



Bournemouth Borough Council Equality and Diversity Policy

Why do we have this policy?

Reason

Bournemouth Borough Council is committed to working on behalf of all its customers, residents, partners, visitors and staff and has a duty to uphold their human rights. By better understanding the diversity of communities and their specific needs, the Council can provide the most appropriate and responsive services; an approach that supports the Council's priorities of providing services that are effective, efficient and of a high quality.

The Council has set Equality Objectives which aim to address local equality priorities. The objectives are published in the Council's equality strategy, 'Better for All', and were informed through the analysis of diversity monitoring data and central government policy of inclusive growth.

Our commitment is reinforced by the Human Rights Act 1998 ("the Act") which the Council is required to uphold and the Equality Act 2010 ("the EA2010") which requires the Council to promote fairness and equality in employment practice and the delivery of services, where relevant.

Human rights are the foundation and non-negotiable floor on which this policy stands. Accordingly, the Council is under a legal obligation to have 'due regard' to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who do not; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a characteristic and those who do not.

Purpose

This policy demonstrates how the Council values diversity, how it meets its responsibilities set out in legislation and how it will pay due regard to equality in the delivery of all its functions.

Anyone who has any form of contact or relationship with the Council has a right to be treated fairly with dignity and respect. This includes Councillors, customers, 'staff'

(for example apprentices', temporary workers, consultants', agency staff), partners, contractors, volunteers and visitors.

This principle applies equally to all people regardless of which protected characteristic (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) they have as detailed below: -

- Age;
- Disability;
- Gender Reassignment;
- Marriage and Civil Partnership;
- Pregnancy and Maternity;
- Race (ethnic origin, nationality, skin colour);
- Religion and Belief;
- Sex/gender;
- Sexual orientation; and
- any other status as identified within the European Convention of Human rights and any other domestic or relevant UK or EU law.

This policy is in place to ensure as far as possible that these rights are protected, respected and observed.

Who must comply with the policy?

- All Council employees
- Councillors
- Anyone delivering services on behalf of the Council such as contractors, volunteers, partner organisations and people on work placements
- Any user of Council premises, facilities, and equipment

The Council undertakes to ensure that all the are made aware of this policy. Any acceptance of an offer of employment or contract by any of the above will automatically be taken as an individual's commitment to support the principles of this policy and as a pledge to demonstrate that commitment in their role with or on behalf of the Council.

When does, this policy apply?

At all times

Who needs to be aware of this policy?

All as named above

What is the policy?

Bournemouth Borough Council actively encourages respect for diversity, and works to eliminate discrimination in its role as an employer; provider of services and community leader. It aims to create an environment where difference is valued and respected and in which fairness, dignity and respect are embedded in interactions with the public and between each other and encourages individuals to develop and maximise their true potential. The Council is committed to achieving and maintaining a workforce that is broadly reflective of the local labour market.

This policy is divided into five areas based around the Council's corporate priorities: Developing the future of Local Government in Bournemouth: An Efficient Council; An

Active Community; An Improving Environment; and A Thriving Economy, as well as the performance areas of the Equality Framework for Local Government. These policy areas are further underpinned by our Diversity promise and our Equality Strategy, 'Better for All'.

Bournemouth Borough Council's Diversity Promise

The Council will:

- treat everyone fairly;
- give fair access to services;
- be socially inclusive;
- be transparent in all that it does; and
- value customers, staff and anyone who has any form of contact or relationship with the Council

The Council will not tolerate Bi-phobic, Homophobic, Transphobic, racist, or sexist behaviour or any other unjust or unfair unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation by or towards any of its staff, contractors or partners, including those who deliver services on its behalf or its customers. Where discrimination, harassment or victimisation has taken place, action will be taken in line with Council policies and procedures as listed below.

This principle applies to all conditions of employment. It also applies to the provision of and access to services, whether supplied directly by the Council, or by organisations or the Council's behalf. In providing services, the Council – or those organisations acting on its behalf – must be able to demonstrate that they have considered the needs and characteristics of service users, and in view of these, have considered the appropriateness and accessibility of the services being offered.

This policy supports the Council's Equality Strategy 'Better for All' and its Equality Objectives which are delivered at service level through Service Equality Action Plans.

This policy is underpinned by the following Council documents:

- Prevention of Bullying and Harassment at Work Policy
- Corporate Complaints Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Better for All – the Council's Equality and Diversity Strategy

How is this policy implemented?

Procedures

The policy is implemented by adherence to the following principles:

The Council's commitment to the progression of equality and respect for diversity is:

- to create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our people are recognised and valued;
- to create a working environment that promotes dignity and respect for all. No form of intimidation, bullying, harassment or victimisation will be tolerated;
- to ensure development and progression and training opportunities are available to all;

- to promote equality and encourage diversity in the workplace, which it believes makes sound business and is good management practice;
- to regularly review all employment and volunteering practices and procedures to ensure that no job applicant, staff, elected member, apprentice or volunteer is treated less favourably than others;
- to regularly review services to ensure they are accessible and appropriate to all sections of our communities;
- to treat breaches of this policy seriously and to take disciplinary action or other action when required;
- to provide information and training to all employees, Councillors and volunteers to ensure they are fully aware of the issues relevant to Equality and Diversity and their responsibilities relating to it;
- to develop Equality Action Plans, to ensure our Equality and Diversity Policy is fully implemented;
- to ensure the policy is fully supported by the Corporate Management Team and the Cabinet; and
- to monitor and review the policy at least every two years.

This policy is implemented by the following procedures:

- Development of Equality Impact Needs Assessments
- Equality Action Plans within each Directorate and Service
- People Management Strategy
- Workforce Development Strategy
- Recruitment and Selection Procedures
- Disciplinary Procedure and Rules
- Prevention of Bullying and Harassment at Work Procedures
- Grievance procedure
- Complaints procedure
- Training
- Whistleblowing Policy

Roles and responsibilities

It is expected that the following roles respect and promote the policy at all times in all aspects of their work:

- the Leader of the Council & Cabinet Members especially the Portfolio Holder for Equality and Diversity);
- Member Champion for Equality and diversity
- Group Leaders
- All Councillors
- Managing Director
- Executive Directors
- Service Directors
- Equality and Diversity Manager
- Service Equality Champions; and
- Staff Network Chairs

Managers' responsibilities

All managers at the Council must demonstrate commitment to the Equality and Diversity Policy and are responsible for encouraging staff and colleagues to

incorporate the principles of this policy into Council business and are expected to be proactive in doing so.

Managers are responsible for monitoring individual behaviour and are expected to take immediate action where there is evidence of discrimination, harassment, bullying or any other prohibited conduct. They will be responsible for raising awareness of individual rights and responsibilities.

Managers are also responsible for supporting and encouraging staff to reach their full potential and will do so by dismantling barriers to development if found to exist.

Councillors' responsibilities

All Councillors are expected to abide by the Local Code of Member Conduct and ensure that their behaviour is consistent with the principles of this policy and their role as publicly elected officials.

Group Leaders' responsibilities

Group Leaders are responsible for informally monitoring the behaviour of Councillors in their political group and should take immediate action if there is evidence of unfair discrimination, harassment or bullying. They are also responsible for raising awareness of this policy within their political group.

Individual responsibilities

All Council employees are individually responsible and accountable for their own behaviour. Any Council employee who causes offence or makes another individual feel unsafe or undignified, or unjustly, unfairly or unlawfully prevents them from developing within the Council whether, intentionally or not, may be subject to disciplinary action by the Council and may face legal action from the complainant.

Any Council employee, who feels that he or she - or another Council employee - is suffering from unfair, unjust or unlawful treatment, should act as detailed in the Complaints and Grievance procedures. Similarly, any Council employee who witnesses another individual being treated in such a way must be able to report the incident without fear of victimisation as defined in the Whistleblowing policy.

Equality and Diversity Manager's responsibilities

The Equality and Diversity Manager will ensure that equality and diversity is kept at the forefront of Council business. This will be done through the provision of professional advice, training, diversity monitoring, updating Council employees & Councillors on changes to legislation and legal requirements. The Equality and Diversity Manager is also responsible for reviewing the policy at least every four years.

Implementation and communication

This Policy will be implemented through the Councils governance framework and communicated to council staff through training and the Council's intranet system. The policy will be accessible to members of the public and partners on the Council's Web pages.

Enforcement

Breaches of the policy may lead to a prosecution; disciplinary proceedings or the withdrawal of council services.

Supporting information

Equality Strategy 'Better for All'

Bournemouth Councils' Members Code of Conduct

Effective from date	01 July 2017
Review date	30 June 2019
Review frequency	Every 2 years
Policy Owner (job title)	Equality & Diversity Manager
Policy Author (job title)	Equality and Diversity Manager
Policy Sponsor (job title)	Managing Director Bournemouth Borough Council
Approval bodies	Corporate Management Team
Approval dates	To be inserted
Related legislation	Equality Act 2010
Related policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of Equality Impact Needs Assessments• People Management Strategy• Workforce Development Strategy• Recruitment and Selection Procedures• Disciplinary Procedure and Rules• Prevention of Bullying and Harassment at Work Procedures• Grievance procedure• Complaints procedure• Training• Whistleblowing Policy
Version	V3.0

Revision history				
Version	Date	Amendments made	Requested by (job title)	Made by (job title)
2	24/5/17	Change of name of Council Cabinet Member from Councillor Lawrence Williams to Councillor Jane Kelly	Equality & Diversity Manager	Equality & Diversity Manager
2	24/05/17	Delete Chief Executive from consultees and replace with Managing Director	Equality & Diversity Manager	Equality & Diversity Manager
2	24/05/17	Change of 'effective from date' from 01 April 2017 to 01 July 2017	Equality & Diversity Manager	Equality & Diversity Manager

3	27/06/17	Change effective date from 01 April 2017 to 01 July 2017	Equality & Diversity Manager	Equality & Diversity Manager

Consultees

The following individuals/groups were consulted during the development of this policy:

You should list here all consultees/consultee groups. If you undertook consultation with residents (or a sub-group of residents) through for example the ePanel, under 'Organisation' provide details of how many residents were consulted.

Name	Organisation	Date consulted
Sean Hawkins	Bournemouth Borough Council	25/05/2017
Councillor Jane Kelly	Bournemouth Borough Council Cabinet Member	27/06/2017
Councillor David Kelsey	Bournemouth Borough Council Member Champion	25/05/2017
Jane Portman	Managing Director	27/06/2017
Service Equality Champions	Bournemouth Borough Council	27/07/2017
Staff Network Groups	Bournemouth Borough Council	25/05/2017
Jonathan Waddington-Jones	DOTs Disability	25/05/2017
Nathalie Sherring	Dorset Race Equality Council	25/05/2017
David Higgins	Unison	25/05/2017
Andy Geeves	GMB	25/05/2017
Tanya Coulter	Bournemouth Borough Council – Service Director Legal and Democratic	25/05/2017
Adam Richens	Bournemouth Borough Council Section 151 Officer	25/05/2017

Equality Impact Needs Assessment This must be undertaken each time a policy is created or reviewed

Assessment date	19 June 2017
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Freedom of Information Act Exemption Most policies will be available for inspection by anyone that requests access. However, there may be some policies which due to their nature, have restricted access. The Freedom of Information Act provides a list of permissible exemptions for public access to information; these can be found on Biz. Advice and guidance on whether a policy should be exempt from publication can also be sought from the Information Governance Team

FOI Exempt?	NO
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