SDCC Comhairle Contae Átha Cliath Theas South Dublin County Council

Supporting implementation of Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty in SDCC

Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Framework

SEPTEMBER 2026

Values Statement

Respect

Participation

Accessibility

Inclusion

Section 2 Equality and human rights values statement

2.1 Introduction

This equality and human rights values statement is a tool for the implementation of the public sector equality and human rights duty (the Duty). It identifies and defines the values that motivate our ambition for the Duty and establishes benchmarks for each of these values in terms of the priorities we pursue, in a statement of outcome, and the way we go about pursuing these priorities, in a statement of process.

This equality and human rights values statement provides a frame for implementing the different elements of the Duty and offers a language to support an embedding of the Duty across the organisation, ensuring equality and human rights are central to our organisational culture.

This equality and human rights values statement is anchored in our corporate values, in particular that of:

"Inclusive and supportive: We are caring, considerate and approachable. We value diversity in our communities and work to engage and connect everyone. We work together to achieve more. We believe in collaboration, cooperation and mutual respect for all."

The equality and human rights values statement is addressed to the identified groups for the Duty.

2.2 Our equality and human rights values

Respect is about equal treatment, fairness and dignity. It involves having and exercising rights, and accountability and consequences where rights are breached.
Statement of outcome: SDCC promotes and advances respect for, fulfilment of, and exercise of the rights of those we provide services to, staff and policy beneficiaries from the identified groups.
Statement of process: SDCC works to ensure that: adequate policies and procedures are in place to prevent and address issues of discrimination or harassment that might be experienced by those we provide services to, staff and policy beneficiaries from the identified groups; and that these groups are enabled to know and exercise their rights in this regard.

Participation is about being consulted, having one's voice heard, and exercising influence. It involves engaging people in decision-making processes and strengthening their capacity to make an impact.
Statement of outcome: SDCC works to strengthen the voice of those we provide services to, staff, and policy beneficiaries from the identified groups and to ensure their capacity to participate actively and make an impact on decisions that impact on them.
Statement of process: SDCC works in a manner that: involves those we provide services to, staff, and policy beneficiaries from the identified groups in its consultation and decision-making structures and processes; and ensures they get feedback as to the impact of their involvement.

Accessibility is about diversity and the specific needs that arise from diversity and the manner in which people choose to live out their identity. It involves knowledge of, and flexibility and adaptability in responding to, these specific needs.

Statement of outcome: SDCC works to ensure that buildings and infrastructure are accessible, and that access is enabled in the workplace, through services delivered, and communicated for those from across the identified groups, engaging with all stakeholders to ensure this outcome is supported and resourced.
Statement of process: SDCC works in a manner that: engages with those we provide services to, staff, and policy beneficiaries from the identified groups to identify and establish an effective response to their specific needs; reaches out to and ensures a welcome for these groups in its work and premises; and promotes accessibility in standards set and funding criteria.

Inclusion is about being visible, involved, and a valued and active part of society, community, the workplace, and civil society. It involves achieving change and enhancing outcomes, and informing and enabling choices between real options.
Statement of outcome: SDCC gives leadership for, contributes to, resources, and seeks to achieve change and improved outcomes for those we provide services to, staff, and policy beneficiaries from the identified groups, and to ensure relevant options are available to them that reflect their informed choices.
Statement of process: SDCC works in a manner that provides additional supports for those we provide services to, staff, and policy beneficiaries from the identified groups to enable them to be a valued and active part of society, community, the workplace, and civil society, including by targeting and reaching out to these groups; and that enables these groups to showcase their diversity and potential.

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Section 42(1):

A public body shall, in the performance of its functions, have regard to the need to:

a) Eliminate discrimination

b) Promote equality of opportunity and treatment

c) Protect human rights

of its staff, persons to whom it provides services, and policy beneficiaries.

Section 42(2):

To giving effect to (42)(1), a public body shall, having regard to its functions and purpose, size and available resources:

a) Set out in a manner that is accessible to the public in its strategic plan, an assessment of the human rights and equality issues it believes to be relevant to its functions and purpose and the policies, plans and actions in place or proposed to address those issues, and

b) Report in a manner that is accessible to the public on developments and achievements, in its annual report.

Who the Duty relates to

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Groups covered under equality legislation under the protected grounds of:

- Gender
- Civil Status
- Family Status
- Age
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Race
- Religion
- Membership of the Traveller Community
- People at risk of poverty and social exclusion (socio-economic status ground)
- People at the intersection on above grounds
- Individual rights holders under various human rights instruments

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Section 42 (1) and Section 42 (2)

Two distinct but interlinked statutory obligations:

Section 42 (1): overarching statutory obligation:

Public bodies to integrate a focus on human rights and equality issues into every aspect of the performance of their functions, on an ongoing basis.

Section 42 (2): strategic statutory obligation:

Public bodies to undertake specific actions as part of their strategic planning cycle: Assess, Address, Report, and to publish specific documentation.

compliance with Section 42(2) may assist in complying with Section 42(1)

SDCC Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty Framework

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SDCC Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty Framework

Updated and published in December 2025

Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission. Guidance for Public Bodies – Second Edition

Promoting equality of opportunity and treatment

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Ensuring that service users and employees of public bodies, from the identified groups, can access and participate in the services and programmes provided by a public body, and as employees of a public body.

In practice, this will involve attention to:

- Preventing and addressing incidents of discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment
- Ensuring reasonable accommodation for people with a disability
- Identifying the needs arising from the diverse situation, experience and identity of the identified groups and working to meet those needs through services, policies, and in employment; and
- Implementing positive action measures (in employment and service provision).

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Potential of the Duty

- Emphasis on a proactive, rather than a reactive, approach to equality and human rights issues,
- Embeds equality and human rights into the mainstream of how public bodies carry out their work,
- Drives a planned and systematic approach to equality and human rights,
- Enables an evidence-based approach to equality and human rights,
- Enhances effectiveness and accessibility of services
- Enhances employee wellbeing and workplace culture, and
- Stimulates cultural change in public bodies

Assessment

Identifies the key equality and human rights issues (for employees, service users and policy beneficiaries) that are relevant to the functions and purpose of the organisation.

It is an evidence-based identification of the equality and human rights issues facing the groups identified for the Duty.

First of 3 steps to give effect to the Duty (42(2))

Provides the foundation for a planned and systematic approach to equality and human rights.

Section 3 Assessment of equality and human rights issues

3.1 Introduction

This assessment of equality and human rights is required under the strategic Duty (Section 42(2))[3] It has been undertaken in alignment with guidance issued by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission[4]. It serves our implementation of both the strategic Duty and the overarching Duty, effectively interlinking both.

This assessment establishes those issues that face the identified groups for the Duty and that South Dublin County Council (SDCC) needs to have regard to in carrying out our functions. The functions of SDCC include: employer; service provider; corporate; policy-making; representative; socio-economic development; planning and development; and regulation and enforcement.

These issues relate to the: **Situation** of the group in terms of their access to resources and any particular disadvantage they experience; **Experience** of the group in terms of the nature and quality of their interaction with employers and service providers and the wider society; and **Identity** of the group in terms of how they chose to give expression to their identity and the manner in which the specific needs that arise from this are recognized and addressed.

This is not an assessment of the performance of SDCC, nor of its work and initiatives to address equality and human rights concerns.

The equality and human rights issues identified below relate to all of the identified groups unless otherwise indicated. Our four values of respect, participation, accessibility, and inclusion are used as a framework to set out the assessment of the equality and human rights issues.

3.2 Assessment of equality and human rights issues

Respect is about equal treatment, fairness and dignity. It involves having and exercising rights, and accountability and consequences where rights are breached. Relevant equality and human rights issues identified that face the identified groups are:

- Discrimination, both at an individual level and a systemic level.
- Experiences of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment.
- Stereotyping, bias, incorrect assumptions, and prejudice that shape:
  - Decision making
  - Expectations; and
  - Choices made

[3]This was an evidence-based and participative exercise. The evidence base is available in a separate document, and includes a report on a review meeting on the draft assessment with civil society organisations.

[4]Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (2024) Implementing the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty: Guidance for public bodies second edition.

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Implementation of Public Sector Duty

- Use the assessment of equality and human rights issues to establish:
  - Where the organisation is currently responding to the issues identified in its continuing plans, policies and actions; and
  - Further plans, policies, and actions required to respond adequately and appropriately to the issues identified in the assessment.
  - Identify key decision-making moments for the organisation, when plans, strategies, policies or programmes are being developed or reviewed to establish:
  - Responsibility and timing for implementation of an equality and human rights impact assessment as part of that process.
  - Identify key operational procedures such as procurement, funding or regulatory functions that would involve passing on the Duty in an appropriate manner.

Appendix:

Template for an Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment

1. Purpose and Scope of Plan, Policy strategy, Programme, Scheme, Internal policy or Procedure

Set out the purpose and beneficiaries established for the plan, policy strategy, programme, scheme, internal policy or procedure

2. Address Step

Respect is about equal treatment, fairness and dignity. It involves having and exercising rights, and accountability and consequences where rights are breached.

Statement of Outcome: SDCC promotes and advances respect for, fulfilment of, and exercise of the rights of those we provide services to, staff and policy beneficiaries from the identified groups.

Statement of Process: SDCC works to ensure that: adequate policies and procedures are in place to prevent and address issues of discrimination or harassment that might be experienced by those we provide services to, staff and policy beneficiaries from the identified groups; and that these groups are enabled to know and exercise their rights in this regard.

Relevant equality and human rights issues	Addressed in current draft – yes, no, partly?	Relevant section(s) where issue is addressed	Amendments required to adequately and appropriately address the issue

Participation is about being consulted, having one's voice heard, and exercising influence. It involves engaging people in decision-making processes and strengthening their capacity to make an impact.

Statement of Outcome: SDCC works to strengthen the voice of those we provide services to, staff, and policy beneficiaries from the identified groups and to ensure their capacity to participate actively and make an impact on decisions that impact on them.

SDCC Methodology

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- Equality and human rights impact assessments before adopting a policy, plan or strategy.
- Training on the Duty; reference to Duty in relevant corporate governance standards; consult with staff and service users.
- Set out in SDCC annual Equality and Human Rights action plan:

Look at key moments for implementation of the overarching Duty:

- Plans, including the corporate plan
- Policy strategies, including the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)
- Programmes and schemes
- Internal policies and procedures.

Key moments achieved where we have carried out equality and human rights impact assessment:

- Age Friendly Strategy
- Tenant Participation Strategy
- Dress Code
- Staff mobility and transfer policy
- Succession planning
- Citizens Survey
- Sustainable Procurement Policy

Goal 4: A Better Place

Deliver the infrastructure and facilities required to serve our growing population

LECP Goals:
Goal 1: For the County of South Dublin to become a better place in which to live and work.

Goal 2: To improve the physical and mental health of those living and working in South Dublin.

Goal 5: Empower communities through SMART initiatives and skills development to help make their areas better places in which to live, work and

Service Objective 2026	Performance Measure (Target)	Public Sector Duty Requirement	Relevant D
Finalise integrated property register for strategic asset management	Property register operational Assets mapped & aligned with regeneration opportunities		Economic D
Enhance accessibility through a programme of audits & follow-up actions	Accessibility audits carried out (#) Follow-up actions & audit recommendations addressed (%,#)	Include under Strategic Duty	
Expand seasonal calendar of local events	Local events & markets held (#) & attendees (#)		
Develop events strategy for future growth & increased profile	Event space audit completed Events strategy finalised	EHRIA required	
Activate brand strategy & architecture to connect better with the public	Public perception engagement workshop events (#) & survey responses (#,%) Facilities branded (#) Key brand actions delivered (#)		Comr

Report step

Prepare a specific Duty report to form part of the Annual report:

- New outcomes for groups,
- New developments and improvements in performance of functions,
- Mainstreaming activity at key decision-making moments (Annual Service Delivery Plan).

Responsibility of the SPC in relation to implementation of the Duty

- Verifying whether the equality and human rights impact assessment was carried out and completed

Equality and Human Rights Framework Duty Implementation

Climate Action Story Map

Below is an overview of the implementation of the Equality and Human Rights Framework

- Published an updated Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Framework in line with revised Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission guidance.
- Continued implementation of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty under Section 42 of the IHREC Act 2014, embedding equality and human rights across all functions, policies and services.
- Oversight provided by a cross-departmental Equality and Human Rights Working Group, coordinating the annual Action Plan, EHRIA processes and reporting.

Policies and Equality Impact Assessments

- Delivered the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Action Plan for 2025.
- Completed Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments on the following:
  - Dress Code
  - Staff Mobility and Transfer Policy
  - Succession Planning Framework
  - Worksharing Scheme
  - Tenant Participation Strategy

Accessibility and Inclusion Initiatives

- Hosted Accessibility Week (3–10 December), including:
  - Launch of partnership with As I Am towards Autism-Friendly Service Provider accreditation
  - Introduction of bilingual communication board in North Clondalkin Library
  - Appointment of a new Access Officer
  - Promotion of pathway accessibility reporting
  - Showcasing Changing Places facilities and inclusive outdoor gym equipment
- Formally launched the updated Framework on International Human Rights Day.
- Progressed Autism-Friendly accreditation pilot for County Hall, including a sensory audit, sensory map and visual guide.
- Marked Irish Sign Language Awareness Day, supporting staff understanding of Deaf culture and access to interpreting services.
- Participated in Make Way Day, raising awareness of footpath accessibility through public campaigning.

Investment in Accessibility and Universal Design

- Allocated €100,000 to an Equality and Access Work Plan, including countywide accessibility audits.
- Committed €400,000 to footpath accessibility works and €1.9 million to village and public realm enhancements using universal design principles.
- Delivered housing supports, including grants for disabled tenants and funding for adaptations, mobility aids and essential repairs.

Celebrating Marriage Equality

Accessible Communications and Wellbeing

- Embedded accessibility at the core of the new Council br
  award-winning accessible font and clearer tone of voice.
- Delivered Plain English training to staff to support access
  communications.
- Promoted staff wellbeing through targeted health, cance
  autism awareness initiatives.

Equality, Diversity and Participation

- Published the 2025 Gender Pay Gap Report, showing a n
  pay gap.
- Supported the Women's Caucus, including meetings and
  Women" event in partnership with the Local Enterprise O
- Continued the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Artist Burs
  community theatre with International Protection applican
  development of Hopeful Theatre.
- Libraries and Community Inclusion
- Marked International Women's Day across South Dublin L
  talks, workshops and cultural events.
- Expanded the Neurodiverse South programme, including
  supports, talks, podcasts and a specialist toy collection.
- Integration and Community Support
- Delivered services through the Local Authority Integratior
  supporting refugees, International Protection applicants a
  of Temporary Protection.
- Administered the Community Recognition Fund, supporti
  across South Dublin.
- Hosted Refugee Week events, World Refugee Day initiati
  Council-wide Job Fair.

Active South Dublin

- Delivered inclusive physical activity programmes for child
  centres and children with disabilities.
- Supported swimming lessons in DEIS schools and provide
  community and youth-focused activity programmes throu

SDCC Comhairle Contae Átha Cliath Theas South Dublin County Council

Thank you

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