

Equality and Diversity in Employment



Customer Business Culture

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Contents	Page
1. Introduction	1
2. Recruitment	1
3. Promotion and Training	2
4. Terms and Conditions of Service and Facilities	2
5. Monitoring.....	2
6. Review of Policy.....	2
7. Grievance.....	2
8. Discipline	3
Appendix and Document information	3

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Equality and Diversity in Employment

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At Colchester Borough Council, we have a corporate approach to equality and diversity that reinforces the importance of providing equal opportunities to potential and existing employees. Our aim is to employ committed and motivated people who will help us to deliver excellent customer services and improve the reputation of the Council as an employer of choice.
- 1.2 Our diversity policies clearly state that we will not discriminate against the people we employ, or those people seeking employment with us, on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or marital/civil partnership status. These are known as 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act.
- 1.3 This document sets out our policy for diversity within employment in more detail and must be strictly adhered to by all who are responsible for the recruitment, management of and day-to-day interaction with potential and existing employees.

2. Recruitment

- 2.1 In recruitment it is unlawful to discriminate by:
 - (a) refusing to employ a person because of their gender, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, religion/beliefs, disabilities and/or age
 - (b) employ a person but on less favourable terms and conditions
 - (c) advertising in a discriminating fashion
 - (d) failing to promote, transfer or train because of a person's age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or marital/civil partnership status.
- 2.2. All vacancies must be advertised internally and externally at the same time, unless otherwise agreed with the appropriate Trade Union. Advertisements which are placed externally should be aimed at, and accessible to, as many diverse communities as is practicably possible. All vacancies will be advertised on the Council's website and in the local Jobcentre Plus.
- 2.3. Every applicant for employment with us will be considered on the basis of their suitability for the position and ability to fulfil the requirements of the job. An applicant's age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or marital/civil partnership status will not affect the decision of the recruitment panel.
- 2.4. The Council will liaise closely with the appropriate organisations on matters concerning applications from disabled people. We will consider reasonable adjustments and modifications to enable suitable applicants to carry out the duties of the post. Disability as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act is "a person with a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities".

Equality and Diversity in Employment

- 2.5. Councillors, Directors and all other Officers responsible for the appointment of staff will be trained in the avoidance of discrimination. Records of all interviews will be kept by the Human Resources Service Centre for a period of at least three months.

3. Promotion and Training

- 3.1. Promotion will be based on ability and potential and all employees who apply for alternative (including higher graded) posts within the Council will be considered equally, objectively and without prejudice.
- 3.2. Officers who are responsible for appraising other employees will be trained in the avoidance of discriminatory and biased assessment.
- 3.3. The Council encourages all staff to undertake further development opportunities relevant to their appointment. Opportunities to attend training courses will be provided to all employees on an equal basis in accordance with the individual development needs that have been identified and agreed with the employee's manager.
- 3.4. In the event of an employee becoming disabled either through injury or illness, the Council will make every effort to continue to employ that individual, either in the same or an equally suitable position. Arrangements for retraining the employee will be made where necessary.

4. Terms and Conditions of Service and Facilities

- 4.1. The Council will not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or marital/civil partnership status in the provision of general staff facilities or benefits.

5. Monitoring

- 5.1. The Council's People and Performance team will be responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of our equality and diversity policy in relation to employment, with overall responsibility for implementation and supervision being with the Head of Corporate and Financial Management.
- 5.2. All aspects of Human Resources policies and procedures shall be kept under review to ensure that they comply with our ethos of equal opportunities.

6. Review of Policy

- 6.1. This policy will be brought to the attention of every employee and will be reviewed at regular intervals following consultations with appropriate and recognised employee representatives.

7. Grievance

- 7.1. Employees who believe they have not been treated fairly within the scope of this policy should raise the matter through the Council's formal grievance procedure.

Equality and Diversity in Employment

8. Discipline

- 8.1 All employees of the Council are required to comply with this Equality and Diversity in Employment Policy and failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Appendix and Document information

Appendix

The following policies and forms should also be read alongside this document:

Policies	Forms
Terms and Conditions of Employment	
Grievance procedures	

The policies and forms are shown on COLIN:

- [the A-Z](#) – this link will take you to the "all in one place" page which has a short summary of the HR subject, what you need to do first, useful documents and links, and related items.
- [the Staff Handbook](#).

Document information

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Consultation :	
Approved By :	Jessica Douglas, Strategic People and Performance Manager
EQIA :	Yes - web link is shown here
Review Frequency :	Every three years or if change occurs

For more information or advice about this policy please contact the HR Service Centre on 01206 282112 or email hrservicecentre@colchester.gov.uk.