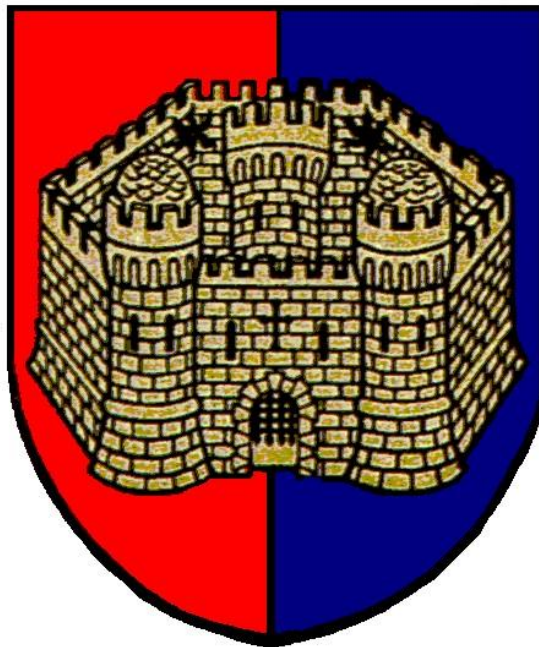


Devizes Town Council

Equal Opportunities Policy



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Equal Opportunities policy

1. Vision Statement:

- Devizes Town Council is committed to promoting equal opportunities in Devizes.
- The Council values diversity and encourages fairness and justice.
- The Council wants equal chances for everyone in Devizes to work, learn and live free from discrimination and victimisation.
- The Council will combat discrimination throughout the organisation and will use its position of influence in the town, wherever possible, to help overcome discriminatory barriers.

2. In seeking to achieve this vision, the Council will strive to:

- Encourage equality of opportunity for all people and actively promote good relations.
- Eliminate any conditions, procedures and individual behaviour that can lead to discrimination even where there was no intent to discriminate, with particular regard to:

Race; Gender; Disability; Sexuality; Age; Religion and Belief plus Employment issues.

Whilst recognising that individuals may experience disadvantage on more than one level.

- Offer services fairly to all people, ensuring that anyone in contact with the organisation is treated with respect, and within those services try to make provision for those groups within the community whose needs and expectations are less well met.
- Comply with all legislation dealing with discrimination and the promotion of equality, following the codes of practice issued to support this legislation.
- Ensure all employment policies procedures, guidelines and circulars reflect and reinforce the Councils' commitment to equality.
- Ensure mechanisms are in place for responding to complaints of discrimination and harassment from employees and the public.
- Encourage disadvantaged groups and individuals to participate in the community.
- Make this policy known to all Councillors, employees, job applicants, local citizens and partner organisations.
- Operate procurement practices and partnership arrangements that ensure others commissioned to provide services for the Council to have similar policies that cover equal opportunities.
- Periodically review the Equal Opportunities policy.

3. Supporting Guidelines

- The Equal Opportunities Policy is reinforced by guidelines specifically relating to accessibility and the Council's role as an employer.

4. Responsibility

- Overall responsibility for the implementation of the policy lies with Council.

Equal Opportunities - Accessibility Guidelines

Devizes Town Council's mission is to work together with all sectors of the community to make Devizes an even better place to live, work and visit. In pursuing this aim, it will strive for a just society which gives everyone equality.

1. Vision Statement:

- The Council's services must be accessible to and appropriate for all the members of the community who might wish or need to use them.
- The Council will take all reasonable steps to ensure its employment arrangements are accessible.

2. In seeking to achieve this vision, the Council will strive to:

- Facilitate physical access into the buildings it controls. New Council buildings will comply with approved document M as will all new, additional features to improve access into existing buildings
- Monitor and evaluate accessibility in order to make improvements. In particular using consultation to understand the needs and expectations of service users, potential users and the workforce.
- Use communication methods that are appropriate and sensitive.
- Publicise the variety of ways in which services can be accessed.
- Improve the accessibility of employment arrangements or physical features of the workplace to meet the needs of staff and applicants with disabilities or other needs.
- Work with partner organisations and agencies delivering services on behalf of the Council, to enhance access to services across the town.

Employment Training and Organisational Development

Guidelines

1. Statement of Principles

Devizes Town Council is committed to ensuring that all its employment policies, procedures, guidelines and circulars will reflect and reinforce the Councils' commitment to equality.

The Council will through its policies and training seek to create a:

- Prejudice-free and supportive working environment.
- Workforce which reflects the diversity of the local population, ensuring that people from all sections of Devize local communities have equality of opportunity to obtain employment in all areas and levels of the Council.

2. Recruitment and Selection

The Council will strive to:

Ensure that all employees are recruited and promoted on the basis of ability and other objective relevant criteria.

Work towards ensuring that through recruitment that its workforce better represents the community it serves.

Be committed to equality of opportunity for all people and protect against all forms of discrimination, with a particular regard to:

Gender; Race; Disability; Religious and Belief; Age; Sexuality

Ensure that it communicates job opportunities to all sections of the community. We will scrutinise the recruitment process to ensure that we do not discriminate or discourage applications from any section of the community.

3. Training and Organisational Development

The Council will:

Seek to ensure that all employees are developed by the provision of appropriate and accessible learning opportunities in line with organisational needs.

Provide training that complies with the Councils Equalities Policies.

Equal Opportunities policy - Supporting statements

- **Race Equality:** Devizes Town Council is committed to promoting a cohesive society and eliminating unlawful racial discrimination. The Authority will promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial, national and ethnic groups.
- **Disability Equality:** Devizes Town Council will not treat a person less favourably directly or indirectly on the basis of his/her disability and will promote equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.
- **Gender Equality:** Devizes Town Council will not treat a person less favourably directly or indirectly due to gender or marital status.

- **Equality of Employment:**Devizes Town Council will through its policies and training seek to create:
 - A prejudice free and supportive working environment;
 - A workforce which reflects the diversity of the local population ensuring that people from all sections of Devizes's local community have equality of opportunity to obtain employment in all areas and levels of the Council.

- **Accessibility:**The Council's services must be accessible and appropriate for all members of the community who might wish or need to use them. The Council will ensure its employment arrangements are accessible.

- **Sexual Orientation:**Devizes Town Council will not discriminate directly or indirectly on the grounds of sexual orientation.

- **Gender Reassignment:**Devizes Town Council will not discriminate directly or indirectly on the grounds of gender reassignment.

- **Religion and Belief:**Devizes Town Council will not discriminate directly or indirectly on the grounds of religion or belief.
(This is defined as any religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief. It excludes philosophical or political beliefs unless those beliefs are similar to a religious belief, e.g. the belief has a profound affect on the person's way of life.)

- **Age:**A person's age will not lead to unfair discrimination