



CENTRAL MILTON KEYNES TOWN COUNCIL

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

Central Milton Keynes Town Council in serving the local community has the duty to promote equality of opportunity and diversity in respect of all its services and activities.

The Council has a legal duty to adhere to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The Act not only seeks to eliminate discrimination in employment but places a general responsibility on public bodies to promote equality of opportunity and diversity in the services it provides.

2. EQUALITY ACT 2010

The Act seeks to remove discrimination in the following protected characteristics:-

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

3. PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

Section 149 of the 2010 Act imposes upon public authorities in the exercise of their functions a duty to take into account the need to eliminate discrimination and harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.

4. EQUALITY OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

Central Milton Keynes Town Council is committed to achieving equality of opportunity, both for those who use its services and for the employees who provide them.

Equal opportunities, fairness in the workplace and provision of good quality services to the local community are inter-linked. It is recognised that individuals and groups continue to be unfairly discriminated against and it is the Town Council's responsibility to promote good community relations and equality of opportunity, as well as tackling unlawful discrimination in all its forms.

Councillors and employees endorse and commit to the following statements:-

5. COMMITMENTS

- i. To provide services that are equally accessible to all people, free from prejudice and discrimination and sensitive to the needs of all sections of the community.
- ii. To value people and their differences and enable all employees to achieve their full potential, creating vitality within our organisation and the services we provide.
- iii. To seek to influence the work and contribution of partner organisations from all sectors by ensuring that equality issues and considerations are fully taken into account when developing strategies.
- iv. To work towards eliminating all forms of discrimination, both of a direct and indirect nature.
- v. To encourage partnership and participation in the development and application of council policy and practices.

6. EMPLOYEES

Central Milton Keynes Town Council aims to provide a non-discriminatory working environment where discrimination, harassment or bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Employment policies, procedures and practices, as outlined in the Employee Handbook and other related documents, will promote equality of opportunity, with all decisions relating to recruitment, selection, training, promotion and career progression being based solely on objective and job related requirements and criteria.

In respect of employee recruitment, the Town Council will ensure that the following criteria are adhered to:-

- i. Full account will be taken of Section 60 of the Equality Act 2010 when recruiting staff. An employer is not permitted to ask questions of an applicant's health prior to an offer of work.
- ii. Advertisements for recruitment will not request applicants from within an age range, neither will the application form require an applicant to state date of birth/age.
- iii. All applications shall state that the Town Council welcomes applications from all, including Protected Groups.
- iv. In order not to discriminate against young people application material will emphasise the importance of skills and potential as well as experience.
- v. There will be no age discrimination in relation to the dismissal of staff.
- vi. A job specification and person specification to be drawn up for each role. Specifications to be limited to that necessary for the effective performance of the job.

- vii. Information about vacancies must be made available to all sections of the community (except in situations where in line with relevant employment legislation external advertising of vacancies is restricted).

7. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- i. The Town Council is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in the development of both its staff and councillors.
- ii. All employees/councillors will be supported to undertake the training and development which they need to help them achieve and maintain a high standard of performance and will be given encouragement and support to achieve their full potential.
- iii. Where employees/councillors with disabilities undertake training and development, appropriate arrangements will be made as necessary to ensure that all opportunities are equally accessible.

8. SERVICE PROVISION TO THE PUBLIC

- i. All members of the public will be treated fairly and consistently.
- ii. All services shall be provided without unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.
- iii. Those using Town Council properties and facilities will be afforded all possible assistance so as to ensure that they can access these, with special attention being given to those who find it difficult to access facilities on the grounds of age, disability or other Protected Characteristic.
- iv. All application forms, including Conditions of Use forms, made to the Town Council shall state that the Town Council will treat all applications equitably and take due consideration of those with Protected Characteristics.
- v. All licence agreements- including allotment tenancy agreements- shall refer to this Equal Opportunities Policy.

9. MONITORING THE POLICY

Issues relating to the implementation of this policy should be addressed to the Clerk.

The Town Council shall receive an annual report from the Clerk on compliance with the policy.

Policy adopted.....