**Inclusive Communication – Top Tips**

Inclusive communication means sharing information in a way that everybody can understand. Inclusive communication makes services more accessible. The requirement for information to be accessible is included in anti-discrimination legislation. All written information should be as accessible as possible. Here are some top tips to make your information accessible.

**Top Tip 1** Only use sans serif font e.g. Clan, Arial, etc.

**Top Tip 2** Minimum font size – 12 point (14 point if possible)

**Top Tip 3** Contrast between text and background colour should be as high as possible. For example, black on white; black on yellow NOT yellow on white. Do NOT put text over images or pictures or graphics.

**Top Tip 4** Try not to use bold or underlining. Avoid using both. Only highlight a few words rather than a paragraph.

**Top Tip 5** Minimise use of text boxes.

**Top Tip 6** Don’t use capital letters in blocks.

**Top Tip 7** Don’t use italics.

**Top Tip 8** Text should always be left aligned – not fully justified.

**Top Tip 9** Don’t have blank pages in documents.

**Top Tip 10** Keep sentences short, (max 14 words.)

**Top Tip 11** Keep language simple – avoid jargon. Spell out acronyms when using for first time and put them in brackets at first use.

**Top Tip 12** Be consistent. For example, when using bullets, stick to one format throughout.

**Top Tip 13** Use good punctuation. Examples include a full stop at the end of paragraphs, or a colon at the beginning of a list.

**Top Tip 14** Space between columns of text should be large enough to be distinct, including on Powerpoint.

**Top Tip 15** Any information conveyed in colour or through images must also be suitable described with text.

**Top Tip 16** Only use Adobe to create a Portable Document Format (PDF) as this has an accessibility checker. To use this in Adobe Acrobat Pro 9 click on Advanced, Accessibility and Full Check. This will help reduce requirement for alternative versions.

**Top Tip 17** If printing, ensure paper is thick enough to prevent show through. Any coating should not be glossy or reflective.

**Top Tip 18** Always think of your audience before writing and give serious consideration to providing alternative formats on request, (Braille, audio, British Sign Language (BSL), Easy Read, or alternative solutions.) Keep a plain text version for Braille transcription.

**Top Tip 19** Use either plain text style or Hyper Text Markup Language (HTML) in emails. Use lower case in links. Avoid breaking links over two lines if possible.

**Top Tip 20** Write Universal Resource Locators (URLs) in full to increase the chances of long URLs being clickable. Put the URL on a new line and continue any text on the next line after the URL.