



BRIDGEND TOWN COUNCIL

Equality and Diversity Policy

Version: 1.0

Introduction

Bridgend Town Council is an equal opportunities employer. It is committed to equality of opportunity and to providing a service and following practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that no job applicant, member of staff or service user receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance or access to services. It seeks also to ensure that no person is victimised or subjected to any form of bullying or harassment.

Bridgend Town Council values people as individuals with diverse opinions, cultures, lifestyles and circumstances. All employees are covered by this policy and it applies to all areas of employment including recruitment, selection, training, deployment, career development, and promotion. These areas will be monitored and policies and practices amended if necessary to ensure that no unfair or unlawful discrimination, intentional, unintentional, direct or indirect, overt or latent exists.

The Personnel Committee has particular responsibility for implementing and monitoring the Equality and diversity policy and, as part of this process, all policies and procedures of the Town Council are administered with the objective of promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating unfair or unlawful discrimination.

All employees, workers or self-employed contractors whether part time, full time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the Town Council.

Equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and compliance with the law is to the benefit of all individuals in the Town Council as it seeks to develop the skills and abilities of its employees. While specific responsibility for eliminating discrimination and providing equality of opportunity lies with designated line managers, all employees have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect. The personal commitment of every employee to this policy and application of its principles are essential to eliminate discrimination and provide equality throughout the Town Council.

Commitment as an employer

The Town Council is committed to:

- Creating an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of staff are recognised and valued
- Every employee, worker or self-employed contractor is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated
- Providing training, development and progression opportunities to all staff
- Understanding equality in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense
- Reviewing all employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.

Commitment as a service provider

The Town Council is committed to:

- Providing services to which all service users are entitled regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, offending past, caring responsibilities or social class
- Making sure services are delivered equally and meet the diverse needs of service users by assessing and meeting their diverse needs
- Fully supporting this policy by Town Councillors and ensuring agreement has been reached with employee representatives where appropriate
- Monitoring and reviewing this policy annually
- Having clear procedures that enable service users, candidates for jobs and employees to raise a grievance or make a complaint if they feel they have been unfairly treated
- Treating breaches of the equality and diversity policy as misconduct which could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

Equal opportunity policy statements

Age

The Town Council will:

- Ensure that people of all ages are treated with respect and dignity
- Ensure that people of working age are given equal access to its employment, training, development and promotion opportunities and
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about younger and older people.

Disability

The Town Council will:

- Provide any reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled people have access to its services and employment opportunities
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about disabled people and
- Seek to continue to improve access to information by ensuring availability of loop systems, braille facilities, alternative formatting and sign language interpretation where appropriate.

Race

The Town Council will:

- Challenge racism wherever it occurs
- Respond swiftly and sensitively to racists incidents and
- Actively promote race equality in the Town Council.

Gender

The Town Council will:

- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about women and men
- Take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against women and men
- Offer equal access for women and men to representation, services, employment, training and pay and encourage other organisations to do the same and
- Provide support to prevent discrimination against transsexual people who have or who are about to undergo gender reassignment.

Sexual orientation

The Town Council will:

- Ensure that it takes account of the needs of gay men, lesbians and bisexuals and
- Promote positive images of gay men, lesbians and bisexuals.

Religion or belief

The Town Council will:

- Ensure that employees' religion or beliefs and related observances are respected and accommodated wherever possible and
- Respect people's beliefs where the expression of those beliefs does not impinge on the legitimate rights of others.

Pregnancy or maternity

The Town Council will:

- Ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity and that a positive image is promoted regardless of pregnancy or maternity
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about the pregnancy or maternity of its employees and
- Ensure that no individual is disadvantaged and that it takes account of the needs of its employees' pregnancy or maternity.

Marriage or civil partnership

The Town Council will:

- Ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity and that a positive image is promoted regardless of marriage or civil partnership;

- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about the marriage or civil partnership of its employees and
- Ensure that no individual is disadvantaged and that it takes account of the needs of its employees' marriage or civil partnership.

Ex-offenders

The Town Council will prevent discrimination against its employees regardless of their offending background (except where there is a known risk to children or vulnerable adults).

Equal pay

The Town Council will ensure that all employees, male or female, have the right to the same contractual pay and benefits for carrying out the same work, work rated as equivalent work or work of equal value.

Date Approved by Council: _____

Date for Review: