

REPORT TO INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE – 29 NOVEMBER 2018

BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2018-2024

1 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

1.1 Note the progress in developing the Aberdeenshire British Sign Language (BSL) Implementation Plan 2018-2024;

1.2 Consider and comment on the draft Implementation Plan at Appendix 1;

1.1 Note that comments will be reported to the Business Services Committee at its meeting on 10th January 2019 where the final version of the Implementation Plan will be presented for approval.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Aberdeenshire Council British Sign Language (BSL) Local Plan 2018-2024 was produced earlier this year as a result of a legal duty under the BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 on each public body to produce a plan with actions that are locally orientated but will support meeting the long term goals set out by Scottish Government.
- 2.2 The final draft of the plan was approved by Business Services Committee on 13 September 2018 (Item 4). The Committee requested that an implementation plan be developed and taken before all area and policy committees as well as the Integrated Joint Board for comment prior to coming back to Business Services Committee for approval.
- 2.3 The Implementation Plan will highlight the costs of the actions within the BSL plan and how the impact of these actions could be monitored and measured.
- 2.4 Work has been undertaken with services to develop the Implementation Plan which highlights costs they expect for their service to deliver the actions contained within the BSL plan. The services proposed monitoring and measuring processes are also explained within the Implementation Plan (**Appendix 1**)
- 2.5 The Implementation plan focusses on BSL support and progress will be reported to Business Services Committee in September 2019.
- 2.6 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated within the report and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

3 Scheme of Governance

- 3.1 The Committee is able to consider and take a decision on this item in terms of Section F.1.1 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to the Committee's powers to decide on all policy issues and resource matters (within agreed budgets) relating to those functions delegated to Infrastructure Services Committee. The Committee is asked to comment on the draft Plan insofar as it relates to services within its remit.

4 Implications and Risk

- 4.1 An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out as part of the development of the Aberdeenshire Council British Sign Language (BSL) Local Plan 2018-2024 (**Appendix 2**) where positive impacts have been identified as the plan will benefit BSL users in the Aberdeenshire area.
- 4.2 There are no staffing implications arising from the report.
- 4.3 For the majority of actions there are no cost implications as they will be delivered with existing budgets and resources. Where potential financial implications were identified in the plan such as supporting parents access courses these have been highlighted.
- 4.4 There are no Town Centre First principle or staffing implications arising from this report.
- 4.5 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level
- ACORP006 – Reputation management (including social media): The actions within the British Sign Language Implementation Plan are in line with action of the Aberdeenshire Council British Sign Language (BSL) Local plan 2018-2014 which aims to improve equality of access to council services.

Ritchie Johnson
Director of Business Services

Report prepared by Lynne Gravener Strategic Policy Lead (Engagement & Equalities)

Date 1/11/2018

**Aberdeenshire Council BSL
Implementation plan**

Across all our Services

Action	Cost implication and how the action will be funded	Proposals for monitoring delivery progress	Impact on users – how will we measure the success?
Promote the use of the Scottish Government's nationally funded BSL online interpreting video relay services called 'contactSCOTLAND-BSL' to staff and to local BSL users.	No cost implication as this is a free service for public sector organisations to help with first point of contact meetings.	Work with ICT to see if a link can be used on the Interpretation and Translation pages which can be tracked to show how often it is clicked/potentially used	Review the number of clicks to identify if services are aware of the ContactSCOTLAND-BSL service.
Promote dedicated Sensory awareness training by North East Sensory Services to staff as part of our Equality and Diversity Seminars.	No cost implications. This is free training offered to the council occasionally which will be offered to frontline staff.	When training becomes available ensure information is widely accessible to all staff	As part of an evaluation process staff will be asked about the impact of this in terms of improving service delivery.
Promote provision of "face to face" BSL interpretation across our services	No cost implications as this action is in conjunction with already established line of business. Information on BSL interpreting services is available on Arcadia and will be further promoted via Arcadia news articles and Yammer posts	To schedule frequent reminders via different channels available as appropriate.	We will work monitor the requests for BSL interpreters and seek feedback from services to ensure service provided meets requirements.
We ensure new website content is accessible to all users by following best practice guidelines as detailed by the	The Better Connected review currently costs £995 per year and is funded by the existing ICT budget.	We consider any issues identified during the review and action as appropriate. If another	We ask for feedback at the end of most transactions on the website. We can add

<p>Government Digital Service (GDS). Our website is tested annually by the Digital Accessibility Centre (DAC) as part of the Better Connected review. The DAC tests cover BSL accessibility.</p>		<p>review is required we can request this through Better Connected, at extra cost</p>	<p>accessibility related questions to measure our performance.</p>
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Family Support, Early Learning and Childcare

Action	Cost implication and how the action will be funded	Proposals for monitoring delivery progress	Impact on users – how will we measure the success?
<p>Continue to provide early years staff with information about BSL and Deaf culture, and resources that are available in BSL including introducing a BSL card for staff.</p>	<p>Currently part of Teacher of the Deaf or Teacher of Deaf Children (ToD) & Early Years Deaf Support Worker (EYDSW) remit As pupil numbers stand there is currently no cost implication. BSL cards are currently provided by NHS via See Hear group and currently these are not charged for, so no cost implication</p>	<p>Discussion as part of ToD caseload review Part of planning process for staff Initial manager contact to gauge need and ongoing dialogue between ToD, Early Years (EY) staff and manager</p>	<p>Biannual questionnaire to parents and partner Providers, schools etc. Ongoing dialogue with EY staff and partner agencies Pupil Health and Wellbeing (H & WB) records to monitor what has been delivered</p>
<p>Continue to deliver deaf awareness and basic signing classes to ALL staff i.e. teachers, nursery nurses/assistants, office staff, kitchen staff etc. prior to a BSL pupil going to the early years setting</p>	<p>Currently part of ToD remit with no added cost implication.</p>	<p>Records of Deaf awareness are kept by service Monitor delivery of DA being delivered by ongoing dialogue with teachers</p>	<p>Work towards all school staff are able to use some basic BSL signs to communicate with pupils using BSL within a school. Staff are more deaf aware and behave accordingly. Staff ask for more signs and evidence of their using sign with pupil. Peers using sign to interact with pupils. Pupil accessing the curriculum using sign.</p>

<p>In settings where there are BSL users' continue to roll out extensive BSL signage in nurseries i.e. toilet, cloakroom, and facilitate the use of visual timetables using BSL signs.</p>	<p>Currently part of ToD remit with no cost implication.</p>	<p>ToD's in schools monitor the use of signage and visual timetables Obvious use of BSL signage throughout school</p>	<p>Pupils operating more independently using signs and visual timetables Pupil can show evidence of using signs to access activities / curriculum</p>
<p>Where appropriate, provide equipment to help the child access the curriculum.</p>	<p>Costs that are currently taken from existing budget and are generally managed annually are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cost of providing equipment, • ongoing cost of renewing & updating equipment • Ongoing cost of replacing lost and broken equipment 	<p>Regular service audit of equipment Staff aware of new developments with technology and link with providers ie Phonak Links / networking with other authorities to keep up to date with current innovations in equipment Advising school /EY staff on equipment and how to use it effectively</p>	<p>Pupils using equipment in schools /EY settings Pupils effectively accessing the curriculum School / EY staff confident using equipment Pupils attending better during lessons</p>
<p>Continue the induction programme introducing families to the service. That includes: initial call from a manager, visit from teacher of deaf children, sending a service leaflet or a DVD and any information relevant to the child from other sources that might be helpful.</p>	<p>Currently part of the ToD and Manager remit so no additional costs</p>	<p>Manager has record of initial referral / contact with parent and actions related to this. Allocated teacher contacts family. Record of information sent out kept in base. Individual pupil record of significant events/contacts. Service leaflets reviewed and updated regularly. Service folder with useful information given to family on initial visit from ToD. Information collated and stored in database.</p>	<p>Families contacted within stated timescales Informal feedback from families if satisfied / dissatisfied with timescale for initial contact and initial meetings Formal feedback from parents through biannual questionnaire Individual pupil records reflect contacts and significant events Service booklets available for distribution</p>

<p>Continue to offer regular visits to build up a relationship with parents/families, offer basic family signs, signed resources and offer deaf awareness to extended family i.e. grandparents</p>	<p>Currently part of the ToD remit so no additional costs while pupil numbers remain at current levels</p>	<p>Teachers plans and records to reflect visits and what has been done with the family. Teacher plans, records, observations and evaluations of sessions. Ongoing dialogue between ToD, families and where appropriate manager and other agencies.</p>	<p>Service folders available for distribution and comments requested</p> <p>Feedback gathered from families about sessions. Sessions tailored to needs of family. Evidence within family of sign being used observations and interactions. Pupil using sign to communicate with family and peers. Pupil has extended sign vocabulary and uses longer more complex language to communicate.</p>
<p>Continue to promote Deaf culture and to address social isolation by working with school, nurseries and families in a similar situation.</p>	<p>Extending the scope of coffee afternoons/ activity afternoons ie inviting pupils from other authorities to try and combat the isolation felt by deaf pupils</p>	<p>Currently working group tasked, as part of Service Development Plan, to extend and enhance the area of Deaf Culture within pupils Health & Well Being (H&WB) section of planning. Produce programme about Deaf culture to slot into current H & WB programme. Monitoring of Teacher's planning and pupils output.</p>	<p>Evidence in pupil profiles of use of H & WB / Deaf Studies programme Increased pupil knowledge about deaf culture /role models Programme and resources available for teachers to work on with pupils Links with other pupils in other authorities</p>
<p>Support parents who wish to access formal signing classes but cannot afford to, through the collaboration with the partner organisations.</p>	<p>Already links with National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) / Grampian Deaf Children's Society (GDCS) to help promote sign courses and family sign within the area</p>	<p>Ongoing dialogue between families, service and NDCS tutors to monitor progress and uptake. College send report on uptake and usage of course. Review and discuss with Hearing Support (HS) team, parents, families etc how to best use course.</p>	<p>Uptake of course by families, regular attendance at course / programme certification on completion. Increased confidence to use sign by family members. Increased use of sign within family.</p>

	<p>Links with NESCol – but would be a cost implication if the Service were to assist parents with these courses. The cost is be between £100-£200 per course. There are very few requests for this assistance – at least 10 years since the last request.</p> <p>An alternative may be to purchase an online / DVD course just produced by Highland which teaches sign, extends signing but this would have a cost implication as they are hoping to market it. Cost is unknown as not on the market yet.</p>	<p>Purchase course and pilot if families request sign input but cannot afford it</p> <p>Review courses and results</p>	<p>Increased language skills of child. Extended vocabulary and complexity of communication by child / family.</p>
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School Education

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

<p>Contribute to support the learning of BSL in schools for hearing pupils as part of the 1+2 language programme, including sharing best practice and guidance.</p>	<p>If schools were to take up the option of having BSL as one of their +2 languages there would be staff implications however it was done. While ToD's can manage this type of input in schools where there is a pupil using BSL, the numbers are so small it can currently be included as part of their ToD remit. To offer BSL on a larger scale, this could not be done using the current level of staffing as it would impact on the other, Deaf pupils, who also need input from the service. As with other languages, it could be done by having courses delivered by ToD's in central locations and having BSL ambassadors come to take part in the courses and then cascade the BSL in schools. However, as a manual language, this can lead to inconsistencies and misunderstandings, so would have to be done with care. Highland Council have developed a model to deliver BSL by DVD / online whereby deaf tutors are showing signs and videoed talking etc. There are lesson plans and resources to accompany the course which can be used in delivering it. In this way there could be an initial delivery to a BSL Ambassador and then they would take it out to schools to cascade. The cost of the DVD from</p>	<p>ToD's could deliver initial sign to BSL ambassadors and then monitor progress by visiting schools – but there would have to be more ToD's or signing staff. Deaf tutors, if available, could be employed to deliver sign to schools. Communicators / hearing adults who are proficient in sign could deliver and monitor progress in schools. Purchase course developed by Highland and roll out across schools wanting to do BSL with qualified staff to oversee. Have forum, similar to those developed for modern languages, where staff share practice and can get guidance, resources and ideas for teaching.</p>	<p>Greater uptake of schools wanting to engage with BSL as +2 language. More pupils / staff able to use BSL in schools. Pupils who use BSL feeling more included in schools. More widespread use of BSL in communities.</p>
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	Highland Council is currently unknown.		
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Training, Work and Social Security

Action	Cost implication and how the action will be funded	Proposals for monitoring delivery progress	Impact on users – how will we measure the success?
<p>Continue to monitor the information provided in the Equality and Diversity monitoring form by all new employees. If the employee selects Hearing Impairment (Deaf, partially deaf, hard of hearing) then they have the option to be contacted by Human Resources regarding further support.</p>	<p>No additional cost as already embedded in service operation.</p>	<p>Monitor numbers of individuals that indicate they have a hearing impairment and the number of individuals that ask to be contacted by HR for further support</p>	<p>By monitoring the number of individual that indicate they have a hearing impairment and the number of individuals that contact HR for further support in this area.</p> <p>Limitations – increase in number of individuals contact HR for further support may not indicate success – a decrease may indicate success where individuals feel fully supported by their line manager in addition to guidance and advice available as a matter of course.</p> <p>Success may be measured by anecdotal or qualitative data collected through an employee survey.</p>

<p>Raise awareness locally of the UK Government's 'Access to Work' (ATW) scheme with employers and with employees who are BSL users so that they can benefit from the support it provides.</p>	<p>No additional cost as already embedded in service operation. Raising awareness for employees who are BSL users: Through implementation of Reasonable Adjustment ALDO course and Recruiting and Retaining people with Sensory Loss or Deafness ALDO course. Promotion through article on Arcadia. Promotion of scheme through social media. Recently Access to Work training was negotiated for the Council's Employability support teams and third sector organisations to upskill them and reappraise them on the current application process. HR can also be invited to attend this training if appropriate. This move will support both internal and external employers. (Carol Balcombe will co-ordinate Access to Work training)</p>	<p>Raising awareness for employees who are BSL users: Review how many individuals access ALDO courses Review how many people click into the article for further information Review number of views or shares on social media</p>	<p>Action can be reviewed depending on how successful it is demonstrated to be. Raising awareness for employees who are BSL users: Significant proportion of employees accessing ALDO course. High number of employees accessing article for further information. High number of views and shares on social media. Limitations – employees and individuals who already have a good understanding of Access to Work may not feel the need to find out further information about the scheme – therefore low numbers may not reflect lack of awareness across organisation and beyond. Success may be measured by anecdotal or qualitative data collected through an employee survey. Action can be reviewed depending on how successful it is demonstrated to be.</p>
<p>Continue to promote Aberdeenshire Council as an employer of choice through</p>	<p>No additional cost</p>	<p>Monitor equality and diversity across applications and appointments</p>	<p>Increased proportion of applicants and appointments from people with disabilities.</p>

<p>displaying our Disability Confident (Employer) logo.</p>	<p>On Home page for MJS (My Job Scotland). Currently looking into process to ensure included on adverts. Will be included on Careers Equality and Diversity. Will be promoting our accreditation through social media.</p>		<p>Limitations – if no increase is seen in this proportion it may not reflect lack of success in Aberdeenshire Council being viewed as an employer of choice for people with disabilities. Action can be reviewed depending on how successful it is demonstrated to be.</p>
<p>Aberdeenshire Council will continue to signpost elected members who use BSL to Access to Work scheme for information on support available to undertake their role as an elected member.</p>	<p>HR Operational Adviser Team propose that this action is encompassed within raising awareness and signposting specified at second action point above.</p>	<p>Review how many individuals access ALDO course. Review how many people click into the article for further information. Review number of views or shares on social media.</p>	<p>Significant proportion of elected members accessing ALDO course. Limitations – elected members who use BSL and already have a good understanding of Access to Work may not feel the need to find out further information about the scheme – therefore low numbers may not reflect lack of awareness across organisation and beyond. Success may be measured by anecdotal or qualitative data collected through an employee survey. Action can be reviewed depending on how successful it is demonstrated to be.</p>

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

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

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

opportunities available for physical activity to BSL users. We will also work with Aberdeenshire Culture and Sport and Physical Activity Service to support people who are deaf to be physically active.	(for wider National service directory development) that includes services for BSL users. Approx. £20k which is from existing staff budget.	Increase in the number of physical activity opportunities suitable for BSL users posted on ALISS.	
Develop a Social Isolation Strategy to ensure the needs of BSL users are considered and addressed. We will publish any parts of the strategy which are specific to BSL users in BSL.	Currently awaiting publication of the Scottish Government's Social Isolation strategy which will inform the Aberdeenshire approach. No further details re BSL aspects can be provided at this point.	See previous response.	See previous response.

Culture and the Arts

Action	Cost implication and how the action will be funded	Proposals for monitoring delivery progress	Impact on users – how will we measure the success?
Enable BSL users to take part in culture and the arts as participants, audience members and professionals.	All requests for translation and interpretation will be met through the existing council contract and service budgets.	Customer evaluation - requests and feedback	All publications have standard statement on access to translation and interpretation. Increased response to requests and accessibility.
Encourage and support BSL users to consider a career in culture and the arts	All requests for translation and interpretation will be met through the existing council contract and service budgets.	Recruitment analysis	Recruitment information – to include standard statement on access to translation and interpretation. Increased

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

Democracy

Action	Cost implication and how the action will be funded	Proposals for monitoring delivery progress	Impact on users – how will we measure the success?
Take opportunities to promote the Access to Elected Office Fund locally, which can meet the additional costs of BSL users wishing to stand in local or Scottish Parliament elections.	There is no anticipated additional cost to this promotional activity.	Delivery will centre around periods when elections are anticipated. The next scheduled election event in Scotland is 2021. Unanticipated election events however would demand similar attention although on a shorter period of notice. The risk of not meeting this obligation will be added to the Register of Risks for each individual election event.	Increased take-up of the Access to Elected Office fund locally will be the principal measure of success. Election of individuals requiring BSL services will be an ultimate measure of success as both the promotion of the fund and the Fund itself will have aided access although clearly the democratic process dictates success or otherwise of any candidate.

<p>Information on the Access to Elected Office Fund which is run by Inclusion Scotland and funded by the Scottish Government will be available on http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/elections and highlighted within the nomination pack.</p>	<p>There is no anticipated additional cost to this promotional activity</p>	<p>The risk of not meeting this obligation will be added to the Register of Risks for each individual election event.</p>	<p>Increased take-up of the Access to Elected Office fund locally will be the principal measure of success. Election of individuals requiring BSL services will be an ultimate measure of success as both the promotion of the fund and the Fund itself will have aided access although clearly the democratic process dictates success or otherwise of any candidate.</p>
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APPENDIX 2

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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

Stage 2: List the evidence that has been used in this assessment.	
Internal data (customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints).	Results from the Sensory Support Service customer survey for parents of BSL pupils and partner providers.

Internal consultation with staff and other services affected.	Relevant Services across Aberdeenshire Council are being consulted for feedback
External consultation (partner organisations, community groups, and councils).	D/deaf and Deafblind BSL users and parents with D/deaf children, the See Hear organisation and the North East Sensory Services. The British Sign Language (BSL) National Plan 2017-2023 plan was developed with the active participation of D/deaf and Deafblind BSL users who worked with public bodies as part of the BSL National Advisory Group. It is not required by local public bodies to consult on long term goals set out in the plan.
External data (census, available statistics).	The online survey, results from the consultation
Other (general information as appropriate).	N/A

Stage 3: Evidence Gaps.	
Are there any gaps in the information you currently hold?	N/A

Stage 4: Measures to fill the evidence gaps.		
What measures will be taken to fill the information gaps before the activity is implemented? These should be included in the action plan at the back of this form.	Measures:	Timescale:
	Public consultation on the draft plan	22 nd June-30 th July

Stage 5: Are there potential impacts on protected groups? Please complete for each protected group by inserting "yes" in the applicable box/boxes below.

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

Stage 6: What are the positive and negative impacts?

Impacts.	Positive (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)	Negative (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)

<p>Please detail the potential positive and/or negative impacts on those with protected characteristics you have highlighted above. Detail the impacts and describe those affected.</p>	<p>The Aberdeenshire Council BSL plan actions aim to create equal opportunities through removing barriers in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access to a wide range of information and public services in BSL; • improving the experience of children who use BSL, when they move from school to college, • access to health care and mental health services for BSL users; • ensuring that the Scottish Government funded employment and training opportunity is accessible to BSL users • promoting opportunities for BSL users participating in politics on the local level and public life, 	

Stage 7: Have any of the affected groups been consulted?	
<p>If yes, please give details of how this was done and what the results were. If no, how have you ensured that you can make an informed decision about mitigating steps?</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Stage 8: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce negative impacts?		
	Mitigating Steps	Timescale
These should be included in any action plan at the back of this form.		

Stage 9: What steps can be taken to promote good relations between various groups?	
These should be included in the action plan.	The Aberdeenshire Council BSL plan aims to minimise social isolation of the BSL users by promoting inclusion in education, Culture and Arts and public life. By promoting the Deaf Culture, we aim to create the environment of inclusion and understanding that will allow for positive relations between BSL and non BSL community members.

Stage 10: How does the policy/activity create opportunities for advancing equality of opportunity?
Our actions will create multiple opportunities for integration and participation that will benefit both, BSL and non BSL users.

Stage 11: What equality monitoring arrangements will be put in place? How the EIA will be used to monitor the proposal	
These should be included in any action plan (for example customer satisfaction questionnaires).	To be considered

Stage 12: What is the outcome of the Assessment?		
Please complete the appropriate box/boxes	1	No negative impacts have been identified –please explain.
		No negative impacts have been identified as the plan offers opportunities for integration and participation for all BSL users and reduces accessibility and communication barriers for BSL users.

	2	Negative Impacts have been identified, these can be mitigated - please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen.
	3	The activity will have negative impacts which cannot be mitigated fully – please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen

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

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

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