

Equalities Policy Statement

October 2018

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Version Control

Version	Description of version	Effective Date
1.0	Equalities Policy Statement	17/10/18

Approvals

Approved by	Date
Corporate Equalities and Safeguarding Group	17/10/18

Associated Documentation

Description of Documentation
Corporate Equalities and Safeguarding Annual Report 2017/18
Corporate Equalities and Safeguarding Action Plan 2018/19

1.0 Introduction

This is South Derbyshire District Council's Equalities Policy, which sets out our commitment to advancing equalities and fairness as an employer, service provider and community leader as well as celebrating and promoting the diversity within South Derbyshire.

2.0 Our Commitment to Equalities

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

Supporting our vision are 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 and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity for all;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic (see 4.0) and those who do not.

Therefore, as an employer and a provider of services, we are committed to advancing equality of opportunity and providing fair access and treatment in all of our activities.

We want all of our communities to be places where people feel they belong. 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 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 Councillors, employees and contractors to:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect at all times;
- Provide the best possible standards of service to all our service users;
- Consider the needs and opinions of every community;
- Have a clear set of objectives for equality issues;
- Keep under review the way services are delivered and accessed by members of the community.

3.0 Specific employment commitments

We are committed to being 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 in a fair and transparent manner
- Provide training for 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 with opportunities to influence the development of our policies and practice
- Provide fair and transparent pay, reward and employment conditions
- Take a consistent and fair approach to the training and development of employees
- Promote work-life balance and provide opportunities to work flexibly
- Make reasonable adjustments, such as providing equipment or support to employees with health conditions
- 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.

4.0 Scope of our commitments

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

- Age
- Disability
- 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.

These are referred to as “protected characteristics”.

5.0 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.

6.0 Implementation

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

The Policy will be implemented through the:

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

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

We will provide support to employees 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 Safeguarding Annual Report.

We will use this information to monitor and assess:

- Compliance with the Public Sector Duty under the Equalities Act 2010
- Satisfaction with our services
- Composition of our workforce
- Effectiveness and impact of our employment practices
- Involvement in decision making
- Residents' experiences of living in South Derbyshire.

7.0 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.
- When we no longer need data (either in paper or electronic formats), destroy it securely.

8.0 Review

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