

# TORPOINT TOWN COUNCIL



## EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

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## **INTRODUCTION**

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# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy

## 1. Definitions

'Inclusion is the culture in which ALL people feel included, are given equal opportunity to contribute and feel comfortable expressing their true selves'

Creating an inclusive culture ensures that All feel valued, regardless of who they are or where they are from.'

Taken from:

[Peoplegoal.com/bog/diversity-and-inclusive-strategy](https://peoplegoal.com/bog/diversity-and-inclusive-strategy)

The equality Act became law in 2020, it covers everyone in Great Britain and protects people from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.

There are 9 protected Characteristics within the equality act:

- 1- Age
- 2- Disability
- 3- Gender reassignment
- 4- Marriage and civil partnership
- 5- Pregnancy and Maternity
- 6- Race
- 7- Religion or Belief
- 8- Sex
- 9- Sexual Orientation

### 1.2 Discrimination as described by dictionary.cambridge.org

treating a person or particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way from the way in which you treat other people, because of their skin colour, sex, sexuality, etc.:

#### **harassment:**

behaviour that annoys or upsets someone.

#### **Victimisation:**

the act of victimising someone (= treating them unfairly)

### 1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Torpoint Town Council (TTC) consider the impact of all decision making on the above 9 protected characteristics. Bearing in mind that failure to do so could result in accusations of discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.

Equality and diversity is not about changing everything or making radical changes to everything that is already in place, it's about providing opportunities, not favouring any of the above 9 protected characteristics.

## 1.4 Why the Equality Act is important to you as a councillor?

As a councillor, you come into contact with a wide range of individuals and community groups. You fulfil several roles, including representative, advocate, negotiator and facilitator, which means that it is important for you to fully understand and respect your local community and residents. Complying with the Act will help you to:

- act lawfully
- treat people fairly
- fully understand your community
- make the best decisions for your community
- be seen as fair and non-discriminatory
- build a good reputation for yourself and your council.

(source: <https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/councillor-workbook-equality-diversity-and-inclusion>)

## 1.5 Aims

Torpoint Town Council's aims are:

To create a workforce that is diverse, promotes positivity and instils a can-do attitude in everyone, no matter their background or characteristics.

To create an environment in which individuals' differences and the ways in which everyone contributes is recognised and valued.

This equality, diversity and Inclusion policy must be followed by:

- All employees of Torpoint Town Council,
- Visitors
- Contractors
- Councillors
- Volunteers
- Torpoint residents

This policy, alongside other relevant TTC policies, sit at the heart of any and all decisions made by the Council regarding the towns assets, environment and accessibility across the board. A best practice document will need to be produced and recorded to show that this policy has been reviewed and taken into consideration when any decisions are made regarding the areas above.

What does the best practice document look like?

Attached appendix

## **1.6 Positive Action**

If it is identified that employees or job applicants have a particular protected characteristic, suffer a disadvantage because of it, or if their group is underrepresented in an area of the Council, the Equality Act 2020 allows the use of 'positive action'.

Positive action allows the organisation to take into consideration the protected characteristic when deciding to recruit or promote. However, only if you have two or more candidates that are equally qualified and equally capable of doing the job.

To use positive action, the organisation is required to provide evidence that the characteristic/s face difficulty in the workplace or that participation in certain workplace activities is disproportionately low.

It is imperative to note, this does not mean favouring those with protected characteristics – that is not equality.

Prior to any selection process the organisation must always consider the abilities and qualifications of all candidates, and if selecting an individual with protected characteristics would improve diversity within the Council.

## **1.7 Torpoint Town Council's Commitments to the policy stated above:**

Torpoint Town Council supports the Equality Act 2020 and in doing so recognises it's the duty and responsibility of all town council employees, volunteers, councillors, visitors, and contractors' to ensure Torpoint town is fully inclusive and accessible, creating an all-inclusive environment by following the principles in this policy with reference to the Equality Act 2020.

Torpoint Town Council will use this policy to ensure equality is actively promoted within our Council and our town by fair treatment of all.

Torpoint Town Council will celebrate individual differences and actively support diversity and inclusion ensuring everyone has the opportunity to experience and access all of the town's offerings.

Torpoint Town Council will ensure everyone is treated with dignity, respect and are valued.

Torpoint Town Council will encourage everyone within the town to support and respect one and other, ensuring the Equality Act 2020 is adhered to and in doing so aiding Torpoint town to reduce discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

Torpoint Town Council will always make a conscious effort to provide equal opportunities for all employees, councillors, volunteers, visitors, contractors, and residents of Torpoint.

The actions we take should be true to our word to promote equality and diversity.

This policy is active, it will be monitored and reviewed annually.

This policy is subject to change after consultation with disabled persons.



### Best Practice Document for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion assessments

This document is to be used in conjunction with any decisions being made within Torpoint Town Council to ensure the council policy on equality, Diversity and Inclusion has been followed. This document also provides clear objectives for ensuring that all areas are considered prior to decisions being made that may affect any of the 9 protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2020.

### **Environment– our town**

How does it affect our town?

### **Mission statement**

Is this in line with the Torpoint Town Council’s mission statement?

Residents – how will it affect the residents of Torpoint?

Is it of benefit?

Do the town’s residents want or need it?

### **Accessibility**

Is this accessible to all?

What would need to be done to ensure that all residents regardless of ability are able to access the proposed?

**Situation**

How will this affect people covered by the 9 protected characteristics?

The outcome of this working document should help to determine firstly if this decision is viable, also, what actions would need to be taken to ensure that the proposed decision effectively covers all of the above areas?

This working document should be completed by a member of the disabled council to ensure that items under accessibility are not dismissed if it is a need.

As a council do bear in mind, we are responsible for providing reasonable adjustments if required and require a robust business case if we decide not to do so.