

Boston Borough Council

Equal Opportunities Policy



Version History

Version	Author	Reason For Issue
September 2005	People Services	Policy revised
August 2007	People Services	Policy statement reviewed
April 2016	People Services	Policy revision to reflect 2016/17- 2019/20 equality objectives

Document Distribution

Name	Role
Unions	For consideration of amendments for policy
CMT	For approval of amendments to policy
SMG	For implementation.
All staff	Revised scheme/ staff benefit.

Document References

Reference	Document Title
1	The Equality Act 2010 brought together all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales. Section 78 of the Act sets out the public sector equality duty, which replaced the former duties relating to race, disability and gender equality. The public sector equality duty came into force on 5 April 2011.
2	Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017 (SI 2017/172)

Policy Statement

Boston Borough Council is committed to equal opportunities in employment and service delivery. Our policies and procedures aim to promote an environment that is free from all forms of unlawful discrimination and values diversity. We seek to treat people equally and with dignity and respect. Improving life chances for all is at the heart of what we do.

We will take every reasonable step to ensure that no person will be treated less favourably whether they are an employee, job seeker, contractor, supplier or member of the public. We will take every reasonable step to ensure that no person will be disadvantaged by requirements or conditions that cannot be shown to be justifiable (indirect discrimination) because of; are perceived to be; or, are associated to any of the following:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Gender reassignment;
- Pregnancy and Maternity;
- Marriage and Civil Partnership;
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin);
- Religion/belief or non belief;
- Sex;
- Sexual orientation;
- Trade Union membership or non-membership.

Our Equal Opportunities Policy aims to help all those who work for us to develop their full potential.

We will be proactive in ensuring that this policy is easily accessible by all employees, job seekers and organisations that we work with. We will ensure that equal opportunity is embedded in all of our policies.

Anti-semitism

Britain has become one of the first countries to use this definition of anti-Semitism, as agreed at a conference of the [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance](#) (IHRA).

The IHRA's definition reads: "Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities."

The council adopts this definition.

Equality Objectives 2016-2019

In setting our equality objectives the priority was to ensure that they were specific, measurable and meaningful. Delivery of the objectives is a long term project for the Equality Board and will be monitored at their quarterly meetings.

Our Equality Objectives for 2016/17-2019/20 are:

- **Equality Data** – ensure our data better provides us with the right insight, evidence and intelligence to make informed decisions that impact on our communities
- **To place equality at the heart of our decision making process** – when we make decisions that are likely to affect people we will assess the impact on equalities
- **Encourage good community relations and active citizenship** – encourage wider participation in the democratic process by working with schools and colleges and encourage more members of the public to attend and participate in public committees and meetings
- **Ensure value for money** – ensure equality objectives are embedded through the procurement & contract life cycle process

Implementing our Equal Opportunity Policy

Recruitment, Selection and Promotion

Our aim is to encourage the highest quality candidates from all backgrounds to apply and ensure fair and equal treatment throughout the recruitment process.

We will strive to ensure that:

- through recruitment and promotion our workforce better represents the community we serve;
- all posts including secondment and promotion opportunities will be advertised widely to provide equality of opportunity;
- all job applicants who meet the minimum employee specification and inform us that they have a disability are guaranteed an interview in line with the Disability Confident accreditation;
- where appropriate we will ask candidates whether reasonable adjustments are required prior to the interview and take this into consideration when arranging interviews;
- all applicants will be asked to complete an equal opportunities monitoring form (this will not be made available to the selection panel but will be used to ensure the policy is being implemented);

- all employees will be recruited and promoted on the basis of ability applying measurable job related criteria consistently to all candidates and recording selection criteria and reasons for selection or rejection of candidates; and
- all staff involved in recruitment and selection have had appropriate training.

Learning and Development

By providing fair access to learning, development and career progression we will encourage all employees to reach their full potential.

We will strive to ensure that:

- all employees are encouraged to invest in their development and consider opportunities to develop their competencies and skills;
- learning opportunities for employees are appropriate and accessible in line with organisation and job related needs;
- wherever possible learning and development programmes are planned to include the needs of part time and operational staff; and
- learning and development programmes are designed to suit a variety of learning styles to encourage participation.

Pay, Terms and Conditions

Policies covering pay, benefits, grades and terms and conditions are devised and implemented with regard to equal opportunity.

We will strive to ensure that:

- terms and conditions are non-discriminatory and applied fairly and consistently to all staff;
- flexible working will be promoted wherever possible to try to balance individual staff circumstances with the needs of the organisation; and
- reasonable adjustments for those with a disability are considered in a fair and open manner.

Discipline and Grievance

We are working towards an environment that is inclusive and where no form of discrimination is tolerated.

We will strive to ensure that:

- discrimination, harassment or victimisation of employees or service users is treated as a disciplinary offence and dealt with under the dignity at work procedures;

- any complaints of discrimination, victimisation or harassment are dealt with promptly in a fair and transparent manner;
- support is provided to any employee who is the victim of harassment or bullying during the course of their employment; and
- disciplinary rules and standards are applied consistently to all employees.

Service Delivery

We want our services to be accessible to all, and will take into consideration the different needs of members of our community to achieve this.

We will strive to ensure that:

- front line staff are comfortable with dealing with people with different abilities and from different cultures;
- we pay due regard to our Public Sector Equality Duties by ensuring that any key decisions, policies and procedures are analysed to determine any equality impacts;
- our contracts and agreements give due regard to equality particularly in accordance with procurement procedures; and
- we work with partners to prevent and eliminate discrimination.

Monitoring and Evaluation

We will regularly monitor and review information to measure the effectiveness of this policy.

We will strive to ensure that:

- all policies and procedures that impact on employees and residents are analysed to determine any equality impacts;
- confidential records of employees and applicants are maintained in order to monitor equality of opportunity across the council; and
- data collected for the purpose of equality monitoring is analysed on an annual basis and published on the our website annually in line with legislation.

Roles and Responsibilities

Elected Members responsibilities

- Formulating and determining policies with regard for the positive impact of equality of opportunity.

- Participating in the Corporate Equality Board to drive and maintain improvements in equal opportunities.

Corporate Management Team responsibilities

- Developing strategic measures and policies to ensure equality across all employment issues within the Council.
- Instigating action to address areas of concern highlighted by trends or patterns in monitoring data.
- Encouraging continued regard for all equal opportunities issues at a strategic level within the Authority with reference to employment and service delivery.
- Encouraging businesses within the Borough or others that provide services to the Council to establish and develop positive and effective equal opportunities policies.
- Ensuring that contractors comply with this policy.
- Dealing with any individual, group or service of the Council which behaves in a way which undermines the spirit of this policy.
- Ensuring complaints are investigated in a fair and effective way.
- Ensuring that all services provided to the community have regard, as far as practicable, to the particular needs and circumstances of individuals or groups.
- Working with users in an appropriate way to continually review the quality of the services delivered across a diversity of needs.
- Working within current legislation to establish that contractors providing services to the Council have due regard to equal opportunity issues.

Manager and Supervisor responsibilities

- Complying with legislation and with this policy at a practical level through their actions in recruitment, training, development, discipline and general management of employees.
- Encouraging good practices by the people they manage and for dealing appropriately with breaches of this policy.

Employee responsibilities

- Acting within the laws relating to equal opportunities and other codes of conduct and policies adopted by the Council which govern acceptable behaviour.
- Complying, as a contractual duty, with this policy as a whole and in doing so, ensuring its application on a day to day basis.

People Services responsibilities

- Ensuring all employees, managers and Members receive equal opportunities training.

- Regularly reviewing procedures and policies in relation to equality and diversity.
- Providing advice to departments on Equal Opportunity matters, including best HR and management practices.
- Publish annually Workforce Equalities data, Gender Pay Gap reports and monitor Equal Pay.

Complaints

The Council is opposed to all forms of discrimination and will treat any breaches of this seriously, promptly and confidentially. Breaches of the Equal Opportunities policy will be investigated and may be regarded as gross misconduct under our Disciplinary Policy.

Employees, who believe that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation should, in the first instance, raise the matter with their line manager. If this is inappropriate they should contact People Services or their trade union representative, if they are a member of a trade union.

Members of the public who wish to raise a concern can do so through the Council's complaints procedure.

Significant breaches of the Equal Opportunities Policy can also be raised through the Whistleblowing Policy.