

Equality in Employment Policy

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1. Introduction

Enfield Council recognises and values the diversity of all people and communities in the borough and in its workforce. The Council is committed to promoting equality and diversity in the workplace and believes in being inclusive and giving everyone an equal chance to succeed.

The Council recognises respects and values diversity within its workforce as an asset and key resource in enhancing and maximising performance to effectively meet the diverse needs of its service users.

The Council will monitor employee and applicant data and information on a regular basis to ensure that there is a continuous review of the composition of the workforce. This will identify the impact of policies and practices and provide the basis to eliminate any unjustified discrimination and promote equality.

The Council will not discriminate on the grounds of race or ethnic origin, gender identity, disability, nationality, marriage or civil partnership, religion or belief, age, pregnancy or maternity, sexual orientation, sex, family status, transgender status or socio economic background or any other irrelevant factor and will build a culture that values meritocracy, openness, fairness and transparency.

Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who discriminates against another employee on any of the grounds stated above in accordance with The Principles of Managing Misconduct

All employees are responsible for the promotion and advancement of this policy.

2. Legal Framework

The Equality Act 2010 provides a single legal framework for all equalities legislation.

It is important that this policy is read in conjunction with The Equalities Act 2010- Managers Briefing

In law, discrimination takes the following forms:

Direct Discrimination: this occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have (see perception discrimination below), or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic (see discrimination by association below).

Discrimination by Association: this is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

Perception discrimination: this is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination can occur where there is a condition, rule, policy or even a practice that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic.

Objectives relating to fair and inclusive practices will be included in all employees' performance assessments and will form an integral part of performance reviews throughout the year.

3. Leadership

The Council will:

- identify senior level Equalities Champions and support equality initiatives
- encourage all managers to take ownership and sponsorship for equality and diversity initiatives

4. Recruitment and Selection

The Council will continually review recruitment and selection practices to ensure that discriminatory practices do not take place.

The Council will promote its commitment to equality on the careers pages of the Council website. Advertisements will be carefully worded so that no inference may be drawn that certain individuals or groups might be at an advantage or disadvantage when applying for employment.

The Council acknowledges that recruitment and selection decisions will be based upon objective, measurable and reasonable selection criteria. No method of recruitment that might unfairly exclude a potential applicant from being recruited will be used. Tests that are applied will not have any adverse implications for any categories of applicant and will be based on objective, job related criteria.

The Council will continue to maintain and develop existing equality monitoring arrangements and take appropriate action as a result of its findings.

All new staff will be required to read this policy and confirm their understanding of their individual responsibility to promote equalities in the workplace.

The Council will systematically review and develop training programmes for staff to both raise awareness of equality issues and equip managers to make selection decisions based upon objective, measurable and reasonable criteria.

5. Training and Development

The Council's commitment to equality in employment and in service delivery will be reinforced during staff and Member Induction training programmes.

Training will continue to be developed to ensure that the full potential of the Council's employees are realised. The Council will monitor their training and development programmes to ensure that development opportunities continue to be open to all employees, and will not be influenced by discrimination.

Equality training will be delivered to all staff and Members at an appropriate level suitable to their job requirements in order to raise awareness, knowledge, skills and confidence.

6. Monitoring

The effectiveness of this policy can only be judged by using information about how it is operating. The Council will use a monitoring system to collect data and assess the progress made in putting the policy into action.

The monitoring system will establish the extent to which all groups represented in employment and training and management development activities. The monitoring system depends on information being available therefore, all employees and job applicants will be asked to provide equality monitoring information.

The reasons for monitoring will be made clear to all employees and job applicants. The giving of this information will be entirely optional, but the Council will urge co-operation to assist in monitoring progress of its equalities programmes.

No information obtained as part of the monitoring of equality in employment, which may identify individuals, will be given to any organisation outside the Council unless required by law.

7. Audit

The Council will endeavour to:

- undertake a full audit in relation to policies and procedures, practice of policy and perception of policy and process;
- obtain workforce statistics and compare them with sector and best practice organisations; and

The audit will include a review of all the processes to establish the Council's position with regard to compliance and best practice. This will be done by administering a survey to all staff, undertaking one-to-one interviews with key leaders and stakeholders, and facilitating focus groups to establish employees' perception in relation to key areas of the questionnaire.