



Mansfield
District Council

Draft

**Equality and Diversity Position
Statement**

2018

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Introduction

Welcome to Mansfield District Council's Equality and Diversity Position Statement for 2018

Mansfield District Council is committed to eliminating inequality based on people representative of the protected characteristics. The council recognises that there are differences in life situations and experiences for people representative of the protected characteristics who access our services and apply for job vacancies. The council strives to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all people taking into account their individual needs.

The Equality Act

The Equality Act 2010 puts all of the equality law into one place and sets out to give people from different groups, identified as protected characteristics, consistent rights and protection.

The protected characteristics covered under the duty are:

- Race
- Sex
- Disability
- Age
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

The public sector equality duty is made up of a general duty supported by specific duties. The general duty requires public authorities, such as local councils to have due regard to the need to:

- **Eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment and victimisation
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Having due regard means that the authority must consider these three aims and ensure that equality issues inform the decision making process throughout the organisation to ensure that the organisation will strive to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- Meet the needs of people with protected characteristics

- Encourage people with protected characteristic to participate in public life and in other activities where participation is low
- Publish information to show compliance with the equality duty, at least annually, and
- Set and publish equality objectives at least every four years

There are a number of specific duties in place which support public bodies in meeting their requirements under the general duty. These specific duties require public bodies to set specific and measurable equality objectives and to publish information that will demonstrate how they are performing.

Equality Objectives 2017 - 2021

The authority reviewed its equality objectives in 2017 to reflect the ambitions within the Corporate Plan. This statement will outline how service areas are working towards these objectives.

Our Equality Objectives for 2017 – 2021 are as follows:

- **To maintain a modern and diverse workforce that is reflective of the local community and whose staff feels valued and treated fairly**
- **To develop and support resilient, active and inclusive communities who are involved in decisions that affect them**
- **To support access to high quality services recognising the needs of different customers**
- **To build strong, safe and resilient communities and support individuals to achieve a better quality of life**

The authority will continue to consult with its employees and customers to enable them to be involved in the decision making process and to influence the way things are done within the authority.

Examples of how we are working towards these objectives:

To maintain a modern and diverse workforce that is reflective of the local community and whose staff feels valued and treated fairly

Careers Website

The careers website will go live in January 2019 and will showcase the possible career paths within the authority. The website will include case studies, apprenticeship opportunities, work experience placements. This

website will be promoted to schools and students are encouraged to get involved and use the site.

There has been continued work with schools and colleges to engage with young people including mock interview days at local schools and support for the delivery of Ideas 4 Careers and work placements. For example the Palace Theatre accepted 25 work placements this year.

Recruitment

The authority will continue with the implementation of our Recruitment and Selections Strategy and People First Action Plan supporting our work towards becoming a more attractive employer to young people.

Alternative methods of recruitment have been tried and tested to be more inclusive and attract an increasing number of applicants and then hopefully appointing more young people. One example being the recruitment open day held to recruit for a parks vacancy.

The authority also worked in partnership with the Department of Work and Pensions to provide open days for applicants currently on Jobseekers Allowance which supported them to apply for suitable vacancies and gain valuable experience from the application experience.

The new on line recruitment videos will go live early next year on the recruitment portal to provide applicants with more information on specific posts and potential career paths.

There has been a review of the psychometric testing process which forms part of the recruitment process and this will now be supported in house in conjunction with Thomas International.

Staff Survey

In 2016 nearly 80% of the workforce took part in the last staff survey. Of those completing the survey 80% demonstrated that they enjoyed working for the authority and were motivated and proud to work there. 70% agreed that the council was committed to delivering quality services and 80% agreed that the council was a good employer and made allowances for home and life demands.

The next staff survey will be carried out in June 2019 and results will be compared with the previous survey. This information will be used to inform the ongoing development of the People Strategy that demonstrates the authorities' commitment to developing its employees.

To develop and support resilient, active and inclusive communities who are involved in decisions that affect them

Budget Consultation

The authority faces big financial challenges to review the way it provides services to produce better outcomes for less public money. It is inevitable that some of the changes in the budget proposals will be viewed as having an adverse impact on the public and the authority has a duty to assess the impact of this on those customers who are representative of the protected characteristics.

In 2018 residents of the district were invited to take part in a budget simulator consultation. This simulator gave residents the opportunity to experience how they would balance the budget if they were in charge of the authority.

The simulator gave examples from front line services where the council spends money and asked the participant to choose if they would spend more, the same or less on the service whilst having to make a saving of 1.63 million. The participants were also asked where they considered income could be generated

The Transformation Plan sets out how Mansfield District Council will become an innovative, efficient, customer focused, high performing '21st century local authority'. To be able to respond to future demand and become self-sufficient, the council will need to better understand its customers, improve its use of technology, operate more commercially and make better use of resources.

As part of the future transformation work that the authority has planned there will be service redesigns across all Departments. Equality impact assessment will be an integral part of this process as will carrying out user research to focus on the outcomes of these changes for customers.

Electoral Services

The authority is working in partnership with the Electoral Commission and Notts Election Officer group/Association of Electoral Administrators/Cabinet Office to develop joint publicity initiatives. Their aim is to increase participation levels of hard to reach groups including BME groups. Their objective is to increase voter registration levels and turnout generally across all 36 wards of the district.

As part of the Polling Place Review Electoral Services will seek representations from electors and community representatives with expertise in relation to access to premises and facilities for disabled people, consultation will commence around June 2019.

For the 10th year the council has supported the election of a youth mayor to act as an advocate for the young people in the local area. The youth mayor's manifesto is to help young people to make their voices heard and to increase

participation in sport particularly with regard to young women. They would also like to improve work experience and careers advice by creating links with local businesses.

Fitness, Food and Fun

This year the Mansfield Museum held its second annual Health and Wellbeing Festival that focuses on families with an aim of helping them to make the right choices across a wide variety of healthy-living issues. The event will also signpost to individuals and organisation that can help them to find out more about areas of particular interest to them.

Tackling Health and Wellbeing

A commission was set up in 2018 to tackle serious health and wellbeing issues across the district. The Healthy Mansfield Commission was set up by the Executive Mayor Kate Allsop and set the priority areas for consideration to tackle health inequalities in the district. In some deprived areas life expectancy for men is over ten years lower than the England average and is eight years lower for women.

To support access to high quality services recognising the needs of different customers

Customer Portal

Significant building work has taken place to transform the council's main reception area to provide improved facilities for customers.

Customers can now utilise the digital self-service hub to access a range of council and Department of Work and Pensions services in one location. This includes applying for or updating a range of grant benefit and applications, make payments and find information on different services.

Digital Platform

The authority is developing a digital self- service platform that will improve communication with service users where they will be able to complete service requests, bookings and payments. Customers will be able to live chat with customer service representatives directly.

Website

The authority is developing their website and is reviewing the information available to customers to ensure that it is suitable and up to date and accessible to people with visual/reading impairments following government guidelines.

Environmental health

The council provides legal documents in alternative formats and languages to support the range of businesses in the district. Food hygiene and health and safety courses are also offered in different languages to meet the diverse needs of the local community businesses. Specific food safety advice takes into account religious beliefs and practices following FSA guidance.

To build strong, safe and resilient communities and support individuals to achieve a better quality of life

Flagship Housing Project for over 55's

The former General Hospital site which had remained derelict for about 20 years is now the new Town View housing development for residents aged 55 and over. This flagship project has a total of 54 new homes, including 12 two bedroomed bungalows and 42 one bed and two bedroom apartments.

Ten of the apartments funded by Nottinghamshire County Council have been allocated to people with extra care needs and who might otherwise need residential care. Six of the bungalows will be rented out by the council at an affordable rent (80% of a market rent) via the council's Homefinder service. The apartment block has communal facilities including a lounge, dining room and outdoor terraced area. The secure landscaped grounds feature a village green with outdoor fitness equipment.

Pilates in the Park

Pilates in the Park sessions were held over the summer at a number of parks in the district. These free sessions led by a qualified instructor were inclusive of all abilities and encouraging more people of all ages and backgrounds to get involved in the community and get active. According to Public Health England the health of people in Mansfield is generally worse than the England average.

Community Garden

A new community garden has been set up at the council's Bull Farm allotments in Shaftesbury Avenue to tackle the issue of social isolation among residents.

The scheme is being run in partnership with Feel Good Gardens, a community interest company based at Sherwood Pines, and the council's housing department. This is part of a wider council strategy to improve the health, wellbeing and lifestyles of its residents, particularly older men who often suffer from loneliness and social isolation. Weekly work parties are being held, guided by Feel Good Gardens and people are encouraged to just turn up, grab a spade and join in.

The aim of this community garden is to improve the lives of local people through therapeutic horticulture and exercise, providing the opportunity to

meet new people and encourage healthier organic eating through growing your own fruit and vegetables.

Community Orchard

Pupils from local schools have been involved in a new community orchard at Jackson's Field in the district planting 72 fruit trees and around 200 shrubs. As well as creating a greener environment the scheme aims to promote a healthier lifestyle among residents who will be able to enjoy the orchard and pick the fruit.

Eight other parks within the district have also established community orchards which are maturing year on year and starting to produce a wealth of fruit.

Healthy Eating and Exercise

Every year hundreds of people across the district benefit from advice on healthy eating and exercise from the council's Health Development team. Members of the team regularly visit schools to talk to primary school children, teachers, kitchen staff and supervisors about healthy lifestyles including the importance of a balanced lunchbox and regular exercise.

The team also offer practical cooking sessions for disadvantaged families to help them to improve their knowledge, behaviour and confidence around nutrition and exercise and how spending time together preparing food together can have a positive impact on mental wellbeing too.

Feel Good Fridays

Feel Good Friday is a free event held at Mansfield Museum on the last Friday of every month to encourage elderly people to be more active and eat well. Activities such as short tennis or boccia are followed by making healthy snacks and advice on eating a balanced diet.

Tackling antisocial behaviour

The council has been working with the Police, and other partners including Framework, Change Grow Live (CGL) and Mansfield Homeless Network, in a bid to resolve the unprecedented issue of antisocial behaviour related to the use of mamba use in Mansfield town centre. The council has now become the first council in Nottinghamshire to take an innovative new approach to tackling antisocial behaviour caused by the drug mamba.

The council has both homeless and mental health outreach workers helping members of the street community to address local issues. More recently this team has benefited from an additional officer who is dedicated to dealing with substance misuse.

This ground-breaking approach aims to break the cycle of dependence on mamba and spice as well as other drugs and alcohol and to tackle the root

causes of substance misuse and encourage users to make permanent changes to their lifestyle and long-standing habits.

The outreach workers get to know each individual so that they can offer tailored support in order to make life changes that will help the community by reducing antisocial behaviour and dependency on services.

Supporting Vulnerable witnesses

The authority is also developing partnerships with ASB Action and Witness/victim Care Plans to offer support to vulnerable witnesses and victims of ASB through use of the Victim Risk matrix and referrals to the Victims Service. The outcome should be improved knowledge and understanding of social issues impacting on individuals including mental health, personality disorders, substance misuse and rough sleeping.

Winter Night Shelter

The council works in partnership with local churches, Derby City Mission and volunteers to run the Mansfield winter night shelter and is hoping to expand to open for 90 nights during December, January and February from 54 last year.

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