

Comprehensive equality policy

Equality of Opportunity Policy

Please note this is currently under review. For more information, contact: equalities@wiltshire.gov.uk

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Statutory duties

Wiltshire Council is fully committed to meeting the legal requirements as set out within the (Equality Act 2010) Public Sector Equality Duty by demonstrating good practice and an innovative approach.

This means we will give due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination;
- advance equality of opportunity; and
- foster good relations.

We will work towards ending discrimination, including stopping victimisation and harassment on the grounds of someone's

- Age
- Sex (formally known as gender)
- Sexual Orientation
- Disability
- Race
- Ethnic Background
- Colour
- Religion or Belief (and those with none)
- Gender Reassignment Status
- Marital or Civil Partnership Status
- Pregnancy and Maternity Status
- Caring responsibilities for children or someone who is disabled or elderly

Wiltshire Council, NHS Wiltshire, Wiltshire Police and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service have been working in partnership to make it easier for people to feedback their views on the organisations' work to promote equality. This has enabled us to take joint action and provide consistent services which are fair for all. This joint engagement work informed a partner action plan which is being taken forward by the Public Service Board's Equality and Diversity Lead Officers group and forms our initial equality objectives in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty. This plan will be

reviewed during the summer/autumn 2013 and will take into account any changes as part of the Public Sector Equality Duty Review, being conducted by the Government (due to finish June 2013)

- [Partnership action plan Partnership action plan 41kb](#)
- [Single equality scheme partner engagement Single equality scheme partner engagement 340kb](#)
- [Single equality scheme partner engagement summary of all results including those relevant to the partners Single equality scheme partner engagement 90kb](#) - summary of results for all organisations
- [Single equality scheme partner engagement summary of results for Wiltshire Council Single equality scheme partner engagement 73kb](#) - summary of results for Wiltshire Council

More information about the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) can be found on the [Equality and Human Rights](#) webpages and the [Government Equalities](#) webpages.

Working with partners

The council recognises that partnership working between the council and the community and other partner organisations is essential for good service delivery. It is important therefore that all of our partners share our values and aims, particularly with respect to equality and inclusion. We are committed to building on existing work and recognise the need for all stakeholders to be included and involved in contributing to improve equality practice at all levels

We undertake to:

- make sure that all contracts with partner agencies and organisations across the county explicitly include the requirement (including the ability to monitor and report on the duty) to promote equality of opportunity, tackle unlawful discrimination and celebrate diversity and good relations between different groups of people in its provision of services and its employment of staff;
- develop a shared vision and set of equality objectives for Wiltshire, co-designed and delivered with partners
- be proactive in developing relationships and support with organisations who meet the needs and interests of those who are in a minority group in Wiltshire;
- work in partnership with other authorities and councils providing services in Wiltshire, who are also engaging and consulting with community groups and service users, in order to identify effective and efficient ways of joint working; and
- fund the Equalities service with [Develop](#) which provides a single source of equality information and support to the voluntary sector in Wiltshire (in partnership with Wiltshire Police and NHS Wiltshire).

Understanding the needs of Wiltshire communities

Wiltshire Council recognises that it is necessary to be well informed about local communities and their needs in order to provide appropriate services. We are committed to:

- embedding the process and implementation of Equality Analysis into all areas of policy-making, planning and delivery;
- making sure that demographic data is made easily accessible to inform service planning including building on the Equality Profile for Wiltshire which can be found on the [Intelligence Network](#) webpages;
- collecting data about service users in order that this information can be used to make sure that groups in the community are accessing the services to which they are entitled and to take appropriate measures to rectify the situation if they are not;
- engaging and consulting with the communities of Wiltshire about their experiences and perceptions of the council in order that this information can be used to respond to local community needs and make services more accessible and relevant to users and potential users;
- regularly requesting feedback from service users and using the information to improve service delivery; and
- appropriate and effective communication with all staff, service users and communities in order to identify needs.

Provision of services

We undertake to:

- provide relevant, appropriate and accessible services which meet the needs of the diverse population of Wiltshire;
- work towards making sure that public council buildings are fully accessible to all;
- make sure that the process of Equality Analysis is used to assess, monitor and review the impact of services and policies, to eliminate any unlawful or unjustifiable discrimination;
- make sure that systems are in place for us to consult and involve community and stakeholder groups within Wiltshire, in all new initiatives;
- fully integrate and promote equality of opportunity and celebration of diversity in service planning processes including the monitoring and review of all plans from an individual to a corporate level;
- make sure that planning, monitoring and reviewing, at all levels, addresses the elimination of discrimination, promotion of equality and celebration of diversity;
- make sure that all our staff are fully aware of and act upon the importance of implementing this policy in order to meet the needs and interests of all those who have the right to access Council services; and
- make sure that access to our services is enabled through communication which is accessible to all individuals.

Employment practice

Wiltshire Council undertakes to:

- make sure that all existing and future HR policies actively promote equality of opportunity for all existing and potential staff and that they do not unlawfully or unjustifiably discriminate against any employees of Wiltshire Council;

- actively work to develop a workforce which reflects the diversity of people who live and work in Wiltshire – more information on [our staff profile and positive action initiatives](#) ;
- work towards providing a fully accessible workplace for all staff and contractors;
- make sure that all staff are committed to the promotion of equality of opportunities and to the development of a workforce which reflects and celebrates diversity;
- fully integrate equality and inclusion into corporate staff training programmes and training undertaken, delivered or commissioned by individual departments; and
- make sure that supervision, appraisal, learning and development plans for individuals take full account of Wiltshire Council's commitment to the equality of opportunity and a celebration of diversity.

Resourcing

The council is committed to improving its performance against the Equality Framework for Local Government and recognises that consultation, training, data-collection, monitoring and action to redress potential or actual adverse impact will all have resource implications.

Accountability and scrutiny

To effectively implement this policy:

- the council will support the Shaping the Future group in leading on promoting our equalities agenda and cascading information across the organisation;
- the council will support the Equality and Diversity Lead Officers group in ensuring effective partnership working to meet the needs of our diverse communities in Wiltshire;
- we will implement a process of self-audit and peer scrutiny in relation to equality and inclusion;
- we will make sure that all reports which are presented to the Cabinet declare any adverse or positive impact in relation to equality and inclusion;
- we will make sure that there is accountability for the implementation and integration of equality through the Council's planning and performance management framework from supervision, appraisals and service planning through to the Business Plan;
- we will make sure that all managers are aware of their responsibility for implementing equality in service provision and employment, for making sure that employees are adequately informed, trained and supported to make sure that their duties are carried out in accordance with the equality principles and standards that underpin the Council's commitment to equality and inclusion; and
- we will make sure that all employees and councillors are aware of their responsibility for making sure that they assist in implementing this policy. They are also responsible for taking advantage of opportunities to increase their awareness of the barriers to equality in service provision and employment, for working towards the elimination of these barriers and for

performing their duties in accordance with the council's commitment to equality and inclusion.

Contact Details

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Last updated: 5 September 2013