



# Penrith Town Council

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## **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT**

Penrith Town Council is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination, and actively promotes equality of opportunity for everyone in employment and service delivery. This Council adopted an Equal Opportunities Policy in May 2016 in relation to employment and retention of staff.

The Town Council agrees wholeheartedly with the principles of equal opportunities and declares its opposition to any form of less favourable treatment, whether through direct or indirect discrimination.

The Town Council recognises it is the duty of all councillors and any employees to accept personal responsibility for fostering a fully integrated community by adhering to the principles of equal opportunity and maintaining racial harmony in the provision of dedicated services to people on equitable terms.

The statement sets out how the Town Council intends to meet its commitments by working alongside everyone, irrespective of their race, religious beliefs, creed, colour, disability, ethnic origin, nationality, marital/parental status, sex or sexual orientation.

## **SCOPE**

This statement applies to all employees, volunteers, placements, contractors and elected members of Penrith Town Council. It is accepted that elected members share a responsibility with employees when representing the Town Council or carrying out the functions of their elected office. Therefore, all aspects of this policy apply to elected members.

## CORE VALUES

There are five core values:

- 1. Equality Recognition** - Everyone is of equal value and should be respected according to individual needs and abilities.
- 2. Reasonableness** - To be fair, reasonable and just in all council activities
- 3. Accessibility** - Providing equal access for all in employment and service delivery.
- 4. Empowerment** - Helping individuals take on responsibility so that they can influence and participate in the decision-making process.
- 5. Quality** - Obtaining the highest standards in service delivery

## THE TOWN COUNCIL WILL:

The Town Council is committed to promoting equality and diversity, providing an inclusive and supportive environment for all.

- Ensure that people are treated solely on the basis of their abilities and potential, regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religious or political belief or affiliation, trade union membership, age, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, socio- economic background, or any other inappropriate distinction.
- Promote diversity and equality for all staff and value the contributions made by individuals and groups of people from diverse cultural, ethnic, socio-economic and distinctive backgrounds.
- Promote and sustain an inclusive and supportive work environment which affirms the equal and fair treatment of individuals in fulfilling their potential and does not afford unfair privilege to any individual or group.
- Challenge inequality and less favourable treatment wherever practicable.
- Promote greater participation of under-represented groups by encouraging positive action to address inequality.
- Promote an environment free of harassment and bullying on any grounds.
- Work towards the elimination of discrimination, direct, or indirect, and all forms of harassment.
- Ensure that individuals are treated equally with respect to their specific needs and that there is consistency in the Councils approach to working practices and conditions.
- Be a role model and try to influence others through good practice in service delivery and employment.
- Provide public information, as far as possible, in a way that best meets the needs of the person requesting it.

## **EQUALITY AIMS**

### **GENDER**

The Town Council operates an Equal Opportunities Policy and will promote a positive work life balance environment and develop family friendly policies.

### **AGE**

The Town Council will eliminate unlawful age discrimination and will review policies (including retirement) to ensure that they comply with age discrimination legislation. Monitoring will be undertaken to identify any areas of inequality.

### **SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

The Town Council will eliminate unlawful discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation. Policies will be reviewed to ensure that they comply fully with legislation on sexual orientation.

### **DISABILITY**

The Town Council will remove barriers to participation by disabled people, wherever possible. Staff who become disabled whilst working with the Council will be offered reasonable adjustments to enable them to continue working. Monitoring will be undertaken to identify any areas of inequality.

### **RACE/ETHNIC ORIGIN**

The Town Council will encourage participation of black and minority ethnic groups in all its activities. All policies will be reviewed and amended as appropriate in line with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

### **RELIGION**

The Town Council includes people from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds and will respect the needs and requirements of people who adhere to a range of cultural and religious beliefs. This will include staff needs in relation to dietary requirements, and requests for leave and facilities for religious observance.

## **THE LAW**

The policy will be implemented within the framework of the relevant legislation and codes of practice, which include:

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 as amended by Equality Act 2006
- Gender Reassignment Regulations 1999
- Race Relations Act 1976 as amended in 2000 by Race Relations amendment Act
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended in 2005
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Council Code of Conduct

**Adopted: May 2017**

**Review: 2022**