

Nailsea Town Council

Equality Policy

1. General

Nailsea Town Council is committed to encouraging equality and diversity among our councillors and workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination. The aim is for each councillor and employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

The Council, in providing services and/or facilities, is also committed to preventing unlawful discrimination of, by and against members of the public.

All representatives of the Council should understand they, as well as the Council as a legal body, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their Town Council activities, against employees, other councillors and the public.

2. The purpose of the policy is to:

- provide equality, fairness and respect for all our councillors and employees.
- not unlawfully discriminate because of protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation.
- oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination including pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities.

3. The Council will:

- encourage equality and diversity in the workplace.
- create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all are recognised and valued.
- train councillors and staff about their rights and responsibilities under the equality policy.
- take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination in the course of the Council's activities.

Such acts committed by employees will be dealt with as misconduct under the Council's Grievance and/or Disciplinary procedures, and any appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

The Council will support the aggrieved party if such acts are committed by or against councillors.

The Council will support councillors or staff if such acts are committed against them by a member of the public.

- make decisions concerning staff based on merit (apart from any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
- review Council policies and employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and this policy to take account of changes in the law.