



HESSLE TOWN COUNCIL

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES - EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Hessle Town Council is committed to meeting the varied needs and circumstances of its employees and Hessle residents, ensuring that services are equally appropriate to all, without discrimination. The Council's goal is to support the development of a community that is free from unlawful discrimination.

In support of this commitment, the Council has adopted a policy for employment and service delivery.

Employment

No Hessle Town Council employee or job applicant will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, gender (including transgender), marital status, sexual orientation, disability, religion or beliefs, race, nationality or ethnic or national origins, or will be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be justified.

Hessle Town Council recognises the value of a workforce in which people from differing backgrounds are encouraged to introduce fresh ideas and perceptions, enabling it to deliver high quality services to all members of the community.

To underpin its commitment to equality in employment, the Council will:

- Ensure that all recruitment, selection and training procedures operate in a fair and non-discriminatory way, so that the best person to do the job is appointed.
- Consult regularly with the National Association of Local Councils (ERNLLCA) and other agencies to identify gaps in its employment policies and take action to remedy them.
- Consider sympathetically any request for flexible working, job-share, travel arrangements, child and dependant care leave and will guarantee interviews for disabled people who meet the essential criteria for a job.

Service delivery

Hessle Town Council will ensure that its services, including those carried out in partnership with other agencies, are available equally to all, regardless of age, gender (including transgender), marital status, sexual orientation, disability, religion or beliefs, race, nationality or ethnic or national origins, making sure that no one is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be justified.

Council documents will be available in large print on request.

Hessle Town Council has made adjustments to the Town Hall to ensure that it is accessible to all.

The Council aims to ensure that employees, contractors and any partners have the information they need to provide equality of opportunity and ensure that this is reflected in their conduct.

The Council will require, where legally possible, any partners and contractors to have equal opportunities policies, and will seek sufficient information and evidence of compliance with equalities legislation.

Legislation

In developing this Policy, Hessle Town Council has taken into account all current appropriate legislation including:

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Asylum and Immigration Act 1996
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2002
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (2006)
- Civil Partnership Act 2004
- Sex Discrimination (Burden of Proof) Regulations 2001
- Equality Act 2006

Discrimination and harassment

Hessle Town Council will take action to ensure that all forms of discrimination are excluded from its policies and practices.

Legally, it is not necessary to prove that someone intended to discriminate: it is sufficient only to show that the outcome of an action was less favourable treatment. Less favourable treatment can take many forms - words, actions or failure to provide opportunities or services and can be perpetuated by individuals, groups or institutions.

Hessle Town Council recognises that harassment and discrimination of employees and service users are unacceptable and is working towards building an organisational culture that reinforces this belief. The Council is committed to addressing any harassment of employees or service users.

Responsibilities

The accountabilities and responsibilities in relation to this policy can be summarised as follows:

Town Councillors will take the lead in promoting equality, ensuring equalities issues are given due consideration within their area of responsibility, in decision-making and in monitoring services.

The Town Clerk will actively support and assist the equalities work by:-

- Monitoring the performance of the Town Council's services, agreeing the necessary action and maintaining a commitment to the Council's equalities work.
- Ensuring that employees are adequately trained to meet the requirements of this policy.

All employees have responsibility for implementing the policy as an integral and core element of the work of the Town Council and will seek training opportunities and personal development, as appropriate.

Annual Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Finance and Personnel Committee and updated as necessary.