



Halstead Town Council

Equality and Diversity Policy

The new public sector Equality Duty came into force from 6 April 2011. It consists of a general equality duty

The Equality Act asks all Councils to provide a range of equality information.

The Equality Act includes a general duty for councils to integrate equality into their day-to-day business and across all their functions. Halstead Town Council, including its councillors and its staff, must have due regard to the need to

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not.
- foster good relations between people who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not.

Type of information The equality information that the Council has to publish relates to people who share a relevant 'protected characteristic' [see below] and who are

- affected by the Council's policies and practices (for example, service users)
- employees (for authorities with more than 150 staff).

Protected characteristics

Fairness in the workplace is a vital part of a successful business or public body. It is supported by the law - the Equality Act 2010 - and also makes good business sense in running and developing an organisation.

The aim of the Equality Act is to improve equal job opportunities and fairness for employees and job applicants. Organisations should have policies in place to ensure that these outcomes happen and, just as importantly, to prevent discrimination.

Under the Act, it is unlawful to discriminate against people at work because of nine areas termed in the legislation as protected characteristics:

- **age**
- **disability**
- **gender reassignment**
- **marriage and civil partnership**

- **pregnancy and maternity**
- **race**
- **religion or belief**
- **sex**
- **sexual orientation.**

Councillors consider the equality and diversity implications of the Council's policies and services as part of the decision making process.

Sarah Greateox

Sarah Greateox
Town Clerk
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