



Colchester
City Council

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 This policy relates to Colchester City Council and Colchester Commercial Holdings Limited.

1.2 Equality is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents. It is also the belief that no one should have poorer life chances because of the way they were born, where they came from, what they believe, or whether they have a disability – [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#).

1.3 This Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Policy positions the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty 2011 preventing organisations and Local Authorities as employers, and service providers from discriminating against individuals with protected characteristics.

1.4 We will protect them from discrimination on the grounds of their protected characteristics, showing the commitment of The Council to promoting and achieving equality, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of its work.

1.5 The policy aims to ensure that all individuals, regardless of their characteristics or backgrounds, are treated fairly, with dignity, and are provided with equal opportunities.

2. Policy Statement

- We are committed to eliminating discrimination, promoting diversity, and ensuring equal opportunities for all employees, residents, service users, and stakeholders.
- We will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, victimisation, or unfair treatment based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.
- We recognise that different individuals have diverse needs and experiences, and it will endeavour to identify and address any barriers to equality and diversity, taking appropriate actions to promote inclusivity.
- The Council's 2023-2026 strategy outlines our vision "To be an inclusive, modern and sustainable city"

3. Responsibilities

- Our leadership team, managers, and employees at all levels are responsible for implementing this policy and ensuring that it is embedded in all aspects of the organisation's work.
- Managers and supervisors will receive appropriate training and guidance to promote equality, diversity, and inclusion within their teams and to deal effectively with any issues or complaints that arise.
- All employees are expected to treat their colleagues, residents, service users, and stakeholders with respect and dignity, fostering an inclusive and supportive working environment.
- All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public.

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- We will provide reasonable adjustments and accommodations to ensure that individuals with disabilities or specific needs can fully participate in all aspects of the organisation's work.
- We will oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes:
 - pay and benefits
 - terms and conditions of employment
 - dealing with grievances and discipline
 - dismissal
 - redundancy
 - leave for parents
 - requests for flexible working
 - selection for employment, promotion, training, or other developmental opportunities
- Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness and update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law and best practice.
- Actively ensure that groups with a protected characteristic are not being excluded or disadvantaged in the workplace.

4. Application

- We will actively promote equality, diversity, and inclusion through its recruitment and selection processes, ensuring that all applicants are treated fairly, and decisions are based solely on merit. All recruitment panels will consist of at least one member being trained in Recruitment & Selection.
- Training and development opportunities will be provided to all employees, focusing on promoting awareness of equality and diversity issues and inclusive practices.
- We will review our policies, procedures, and practices to identify and address any potential discriminatory practices or barriers to equality and diversity.
- We will complete Equality Impact Assessments on policies and changes to services, this ensures we are following our statutory duties and not creating unnecessary barriers.
- Complaints of discrimination, harassment, victimisation, or unfair treatment will be taken seriously, and appropriate procedures will be in place to address and resolve such complaints promptly and fairly.
- We will monitor the demographics of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity, and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity, and inclusion policy. Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.
- Regularly review the effectiveness of this policy, set objectives for improvement, and communicate progress to employees, service users, and stakeholders.
- Work with colleagues to continue with our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion working group, supporting our service champions to provide awareness and support throughout the organisation.

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- Review our services in line with the Equality Framework for Local Government. We will use this Framework to build our own and to ensure we are meeting the standards set out.

[Equality Framework for Local Government | Local Government Association](#)

5. Confidentiality

- We will treat all personal information related to equality, diversity, and inclusion matters with strict confidentiality, ensuring compliance with data protection laws and regulations.
- Employees who raise concerns or complaints regarding equality and diversity issues will be protected against victimisation or retaliation.

6. Communities

6.1 The Community & Partnerships Team as part of the wider Wellbeing, Prevention and Partnerships Cluster are committed to serving their residents, organisations, and communities to ensure that EDI is at the forefront of all our interventions and engagements. We commit to support our community through connecting, signposting, and collaborating where appropriate as well as being responsive to enquiries/resident engagements – all of this we will do with an Asset Based Community Development (Communities Can) lens.

7. Colchester and Ipswich Museums

7.1 Colchester and Ipswich Museums (CIMS) preserves, interprets, and makes accessible the material culture and cultural heritage of both Colchester and Ipswich for the benefit of residents and visitors to both towns. It is a museum service with regional and national reach contributing to the cultural regeneration and wellbeing of both towns and the wider region.

7.2 CIMS will inspire creativity and learning through the innovative use of venues, collections and activities that appeal to and connect with audiences locally, regionally, and nationally.

7.3 We want our museum service to enrich the lives of all our residents, increase their knowledge and understanding and feed their aspirations and imaginations. Visitors will have access to all that the Museums have to offer and will enjoy and value what they experience during their visits, resulting in a significant and positive impact upon their lives.

7.4 CIMS Senior Management team, supported by CIMS Diversity Advisory Group and the CCC Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Specialist, will be responsible for ensuring wider stakeholders are aware of the Duty, as well as the responsibilities appropriate to their role.

8. Review:

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8.1 This Equality & Diversity Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness. Any updates or revisions to the policy will be communicated to employees, service users, and stakeholders.

8.2 We are committed to creating an inclusive and diverse working environment, promoting equality of opportunity, and valuing the contributions of all individuals. Together, we can build a fair and inclusive society for all and promote a culture where you are free to be you.

Check for updates

Appendix and Document Information

The following policies and forms should also be read alongside this document:

| Policies | Forms |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| EqIA | |
| Disciplinary and Grievance | |
| Flexible Working | |
| Bullying and Harassment Policy | |

The policies and forms are shown on COLIN:

- [A-Z](#) – this link will take you to the "all in one place" page which has a short summary of the HR subject, what you need to do first, useful documents and links, and related items.
- [Staff Handbook](#).

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|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Title : | Equality, Diversity and Inclusion |
| Date : | 2023 |
| EQIA : | See HR EQIAs on the Council's website |
| Review Frequency: | Every three years or if change occurs |

For more information or advice about this policy please contact the HR Service Centre on 01206 282112 or email hrservicecentre@colchester.gov.uk.

This policy applies to you if you are working under the Terms and Conditions of Colchester City Council.