

Key Function or Service Area	Overall Relevance to the general Duty	Agreed Actions	Responsibilities and Target Dates
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## Torfaen County Borough Council

### Disability Equality Duty

Action Plan June 2007

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<b>Corporate or Cross-Cutting or Service Area</b>			
Strategy	At a corporate level it is important to work on key disability issues in partnership with other statutory and voluntary organisations toward greater equality for disabled people in opportunity, participation, service provision and service outcome	<p>Ensure the value of 'Fairness' is incorporated within the implementation process of the Corporate Plan and Community Strategy.</p> <p>Work with Torfaen Access Coalition and other partner organisations to identify issues of concern to disabled people.</p> <p>Undertake surveys and studies as appropriate to establish priority issues and issues of difference for people with disabilities.</p> <p>Establish monitoring process measuring representation levels of different 'equality' groups within decision making frameworks and planning processes.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>April 2008 Citizen Engagement &amp; Research</p>

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	Ensure key issues relating to disability are incorporated within the Torfaen Health & Well-Being Strategy	<p>Undertake an Equality Impact Assessment as part of the Strategy formulation process.</p> <p>Ensure objectives contained within strategy are cognisant of disability equality issues</p>	<p>August 2007 Strategic Director for Health &amp; Well-Being</p> <p>August 2007 Strategic Director for Health &amp; Well-Being</p>
Policy & Performance	'Front of Office' service should be fully accessible to people with disabilities and adjustments and additional provisions made to ensure good customer service.	<p>To monitor service standards and effective any adjustments that are made to ensure that adequate arrangements are in place.</p> <p>Report progress of above to Overview &amp; Scrutiny committee (in March annually).</p>	<p>Ongoing Head of Customer Service</p> <p>Ongoing Head of Customer Service</p>

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	<p>Where appropriate all policies established by Council should be mindful of its potential implications on issues of disability.</p>	<p>A standardised report structure guides authors who present policy to Council, its Committees and upper management structure on the inclusion of a variety of themes and considerations. The equalities issue is included within the recommended report structure.</p> <p>Reports that are presented to the Council, sub-committees, and Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committees are routinely screened by the Equalities Manager for potential equality implications. Where potential implications are apparent these will be discussed with the policy author and such considerations included within the content of the reports.</p> <p>An Equality Impact Assessment process has been established and promoted within Council policy development procedures. The conducting of EIA's is required where high-level policies are being developed. The conduct and outcomes of EIA will be reported within each service areas annual report to scrutiny on progress on equalities issues.</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>March 2008 Equalities Manager &amp; Equality Lead Officers</p>
	<p>Council Complaints procedure to include 'equality monitoring' within processes</p>	<p>To monitor nature of any complaints that relate to service access for disabled people.</p> <p>To collaborate across Council to make changes to service delivery arrangements where this is indicated.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Performance &amp; Engagement</p> <p>To be confirmed</p>

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Public Relations and Communications	Ensure that disabled people and disability equality are represented in a positive and appropriate way within Council publicity.	Monitoring of communication function in relation to portrayal of disability issues.	Ongoing Public Relations Team
	Develop appropriate range of communication methods and services for dissemination of public information (i.e. Torfaen Talks, service information leaflets, personal & private communications)	Assess potential and level of need for Torfaen Talks to be made available on CD.	To be confirmed
I.T. Services	Ensure that the Council's website meets current standards of accessibility for disabled people	<p>Research developments in accessibility in both hardware and software website support. (Such as Page Readers)</p> <p>Include agreed software and any adjustments to remote hardware units within a planned programme of improvement.</p>	<p>December 2006 Head of IT Services</p> <p>August 2007 Head of IT Services</p>

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Community Safety	<p>Ensuring that local community safety policy and practice is cognisant of issues relating to disability. This will include understanding the nature of specific vulnerabilities of disabled people around issues of community safety and responding to these issues proportionately.</p>	<p>Training needs to be identified through Achievement Development Interviews with staff.</p> <p>Anti Social Behaviour Monitoring Questionnaires to be amended to include equalities monitoring statistics</p> <p>Participation of Community Safety Officers in The 'Diversity Torfaen' Forum</p> <p>Develop actions strategy to ensure best practice in relation to harassment and victimisation for reasons of disability (Hate Crime). In collaboration with other organisations this will address issues within the community and in Schools.</p> <p>Ensure crime reduction and anti-social behaviour control measures are sensitive to access needs of people with disabilities.</p>	<p>Annually Community Safety Manager</p> <p>Achieved since July 06</p> <p>June 2007</p> <p>To be confirmed</p> <p>To be adopted within practice.</p>
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<b>Personnel Services &amp; Resources</b>			
	To promote Torfaen County Borough Council as an equal opportunity employer and take positive action to address inequality of opportunity of people with disabilities within the recruitment process.	<p>Ensure implementation of the 'Two Ticks' Scheme and Guaranteed Interview Scheme through the People &amp; Performance Working Group and Equality Lead Officers.</p> <p>Monitor uptake and outcome of applications through this Scheme</p>	December 2007
	Core employment policies should be mindful of issues relating to disability and the need to ensure 'reasonable adjustment' where this is relevant. (for example: expenses policy, Access to Work). For purposes of efficiency, such review will be mindful of all equality issues.	To set out a policy review programme prioritising the amendment of policies as appropriate. This will be incorporated within service areas Service and Organisational Development Plan.	December 2007

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	<p>Disabled people should experience recruitment and employment processes as fair and without discrimination.</p>	<p>Establish monitoring arrangements in relation to recruitment, training and employment statistics and practice to ensure fair treatment of disabled people.</p> <p>Implement the equality monitoring packages within the front end of the Trent (Workforce Management Database) implementation</p> <p>Report annually to the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Councils performance on equalities within the field of employment. This data will also be published on Council Website.</p>	<p>October 2007 Head of Personnel Services</p> <p>October 2007 Head of Personnel Services</p> <p>March 2008 Head of Personnel Services (Ethnic origin data to be published July 2007)</p>
	<p>Develop the Councils ability to provide services and communicate through BSL</p>	<p>Torfaen CBC has hosted an Interpreter Apprenticeship Placement under the BSL Futures Project sponsored by the National Assembly for Wales.</p> <p>Provide a programme of Deaf Awareness Sessions for customer facing and other key staff.</p>	<p>2 year placement commenced November 2006</p> <p>Ongoing (annually) Equalities Manager</p>

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	As a major employer within the area Torfaen County Borough Council has a responsibility to recruit fairly from within and beyond the community and go on to employ and treat disabled people equally within the workforce.	<p>To reconvene an employees with disabilities working group to help and monitor implementation of a programme of review and improvement within the Council's employment practice in relation to disability.</p> <p>To precursor the re-launch of the Employees with Disabilities Working Group with an equalities workforce data improvement exercise through the Trent HR Project.</p>	<p>Head of Personnel Services &amp; Equalities Manager (July 2007)</p> <p>Head of Personnel Services (July 2007)</p>
	Ensure whole organisation workforce is trained in disabilities awareness and managers are aware of responsibilities under anti-discriminatory legislation.	<p>Commission high quality e-based training on disability awareness (Engaging Diversity)</p> <p>Secure participation of 500 members of staff in the Disabilities Module</p> <p>Roll-out and encourage full engagement of workforce in this training</p>	<p>Equalities Manager June 2006</p> <p>Equalities Manager December 2007</p> <p>Equalities Manager Ongoing</p>
	Provision of counselling services for employees, to assist in the maintenance of good mental health.	Council has commissioned confidential counselling services (Kerneys Grange) and raised awareness to workforce via information leaflets distributed through the payroll	Head of Personnel Services November 2006
	Ensure services and communications are provided in accessible formats	Survey and enquire of customers whether they require information in other accessible formats such as on tape or in Braille or require the use of a sign language interpreter.	Head of Public Relations To be confirmed

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	Procurement Strategy	<p>Produced specific guidance for managers awarding contracts.</p> <p>Review how information from contractors on equality issues is used to inform decision making.</p> <p>Further develop principles of promoting equality within the implementation of the Corporate Procurement Strategy</p>	<p>April 2006 (Achieved)</p> <p>To be confirmed</p> <p>To be confirmed</p>
	Ensure all policies and practices relating to employment and service provision are reflective of the expansion of coverage in relation to disability (eg: AIDS or HIV status, cancer diagnosis, Multiple Sclerosis)	<p>Develop new specific policy in relation to HIV in employment and service provision issues.</p> <p>Review human resource policies to ensure inclusion of aspects newly covered by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.</p>	<p>Head of Personnel Services January 2007</p> <p>Head of Personnel Services To be confirmed</p>
Resources	As locations from which public services are obtained all Council buildings should have a high 'accessible' rating to members of the public and disabled members of staff	<p>Ensure accessibility issue is incorporated within the Corporate Asset Management Strategy</p> <p>Managers to ensure the 'office and working environments' are accessible to staff with disabilities.</p>	<p>Head of Asset Management Ongoing.</p> <p>All (Ongoing)</p>

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	Ensuring safe egress for Council owned buildings.	Ensure adequate training is provided for Fire Wardens in how to evacuate disabled persons during fire alarm.	Health & Safety Manager (annually)
	Important to review external facing services to assess whether we use good, positive words and pictures when talking about disabled people	Work towards Chartermark accreditation. (Criterion 3 deals specifically with being Fair and accessible to everyone and promoting choice.)	To be progressed in accordance with Chartermark principles.  Accreditation for a significant portion of the Directorate already achieved. March 2007

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Democratic Services	Ensure that new responsibilities within the electoral and democratic processes as extended under this duty are implemented in a sustainable and responsive manner.	<p>Survey elected members to assess individualised or collective needs relating to disability, access or other equality concern.</p> <p>Monitor &amp; enforce high levels of electoral poll booth accessibility throughout County.</p> <p>Ensure all physical locations used for the conduct of democracy and political process within the Council are accessible.</p> <p>Ensure Councillors are familiarised with their responsibilities and develop greater awareness promoted through disability equality training. (Engaging Diversity)</p>	<p>Head of Democratic Services (To be confirmed)</p> <p>As required</p> <p>Ongoing.</p> <p>To be confirmed</p>
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<b>Social Care &amp; Housing Service Area</b>			
Housing	To ensure that greater equality is experienced by disabled on non-disabled people in the provision of social housing	To examine the performance and waiting time differentials between waiting times for the provision of adapted and non-adapted social housing provision. Data systems to be amended to record variance	To be confirmed
	To ensure a range of housing options for people with disabilities within Torfaen	Ensure breadth of housing options are contained within Supporting People Plans	To be confirmed
	The existing stock of social housing should be improved to ensure higher accessibility levels to tenants.	This concern will be included within the Bron Afon establishment strategy and will address access issues within individual, family and other accommodation settings such as sheltered housing and supported accommodation.	To be confirmed

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Social Care	One of the 10 key priorities stated within the DRC's Disability Agenda is that disabled people have a right to live independently and should not be forced by circumstances to live within institutional accommodation if this is not their personal choice.	Torfaen County Borough Council supports this priority and it will review policy, practice and financial constraints to seek to ensure that no individual lives within institutional care where this is not wanted by the individual and a viable community based alternative can be created. It will do so in collaboration with other partners involved in social care, housing, and health provision.	To be confirmed
Employment in Social Care & Housing	Ensure greater employment and retention opportunities for disabled people and the Council through the Access to Work-Scheme and funding of provision of specialist equipment and support for workers	<p>Establish monitoring reports to evidence both quantitative and qualitative feedback around level and type of support being provided to workers with special needs. Social Care has achieved a considerable amount in this area already with the acquisition of specialist equipment for a number of staff.</p> <p>SC&amp;H Equalities Working Group to maintain momentum in this area and to explore expanding the access to the service across Housing.</p>	<p>To be confirmed</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

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<p>Consultation and engagement of Social Care &amp; Housing Service Area users groups</p>	<p>'Involvement' is a key principle within the new public sector duty. Service user reference groups are already in place but currently there are no systematic use of these groups in considering equalities issues</p>	<p>Need to support and promote the development of different methods for ensuring engagement of relevant reference groups when undertaking service specific reviews. EWG to ensure that existing consultation frameworks are developed to including the consideration of equalities issues progress to SMT</p> <p>Developing policies, practices or procedures or in processes such as training and recruitment of staff</p> <p>Evidence to be provided to SC&amp;H Equalities Working Group of new ways in which service users of staff reference groups have been used to address equalities issues</p>	<p>Aug 07</p> <p>To be confirmed</p> <p>To be confirmed</p>
<p><b>Education Service Area</b></p>			
	<p>It is a requirement for all Schools to have a Disability Equality Policy in place by April 2007</p>	<p>To establish a working group to develop a model policy for School Governor Boards. This should be inclusive of a disability access plan.</p>	<p>Model drafted October 2006. To be progressed through the Education Services Equalities Working Group.</p>

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	It is important to monitor educational achievement/outcomes for children with disabilities	<p>Publish within SOD Plans and Single Education Plan the specific steps that will be taken to address any identified inequality in outcomes.</p> <p>Narrow the gap in achievement and attainment for all pupils in line with the LEA 'Monitoring, Intervention, Support &amp; Challenge' policy document.</p> <p>Key performance indicator to be established that allows dis-aggregated data to be available around outcomes for different equality groups.</p>	Progress to be monitored by the Education Services Equality Working Group. To be reported within annual equalities report to Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
	The LEA will seek to ensure educational establishments should facilitate for the full accessibility to pupils, staff and people with physical disabilities.	Work within the parameters of schools assets improvement plan and the Council Asset Management Strategy to establish key priorities	Progress to be monitored by the Education Services Equality Working Group. To be reported within annual equalities report to Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
	It is important that Disability Awareness Training be made available throughout all sections of the Education Service	'Engaging Diversity' to be made available to teachers through the inset programme, school governors, admin and support staff.	To be progressed by the Education Services Equality Working Group.
		Establish Single Education Plan targets and LEA Key Performance Indicators and monitor and review.	

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	Access Strategy	<p>Monitoring 'Education Other than at School' to support parents educating their children at home in providing access to suitable education opportunities.</p> <p>Monitoring targets of actuals for pupils leaving education with no recognised qualifications.</p> <p>Monitoring entry to statutory assessments for all pupils.</p>	To be progressed by the Education Services Equality Working Group. To be reported within annual equalities report to overview & scrutiny committee.
	Inclusion (MLD, EBD) Consultation	Review of policy and practice ongoing. Proposals in new Inclusion Policy to go out for consultation.	Draft policy published and consulted upon by July 2007
	Understanding the nature of bullying generally and specifically in relation to disability, and taking action to eliminate this is important action in ensuring children aspect to ensuring that children with disabilities have a quality education free from harassment.	<p>All schools issued with up to date guidance / training materials this year.</p> <p>Work with teachers, advisors and Community Safety Officers to develop a comprehensive response to the issue of bullying in schools.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>October 2007</p>

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	Education Modernisation	<p>The Education Modernisation Group is a cross department and multi agency group that is charged with producing a 10 year vision for all schools to make them fit for purpose. It is more than just Asset Management in the traditional sense it also looks at:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surplus Places</li> <li>• Suitability</li> <li>• DDA</li> <li>• Access</li> <li>• Inclusion</li> <li>• Health &amp; Safety</li> <li>• Community Focused Schools</li> </ul>	<p>Learning Country Targets are 2010. Lea targets are 2016.</p> <p>To reduce surplus places to 15% by 2010</p>
	Sensory Impairment Service	<p>Gwent Directors established working group to look at the future of sensory services. External consultation report commissioned and now available. Task &amp; Finish Group to take forward recommendations</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>January 2007</p> <p>July 2007</p>
	Physical Standards of Provision of Special Needs Education (for example Crownbridge)	<p>Review of 'required services'[ resources.</p> <p>Bid for WAG SBIG funding for new build for refurbishment and new build elements.</p>	<p>To be confirmed</p> <p>January/February 2007.</p>

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	It is important to promote a positive and informed understanding of disability amongst children as this is often when life long attitudes are established	Disability awareness and education to be contained as a running theme within the personal and social education element of the curriculum	To be confirmed

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<b>Regeneration</b>	The enhancement of the access of the rural setting, leisure and cultural facilities and services are important factors to ensuring inclusion and equality for disabled people.	Countryside will continue to assess that access points, handrails and surfaces are appropriate for users needs.	Ongoing
		We will continue to identify key buildings to make them accessible for our users.	Ongoing
		We will inform our existing service areas of current adaptations (for instance the Braille printer in Cwmbran Library.)	To be confirmed
		Torfaen Libraries will improve access to Pontypool and Abersychan Libraries.	To be confirmed
		The Community Farm will improve access to tractor rides.	To be confirmed
		Economic Development will encourage access improvements to businesses.	To be confirmed
		We will arrange for access audits to be carried out to the remainder of Regeneration building stock.	To be confirmed
		We will assess which of our Community Education Centres will install hearing loops.	To be confirmed
		The community farm will make services available at all levels of the building.	To be confirmed
		Our leisure centres and the community farm will implement control measures for disabled parking.	
Urban Regeneration will develop strategies and action plans that fully address issues of transportation and access to key services for disabled groups.			

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		<p>Our leisure centres and the community farm will implement effective control measures for disabled parking.</p> <p>Urban Regeneration will develop strategies and action plans that fully address issues of transportation and access to key services for disabled groups.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>To be confirmed</p>
		<p>To develop a long term strategy to ensure a level of engagement and support is achieved with people with disabilities on issues relating to economic regeneration and employment.</p> <p>Economic Development will work with Disability Wales re – starting up of businesses</p>	<p>To be confirmed</p> <p>To be confirmed</p>

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	Employment & eliminating unlawful disability harassment	<p>Use the corporate recruitment procedures to employ all our staff, for casual, permanent, part and full-time posts.</p> <p>Provide all staff with internet based training on Age equality, Disability, Gender and Race as well as grass roots disability awareness training.</p> <p>We will follow guidelines and procedures laid down by HR and where required appropriate action against those that harass any members of the public or staff.</p>	<p>On-going</p> <p>All staff to have undertaken training by 2008</p> <p>On-going</p>
	<p>Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people.</p> <p>Ensure our departmental SOD plans include targets that are inclusive of all users.</p>	<p>We will encourage our staff to adopt an access for all attitude at all our service points.</p> <p>We will provide training on serving disabled customers and internet based equality to all members of staff</p> <p>Awareness training for all Managers to ensure targets are inclusive of all users.</p>	<p>All Managers 2007 - 2009</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p>

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	<p>Encouraging participation by disabled people in public life</p> <p>We will positively target disabled groups/organisation and individuals to utilise the services we provide.</p>	<p>Libraries will ensure that the new Library Management System has built in features to enable disabled users to use and access the system.</p> <p>The Community Farm will develop a sensory experience to complement existing provision.</p> <p>RISE will establish a workplace learning action centre that is accessible to the wider community.</p> <p>RISE will develop learning opportunities at grass roots level to widen and deepen participation by using ongoing community development work to identify need and develop appropriate opportunities.</p> <p>RISE will develop an informal cluster of learning opportunities whilst supporting other sites with awareness events.</p>	<p>2007 – 2009</p> <p>To be confirmed</p> <p>To be confirmed</p> <p>To be confirmed</p> <p>To be confirmed</p>
	<p>We will review our data collection in order to carry out monitoring on levels of usage.</p>	<p>Urban Regeneration will assess the impact of physical works on user groups</p>	<p>To be confirmed</p>

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	Ensure our marketing and publicity material is appropriate for all our service users.	The newly formed marketing team will undertake a review of existing publicity material to ensure consistency and appropriateness [Braille, large print etc.,] across all service areas.	March 2008

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	<p>We will take steps to meet disabled peoples needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment. We will carry out reasonable adjustments to make our services accessible to all our users.</p>	<p>Torfaen Training will train their staff to use aids and adaptations</p> <p>RISE will ensure one learning centre in each LAC cluster has been adapted i.e., Supernova software, height adjustable desks, trackballs, screen reader features.</p> <p>Torfaen Leisure Centres will install automatic doors where appropriate.</p> <p>When planning new buildings we will continue to work with DAP on all aspects of design and planning.</p> <p>Urban Regeneration will adopt inclusive design principles in all physical projects allowing all users to access facilities in an equal and independent way</p>	<p>March 2008</p> <p>To be confirmed</p> <p>To be confirmed</p> <p>To be confirmed</p> <p>On-going</p>

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	To work toward the removal of barriers to participation in sport and recreation amongst disabled people.	<p>To undertake 'snapshot' and 'footfall' monitoring of current user profiles as required within different service settings.</p> <p>To provide service development investment as appropriate.</p> <p>To explore funding opportunities for further service development.</p>	<p>To be confirmed</p> <p>To be confirmed</p> <p>To be confirmed</p>
<b>Public Protection &amp; Regulatory Services</b>	Public and Private Hire Transport	To review current vehicle licensing arrangements to establish if they are contributing toward the Councils duty to promote equality of opportunity between disabled and non-disabled people	To be confirmed
		To work with partners ensure that methods of independent and public transport assist the whole communities' mobility. To be particularly cognisant of the barriers to mobility faced by people with disabilities and address these within policy and practice.	To be confirmed
	General Enforcement	Ensure all officers are provided with equality training appropriate and sufficiently developed for there responsibilities. Particular emphasis to be placed upon customer facing staff and officers involved in legal enforcement process.	<p>To be confirmed</p> <p>Alison Hughes</p>

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	Ensure disabled people are involved within the planning approval process for commercial developments and new Council facilities.	Ensure consistent presentation of planning proposals to the Torfaen Access Coalition.	Wayne Collier On-going
	Improving Access by ensuring access to public building	To contribute and work corporately to improve the access to and provision of buildings accessible to the public or buildings open to the public areas are suitable for and accessible for disabled people.	Wayne Collier On-going
	Identification of Groups not accessing service or facing obstacles in service provision/equality of treatment	Develop appropriate service adjustments to ensure practice and policy is non-discriminatory. Action plan to be developed in consultation with disability and other equality groups via the Customer Panel.	H Deakin On-going
		Review planning processes for work relating to adaptations because of disability to ensure they are effective, fair and supportive.	To be confirmed
		Incorporate consideration of disability issues within Torfaen Local Development Plan.	Adopted within the LDP Assessment Process as part of the scoping process

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<b>Operational Services</b>	Creating accessible communities – (highways & public areas)	<p>To liaise with the Torfaen Access Coalition on a regular basis to identify locations of poor accessibility.</p> <p>To ensure all refurbishment and maintenance work is undertaken within current guidelines on accessibility.</p> <p>To develop a policy which communicates a list of criteria which can be used to assess prioritisation of community locations for accessibility refurbishments (ie, tactile surfaces, dropped kerbs)</p>	<p>Kevin Mulcahy On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>Achieved December 2006</p>

