



Knutsford Town Council

Equal Opportunities Policy

April 2015

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INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide equal opportunities to all employees, irrespective of their characteristics (unless there are genuine occupational qualifications or objectively justified reasons for a different approach to be taken).
- 1.2 The Council opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination whether it be direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation or harassment on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010.
- 1.3 All employees whether full-time, part-time, fixed term contract, agency workers or temporary staff, will be treated fairly and equally.
- 1.4 Selection for employment, promotion, training, remuneration or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability.
- 1.5 All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the council

OUR COMMITMENT

- 2.1 Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- 2.2 The commitment to equal opportunities in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense as it seeks to utilise the talents available from the local community, representing Society as a whole.
- 2.3 Breaches of our equal opportunities policy will be regarded as serious misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings. Employees are entitled to complain about discrimination or harassment or victimisation through the Council's Grievance procedure.
- 2.4 The policy will be monitored and reviewed annually. Other Personnel policies will be reviewed against the values stated in this main Equal Opportunities policy to ensure that the Council strives to remain an Equal Opportunities employer.

REHABILITATION OF OFFENDERS

- 3.1 As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Knutsford Town Council complies fully with the Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly.
- 3.2 The Council undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

- 3.3 The Council can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that the Council is legally entitled to know about. Where a DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can legally be requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended) and where appropriate Police Act Regulations (as amended), the Council can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected.
- 3.4 The Council is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.
- 3.5 The Council has a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is made available to all DBS applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.
- 3.6 The Council actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. The Council select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.
- 3.7 An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to DBS after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position.
- 3.8 The Council ensures that all those in The Council who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. The Council also ensures that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- 3.9 At interview, or in a separate discussion, The Council ensures that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.
- 3.10 The Council makes every subject of a criminal record check submitted to DBS aware of the existence of the Code of Practice and makes a copy available on request.
- 3.11 The Council undertakes to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.