

CYNGOR SIR *POWYS* COUNTY COUNCIL

Equality and Diversity Policy Statement

Status	Version 1
Date of Issue	1 April 2015
Date of Previous Issue	Replaces Equal Opportunities Policy (2006)
Agreed by	Management Team
Bi-annual review	October 2015
Formal Review Date	April 2016

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1. Equality Policy Statement

- 1.1 Powys County Council (hereinafter “the Council”) is fully committed to removing discrimination and advancing equality of opportunity within the employment of our staff and in the provision of services to our clients and customers, by treating people according to their needs. The Council recognises that our employment and services must be accessible to and appropriate for different types of people, and it is therefore fully committed to providing fully accessible employment provision and services.
- 1.2 In order to meaningfully fulfil the aim of removing discrimination and to advancing equality of opportunity, the Council recognises - in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 - that this may on occasion involve treating certain people in a way that may be perceived to be more favourable treatment – this is however in order to achieve the aim of fairness.
- 1.3 The Council recognises that people’s differences can mean that some individuals face discrimination or harassment in everyday life and that it therefore has a responsibility to ensure that this is removed in the employment that it provides and in the provision of services to the public.
- 1.4 The Council is fully committed to complying with the Equality Act 2010 concerning unfair discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and the promotion of good relationships between different types of people both in the workplace and in the interaction of providing services to the public.
- 1.5 All Councillors, employees and others who work on behalf of the Council are expected to carry out their responsibilities under this policy and to follow all other relevant policies and procedures that support the Council’s wider equality agenda. All employees have a role to play in ensuring fairness towards colleagues and to all sectors of the community that we serve.
- 1.6 For those that work and are employed directly by schools, they should refer to their school’s equal opportunities/equality and diversity policies.
- 1.7 This Equality Policy Statement is reinforced by the Council’s Strategic Equality Plan (2012 to 2016) which contains our Equality Objectives and the steps we will take to achieve them. You can find this Strategy at <http://www.powys.gov.uk/index.php?id=12843&L=0>
- 1.8 The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination, victimisation and harassment on the basis of the following “protected characteristics”:

- Age;

- Gender reassignment;
- Sex;
- Race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality;
- Disability;
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Sexual orientation;
- Religion or belief – including lack of belief; and
- It applies to marriage and civil partnership, but only in respect of the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination.

2. Responsibility

- 2.1. Whilst the implementation of this Policy is the responsibility of each and every employee, day-to-day implementation of it will rest with the Heads of Service, under the strategic guidance of the senior Management Team of the Council – the Chief Executive and Directors. Ultimate responsibility will however rest upon the Cabinet in particular and progressed forward by the Cabinet member with the portfolio responsibility for Equality. Appropriate training, development and awareness-raising events will be provided to employees and Members as appropriate.

3. Councillors

- 3.1. All Councillors sign the Member’s Code of Conduct in terms of which they agree to act in accordance with the Council’s equality plans and policies.

4. Employment

- 4.1. The Council will work towards creating a workforce which reflects Powys’ diverse population, by ensuring that the recruitment process is fair and equitable. It will ensure that no-one is unfairly discriminated against when applying for a job or during the course of their employment with the Council. All recruiting managers must ensure that they are fully trained in the agreed recruitment and selection processes, including “Safer Recruitment” - equality and diversity duties and obligations will be a fundamental part of this process. Monitoring of the recruitment and selection process will be undertaken to ensure that equality and diversity legislation is complied with.
- 4.2. All employees shall have equal access to training and career development in line with their job role and employee development plan. The Council will monitor patterns of career progression of Council employees in line with the requirements of the Equality Act (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 to ensure this is evaluated and progressed over time.

- 4.3. Any employee who has a concern regarding unfair discrimination or harassment at work may use one of the Council's formal procedures e.g. the grievance procedure.
- 4.4 Harassment or victimisation or other forms of poor treatment of employees who initiate either formal procedures or who raise informal concerns with management over the treatment of themselves or other employees in the workplace will be viewed as a serious matter and perpetrators of harassment or victimisation may be subject to disciplinary procedures.

5. Responsibilities of all Council Employees

- 5.1. The Council requires that all its employees behave in appropriate ways that promote equality between people and are non-discriminatory in particular in relation to any of the protected characteristics listed under point 1.7. This applies to the way that they behave towards members of the public in the delivery of services and to other employees in the course of their work, as well as in other circumstances where they are identified as Council employees; for example, at a staff office party, at a work-related conference, etc. Employees should be aware of and fully adhere to the Council's Code of Conduct Policy.
- 5.2 Employees should participate actively in creating a positive culture as well as positive attitudes towards equality and diversity issues, and in particular, towards people covered by the protected characteristics e.g. disabled employees, women taking maternity leave, people with religious beliefs, etc. Employees should also draw to the attention of their line manager or a member of the HR team any alleged unlawful or unfair discriminatory acts or practices committed by another employee, regardless of their status in the Council.
- 5.3 Should employees, through the course of their employment, be found to have caused or encouraged discrimination, this will be regarded as having committed a particularly serious offence, rendering them liable to disciplinary action. This will be dealt with under the Council's disciplinary procedure policy.
- 5.4. This Equality Policy Statement sets out the Council's commitment to equality and diversity issues. For further details relating to the implementation of equality and diversity principles in the Council, please see the Council's [Strategic Equality Plan 2012-2016](#) - please refer to section 1.6 for the webpage reference.

6. Policy Monitoring

- 6.1. A review of this policy will take place as part of the Strategic Equality Plan's annual review which will reflect both legislative and

operational changes, when and where applicable.

7. Applicable Legislation, Orders and Guidance

- 7.1 The Equality Act 2010 including the (Specification of Relevant Welsh Authorities) Order 2011;
- 7.2 The Public Sector Equality Duty; i.e. s149 of the Equality Act 2010; and,
- 7.3 The Human Rights Act 1998.