



FOWEY TOWN COUNCIL

Equality and Diversity Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

This council is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination, and actively promotes equality of opportunity for everyone in employment and service delivery.

The Town Council agrees wholeheartedly with the principles of equal opportunities and declares its opposition to any form of less favourable treatment, whether through direct or indirect discrimination. The Town Council recognises it is the duty of all councillors and any employees to accept personal responsibility for fostering a fully integrated community, at work, by adhering to the principles of equal opportunity and maintaining racial harmony in the provision of dedicated services to people on equitable terms.

The policy sets out how the Town Council intends to meet its commitments by working alongside everyone, irrespective of their race, religious beliefs, creed, colour, disability, ethnic origin, nationality, marital/parental status, sex or sexual orientation.

BACKGROUND

The 2005 amendment of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) places a duty on all public authorities to actively promote disability equality, and to produce a scheme showing how this will be achieved. The DDA defines a disabled person as 'someone with a physical or mental impairment, which has substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'

The Race Relations Act 1976 (section 71) places a general obligation on local authorities to promote good race relations, and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 amended and strengthened this by making it unlawful for public authorities to discriminate on racial grounds in carrying out any of their functions. The Act also places a general statutory duty on public authorities to promote racial equality and prevent racial discrimination.

The Equality Act 2006 amends the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 to place a statutory duty on all public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment, to promote equality of opportunity between men and women and show how gender equality will be achieved. It also incorporates the duty to prohibit discrimination on the grounds of religion, belief or lack of belief.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, placements, contractors and elected members of Fowey Town Council. In this document they will all be referred to as 'employees'.

It is accepted that elected members of the council are not employees, but they do share a responsibility with employees when representing the Town Council or carrying out the functions of their elected office. Therefore all aspects of this policy apply to elected members.

POLICY GUIDELINES

The policy aims to achieve the five core values, which embrace and provide a framework within which employees can work:

Equality	Recognition that everyone is of equal value and should be respected according to individual needs and abilities.
Reasonableness	To be fair, reasonable and just in all council activities
Accessibility	Providing equal access for all in employment and service delivery.
Empowerment	Helping individuals take on responsibility so that they can influence and participate in the decision making process.
Quality	Obtaining the highest standards in service delivery

The aims of the policy are to:

- Work towards the elimination of discrimination, direct, or indirect, and all forms of harassment:
- Ensure that individuals are treated equally with respect to their specific needs and that there is consistency in the parish councils approach to working practices and conditions:
- Be a role model and try to influence others through good practice in service delivery and employment:

- Provide public information, as far as possible, in a way that best meets the needs of the person requesting it.
- Be accountable to all parishioners and encourage active participation of communities and groups in the development and application of the parish councils policies and practices:
- For all employees to attend relevant training programmes

There is no single way that equal opportunities can be achieved. Progress will be through a diverse number of factors, which are outlined below. These factors are fundamental in the implementation and incorporation of the core values that embrace equal opportunities and its practice

- CONSULTATION
- PUBLICITY / COMMUNICATION
- COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
- TRAINING
- CONTRACTS
- EMPLOYMENT MONITORING
- SERVICE DELIVERY AND MONITORING
- POLICY REVIEW
- RESOURCES

The Town Council will actively promote equal opportunities throughout the organisation through the application of its policies, which will ensure that individuals receive treatment that is fair equitable and consistent with their relevant aptitudes, potential, skills, experiences and abilities.

In particular, no applicant or employee will be placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions which are not necessary to the performance of any job or which constitute indirect unfair discrimination. Reasonable adjustments will be taken where a disabled person is put in a detrimental position and such reasonable adjustments to remove the detriment. The Town Council is committed to ensuring that such adjustments will be effected where reasonably practicable and where the detriment is substantial.

The Town Council recognises the problems that sexual or racial harassment may cause and is committed to ensuring that such unacceptable behaviour does not take place. Sexual Harassment includes (but is not limited to) unwanted physical contact, suggestive remarks or behaviour, compromising invitations, demands for sexual favours and similar unwanted behaviour. Racial harassment is similarly unwanted treatment but could also form derogatory treatment and language based on racial grounds.

All employees are expected to comply with the policy and ensure that such conduct does not occur.

THE LAW

The policy will be implemented within the framework of the relevant legislation and codes of practice, which include:

Equal Pay Act 1970

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

Sex Discrimination Act 1975 as amended by Equality Act 2006

Gender Reassignment Regulations 1999

Race Relations Act 1976 as amended in 2000 by Race Relations amendment Act

Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended in 2005

The protection from Harassment Act 1997

The Council Code of Conduct

Adopted by Fowey Town Council on 21st March 2012

Mayor ***John Berryman***

Town Clerk ***Sally Vincent***