

Sligo County Council **Disability Inclusion & Access Strategy 2024 - 2027**



Sligo County Council
Comhairle Chontae Shligigh

Sligo.

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Message from the Cathaoirleach of Sligo County Council

It is a great honour to introduce the Sligo Disability, Inclusion and Access Strategy 2024-2027. This important document for Sligo was developed under the auspices of the Council's Disability Consultative Committee, and adopted by Sligo County Council at its Plenary meeting on 8 April, 2024.

This Strategy represents the commitment of the Council in providing leadership at a local level to make Sligo a more inclusive place where disabled people are facilitated to participate equally in all aspects of social life. Its vision is aligned to and reflects other important Council Strategies such as Sligo 2030 One Voice One Vision which aims for Sligo to be "a smart, sustainable and socially inclusive Sligo, one that cherishes its vibrant communities." It also strives to remove barriers and to improve accessibility for disabled people in accessing services provided by the Council.

The approval of this Plan by the Council represents an important step for local government and puts Sligo County Council at the forefront in leading out in developing policy in this area. I want to acknowledge the input of all those who made contributions to the making of this Strategy, especially Cllr Declan Bree (Chair) and members of the Disability Consultative Committee, Cllr Arthur Gibbons (Chair) and Members of the Strategic Policy Committee for Housing and Corporate, and the various agencies both state, community and voluntary, who inputted into the making of this important strategy. My gratitude also to the staff of Sligo Co Council in preparing the Strategy and Action plan.

We look forward to its implementation.



Cllr Gerard Mullaney
Cathaoirleach,
Sligo County Council

Foreword

Sligo County Council's Disability, Inclusion and Access Strategy 2024-2027 was developed under the auspices of the Council's Disability Consultative Committee (DCC). As Chairperson of the DCC, I am delighted to see the adoption of this Strategy, the development of which commenced in July, 2023.

The development process agreed by the DCC ensured that adequate time was given for a review of the outgoing strategy, updating legislation and policies and analysing relevant local statistical data. Importantly, it also enabled an extensive public consultation process which ensured meaningful engagement with all stakeholders and the wider community. Significantly, this included engagement with the Disability Sector through the lived experience of Sligo Disabled Persons Organisation, (DPO) and the Independent Living Movement Ireland (ILMI). All contributions received were valued and enhanced the development of the strategy.

The Disability, Inclusion and Access Strategy 2024-2027 builds upon and reaffirms the Council's commitment to adopt the Social Model of Disability which was first adopted by Sligo County Council in 2018 and introduced in the Council's outgoing Strategy for the period 2019-2022. Sligo County Council is proud to have been one of the first councils to adopt the Social Model of Disability which recognises the disabling barriers built into the environment and social structures which feature in the daily lives of disabled people.

According to the 2022 Census figures for County Sligo, Disabled people make up 22.98% of the County's population. It is our duty as a Local Authority, in conjunction with other stakeholders, to help remove some of the barriers to participation and improve accessibility of services to enable Disabled people to enjoy the same services and opportunities as other citizens.

I would like to thank my colleagues on the Sligo County Council's Disability Consultative Committee for their work in developing this Strategy along with the contributions made by members of the Strategic Policy Committee for Housing and Corporate and various organisations from the disability sector who inputted. I also wish to acknowledge the administrative support provided by staff of the Community Section and the input made from various departments of the Council throughout the process. This Strategy is a very important landmark for Sligo County Council in leading local policy making and to ensure greater accessibility to enhance the lives of disabled people in County Sligo.

I look forward to seeing the rollout of this Strategy for the betterment of all of Sligo's citizens.



Councillor Declan Bree
Chair, Sligo County Council
Disability Consultative
Committee

2.0. Introduction

The Sligo County Council Disability Inclusion and Access Strategy 2024-2027 builds upon the solid foundation put in place by the preceding Disability Inclusion and Access Strategy 2019-2022. It continues to acknowledge the shift in the understanding of disability and recognition of rights of disabled people. It also recognises that international understandings have moved away from a strictly medical definition, where “disability” is seen to be “caused” by functional deficits (such as physical injury or intellectual disability) to a “social model” that recognises the disabling barriers built into the environment and social structures as disabled people go about their lives.

With support from the Disability Consultative Committee and contributions received from the consultation process, Sligo County Council was one of the first Councils to formally vote to adopt the Social Model in 2018. While Social Model language is used in this strategy and action plan the Disability Consultative Committee wish to acknowledge that some people identify with person first language i.e. people/persons with disabilities and also that some people do not identify with either term.

The principle of mainstreaming for and with disabled people which was introduced in Ireland in 1996 is continued in this strategy to ensure that disabled people enjoy equal rights and opportunities to participate in economic, social and cultural life, have choice and control over how they live their lives and are enabled to reach their full potential.

The input and expertise of the Council’s Disability Consultative Committee and Sligo Disabled Persons’ Organisation (DPO) & Independent Living Movement Irl. (ILMI) throughout the development process of this strategy has ensured that the “lived experience” of disabled people has been considered throughout the strategy formation and accompanying action plan for the period 2024-2027.

2.1. Document Design

This document is designed to ensure that the needs and effective access supports of the widest possible audience are met, whether using digital or print media. The font, formatting and descriptive text used have been directly informed by the Customer Communications Toolkit for the Public Service - A Universal Design Approach, developed by the National Disability Authority and the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design.

3.0. How the Disability Inclusion and Access Strategy was developed

The Sligo County Council Disability Inclusion & Access Strategy 2024-2027 was developed under the auspices of the Council's Disability Consultative Committee which was key in developing and monitoring the preceding strategy for the period 2019-2022. It also provides access to key state and non-governmental organisations who work with disabled people and most importantly includes the voice of people who have experienced a variety of access challenges from the Sligo community and in particular Sligo Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO).

The Disability Consultative Committee agreed the following approach in developing the strategy for the period 2024-2027

- The review and updating of the preceding Disability, Inclusion and Access Strategy 2019-2022 was agreed as the basis to form positive actions moving forward for the period 2024-2027 with actions to be reviewed and aligned where possible. As previously, it will align to the most recent National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) 2017-2022, and contains actions relevant to local authorities which were extracted for implementation at a local level.
- One of the key objectives of National Policy is to give legal effect to the principle that mainstream public services should serve people with disabilities alongside other citizens, as set out in the Disability Act 2005.
- Public Consultation through the display of a Draft Disability, Inclusion and Access Strategy 2024-2027, inviting submissions from members of the public. Final approval of this Draft agreed by the Council's Disability Consultative Committee and the Strategic Policy Committee for Housing and Corporate Services.
- Submissions received through the Public Consultation process reviewed and considered by the Disability Consultative Committee for incorporation into the Strategy.
- Draft Disability, Inclusion and Access Strategy 2024-2022 approved by Disability Consultative Committee, SPC and adopted by full Council.
- Implementation of the strategy to be overseen by the Disability Consultative Committee.

3.1. Social Model of Disability & Human Rights

In keeping with the ethos of its previous Strategy, the Disability Consultative Committee agreed to adopt the Social Model of Disability in the development and delivery of this strategy.

The Social Model is generally based on the idea that disability is caused by the way society is organised, rather than by a person's impairment. It views disability as "the disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by barriers within social structures and society which takes little or no account of people who have impairments and excludes them from participation in the mainstream of social activities". Barriers to equal opportunities are not just physical and include attitudes found in society, based on prejudice or stereotype (also called Ableism and Disablism).

In contrast the Medical Model of disability is of the view that disability is a problem located within the individual (impairment), which rehabilitation can 'fix'. Although medicine and rehabilitation are important, a social model of disability is committed to generating a more holistic understanding of disability and advocates for inclusive practices aimed at tackling discrimination and disadvantage.

The Social Model has become influential globally in the development of international human rights treaties and strategies on disabilities, which are concerned with highlighting social exclusion and dismantling barriers to ensure access for disabled people to all aspects of social life. It is strongly based on human rights principles and is embedded in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and described in 'Preamble, as:

"Recognising that disability is an evolving concept and that disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others".





The social model recognises that disability affects every aspect of our lives, not just our health. It must become the first key consideration when drafting plans and making decisions. Disabled people have the right to enjoy the same services and opportunities as their non-disabled fellow-citizens, to have access to the same public services, like transport, housing, and to take advantage of the same education and employment opportunities as everyone else.

A social model perspective provides an opportunity to understand disability in terms of disabling barriers in institutions (such as policies, access, communication methods) and society generally (attitudes, assumptions, beliefs), and the different social meanings attached to disability.

The Sligo County Council's Strategy will focus on effective social model informed inclusion and what needs to change and systematically transform to enable disabled people to achieve a barrier free pathway to the County's resources. As referenced, this strategy's language is fundamentally grounded in the social model of disability and also reflects the human rights and equality language of the term disabled people used throughout this document. The term 'disabled people' is both positive and empowering, as it denotes the recognition of oppression by disabling barriers and affiliation to a collective movement, such as Sligo's Disabled Peoples Organisation (DPO). Significantly, the term's usage in this Strategic Plan also acknowledges something that can be changed and transformed by collective actions between disabled people as genuine partners and the County Council.

4.0 Vision and Mission

Adopting a social model perspective on disability, the vision underlying this plan is that of an inclusive society, where disabled people are facilitated to participate equally in all aspects of social life. The mission is to remove these barriers so that all in Sligo enjoy equal rights and opportunities to participate in the social, economic and cultural life of the county, with universal access to services and facilities.

This mission is aligned to the vision of Sligo 2030 One Voice One Vision County Sligo Local Economic and Community Plan 2023-2030.

The vision for Sligo in 2030 is

“ for a smart, sustainable, and socially inclusive Sligo; one that cherishes its vibrant communities, protects and celebrates its unique environment and rich culture, and is a champion of innovative growth and development”.



5.0 Guiding Principles

In adopting a social model of disability, Sligo County Council's Disability Inclusion & Access Strategy 2024-2027 adopts the Guiding Principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD), namely:

- 1. Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons**
- 2. Non-discrimination**
- 3. Full and effective participation and inclusion in society**
- 4. Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity**
- 5. Equality of opportunity**
- 6. Accessibility**
- 7. Equality between men and women**
- 8. Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities**

This means a commitment to the Principles of UNCRPD in undertaking planning and decision making.

6.0 Policy Background and Context

The development of Sligo County Council's Disability Inclusion & Access Strategy 2024-2027 has been influenced by a number of international and national policies.

The strategy is also aligned to key principles set out in key local strategies and policies of Sligo County Council.

7.0 International/European Policy Context

Globally, disability has come under the spotlight through a number of international conventions and policies. These include the Barcelona Declaration, UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's), and the European Commission Union of Equality Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021- 2030.

7.1. The Barcelona Declaration 1995

The Barcelona Declaration was signed by Ireland in March 1995 as a commitment to become a more 'disability friendly' place. In practice this means working to make the built environment, services, and decision-making processes more accessible to disabled people. The Barcelona Declaration contains 17 agreements, which can be summarised under six broad headings as follows:

- I. Promote disability awareness and ensure the rights of disabled people to be different and their right to receive personal attention
- II. Develop policies and an equality/disability proof decision-making process
- III. Develop disability consultation processes
- IV. Provide disabled people access to the social and physical environments as well as services
- V. Provide training programmes dealing with equality/disability issues
- VI. Develop monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment procedures for actions, projects and policies regarding equality/disability issues.

7.2. UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD) was signed by the Irish Government in 2007 with legislative effect commencing in Ireland from 19 April 2018. Its purpose is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all disabled people, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity. It applies established human rights principles from the UN Declaration on Human Rights to the situation of disabled people. It covers civil and political rights to equal treatment and freedom from discrimination, and social and economic rights in areas like education, health care, employment and transport. States which ratify the UN Convention commit themselves to delivering civil and political rights to disabled people, and to progressive realisation of social and economic rights. The principles of UNCPRD underpin this strategy and are listed under the Guiding Principles.

7.3 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's)

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity. The 17 SDGs which are set out below are integrated—they recognize that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability.

THE GLOBAL GOALS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



Figure 1: The Global Goals for Sustainable Development

7.3 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's)

Sustainable development is the key principle internationally for meeting societal and economic goals while protecting the environment.

Disability is referenced in various parts of the SDGs and specifically in parts outlined below:

Goal 8 promotes sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



Goal 10 strives to reduce inequality by empowering and promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all.

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



Goal 11 works to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe and sustainable.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



7.4 European Commission Union of Equality Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030

The European Commission's Union of Equality Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 builds upon the European Commission's European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, (EDS) and the UNCRPD. Adopted by the European Commission in March 2021, it encompassed Parliament's main recommendations namely:

- The mainstreaming of the rights of all disabled people into all policies and areas
- Recovery and mitigation measures to avoid disabled people getting disproportionately affected by health crises such as Covid 19
- Equal access for disabled people to health care, employment, public transport, housing
- The implementation and further development of the EU disability card pilot project, which allows for the mutual recognition of disabilities in some EU countries
- Disabled people, their families and organisations were part of the dialogue and will be part of the process of implementation.



8.0 National Policy Context

Since the publication of the National Disability Strategy (2004) and the passing of the Disability Act (2005) it has been established Government policy that mainstream public services include disabled people with complex impairment labels that require effective supports. The focus on mainstreaming in Government policy reflects the wider changes occurring globally as a consequence of the rise of the social model, which emphasises rights and mainstreaming of services across all areas of social policy. A number of key disability reports and policies have influenced the shift towards a social model perspective within an Irish (national and local) context.

8.1. A Strategy for Equality 1996

A Strategy for Equality was a watershed report undertaken by the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities in 1996. The Report recommended wide ranging changes to the manner in which people with disabilities were supported across many life domains including education, health, housing, research, transport and work. It called for a Disability Act and additional policy including housing for disabled people with a view to ensuring 'the right of people with disabilities to live as independently as possible, if they so chose' (Government of Ireland, 1996)

8.2. The Equality Acts (Employment Equality Acts and the Equal Status Acts)

The Employment Equality Acts 1998 to 2004 outlaw discrimination in employment on grounds of disability. The Equal Status Acts 2000 outlaw discrimination in the provision of goods and services on grounds of disability.

8.3. National Disability Strategy 2004

The National Disability Strategy (NDS) was designed as a whole of government approach to promoting equality and inclusion of disabled people in mainstream society. It marked a significant shift in Government thinking on disability in terms of how we understand, plan for, and deliver services to people with disabilities as equal citizens in Irish society. It built on previous policy and legislation including the anti-discrimination provisions of the Equality Acts (above) relating to employment and the provision of facilities, goods and services and concentrated on enhancing two mutually supporting areas:

- **Disability specific services**
- **Access for disabled people to mainstream public services.**

8.3.1 Mainstreaming

Underpinning NDS is the vision that people with disabilities, in the same way as other Irish citizens, will use, wherever possible, mainstream public services, including housing, information, education and employment, to meet their health and social needs. This means in effect that people with disabilities have a right to access and receive mainstream goods and services in their local communities.

In addition, the NDS adopted a 'life cycle approach' to disability which include, children, people of working age, older people and people with disabilities.



8.3.2 Lifecycle Approach

This lifecycle approach acknowledges that disability is present throughout all stages of the lifecycle. This means that services should be planned with the understanding that whatever the service, there will be disabled people also wishing to access it and who can benefit, at all stages of the lifecycle, for example, playgrounds, community activities, information.

For statutory bodies like the local authority, this means that senior managers, who are in charge of delivering services, need to ask themselves all of the time 'how does that work for disabled people?'

For the purposes of this plan, key elements of the NDS which are concentrated on are the Disability Act and the Sectoral Plan.

8.4 Disability Act 2005

The Disability Act was passed in 2005 and sets out a definition of disability to be: "Disability", in relation to a person, means a substantial restriction in the capacity of the person to carry on a profession, business or occupation in the State or to participate in social or cultural life in the State by reason of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment. The Disability Act is made up of seven Parts containing fifty-eight Sections.

8.4.1 Local Authority Obligations Under the Disability Act 2005

Part 3 and Part 5 of the Act are relevant to and inform Sligo County Council's Disability Inclusion & Access Strategy.

8.4.2 Sectoral Plans

Part 3 of the Disability Act 2005 required six Government Departments including The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government to prepare sectoral plans that set out how they will deliver specific services for people with disabilities.

The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government Sectoral Plan was published in 2006 and sets out a range of measures to be taken by the Department and Local Authorities regarding the improved provision of services to disabled people and set out national objectives and guidelines for access to services and built facilities.

The sectoral plan (2006) required each Local Authority to undertake a number of actions including:

- Draw up an implementation plan setting out a programme to implement the commitments and objectives contained in the Disability Act 2005 and in the sectoral plan.
- The Act further states that the implementation plan will be published by each local authority – including making it available on its website. In drawing up their implementation plans, local authorities will have regard to the funding and staffing resources available to them for implementation.

Priority to be given to local authority buildings and other facilities to which access is most frequently required as well as accessible public footpaths streets and crossings in urban areas. The plans will set out targets and timeframes for carrying out these works to reflect local priorities.

8.4.3. Access and Accessibility, Buildings and Services

The Disability Act (2005) provides a statutory basis for making public services accessible. Various sections of the Act place specific obligations on local government to ensure universal access to public spaces, buildings and services (including information provision) owned and operated by local authorities nationally. Furthermore, the Act places an obligation on local authorities to integrate disability service provision within mainstream services, where this is practical and appropriate.

Part 3 of the Act places obligations on public bodies to make their public buildings, services and information accessible to people with disabilities. These include:

- Section 25 of the Act requires public bodies to ensure that its public buildings are, as far as practicable, accessible to people with disabilities.
- Section 26 of Part 3 of the Act – public bodies are required to ensure that their services are accessible for people with disabilities by providing integrated access to mainstream services where practicable and appropriate.
- Section 26(2) of the Act requires that public bodies must authorise at least one of its officers as an **Access Officer**.

Access Officers are responsible for providing and coordinating assistance and guidance to disabled people accessing services provided by the offices.

They can also act as a point of contact for disabled people wishing to access such services.

- Section 27 of Part 3 of the Act - public bodies are required to ensure that the goods or services that they purchase are accessible, unless it would not be practicable or justifiable on cost grounds or would result in an unreasonable delay

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- Section 28 of Part 3 of the Act – communications by a public body to a person with a hearing or visual impairment must, as far as practicable, be provided in an accessible format.

Information provided electronically must, as far as practicable, be compatible with adaptive technology. Published information, relevant to disabled people with the impairment label of Intellectual Disability ('ID') must also be, as far as practicable, made available in easy to read formats.

- Section 39 - provides that Public Bodies may appoint "inquiry officers" to investigate and make determinations in relation to complaints alleging the failure of the body to comply with section 25, 26, 27, 28 or 29 the Act. Procedures must be put in place for dealing with such complaints. In the case of a determination that there has been such a failure, The Inquiry Officer must outline the steps required to be taken by the public body concerned to comply with the provision concerned.



8.4.4 Employment of People with Disabilities

Part 5 of the Act provides that public bodies take, in so far as practicable, all reasonable measures to promote and support the employment of disabled people. The minimum statutory employment target for disabled people to be employed in the public sector is currently at 3%. This will be increasing from 3% to 6% by 2025 as outlined in the recently enacted Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) (Amendment) Act 2022.

8.5. Time to Move on from Congregated Settings - A Strategy for Community Inclusion (2011)

Community Inclusion is Government policy, which aims to support disabled people to move from large institutions (congregated settings) to their own homes in the community, with the supports they need.

The vision is to support disabled people to *'live ordinary lives in ordinary places.'*

8.6. Public Sector Duty

Under the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014, public bodies are required to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity to both staff and service users, and to protect the human rights of its members, staff and service users.

Section 42 of the Act requires public bodies to set out in its strategic plan an assessment of the human rights and equality issues relevant to its function including plans and actions to be put in place to address any issues identified. In addition, a public body must report on developments and achievements in its annual report.

8.7. Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015 as amended 2022

The Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015 was enacted in December, 2015 and commenced in 17 December, 2022. It provides a statutory framework for people to be assisted and supported in making decisions about their health, welfare and property in legally binding agreements. Under this legislation a person whose impairment label based capacity is in question can avail of a three tier system of assisted decision making 1. Decision making assistance, 2. Co-decision maker, 3. Decision making representative.

8.8. Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities (2015 - 2024)

This Government Strategy sets out a ten-year approach to ensuring that disabled people who are able to, and want to work, are supported and enabled to do so through the following:

- 1. Build skills, capacity and independence**
- 2. Provide bridges and supports into work**
- 3. Make work pay**
- 4. Promote job retention and re-entry to work**
- 5. Provide co-ordinated and seamless support**
- 6. Engage employers**

Within this Strategy, Government have pledged to progressively increase the statutory target of 3% of disabled employees in the public sector towards 6% by 2024. (Amended to the reach 6% by 2025 under the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) (Amendment) Act 2022.⁴

The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) became the coordinating body for the National Disability Inclusion Strategy (October 2020). Implementation was monitored by a Steering Group comprising of officials from all relevant departments, Disability Stakeholders Group, and representatives of the National Disability Authority, chaired by the Minister of State with responsibility for Disability.

⁴ Per NDA website

8.9.1. Mid-Term Review of the National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021

A Mid-Term Review of the NDIS dated January 2020 was carried out under the Minister of State with special responsibility for Disability issues. It set a framework for action on disability until the end of the lifetime of the Strategy which was subsequently extended to 2022. It also highlighted some of the significant progress made on key areas of the NDIS since its launch in July 2017, including:

- The ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (April 2018)
- The publication of the Make Work Pay Report;
- Enactment of the Irish Sign Language Act 2017;
- Significant improvements in transport accessibility e.g. improved accessibility in train and bus stations;
- Reduction in the number of people with disabilities living in congregated settings;

The review process involved consultation with disability stakeholders and relevant departments and agencies. It confirmed that stakeholders wanted the emphasis of the framework for action to be on implementing existing commitments within the Strategy and on fulfilling obligations arising from Ireland's ratification of the UNCRPD. In effect, the approach to the National Disability Inclusion Strategy for 2020 -2022 was structured around the following strands:

- Raising awareness of the lived experience of people with disabilities;
- Strengthening rights including legislation following ratification of UNCRPD;
- Expanding into new areas – work regarding issues of intersectionality;
- Implementing the UNCRPD;
- Improving services through better implementation and collaboration.

Following the mid-term review, a revised version of the Strategy (period up to 2022), was adopted by the Minister of State at the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth with special responsibility for Disability. This included 20 new actions, 35 modified actions and 9 completed actions. Prior to the mid-term review, there were 114 actions contained in the NDIS and post mid-term review 125 actions.

8.9.2. National Disability Authority (NDA) Independent Assessment of Implementation of the National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) for 2022

The NDA offers advice and input through its membership of the NDIS Steering Group, but also had a role of engaging directly with Departments in relation to their NDIS commitments and to advise them on disability and Universal Design issues. The NDA was responsible for carrying out independent assessments of the NDIS implementation. Its most recent assessment was for the final year of the NDIS 2022 (published in June 2023).

In this assessment, the NDA provides views on key learnings and highlights areas for focus as a successor strategy is developed. It states that the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth “has indicated that the successor strategy will concentrate on a tighter and more targeted number of ambitious actions that will deliver the most significant change and progress”. The NDA highlights the following in relation in the consideration of a successor strategy:

- Consideration must be given to actions which have not been completed in the lifetime of the NDIS,
- In relation to complete actions, a next phase of implementation could focus on evaluating the outcomes from these actions, to avoid giving rise to situations where a Department or public body believes it has delivered on commitments, but disabled stakeholders feel this has not led to the hoped for outcomes in their daily lives.
- Where actions are shared between several Government Departments and where actions and have progressed at a slow/staggered pace, clear and accountable leads for shared Actions must be agreed.
- A more explicit focus on outcomes.
- The need for engagement in particular with DPOs, in the design, implementation and monitoring of the successor strategy is a requirement of UNCRPD.
- An opportunity for greater linkage with other strategies.
- There is an opportunity to link the successor strategy with the National Sustainable Development Goals implementation plan.
- Cost of Disability Implications: In December 2021, the Minister for Social Protection published the Cost of Disability Report, carried out by Indecon International Research Economists. The Programme for Government commits the Government to use the research into the cost of disability to properly inform the direction of future policy. The report demonstrates the significant additional costs faced by persons with disabilities.

8.10. Sharing the Vision a Mental Health Policy for Everyone 2020 – 2030

This is Ireland's whole system policy to enhance the provision of mental health services and supports across a broad continuum from promotion of positive mental health to specialist mental health service delivery. It follows on from the previous policy "A Vision for Change". The fundamental principle of equality of access to housing, employment and training for people living with mental health difficulty is incorporated into this policy.

8.11. Programme for Government – Our Shared Future (June 2020)

The Government's commitment to "enshrining disability rights" is included in this Programme for Government where there is a commitment to finalise the legislation required following the ratification of the UNCRPD. It also sets out a commitment to continue to work with government departments and their agencies to ensure that a disability perspective is integrated into mainstream policy development. As in keeping with UNCRPD Article-33, the Government recognises a commitment to consult with disabled people through their national and local DPO's.



8.12. Part M – Building Regulations 1997 – 2022 (As Amended)

The aim of Part M of the Building Regulations 1997– 2022 (As Amended) is to foster an inclusive approach to the design and construction of the built environment.

The requirements of Part M (M1 – M5) are as follows.

Access and Use:

- M1. Adequate provision shall be made for people to access and use a building, its facilities and its environs.
- M2. Adequate provision shall be made for people to approach and access an extension to a building.

Sanitary Facilities:

- M3. If sanitary facilities are provided in a building that is to be extended, adequate sanitary facilities shall be provided for people within the extension.

Changing Places Toilet:

- M4. Where sanitary facilities are provided in a building, or in a building that is to be extended, adequate provision shall be made for people to access and use a changing places toilet, having regard to the use and size of the building.

Non-Application of Part M:

- M5. Part M does not apply to works in connection with extensions to and material alterations of existing dwellings, provided that such works do not create a new dwelling.

8.12. Part M – Building Regulations 1997 – 2022 (As Amended)

The aim of these requirements is to ensure that regardless of age, size or disability:

- A.** New buildings other than dwellings are accessible and useable.
- B.** Extensions to existing buildings other than dwellings are where practicable, accessible and useable.
- C.** Material alterations to existing buildings other than dwellings increase the accessibility and usability of existing buildings where practicable.
- D.** Certain changes of use to existing buildings other than dwellings increase the accessibility and usability of existing buildings where practicable; and new dwellings are visitable.

In doing so, the requirements, underpin the principle of Universal Design which is defined in the Disability Act 2005 as:

“ the design and composition of an environment so that it may be accessed, understood and used to the greatest practicable extent, in the most independent and natural manner possible, in the widest possible range of situations and without the need for adaptation, modification, assistive devices or specialised solutions, by persons of any age or size or having any particular physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual ability or disability.”

The Technical Guidance Document M (TGD M) sets out guidance on the minimum level of provision to meet with the requirements M1 - M5.

In order to satisfy the requirements of Part M, all buildings should be designed and constructed so that:

- A.** People can safely and independently approach, gain access and use a building, its facilities and its environs, and
- B.** Elements of the building do not constitute an undue hazard for people, especially for people with vision, hearing or mobility impairments.

8.13. National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022 – 2027

This National Strategy clearly sets out Government’s vision for the delivery of housing and related support services for disabled people from 2022-2027. Developed under the guiding principles of Housing for All, its vision is “to facilitate disabled people to live independently with the appropriate choices and control over where, how and with whom they live, promoting their inclusion in the community” and to “further enable equal access for disabled people to housing with integrated support services”. The Strategy promotes a whole of community approach to housing for disabled people when planning the provision of housing, including infrastructure, transport, education, and employment. The development of the Strategy, and the suite of documents that accompany it, are informed and underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the inclusion in the Document’s drafting process, the voice of national DPOs such as Independent Living Movement Irl. (ILMI).

A key element is a focus on co-ordinating provision of housing for disabled people with the social supports provided through HSE-funded disability services. The Strategy is set out across 6 themes, each detailing desired outcomes to deliver the overall vision set out in the plan:

- 1 Accessible housing and communities**
- 2 Interagency collaboration and the provision of supports**
- 3 Affordability of housing**
- 4 Communication and access to information**
- 5 Knowledge, capacity, and expertise**
- 6 Strategy alignment**

Housing and Disability Steering Groups (HDSGs) were established in each local authority area under the National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011 to 2016 (extended to 2021). The new Strategy reaffirms the structure of the Housing and Disability Steering Groups as the most effective forum for the delivery of the outcomes of the Strategy at local level.

9.0 Local (Sligo) Policy Context

The following sets out some of the main policies that have been put in place by Sligo County Council with relevance to this strategy.

9.1. Sligo 2030 One Voice One Vision (Sligo 2030)

The Sligo 2030 One Voice One Vision Strategic Framework (Sligo 2030), seeks to position Sligo to embrace change, face its challenges head on and transform the county over a 7 year period. It also acts as the county's new Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) as required under Government guidelines. Sligo 2030 was approved by Sligo County Council at its meeting of 3 April, 2023 and sets out 6 high-level goals and objectives which were designed to address the specific needs of the county which were identified during the development process. In particular, Goal No.4 is of relevance to this Strategy which is to:

Support and empower communities across Sligo to play an active role in the development of their county with the following objectives.

- **Ensure Sligo is a county that supports active inclusion for all**
- **Improve the health of the community across Sligo**
- **Support and empower Sligo's' communities to play an active role in the development of their county**
- **Improve the vibrancy and appeal of Sligo's towns, villages and targeted rural recreational areas.**

9.2. Sligo County Council Corporate Plan 2020 – 2024

Section 134 of the Local Government Act 2001, amended by Section 49 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014, obliges Local Authorities to prepare a Corporate Plan. This is a strategic framework for the Authority over a five year period, linking policy, organisational activity, governance and performance management and actions. The Sligo County Council Corporate 2020-2024 sets out its Core Values which include Democracy, public service, inclusion, fairness, communication, openness transparency and accountability, innovation, community focus and Health and Safety.

Sligo County Council has determined a number of Strategic Corporate objectives to underpin the implementation of the Corporate Plan over its lifetime from 2020 to 2024 one of which is social inclusion and poverty:

“ To promote a culture of inclusion and diversity socially, culturally and economically in all our activities so as to eradicate disadvantage, alienation, isolation and poverty within the county”

In addition “Access” is a cross cutting theme with a commitment to:

“ Ensure Sligo is developed and promoted as a welcoming, accessible environment for people with disabilities”. Its Customer Charter also highlights Access as a key commitment and pledges to “Facilitate access for people with disabilities and special requirements”.

9.3. Sligo County Council Disability Inclusion and Access Strategy 2019 – 2022

The Sligo County Council Disability Inclusion and Access Strategy 2019–2022 was the second Disability Strategy produced by the Council. The strategy followed the National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017-2022 as its framework and focussed on actions set out under the NDIS thematic areas which pertained to local government namely:

- I. Equality and Choice,**
- II. Joined up Policies and Public Services**
- III. Employment**
- IV. Person Centred Disability Services**
- V. Living in the community**
- VI. Transport and accessible places.**

It also included other local actions recommended by the Disability Consultative Committee.



9.3.1 A Review of the Sligo County Council Implementation of the Disability, Inclusion and Access Strategy 2019 – 2022

While significant progress was achieved in addressing access issues under the Council's Disability, Inclusion and Access Strategy 2019-2021, it is recognised that this period brought with it unprecedented challenges due to the COVID 19 pandemic which saw delayed implementation in community engagement and the rollout of strategies and action plans. This period saw the intermittent pausing of some actions and activities, however it also saw the delivery of services through alternative delivery mechanisms such as the increase in online services.

A snapshot of some of the key actions delivered in the lifetime of the Council's Disability, Inclusion and Access Strategy 2019-2022 include the following:

- In the promotion of accessibility and universal design principles in the implementation of the Public Service ICT Strategy, Sligo County Council has increased its website accessibility score for sligococo.ie on compliance with the EU Web Accessibility Directive from 39% to 87.47% Monitoring | Disability Act 2005 | The National Disability Authority - National Disability Authority (nda.ie)
- Sligo County Council developed the Sligo Strategic Plan for Housing People with a Disability (2021-2025) and the Sligo Housing & Disability Steering Group meet quarterly to monitor and progress actions in this plan.
- Sligo County Council advanced the promotion of accessible user engagement in design and planning, including public procedures under Planning Acts through 2 key deliverables namely the Planning Consultation Platform and the introduction of the e-planning system.

Sligo County Council Disability Inclusion & Access Strategy 2024 - 2027

The Planning Consultation Platform allows members of the public to make submissions electronically to a wide range of SCC public consultations. To date, public consultations taken place through this portal include Active Travel projects, the County Development Plan, the County Heritage Plan, the Climate Change Action Plan, Social Housing Projects and Public Realm Projects. The portal enables the public to engage with the Council on a range of consultations meaning they no longer have to access a Council building to view Part 8 drawings or draft development plans. The platform meets (WCAG) 2.0 standards and the operators are currently pursuing its VPAT certification for accessibility.

Sligo County Council has improved access to outdoor recreation facilities especially footpaths and trails. An example of a successful project undertaken is the increased accessibility measures taken at Mullaghmore Beach. Improvement works consisted of ramp with gradient suitable for wheelchair users, and a tapping rail to aid users with sight impairments. New beach mats were put in place for the summer season to enable greater beach access along with 2 no beach wheelchairs. Resurfacing works to the car park included 4 no new wheelchair car parking spaces etc.

Sligo County Council and partners such as the PPN have inputted into the development of Pobal's Inclusive Engagement Strategy which sets out how public sector bodies can enhance the accessibility of the community engagement processes.



9.4. Disability Consultative Committee

Sligo County Council established a Disability Consultative Committee in 2006, to provide a forum for consultation with the disability sector and to ensure linkage between the policies of the Council and disability issues. It is a sub-committee of the Housing and Corporate Strategic Policy Committee. The Terms of Reference for the Committee sets out its role as follows:

- To advise the Local Authority on policies to improve services
- To make recommendations on disability proofing of policies, projects and actions
- To proof plans/policies prepared under the Disability Act 2005
- To promote inclusion and equality
- To promote co-ordination between service providers
- To make submissions on disability issues to other departments and agencies as appropriate
- To raise awareness on disability issues
- To meet quarterly
- To submit an Annual Report on activities to the SPC

Members of Sligo's DCC effectively include DPO reps from Sligo DPO and ILMI. A list of the full membership of the Committee is attached at appendix A.



9.5. Sligo County Council Housing and Disability Steering Group

Housing and Disability Steering Groups (HDSGs) were established in each local authority area under the National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011 to 2016 (extended to 2021). They were made up of representatives from the HSE, Approved Housing Bodies and the disability sectors. HDSG's were responsible for the preparation of Local Strategic Plans (LSP's) that looked at how the actions in the national strategy could be implemented locally. The National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022-2027 re-affirms the HDSG's as the most effective forum for the delivery of the outcomes of the Strategy at local level. The Sligo County Council HDSG updated the Local Strategic Plan for housing Disabled People to cover the period 2021-2025.



9.6. Sligo County Council Strategic Plan for Housing People with a Disability 2021 - 2025

The Council, in conjunction with the HSE, disability service providers, disabled person groups and approved housing providers have completed the Strategic Plan for Housing People with a Disability 2021–2025.

The vision of the Strategy is to facilitate access to the appropriate range of housing and related support services, delivered in a sustainable manner, which promotes equality of opportunity, individual choice and independent living for people with a disability.

The core goal of the strategy is to meet the identified housing needs of disabled people locally whether they are currently living in the community and/or in a congregated setting.

The four grounds of disability referred to in the Strategy are:

- A Sensory**
- B Mental health**
- C Physical**
- D Intellectual – including autism and ASD**

Sligo's renewed Local Strategic Plan strategically aligns itself to, and is embedded within relevant policy and legislation. The aim of the strategy is to work towards delivering equality of opportunity, choice and the chance to live independently in the community, adopting a rights based approach to housing, universal access and community inclusion for disabled people living in Sligo.

The Strategy sets out 10 actions to deliver over its lifetime. This includes increased promotion of the work of the HDSG, developing relationships and linkages between partners, ensuring that the voices of lived experience of disability is heard in the work of the Steering Group along with achieving disability implementation targets.

9.7. Housing Adaption Grants for People with a Disability Schemes

A Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability is available through the Council to assist in the carrying out of works which are reasonably necessary for the purposes of rendering a house more suitable for the accommodation of a person with a disability who has an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment.

The types of works allowable under the scheme include the provision of access ramps, downstairs toilet facilities, stair-lifts, accessible showers, adaptations to facilitate wheelchair access, extensions, and any other works which are reasonably necessary for the purposes of rendering a house more suitable for the accommodation of a disabled people. Grants are also available under the Mobility Aids Housing Grant Scheme to cover a basic suite of works to address mobility problems, e.g., access ramps, level access shower, stair- lifts, grab-rails, etc.



10.0 Data and Statistics:

Key points from the CSO Census 2022 for County Sligo and at a national level are set out below in order to inform the planning process in the development of this strategy and action plan.

Population of County Sligo

Census 2022 shows the population of Sligo to be **70,198**.

This is an increase in population of **4,663 people** or 7% from the census recorded in 2016.

This represents **34,529 males** and **35,669 females**.

Over the same period, Ireland's population grew by 8% from **4,761,865** to **5,149,139**.



Average Age

The average age of Sligo's population in Census 2022 was 40.7 years, compared with 39.2 years in Census 2016.

Nationally, the average age of the population has also increased to 38.8 years in Census 2022 from 37.4 years in Census 2016.

The number of people aged 65 and over continues to grow.

In 2022, this age group increased by 21% to 12,903 in Sligo, and by 22% to 776,315 at a national level since 2016.

Persons with a Disability in Sligo County Council Administrative Area

Persons	Male	Female	Total
Total Population	34,529	35,669	70,198
Total Population with a Disability	7,684	8,444	16,128
% Sligo	22.25%	23.67%	22.98%

Long Lasting Conditions and Difficulties⁶

National Data	County Sligo Data
<p>In April 2022 nationally, 1.1 million people (22% of the country's population) reported experiencing at least one long-lasting condition or difficulty to any extent,</p> <p>Of these, 407,342 people (8% of the country's population) reported experiencing a long-lasting impairment label or condition or difficulty to a great extent.</p> <p>A further 702,215 people (14% of the country's population) reported to some extent.</p>	<p>In April 2022 in Sligo, more than 16,100 people (23% of the county's population) reported experiencing at least one long-lasting condition or difficulty to any extent.</p> <p>Of these, 5,886 people (8% of the county's population) reported experiencing at least one long-lasting impairment label or condition or difficulty to a great extent or a lot.</p> <p>A further 10,242 people (15% of the county's population) reported experiencing at least one long-lasting impairment label or condition or difficulty to some extent or a little.</p>

In Ireland overall, more females (22%) than males (21%) experienced a long-lasting impairment label or condition or difficulty to any extent. In Sligo, this rate was 24% for females and 22% for males.

⁶ Due to the substantial changes on the long lasting conditions and difficulties question, Census 2022 results are not comparable with previous census data for this question.

Health

In 2022, 83% of people in Sligo stated that their health was good or very good compared with 86% in 2016. This is a similar trend to the national figures, which showed a 4% decrease in the good/very good categories, from 87% to 83%.

Among the county's females, 18,712 (52%) reported very good health, along with 53% of males (18,268).

There were also 1,272 people who reported bad or very bad health in the county, up from 1,138 people in 2016.

Carers

There were almost 4,600 unpaid carers in County Sligo in April 2022, which was 7% of the county's population compared with 5% in 2016. Nationally there were almost 300,000 unpaid carers, or 6% of the population, up from 4% in the previous census.



11.0 Action Planning – Sligo Disability Inclusion and Access Strategy 2024-2027

The actions proposed in this Strategy are largely drawn from appropriate actions contained in the Mid Term Review of the National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) 2017-2022. This was published by the Department of Justice and Equality in January 2020 following an extensive public consultation process. While this NDIS timeframe has culminated and a national successor strategy has yet to be developed it remains a comprehensive framework for the Disability Consultative Committee to follow. It also builds upon and provides linkage to previous Sligo Disability, Inclusion and Access Strategy 2019-2022.

11.1. Structure of the Action Plan

Actions 1-24: As previously outlined, the National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017 to 2022 (and its midterm review) identifies actions for implementation by various public bodies under 8 themes. These themes are reflected in Actions No's 1 to 24 of the Action Plan insofar as they relate to Local Authorities. A number of additional actions are recommended by the Disability Consultation Committee.

11.2. Monitoring and Evaluation

It is proposed that an Annual Work Programme will be recommended by the Disability Consultative Committee identifying the specific Actions from this plan to be implemented each year. The Committee will monitor progress and evaluate outcomes on an ongoing basis at its Quarterly Meetings. An Annual Progress Report on the overall implementation of the Strategy will be submitted by the Committee to the members of the Strategic Policy Committee / Sligo County Council, and an evaluation of the plan will be carried out by the Committee at the end of the term of the Plan.

11.4. Key to Acronyms and Terms used in the Action Plan

Acronyms Used

DCC: Disability Consultative Committee

DRCD: Department of Rural and Community Development

HSE: Health Service Executive

LGMA: Local Government Management Agency

This is a state agency that provides a range of professional services to the local government sector and in particular policy support and development in the roll out of national policy across the local government sector. This sectoral guidance provides a framework for alignment of local strategy with national strategy and policy across local government.

NDIS Ref: National Disability Inclusion Strategy reference.

NTA: National Transport Authority

PPN: Public Participation Network

SCC: Sligo County Council

Terms Used

Ableism: Ableism is a form of prejudice whereby people, structures and systems assume that non-disabled people are superior to disabled people. Typically ableism is present where by non-disabled people make decisions on behalf of disabled people and design systems and structures that exclude disabled people from society. Ableism can also involve discrimination and prejudice against disabled people in society and enable unearned privilege to non-disabled people over the lived experiences of disabled people.

Disablism: Disablism is whereby disabled people are discriminated against based on their impairment. Disablism is a form of social oppression involving the social imposition of restrictions of activity on disabled people and the socially engendered undermining of their lived experience well-being.

12.0 The Action Plan 2024 – 2027

12.1 Theme – Equality and Choice

- Public sector information is available in accessible formats that are easy to understand.
- Public services are universally designed and accessible to all citizens.

Action Number	NDIS Ref	Action	Lead / Partner
1.	3B	<p>Develop Plans to implement the obligations of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.</p> <p>To follow Sectoral Plans as developed by the LGMA</p>	SCC /LGMA
2.	3C	<p>Implement a consultation and participation model, in line with the UN CRPD, to facilitate participation by disabled people in the policy development processes</p> <p>Implement consultation model “A Guide for Inclusive Community Engagement in Local Planning and Decision Making”. (DRCD Feb 2023 and updated October 2023).</p> <p>To ensure stakeholder engagement utilising the Consultation Forum of the DCC, the lived experience of the DPO and the support of the PPN.</p>	SCC/ DCC/ DPO/ PPN
3.	16	<p>Promote accessibility and universal design principles in the implementation of the New Local Government Digital and ICT Strategy and of the Web Accessibility Directive.</p> <p>To Implement actions set out in the New Local Government Digital and ICT Strategy.</p>	SCC /LGMA

⁷ LGMA: Local Government Management Association. Refer 11.4 – Key Acronyms used in the Action Plan

⁸ DRCD: Department of Rural and Community Development

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Action Number	NDIS Ref	Action	Lead / Partner
4.	17	<p>Encourage compliance with the obligations set out under section 28 of the Disability Act 2005 regarding access to information and communication including electronic communication.</p> <p>Develop policy and guidelines having regard to the NDA Code of Practice on Accessibility of Public Services and Information provided by Public Authorities and NDA Accessibility Toolkit.</p>	SCC /DCC
5.	20	<p>Provide disability awareness training for all staff.</p> <p>Continuation/refresh delivery of appropriate training</p>	SCC
6.	21	<p>Implement the Action Plan on Autism</p> <p>Develop Autism Friendly Practices as they relate to SCC services.</p>	SCC
7.	23	<p>Promote the design of public sector websites in accordance with universal design principles and in line with our obligations under the Web Accessibility Directive.</p> <p>Continue to identify measures to attain AA level of the WCAG 2.2 Guidelines for online accessibility. [Guidelines issued by World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)]</p>	SCC
8.	24	<p>Set out commitments in our strategy statements and business plans to ensure compliance with the obligations on public bodies to make their buildings and services accessible in line with Part 3 of the Disability Act 2006.</p> <p>To include commitment in future development in the Councils Corporate Plan and Customer Action plan and relevant policies.</p>	SCC

Action Number	NDIS Ref	Action	Lead / Partner
9.	25	<p>Public sector buildings - compliance with the Part M Building Regulations 1997-2022 (As Amended)</p> <p>Have regard to standards in developing and implementing work programmes to address deficits identified.</p>	SCC
10.	27	<p>Ensure that public procurement of buildings, facilities, goods and services complies with the accessibility requirements of planning regulations including the relevant legislation in relation to the Planning Code and relevant EU Law and the EU Web Directive 2016.</p> <p>The Council's Public Procurement Policies and Procedures will be reviewed/ amended as necessary to reflect this.</p>	SCC

12.2 Theme - Joined up Policies & Public Services

Public services actively engage with disabled people and their representatives in the planning, design, delivery and evaluation of public services.

Action Number	NDIS Ref	Action	Lead / Partner
11.	32	<p>Departments and agencies will actively engage disabled people through consultative committees and / or other appropriate fora (national Steering Group to elaborate on timeframes for this action)</p> <p>Engage people with disabilities through the SCC Disability Consultative Committee and Sligo PPN Structure.</p>	SCC / PPN/ DCC

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Action Number	NDIS Ref	Action	Lead / Partner
12.	33	<p>We will embed a culture and process of early engagement with disabled people in mainstream service design and evaluation.</p> <p>Implement consultation model “A Guide for Inclusive Community Engagement in Local Planning and Decision Making”. (DRCD Feb 2023).To ensure stakeholder engagement utilising the Consultation Forum of the DCC, the lived experience of the DPO and the support of the PPN.</p>	SCC/ DCCD- PO/ PPN

12.3 Theme – Employment

People with disabilities have the opportunity to work and have a career.

Action Number	NDIS Ref	Action	Lead / Partner
13.	47/49	<p>Support disabled people to enter and remain in employment, in particular by implementing the second Action Plan of the comprehensive Employment Strategy for Disabled people.</p> <p>Increase employment target of disabled people from 3% to 6% by 2025 and embed this target into all our workforce planning and recruitment.</p> <p>Plan to include actions re: incrementally increasing recruitment of disabled people so that by 2025 a minimum of 6% of employees will be disabled people.</p>	SCC / PPN/ DCC

12.4 Theme – Person Centred Disability Services

- Participate in the everyday life and activities of their communities.

Action Number	NDIS Ref	Action	Lead / Partner
14.	74	<p>Develop actions at community level to build and sustain for disability - competent and welcoming communities.</p> <p>Identify appropriate community initiatives to support implementation of this action.</p>	SCC / PPN/ DCC
15.	75	<p>Ensure that new buildings and facilities for arts, sport or leisure are based on universal design principles.</p> <p>This will be achieved through application and enforcement of Part M of the Building Regulations 1997-2022 (As Amended).</p>	SCC

12.5 Theme – Living in the Community

- Disabled people are supported to live an independent life in a home of their choosing in their Community.

Action Number	NDIS Ref	Action	Lead / Partner
16.	93 94	<p>The Programme for Partnership Government aims to reduce the number of people living in congregated settings and to ultimately close all congregated settings.</p>	Dept of Health, HSE, SCC, Disability Sector
	96	<p>Provide Housing through all available mechanisms under the National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022-2027</p> <p>Implementation of the SCC Strategic Plan for Housing People with a Disability (2021-2025)</p>	SCC

12.6 Theme – Transport and Accessible Places

- Disabled people can get to and from their chosen destination independently (without driving a car) in transport that is accessible to them.
- Public transport in both urban and rural areas is accessible.
- Planning and design of public buildings and public spaces is informed by engagement with disabled people and other users across the spectrum of age, size, ability and disability.

Action Number	NDIS Ref	Action	Lead / Partner
17.	107	<p>We will develop access to outdoor recreation facilities especially footpaths and trails.</p> <p>Include in design and delivery of all new outdoor recreation facilities.</p> <p>Carry out audit of existing facilities to establish feasibility of retrospective development of access for disabled people where not currently in place.</p>	<p>SCC / Sports Ireland</p> <p>SCC</p>
18.	108	<p>We will implement the programme of dishing of footpaths in urban areas, in line with guidance from the NDA's publication: Building for Everyone.</p> <p>Include in Access Audit and develop / implement work programme to address deficits.</p>	
19.	109	<p>Continue to progressively make public transport infrastructure accessible, including train stations and bus stops and bus stations in regional and rural areas.</p> <p>The Council will engage with and assist Bus Eireann/ National Transport Authority where required to facilitate access for disabled people.</p>	<p>SCC / Bus Éireann, partner Local Authorities - National Transport Authority/ Irish Rail</p>

Action Number	NDIS Ref	Action	Lead / Partner
20.	114	<p>We will ensure, as far as practicable, the promotion of accessible user engagement in design and planning, including public procedures under Planning Acts.</p> <p>Facilitate easy access to documentation on proposed plans or projects subject to public consultation e.g. electronic access - also facilitate making submissions electronically through the SCC online consultation platform and E-Planning Portal.</p>	SCC
21.	116	<p>We will undertake initiatives to promote and support entrepreneurship and self employment for disabled people, to support their employment in Foreign Direct Investment companies and to provide information on local enterprise opportunities.</p> <p>Local Enterprise Office to deliver on actions to promote and support entrepreneurship and self-employment for disabled people in the microenterprise sector.</p>	
22.		<p>Access Team</p> <p>Facilitate internal Access Team in Sligo County Council to assist with the implementation of actions.</p>	

12.7 Additional Actions proposed by the Disability Consultative Committee

Action Number	Action	Lead / Partner
23.	<p>Access to buildings, facilities services and information</p> <p>a. Develop programme of accessibility audits of roads and streets, pavements and pedestrian crossings, public buildings, public parks, amenities and open spaces, public libraries, harbours and beach accessibility (including provision of beach wheelchairs) within its control and identify the remedial action necessary to make them accessible (subject to funding)</p> <p>b. Develop proposals to improve accessibility to services and information, having regard to the National Disability Authority Code of Practice on Accessibility of Public Services and Information provided by Public Bodies and utilising NDA Accessibility Toolkit.</p>	SCC/DCC
24.	<p>As part of the development of the SCC Corporate Plan to review the Customer Action Plan / Customer Charter / Equality Policy / Equal Status Policy for Customers to strengthen commitments to providing accessible services, buildings, and information. [Consider NDA publication "Customer Communications Toolkit for the Public Service - A Universal Design Approach]</p>	

12.7 Additional Actions proposed by the Disability Consultative Committee

Action Number	Action	Lead / Partner
25.	Review procedures for making, investigating and making determining complaints alleging failure of the Council to comply with sections 25/26/27/28 of the Act.	SCC/DCC
26.	<p>Consultation</p> <p>Local implementation of consultation model "A Guide for Inclusive Community Engagement in Local Planning and Decision Making". (DRCD Feb 2023). Refer to action 2 and 21.</p>	
27.	<p>Awareness Initiatives</p> <p>Develop initiatives aimed at heightening public awareness of the issues and challenges faced by disabled people in Sligo e.g. difficulties faced by disability parking permit holders.</p> <p>To promote relevant Awareness Initiatives developed by other appropriate bodies such as the PPN and DPO e.g. "Navigating Ordinary Things" videos developed by Sligo DPO.</p>	
28.	<p>Changing Places</p> <p>Implement new Provisions set out in the S.I. No.608/2022 – Building Regulations (Part M Amendment) Regulations 2022 in relation to Changing places.</p>	
29.	<p>Public Sector Duty</p> <p>Sligo County Council will comply with the Public Sector Duty requirements under Irish Human Rights and Equality Commissions Act 2014. It will work with the Irish Human Rights Equality Commission (IHREC) with regard to achieving obligations under Public Sector Duty and UNCRPD.</p>	

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APPENDIX A – Membership of Disability Consultative Committee



Elected Representative
Cllr Declan Bree (Chair)



Elected Representative
Cllr Martin Baker



Elected Representative
Cllr Thomas Walsh



Elected Representative
Cllr Gino O'Boyle



Elected Representative
Cllr Rosaleen O'Grady



Elected Representative
Cllr Tom Fox



Elected Representative
Cllr Michael Clarke



Disability Federation
of Ireland (DFI)
Mr P.J. Cleere



Sligo Public Participation
Network (PPN)
Mr Mark Kupzac



Physical and Sensory
Disabilities Service, Health
Service Executive
Ms Michelle McCabe



ATU Sligo – Chairperson of
ATU Disability and Inclusion
Sports
Ms Victoria Matthews



Independent Living
Movement Ireland
(ILMI) Project Co-ordinator
Mr Peter Kearns



Irish Wheelchair
Association
Ms Rosaleen Lally



Sligo Centre for
Independent Living
Mr Pat Fallon



Disability Access Officer/
Building Control Officer Sligo
County Council.
Mr Damien Henry,
Sligo County Council



Sligo County Council Mgt. Rep.
Mr Fineen O'Driscoll, Sligo
County Council



Sligo County Council
Comhairle Chontae Shligigh

Sligo.