

# **Hythe Town Council**

## **Equal Opportunities Policy**

### **EQUALITY STATEMENT**

Hythe Town Council is strongly committed to the elimination of discrimination and the promotion of equality in employment and service delivery. The Town Council's equal opportunities policy is based on the principle that people are not discriminated against on the basis of race, religion, culture, ethnic origin, nationality, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability or marital status.

Hythe Town Council recognises the general duty placed upon it by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

The Council will continue within its functions and policies to have due regard to the requirement to eliminate discrimination, bullying, promote equal opportunities and racial equality between people of different racial groups.

The Town Council recognises that the above list is not exhaustive and that there are other forms of discrimination that should not be tolerated.

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

The policy aims to achieve the five core values, which embrace and provide a framework within which all members, employees can work:

<b>Equality</b>	recognition that everyone is of equal value and should be respected according to individual needs and abilities.
<b>Equity</b>	to be fair, reasonable and just in all the Council's activities.
<b>Empowerment</b>	helping individuals take on responsibility so that they can influence and participate in the decision making process.
<b>Accessibility</b>	equal access for all in employment and service delivery.
<b>Quality</b>	obtaining the highest standards in service delivery.

The aims of the equal opportunities policy are:

- Work towards the elimination of discrimination, either direct or indirect, and all forms of harassment:
- Ensure that individuals are treated equally with respect to their specific needs and that there is consistency in the Town Council's approach to working practices and conditions:
- Be a role model and influence others through good practice in service delivery and employment:
- Provide public information, as far as possible, in a way that best meets the needs of the person requesting it.
- Be accountable to the people of Hythe and encourage active participation of communities and groups in the development and application of the Town Council's policies and practices.
- Raise the level of equal opportunities awareness and understanding through facilitating training programmes for members and employees.

## **POLICY GUIDELINES**

There is no single way that equal opportunities can be achieved: progress will be through a diverse number of factors, which are outlined below. These factors are fundamental in the implementation and incorporation of the core values that embrace equal opportunities and its practice

- CONSULTATION
- PUBLICITY/COMMUNICATION
- COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
- TRAINING
- CONTRACTS
- TRADES UNIONS
- EMPLOYMENT MONITORING
- SERVICE DELIVERY AND MONITORING
- POLICY REVIEW
- RESOURCES

### **CODE OF PRACTICE: Creating a Working Environment**

It is the responsibility of the Town Council through members, employees and others acting on its behalf to work towards the implementation of its equal opportunities policy.

It is the individual responsibility of every employee, irrespective of their position in the organisation, to ensure this policy is applied in practice, both in employment and in providing services to the public. The Town Council is committed to the elimination of negative images and language in its informal and official communications, especially the use of stereotypical views and material.

An additional responsibility falls on members and employees who have specific recruitment and personnel management responsibilities.

The Town Council and its employees have a duty in accordance with the Equal Opportunities Policy to provide a workplace free of discrimination and harassment.

### **THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

The policy will be implemented within the framework of the relevant legislation, which includes:

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Sex Discrimination Acts 1975 & 1986 ( as amended)
- Gender Reassignment Regulations 1999
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997