



Usel Disability Action Plan Dec 17-Dec 21

Introduction

1.1 Under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006), Usel is required when carrying out its functions 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').

Under Section 49B of the DDA 1995, Usel is also required to submit to the Equality Commission a disability action plan showing how it proposes to fulfill these duties in relation to its functions.

1.2 As Chairman of our Board of Directors (Jim Perry) & Chief Executive (Bill Atkinson) of Usel, (who are a non-departmental public body governed by the Department of Communities) we are committed to implementing effectively the disability duties and this disability action plan. We will allocate all necessary resources (in terms of people, time and money) in order to implement effectively this plan and where appropriate, build objectives and targets relating to the disability duties into corporate and annual operating plans.

We will also put appropriate internal arrangements in place to ensure that the disability duties are complied with and this disability action plan is effectively implemented, through tracking of our Action Measures, employee feedback and training. We will ensure the effective communication of the plan to employees, provide all necessary training and guidance on the disability duties and the implementation of the plan (see section 2 for training provided in 2017). This will be done through our Employee Forum, monthly meetings, factory toolbox talks and ongoing training. During the implementation and ongoing review of this plan, Usel is committed to consulting with disabled employees to ensure our objectives align with their needs, using our Employee Forum, Factory Toolbox Talks and monthly meetings to gather feedback.

We confirm our commitment to submitting an annual report to the Equality Commission on the implementation and progress of this plan as well as carrying out a full five-yearly review of this plan, and annual progress reviews to report on new actions/initiatives undertaken during its duration.

Responsibility for implementing, reviewing and evaluating this disability action plan and the point of contact within the Usel will be:

Name: Patrice Devine

Title: Compliance Manager

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If you require this plan in an alternative format (such as in large print, in Braille, audio cassette, easy read or on computer disc) and/or language, please contact the above person to discuss your requirements. A copy of this plan, our annual progress to the Equality Commission and our five-year review of this plan will be made available on our website www.usel.co.uk, as well as being shared with all employees, placements and programme participants via our employee/placement induction, internal intranet, email and hard copies issued where appropriate.

1.3 We confirm our commitment to submitting an annual progress report on the implementation of this plan to the Equality Commission and carrying out a five-year review of this plan, or plans submitted to the Equality Commission over the five-year review period. The dates of this plan will run alongside the dates of our Corporate Plan.

1.4 Functions

The primary function of Usel is to provide supported employment for people with disabilities or health conditions. The 3 main areas in which Usel offers support are:

- **Employment Support**-Supporting people with disabilities into employment by both direct employment at Usel and supported employment with external employers
- **Manufacturing**-Industrial sewing, mattress and divan production
- **Circular Economy**-Recycling mattresses & carpets and clean & clears of local authority properties. Through the clean & clears we aim to upcycle furniture and gift this back to the local community in conjunction with the local authority and charities.

2. Previous Measures completed in 2016-2017

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

- Mandatory Equality & Diversity Training
- Disability Awareness Training
- Mental Health Training
- Actively supporting disabled people into employment, both in our operations and with external employers
- Educating employers on supporting employees with disabilities
- Providing training to employers and employees



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3. Action Measures

Outlined below are the measures which we propose to take over the period Dec 17-Dec 21 of this disability action plan, together with performance indicators or targets.

Measures to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage the participation of disabled people in public life

Measures	Timescale Indicators/target	Performance Indicators	Responsibility	Progress
Completion of Equality & Diversity Training to promote a positive attitude towards disabled people	All existing employees to be completed by Jan 18. All new employees to the organisation will complete this in their first month of employment	An increased awareness of Equality & Diversity in the workplace and legislation requirements Respect in the workplace regardless of disabilities, religion etc	Compliance Manager	Feb18-Ongoing throughout plan. Targets being achieved for new employees completing this during first month of employment.
Disability Awareness Training to promote a positive attitude towards disabled people	June 2018	Disability awareness for all employees that will include equality awareness and disability equality legislation	Compliance Manager	TBC June 18
Mental Health First Aid Training promote a positive attitude towards disabled people	Feb 18 for existing frontline employees. All new employees to the organisation will complete this in their 6 months of employment	A greater understanding of supporting people with mental health Suicide Awareness and how to access support for both clients and employees	Compliance Manager	Feb18-Ongoing for all new employees. Targets achieved for existing employees
Mindfulness Training to encourage the participation of disabled people in public life	Jan 18 for frontline employees. Aug 18 for factory	An increased awareness for employees on how to cope with stress factors A proactive approach on how to deal with anxiety	Compliance Manager	Feb18-Jan targets achieved



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		An increased awareness of how Employment Officers can support clients with stress factors and anxiety		
Wellness Recovery Action Planning to encourage the participation of disabled people in public life	Apr 18 for all frontline employee	Enabling our frontline employees to support clients with mental health into employment through action planning and coping strategies. It will also help employees with Mental Health issues to develop coping strategies	Compliance Manager	Feb 18-Jan training completed, remainder of employees booked for Apr 18
Increased number of employees with disabilities to encourage the participation of disabled people in public life.	Ongoing throughout our Corporate Plan 2017-2021 As part of our 2017-2021 Corporate Plan we are committed to creating 50 sustainable jobs for people with disabilities	Since May 2017 we have employed 20 people with various disabilities in Usel, we will continue this through 2018 to one of the largest employers of people with disabilities	CEO	Feb18-We continue to promote the employment of people with disabilities, update of new figures at next review
Health & Wellbeing Initiative-We have created a plan for activities each month, e.g. Health Eating, Eating Disorders Awareness, Suicide Prevention etc encourage the participation of disabled people in public life	Ongoing through 2018	Increased morale with support for employees with disabilities/health conditions Raising awareness of health conditions with employees Raising awareness of support available to employees with disabilities or health conditions	H&S Officer	Feb 18-Recent initiatives have included raising awareness of breast and testicular cancer, Eating Disorders and anti-bullying tool box talks. We have also held a healthy eating Smoothie Morning
Support for employees with hearing and visual impairments to	Ongoing throughout time of employment	Employees will engage with team meetings, employee forums ect by	Compliance Manager	Feb 18-One employee with a visual impairment



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encourage the participation of disabled people in public life		being provided with BSL Interpreters, Braille, Large Print		requested that all information be sent to her via email, this has now been actioned. Large print is provided to other employees. BSL interpreters attend team meetings etc
The inclusion of disabled employees in the internal employee forum to encourage the participation of disabled people in public life	Meeting are ongoing on a bi monthly basis To ensure that all policies, practices and procedures are promoting a positive attitude towards disabled people Disabled employees approving and having input to the DAP	Review of internal and external communication policies, practices and procedures to ensure disabled people are portrayed in a positive role	Head of Corporate Services	Feb 18-Employees are reviewing new policies and procedures to provide feedback. We are also actively encouraging more employees with disabilities to join the forum
To encourage the participation of disabled people in public life	The number of people with disabilities that we work with across our range of employment programmes including the number of external employers we engage with.	An increase of employers engaging with Usel to employ people with disabilities and to support them to remain in employment	Employability Managers	Feb 18-Usel is currently working with around 700 employers across N Ireland to support disabled people into work
Accessible toilet Signs to promote a positive	June 18	Raising an awareness of hidden disabilities new signs will be put on all	Compliance Manager	TBC June 18



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attitude towards disabled people	All signs on disabled toilets to be updated	disabled toilets to acknowledge that not all disabilities are visible		
Monitoring of employees and applicants to encourage the participation of disabled people in public life	Ongoing throughout our DAP and recruitment of new employees	Bi-annual monitoring of all employees to identify those who have developed disabilities or health conditions during their time in employment. Recording all monitoring of new applicants in order to report to the Quality Commission the number of applicants and appointees with disabilities	Compliance Manager	Feb 18-Bi Annual monitoring completed Dec 17 2017 Equality Report completed and returned to the Equality Commission Feb 18
Direct Employment of people with disabilities in our Recycling and Manufacturing Operations to encourage the participation of disabled people in public life	Ongoing throughout our DAP and recruitment of new employees Recruitment of new employees through our Employment Programmes	Annual Increase in the number of people with disabilities employed by Usel	CEO	Feb 18-Usel currently employs 61 people with disabilities or health conditions
Free support helpline for employees to encourage the participation of disabled people in public life	Ongoing throughout employment with Usel	Inspire Workplaces provide all employees with free and confidential advice, this can be used for various reasons that may have an impact on an employees mental health	CEO	Feb 18-All employees have been issued with contact details for Inspire Workplaces, we are also continuing to work with them to identify new ways of promoting their services



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Guaranteed interviews for people with disabilities who meet the minimum criteria to encourage the participation of disabled people in public life	Ongoing through Usel's recruitment process	An ongoing increase in the number of employees with a disability	Compliance Manager	Mar 18 48% of our employees have a disability or health condition across the business
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Signed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Perry', written in a cursive style.

Jim Perry-Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Bill Atkinson', written in a cursive style.

Bill Atkinson-Chief Executive