.	See previous response.	Action to tackle social isolation will be considered as part of existing work programmes, rather than through a standalone strategy. Public Health are developing work to address loneliness and isolation, informed by the national policy 'Connected Scotland'.

#### Culture and the Arts

Action	Cost implication and how the action will be funded	Proposals for monitoring delivery progress	Impact on users – how will we measure the success?	Progress by Sept.2019
Enable BSL users to take part in culture and the arts as participants, audience members and professionals.	All requests for translation and interpretation will be met through the existing council contract and service budgets.	Customer evaluation - requests and feedback	All publications have standard statement on access to translation and interpretation. Increased response to requests and accessibility.	A marketing strategy is under development. This will include making information of LLA services accessible to all.
Encourage and support BSL users to consider a career in culture and the arts	All requests for translation and interpretation will be met through the existing council contract and service budgets.	Recruitment analysis	Recruitment information – to include standard statement on access to translation and interpretation. Increased response to requests and accessibility.	Requests for translation and interpretation are met through the existing council arrangements and service budgets.
Increase information in BSL about culture and the arts on relevant Aberdeenshire	All requests for translation and	Customer evaluation-requests and feedback	All publications have standard statement on access to	As per above

Council websites and at Aberdeenshire Council venues.	interpretation will be met through the existing council contract and service budgets.		translation and interpretation. Increased response to requests and accessibility.	
Improve access to cultural events and performing arts and film for BSL users on relevant Aberdeenshire council websites and Aberdeenshire council venues.	All requests for translation and interpretation will be met through the existing council contract and service budgets.	Customer evaluation- requests and feedback. Attendance at events/ feedback	All publications have standard statement on access to translation and interpretation. Increased responses to requests and accessibility.	As per above

**Democracy**

Action	Cost implication and how the action will be funded	Proposals for monitoring delivery progress	Impact on users – how will we measure the success?	Progress by Sept.2019
Take opportunities to promote the Access to Elected Office Fund locally, which can meet the additional costs of BSL users wishing to stand in local or Scottish Parliament elections.	There is no anticipated additional cost to this promotional activity.	Delivery will centre around periods when elections are anticipated. The next scheduled election event in Scotland is 2021. Unanticipated election events however would demand similar attention although on a shorter period of notice. The risk of not meeting this obligation will be added to the Register of Risks for each individual election event.	Increased take-up of the Access to Elected Office fund locally will be the principal measure of success. Election of individuals requiring BSL services will be an ultimate measure of success as both the promotion of the fund and the Fund itself will have aided access although clearly the democratic process dictates success or otherwise of any candidate.	The Elections Team have now made information on the Access to Elected Office Fund available on <a href="http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/elections">http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/elections</a> and will take the opportunity to further promote the Access to Elected Office Fund locally in advance of the next Local Authority or Scottish Parliamentary election, which is currently the Scottish Parliamentary elections in 2021. <a href="https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/elections/">https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/elections/</a>
Information on the Access to Elected Office Fund which is run by Inclusion Scotland and funded by the Scottish Government will be available on <a href="http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/council-">http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/council-</a>	There is no anticipated additional cost to this promotional activity	The risk of not meeting this obligation will be added to the Register of Risks for each individual election event.	Increased take-up of the Access to Elected Office fund locally will be the principal measure of success. Election of individuals requiring BSL services will be an ultimate measure of success as	Information on the Access to Elected Office Fund has now been made available on <a href="http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/elections">http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/elections</a>

<p>and-democracy/elections and highlighted within the nomination pack.</p>			<p>both the promotion of the fund and the Fund itself will have aided access although clearly the democratic process dictates success or otherwise of any candidate.</p>	<p>and will be highlighted within the nomination pack for the next election event, which is currently the Scottish Parliamentary elections in 2021. The risk of not meeting this obligation will be added to the Risk Register for any Local Authority of Scottish Parliamentary election.</p>
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**APPENDIX 2**

**EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

EIA Version	Date	Author	Changes
2	05/11/19	MBereza	New evidence added and FSD assessment undertaken

Stage 1: Title and aims of the activity (“activity” is an umbrella term covering policies, procedures, guidance and decisions).	
Service	BUSINESS SERVICE
Section	POLICY, PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT (COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND EQUALITIES)
Title of the activity etc.	The Aberdeenshire Council British Sign Language (BSL) Local Plan 2018-2024
Aims and desired outcomes of the activity	The BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 requires public bodies in Scotland to publish their local British Sign Language (BSL) plans showing how they will promote and support BSL. To comply with the Act, the Aberdeenshire Council British Sign Language (BSL) Local Plan 2018- 2024 has been prepared in conjunction with the Scottish Government British Sign Language (BSL) National Plan 2017-2023. The plan sets out ten long-term goals for BSL in Scotland, covering early years and education; training and work; health, mental health and wellbeing; culture and the arts; justice and democracy. These ten long goals were duplicated into the Aberdeenshire BSL Local Plan and followed by locally oriented actions. The Aberdeenshire BSL local Plan aims to improve accessibility and to remove any barriers to information and public services in BSL; to support children, young people and parents who use BSL, to ensure equality and support in access to our workforce and participation in public life.
Author(s) & Title(s)	Magdalena Bereza, Lynne Gravener

Stage 2: List the evidence that has been used in this assessment and explain what it means in relation to the activity you are assessing.		
Evidence	What does it say?	What does it mean?

<p>Internal data (customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints).</p>	<p>Not available at this stage</p>	
<p>Internal consultation with staff and other services affected.</p>	<p>Relevant Services across the Aberdeenshire Council have been engaged with to develop the actions and how these will be monitored.</p>	<p>Actions under the plan are directly relevant to service work and can be monitored through their internal processes.</p>
<p>External consultation (partner organisations, community groups, and councils).</p>	<p>Sensory Support Service customer survey for parents of BSL pupils and partner providers. There were not many responses received as there are not many BSL pupils in Aberdeenshire. Those who responded were happy with the level of service currently provided.</p> <p>Whilst developing the plan public consultation on the draft plan took place, including an online survey, contact SCOTLAND-BSL telephone service, email, post and face to face meetings. There were 23 respondents via our online survey.</p> <p>The face to face consultation meeting with the BSL users took place on 23rd July 2018 and was attended by seven BSL users. Paper copies of the plan and the DVD with the plan in BSL were sent to five BSL users who have been identified as not having access to internet.</p> <p>Majority of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with actions identified in the plan. Suggestions for further actions included raising awareness of the Apprenticeship programme amongst young people who are deaf and to promote the BSL in schools as an integral part of the Deaf culture.</p>	<p>Actions for Education and Family support are tailored to the needs of BSL service users.</p> <p>Actions within the plan are supporting the expectations of BSL users in Aberdeenshire.</p>

External data (census, available statistics).	The 2011 Census highlighted that 418 individuals in Aberdeenshire use BSL as Language other than English at home in Aberdeenshire.	That means that our plan can potentially benefit our BSL users. The relatively low number of BSL users presents challenge when it comes to proportionality in efforts and resources allocated to the delivery of actions under the plan. The data available does not specify age, gender or race of BSL users, hence alternative sources of such information needs to be identified.
Other (general information as appropriate).	N/A	

Stage 3: Evidence Gaps.	
Are there any gaps in the information you currently hold?	BSL users' customer feedback on using council services as specified in the plan.

Stage 4: Measures to fill the evidence gaps.		
What measures will be taken to fill the information gaps before the activity is implemented? These should be included in the action plan at the back of this form.	Measures:	Timescale:
	Biannual questionnaire to parents	January 2020 and then twice a year
	BSL pupils' school plans and records of support provided	ongoing
	Survey with BSL users on impact	2020
	Feedback questionnaire for staff on ALDO Course on Reasonable Adjustment	January 2020
	Consider developing a standard customer feedback for HR telephone enquires where question on Contactscotland can be asked.	Ongoing

Stage 5: What steps can be taken to promote good relations between various groups/areas?	
These should be included in the action plan.	The Aberdeenshire Council BSL plan aims to minimise social isolation of the BSL users by promoting inclusion in education, Culture and Arts and public life. By promoting the Deaf Culture, we aim to create the environment of inclusion and understanding that will allow for positive relations between BSL and non BSL community members.

Stage 6: How does the policy/activity create opportunities for advancing equality of opportunity?

Our actions will create multiple opportunities for accessibility to council services that will benefit both, BSL and non BSL users.

Stage 7a: Are there potential impacts on protected groups?

The protected groups covered by the equality duty are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Who is affected by the activity or who is intended to benefit from the proposed activity and how?

Complete the table below for each protected group by inserting "yes" in the applicable box/boxes below.

	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unknown
Age – Younger	Yes			
Age – Older	Yes			
Disability	Yes			
Race – (includes Gypsy Travellers)	Yes			
Religion or Belief			Yes	
Gender – male/female			Yes	
Pregnancy and maternity			Yes	
Sexual orientation – (includes Lesbian/ Gay/Bisexual)			Yes	
Gender reassignment – (includes Transgender)			Yes	
Marriage and Civil Partnership			Yes	

Stage 7b: Do you have evidence or reason to believe that this policy, activity etc. will or may impact on socio-economic inequalities?

This is about trying to be fair to everyone. Part of that is realising that not everyone may be starting at the same place. Some individuals and families may have low income, may have very little or no savings which means they are living from month to month therefore changes to council policies/services may have a greater adverse impact on them.

On this basis you should consider potential impacts on individuals/families by:

- Place: on specific vulnerable areas or communities (SIMD, regeneration, rural) e.g. housing, transport.
- Pockets: household resources, (Income, benefits, outgoings) ability to access a service
- Prospects: People’s life chances e.g.access to, or ability to access: employment, training, services (such as council or health) or support.

Groups of people who may be impacted include, but not limited to:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unemployed</li> <li>• Single parents and vulnerable families</li> <li>• People on benefits</li> <li>• Those involved in the criminal justice system</li> <li>• People in the most deprived communities</li> <li>• People who live in rural areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pensioners</li> <li>• Looked after children</li> <li>• Careers including young carers</li> <li>• Veterans</li> <li>• Students</li> <li>• Single adult households</li> <li>• People who have experienced the asylum system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those leaving the care setting including children and young people and those with illness</li> <li>• Homeless people</li> <li>• People with low literacy/numeracy</li> <li>• People with lower educational qualifications</li> <li>• People I low paid work</li> <li>• People with one or more protected characteristic</li> </ul>
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Please complete by inserting “yes” in the applicable box/boxes below.

Socio-economic disadvantage	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unknown
Pockets: Low income/income poverty – cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing	Yes			
Pockets: Low and/or no wealth – enough money	Yes			

to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provision for the future				
Pockets: Material deprivation – being unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, leisure and hobbies	Yes			
Place: Area deprivation – where you live, where you work	Yes			
Prospects: Socioeconomic background – social class i.e. parents education, employment and income , educational achievement.	Yes			

Stage 8: What are the positive and negative impacts?		
Impacts.	Positive (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)	Negative (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)
<p>Please detail the potential positive and/or negative impacts on those with protected characteristics you have highlighted above. Detail the impacts and describe those affected.</p>	<p>The aims of the Aberdeenshire Council BSL plan are to create equal opportunities through removing barriers in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• accessing a wide range of information and public services in BSL;</li> <li>• improving the experience of children who use BSL, when they move from school to college,</li> <li>• accessing health care and mental health services for BSL users;</li> <li>• ensuring that the Scottish Government funded employment and training opportunity is accessible to BSL users</li> <li>• promoting opportunities for BSL users participating in politics on the local level and public life,</li> </ul>	
	Improving prospect to health care m education and collage	

Stage 9: Have any of the affected groups been consulted?	
<p>If yes, please give details of how this was done and what the results were. If no, how have you ensured that you can make an informed decision about mitigating steps?</p>	<p>During the development of the plan the following were consulted: BSL users and various BSL related organisations such as North East Sensory Services, the SeeHear group and Deaf Action.</p>

Stage 10: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce negative impacts?		
<p>These should be included in any action plan at the back of this form.</p>	Mitigating Steps	Timescale

Stage 11: What equality monitoring arrangements will be put in place? How the EIA will be used to monitor the proposal	
<p>These should be included in any action plan (for example customer satisfaction questionnaires).</p>	<p>The equality monitoring arrangements will be picked up during the life of the plan.</p>

Stage 12: What is the outcome of the Assessment?		
<p>Please complete the appropriate box/boxes</p>	1	No negative impacts have been identified –please explain.
	<p>No negative impacts have been identified as the plan offers opportunities for integration and participation for all BSL users and reduces accessibility and communication barriers for BSL users.</p>	
	2	<p>Negative Impacts have been identified, these can be mitigated - please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen.</p>

	3	The activity will have negative impacts which cannot be mitigated fully – please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen

* Stage 13: Set out the justification that the activity can and should go ahead despite the negative impact.
N/A

Stage 14: Sign off and authorisation.

Sign off and authorisation.	1) Service and Team	Equalities and Community Engagement Policy, Performance and Improvement	
	2) Title of Policy/Activity	(if appropriate)	
	3) <b>Authors:</b> I/We have completed the equality impact assessment for this policy/ activity.	Name: Magdalena Bereza Position: Policy Officer Date: 01/06/2018 Signature:	Name: Lynne Gravener Position: Date: Signature:
		Name: Position: Date: Signature:	Name: Position: Date: Signature:
	4) Consultation with Service Manager	Name: Date:	
5) Authorisation by Director or Head of Service	Name: Kate Bond Position: Head of Service Date: 14/11/2019	Name: Position: Date:	

	<p>6) If the EIA relates to a matter that has to go before a Committee, Committee report author sends the Committee Report and this form, and any supporting assessment documents, to the Officers responsible for monitoring and the Committee Officer of the relevant Committee. e.g. Social Work and Housing Committee.</p>	Date:
	<p>7) EIA author sends a copy of the finalised form to: equalities@aberdeenshire.gov.uk</p>	Date:
<p>(Equalities team to complete) Has the completed form been published on the website? YES/NO</p>		Date: