

KEGWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

We (Kegworth Parish Council) are committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and to avoiding unlawful discrimination.

Striving to ensure that the work environment is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect is an important aspect of ensuring equal opportunities in employment.

This policy is intended to help us to put this commitment into practice. Compliance with this policy should also ensure that our employees do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.

PRINCIPLES

- We will not discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of a protected characteristic (age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality, caste and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership).
- We will not discriminate after employment has ended, e.g. refusing to give a reference for a reason related to one of the protected characteristics.
- We will not discriminate against or harass a member of the public in the provision of services or goods.
- We will make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services.
- Service providers have an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.
- We recognise there are different types of unlawful discrimination, definitions of which can be found in Appendix 1 at the end of the policy.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN EMPLOYMENT

We will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy.

Recruitment

- Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job.
- Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability.

- Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.

Working practices

- We will consider any possible indirectly discriminatory effect of our standard working practices, including the number of hours to be worked, the times at which these are to be worked and the place at which work is to be done, when considering requests for variations to these standard working practices.
- We will refuse such requests only if we consider we have good reasons, unrelated to any protected characteristic, for doing so.
- We will comply with our obligations in relation to statutory requests for contract variations.
- We will also make reasonable adjustments to our standard working practices to overcome barriers caused by disability.

EMPLOYEES

- Every employee is required to assist the council to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination.
- Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the council for any act of unlawful discrimination.
- Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.
- Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees or customers are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the council's disciplinary procedure.
- Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.
- If you consider that you may have been unlawfully discriminated against, you should use the Grievance procedure to make a complaint.
- If your complaint involves bullying or harassment, the grievance procedure is modified as set out in the Anti-Harassment & Bullying Policy which can be accessed on the Parish Council Website.
- We will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that is upheld.
- An employee will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if their grievance is not upheld, unless your complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith.

TRAINING

- We will provide an awareness of equal opportunities to anyone likely to be involved in recruitment or other decision making where equal opportunities issues are likely to arise.
- We will raise awareness of all employees to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under the dignity at work policy and what they can do to help create a working environment free of bullying and harassment.
- We will provide training to managers to enable them to deal more effectively with complaints of bullying and harassment.

PEOPLE NOT EMPLOYED BY THE COUNCIL

We will not discriminate unlawfully against those using or seeking to use the services provided by Kegworth Parish Council.

Any bullying or harassment by suppliers, visitors or others, should be reported to the council who will take appropriate action.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING

- We will monitor the ethnic, gender and age composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs (including promotion), and the number of people with disabilities within these groups and will consider and take any appropriate action to address any problems that may be identified as a result of the monitoring process.
- We treat personal data collected for reviewing equality and diversity in accordance with the data protection policy. Information about how data is used and the basis for processing is provided in the council's privacy notices.
- Information provided by job applicants and employees for monitoring purposes will be used only for these purposes and will be dealt with in accordance with relevant data protection legislation.

Date of policy: January 2021

Date of next review: January 2022

APPENDIX 1

Types of unlawful discrimination

Direct discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic.

In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Indirect discrimination is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Harassment is where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Associative discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.

Perceptive discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that he/she has a particular protected characteristic when he/she does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic.

Third-party harassment occurs where an employee is harassed and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties.

Victimisation occurs where an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because he/she made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because he/she is suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if he/she acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments is where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.