



# Penrith Town Council

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## **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY: SERVICE DELIVERY**

Penrith Town Council is wholly committed to equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice in the provision of services. We aim to deliver the highest quality service to all sections of the community without discrimination. Our intention is to demonstrate excellence in equality and diversity issues across all areas of policy, practice and service delivery, and to influence others through the high standards that we set.

The Town Council recognises that it is the duty of all councillors and employees to take personal responsibility for fostering a harmonious and cohesive community by adhering to the principles of equal opportunity and maintaining good community relations in the provision of dedicated services to all people on equitable terms.

## **SCOPE**

This statement sets out how the Town Council intends to meet its commitments by working alongside our local communities, irrespective of their age, disability, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or transgender status (as identified within the Equality Act 2010 as 'protected characteristics').

This statement applies to all employees, volunteers, placements, contractors and elected members of Penrith Town Council. All aspects of this policy applies to everyone who has a role in representing the Town Council or carrying out the functions of their work or elected office.

## **CORE VALUES**

The approaches of the Penrith Town Council to equality of opportunity are underpinned by a set of core values which guides our interactions and service delivery. All elected and employed representatives of the Town Council will ensure that the service provided is:

- Accessible
- Inclusive

- Responsive
- Fair
- Respectful
- Empowering
- Supportive
- Diverse

## **THE TOWN COUNCIL WILL:**

- α. Ensure that all groups and individuals are treated equally, fairly and respectfully whilst challenging inequality, discrimination and less favorable treatment;
- β. Work towards the elimination of discrimination, direct, or indirect, and all forms of harassment;
- χ. Positively promote equality of opportunity in the development and design of services to ensure that they are sensitive to the requirements of the diverse population served;
- δ. Take action to identify groups within the community who have specific needs in relation to Council services;
- ε. Promote greater participation of under-represented groups by encouraging positive action to address inequality;
- φ. Encourage activities across our organisation that enhance equality and promote and celebrate diversity;
- γ. Provide accessible public information, as far as possible, in a way that best meets the needs of the whole Penrith community;
- η. Ensure that all employees and elected members understand equality in service provision by making sure that we are up to date with the knowledge and skills necessary to understand what equality and diversity means for our town;
- ι. Take an evidence-based approach to equality impact assessments designed to help the Penrith Town Council ensure that our policies, practices, services and decision-making processes are fair and do not present barriers to participation or disadvantage of any 'protected' groups from participation;
- φ. Ensure the provision of services for 'protected' groups will be monitored against justified performance indicators and included in reporting procedures;

- κ. Periodically review our policies and practices to ensure that we continue to comply with all measures of the legislative frameworks (outlined within 'The Law 'section at the end of this statement).
- λ. The Town Council will increase awareness of our use of language in all verbal and written communications in recognition that prejudice and discrimination can be formed and reinforced by the insensitive use of language.

## **POLICY AIMS**

**In relation to people identified as having 'protected characteristics', we will:**

### **AGE**

- Ensure that people of all ages are treated with respect and dignity;
- Ensure that people of working age are given equal access to our services;
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about younger and older people.

### **DISABILITY**

- Provide any reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled people have access to our services;
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about disabled people;
- Seek to continue to improve access to information by ensuring availability of loop systems, Braille facilities, alternative formatting and sign language interpretation.

### **MARRIAGE OR CIVIL PARTNERSHIP**

- Ensure that all people are treated with respect and dignity and that a positive image is promoted regardless of marriage or civil partnership;
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about the marriage or civil partnership of within our communities;
- Ensure that no individual is disadvantaged and that we take account of the needs of all people whatever their marriage or civil partnership status.

### **PREGNANCY OR MATERNITY**

- Ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity and that a positive image is promoted regardless of pregnancy or maternity status;
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about the pregnancy or maternity of members of our communities;
- Ensure that no individual is disadvantaged and that we take account of the needs of peoples' pregnancy or maternity status.

### **RACE**

- Challenge racism wherever it occurs;
- Respond swiftly and sensitively to racists incidents;

- Actively promote race equality in the Town;
- Provide opportunities to celebrate race and culture diversity;
- Encourage participation of black and minority ethnic groups in all activities.

### **RELIGION OR BELIEF**

- Ensure that the community's religions or beliefs and related observances are respected and accommodated wherever possible;
- Respect people's beliefs where the expression of those beliefs does not impinge on the legitimate rights of others;
- Respect the needs and requirements of people who adhere to a range of cultural and religious beliefs. This may include dietary requirements, observance of important religious festivals, days or events.

### **SEX**

- Challenge discriminatory assumptions and generalisations about women and men;
- Take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination based on the sex of a person;
- Offer equal access for women and men to representation and services and encourage other organisations to do the same
- Promote a positive work life balance environment and develop family friendly policies;
- Take positive actions to redress imbalances due by a inequalities because of a person's sex .

### **SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

- Ensure that we take account of the needs of lesbians, gay men and bisexuals;
- Promote positive images of lesbians, gay men and bisexual people;
- Ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity and that a positive image is promoted regardless of sexual orientation;
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions and generalisations about lesbians, gay men and bisexual people.

### **TRANSGENDER**

- Provide support to prevent discrimination against people who identify themselves as transgender;
- Ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity and that a positive image is promoted of transgender people;
- Promote positive images of transgender people;
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions and generalisations about transgender people;

- Take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination based on transgender status.

## **THE LAW**

The policy will be implemented within the framework of the relevant legislation and codes of practice, which include:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999
- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 as amended by Equality Act 2006
- Race Relations Act 1976 as amended in 2000 by Race Relations amendment Act
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended in 2005
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Council Code of Conduct