



# Equality & Diversity Policy

## Ilfracombe Town Council

### 1. Policy

The Town Council is committed to promoting equality and diversity, providing an inclusive and supportive environment for all. In the implementation of this policy the Town Council will:

- Ensure that people are treated solely on the basis of their abilities and potential, regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religious or political belief or affiliation, trade union membership, age, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic background, or any other inappropriate distinction
- Promote diversity and equality for all staff and value the contributions made by individuals and groups of people from diverse cultural, ethnic, socio-economic and distinctive backgrounds
- Promote and sustain an inclusive and supportive work environment which affirms the equal and fair treatment of individuals in fulfilling their potential and does not afford unfair privilege to any individual or group
- Treat part time staff fairly and equally
- Challenge inequality and less favourable treatment wherever practicable
- Promote greater participation of under-represented groups of staff by encouraging positive action to address inequality
- Promote an environment free of harassment and bullying in relation to all staff.

### 2. Responsibility for Implementation

The Town Council has ultimate responsibility for the effective implementation of the policy. The Town Clerk will oversee the implementation of this policy.

The Staffing Committee is responsible for monitoring the implementation of all equal opportunities policies and procedures and reporting on the progress made in achieving equalities targets to the Full Council. The Town Clerk has overall delegated responsibility for co-ordinating the day to day operation of the policies and procedures.

### 3. Responsibility and Liability

All members of staff remain personally responsible for ensuring they act within the law. The Town Clerk is responsible for ensuring that all staff perform their duties in a lawful manner and that proper training and support is provided accordingly. In certain circumstances the Town Council could be vicariously liable for actions carried out by staff purportedly in the Town Council's name. Any member of staff may be personally liable if, whilst on Council business and despite guidance and training from the Council, they behave illegally.

#### **4. Related Policies**

All Council policies and procedures will be reviewed to ensure that they comply with the equality and Diversity policy.

#### **5. Recruitment**

Recruitment and selection procedures will be reviewed and updated in the light of emerging equalities legislation and guidance offered to all relevant staff on drafting job descriptions and person specifications. Annual data monitoring will be undertaken in relation to recruitment, selection, appraisal, promotion, pay, grading, disciplinary cases, grievances and harassment in respect of gender, age, disability and race/ethnicity. Areas of identified inequality will be addressed.

Positive action measures may be put in place to support under-represented groups in specific areas, such as women seeking management posts and the employment of ethnic minorities and disabled staff.

#### **6. Equality Aims**

- To show leadership and commitment in promoting equality and challenge and eliminate discrimination
- To ensure that equalities are mainstreamed and at the core of all employment matters
- To ensure fairness and consistency in working policies and practices
- To promote and implement equality of opportunity.

To meet these aims, Ilfracombe Town Council will:

- Commit to the workplace being free of harassment, bullying and discrimination where everyone is treated with respect and allowed to develop at their full potential
- Have policies and procedures that comply with legislation and ensure existing policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and amended so they conform to any new legislation
- Ensure that equality and diversity is integrated throughout the culture of the Council
- Have service plans that integrate actions from our workforce plan profile
- Recognise and value the differences, skills, abilities and experience people bring to the workplace
- Provide all employees with the training and development to enable us to achieve our equality objectives
- Ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment than another on any grounds or conditions, which cannot be justified
- Monitor an act upon adverse trends or inequalities in employment
- Ensure that equal pay is fully implemented
- Develop and monitor employment practices and tackle employment inequalities
- Ensure all job adverts make reference to our commitment to equality of opportunity and encourage applications from all sections of the community
- Record, analyse and monitor statistics relating to the workforce, recruitment and selection, internal promotion, disciplinary procedures and grievances, work-life balance applications, leavers, training and development
- Continue to develop and promote work/life balance initiatives to enable employees to achieve a better balance between home and work responsibilities.

## **7. Management and Employee Responsibilities**

The success of this policy relies on the understanding and support of all employees and it is important that everyone takes account of the policy when managing employees or dealing with each other.

Managers are responsible for ensuring compliance with the policy and have particular responsibility to comply, when:

- Recruiting new employees
- Making decisions about work-related opportunities, promotion and pay issues
- Managing performance, appraisals and the allocation of training
- Managing pregnant employees and those with dependent care responsibilities
- Managing change, including reorganisations and restructures
- Managing requests for flexible working and career breaks
- Managing attendance and/or absence issues
- Making selections for redundancy

Employees are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy and must not:

- Unfairly discriminate or harass against colleagues, other workers or job applicants
- Encourage their colleagues to treat others unfairly or to practice discrimination
- Victimise people who have made allegations or complaints of discrimination or who have been witnesses in cases of discrimination

## **8. Compliance with the Policy**

We all have a responsibility not to be offensive to colleagues or to participate in or condone harassment or unlawful discrimination of any kind. Complaints will be treated seriously and fully investigated.

If following an investigation there is evidence of discrimination, harassment or other breaches of this policy, then formal disciplinary proceedings will be instigated and this could result in dismissal from the Council.

Policy reviewed: 14/2/22

Adopted: 12/8/19

Next review: 14/2/24