



*Knowsley Council*

## **Corporate Equality and Diversity Policy 2014 - 2016**

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**KMBC DOCUMENT CONTROL PAGE**

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<b>POLICY DEPENDENCIES</b>	<p><b>Link to other Council documents:</b> EIA Toolkit</p> <p><b>Link to Council Primary Objective:</b> Operational/Enabling</p> <p><b>Link to Sustainable Communities Strategy Key Driver:</b> Operational/Enabling</p>

	<b>KMBC DOCUMENT CONTROL PAGE (2) Continued</b>
<b>EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT</b>	<p>In order to carry out an EIA you should first complete a screening matrix which can be accessed through the Corporate Equality and Diversity Team.</p> <p>Screening Matrix Complete: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Date Complete:</p> <p>Manager/Group responsible:</p> <p>Category: High <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> No relevance <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Based on the category indicate the date that a further assessment must take place:</p>
	<p>Initial Assessment is complete: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date Complete:</p>
	<p>Full EIA Process is complete: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date Complete:</p>
<b>SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL</b>	<p>To evaluate the economic, social and environmental impacts of a policy you should complete the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal Toolkit on the Policy Hub</p> <p>Policy has been appraised for sustainability: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Action has been taken to mitigate any identified negative impacts:</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date Complete:</p>
<b>RISK ASSESSMENT</b>	<p>A risk assessment template is available on the Corporate Risk Management intranet site.</p> <p>Policy has been risk assessed: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date complete:</p>
<b>TRAINING/ AWARENES S RAISING</b>	<p>Training / awareness raising required to fully implement document: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If no please state why: No specific training needed as the policy is already incorporated into existing training.</p> <p>If yes indicate the date of training / awareness raising:</p> <p>Training provided by:</p>
<b>POLICY LIBRARY</b>	<p>Once formally approved the document should be posted onto the Policy Library on the council intranet.</p> <p>Date Posted:</p> <p>Posted by:</p>

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# Equalities Statement

Knowsley Council is committed to developing, promoting and delivering its services and employment opportunities without discrimination on the basis of a person's :

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race (including Gypsies and Travellers)
- Religion and Belief
- Sex (Gender)
- Sexual Orientation

or any other aspect of an individual's background which is used to justify unfair treatment. The Council will regularly monitor and review the impact of services and procedures on Knowsley's different communities and instigate changes to ensure it meets its aims.

## **As a Provider or Commissioner of Services**

Knowsley will ensure that as a commissioner or provider, services are actively shaped based on the varied needs, expectations and experiences of all its communities and services that are relevant, appropriate and respectful to individuals. The Council undertakes to ensure that its contractors and others, who deliver services on its behalf, share and implement this vision and these values.

## **As an Employer**

Knowsley will manage its workforce in a way that gets the best from their diversity, valuing their experience as individuals and integrating fairness and equity into every aspect of its employment practices. The Council will do this by recruiting, developing and retaining the most talented people and valuing the varied skills and experiences people bring to Knowsley. The Council is committed to developing more imaginative and open ways of recruiting and retaining a diverse work force.

## **As a Community Leader**

As well as a service provider and employer, the Council has an important leadership role in influencing others, promoting and encouraging fairness and equality and contributing to a more just and compassionate society. The Council

will work with all its citizens, partners, businesses, voluntary and community groups to develop a shared understanding and commitment to its objectives.

## **Equality and diversity commitment**

Knowsley Council's vision as set out in the Strategy for Knowsley is to be the Borough of Choice

In support of this vision and in promoting equal opportunities and diversity we are committed to

- Valuing and respecting the diversity of those who live, work and do business in the borough and benefiting from those differences.
- Translating all statutory obligations into direct delivery.
- Creating a positive, safe, healthy and accessible working and learning environment and a culture in which discrimination has no part, and where everyone can achieve their full potential.
- Listening to, engaging and collaborating with the wider community and a wide range of partners and staff in order to continually improve our equality practice.
- Encouraging and welcoming people into Knowsley through developing an inclusive environment and culture.
- Empowering people by providing accessible information.
- Ensuring sound equal opportunities and diversity principles are embedded in all our communications.
- Facilitating equal opportunities in all aspects of employment service delivery
- Mainstreaming equal opportunities into service delivery and all decisions by developing systems and processes, which are accessible and transparent.
- Ensuring all projects and programmes delivered by contractors adhere to equality and diversity core components.
- Ensuring that all commissioning activity builds into practice the core principles and policies of equality and diversity

- Taking necessary action when non-compliance with our policies is identified.
- Knowsley Council is committed to encouraging staff to actively enforce compliance by using the Managing Conduct, Performance and Information Policy and to report discriminatory practice.
- Securing and making best use of resources to ensure that the Equality and Diversity Policy is implemented.

Working with the relevant partners and agencies to influence their equal opportunities and diversity principles.

## **Working together**

To meet these commitments Knowsley Council achieved the highest level (excellence) of the Equality Framework for Local Government in January 2013. This will be maintained by working in partnership with our members, employees, trade unions, the community, partners and stakeholders. It is only by working together that we can eliminate discrimination against people on the basis of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race (including Gypsies and Travellers)
- Religion and Belief
- Sex (Gender)
- Sexual Orientation

or any other factor. In addition our aim is to ensure equality of life chances for all residents of the borough, which includes learning from other organisations who have well developed policies and practices. The council recognises the need to seek opportunities to learn from others who have already developed and implemented best practice.

## **Implementation of the policy**

The Equality and Diversity Policy is a key corporate policy of the council. It is championed and supported by the Chief Executive Officer who is responsible for implementing the mandate of all Elected Members, which demonstrates a firm leadership commitment. The importance of Equality and Diversity is further reflected by its inclusion within the Leader's portfolio. The council is committed to the management of this policy through a process of self-assessment, scrutiny and audit.

This agenda will be taken forward through:

## **Equality Objectives**

The Corporate Plan includes the Council's equality objectives; they are:

- Narrowing the Inequality Gap
- Empowered and Resilient Communities

Progress on the objectives is monitored using the Corporate Plan (add link).

## **Corporate Equality and Diversity Strategy Group**

A Corporate Equality and Diversity Strategy Group have been established to drive this agenda forward across all service areas. This group represents every service area of the authority plus partners. It is chaired by The Director of Employee Services on behalf of the Chief Executive. This group has responsibility for the overall management and direction of our equality and diversity commitment.

## **Elected Members**

Knowsley's equality and diversity agenda is within the portfolio of the Leader of the Council. Our Elected Members are responsible for setting and agreeing policies that are non discriminatory and promote equality for all employees and all people who access services.

## **Chief Executive, Directors and all employees**

All those who act on behalf of the council have a responsibility to work within the terms of the Equality and Diversity Policy and strive towards the elimination of discriminatory attitudes and practices in their working environment and in the services they provide.

## **The community, partnerships and stakeholders**

The views, ideas and opinions of our communities, partners and stakeholders and employees will be built into the decision making process via our consultation mechanisms. All of the equality and diversity principles we promote will also be expected to be shared and upheld by those who work with us.

## **Training**

The corporate commitment is that all staff will undertake training relevant to their role and responsibilities. This is our process for ensuring that policies and procedures are understood and adhered to and, besides facilitating the work of developing a culture which values and respects diversity, will also govern the way we will behave towards each other.

## Equality Impact Assessment

The Public Sector Equality Duty as detailed in the Equality Act 2012 requires the Council to assess the impact of decisions on protected characteristic groups. Knowsley Council's method for complying and further documenting our commitment to equality and diversity is through the implementation and completion of equality impact assessments. An equality and diversity impact assessment is a way of finding out whether a decision affects different groups of people in different ways. These assessments must be undertaken to comply with our organisational commitments and statutory obligations.

As part of Knowsley's commitment to equality and diversity impact Assessments will be undertaken which take into account the Equality Act 2010 General Duty, The Human Rights Act 1998 and the Health and Social Care Act 2012. In addition, Knowsley EIA's also have considerations incorporated which reflect the local demographics. EIAs also form a mandatory element of the Commissioning Review Programme

Equality Impact Assessments cover the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race (including Gypsies and Travellers)
- Religion and Belief
- Sex (Gender)
- Sexual Orientation
- Offending Past
- Carer's Status
- Socio Economic Status (including Child Poverty)

The results of the equality impact assessments will be used to address negative issues which may arise from existing or proposed policies, including the identification of potential for discrimination and the consideration of alternative proposals and activities that will mitigate any adverse impact. Equality Impact Assessments will also include the recording of positive effects.

It is important that we have a clear record of the decisions the council have made regarding policy, operating procedures and commissioning. Therefore each service area will undertake Impact Assessment on all their policies, functions and services and the Council will also undertake Impact Assessments on all its commissioning decisions. In both cases, the following questions will be addressed:

- Does the service reach all the communities it is meant for and does it meet their needs?
- Does the service reflect the ability to cater for cultural differences?
- Are all customers getting the same level of benefit from the services, which are delivered on the basis of need?
- Does the workforce delivering that service generally reflect the population it seeks to serve? Or if not has it been appropriately trained in order to reflect the ability to cope with potential cultural differences within the varied community of Knowsley?

The council has a Corporate Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit which is used by commissioners and managers to establish priorities for assessment and to proceed with full impact assessments where considered necessary. The toolkit is updated every two years to ensure that it meets the contemporary needs of the demographics of the borough.

## **Audit and scrutiny**

We will demonstrate our commitment to self-assessment, audit and scrutiny through:

- Corporate and service area commitment and engagement in scrutiny, self-assessment and audit.
- Service area engagement with equality self-assessment, scrutiny and audit.
- Consultation with designated community, staff and stakeholder groups on scrutiny procedures, including un-constituted community groups.
- Arrange external and internal scrutiny processes and ensure monitoring and reporting on progress takes place with relevant internal and external stakeholders.
- Evaluation and review of scrutiny arrangements.
- Publish the results of audit and scrutiny on an annual basis.

- Where necessary, capacity build consultation groups in order to enable them to take part in all relevant processes from an informed position.

## **Commitment to consultation**

The council is committed to continuously improving the consultation process with community groups, partners and stakeholders.

This is seen as a key element in our equality and diversity agenda as consultation ensures that the council is better informed to meet the needs of all people and communities of the borough.

The Strategy for Knowsley has been developed with members of the Knowsley Partnership. Progress is now being made with implementing the strategy and we are working alongside our partners in the community to ensure that all forms of engagement and consultation are inclusive.

Knowsley Council values the views of both customers and employees - especially with regard to any proposed changes to plans or methods of service delivery. For example, the council regularly consults through:

- Four area partnership boards – providing public access to information and decision making
- Knowsley Partnership
- Officers with a remit for developing community empowerment and social growth at all levels
- Trade unions
- Community and Youth Services ‘sharing and learning’ events for community groups
- Schools Council
- Stakeholders
- Committee meetings – public sessions open and made accessible to all residents
- Information on the internet/intranet
- Newspapers and other media
- Knowsley Challenge Citizen’s Panel
- Police forums
- Staff Operational Workers Groups

## **Procurement and commissioning**

Knowsley Council aims to provide services that meet need whilst offering the best value in terms of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

The council's portfolio of contracts for goods, services and works covers a wide range of requirements and local Knowsley based suppliers already account for a significant level of expenditure through these contracts.

Our commitment to promoting equality will ensure that we treat all people according to need including those contracting to supply goods or services. The council will not discriminate on the grounds of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race (including Gypsies and Travellers)
- Religion and Belief
- Sex (Gender)
- Sexual Orientation

Suppliers or contractors approved for the provision of goods, services or works will have to comply with such criteria. In particular the council will adhere to, promote and utilise best practice and add social value within procurement and commissioning documentation.

## **Equalities in employment**

Knowsley Council aspires to recruit and retain a diverse workforce, which generally reflects the local population and which has the skills and understanding to improve the lives of the people of Knowsley through the provision of quality services responsive to cultural, individual and community needs.

In addition, the authority collects and evaluates workforce monitoring data in compliance with the statutory monitoring duties. The Public Sector Equalities Duty states that we should monitor our workforce by the different protected characteristics:

- All employees
- All applicants for jobs
- All applicants for promotion
- All applicants for training
- Foster carers
- Volunteers

This information is gathered annually and published in the workforce monitoring report.

The council recognises that the issue of the make-up and skills of our workforce is central to our plans for the future for several important reasons:

- Our ability to deliver diverse services to a diverse local population is dependent upon the skills and experience of our staff. The more closely our workforce reflects the local population and is given the knowledge and ability to cater for the prospect of a culturally diverse potential, the more likely the services we provide will meet the needs of the population.
- Wherever possible the council will support the introduction of positive action strategies to support local people in accessing council vacancies.
- Our commitment to valuing diversity is best demonstrated through our own performance in key areas, and the structure of our workforce is one of the most visible aspects of that performance.
- Our ability to provide leadership to our partner organisations and the local population is undermined if we cannot provide evidence of our ability to fulfil our goals and aspirations for our own workforce.

In addition the council has an ongoing commitment to achieve equality within the workforce.

The council's commitment to promoting and ensuring equality and diversity in employment is demonstrated through a range of policies and procedures which cover:

- Consultation with Employees Policy
- At Risk Redundancy and Redeployment Policy
- Developing People Policy
- Time Off Work Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Retirement and Pension Policy
- Managing Conduct, Performance and Information Policy
- Sickness Absence Management Policy
- Flexible and Mobile Working Policy
- Health and Wellbeing Policy

## Appendix 1 The Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 (sec149) states that:

1. A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:-
  - a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
2. A person who is not a public authority but who exercises public functions must, in the exercise of those functions, have due regard to the matters mentioned in subsection (1) above.
3. Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
  - a. remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
  - b. take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
  - c. encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
4. The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
5. Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
  - a. tackle prejudice, and
  - b. promote understanding.
6. Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act.