

## **STRATFORD-ON-AVON DISTRICT COUNCIL** **EQUALITY POLICY**

The following Equality Policy was adopted by Stratford-on-Avon District Council on 25 April 2005, and will be reviewed no later than April 2008.

### **Equality statement:**

**Stratford District Council will provide equality of access through good practices, and actively promote fair treatment and opportunity, regardless of a person's age, gender, disability, religion, ethnicity, sexuality or income**

The Council will achieve this by attaining the following objectives:

1. Providing equality of access to the Council's services.
2. Continuously improving the Council's services and practices in line with experience and views of minority groups.
3. Providing fair employment and equal pay, while ensuring all managers manage their teams in a way in which will create a working environment where differences in individuals are valued and respected.
4. Enacting the Council's community governance role by combating discrimination within the District.

This statement sets out the guidelines by which this Authority seeks to eliminate discrimination both in the workplace and within the whole community. The Council's definitions of inequality, institutional prejudice and prejudiced action are derived from the report in the Stephen Lawrence inquiry. It believes these provide a useful basis for the consideration of all inequalities. The Council therefore adopts the following definitions for the purposes of this policy:

#### ***Inequality:***

In general terms consists of conduct or words or practices which disadvantage or advantage people because of their culture, ethnic origin, gender, disability, age, religion, sexuality or income.

#### ***Institutional prejudice:***

The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their culture, ethnic origin, gender, disability, age, religion, sexuality or income. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and stereotyping which disadvantages people.

#### ***Prejudiced action:***

Any action (or inaction) which is perceived to arise from prejudice by the victim or any other person.

## **Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of every Councillor and member of staff to develop the Council's services in order that they are provided in fair and equitable manner.

The following groups have specific responsibilities:

Councillors:	<p>The Members' Code of Conduct adopted by the Council places a <b>positive duty</b> on all Councillors to promote equality by not discriminating against others.</p> <p>Councillors are essential to the successful implementation of equalities which they can achieve by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Providing leadership and support</li><li>• Ensuring resources are available</li><li>• Engaging with the local community</li><li>• Scrutinising equality of the Council's services and action; and delivery of this Equalities policy</li></ul>
Staff and trades unions:	<p>All staff and Unions working in the Council will play a vital role in the practical achievement of this policy. To achieve this they will need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work towards speedy implementation of the Policy</li><li>• Organise and participate in equalities training</li><li>• Engage with the local community</li></ul> <p>Most importantly <b>all staff</b> have a major role to play in equalities work by challenging discriminatory behaviour and procedures.</p>
Management Team and Heads of Service:	<p>Preventing prejudice and stereotyping is crucial. Managers must manage their teams in a way which will create a working environment where differences in individuals are valued and respected.</p>
Other organisations including Parish Councils:	<p>Other organisations including Parish Councils and Local Partnership Teams can contribute to equalities by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Working with the Council's equality planning process</li><li>• Participating in Scrutiny</li><li>• Extending knowledge of the Equality Standard within the community</li></ul>

### **Legal Background**

We will ensure that, as an Authority, we will meet the requirements as identified by current legislation, guidance and codes of practice. That legislation to include, Disability Discrimination Act (1995), Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000), Human Rights Act (2000), Sex Discrimination Act (1975) , Gender Recognition Act (2004)

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