

Equality & Diversity

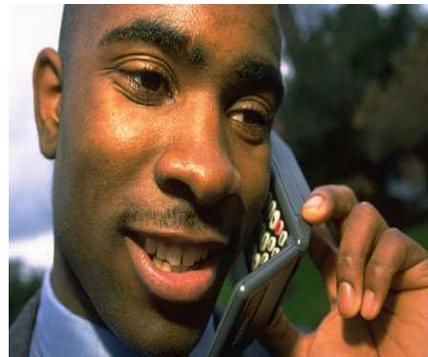
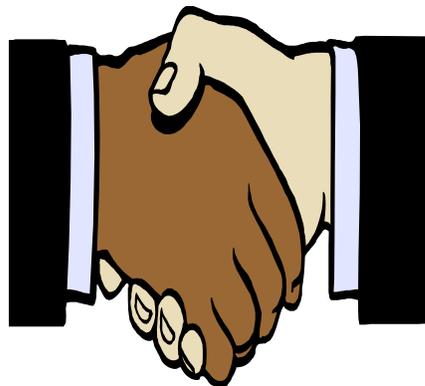
Mid Devon District Council is committed to promoting equality and diversity in everything it does:

“ An equal society protects and promotes equal, real freedom and opportunity to live in the way people value and would choose, so that everyone can flourish.

An equal society recognises people’s different needs, situations and goals, and removes the barriers that limit what people can do and be.”

**Equality Framework for Local Government
September 2009**

REVISED JANUARY 2018



What does the Equal Opportunities Policy Mean?

It is about treating people with respect and ensuring that everyone (employees, residents, councillors and external organisations we work with) have equal opportunity to access our services, to jobs and working for the Council.

The Equality & Diversity Policy will ensure that people are not discriminated against the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010.

The Policy is available on the council's [website](#).

Legal Responsibilities

The Council has important legal responsibilities under a number of anti-discrimination and equal opportunity legislation. It must ensure that those requirements of those Acts are adhered to.

The Council aims to reach the standards of the Equality Framework for Local Government. The Standard recognises the importance of fair and equal treatment in local government services and employment. It helps Councils to mainstream the protected characteristics into council policy and practice at all levels.

In practical terms what does this mean for the way we deliver our services?

Examples include:

- Ensuring all buildings and amenities (eg play areas) are physically accessible wherever possible
- Ensuring information is accessible – translations, larger print versions or sign language may be required
- Offering home visits
- Ensuring organisations we work with are committed to equality and diversity issues
- Ensuring diversity (protected characteristics) questions are included in all customer surveys. Monitoring will help to ensure the Council's services are provided fairly.

The Council will create a climate of trust and respect

- Individual differences will be respected and valued
- Ability to balance needs of family with needs of service
- Discriminatory behaviour will be challenged
- Bullying, harassment and victimisation will not be tolerated
- Making clear the action an employee may take if she/he feels unfairly treated

- Ensuring recruitment, promotion and assessment is based purely on the basis of individual's skills, abilities and experience
- An understanding of equality as part of the recruitment, induction, personal development (appraisal) and exit process
- Provide training and support to ensure our responsibilities are understood
- Include questions in the staff survey to monitor whether staff feel they are treated fairly.

What does it mean for employees?

- We all have a responsibility to ensure that we deliver services in a fair way to ensure everyone has the same equality of opportunity
- If employee's see unfair discrimination occurring they have a duty to report it through appropriate channels (eg managers, Human Resources, unions)
- Understanding the action the Council may take against an employee through the disciplinary procedures if he/she contravenes any aspect of the Single Equal Scheme.

We all have a responsibility to ensure that the climate we work in, our relationships with colleagues, members of the public and councillors is one of respect and trust. It is not just up to management to ensure this happens. Management can provide the support mechanisms, but we all have to work to make it happen.

If you do need to talk to someone

Employees should contact:

- **Human Resources** will give you advice and support. Any discussions with Human Resources staff will be in complete confidence.
- **Employee Counselling and Welfare Service**
 - Free to employees
 - Confidential
 - Listening
 - Explore ways of dealing with situations that you may be finding difficult to deal with

First point of contact: 0800 3687325

- **Unions** – if you are a member of a union they can also offer you advice and support
- **Residents** should contact the Service Lead for the area in question.
 - Stephen Walford – Chief Executive – 01884 234298
 - Jenny Clifford – Head of Planning – 01884 234201
 - Claire Fry – Group Manager for Housing Services – 01884 234920

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