

Equality and Diversity Policy



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Albanian

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Arabic

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Kurdish Sorani

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Turkish

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Bu bilgiyi başka bir dilde veya formatta temin edebilirsiniz.
Diğer sorularınız için lütfen yukarıdaki numarayı arayınız.

Contents

	Page
What is Equality and Diversity?	1
Why have an Equality and Diversity Policy?	1
Why is Equality and Diversity important to Lincolnshire County Council?	1
Background	2
Our Vision	3
Aims	4
Responsibilities	5
Action and Evaluation	5
Employing people	6
Providing services	7
Working with other organisations	8
Involving communities	8
Meeting our legal obligations	9
What to do if something goes wrong	9
Appendix A – Equality and Diversity Policy Statements:	11
• Race	
• Gender	
• Disability	
• Age	
• Sexual Orientation	
• Religion/Belief	
Appendix B – Glossary of Terms	19
• Equality	
• Diversity	
• Discrimination	
• Prejudice	
• Stereotyping	
• Bullying	
• Harassment	
• Corporate or Vicarious Liability	
Appendix C – Legislation and Codes of Practice	22

What is Equality and Diversity?

Equality, or equal opportunities, is based on a legal framework that aims to protect individuals from discrimination. The focus is on fair treatment for all, and not treating someone less favourably because of their race, gender, disability etc. This does not mean treating everyone the same; people are different and the issues relating to different groups require separate consideration.

Diversity goes beyond equality and the groups covered by anti-discrimination legislation. It refers to 'difference' and is about recognising and valuing the differences and individual contribution that people make, whether at work or in the community. It is concerned with having a workforce that is motivated by being valued and treated with respect, and ensuring that all people maximise their potential and contribution. For the County Council, this includes working towards having a workforce that is representative of the community it serves, providing accessible and relevant services that respond to the customer's needs, and creating an inclusive environment. However, it is not a replacement for equality or equal opportunities and both need to be considered together.

Why Have an Equality and Diversity Policy?

Despite the existence of legislation, there is evidence that discrimination exists within Lincolnshire and the Country as a whole. Clearly, it is right for this to be challenged and

addressed on moral grounds. However, it is also right to challenge patterns of discrimination and disadvantage on the basis that they also have a negative impact on the economy through, for example, not allowing people to realise their full economic potential.

The County Council has a moral, social and legal obligation to value individual and community differences and to take into account these different perspectives when making decisions. This Equality and Diversity Policy aims to ensure that we provide a fair and equitable service, to our employees, customers and everyone who lives, works, studies in or visits Lincolnshire.

Why is Equality and Diversity important to Lincolnshire County Council?

Lincolnshire is a diverse area. Diverse in terms of our environment, diverse in terms of the array of cultures and traditions that exist within our communities; and diverse in terms of the people who live and work here.

This diversity is one of our strengths. In particular, it is a strength that can be harnessed for economic benefit, whether through the identification of new market opportunities, through bringing new skills and experiences to the workforce, or through the creation of dynamic communities that attract new businesses.

Our services can only be delivered effectively with good employee and community relations, and by an organisation that understands the needs of both. For the County Council to achieve its ambition of

Equality and Diversity Policy

becoming an excellent-rated authority, we must develop our workforce and appreciate the contribution and needs of the diverse population that we serve.

Background

Lincolnshire is the fourth largest county in England, and one of the most sparsely populated. It has a diverse geography, with the densely populated city of Lincoln contrasting with the rolling hills of the Wolds, the flat arable lands of the fens, and the long North Sea coastline running from the Wash nearly to Grimsby. Lincolnshire's diversity has helped to create the opportunities and challenges that are characteristic of the county, and should shape the approach that we take as a major employer, provider of services and community leader.

Lincolnshire has experienced high levels of inward migration in the last ten years, with the population increasing by 10% between 1991 and the last Census in 2001. This was the highest rate of population growth of any English county, and much higher than the national average growth rate of 4%. This trend has continued since 2001. The increase has been composed partly of people from the European Union seeking work, partly of people from other parts of the UK seeking a comfortable retirement, and partly of families who work outside Lincolnshire.

The men, women and children who live, work, study in or visit Lincolnshire have diverse backgrounds and circumstances. They are of all ages, disabled and non-disabled, of different ethnic backgrounds, straight, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender, and from faith

and non-faith communities. They live in a range of different types of households and have different levels of income. These different groups and their experiences overlap, and their ideas about themselves and their communities may change over time.

While the diversity of its communities is a great asset to Lincolnshire, there is evidence that some communities experience discrimination and disadvantage, and this has a negative effect on their quality of life. This can affect all communities, but it most often affects women, transgender people, ethnic minority people including guest workers and Gypsies and Travellers, disabled people, younger and older people, lesbians, gay men and bisexual people.

The County Council is one of the largest employers in the County with over 16,000 employees. We spend £932 million every year to provide services, either directly or through contracting from other organisations. We have a wide range of statutory duties, and we also have a general power to promote the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the County.

We believe that actions to promote equality and diversity will help us to respond more effectively to the changing requirements of an increasingly diverse population. Greater awareness will enable us to better understand and address the needs of all communities, and the pressures faced by public services as a result of an aging population and the long-term health conditions facing people retiring from heavy industry.

Our Vision

Our vision is that this Policy and subsequent actions will contribute to a Lincolnshire where people live, work and learn in vibrant and cohesive communities free from discrimination and with opportunities and choices to express and celebrate difference.

Aims

By adopting and implementing this Equality and Diversity Policy, we acknowledge our responsibility to address the imbalances caused by discrimination and disadvantage. In doing so, we will ensure that all communities have opportunities to work with us, access our services and be involved in what we do.

We will pursue this aim through continuously striving to improve the way in which we:

- Recruit, employ and develop our employees;
- Provide services;
- Involve communities;
- Work with other organisations.

We aim to:

- Promote equality and diversity in employment and in learning and development;
- Provide services that are accessible according to need;
- Involve all sections of the community in the planning, design, delivery and assessment of our services;

- Work in partnership with others to improve the lives of the people who live, work, study in and visit Lincolnshire.

We believe:

Our responsibility for equality and diversity is wider than the areas covered by current laws. We are committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and promoting good relations between people from different groups, in employment and in our services, on the grounds of:

- Race, nationality, national or ethnic origin;
- Gender, gender identity;
- Marital status, including civil partnerships;
- Disability;
- Age;
- Sexual orientation;
- Religion or belief, including the belief in no religion and non-religious belief;
- Caring responsibilities and family circumstances;
- Social class, income, or housing circumstances;
- Membership or non-membership of trade unions and involvement or non-involvement in trade union activity;
- Any other status as identified within the European Convention of Human Rights.

Equality and Diversity Policy

We will do this by:

- Meeting all our responsibilities for equality and diversity in the relevant legislation and codes of practice, as shown at Appendix C;
- Mainstreaming equality and diversity into everything we do. This means making sure all aspects of our work, such as our policies, strategies, plans, practices and procedures, structures and systems, reflect and incorporate appropriate equality objectives and targets;
- Challenging discrimination and tackling all forms of bullying and harassment;
- Taking positive action to address social, economic and geographical disadvantage;

We will promote equality and diversity through the strategic aims under each Executive member's portfolio. These are:

- Adult Services and Secondary Education (including Adult Social Care)
- Children's Services (Primary and Early Years, Children's Social Services)
- Community Safety and Local Strategic Partnerships
- Corporate Development (Improvement Plan, Children's Champion, Standards, County Solicitor's and Members' Support, HBS and IT Champion)
- Economic Development (Economic Development, Strategic Planning, Tourism, Culture, Sport and Diversity)
- Resources (Finance, Personnel, Property and ICT)

- Waste
- Highways

Responsibilities

The ultimate responsibility for the Equality and Diversity Policy rests with the Council's Executive. Both the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive ensure systems are in place to put the policy into practice on a day-to-day basis. All elected councillors (Members) have responsibility for the ownership and direction of this policy.

The Corporate Management Team has overall managerial responsibility for the direction of this policy and Directorate/Senior Management Teams are accountable for its implementation and delivery.

All managers will be familiar with this policy. They will promote and monitor the policy actively through their teams and through business and service plans, their service delivery, employment practices and employee development.

All employees will have access to, understand and implement this policy through their work and actions, supported by team discussions and training, and take personal responsibility to implement and promote this policy in their day-to-day dealings with customers, partners and each other.

We will ensure that everyone associated with the Council, whether employees, contractors, partners or those funded by us, are aware of, understand and comply with this policy.

Action and Evaluation

The Council's Equality and Diversity Scheme is the means by which this policy will be translated into a detailed action plan. Every year each directorate will review its action plan, as part of a review of the entire Scheme, and an annual report will be published. This will state how each directorate will identify and carry out ways of improving their performance in delivering equality and diversity. The plans will cover race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and religion/belief, in a context appropriate to the work of each directorate or service, and taking account of local circumstances. The entire Scheme will be completely revised every 3 years.

However, equality and diversity cannot be taken in isolation – they must be integrated into everything we do in order to improve the services we provide. We will integrate this policy into other strategies, policies and plans relating to our services, employment practices and partnerships.

Equality and diversity issues are central to the way we carry out our duties under Best Value (BV) and Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA). These are Government initiatives to measure and manage the performance of councils, which require us to continuously improve the way we work.

As part of the Best Value process we have to periodically review our services to make sure they are efficient, effective and giving value for money, and produce a Best Value Performance Plan every year that explains how we will do this. As part of Best Value we will produce guidance on equality and diversity

to ensure issues are addressed during reviews.

We will set measurable equality and diversity objectives and targets in the Best Value Performance Plan and service plans, and will monitor our performance against these. During the course of conducting Best Value reviews of services, review teams will consider the contribution of services to this policy and possible action required for improvement.

We will implement systems to monitor our employment, service delivery and other activities in relation to equality and diversity. This will include ways of identifying whether our policies and plans are improving access to council jobs, services and activities for those who typically face discrimination and disadvantage. This information will be used to inform the way we develop our policies and deliver our services.

Each directorate will have a named contact officer for equality and diversity issues.

It is a condition of service that employees comply with and support this policy. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal. The County Council will make sure that all employees:

- Are fully aware of the Equality and Diversity Policy and how it affects their work;
- Understand any action plans relevant to them and their responsibilities for implementing them.

Equality and diversity is a compulsory competency for all employees and the Equality and Diversity Policy will be part of all induction courses for new employees. We are working to incorporate equality and diversity into all

Equality and Diversity Policy

training and development activities, and all employees will receive equality and diversity training relevant to their needs.

Employing people

We will:

Strive to develop a workforce that broadly reflects the communities it serves, by taking steps to make sure that people from groups currently under-represented in our workforce are encouraged to apply for jobs with us.

Include equality and diversity in all aspects of employment practice – from advertising vacancies, recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of employment and access to training and development, to reasons for ending employment.

We will do this by:

- Including only the skills and experience actually needed for the job in job descriptions and the essential requirements in person specifications;
- Including in all jobs a requirement to implement equality and diversity, and assessing applicants against this requirement;
- Advertising jobs using media that reach all communities and in particular media that target groups who are currently under-represented in our workforce, including national and specialist media;
- Providing job details and accepting job applications in alternative formats such as large print, Braille and audio tape; offering a minicom or text service for job queries and providing interpreters if required in the recruitment and selection process;
- Valuing skills gained through non-traditional or informal work, such as voluntary work and caring responsibilities. The competence gained through this kind of experience will be balanced against that gained through more formal routes;
- Making sure that all job applicants, whether redeployment candidates, internal or external applicants, demonstrate their skills, experience and competence for the job. Redeployment candidates may be given additional training to allow them to reach the minimum standards required for a post;
- Recognising and supporting the potential of all employees by offering opportunities for learning and development to all;
- Monitoring job applicants, those short-listed and those appointed, by race, gender, disability, age, directorate and whether they work full or part time, to make sure this policy is working properly;
- Aiming to develop, implement and review policies and procedures on work-life balance, caring responsibilities and religious/cultural needs of our employees;
- Making sure the working environment is safe and supportive by not tolerating any form of bullying or harassment. We have recently reviewed our policies and procedures to deal with bullying and harassment at work;
- Providing funding for workplace adaptations and aids so disabled people can get or keep jobs with us;

- Specifically addressing disability issues in accordance with the Employment Service's 'Positive about Disabled People scheme', through which we are committed to:
- Interview all disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria for a job vacancy and consider them on their abilities;
- Make sure that there is a mechanism in place to discuss, at any time, but at least once a year, with disabled employees what we and they can do to make sure they can develop and use their abilities;
- Make every effort to ensure that employees who become disabled can stay in employment;
- Take action to ensure that all employees develop the appropriate level of disability awareness needed for their job;
- Annually review our commitments and achievements, plan ways to improve on these and let employees and the Employment Service know about progress and future plans;
- Making sure that all managers discuss this policy and any relevant action plans with their employees. Managers will discuss with employees how they can contribute to achieving our equality and diversity aims and objectives and ensure these are put into practice. Managers will deal with any breaches of the policy and with any failure to implement relevant action plans. Failure to tackle issues of discrimination or harassment could result in line managers being held liable for the actions of their employees;

- Recognising that the Trade Unions representing employees make a valuable contribution to equality and diversity. We will continue to work closely with the Unions to develop our Equality and Diversity Policy and Scheme.

Providing services

We will:

Provide our services in line with the values, priorities and principles identified in our corporate vision, Community Strategy, Best Value Performance Plan, Business Plan and our directorate Service Plans;

Deliver services throughout the County to people who need them, without discrimination and in ways that are tailored to different peoples' needs. Every customer will be treated in a professional manner, with courtesy and respect;

Carry out a programme of continually improving access to our buildings that are open to the public, and ensure that pedestrian environments and transport facilities are designed to meet the needs of all communities;

Make sure our employees are properly trained and supported to deliver high quality customer service in line with this policy;

Make sure that our services meet the needs of our diverse communities by involving communities in identifying and prioritising their needs and making sure they are met; Develop our services to maximise take up by all communities and particularly those groups

Equality and Diversity Policy

facing discrimination or disadvantage. We will do this by:

- Presenting written information in plain English and using methods other than written documents to present information, as appropriate;
- Providing information in community languages and alternative formats such as Braille, large print, audio tape etc., in line with our policies and procedures relating to communication and access;
- Providing interpretation and translation services as appropriate and in line with our policies and procedures relating to communication and access;
- Review our procurement policies, our funding for services provided by other organisations and our partnership arrangements to make sure that wherever possible organisations that provide services under contract to the Council, on our behalf or with funding from us, adopt the same approach to equality and diversity.

Working with other organisations

We will:

- Use our leadership role as a major employer and provider of services to help form public opinion to promote equality and diversity, and challenge negative stereotypes of excluded and disadvantaged communities;
- Work with others in the public, private, voluntary and community sectors in the

county to make sure that equality and diversity policies and plans similar to our own are adopted and implemented more widely;

- Share information, experience and examples of good practice on equality and diversity through our links with other public, private, voluntary and community organisations in the county;
- Promote equality and diversity within partnerships and other relevant bodies, and in our dealings with the media;
- Work with other organisations to develop joint plans to improve equality and diversity;
- Learn from the equality and diversity policies and plans of other similar councils and organisations locally, regionally and nationally.

Involving communities

We will:

- Develop and implement our Sustainable Communities Strategy, Consultation Strategy and Engagement Strategy to support the involvement of all communities in our planning and decision making, and in the design, delivery and assessment of our services;
- Target resources at communities facing discrimination and disadvantage to help them become fully involved in the social, cultural, political and economic life of the county;

- Make sure there are a range of appropriate mechanisms that allow different communities to be fully involved;
- Develop effective working relationships with the diverse communities in the county through appropriate groups, forums and networks.

Meeting our legal responsibilities

We will:

Work within all current and relevant anti-discrimination laws. A full list of these can be found at Appendix C on page 22;

Work within the Codes of Practice produced by the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equality and the Disability Rights Commission. These Codes give recommendations and guidance on how to avoid discrimination in employment. They contain advice on the policies that are needed to prevent discrimination areas such as the recruitment and treatment of employees. Other Codes suggest steps to promote equality in service delivery, such as the CRE Code of Practice in Rented Housing and the Code of Practice for Social Landlords - Tackling Racial Harassment (2001). A list of current Codes of Practice is included at Appendix C on page 22.

The Codes do not have the force of law but they are approved by Parliament. Employment tribunals and others will take their provisions into account when considering relevant cases. Our policies, practices and procedures will be revised in line with changes in these Codes of Practice, as appropriate.

What to do if something goes wrong

Members of the public

If you think we are not providing a service in line with this policy or you think you have been unfairly treated in any way, you can complain to the County Council. Our corporate complaints procedure explains how you can do this. You can get a copy of this procedure from County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YL or from any of our offices, local libraries or by ringing us on 01522 782060. You can also email us at customer_services@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Council employees

If you are concerned about any equality or diversity issue relating to your employment you can speak to your line manager, or to your directorate's HR Manager or HR Advisor.

If you feel embarrassed, humiliated, offended, distressed, alarmed, apprehensive or fearful because of someone else's behaviour towards you, you have the right to have that behaviour stopped. The County Council's Harassment and Bullying policy explains how to go about this. There are Harassment Advisors in each directorate who can advise and support you. Or you can contact the confidential anti-bullying helpline on 01522 782120. Further information is available on the intranet.

You also have a right to take up issues through the Grievance Procedure. You can get information on this from your line manager or from your directorate's HR Manager or HR Advisor.

Equality and Diversity Policy

If you are a member of a Trade Union, you can contact them for advice and support on any of these issues.

Appendix A – Equality and Diversity Policy Statements

These statements explain how the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy relates to some of the main groups of people who most often face discrimination and disadvantage. The statements add to the information given in the main body of the policy.

Equality and Diversity Policy

Race

The County Council acknowledges that ethnic minority people, including refugees and asylum seekers, guest workers and Gypsies and Travellers, face discrimination and disadvantage. This is because of attitudes and actions based on the belief that one race is better than another. This kind of belief is usually called racism. Racism covers these kinds of negative beliefs whether they are based on race, nationality, or national or ethnic origin. It is ethnic minority people who most often experience discrimination or disadvantage because of racism. Racism can mean people from an ethnic minority background are the subject of negative stereotypes and attitudes, treated as inferior and denied the same quality of life as white people. It can also mean they face harassment, hatred and violence.

The Council will strive to meet the specific needs of ethnic minority people. In particular we will:

- Carry out our duties under legislation aimed at eliminating racial discrimination, including the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000;
- Challenge racism by our employees, elected Members, other organisations and customers;
- Deal effectively and consistently with racial harassment and violence;
- Support campaigns and activities for achieving full equality for ethnic minority people;

- Work with others to make Lincolnshire a safer place for ethnic minority people to live, work, study and visit;
- Support all ethnic minority employees to fully develop their potential;
- Aim to develop a workforce that better reflects the ethnic minority communities in Lincolnshire, especially at senior management levels and in areas where ethnic minority people are under-represented;
- Support the formation of groups, networks and services for ethnic minority people, as employees of the Council and as residents and customers.

We understand that ethnic minority people are part of diverse communities and that racism affects these communities in different ways. We will take responsibility for making sure we meet the range of needs that arise from this.

We also recognise that ethnic minority people can face other forms of discrimination or disadvantage because of their age, gender or gender identity, marital and civil partnership status, family circumstances, caring responsibilities, because they are disabled or because they are lesbian, gay or bisexual. We will make sure our policies to tackle these issues include ways to address the needs of ethnic minority people.

Gender and transgender

The County Council acknowledges that women and – to a lesser extent – men, face discrimination and disadvantage. This is because of attitudes and actions based on the belief that one of the genders is better than the other – this kind of belief is usually described as sexism. Women more often experience discrimination or disadvantage because of sexism. Sexism can mean women are the subjects of negative stereotypes and attitudes, treated as inferior and denied the same quality of life as men. It can also mean they face harassment, hatred and violence.

The County Council also accepts that transgender people face disadvantage and discrimination because of similar attitudes and actions based on hatred of transgender people (often described as trans-phobia) or the belief that the lives of transgender people are less valid than others.

The Council will strive to meet the specific needs of women, men and transgender people. In particular, we will:

- Carry out our duties under legislation aimed at eliminating gender discrimination, including the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Equal Pay Act 1970 and Gender Recognition Act;
- Challenge sexist and exclusive language and behaviour by our employees, elected Members, other organisations and customers;
- Deal effectively and consistently with sexual harassment and violence;
- Support campaigns and activities for achieving full equality for women and men;
- Work with others to make Lincolnshire a safer place for women, men and transgender people to live, work, study and visit;
- Support all employees to fully develop their potential and provide positive action measures in areas of under-representation by either gender;
- Aim to develop a workforce that better reflects an equal balance of women and men, especially at senior management levels and in areas where men or women are traditionally under-represented, i.e. men in education and caring professions, women in construction and transport;
- Support the formation of groups, networks and services for all women and men, as employees of the Council and as residents and customers.

However, we recognise that the ways we deal with other forms of discrimination may not be appropriate to deal with trans-phobia. Because of the nature of this form of discrimination, transgender employees and customers may not always feel able to disclose who they are. This can mean that services are designed or delivered in a way that is inappropriate for this group. We will work with individuals and groups who are part of the wider transgender community to make sure our policies in this area are effective. We will also work to eliminate assumptions that our employees, customers and others we work with are not transgender.

Equality and Diversity Policy

We also recognise that women, men and transgender people can face other forms of discrimination or disadvantage because of their race, age, marital and civil partnerships status, family circumstances, caring responsibilities, because they are disabled or because they are gay, lesbian or bisexual. We will make sure our policies to tackle these issues include ways to address the needs of women, men and transgender people.

Disability

The County Council acknowledges that disabled people face discrimination and disadvantage. This is because of attitudes and actions based on the belief that disabled people are less able than other people. These kinds of beliefs are based on an idea that disabled people are impaired in some way, rather than recognising that it is other people's attitudes, organisations and systems in society that create barriers which prevent disabled people from having a full quality of life.

This can mean that disabled people are the subject of negative stereotypes or attitudes. They are often patronised by other people and not given the same access to the full range of services and social, work and leisure opportunities as other people. Disabled people can also face harassment, hatred and violence.

The Council will strive to meet the specific needs of disabled people. In particular we will:

- Carry out our duties under legislation aimed at eliminating disability discrimination, including the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005;
- Promote positive images of disabled people and challenge attitudes that stereotype, patronise or discriminate;
- Deal effectively and consistently with any harassment and violence towards disabled people;
- Develop our services and the environments we deliver them from, to remove barriers that prevent disabled

people from having equal access to our services and premises;

- Support campaigns and activities for achieving full equality for disabled people;
- Work with others to make Lincolnshire a safer and more accessible place for disabled people to live, work, study and visit;
- Carry out, review and build on our commitments under the Employment Services' 'Positive about Disabled People' scheme;
- Aim to develop a workforce that better reflects the disabled population of Lincolnshire, especially at senior management levels and in areas where disabled people are under-represented;
- Support all disabled employees to fully develop their potential;
- Support the formation of groups, networks and services for disabled people, as employees of the Council and as residents and customers.

We also recognise that disabled people can face other forms of discrimination or disadvantage because of their race, age, gender or gender identity, marital and civil partnerships status, family circumstances, caring responsibilities or because they are lesbian, gay or bisexual. We will make sure our policies to tackle these issues include ways to address the needs of disabled people.

Equality and Diversity Policy

Age

The County Council acknowledges that younger and older people face discrimination and disadvantage. This is because of attitudes and actions based on certain beliefs, for example that older people are less able to learn new skills, or that younger people are not competent to do some jobs because of their youth, regardless of their experience.

This kind of belief is usually called ageism and applies to both younger and older people. It means that younger and older people are often patronised and are the subject of negative stereotypes or attitudes that limit their opportunities.

The Council will strive to meet the specific needs of younger and older people. In particular we will:

- Carry out our duties under legislation aimed at eliminating age discrimination, including the Employment (Equality) Age regulations;
- Support campaigns and activities for achieving full equality for younger and older people;
- Promote positive images of younger and older people and challenge attitudes that stereotype, patronise or discriminate;
- Develop our services and the environments we deliver them from, to remove barriers that prevent younger and older people from having equal access to our services and premises;
- Work with others to make Lincolnshire a safer and more accessible place for

younger and older people to live, work, study and visit;

- Aim to develop a workforce that better reflects the age range of the population of Lincolnshire, in all directorates and at all levels;
- Support all employees to fully develop their potential, regardless of their age;
- Support the formation of groups, networks and services for younger and older people, as employees of the Council and as residents and customers.

We also recognise that younger and older people can face other forms of discrimination or disadvantage because of their race, disability, gender or gender identity, marital and civil partnership status, family circumstances, caring responsibilities or because they are lesbian, gay or bisexual. We will make sure our policies to tackle these issues include ways to address the needs of younger and older people.

Sexual Orientation

The County Council acknowledges that lesbians, gay men and bisexual people face disadvantage and discrimination. This is because of attitudes and actions based on hatred of lesbians, gay men and bisexual people (often described as homophobia) or the belief that the lives of heterosexual people are better or more valid (a belief described as heterosexism). The Council also accepts that transgender people face disadvantage and discrimination because of similar attitudes and actions.

The Council will strive to meet the specific needs of lesbians, gay men, and bisexual people. In particular we will:

- Challenge heterosexism and homophobia by our employees, elected members, other organisations and customers;
- Deal effectively and consistently with any harassment and violence towards lesbians, gay men, and bisexual people;
- Support campaigns and activities for achieving full equality for lesbians, gay men and bisexual people;
- Work with others to make Lincolnshire a safer place for lesbians, gay men and bisexual people to live, work, study and visit;
- Support the formation of groups, networks and services for lesbians, gay men and bisexual people, as employees of the Council and as residents and customers;
- Support the right of lesbian, gay and bisexual customers, employees and others

we work with to be open about who they are. We will do this by creating an atmosphere and environment where it is safe for them to do so, by acknowledging that relationships between people of the same gender are equally valid to those between women and men, and by not assuming that employees or customers are heterosexual.

However, we recognise that the ways we deal with other forms of discrimination may not be appropriate to deal with homophobia and heterosexism. Because of the nature of these forms of discrimination, lesbians, gay men and bisexual employees and customers may not always feel able to disclose who they are. This can mean that services are designed or delivered in a way that is inappropriate for these groups. We will work with individuals and groups who are part of the wider lesbian, gay and bisexual communities to make sure our policies in this area are effective. We will also work to eliminate assumptions that all our employees, customers and others we work with are heterosexual.

We also recognise that lesbians, gay men and bisexual people can face other forms of discrimination or disadvantage because of their race, age, gender or gender identity, marital and civil partnership status, family circumstances, caring responsibilities or because they are disabled. We will make sure our policies to tackle these issues include ways to address the needs of lesbians, gay men and bisexual people.

Religion or Belief

The County Council acknowledges that people may face discrimination and disadvantage because of their religion or belief. This is because of attitudes and actions based on the belief that one religion is better than another. This kind of belief is usually called religious discrimination or intolerance. Religious discrimination or intolerance covers these kinds of negative beliefs whether they are based on religion, race, nationality, or national or ethnic origin.

Ethnic minority people most often experience discrimination or disadvantage because of religious intolerance, although it can apply to any group. Religious discrimination or intolerance can mean that people of a particular religion are the subjects of negative stereotypes and attitudes, and are consequently denied the same quality of life as others. It can also mean they face harassment, hatred and violence.

The Council will strive to meet the specific needs of people of different religions. In particular we will:

- Carry out our duties under legislation aimed at eliminating discrimination based on religion or belief, including the Race Relations Act 1976, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, and the Employment (Equality) Religion or Belief regulations 2003;
- Challenge discrimination and intolerance by our employees, elected Members, other organisations and customers;

- Deal effectively and consistently with religious harassment and violence;
- Work with others to make Lincolnshire a safer place for people of different religions to live, work, study and visit;
- Support all employees to fully develop their potential, regardless of their religion or belief;
- Aim to develop a workforce that better reflects the religions of the communities in Lincolnshire, across all directorates and at all levels;
- Support the formation of groups, networks and services for people of different religions, as employees of the Council and as residents and customers.

We understand that different religions can be found in all communities and that religious discrimination and intolerance affects these communities in different ways. We will take responsibility for making sure we meet the range of needs that arise from this.

We also recognise that people with different religions can face other forms of discrimination or disadvantage because of their race, age, gender or gender identity, marital and civil partnership status, family circumstances, caring responsibilities, because they are disabled or because they are lesbian, gay or bisexual. We will make sure our policies to tackle these issues include ways to address the needs of different religious groups.

Appendix B – Glossary of Terms

Equality

Equality or equal opportunities, is based on a legal framework that aims to protect individuals from discrimination. The legislation covers employment and services.

The focus is on fair treatment for all, and not treating someone less favourably because of their race, gender, disability etc. This does not mean treating everyone the same; people are different and the issues relating to different groups require separate consideration. The law allows for positive action to be taken to assist certain groups to overcome past disadvantage or under-representation in the workforce.

Diversity

Diversity goes beyond equality and the groups covered by anti-discrimination legislation. It refers to 'difference' and is about recognising and valuing the differences and individual contribution that people make, whether at work or in the community. It is about having a workforce that is motivated by being valued and treated with respect, and ensuring that all people maximise their potential and contribution. For the County Council, this includes working towards having a workforce that is representative of the community we serve, providing accessible and relevant services that respond to the customer's needs, and creating an inclusive environment. However, it is not a replacement for equality or equal opportunities.

Discrimination

Discrimination is about people being thought of as having less worth or value, being treated less favourably than others or given fewer opportunities. Discrimination has its roots in stereotyping and prejudice, and fundamentally between whether a person belongs to the in-group (us) or the out-group (them).

Sometimes discrimination arises because people have decided that some people 'deserve' to be treated less well than others (because they're not part of the in-group). In other cases, people make assumptions that discriminate, for example that older workers don't learn as quickly as younger ones, or that disabled workers take more sick leave.

Discrimination can be direct, indirect, intentional or unintentional. Individuals, groups or whole organisations can be discriminatory. Perception is just as important as intention. It is vital that we take seriously the views of people who experience discrimination.

Direct discrimination

This is when a person is treated less favourably than others because of, for example, their race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief. It can also be due to other factors such as their political beliefs, trades union membership or non membership, marital and civil partnership status, mental ill health, pregnancy, maternity, or social background.

Equality and Diversity Policy

Indirect discrimination

This is where a criterion, provision or practice is applied to all, but which disadvantages people of, for example, a particular race, gender or age because they are less able to comply with it – unless it can be objectively justified.

Institutional discrimination

Institutional discrimination, based on the definition of institutional racism from the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report, is defined as “the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate service to people because of their difference, including race, gender, caring responsibilities, disability, gender reassignment, age, social class, sexual orientation, religion or belief. It can be seen in processes, attitudes, behaviour and power imbalances that discriminate through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and stereotyping, which disadvantage people.”

Victimisation

Victimisation is treating a person less favourably because they have brought proceedings of discrimination against their employer, given evidence in relation to a case, or alleged that discrimination has occurred.

Positive Action

Positive action means taking steps to overcome past disadvantage or under-representation, in a way that helps put everyone on an equal footing. This might involve advertising to encourage job applicants from a particular under-represented group to apply, or training to help develop the potential of under-represented groups. Positive action is not the same as positive discrimination.

Positive discrimination

Positive discrimination is illegal. It involves employing someone because they come from a disadvantaged group, regardless of whether they have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to do the job. The only exception to this is that the law now allows for positive discrimination in regard to disabled people. The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) requires employers to “take steps to take account of disabled persons’ disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.”

Genuine Occupational Requirement

Formerly called Genuine Occupational Qualification. In very limited circumstances it can be lawful for an employer to discriminate in favour of one person because of their gender, race, religion/belief or sexual orientation, if the employer can show that it is a genuine occupational requirement that the job holder is of a certain gender, race, religion/belief or sexual orientation. This is usually for reasons of authenticity, such as an actor or model, or where the job holder is providing personal care or targeted services that are better delivered by someone of the same gender, race or sexual orientation as the customer. For example, a personal assistant employed by a disabled person, or a gay men’s outreach worker.

Prejudice

Prejudice means to pre-judge. It refers to negative attitudes towards the members of a particular group based solely on their membership of that group, e.g. because of their gender, sexual orientation etc. Prejudice often involves stereotyping and acting

negatively towards a particular group or treating them less favourably (discrimination).

Stereotyping

This is the belief that all members of a particular group share certain traits or characteristics. It involves over-generalisations and is often linked to prejudice and discrimination.

Bullying

Bullying is defined as offensive, intimidating, malicious, insulting or humiliating behaviour, abuse of power or authority, which attempts to undermine an individual or group of employees.

Harassment

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating the victim's dignity, creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It may be related to a particular personal characteristic, e.g. gender, race, age etc. It may be persistent or an isolated incident. What matters is the effect on the victim, not the intent of the perpetrator.

Corporate or Vicarious Liability

This refers to the fact that in the eyes of the law, an employer is responsible for the actions of its employees, with or without the employer's knowledge. The only exception to vicarious liability is if the employer can show that it has discharged this responsibility through proper training.

Appendix C – Legislation and Codes Of Practice

Disability:

- **Disability Discrimination Act 1995**
- **Disability Discrimination Act 2005**
- **Disability Rights Commission Act 1999**
- **Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001**

Gender:

- **Equal Pay Act 1970 (as amended)**
- **Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (as amended)**
- **Equal Pay (Amendment) Regulations 1983**
- **Sex Discrimination and Equal Pay (Amendment) Regulations 2003**
- **Sex Discrimination Act 1986**
- **Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999**
- **Sex Discrimination (Indirect Discrimination and Burden of Proof) Regulations 2001**
- **Equal treatment Directive (amended 2002)**
- **Equal Pay Directive**
- **Pregnant Workers' Directive**
- **Equality Act 2006**
- **The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 (as amended in light of Civil Partnership Act)**

Race and Religion:

- **Race Relations Act 1976**
- **Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000**
- **Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment Regulations) 2003 – EC Article 13 – Race directive enhancing RRAA - e.g. by amending definition of indirect discrimination**
- **Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003**

Codes of Practice

Disability Rights Commission

- **Code of practice: the elimination of discrimination in the field of employment against disabled persons or persons who have had a disability**
- **Code of practice: Employment and occupation (2004)**
- **Code of practice: Trade organisations and qualifications bodies (2004)**
- **Code of practice: Rights of access, goods, facilities, services and premises (1999)**

Equal Opportunities Commission

(Most advice from the EOC has been issued as 'good practice' guidance)

- **Code of practice on sex discrimination (1985)**
- **Code of practice on equal pay (2003)**
Code of Practice for the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of sex and marriage and promotion of equal opportunities in employment

Commission for Racial Equality

- **Code of practice on the duty to promote race equality (2005)**
- **Code of practice for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in Education in England & Wales (1989)**
- **Code of practice in primary health care services (1992)**
- **Code of practice in maternity services (1994)**

Forthcoming Legislation/Codes

- **Work and Families Bill – maternity/paternity, flexible working**
- **Gender Equality Duty (from April 2007)**
- **Disability Equality Duty Code of Practice (from 05-12-2006)**
- **Draft Transport Code of Practice (from 04-12-2006)**
- **The Employment Equality Age Regulations (2006)**