

Penzance Town Council

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Penzance Town Council is a provider of services and employer in Penzance and understands the inequality which some individuals and groups in our society experience.
- 1.2 We are committed to creating and developing a positive approach to equal opportunities in the delivery of all our services and employment.
- 1.3 The aim of this policy is to ensure that no member of the public, service user, job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on any grounds or conditions which cannot be justified. This means both direct or indirect discrimination.
- 1.4 The grounds specified by law include: race, nationality, colour, ethnic origin, gender, marital status and disability. Penzance Town Council also recognises that discrimination can occur on the grounds of age, religious beliefs, sexuality, appearance, caring responsibility, poverty and lifestyle and aims to eliminate discrimination on all these grounds.
- 1.5 We aim to create an environment which is free of discrimination. This policy takes into account the requirements and intent of all Equal Opportunities legislation and Codes of Practice.

2. WHAT WE MEAN BY DISCRIMINATION

- 2.1 There are two types of discrimination. These are termed direct and indirect discrimination.

Direct discrimination means treating the victim less favourably than others on the grounds of their gender, race, disability etc.

Indirect discrimination occurs where the discriminator applies a condition or requirement which is more difficult or impossible for a particular individual to comply with than the general population on the grounds of gender, race, disability etc. Indirect discrimination may not be intended by the discriminator.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 Penzance Town Council is committed to providing equality of opportunity. All employees have a part to play in achieving this and Penzance Town Council will ensure that individuals are aware of their personal responsibility to follow and support the Equal Opportunities Policy.
- 3.2 No employee or prospective employee should receive unfair or unlawful treatment due to race, nationality, colour, ethnic origin, gender, marital status, disability, age, religious beliefs, sexuality, appearance, caring responsibility, poverty or lifestyle.
- 3.3 Penzance Town Council will seek to identify and act upon any unfair or unlawful discrimination which denies individual opportunity on any of the criteria mentioned

above. Employees and applicants have the right to complain about unfair discrimination through the appropriate procedures.

- 3.4 Active steps will be taken to ensure that this policy is implemented and regularly reviewed.
- 3.5 Penzance Town Council will:
- make the best possible use of the skills, talents and abilities of all employees
 - ensure as far as possible that our services reflect the diverse needs of our customers
 - regularly monitor how effective our policy and practices are and change them if necessary
- 3.6 The implications of this policy will be considered when developing and implementing training strategies and plans and relevant training opportunities will be made available to all employees.
- 3.7 Whilst the emphasis in this policy is on the fair and equal treatment of employees, the principle of creating an environment which eliminates discrimination applies equally to the treatment of customers, suppliers and other people who have contact with the Town Council.

4. ADHERENCE TO POLICY

- 4.1 It is the responsibility of managers/supervisors to:
- ensure that within their areas of responsibility the standards established within this policy are followed
 - ensure that recruitment and promotion procedures select the highest quality candidates and that they are carried out according to objective, job-related criteria
 - ensure that all job advertisements make reference to this policy and encourage applications from under-represented groups to reflect the composition of the local communities
 - provide flexible working arrangements for employees and review provisions for any special needs of minority groups as required
 - review the effectiveness of the policy and communicate their views to the Town Clerk/Penzance Town Council
- 4.2 All employees must:
- co-operate with any measures introduced to ensure equal opportunity;
 - report any suspected discriminatory acts or practices
 - not persuade or attempt to persuade others to practice unlawful discrimination
 - not victimise anyone as a result of them having reported or provided evidence of discrimination
 - not harass, abuse or intimidate others on account of their race, nationality, colour, ethnic origin, gender, marital status, disability etc
 - not lobby job applicants in an attempt to discourage them from applying for or taking up a post
- 4.3 Any breach of the Equal Opportunity Policy will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure. Serious offences, such as harassment, will be treated as gross misconduct.

5. COMPLAINTS

- 5.1 Any employee who has a concern regarding the application of this policy should normally make use of Penzance Town Council's grievance procedure.
- 5.2 Employees wishing to raise a grievance alleging unlawful discrimination during an internal selection procedure should discuss this with the recruiting line manager in the first instance. If required, an investigation will be conducted by a representative of the Town Council who has not been previously involved with the selection procedure. The employee will receive written notification of the outcome.
- 5.3 Any prospective employee wishing to raise a complaint should do so, in writing, to the Town Clerk within 15 days, at the latest, of the alleged incident. An investigation will then be conducted by a representative of the Town Council who has not been previously involved with the selection procedure. The individual will receive written notification of the outcome.

6. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 6.1 Penzance Town Council will follow changes to legislation and Codes of Practice regarding Equal Opportunities and amend its policy accordingly.
- 6.2 Penzance Town Council will monitor its performance in implementing this policy and review and revise its practices as required.