

## Employment Practices and Policy Statement

The Council aims to have a modern and diverse workforce that attracts talent and is also representative of the community we serve. All staff should experience fairness and equity of treatment in the workplace and be treated with dignity and respect. The Council will actively work to remove discriminatory barriers that can prevent people from obtaining employment opportunities whilst ensuring that the best candidates are appointed.

The Council will not tolerate processes, attitudes and behaviour that amount to discrimination including harassment, victimization and bullying through prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness, stereotyping and unconscious bias. The Council's approach and expectations of managers and employees is summarised below.

The Council will train and develop its workforce effectively, raising awareness of diverse community needs and ensuring that the work environment is free from discrimination, harassment and bullying. All employees will be expected to promote these values at all times. Employees found in breach of this policy may face disciplinary action.

The Council will consult with staff to identify and implement improvements that can be made to working practices.

The Council will undertake annual equality monitoring of employment practices relating to:

- Staff in post
- Applications for employment,
- Applications for training and recipients of training
- Applications for promotion
- Staff who benefit or suffer detriment as a result of performance assessment procedures
- Staff involved in capability, grievance and disciplinary procedures
- Staff who cease employment

The Council also undertakes regular Staff Opinion Surveys. Key findings from the 2016 survey focusing on an equality perspective are summarised below:

- My Line Manager is Approachable 89%
- My Line Manager is Supportive 89%
- Believe CBC does not Discriminate on any Grounds 80%
- Strong sense of team work and cooperation with their team 77%
- Satisfaction with opportunities to work flexibly outside of standard working hours 72%
- Achieve Correct Balance between Work and Home Life 67%
- Would speak highly about Central Bedfordshire Council as an employer 66%
- Confident CBC would deal effectively with bullying / harassment 65%

Many indicators retained a strong score or registered an improvement. The findings are broadly consistent when considered by protected characteristic.

## **Policy Statement - Summary of Key Actions**

Central Bedfordshire Council is committed to the elimination of discrimination in both service delivery and employment because it is essential that services are provided fairly to all sections of our community and because we value the contribution our employees make to achieve this.

### **Equality of opportunity is about:**

Treating people with dignity and respect and accepting people as individuals.

Understanding and addressing the needs of individuals or groups relating to age, carers, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, Pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and other factors such as socio economic disadvantage.

Engaging with service users, local communities, staff, stakeholders and contractors to identify and implement improvements.

Tackling barriers which restrict access to services and employment opportunities

Knowing who uses (or should use) different services.

Making sure our recruitment, selection, training and promotion processes support us to appoint the best people for the job and to develop and maintain the highest standards of skills and expertise

### **The Council will act to:**

eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity

ensure that all service users are treated with dignity and respect and that we recognise and value people's differences

understand that some groups of people experience more disadvantage than others and target services to meet their particular needs

encourage participation of under represented groups in public life

continually improve services to make sure they are accessible and provided fairly to everyone in our community

create and maintain a workplace where all employees are treated with dignity and respect

develop and train our members and employees to help them recognise equality issues

### **Directors and Managers will**

Actively promote awareness of equality and compliance with legislation

Undertake training on equality and diversity issues regularly (every three years)

Ensure fairness and equity of treatment in service delivery and employment practices

Identify equality implications of council functions, strategies, policies and decisions

Ensure the service delivery and working environment is free of discrimination, including harassment, victimisation and bullying

Ensure that all people who help to deliver our services are aware of this policy statement

Provide clear information about where, and to whom, customers should complain

Listen to complaints and comments and act upon them

Make clear to staff that discrimination is unacceptable and that it will be treated as a serious matter and a disciplinary offence

Deal promptly and thoroughly with complaints of discrimination recording all incidents

Support customers or staff who experience discrimination

Take appropriate action against any customer or member of staff who harasses or acts in a discriminatory way towards other customers or members of staff

### **Employees will**

Act in line with this policy statement

Ensure that they treat other colleagues and customers fairly and with respect

Undertake training on equality and diversity issues regularly (every three years)

Not use discriminatory behaviour or practices in the workplace or when providing services

Record any incident of harassment, bullying or victimisation

Support customers or staff who experience discrimination

Provide clear information about where, and to whom, customers should complain

Listen to complaints and comments and act upon them