Local Government for Langton Green, Speldhurst, Ashurst and Old Groombridge

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY / DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to provide equal opportunities to all employees, irrespective of their gender, race, ethnic origin, disability, age, nationality, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, marital status or social class. The council opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

All employees whether full-time, part time, fixed contract, agency workers or temporary, will be treated fairly and equally. Selection for employment, promotion, training, remuneration or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

Principles

Discrimination, direct or indirect, based on a person's gender, race, ethnic origin, disability, age, nationality, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, marital status, social class or other irrelevant distinction is unacceptable.

In addition to being unacceptable, such forms of discrimination represent a waste of human resources and a denial of the opportunity for individual fulfilment.

The Council seeks to involve all sections of staff in the continuing development and implementation of this policy.

Members of the Public

The council recognises that many members of the public use its services or visit its premises. The council takes seriously its responsibility to these people and affirms that they will be treated with the same respect and rights. Likewise, it is not acceptable for staff to be treated unfairly by service users or visitors.

Organisational Responsibilities

The council is responsible for overseeing the implementation, monitoring and review of the Equality and Diversity Policy.

The Clerk's responsibilities include communicating the policy and its implementation to staff, monitoring its implementation and advising Members on recruitment and other matters concerning equal treatment.

The co-operation of all employees is essential for the success of this policy. However, ultimate responsibility for achieving the policy's objectives and for ensuring compliance with relevant statues and codes of practice lies with the council.

Intentional breaches of the provisions or spirit of this policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary action in accordance with the council's disciplinary policy.

Legal Framework

The policy will be implemented within the framework of the relevant legislation, the main statute being the Equality Act 2010. This Act bought together 116 separate pieces of legislation to provide a framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equal opportunities for all. The main pieces of legislation which have merged under the new act are:

- Equality Pay Act 1970
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Sex Discrimination Act 1995
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Gender Reassignment Regulations 1999
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Equality Act (Sexual Orientations) Regulations 2007