



LEEK TOWN COUNCIL

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Approved 21st May 2024

1 INTRODUCTION:

Leek Town Council is committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity. This policy is a statement of the Council's determination to tackle discrimination and harassment and to promote equality. The policy relates to the following areas:

- pay and benefits,
- terms and conditions of employment,
- grievances and discipline,
- dismissal,
- redundancy, parental leave requests for flexible working,
- and selection for employment, promotion, training, or other developmental opportunities.

A 'Dignity at Work Statement' is included at section 3.

2 OBJECTIVES:

This policy applies to employment and service provision within the Council and stakeholders, contractors and partners are required to conform to its principles. The Council will ensure that practices are inclusive and directed to the elimination of discrimination and of harassment and victimisation, on the grounds of the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Race
- Religion/Belief
- Disability
- Gender

- Gender reassignment
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage and Civil Partnership status

The Town Council recognises its statutory duty under equality legislation in terms of service provision and employment and is committed to meet them by complying with this policy.

3 DIGNITY AT WORK STATEMENT:

Town Council employees and members are entitled to:

- a workplace free from bullying, intimidation, harassment, or victimisation.
- be treated with dignity, respect, and courtesy.
- experience no form of unlawful discrimination.
- be valued for their skills and abilities.

4 SERVICE DELIVERY:

4.1 **The Council** is committed to ensuring its services are open, fair, and accessible, and that they consider the needs and requirements of all customers, potential and existing. It will ensure that:

- customers and staff have the opportunity to engage with and participate in the planning of services through consultation and public meetings,
- clear information is provided about service and where necessary in accessible formats,
- elected members and employees ensure they are aware of current equal opportunities legislation and participate in any relevant training opportunities.

The Council carries out an impact assessment where necessary.

4.2 **The Town Clerk** has particular responsibility for setting standards and ensuring appropriate workplace behaviours are maintained and for:

- providing leadership in the implementation of this policy
- ensuring that service planning and performance management systems take account of the need to eliminate discrimination.
- ensuring that staff, service providers and members are made aware of this policy.

- 4.3 **All staff** are responsible for appropriately challenging inappropriate behaviours and raising concerns with the Town Clerk and The Mayor for their considered action.

5 COMMISSIONING AND PROCUREMENT:

The Council will ensure that contractors, and suppliers abide by the requirements to promote equality of opportunity and take steps to tackle discrimination. It will ensure that contractors and those providing a service on its behalf:

- are aware of this policy
- ensure that Council facilities and services are appropriate and accessible.
- Provide opportunities for small to medium enterprises bid for contracts.

6 EMPLOYMENT DELIVERY:

The Council is committed to ensuring that it provides equality of opportunity to all in its employment through recruitment policies and practices. This is achieved by:

- ensuring that recruitment and selection policies and procedures are fair and equitable.
- considering job applicants based on their relevant experience, skills and abilities.
- using appropriate lawful methods, including positive action, to address the under-representation of any group.
- ensuring that employees are treated fairly regardless of their hours of employment, and of their permanent or temporary status.
- taking appropriate action when incidents of harassment, bullying or discrimination are reported, offering appropriate support and advice to victims or witnesses.
- taking disciplinary action against employees who discriminate against people who work or seek employment with the Town Council, or against customers, service users or providers.

7 WORKFORCE DATA:

To be able to assess the impact of policies and practices, and to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Council monitor and evaluates the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 for the following:

- the number of part-time/full-time staff by protected group
- recruitment, training, redundancy, and leavers
- the rates of return to work for women on maternity leave

8 RELEVANT LEGISLATION:

The Council recognises its statutory equality duty under the the Public Sector Equality Duty s149 of the Equality Act 2010 to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct,
- advance quality of opportunity between people from different communities,
- foster good relations between people from different communities,
- ensure that we assess how our policies, procedures and services impact on disadvantaged groups and take steps to remedy any adverse implications.