



CITY OF
Lincoln
COUNCIL

Equality, Diversity & Human Rights Policy

Document Control

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CMT	28 th October 2025
Policy Scrutiny Committee	17 th November 2025

Introduction

The aim of this policy is to define and raise awareness of City of Lincoln Council's approach to equality, diversity and human rights, and to ensure there are defined guidelines for employees to follow.

The Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Policy is for the benefit of all employees, members, service users, partners and commissioned services. This policy covers the areas of:

- Community Leadership
- Service Delivery
- Employment

City of Lincoln Council is committed to equality of opportunity for all, taking into account the nine protected characteristics as defined within the Equality Act 2010. The nine protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Sex
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

City of Lincoln Council will also strive to uphold the human rights of all of its employees, members and service users in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998.

City of Lincoln Council is one of the largest single employers in Lincoln, employing around 640 people and serving residents of and visitors to the city through the delivery of a range of services.

Through adopting and implementing this Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Policy we accept our responsibility for addressing and tackling the imbalances caused by disadvantage and discrimination, so that we can make sure all communities have opportunities to access our services, be involved in what we do and be part of our workforce.

The council has made significant progress towards this activity, and the Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Policy will help to ensure we continue this important work now and into the future.

All employees and members must comply with this policy at all times.

Additionally, we expect our contractual partners to also comply with this policy.

Setting the Corporate Context

Vision 2030 is City of Lincoln Council's Strategic Plan through to 2030.

Vision 2030 sets out what City of Lincoln Council want to achieve for Lincoln through to 2030 and how we will work together to achieve this. Vision 2030 builds on the council's two previous strategic plans Vision 2020 and Vision 2025.

The overall vision is: **Together, let's deliver Lincoln's ambitious future.**

The council has five strategic priorities under Vision 2030 which are:

- Let's drive inclusive, sustainable, economic growth
- Let's reduce all kinds of inequality
- Let's deliver quality housing
- Let's enhance our remarkable place
- Let's address the challenge of climate change

City of Lincoln Council continues to be passionate about promoting equality, diversity and human rights and this runs through the council's priorities.

Consideration of equality, diversity and human rights in these areas will therefore continue to form an important part of the council's work.



The council's equality objectives

The council has five equality objectives in place, which it is continuously working towards. The objectives help ensure the council has a clear focus on and considers equality, diversity and human rights at all times in the functions and services it delivers.

In early 2025 a review of the council's equality objectives was undertaken in line with the development of the council's new strategic plan, Vision 2030, and the following refreshed equality objectives were adopted by the council.

We will -

- Ensure our services are accessible and meet the needs of our residents
- Actively listen to and engage our communities and stakeholders in shaping the way our services are delivered
- Ensure equality and diversity is at the heart of our decision making and advocate for our communities' needs with partners
- Support and celebrate our diverse communities
- Continue to foster an inclusive workforce, making sure that our policies and practices support our workforce, now and in the future

City of Lincoln Council's statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998

As a public body acting on behalf of the local community, the council must actively work to make society fairer and tackle discrimination, with the overall aim of providing equal of opportunity for all.

The Equality Act 2010 places a general duty called the Public Sector Equality Duty on all public authorities when exercising their functions.

This Public Sector Equality Duty requires public authorities to have due regards to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

To comply with the duty at all times, the council will ensure that no individual will be unjustifiably discriminated against. This includes, but is not limited to, discrimination because of the nine protected characteristics as defined under the Equality Act 2010. The nine protected characteristics are outlined within the introduction to this policy.

Additionally, we will:

- engage with our customers to ensure the services we provide are relevant and meet their needs.
- empower people to recognise and counter discrimination and be supportive in doing so.
- not tolerate any form of intimidation, bullying or harassment.

We will also monitor the work of the council to ensure that human rights are respected and valued and that the Human Rights Act 1998 is complied with in service provision.

The Human Rights Act 1998 sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that individuals in the UK have access to. They include:

- Right to life
- Freedom from torture and inhuman or degrading treatment
- Right to liberty and security
- Freedom from slavery and forced labour
- Right to a fair trial
- No punishment without law
- Respect for your private and family life, home and correspondence
- Freedom of thought, belief and religion
- Freedom of expression
- Freedom of assembly and association
- Right to marry and start a family
- Protection from discrimination in respect of these rights and freedoms
- Right to peaceful enjoyment of your property
- Right to education
- Right to participate in free elections

Public authorities have an obligation to act in accordance with the rights, and therefore public officials must understand human rights and take them into account in their day-to-day work.

This is the case whether officials are delivering services directly to the public or devising new policies or procedures. Understanding human rights can help in making the right decisions.

Within the following sections details the council's commitments to equality, diversity and human rights as a:

- Community Leader
- Service provider
- Employer

Our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Human Rights as a Community Leader

Tackling inequality is a key element of the council's strategic plan, Vision 2030, which includes the following key priority – **Let's reduce all kinds of inequality.**

To achieve this -

- We will recognise the value of the voluntary sector and will work with individuals, groups and organisations to provide essential services, with equality and diversity firmly embedded in these relationships and in project delivery – this includes the work we undertake on tackling poverty as well as the work in our neighbourhoods to build community relations.
- We will encourage real participation in local democracy from people who may normally feel excluded from decision-making processes.
- We will comply with all our legal obligations and follow best practice guidance.

- We will embed equality and diversity into the business planning process of the council, ensuring that equality, diversity and human rights responsibilities are set out in a tree of responsibility, within employee job descriptions and within member role descriptions and that equality is an essential aspect of our Code of Corporate Governance. We will lead by example so other organisations can aspire to the standards we set.
- We will ensure training on equality and diversity is provided for all employees on an annual basis and also to new staff at the induction stage as well as for members. Online training is available on the staff intranet, Hub, and equality and diversity matters are covered in the corporate induction process.
- We will monitor council procurement activity to ensure that statutory equality, diversity and human rights duties relating to procurement are observed. This extends to working in partnerships with other agencies. We will set high standards for others to follow in the way we procure goods and services.

Our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Human Rights as a Service Provider

As a public body and an essential service provider to the residents of Lincoln, we must ensure the services we provide fully meet the individual needs of our customers, and that staff are aware of and responsive to the needs of different sectors of our community.

To achieve this:

- We will work to ensure that council information, services and events are accessible.
- We will work to reduce the barriers people may face due to disability or language by arranging appropriate translation, interpretation or transcription services where required
- We will implement and publish an Equality & Diversity Action Plan, which outlines how the council will meet each of our equality objectives. We will ensure that these actions are reviewed and monitored and also reported upon through an annual Equality & Diversity Journal.
- We will embed our Equality Impact Assessment guide and supporting template into the culture of the council to ensure any adverse impacts that our policies and functions could have on particular groups will be removed or reduced where they cannot be avoided entirely. We will also include human rights as part of this assessment process, together with the requirement to consider socio-economic impacts. Completed Equality Impact Assessments relating to our policies and functions will be published on our website via the committee reporting process. Equality Impact Assessments which relate to individuals will not be made publicly available.

For Housing, Public Protection & Anti-Social Behaviour and Planning, where enforcement action is required, the Legal Team have additional drafted Equality Impact Assessments, which must be completed before enforcement action is taken.

- We will ensure equality, diversity and human rights consideration sections are included in all committee reports. This will help to ensure that issues of importance or concern are highlighted during the decision making process.
- We will ensure reference to the Public Sector Equality Duty is included in all committee reports to reaffirm our commitment to this.
- We will ensure that via our Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, we scrutinise council performance on equality, diversity and human rights issues and that we appropriately challenge the council where any areas of concern arise.
- We will carry out equality monitoring activities when we consult with the community in order to ensure that the views are representative of our communities and to understand the views different groups of people may have. We will aim to conduct specific consultation exercises with groups shown to be under-represented in our consultation campaigns.
- We will carry out equality monitoring activities among service users / non-users in order to ensure services are relevant to meet their needs. We will take action to overcome under representation where needed.

Our Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Human Rights as an Employer

As an employer we aim to ensure that we promote a workplace culture whereby all employees and members feel valued and respected, and where nobody carries out their role in fear of prejudice, discrimination, bullying or harassment.

Additionally, we recognise that harassment can take many forms, not all of which may be obviously clear. Any reported cases of harassment within the council will be dealt with promptly and sensitively, using the City of Lincoln Council's Dignity at Work Procedure.

In summary, the council aims for all employees and members to feel comfortable at work and to be treated with dignity and respect. No form of intimidation, victimisation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.

To achieve this:

- We will implement and publish equality objectives, which will require the council to actively consider the individual needs of our employees. To support these objectives, the council will implement an Equality & Diversity Action Plan. The plan will detail the key equality and diversity related activity the council will progress to support our employees, together with the local community. We will ensure that these actions are monitored and reviewed.
- We will ensure the council's Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel scrutinise the council's performance and approach to equality, diversity and human rights in relation to employment issues and that the panel appropriately challenge the council where any areas of concern arise.
- We will embed equality and diversity into the business planning process of the council, ensuring that equality responsibilities are core elements of employee job

descriptions and member role descriptions and that equality is an essential aspect of the council's Code of Corporate Governance.

- We will actively monitor job applicants and our workforce by protected characteristic to ensure we are fully aware of the makeup of the council's workforce and those applying for positions.
- We will ensure that our employee appraisal systems take account of the need to abide by this policy and to actively promote equality and human rights within all roles.
- We will have regard for dependant and caring responsibilities within our employment practices.
- We will ensure a flexi time working system is offered to all staff (excluding apprentices)
- We will ensure that all City of Lincoln Council recruitment and selection processes, including those of staff and members, will be conducted fairly and in accordance with this policy and other internal recruitment policies.

Making sure council employees and members are aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to equality, diversity and human rights

It is important that the council's employees and members are fully aware of this policy and that the contents within are fully considered at all times.

To support with this, the policy will be made available via the council's staff intranet, Hub, together with available via the council's document management system, Net Consent.

Upon making revisions to this policy, employees will be made aware of this via the above channels, together with made aware via staff and member internal briefings.

Additionally, all employees will be required to undertake equality, diversity and human rights refresher training on an annual basis within which details of this policy will be included. All new employees will be required to undertake this training as part of the induction process.

Those employees where their role requires them to undertake specific equality, diversity and human rights activity as set within the council's Equality & Diversity Action Plan, will be made aware of this and the progress on this activity will be actively monitored and reported to the council's Corporate Management Team and Equality & Diversity Advisory Panel.

All City of Lincoln Council employees are required to comply with and support the Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Policy. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action being taken against them.

Ensuring other organisation we work with are aware their responsibilities in relation to equality, diversity and human rights

All contractors, sub-contractors, partners and organisations employed by the City of Lincoln Council to carry out work on our behalf will be required to comply with the Equality Act 2010, Public Sector Equality Duty and the Human Rights Act 1998, together with comply with the council's required standards and objectives in respect of equality, diversity and human rights.

All contractors, sub-contractors, partners and organisations of the City of Lincoln Council will be required to demonstrate their compliance upon request.

Additionally, we recognise that every partner that receives funding from the council has an obligation to put this or similar approved policies into practice.

Responsibilities

City of Lincoln Council's Executive Committee has overall responsibility for this policy and ensuring systems are in place to put this policy into practice on a day-to-day basis. The Executive committee is chaired by the Leader of the council and supported by the Corporate Management Team, City Solicitor and Chief Finance Officer.

Additionally, all council members and employees have a responsibility to -

- Listen to what others have to say in respect of their views
- Report any incidences of discrimination, bullying, harassment, verbal or physical abuse or aggression
- Challenge own prejudices and those of others
- Know their individual rights and responsibilities in relation to the law
- Participate in relevant training
- Proactively promote and celebrate diversity.

The Assistant Director for Transformation and Strategic Development, supported by the Corporate Policy & Service Improvement Team, will ensure we meet our duties under the Equality Act 2010 in respect of setting equality objectives and provision of advice when council services and policies are introduced, changed or withdrawn.

The Human Resources and Work Based Learning Manager, supported by the Human Resources Team, will be responsible for ensuring staff have access to relevant equality and diversity training and for actively monitoring the makeup of the council's workforce to help ensure the needs of individuals are identified and support provision is provided where requested.

The Legal Services Manager, supported by the Legal Services Team, will be responsible for advising from a legal perspective on equality, diversity and human rights matters.

The Democratic and Elections Manager, supported by the Democratic Service Team, will be responsible for ensuring elected Members receive appropriate training and for monitoring reports submitted through the committee reporting process consider equality, diversity and human rights.

This policy will be monitored by the council's Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel, chaired by the Council's Member Equality Champion, with any concerns reported to Council.

The Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel will receive reports from officers on the progress towards the council's equality objectives and other equality, diversity and human rights activity.

In addition, the council's Corporate Management Team, which consists of the Directors of the council, is tasked with driving forward the council's work on equality, diversity and human rights under the leadership of the Corporate Management Team Champion.

Each Director will be responsible for ensuring that the Directorate they are responsible for carries out the work necessary to adopt and implement this policy.

Assistant Directors and Service Managers will be responsible for ensuring equality, diversity and human rights are fully considered in all service related policy developments and decision making, especially where there are changes to service delivery, and that this is monitored following implementation.

The Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel will hold Assistant Directors and Service Managers to account for delivering the above through consideration and monitoring of the Equality and Diversity Action Plan and Equality Journal.

What to do if you have a concern in relation to the council's implementation of this policy and activity towards equality, diversity and human rights

Employees of City of Lincoln Council

If you are concerned about any equality issues relating to your employment you can speak to your line manager and to the council's Human Resources Team.

If you feel embarrassed, humiliated, offended, distressed, alarmed, apprehensive or fearful because of someone else's behaviour towards you, you have the right to make a complaint and ask for the appropriateness of the behaviour to be reviewed. The council's Dignity at Work Policy and Procedure explains how to do this. This document can be accessed via the staff intranet, Hub, upon request via your line manager, and from the Human Resources Team.

You also have the right to take up concerns through the Grievance Procedure. You can also obtain information about this procedure via the council's intranet, Hub, from your line manager, and from the council's Human Resources Team.

If you are in a Trade Union, you can contact them for advice and support. Please refer to your local Trade Union representative for more details.

Where you feel a manager, director, elected member or other officer has handled an aspect of service delivery or management related to equality, diversity or human rights particularly well you can feed this information back through the appraisal system.

Members of the public

If you think the council is not providing a service in line with this policy or you think you have been treated unfairly in any way, you can complain to the City of Lincoln Council.

Our Complaints Procedure explains how you can do this. You can obtain a copy of this procedure via the council's website <https://www.lincoln.gov.uk/online/make-formal-complaint>, by telephoning 01522 881188, or emailing complaints@lincoln.gov.uk.

You can also make a complaint by writing to City of Lincoln Council's Customer Services Team via the address below:

Customer Services
City of Lincoln Council
City Hall
Beaumont Fee
Lincoln, LN1 1DD

Let us know what you think

If you wish to discuss this policy or make any comments or suggestions on the work we are undertaking towards equality, diversity and human rights, please contact the Corporate Policy & Service Improvement Team via the following details:

By e-mail - policy@lincoln.gov.uk

Telephone - 01522 881188

In writing to -
Corporate Policy & Service Improvement Team
City of Lincoln Council
City Hall
Beaumont Fee
Lincoln
LN1 1DD