

# The London Borough of Waltham Forest

## Equality Policy

October 2014



This Policy sets out the Waltham Forest Council's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity for everyone in Waltham Forest. It describes how we will endeavour to meet the requirements of the **Equality Act 2010** and deliver on our **Public Sector Equality Duty** to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a "protected characteristic" and those who do not share that protected characteristic and;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (this involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to (a) tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding).

We will do this by delivering on our strategic outcomes contained in the Equality Plan:

- Promoting equal opportunity for all
- Opposing all forms of discrimination, intolerance and disadvantage by reducing inequalities that limit people's life chances
- Ensuring our workforce reflects the diverse communities of Waltham Forest at all levels
- Providing inclusive, accessible and excellent services to all.

The Policy covers:

- Waltham Forest residents
- Visitors to Waltham Forest
- Council staff
- Anyone who uses council services.

There are **nine protected characteristics** that are covered by the Policy. These are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy/maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex (formerly gender)
- Sexual orientation.

The Council will promote and demonstrate fairness and equality of opportunity through our key equality objectives to:

#### **Protect the most vulnerable**

- Increase the percentage of older people and disabled people in receipt of social services who control their care through self-directed support

- Reduce the length of time it takes for disabled children and adults to receive aids and minor adaptations
- Reduce the incidence of racist and homophobic bullying within schools.

### **Improve Community Safety**

- Reduce the percentage of over-represented young people from black, Asian and ethnic minority residents who are affected by gang-related violence
- Increase access to domestic violence services for women and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender residents
- Reduce the number of older people who are victims of burglary, and in particular artifice burglary.

### **Regenerate the borough**

- Narrow the gap between the overall employment rate and the employment rate for black, Asian and minority ethnic groups, disabled people and women
- Increase the percentage of young people who are in education, employment or training
- Narrow the gap between the attainment of pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers
- Narrow the gap between the attainment of Asian and Black African pupils and their peers
- Narrow the gap between the attainment of children in care and their peers
- Increase the attainment of pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN).

### **Workforce equality objectives**

- Ensure the percentage of women, disabled staff, and black, Asian and minority ethnic staff is in line with top-performing London authorities across all tiers of the Council's workforce
- Encourage the development of young people through apprenticeships and a graduate programme
- Support men and women to balance their work and caring responsibilities
- Work closely with staff networks for race, faith, disability and sexual orientation to address priorities agreed with staff
- Eliminate bullying and harassment in the workplace.

Actions to deliver these equality objectives are included in our key strategies. We have set targets based on relevant performance measures which will be included in the Council's performance reports.

We will review the delivery plan annually and update the objectives to reflect new and emerging issues. We will publish an annual report on our performance and invite the public to comment on how well we are doing.

### **Equality Analysis**

We will continue to undertake Equality Analysis on all relevant decisions that affect the protected equality characteristics as a means of demonstrating 'due regard' to the equality duty.