

Equalities

Equality brings quality for everyone and the creation of a fairer society where everyone can participate and achieve their potential.

Equality is not about treating everyone the same; equality is about valuing a person 'as an equal' regardless of their characteristics and treating people according to their needs in order to achieve an equal or fair outcome. An equal society values human diversity, recognising that diversity brings a range of skills, knowledge, values, styles, perspectives and ideas that secure Devon's future as a place where people want to live, work and prosper, and challenges the inequalities that destroy this diversity in our society and organisations.

Freedom from discrimination and equality of opportunity are basic rights. Devon County Council is committed to challenging inequality and celebrating diversity to achieve the following Vision:

- People achieve their own potential and a good quality of life
- Everyone can access our services, facilities or information
- There is public involvement and influence in decision-making, planning, policy and service delivery
- Devon is a strong, safe and inclusive community
- People have trust and confidence in us to report incidents of abuse or discrimination
- Our workforce, at all levels, is supported and broadly reflects the diversity of the community.

We (Devon County Council) have signed up to a Devon Joint Declaration for Equality and encourage other organisations to do so at - <https://www.devon.gov.uk/equality/our-vision/devon-joint-declaration-for-equality>

Under the Equality Act 2010, as a public authority we have legal duties to:

- 1) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct.
- 2) Advance equality of opportunity.
- 3) Foster good relations between people.
- 4) Publish objectives to demonstrate how we will meet the above legal duties and publish information on our performance and how people are affected by our policies and practices.

The duties apply to nine 'protected characteristics': age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The County Council's Vision for equality and our duties under the Equality Act are reflected in our approach to contracting and commissioning social care services. Our objectives are to ensure:

- all contracts are procured and delivered in a way that is non-discriminatory and promotes equality of opportunity for staff, the general public and the business community
- the goods, works and services provided by contractors and suppliers are non-discriminatory and cater equally for all users' needs
- the procurement process incorporates equality standards
- contracts and contractors are monitored to ensure compliance with equality standards
- appointed contractors share and help deliver our equal opportunities goals

Find further information about our commitment to equality and diversity is available at - www.devon.gov.uk/equality

DRAFT