

SERVICE UPDATE

<u>Name of Cluster:</u>	People and Citizen Services
<u>Date:</u>	7 th May 2024
<u>Title of Update:</u>	British Sign Language (BSL) Plan 2024-2030 for Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership
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UPDATE:

1. The Scottish Government published the second BSL National Plan 2023 – 2029 on 6 November 2023. The BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 requires listed authorities to publish their Authority Plans (also known as ‘BSL plans’) within 6 months after the publication of the BSL National Plan, and therefore listed authorities are required to publish their Authority Plans by 6 May 2024. As this deadline is established by the BSL (Scotland) Act 2015, there is no facility for an extension to this.
2. Aberdeen City Council (ACC) and Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership (AHSCP) published a shared BSL Plan 2018-24 for Aberdeen in October 2018 as per the requirement in the British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015 (The Act). We are now progressing our 2nd joint plan for 2024-2030.
3. To develop our 2nd plan, we sought views from the communities, families and partners who support BSL users in Aberdeen to establish what are their priorities and how can we achieve the targets together.

Questions were based on the 10 priority areas as per the [National Plan](#). Through consultation, 8 out of the 10 points listed below were a priority for our BSL users at a local level and have been listed in bold font.

- **Delivering the BSL Plan Across our services**
- **BSL Accessibility**
- **Children, Young People and their Families**
- **Access to Employment**
- **Health and Wellbeing**
- **Celebrating BSL Culture**
- **BSL Data**
- Transport
- Access to Justice
- **Democratic Participation**

4. Since January 2024, 6 events have been held locally to raise awareness about the plan and consult on the priority areas. Some of these were shared events with Aberdeenshire Council and NHS Grampian.
5. A survey was produced in BSL and in English to establish what were the priorities for Aberdeen residents in line with the 10 priorities set by the government. The survey was publicized via our consultation hub via Citizen Space, through direct emails and at all events.

[British Sign Language Plan 2024-30 survey - Aberdeen City Council - Citizen Space](#)

6. Following the feedback and analysis, our plan is developed with a mix of short-, medium- and long-term goals spanning over the 6 years of the plan. As part of the plan, there are agreed actions that will be taken forward by respective service areas for 2024 – 2030 as part of our new BSL Delivery Plan.
7. The next progress report will be laid before the Scottish Parliament by 27 October 2027.
8. Listed authorities are not required to publish progress reports, however they must state in their Authority Plans how, when and to what extent they took the measures set out in their previous plans.
9. Further commitment to support and actions the BSL Plan are also reflected in our [Equality Outcomes](#) which aim to improve the overall outcomes for people in Aberdeen by
 - Improving access to information, goods and services by identifying and removing barriers
 - Increasing the sense of safety and belonging
 - Increasing civic participation
10. The Council and the ACHSCP remain actively committed to maintaining dialogue with the BSL community to ensure our BSL Plan is regularly reviewed and evolves to reflect on actions that are delivered.
11. The BSL Plan will remain a live plan and users from across the city are welcome to provide their feedback on our progress and developments to ensure that BSL users' priorities are in the heart of all we do as a council and health care partnership.
12. Our main page for all our activity will be [British Sign Language | Aberdeen City Council](#) – where the plan has been made available and will be presented in BSL and English.