

Deal Town Council Equality and Diversity Policy

Equality is about creating a fairer society where everyone can participate and has the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

Diversity literally means difference and recognises individual and group differences, treating people as individuals and placing a positive value on diversity in the community and the workforce.

1. Statement of intent - Deal Town Council recognises that many people in our society experience discrimination or lack of opportunity for reasons which are not fair. These include: race, religion, creed, colour, national and ethnic origin, political beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability (including mental illness), HIV status, marital status, responsibility for dependants, appearance, geographical area, social class, income level or criminal record.

The Equality Act 2010 protects against discrimination on account of 9 protected characteristics as follows:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex (gender)
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity.

Deal Town Council recognises that it is unlawful to treat another employee, contractor or colleague differently compared to others because of any of the above protected characteristics.

Deal Town Council will challenge discrimination and lack of opportunity and will help other organisations and individuals to do the same.

Deal Town Council aims to create a culture that respects and values each other's differences and sees these differences as an asset to our work as they improve our ability to meet the needs of the organisations and people we serve.

All Members, employees and volunteers are expected to declare their support for the objectives of this Equality and Diversity policy.

2. What is discrimination? Deal Town Council believes that discrimination can take one or more of the forms set out below.

Direct discrimination is treating one person less favourably than another in the same or similar circumstances or segregating them from others solely because they are, for example, a lesbian, a gay man or because they have a disability or illness. Refusing to employ someone who has the required skills because they are deaf or because they are pregnant would constitute such discrimination.

Indirect discrimination occurs where there is a requirement or condition which applies equally to everyone but which, in practice, has an adverse impact on a particular group and cannot be justified. For example an unnecessary physical or age requirement can discriminate against women or disabled people. The setting of language tests, where language skills or fluency are not really needed for a job, is another example.

Abuse and/or harassment – Discrimination also covers actions which amount to abuse and/or harassment of people or groups of people because for example they are a member of a national, racial or ethnic minority group, a woman, a lesbian, a gay man or have a disability or illness.

Victimisation - occurs when a person is treated less favourably or is discriminated against because she/he has pursued or intends to pursue their rights in respect of alleged discrimination.

Institutional racism (Macpherson Report, 1999) -The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen in the processes or attitudes and behaviour, which amount to discrimination, to unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantages minority ethnic people.

Racist incident (Macpherson Report, 1999) - Any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person. If the victim doesn't want to complain, another person may do so.

Discrimination in any of the forms stated above is unacceptable, regardless of whether there was any intention to discriminate or not.

3. Training - Decisions about learning and development opportunities will ensure Members and staff will have access to opportunities to enable them to develop in line with Deal Town Council priorities.

4. Service provision - All Deal Town Council services are covered by this policy and will be reviewed when necessary.

Deal Town Council will promote equality and diversity in its work with other agencies, contractors or individuals.

5. Recruitment and selection - Deal Town Council believes that no person or group should be treated less favourably in employment because of the reasons given in the Statement of intent.

Staff appointments will be monitored to ensure no discrimination is occurring at the point of selection.

6. Miscellaneous

Office accommodation - Deal Town Council will make every effort to ensure that premises used in relation to its work are accessible and inviting for all members of the community.

Promotion of policy - Copies of this policy will be freely available to Members, staff and volunteers and any other interested parties and will also be placed on the Deal Town Council website.

Travel - Deal Town Council recognises that not everyone has access to personal transport or is able to use it and will plan its services and activities with this in mind.

7. Implementation and monitoring - Monitoring of the Equality and Diversity policy and its implementation is the responsibility of Deal Town Council.

The policy will be reviewed annually. 26.2.18