



North Walsham Town Council

Equal Opportunities Policy

1 Statement of Policy

- 1.1 The North Walsham Town Council seeks to employ a workforce which reflects the diverse community at large because it values the individual contribution of people, irrespective of gender, sex orientation, age, marital status, disability, race, colour, religion, ethnic or national origin and creed.
- 1.2 The North Walsham Town Council will treat all of its employees with dignity and respect and will provide a working environment free from unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.
- 1.3 The North Walsham Town Council expects each individual employee to promote the spirit of its Equal Opportunities Policy. Each employee has a duty, both morally and legally, not to discriminate against other employees or clients of the Council.
- 1.4 The North Walsham Town Council will not tolerate acts which breach this policy and all instances of such behaviour, will be taken seriously, be fully investigated and may be subject to the Town Council's disciplinary procedures.
- 1.5 The North Walsham Town Council will provide services to its clients and members of the community without any form of unlawful discrimination.
- 1.6 The North Walsham Town Council will make every effort, if an existing employee becomes disabled, to retain him or her within the workforce, wherever reasonable and practical. The Council will urge the owners of the premises to install facilities for people with disabilities wherever practical to do so and whenever they invest capital in new or refurbished premises, to make every practical effort to provide for the needs of staff, customers and clients with disabilities or make alternative arrangements, which ensure no visitor shall be disadvantaged.
- 1.7 The North Walsham Town Council is an equal opportunities employer, it recognises that, in the area of equal opportunities, effective policy and practice are a means of maximising the use of resources in the council and employees' best interests.
- 1.8 This policy consolidates the North Walsham Town Council's approach to its statutory requirements set down in the Race Relations Act (1976), Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, Sex Discrimination Act (1975), Equal Pay Acts, Disability Discrimination Act 1995 etc., and all other relevant employment legislation.
- 1.9 The North Walsham Town Council recognises that a number of groups can be disadvantaged because of factors such as race, colour, ethnic or national origins, sex, marital status or disability. The aim of this policy is to ensure that no job applicant or employee received less favourable treatment on these statutory grounds, or other grounds irrelevant to the requirements of the post.
- 1.10 It is the North Walsham Town Council's objective that this policy remains fully effective.

2 Recruitment, Promotion & Retention

- 2.1 No job applicant or employee is to be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.
- 2.2 Selection criteria are, and will continue to be scrutinised to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.
- 2.3 The Town Council will endeavour through its current training programme to ensure that employees making selection decisions do not discriminate.
- 2.4 Applicants shall be informed that North Walsham Town Council is an equal opportunities employer.
- 2.5 The Town Council will advertise vacancies internally and externally at the same time. This will ensure that advertisements are aimed at as wide a group of suitably qualified and experienced people as possible. Advertising by word of mouth exclusively is not acceptable.
- 2.6 All employees will be given equal opportunities and where appropriate special training to progress within the Town Council's service.
- 2.7 In the event of a redundancy situation the Town Council will not discriminate unfavourably in its selection for redundancy on the grounds outlined in paragraph 1.9.

3 Training

- 3.1 It is the policy of the Town Council that it will not discriminate in the provision of training.
- 3.2 The Town Council will make use, where appropriate, of the provisions of paragraphs 35 and 38 of the Race Relations Act 1976 and section 48 paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975. These paragraphs enable the employer in certain circumstances to provide specific training facilities to a particular racial group or to women or men only.

4 Disability

- 4.1 The Town Council recognises the special needs of disabled persons and the aim of this policy is to ensure that disabled people secure their full share of employment as is ordinarily available throughout its service.
- 4.2 The Town Council will adopt procedures which will give disabled people full and fair consideration for all vacancies. It will retain newly disabled employees wherever possible. Training will be provided wherever possible. It will give positive consideration to appropriate schemes of assistance provided by Government agencies, which could result in the engagement of a disabled person or in the retention of the service of a newly disabled employee.
- 4.3 Disabled employees will be given full and fair opportunities for career development and, where appropriate, special training to progress within the Town Council's service.
- 4.4 The Town Council will recognise the special needs of registered disabled persons faced with redundancy.

5 Conditions of Service and Facilities

- 5.1 The Town Council will not discriminate in the interpretation of National and Local Conditions of Service.
- 5.2 The Town Council will not discriminate in the provision of facilities to staff.

6 Grievance and Discipline

- 6.1 Any complaints of discrimination against employees will be pursued throughout the appropriate grievance procedure.
- 6.2 The Town Council's disciplinary procedure may be used in the case of a breach of policy.

7 Communication, Review and Monitoring of Policy

- 7.1 The Clerk will have responsibility for bringing the policy to the attention of all the Town Council staff and for ensuring that the policy remains effective.
- 7.2 The Town Council will from time to time undertake a broad assessment of its workforce derived from information available to it. All information will be collated and presented in the form of impersonal statistics.
- 7.3 The policy will be the subject of review from time to time which will include a detailed study of a selected area of the Town Council's activities.