

# **Accessible Communication Protocol**

February 2020



Derby City Council



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# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This is the Council's Accessible Communication Protocol, covering our commitment to equality and diversity when we communicate with our job applicants, colleagues and citizens.
- 1.2 This Protocol is one of a set of policies and guidelines around equality and diversity and human rights issues. The other policies and guides in the set include:
  - Equality, Dignity and Respect Policy
  - Tackling Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy
  - Tackling Hate Crime Together Policy.
- 1.3 The Protocol supports the [Accessible Communication](#) guidance on our internal intranet site iDerby, for colleagues booking interpreters and arranging translations. It also supports our [Communications Toolkit](#).

## 2 Aim

- 2.1 We know that some customers, job applicants and colleagues may have difficulty communicating with us because our main language is written and in spoken English. This can cause particular barriers for some disabled people and minority ethnic people. So, the main aim of this Protocol is to provide a consistent accessible approach in how we communicate with people.

## 3 The law

- 3.1 We have a legal responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 and a commitment to make sure that all our customers can access our services, take part in the democratic process, including consultation and that our employees and job applicants have reasonable adjustments to access information at work.
- 3.2 We also have a legal responsibility under the SCCI1605 Accessible Information Standard to make sure that any disabled people needing NHS or adult social care, carers and parents have access to information. This information needs to be in a way they can understand and we need to provide any communication support that's required. In addition we will record these needs and how they'll be met on their personal file.

## 4 Our principles

4.1 All individuals and communities in Derby have a right to access and understand accurate and timely information in a way appropriate to their needs under the Equality Act 2010. This means arranging a wide range of support such as British Sign Language interpreters, language interpreters, translations in various languages and formats, lip speakers, note takers, Deaf Relay interpreters, Easy Read information, BSL videos, Braille, large print or any other support.

4.2 Our principles are to:

- make sure that people who have difficulty communicating in English can access our key services such as housing, benefits, children's and adult services
- make sure our printed public information, website and intranet - iDerby, letters, emails, public meetings, events, and public contact – reception and telephone/minicom are accessible
- make sure that our disabled colleagues and job applicants can access information at work or in applying for a job
- provide customers with information that is easy to understand
- support customers to take part in the democratic process, for example registering to vote in local elections or taking part in consultation
- support customers to effectively take part in daily life by making sure that they understand local rules such as rubbish collection, council tax obligations and car parking restrictions
- support customers who do not have access to or are unable to use a computer
- produce and provide information that is cost effective
- make sure we are consistent in all areas of the Council.

4.3 So, we will:

- make sure we provide appropriate access to interpreting, translation and communication support for disabled people and people where English is not a suitable language of communication for them
- use plain English by avoiding jargon and explaining anything technical
- make sure that interpretation, translation and communication issues are considered when we are doing equality impact assessments
- make sure that Derby people can take part fully in our consultations by providing support and information in accessible ways, including reasonable adjustments at any focus groups. For example, we know from our Deaf community that the best way to consult with them is to hold a specific focus group for Deaf people. Our older people's community have said they prefer to talk to us in a coffee morning session and for people with learning difficulties Easy Read documents are essential
- provide Easy Read versions of consultation documents as standard practice
- inform customers with language needs about the availability of the Council's interpreting, translation and communication services and how to access them
- allocate appropriate resources
- make sure that any specification for external consultants include equality criteria for accessible communication
- consult with Derby people to make sure the communication support facilities we have are appropriate to their needs
- advertise the interpretation translation and communication facilities in public areas and in all publications, including induction loop facilities and language identification cards
- sign post customers who use our interpretation, translation and communication service to appropriate courses to improve their English skills
- make every effort to provide customers and employees with information in their preferred language or format

- publish key documents on the council website that have already been translated
- use picture campaigns where we can, so more people can access the information on leaflets and other information
- provide support to use the council's computers to access our information and where this is still not accessible, provide alternative versions for customers
- give council employees sufficient guidance and support to help them to effectively put the accessible communication provision into practice – particularly customer facing colleagues
- provide support for colleagues to help them communicate better with people living with dementia
- arrange for customer facing employees to learn basic British Sign Language skills including Deaf and hearing impaired people's equality training and skills for working with customers who have English as an additional language
- regularly check the effectiveness of the accessible information provision.

## 5 Interpreting

- 5.1 It is important that any interpreters we use offer a good quality, impartial and confidential service. We know that many of our customers prefer trusted friends, family members or carers to interpret for them, but it is important that this is the customer's choice and not the Council's. However, we **cannot** accept anyone acting as an interpreter who is under 18, and there should not be any conflict of interest between the customer and the interpreter. We will keep a record of why a non-professional interpreter was used.

We will **use independent, suitably qualified interpreters only**, where there may be:

- potential breaches of someone's confidentiality

- possible misinterpretation - this may happen if the information being provided is technical or has legal or safeguarding implications
- a degree of objectivity of the person acting as an interpreter
- sensitivity of what is being discussed, such as domestic violence.

5.2 When organising communication with Deaf and hearing impaired people we will only use communicators that are qualified registered NRCPD British Sign Language Interpreters, lip speakers, Deaf Relay Interpreters and note takers or any other interpreting facility. Where meetings last for over two hours we will provide two registered British Sign Language Interpreters.

5.3 Council colleagues will not be used as interpreters, unless they need to use their language skills as part of the everyday duties of their job. In these cases, colleagues need to be trained by our Adult Learning Service on the basic dos and don'ts of interpreting and protocol.

### **Telephone interpreting service**

5.4 The Council has a contractor that provides a telephone language interpreting service. This service is available for all employees to use. It should be used for:

- all first point of contact enquiries where a customer is struggling to understand English effectively
- collecting information from a customer to book an interpreter
- arranging an appointment
- emergencies where it will take too long to get a face to face interpreter.

5.5 The Council House has Video Relay units in the reception area, at a booth and in a private meeting room. These provide instant British Sign Language support for customers and employees to use.

### **Minicom and mobile phones**

5.6 The Council House has a minicom for Deaf and hearing impaired people to contact us – the minicom number must be advertised with all voice

numbers. We recognise that many Deaf people use mobile phones to communicate by text and so mobile phone numbers must be advertised as much as possible with voice numbers and email addresses.

### **Hearing loops**

- 5.7 Hearing loops are in the Council Chamber, Jacob Rivers Room and public meeting rooms as well as at our main reception and cafe. We also have several portable hearing loops. We will make sure that all of these are tested and maintained regularly so that they always work.

### **Face to face interpreters**

- 5.8 The Council has contractors who provide face to face interpreters, apart from British Sign Language. We will provide NRCPD British Sign Language interpreters, lip speakers, Deafblind communicators, Picture Exchange Communication System communicators.

## **6 Translations**

- 6.1 We will translate documents on request for disabled people as a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act 2010 and also under the Accessible Information Standard. In other cases, we will not translate documents automatically, but consider a range of other options first. We have a contractor who provides our translation service.
- 6.2 All our publications that are meant for the public will include our help message on a prominent page - 'please tell us if you need this information in any other style or way so you can access it' – this will be in large print in English, and in the four main languages spoken in Derby.

## **7 Monitoring and reviewing**

- 7.1 This Accessible Communication Protocol and its operation will be reviewed regularly by the Accessible Communications Working Group. We welcome feedback from people using this Policy to help us improve how we communicate with people.

For more details and to give us your comments please contact:

Ann Webster – Lead on Equality and Diversity

ann.webster@derby.gov.uk

Telephone 01332 643722

Text Relay 18001 01332 643722

Minicom 01332 640666

Mobile 07812301144

Or write to us at:

Equality and Diversity  
Strategic Services and Customer Management  
Organisation and Governance  
Derby City Council  
The Council House  
Corporation Street  
Derby DE1 2FS

## Document history

<b>Type, title and status of document</b>	Accessible Communication Protocol	<b>Version number and reason for update</b>	Brand new Protocol
<b>Document description, format and audience</b>	The document outlines the Council's commitment to accessible communication. It is available on request in alternative formats. We have produced an Easy Read version and a BSL video version as standard	<b>Responsible Directorate and lead department</b>	Organisation and Governance and Strategic Services and Customer Management
<b>Accountable Service Director</b>	Gordon Stirling Director of Strategic Services and Customer Management	<b>Document owner</b>	Ann Webster Lead on Equality and Diversity
<b>Legislation</b>	Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty	<b>Safeguarding</b>	The Protocol covers interpretation and translation for vulnerable adults, disabled people, older people, young people and children
<b>Equality impact assessment</b>	22 March 2017	<b>Communication and date published</b>	The Protocol is a public document and will be on our external website and internal intranet site
<b>Approving Body and date approved</b>	Operational Management Team	<b>Working groups</b>	Equality and Diversity Strategy Group, Diversity Forum and Accessible Communication Working Group have all accepted the Protocol
<b>Links to other policies and strategies</b>	Council Plan and Equality, Dignity and Respect Policy	<b>Costs</b>	Costs relating to actions in the Protocol will come from Directorate's own budgets. There will be costs with making this document accessible
<b>Action plan</b>	All employees will be advised about the Policy	<b>Review frequency and date of next review</b>	Every three years from date of last approval or where we identify good practice needs including

We can give you this information in any other way, style or language that will help you access it. Please contact us on: **01332 643722**  
Minicom: 01332 640666

### Polish

Aby ułatwić Państwu dostęp do tych informacji, możemy je Państwu przekazać w innym formacie, stylu lub języku.

Prosimy o kontakt: **01332 643722** Tel. tekstowy: 01332 640666

### Punjabi

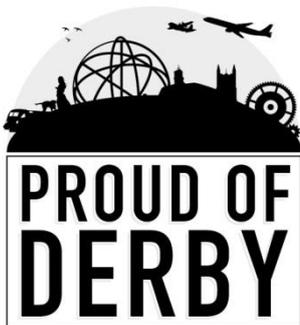
ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਅਸੀਂ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਹੋਰ ਤਰੀਕੇ ਨਾਲ, ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਬੋਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਦੇ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ, ਜਿਹੜੀ ਇਸ ਤੱਕ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਕਰਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੋਵੇ। ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ **01332 643722** ਸਿਨੀਕਮ 01332 640666 ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

### Slovakian

Túto informáciu vám môžeme poskytnúť iným spôsobom, štýlom alebo v inom jazyku, ktorý vám pomôže k jej sprístupneniu. Skontaktujte nás prosím na tel.č: 01332 643722 Minicom 01332 640666

### Urdu

یہ معلومات ہم آپ کو کسی دیگر ایسے طریقے، انداز اور زبان میں مہیا کر سکتے ہیں جو اس تک رسائی میں آپ کی مدد کرے۔ براہ کرم **01332 643722** پر ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔



Derby City Council