

HR Policy

Strategic Human Resources



Equality Policy

This information can be made available in a range of formats and languages, including Braille and large print. If this would be useful to you please contact [Human Resources](#).

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EQUALITY STATEMENT

Staffordshire County Council is committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity in all that we do. This policy is a statement of how we intend to tackle discrimination and harassment and promote equality. We consider it important for the County Council to have an Equality of Opportunity Policy because we recognise that, oppression, disadvantage and discrimination still exists in society and we are keen to eliminate such practices.

THE EXTENT OF THE POLICY

This policy applies to employment and service provision. We will also work with our stakeholders, contractors and partners to ensure practices are inclusive and steps are taken to eliminate discrimination.

Our aim is to tackle discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Race
- Religion/Belief
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

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

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

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

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies to have “due regard” to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people from different communities;
- Foster good relations between people from different communities;
- We will ensure that we assess how our policies, procedures and services impact on disadvantaged groups and take steps to remedy any adverse implications.

We will meet our obligation of the Equality Act 2010 by training staff and setting out our obligations in policies and procedures.

SERVICE DELIVERY

We are committed to ensuring our services are open, fair and accessible by taking into consideration the needs and requirements of all customers, potential and existing. We will ensure that:

- Customers and staff have the opportunity to engage with and participate in the planning of services.
- Provide clear information about our services and where necessary in accessible formats and appropriate languages.
- Provide training for all our employees and elected members to ensure they have a good understanding of equalities and its impact on services
- Assess the impact and monitoring of our services to ensure they do not discriminate
- Monitor take up of services across the protected characteristics

Conduct Community Impact Assessments (CIAs) when developing new services and or policies or when making any changes.

COMMISSIONING AND PROCUREMENT

The County Council will ensure that contractors, suppliers and funded service providers abide by the requirements to promote equality of opportunity and take steps to tackle discrimination and barriers to access. We will ensure that our contractors and those providing a service on our behalf:

- Are aware of this policy and that it is communicated to all potential contractors and service providers through pre-qualifying questionnaires, specifications and contracts.
- Check that contractors and service providers have equality and diversity procedures and practices in place
- Ensure that those acting on our behalf deliver goods, facilities and services that are appropriate and accessible.
- We will provide opportunities to ensure that small to medium enterprises can bid for contracts

EMPLOYMENT DELIVERY

As an employer, we are committed to ensuring that we provide equality of opportunity to all in employment. Through our recruitment policies and practices we will aim to eliminate barriers and encourage applicants from all sections of the community. We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring that our recruitment and selection policies and procedures are fair and equitable so that the best people are appointed to deliver our services
- Only consider applicants for jobs on the basis of their relevant experience, skills and abilities unless a Genuine Occupational Qualification (GOQ) exists for specific posts;
- Use appropriate lawful methods, including positive action, to address the underrepresentation of any group which the county identifies as being under-represented in particular types of jobs
- Shortlist and interview all disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria of the post in line with our commitment to the 'Positive about Disabled People' initiative.

- Ensure that all employees receive fair and equal treatment in relation to their employment regardless of whether they are part-time, full-time or employed on a temporary basis.
- Take appropriate action against incidents of harassment, bullying or discrimination, and offer support and advice to victims or witnesses to incidents
- Take disciplinary action against employees who discriminate against people who work or seek employment with the county.
- Take disciplinary action against employees who discriminate against customers, service users or service providers.

WORKFORCE DATA

In order to assess the impact of our policies and practices and comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we will monitor by 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
- the results of staff satisfaction surveys by protected group

This information will be published on an annual basis.

Those involved in recruitment and selection will be required to follow the county's policy guidelines as set out in the recruitment and selection procedure.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Chief Executive with senior management teams are responsible for providing leadership in the implementation of this policy and for ensuring that service planning and performance management systems take account of the need to eliminate discrimination. However all staff have responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

COMMUNICATION

All managers will be responsible for ensuring that those they manage are made aware of this policy and that it is brought to the attention of all those who join the county as part of employee induction processes.

The policy will also be made available to members of the community on request and all those who provide services on behalf of the county will be made aware and the need for them to comply with its provisions.

BREACH OF POLICY

Breaches of this policy will be managed through the County Council's disciplinary procedures. Legal action may also be considered where appropriate.

REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

This policy will be reviewed every three years unless we are required to do so due to changes in legislation. The next scheduled review is September 2016.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STRATEGY

Our Corporate Equality Plan has been developed to reflect the priorities outlined in our Strategic Plan and it demonstrates how equality and diversity underpins all of the work we do.