

APPENDIX A - EQUALITIES POLICY STATEMENT (Revised March 2012)

1 INTRODUCTION

This is South Derbyshire District Council's Equalities Policy.

The Policy has been written to clearly set out our commitment to advancing equalities and fairness and celebrating the diversity within South Derbyshire.

2 OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUALITIES

Our vision is to make '*South Derbyshire a better place to live, work and visit*'.

Supporting our vision is a number of '*values*' that lie at the core of everything we do and help us make a difference for people and our communities within South Derbyshire.

This Policy confirms our commitment as a public body to have 'due regard' to the need to:

- **Eliminate unlawful discrimination** – harassment, victimisation and other conducted prohibited by the Equalities Act
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a 'protected' characteristic and people who do not share it. For instance removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their 'protected' characteristics; to meet the needs of people with 'protected' characteristics and to encourage people with 'protected' characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low and
- **Foster good relations**, between people who share a 'protected' characteristic and people who do not share it. For instance, tackling prejudices and promoting understanding between people who share a 'protected' characteristic and others.

Therefore, as an employer and a provider of services, we are committed to advancing equality of opportunity and providing fair access and treatment in employment and when delivering services.

We want all of our '*communities*', whether they are large, small, rural or urban to be strong places of togetherness and belonging. In particular, we will support people and employees in realising their full potential, to exercise genuine choice and control over their own lives, and participate fully in the community life of South Derbyshire.

We recognise the importance of our workforce and how they help us achieve our corporate aims and deliver customer-focused and efficient services.

To support our commitment, we will

- Comply with and embrace Equalities legislation and good practice, including carrying out our public duties to promote equality and help create a fairer society
- Regularly monitor, assess and consult on the impact of our policies, services and functions to ensure that they are fair and reflect people's different needs and opinions
- Use our influence in the community, with our Partners and businesses to generate opportunities for the people of South Derbyshire
- Celebrate diversity in South Derbyshire and support initiatives for greater equality and awareness
- Embed equality and consider diversity into our everyday business.

To achieve our commitment, we will expect all of our Councillors, managers, employees and contractors to:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect at all times, including customers, employees and other people with any connection with the Council
- Provide the best possible standards of service to all our customers
- Consider the needs and opinions of every community
- Have a clear set of objectives for equality and diversity issues
- Keep under review the way services are delivered and accessed by members of the community.

Specific employment commitments

We are committed to be a fair and supportive employer, enabling our employees to deliver high quality services to everyone.

In order to achieve this we will:

- Carry out recruitment and selection procedures fairly and effectively
- Manage and train our employees to implement this Policy effectively
- Treat all employees fairly, with dignity and respect at all times
- Not tolerate and take necessary action to deal with unacceptable behaviour at work
- Provide employees of all parts of the Council with opportunities to influence the development of our policies and practice
- Provide fair and transparent pay, reward and employment conditions;
- Promote a work-life balance and opportunities to work flexibly
- Make reasonable adjustments in line with our legal duties such as providing additional equipment or support to employees
- Consult with employees and their representatives in the continued development of good employment practice
- Monitor the make up of our workforce with the aim to employ a workforce that reflects the population of South Derbyshire.

3 SCOPE OF OUR COMMITMENTS

We will work to deliver our commitments by tackling inequality arising out of:

- Age
- All forms of disability set out in the Act
- Gender re-assignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race – including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality.
- Religion or belief (including non-belief)
- Sex or gender
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Other forms of disadvantage, such as rural deprivation and isolation
- Any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

4 RESPONSIBILITIES

This Policy applies to every Councillor, employee, and any other person or organisation employed or engaged by South Derbyshire District Council to work or deliver services on its behalf, including those employed through contractual, commissioning or grant related arrangements.

5 IMPLEMENTATION

We will ensure that everyone associated with the Council is made aware of this Policy and understands their responsibilities for implementing it.

The Policy will be implemented in the:

- Corporate Plan
- Sustainable Community Strategy
- Workforce Development Strategy
- Communication Strategy
- Consultation Strategy.

We will develop our approach to equalities and diversity by identifying good practice in employment, service delivery and how we engage with local people.

We will provide support to people so that they know how to implement the Policy in relation to their role, including providing training and development opportunities.

We will regularly monitor and report our progress in relation to published equality and diversity objectives through the Council's Equalities and Fairness Annual Report, which is published in June each year.

We will use this information to monitor and assess:

- Our compliance with the Public Sector Duty under the Equalities Act 2010
- Satisfaction with our services
- Make-up of our workforce
- Effectiveness and impact of our employment practices
- Involvement in decision making
- Residents' experiences of living in South Derbyshire's communities.

6 OUR PROMISE ON MONITORING

When we ask members of the public or employees for information in order to undertake equality monitoring, we will ensure that the monitoring is appropriate and complies with five main rules.

- Only ask for information we need.
- Provide an explanation of why we need that information and how it will be used.
- Take care to ensure that individuals cannot be identified from the data collected, especially when the monitoring results are made public or shared.
- Comply with the law in relation to confidentiality, data protection and freedom of information.
- Securely destroy any data that is collected either in paper or electronic form.

7 REVIEW

The Policy will be reviewed, along with the progress in delivering our commitments on an annual basis in June.