



Buckingham Town Council
Equal Opportunities

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Prepared by: Town Clerk
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LEGAL POSITION

It is unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the following grounds:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Under the Equality Act 2010 these are known as “protected characteristics”.

Buckingham Town Council is committed to valuing the diversity of the community it serves and promoting equality of opportunity.

We will work to ensure fair and equal access to our services by all citizens and to provide services in a manner which is sensitive to the needs of the individual, whatever their background.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide equal opportunities to all employees, irrespective of their characteristics (unless there are genuine occupational qualifications or objectively justified reasons for a different approach to be taken). We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination whether it be direct or indirect discrimination, victimization or harassment on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010.

Scope

All employees whether full-time, part-time, fixed term contract, agency workers or temporary staff, 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 the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximize the efficiency of the council.

Our Commitment

Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated. This is further defined in the Bullying and Harassment policy adopted by the Town Council.

The commitment to equal opportunities in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense as it seeks to utilise the talents available from the local community, representing society as a whole.

The Town Council recognises that all employees have the right to be a member of a trade union, and the Council will not discriminate against employees based on their trade union status.

Breaches of our equal opportunities policy will be regarded as serious misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings. Employees are entitled to complain about discrimination or harassment or victimisation through the council's Grievance procedure. This is further defined in the Equality 2011 policy agreed by the Town Council.

This policy is fully supported by all Members of the council and adopts the model contract as devised by the employee professional body in the local government sector (the Society of Local Council Clerks).

The policy will be monitored and reviewed annually by the Resources Committee. Other Personnel policies will be reviewed against the values stated in this main Equal Opportunities policy to ensure that the council strives to remain an Equal Opportunities employer.

Uses of Policy – Staff Handbook, Induction of staff and Members, decisions relating to Recruitment and Selection, Training and Development, Promotion, Remuneration, Retirement, cross-referenced to the Town Council's Community Engagement Strategy, Grievance, Disciplinary and Bullying & Harassment Policies.

Council Services

The Council will actively seek the views and feedback from all communities, including from residents with the protected characteristics. The Council will consider the impact of service and policy changes on each of the protected groups. The Council will seek to proactively address inequality where this is identified. This will include reviewing each event to identify any changes that should be made, and carrying out an equalities impact assessment for the budget each year, along for any major service or policy changes.