

Invest  
Northern  
Ireland

Building Locally  
Competing Globally

# Disability Action Plan

**June 2007**

Disability Discrimination Order (Northern Ireland) 2006



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination

Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006), requires Invest NI to have due regard to the need to:

- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life ('the disability duties').

Section 49B of the DDA 1995 also requires Invest NI to submit to the Equality Commission a **Disability Action Plan** showing how it proposes to fulfil these.

1.2 Stephen Kingon (Chairman) and Leslie Morrison (Chief Executive) of Invest NI, are committed to implementing effectively the disability responsibilities and this Disability Action Plan. Invest NI, therefore, will:

- deploy people, time and money to put this plan into action and, build objectives and targets on disability duties into corporate and annual operating plans;
- put in place internal arrangements to ensure that the disability duties are complied with and this disability action plan effectively implemented;

- ensure the effective communication of the plan along with training and guidance to staff on the disability duties and the plan;
- submit an annual report to the Equality Commission on the progress of the plan and carry out a review every five years;
- carry out timely, open and inclusive consultation in accordance with Equality Commission guidelines.

Lynsay McConnell will co-ordinate, review and evaluate the plan and be the point of contact within Invest NI.

She can be contacted at:

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The plan is available in alternative formats such as in large print, Braille, on audio cassette, easy read or on computer disc, and/or language, from the person above.

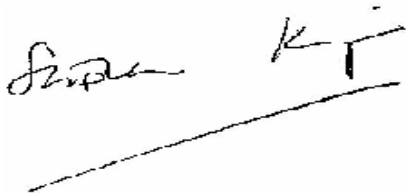
1.3 A copy of the plan, our annual report to the Equality Commission and our five year review will be available on our website [www.investni.com](http://www.investni.com).

#### 1.4 Functions of Invest NI

Invest Northern Ireland, a Non Departmental Public Body, was formed in April 2002 as the main economic development organisation in Northern Ireland to help businesses, principally in manufacturing and tradable services, to compete internationally and by attracting new investment.

We offer companies a single point of contact for high-quality services, expert advice and support for growth particularly in strategy, research and development, people management, e-business, energy management and exports.

Our primary focus is on innovation. There are three client facing groups - **Innovation and Capability Development; Entrepreneurship and Enterprise** and **Business International** – which work together with client companies and are supported by a **Corporate Services Group**.

Handwritten signature of Stephen Kingon, consisting of a stylized 'SK' followed by a horizontal line.

Stephen Kingon  
Chairman

#### 1.5 Public Life Positions

Invest NI is responsible for making appointments to the following publicly owned body

- NI-CO

Over the duration of this plan, Invest NI will review it's range of public life positions and how it can best encourage those with disabilities to participate in those positions.

Handwritten signature of Leslie Morrison in cursive script.

Leslie Morrison  
Chief Executive

# 2. Previous Measures

Outlined below are the key measures which Invest NI has already taken to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and to encourage the participation of disabled people in public life.

Our headquarters building in Bedford Street was designed and built to best practice guidelines on disability following consultation with Disability Action.

- Textphone numbers on publications and website ensure accessibility to our offices and staff.
- Publications are produced in alternative formats on request. A “Making Information More Accessible” document has also been produced and this has been distributed to all staff for guidance and to raise awareness. We are committed to making information more accessible and an audit on the accessibility of the Invest NI website has been carried out. The recommendations will be implemented once this review is complete.
- A Signer (English/Irish language as requested) is present at key events. Invitations for events will also include a request for details of any special requirements.
- Equality co-ordinators have been appointed within each division to assist with the implementation of our equality obligations.
- Section 10 of the Invest NI Equality Scheme sets out our commitment to equality training and raising awareness.
- All programmes have been reviewed under the Accelerating Entrepreneurship and Business Development Solutions Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) to ensure that they are accessible to those with disabilities.

## **Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people**

- We are currently reviewing our internet and intranet to ensure they are fully accessible.
- We have delivered equality training to all staff which has raised awareness of our responsibilities concerning disabled people.
- Our building has been made fully accessible to encourage the participation of people with disabilities in our everyday activities.
- All our documentation is made available in alternative formats to help encourage people

with disabilities to apply for and participate in public life positions.

- A member of staff has been trained in sign language.

### **Encourage the participation of disabled people in public life**

Our approach is based on these principles:

- Everyone has the right to equal access to information.
- Information can be made available in various formats to suit particular needs.
- When we decide to make information available in a format that an individual or group prefers we will do it quickly and for free.
- We make sure that people know how and where to get the information they need.
- When we cannot provide preferred formats we will make the information available in other ways. For example, we can arrange face-to-face meetings to pass on information; give an oral briefing; or give staff time to help customers understand and complete forms.
- We also, where reasonably possible, provide interpreters and signers for those who would wish to attend any of our programmes or events.
- Some people may need help from a supporter who would come with them when we are providing information to them and we will make all reasonable adjustments to allow for this.
- Car parking is provided on site for disabled members of staff.
- Our HQ is fully accessible and has been approved by the Disability Action Access Consultant. Disabled toilets are provided on all floors and a designated fire evacuation lift is available for emergency exit.
- Reasonable adjustments are also made for disabled members of staff including remote working and working from home.
- All employees have undergone equality training to raise awareness of the issues surrounding Section 75 and equality of opportunity.

# 3. Action Measures

These measures in our Disability Action Plan will be taken between June 2007 – June 2008.

## Measures to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage their participation in public life

Measures	Timescales	Performance Indicators/target
Ensure Invest NI website is accessible to all Those with disabilities.	June 2008	Gain A Accreditation for the website.
Raise awareness with all staff regarding the Disability Discrimination Act and our Disability Action Plan	Ongoing	Communicate Disability Action Plan to all staff and have regular updates appear in Invest NI's magazine to reinforce Awareness.
Provide training and guidance to employees and Office holders on the disability equality legislation and disability awareness.	June 2008	All staff will be trained on our obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act.
Review current skills held by contracted HQ Facilities Staff and provide relevant training to Ensure an inclusive customer facing service.	December 2007	All HQ Facilities Staff will be trained on the Disability Discrimination Act.
Maintain compliance with legislative requirements For disability access to Invest NI buildings.	Ongoing	Ensure ongoing accessibility provision for Invest NI buildings.
Review recruitment and selection procedures to Include monitoring, welcoming statements and advertising media.	March 2008	Report on the outcome of this review.
Review how Invest NI encourages those with Disabilities to participate in the public life positions within its remit.	June 2008	We will seek to encourage people with disabilities to become involved in public life positions within our remit.

# 4. Publication of Final Results and Decision

Invest NI received responses from the following organisations on its disability action plan:

- Employers Forum on Disability NI
- Carers Northern Ireland
- Disability Action

We would like to take this opportunity to thank each of these for their time and input.

Invest NI has considered all responses made during the consultation process, and these have been fully taken into account in developing this final version of our first Disability Action Plan.

Invest NI will send a copy of this report to all those who responded to the consultation and place a copy on its website.

If you require this plan in an alternative format (including Braille, disk, large print, audio cassette or in a minority language to meet the needs of those whose first language is not English) then please contact:

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