EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES – EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

1.0 Purpose

1.1 Howden Town Council is committed to meeting the varied needs and circumstances of its employees and Town residents, ensuring that services are equally appropriate to all, without discrimination. The Council's goal is to support the development of a community that is free from unlawful discrimination. In support of this commitment, the Council has adopted a policy for employment and service delivery.

2.0 Employment

2.1 No Howden Town Council employee or job applicant will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, gender (including transgender), marital status, sexual orientation, disability, religion or beliefs, race, nationality or ethnic or national origins, or will be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be justified.

To underpin its commitment to equality in employment, the Council will;

- Ensure that all recruitment, selection and training procedures operate in a fair and non-discriminatory way, so that the best person to do the job is appointed.
- Consult regularly with the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and other agencies to identify gaps in its employment policies and take action to remedy them.
- Consider sympathetically any request for flexible working, job-share travel arrangements, child and dependant care leave and will guarantee interviews for disabled people who meet the essential criteria for a job.

3.0 Service Delivery

3.1 Howden Town Council will ensure that its services, including those carried out in partnership with other agencies, are available equally to all, regardless of age, gender (including transgender), marital status, sexual orientation, disability, religion or beliefs, race, nationality of ethnic or national origins, making sure that no one is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be justified.

4.0 Legislation

4.1 In developing this Policy, Howden Town Council has taken into account all current appropriate legislation including:

- Equality Act 2010
- Sex Discrimination Act 2010
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Race Relations Act 2000
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Asylum, Immigration and Nationality Act 2006
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) (Religion or Belief) (Amendment) Regulations 2007
- Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 (Amendment) Regulations 2008
- Civil Partnerships, Marriages and Deaths (Registration etc) Act 2019
- Sex Discrimination (Burden of Proof) Regulations 2001
- Equality Act 2010

5.0 Discrimination and harassment

5.1 Howden Town Council will take action to ensure that all forms of discrimination are excluded from its policies and practices.

It is not necessary to prove that someone intended to discriminate; it is sufficient only to show that the outcome of an action was less favourable treatment. Less favourable treatment can take many forms – words, actions or failure to provide opportunities or services and can be perpetuated by individuals, groups or institutions.

5.2 Howden Town Council recognises that harassment and discrimination of employees and service users are unacceptable and is working towards building an organisational culture that reinforces this belief. The Council is committed to addressing any harassment of employees or service users.

6.0 Responsibilities

6.1 The accountabilities and responsibilities in relation to this policy can be summarised as follows:

The Council will take the lead in promoting equality, ensuring equalities issues are given due consideration within all areas of responsibility, in decision-making and in monitoring services.

The Clerk to the Council will actively support and assist the equalities work by:-

- Monitoring the performance of the Town Council's services, agreeing the necessary action and maintaining a commitment to the Council's equality work.
- Ensuring that employees are adequately trained to meet the requirements of this policy.

All employees have a responsibility for implementing the policy as an integral and core element of the work of the Town Council and will seek training opportunities and personal development, as appropriate.

To be reviewed every three years or earlier if legislation dictates.