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Introduction

The Town Council is committed to ensuring that it serves all Neston residents. In employment, this means that the Council's aim is to recruit and retain the best employees regardless of background. This policy sets down the minimum standards that it will operate to, in order to achieve this.

It also aims to ensure that no-one will be discriminated against because of race, age, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, or receive any other form of discrimination that hinders the promotion of equal opportunities.

The Council aims to be consistent with good practice and will take account of advice and guidance issued by bodies such as the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

Employment Issues

a) Recruitment & Selection

The Council's policy is to select people on the basis of their suitability for the role, as defined by a properly constructed job description and person specification. All job descriptions will be reviewed to ensure that they are still relevant prior to advertising a vacancy, and any criteria that are no longer applicable or which may be indirectly discriminatory will be removed.

Vacancies will be advertised to the widest possible audience and will utilise sources that ensure that all sections of the community have the opportunity to apply. However this does not stop the Council from restricting recruitment advertising in certain situations (e.g. in a redundancy situation; where the role requires particular specialist skills which can only be found from a specific source; or where the same or similar position has been advertised in the immediate past).

Where appropriate, applications will be monitored to ensure that they appear to reflect the wider community.

All job adverts will contain the statement that Neston Town Council is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

Shortlisting for interview will be done in accordance with the defined criteria and all managers (and Councillors involved in recruitment) will receive guidance and information in interviewing skills and recruitment legislation before undertaking

interviews. Notes will be taken for all interviews and retained for a period after the selection process.

The Council will consider flexible working arrangements, where operationally feasible, to allow as many people as possible the opportunity to work for it.

b) Training and Promotion

Decisions on training, promotion and other employment matters will be based on organisational need and non-discriminatory procedures. The Council will also, where appropriate, consider using the provisions of the Equality Act to undertake "positive action" training to ensure that underrepresented groups are fully represented in the workforce.

c) Disability

The Council recognises that it may be necessary to undertake adjustments of various kinds in order to allow individuals with disabilities to work for us. It will look positively at whether and how this can be done, on an individual case basis, as it recognises that people with the same or similar disabilities will have different requirements.

d) General conduct at work

All staff will be expected to ensure that they comply with the principles of this policy. In line with its general code of conduct, the Council will strive to ensure that the organisation has a positive working atmosphere where no member of staff, customer or volunteer is the subject of belittlement, insult or offensive remarks. All new staff and volunteers will be given the code of conduct and briefing on this area as part of their induction.

Serious breaches of this policy might be considered as gross misconduct.

If individual staff members feel they have been discriminated against, or subjected to some other kind of detriment which they believe is as a result of their race/sex/disability/age/religious belief/sexual orientation, then they should raise the matter with their manager or the Council Manager

If this behaviour has come from a Councillor or external source (such as a client or supplier) then the Council expects staff members to raise it immediately. The Council will not accept such behaviour and will investigate matters promptly and thoroughly.

e) Remuneration

The Council will ensure that its criteria for determining employees' pay are consistent with equal pay requirements.

f) Record Keeping

For the purposes of monitoring how effective this policy is in practice, and for no other reason, the Council may maintain records of employees' and applicants' racial origins, gender and disability.

Publicity/Advertising

Publicity materials will not only emphasise that our services and job opportunities are available to all, but will utilise all appropriate media to ensure that all sections of the community can access the information.

Personal Responsibility

The Council will do everything possible to ensure that it operates in a non-discriminatory way. Staff members may be held personally responsible in law for discriminatory behaviour, especially if they have contravened this policy or behaved in a way which is contrary to a direct instruction from their manager, or a decision of the Council.

Review

The Council will review this policy and any procedures arising from it in the light of changes to legislation, case law or other guidance issued.