

Accessible Communication Protocol

Revised April 2023



Derby City Council

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This is the Council's Accessible Communication Protocol, covering our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion when we communicate with our job applicants, colleagues and citizens.
- 1.2 This Protocol is one of our policies and guidelines around equality and diversity and human rights issues. The other policies and guides around equality 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 MiDerby, 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, Public Sector Equality Duty, BSL Act 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 NHS 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.
- 3.3 Our [Access for Deaf and Hard of hearing guide](#) will help you to get reasonable adjustments right.

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, videos and intranet - MiDerby, letters, emails, public meetings, events, and public contact – reception and telephone facilities 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
- signpost 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 Hard of hearing 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 Hard of hearing people we will only use communicators that are registered 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 must 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 colleagues 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 uses a [BSL Signing Service](#) system providing instant British Sign Language support for customers and colleagues to use.

Mobile phones

- 5.6 The Council House has a text number **07774 333 412** for Deaf and Hard of hearing people to contact us. We know that many Deaf and Hard of hearing people use mobile phones to

communicate by text and so mobile phone numbers must be advertised where you advertise a voice number and email address. If you do not have a mobile number then use our [BSL Signing Service link](#) and Relay UK by putting 18001 in front of your voice number – see the example in the contact details at the end of this guide.

If you are advertising any outside agencies who do not have mobiles, then make sure you flag up Relay UK in the document, but first check if they do have any accessible numbers and use them. Under the Equality Act they should, but sometimes need reminding. This is under our Public Sector Equality Duty responsibilities.

Hearing loops

- 5.7 Hearing loops are in our public meeting rooms in the Council House, Council Chamber, reception area, library and café. We 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 registered British Sign Language interpreters, lip speakers, Deafblind communicators, Picture Exchange Communication System communicators.

Videos

- 5.9 Many services have started using videos on social media as ways of messages to reach our citizens, but these need to be inclusive and accessible to all our citizens and colleagues. Think about the target audience and if necessary, arrange for the videos to be in the community languages you may need. You must also consider the Equality Act and BSL Act and look at providing the video in BSL. Just having sub-titles does not always reach all BSL users. Contact our Lead on Equality and Diversity for help and advice.

6 Translations

- 6.1 We will translate documents on request for disabled people as a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act 2010 and under the National Accessible Information Standard. In other cases, we will not translate documents automatically, but consider a range of other options first. We have contractors 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 Protocol 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

Mobile 07812301144 [BSL Signing Service](#)

Or write to us at:

Equality and Diversity
Corporate Management Services
Derby City Council
The Council House
Corporation Street
Derby DE1 2FS

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 mobile 07812301144** or [BSL Signing Service](#)

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 ਇੱਥੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ: **01332 643722**

Mobile **07812301144** ਜਾਂ [BSL Signing Service](#)

Polish

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

01332 643722 Mobile 07812301144 lub [BSL Signing Service](#)

Slovak

Túto informáciu vám môžeme poskytnúť iným spôsobom, štýlom alebo v inom jazyku, ktorý vám pomôže k jej sprístupneniu. Prosím, kontaktujte nás na tel. č.: **01332 643722 mobile 07812301144** alebo na stránke [BSL Signing Service](#)

Urdu

یہ معلومات ہم آپ کو کسی دیگر ایسے طریقے، انداز اور زبان میں مہیا کر سکتے ہیں
Mobile **07812301144 01332** جو اس تک رسائی میں آپ کی مدد کرے۔ براہ کرم
پر ہم سے رابطہ کریں [BSL Signing Service](#) یا **643277**



Derby City Council

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