

NAILSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The Town Council acknowledges that Nailsworth is diverse in culture, race, beliefs and religion and believes that no individual or group of people should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, age, colour, race, nationality, racial or national origins, cultural heritage, disability, marital status, social background, sexual orientation or geographical location.

It acknowledges that members of these groups are often under-represented, exposed to prejudice and stereotyping, and suffer various disadvantages within our society.

It recognises and values the diversity of the population of Nailsworth.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy Statement is to set out clearly and fully the positive action that the Town Council intends to take to combat direct and indirect discrimination and ensure there is no institutional discrimination in employment policy; management of its buildings (the Town Hall, the Mortimer Room and the Forest Green Temporary Community Hall/Centre); relationships with other bodies; and in the services it provides to, and any relationships it has with, volunteers, hirers, service providers, residents, businesses, community organisations and visitors.

The Town Council is committed to providing equality of opportunity in all areas of its work. It aims to overcome discrimination on the grounds mentioned above.

The Town Council recognises that positive steps need to be taken to ensure equality of provision in areas of representation, service provision, and access and will take action to make this policy effective.

COMMITMENT

The Town Council, through the councillors and staff, and in its roles as an employer, provider of public services and community leadership, is committed to :

- Opposing all direct, indirect and institutional discrimination against people on the grounds of ethnic origin, economic or social background, religion, culture, disability, gender, sexual orientation, HIV status, age and family status.
- Respecting the identity, rights and value of each individual and ensuring they are treated with dignity and respect.
- Promoting equality of opportunity in recruitment and selection of staff and councillors, access to services, the management and operation of meeting and event spaces, the provision of grant-aid, the operation of Council and committee meetings, and in training.
- Tackling inequality and social exclusion.
- Promoting community cohesion.
- Monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of the policy.

DUTIES

The Town Council's Statutory Duties are as follows :

Race Relations (Amendment Act) (2000) which placed a general duty on public authorities to promote race equality and eliminate unlawful racial discrimination;

Disability Discrimination Act (2005) which placed a duty on public authorities to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people and eliminate unlawful discrimination; and

Equality Act 2006 which placed a duty on public authorities to promote equality of opportunity between men and women and eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment.

Additionally, the **Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007** and the **Statutory Guidance for the Duty to Involve April 2009**, place the Town Council under a duty to consider the possibilities for provision of information to, consultation with and involvement of representatives of local persons across all authority functions. This extends to people who live, study or work in the area.

IMPLEMENTATION

This statement will be implemented by the following actions :

- 1 Making people aware of this statement in the following ways :
 - staff and volunteers being given a copy at induction and signing that they have seen it and understand their responsibilities;
 - the statement being prominently displayed in all the Council's spaces for hire; and
 - the statement's existence on the Council's website being drawn to the attention of all organisations seeking grants from the Council, all hirers, all service providers and potential tenderers.
- 2 The involvement of staff and councillors in training.
- 3 Staff and councillors challenging contraventions to the statement when representing the Town Council in their official roles, for example, language or humour that people find offensive will not be tolerated.
- 4 Taking allegations of harassment, abuse or intimidation seriously and ensuring they are investigated, quickly, impartially and thoroughly.
- 5 The identification and pursuit of opportunities to promote equal opportunities and community cohesion in all that the Council does.
- 6 The monitoring, and annual review of premises bookings by the Property Management Committee, with appropriate action put in place to ensure all Nailsworth's communities benefit from the opportunities the Town Council provides.
- 7 A formal annual review of the statement to ensure it is relevant and up-to-date.

Committee responsible	Environment
Adopted at NTC meeting	19 January 2010
Review Date	by 31 December 2010