

Harlow District Council

Equality Policy on Inclusion and Diversity

Updated: 08 March 2018

Equality Act 2010

- 1) Harlow Council [the Council] is committed to encouraging equality and diversity throughout its core business. Both in the services the Council provides to the community and in its role as an employer.
- 2) The Council is committed to ensuring that no person or group of persons living, working or visiting the district will be directly or indirectly discriminated against because they belong to a particular group with protected characteristics.
- 3) The Council believes that tackling inequality will provide a strong foundation for cohesive and confident communities.
- 4) Some people may suffer from inequality due to certain characteristics. The Equality Act 2010 recognises the protected characteristics as being:
 - Race this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality.
 - Sexual orientation
 - Gender
 - Gender reassignment
 - Disability
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Marriage and civil partnerships (but only for the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination)

- 5) The Council will also ensure that no person or group suffers direct or indirect discrimination due to factors relating to caring duties for dependents or unrelated criminal activities.
- 6) The Council's aim is for its workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and its customers, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.
- 7) The Council also has a legal duty to work in a way that is compliant with human rights legislation.
- 8) The Council recognises that discrimination can take many forms and is committed to a zero tolerance of harassment and discrimination.

Public Sector Equality Duty

- 9) The Council has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty [PSED] introduced on the 5 April 2011, which requires the Council, in the exercise of its public functions to have due regard to:
 - a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010,
 - b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not, and

- c) Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 10) While there is no legal duty to carry out Equality Impact Assessments since the introduction of the PSED, the Council will evidence how 'due regard' was taken of this duty when making decisions that may have an impact of people or groups of people with protected characteristics.