



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Issuing Service:	Tbd
Committee Approval:	Tbd
Date Approved:	Tbd

1. Equality Statement

North Northamptonshire is committed to treating people fairly. We want to instil a culture of inclusion in our workplace, where everyone feels valued and that they have the equality of opportunity to achieve their best. We believe that a diverse workforce can deliver a better service to our customers and local community.

2. Purpose

This policy outlines the legal obligations of the Equality Act (2010) to enable our employees to make fair and informed decisions in daily tasks. This will give us the opportunity to reduce inequalities within our communities and comply with our legal obligations.

It is important that our employees understand how they can contribute towards creating an inclusive workplace, and their equality responsibilities. This applies to the decisions they make, and the interactions they have with fellow colleagues and others they may come into contact with, in the course of their duties.

3. Scope

The rights and obligations set out in this policy apply to all employees, irrespective of work pattern, and contract type. They also apply to secondees, agency staff, contractors and others employed under a contract of service.

4. Legal Responsibilities

All employees must ensure that they do not directly or indirectly discriminate against someone because of their protected characteristic. This applies to all aspects of decision making, including: recruitment, training, promotion opportunities and service delivery. The protected characteristics as defined within the Equality Act (2010) are:

- Sex
- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity

Further details on the types of discrimination will be set out within the Council's complementary employment policies, for example, the Dignity at Work Policy.

As a public sector organisation, we have additional obligations that we must comply with. We must ensure that people are treated fairly and in accordance with the General Equality Duties of the Equality Act (2010). All employees have a duty to give due regard to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation or anything else prohibited by the act.
- To advance the equality of opportunity between those that have a protected characteristic and those that do not share it.
- To foster good relations between those that have a protected characteristic and those that do not share it.

All employees are required to attend equality training to enhance their awareness of equality legislation and their responsibilities. Equality information and policies are also available on the intranet for all staff to refer to.

5. Our Commitment

We are committed to reducing inequalities within our communities and creating a fair and inclusive working environment for our employees. Our equality objectives have been formulated to help us meet our obligations under the Equality Act (2010). Each service area will be responsible for developing a Service Level Equality Action Plan to help the Council achieve the four equality objectives:

- One) To lead by example within the community.
- Two) Ensure that our services are accessible and inclusive.
- Three) Create a fair and inclusive culture in the workplace.
- Four) Reduce inequality in our community

We have published an Equality Scheme which explains in further detail what actions we intend to take to achieve our equality objectives.

6. Decision Making

To ensure that Officers are making informed decisions, all proposals requiring approval or consultation must have an Equality Screening Assessment completed.

An Equality Screening Assessment provides evidence that the impact of the proposal on equality groups has been considered. This is also a requirement of the Equality Act (2010). If the outcome of this initial assessment shows that there is, or there is a possibility of a negative impact on one or more equality groups, a full Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) must be completed.

All EqIA forms should have the appropriate approval at a senior level and be completed in consultation with those responsible for overseeing corporate equality compliance.

7. Procurement and Commissioning

All procurement and commissioning exercises must evidence that equalities has been considered during the decision making process, and therefore:

- The lead officer must complete an Equality Screening Assessment.
- Those providing services on behalf of North Northamptonshire Council must provide evidence that they have given due regard to the General Equality Duties of the Equality Act (2010).

8. Supporting Policies

- To support our commitment to creating a fair and inclusive workplace we will develop a Dignity at Work Policy (or one of a different name that fulfils the same objective). This policy will explain the different types of discrimination that are covered by the Equality Act (2010). The policy details behaviours that are unacceptable within the workplace, and how they should be dealt with.
- A policy will support our employees on how to deal with reasonable adjustment requests from a member of the public. It also details how we should be recording disability information of our customers to ensure they receive consistency in their services across the council.
- Our Employee Code of Conduct will detail how we expect employees to conduct themselves at work. All employees are asked to read this policy when they are offered a position at the council.