

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY STATEMENT AND ACTION PLAN

### 1 Our Policy Statement

1.1 The Council will strive to be an equal opportunities employer and conform to the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 ('the 2010 Act') which, in the main, came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2010. The 2010 Act replaces and brings together previous legislation (such as the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Equal Pay Act 1970).

**Commented [r1]:** Recognising the significance of the Equality Act 2010

1.2 The 2010 Act protects individuals from discrimination because of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- sex (gender)
- pregnancy and maternity (a protected characteristic separate to sex)
- race
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation.

**Commented [r2]:** These are the protected characteristics which protect people from discrimination. The Act explains ways in which people cannot now be discriminated against

In section 4 of the 2010 Act, the above are referred to as 'protected characteristics.' Further guidance as to their definitions is given in the attached NALC topic note.

1.2 The two main purposes of the Statute is to harmonise discrimination law and to strengthen the existing law to support progress on equality and in doing so will apply to the services that the Council provides, the people who access those services as well as the persons who the Council employs.

**Commented [r3]:** The Act applies equally to employees of the Council and people who access council services.

1.3 The Council will continue to take lawful positive action initiatives to achieve and maintain a workforce representative of the population it serves.

1.4 All employees will have a responsibility to apply this policy and its supporting action plans in carrying out their duties.

1.6 The discrimination must be neither direct nor indirect.

## **2 Action Plans**

- 2.1 The policy statement of itself will not give effect to equal opportunity in employment for the workforce and for the public and therefore it needs to be regularly reviewed to ensure that it is achieving its objectives..

**Commented [r4]:** Regular checks will be undertaken to ensure that the policy is meeting its objectives.

## **3 Adoption**

- 3.1 In adopting the policy statement the Council will endorse the NALC legal topic note which sets out in greater detail the definitions of the 'protected characteristics'; examples of how discrimination can occur and action that needs to be taken if this does happen.

- 3.2 The Council will also be mindful of its duty to the wider population

- 3.3 The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and no later than May 2017.

**Commented [r5]:** A review period must be incorporated into the Act

Mrs R.V. Tucker

Clerk to the Council

**Approved and Adopted: 6<sup>th</sup> April 2016**

**Date of Review: May 2017**