

Bradford on Avon Town Council is an equal opportunities employer.

We are committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion in our town council team – and eliminating all forms of unfair or unlawful discrimination.

Our aim is for officers (employees of the town council) to be truly representative of the community they serve - and for each employee to feel respected, safe and be able to give their best for Bradford on Avon.

The town council – in providing services, facilities and events to the community – is also committed against discrimination of residents, visitors or others.

Purposes of this policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all officers are treated with fairness and respect – whether they are temporary, permanent, full-time or part-time.

We value people as individuals with diverse cultures, opinions, lifestyles and circumstances.

In this, the town council will not unlawfully discriminate against anyone – because of the **Equality Act 2010** protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- sex
- gender identity
- marriage or civil partnership
- pregnancy or maternity
- race – including colour, ethnicity or nationality
- religion or belief
- sexuality.

All employees are covered by this policy and it applies to all areas of employment – including recruitment, selection, deployment, career development and promotion.

These areas are monitored and amended if needed to ensure no unfair or unlawful discrimination exists – be it intentional, unintentional, direct or indirect.

All employees, workers or contractors will be treated fairly and with respect. The town council will oppose all forms of unfair and unlawful discrimination. This includes in:

- pay and benefits
- terms and conditions of employment
- dealing with grievances and discipline
- dismissal
- redundancy
- leave for parents
- requests for flexible working

- selection for employment, promotion, training or other development opportunities.

The Chief Executive & Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk are responsible for making sure this policy is monitored and administered with the aim of promoting diversity and inclusivity, as well as eliminating unfair or unlawful discrimination.

Officers and workers at all levels have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect. Each employee has a personal commitment to apply this policy and its principals to all areas of their work – to eliminate discrimination and promote equality throughout the town council.

Our commitment as an employer

Bradford on Avon Town Council is committed to:

- *Encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace.
- *Creating an environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unfair and unlawful discrimination – where all individual differences and contributions are recognised and valued.

This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unfair and unlawful discrimination.

All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unfair and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, councillors, members of the public and suppliers.

- *Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unfair and unlawful discrimination by employees, councillors, members of the public and suppliers in the course of their employment.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/ or disciplinary procedures and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

- *Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents

and resources can be fully utilised to maximised the efficiency of the town council.

*Make decisions about staff based on merit – unless from any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the **Equality Act 2010**.

*Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in law.

*Monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexuality, gender identity, religion or belief and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in this policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how this policy and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually and considering and taking action to address any issues.

Our commitment as a service provider

We aim to provide services for residents regardless of age, disability, sex, gender identity, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, past offending, care responsibilities or social class.

We will ensure that services are delivered in a way which meets the diverse needs of Bradford on Avon's residents.

Equal opportunities statements

Age:

- ensure people of all ages are treated with respect and dignity
- ensure people of working age are given equal access to training and development
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about younger and older people.

Disability:

- provide reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled people have access to employment and development opportunities
- challenge discriminatory assumption about disabled people
- continue to improve access to information by ensuring there is equality of access for people with disabilities of all forms.

Race:

- challenge racism
- respond swiftly and sensitively to incidents of racism
- actively promote racial equality in Bradford on Avon.

Sex & gender identity:

- challenge discriminatory assumptions about women and men
- offer women and men equal access to services, employment, training, development and pay
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about transgender people.

Sexuality:

- challenge discriminatory assumptions about LGBTQIA+ people.

Religion or belief:

- ensure that employees' religions or beliefs and related observances are respected and accommodated for
- respect people's expressions of belief where it does not impinge on the rights of others.

Pregnancy or maternity:

- challenge discriminatory assumptions about the pregnancy or maternity of our employees
- ensure no one is put at a disadvantage and that the town council takes account of the needs of our employees' pregnancy or maternity
- ensure parental leave, family leave, including maternity, paternity and adoption leave entitlements are met.

Marriage or civil partnership:

- ensure people are treated with respect and dignity
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about marriage or civil partnership.

Ex-offenders:

- challenge discrimination against our employees regardless of their offending background – except where there is a known risk to children or vulnerable adults.

Equal pay:

- ensure all employees have the right to the same contractual pay and benefits for carrying out the same work.

Agreement to follow this policy

This policy is fully supported by senior management and was adopted by councillors at the Resources committee meeting on 4 June 2024.

Our complaints policy

Our complaints policy sets out a way for residents, job applicants and employees to raise a grievance or make a complaint if they feel they have been treated unfairly or unlawfully discriminated against.

Use of the town council's complaints policy does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within 3 months of the alleged discrimination.

Details of the town council's complaints policy can be found on our website:
bradfordonavontowncouncil.gov.uk/policies