






Our responsibilities as a services provider

Everyone has a right to be treated fairly and have access to our services.

Customers and communities can expect the Council and its employees to:

-  Provide access to information and services as easily as possible, in ways that suit our customers.
-  Improve our monitoring of equalities issues. Knowing who in our community uses our services (and who doesn't) helps us to identify barriers to access and make improvements.
-  Carry out assessments that make sure our services are fair and easy to use.
-  Involve and listen to local equality groups.
-  Work with our many partner and community groups to tackle prejudice and promote inclusion.
-  Review and report on progress on equality matters.

We will also require the people we work with – our contractors, suppliers and partners – to demonstrate their commitment to equality and diversity.

“An equal society recognises people’s different needs, situations and goals, and removes the barriers that limit what people can do and be”
The Equalities Review, 2007

Have your say

Please let us know if you feel you faced any barriers when trying to access a Council service. You can contact us by telephone on 01349 886606, or visit your nearest Service Point. You can also report a complaint or comment on good service from the Council using our online form:

www.highland.gov.uk/comments

Further information

Visit the Council website:

www.highland.gov.uk/equalopportunities

If you wish to discuss an issue relating to Equal Opportunities, please contact:

Equal Opportunities Team

Telephone: 01463 702094

Email: equal.opportunities@highland.gov.uk

Personnel Services

Telephone: 01463 702200

Email: personnel@highland.gov.uk

Equality and Human Rights Commission

www.equalityhumanrights.com

Equality Advisory Support Service

www.equalityadvisoryservice.com

To request this leaflet in another format, e.g. large print, Braille, audio, or suitable language, please contact the Equal Opportunities team.

PR12-186-F

A Fairer Highland Gàidhealtachd nas Cothromaiche

**The Highland Council
is committed to
treating people fairly
and with respect.**



A new focus on equality

We know that some groups of people still face significant levels of inequality, discrimination and harassment.

The Equality Act 2010 provides a new focus on equality and everyone in Britain is protected by the Act. It brings together previous equality legislation in one Act and gives protection in employment, access to services and education. It tackles discrimination across nine equality groups, called “protected characteristics” in the Act. These are:

Age

Disability

Gender reassignment

Marriage and civil partnership

Pregnancy and maternity

Race

Religion or belief

Sex

Sexual orientation

Public bodies, like the Council, have additional duties in the Equality Act to consider and show how they:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment;
- advance equality; and
- promote good relations.



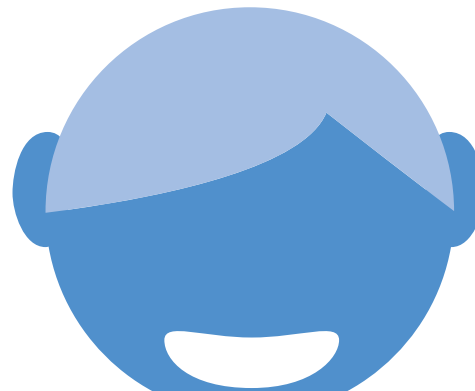
The Council's commitment

The Council's programme, Working Together for the Highlands, makes a commitment to implement its public sector equality duties in its equality plan, A Fairer Highland.

A Fairer Highland aims to promote a fair and inclusive Highland. Actions in the plan are based on evidence which includes the experiences and views that local people have shared with us on equality and diversity issues. We want to ensure that in Highland:

- people are, and feel, free to live their lives without harassment and discrimination, and can take part in community life.
- people benefit from public services in a fairer way and are able to have their say about them.
- our staff feel there is an organisational culture where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

We expect our employees to treat colleagues and service users fairly and with respect, to challenge discriminatory behaviour and, where possible, promote equality. We also expect service users to treat our employees with respect.



What's it got to do with me?

Equality is an issue for us all; we all belong to one or more of the groups protected in the Equality Act. The Council also has a duty to consider equality in every area of its work.

Our responsibilities as an employer

The Council will put into effect fair employment and recruitment practices. As an employer, we will act fairly in the way we recruit, train, pay and develop our employees, and we will discuss employment issues with staff.

In addressing equal pay we include pay arrangements, but also measures to make sure there are fair promotion and development opportunities, and to tackle occupational segregation. We will ensure reasonable adjustments are made for disabled candidates and employees.

Our working culture will promote dignity, and respect the contributions of all. Employees are expected to behave in a manner that reflects our commitment to fair treatment and respect. We will provide staff and Elected Members with training on equality and diversity.

