

Equality and Diversity Policy Statement

The Council's ambitions are

- **Real help for communities - communities that are strong, safe, healthy and at ease with each other**
- **Responding to recession - good, secure and better paid jobs**
- **Reducing inequalities - an atmosphere of fairness and opportunity for all**
- **Reducing carbon - a reduced carbon impact**

Introduction

We are the largest employer in Kirklees with nearly 20,000 employees serving a population of 400,000 residents. The area is diverse in many ways. Although mostly rural, we have several large towns including Huddersfield, Dewsbury and Batley. Each is different in geography, character and population. A considerable proportion of our 400,000 residents are from black or minority ethnic backgrounds. One in ten of our population is Muslim and almost one in five is disabled or has long term illness. Like many other areas we have an aging population, conversely, unlike many other areas, we have a high percentage of young people living and learning in the borough. 30% of our school children are from a minority ethnic background and the area benefits from having a university and several further education colleges.

Our Equality and diversity statement

We believe in treating everyone fairly and see the diversity of our community and workforce as a real strength. We want to build strong communities with a sense of togetherness, and we want to tackle disadvantage. We want everyone to be able to realise their potential and to benefit from the cultural, social, economic and civic vitality of our district. We want to meet people's needs as best we can, and we realise that treating people fairly does not necessarily mean treating everyone as if they are the same.

This commitment applies to our work as an employer, a service deliverer, a contractor and funding body and in our community leadership role.

Our commitment into action

The council opposes all forms of discrimination and believes in treating our employees and the people of Kirklees fairly regardless of their race, gender or gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief.

We want to make sure that we take equality and diversity into account in all our activities. This includes working with our employees and the people of Kirklees to develop and deliver high quality services that meet the needs everyone.

Equal citizens' – different needs

Plans, policies and practice

We will

- Design services that meet the needs of all our communities by utilising detailed research and our experience of good-practice
- Ensure our plans and policies do not unfairly discriminate against any individual or community group
- Make sure all our employees, customers, residents, partners and contractors are aware of our Equality and Diversity Strategy and this Policy Statement

As a provider of services

We will

- Ensure that services are relevant to the people of Kirklees and take into account their different needs
- Provide information about our services that is clear, accurate and accessible
- Treat all our customers positively, with dignity and respect
- Investigate and respond to, complaints of discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying.
- Listen to our customers and ensure their views are continually taken into consideration to shape decisions. We will do this through consultation with, and the involvement of, our community groups and residents.

As an employer

We will

- Recruit and retain a workforce that reflects the community we serve in all our services and at all levels
- provide our employees with equal access to training and development
- ensure that all staff receive equality and diversity training through the council's general training programme
- provide positive action training where there is under-representation of certain groups, such as men and women into non-traditional roles
- ensure our staff have equivalent terms and conditions through single status, including equal pay and reward
- listen to our employees' ideas and suggestions for improving services and ways of working, through regular surveys and our equality networks

In partnerships and contracts

We will

- ensure that our partners and contractors have the same values and principles and approach to equality and diversity as ourselves
- share our knowledge of our diverse communities, their requirements and aspirations, with our partners to help shape and improve the services they provide, and we will
- listen to the views of our partners to help us to improve our work and practice

How will make this happen?

- Councillors will promote the council's approach and commitment to equality and diversity across the organisation and within their localities
- Senior council managers will provide leadership and direction by taking responsibility for the overall management of equality and diversity within their directorates and services and the council as a whole
- Managers will ensure that equality and diversity issues are central to service delivery and employment practices and actions are reflected in their service plans
- We have specialist staff who will work with all council services to ensure our high standards in equality and diversity are met.
- All employees will be aware of their individual responsibility for ensuring that the principles of equality and diversity are upheld in their work at all times
- We will ensure that our partners and contactors are aware of and comply with our equality and diversity strategy and policies

For more information about the council's Equality and Diversity Strategy visit the council's website on <http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/you-kmc/kmc-policies/equalitydiversity.shtml> or contact the Corporate Equal Opportunities Officer on 01484 225029

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