

5.6. EQUALITIES POLICY

The Council is committed to reviewing and, where necessary changing, how it does things, to address disadvantage amongst the people it serves and its workforce.

The Council's policy is to provide services fairly to all sections of the community and to give equal treatment to service users, employees and job applicants regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, marital status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion, age or disability.

Service Delivery

Aim To make our services accessible, welcoming and appropriate to meet the diversity of needs in our communities.

- Action**
- Train our councillors and staff to make sure that they understand their responsibilities under the law and in accordance with Council policy;
 - Monitor service usage to identify groups within the community whose needs are less well met;
 - Take action to widen service take-up across all sections of the community and ensure equality of access to services;
 - Take action to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good race relations and equality of opportunity;
 - Keep services under review to ensure that they are accessible to everyone;
 - Consult widely and regularly to ensure an up-to-date understanding of current needs;
 - Ensure systematic progress through the adoption of the Equality Standard for Local Government;
 - Ensure our complaints procedure will respond to service users who experience discrimination.

Employment

Aim Ensure all employment - related decisions, including appointments, promotion, training and development are based on merit.

Action

- Ensure that selection criteria are free from bias and genuinely needed and that applicants are considered solely on their ability to do the job;
- Ensure that disabled applicants who demonstrate that they meet the essential requirements of the job are guaranteed an interview;
- Provide aids, modify equipment or adapt work areas where reasonable and practicable, to enable a disabled person to be appointed, or employee retained;
- Distribute information widely and in different formats to ensure equal opportunities;
- Develop policies and procedures consistent with the National Single-Status Agreement;
- Provide flexible employment opportunities, redeployment, earnings protection and sheltered placements to maintain access to work;
- Support employees who experience discrimination.