

Meath County Council

Equality and Human Rights Values Statement

Introduction

This statement underpins the values-led approach of Meath County Council to implementing the public sector equality and human rights duty. It reflects and reinforces our organisational culture, that is committed to eliminating discrimination, achieving equality, and fulfilling human rights for service users, policy beneficiaries, and staff.

This statement encompasses the diversity of people across the identified groups for the Duty:

- groups covered by the nine grounds under the equality legislation: gender (including gender identity); civil status; family status (including lone parents and carers); age (young and older people); disability; sexual orientation; race (Black and minority ethnic people); religion and belief; and membership of the Traveller community; and
- groups encompassed by the ground of socio-economic status, those who are at risk of or experiencing poverty and exclusion.

Our Equality and Human Rights Values

Dignity

Inclusion

Social Justice

Democracy

Autonomy

Values in Practice

Dignity is about the human worth and integrity of all individuals, respect and equal treatment for all regardless of difference, and being person centred.

Statement of Priority: Meath County Council works to be a champion and exemplar for, and set a standard in, creating an environment of quality relationships based on human worth and individual integrity, both at community level and in its workplace.

Statement of Process: Meath County Council works in a manner that all service users and staff are treated equally and with respect, where each individual is valued, and particular attention is given to those most excluded in society.

Inclusion is about integration and recognition of difference. It concerns community, social cohesion, flexibility in adapting to the diversity of needs, and securing a focus on the most excluded.

Statement of Priority: Meath County Council works to advance more inclusive communities and workplace, encouraging and enabling the participation of groups experiencing inequality.

Statement of Process: Meath County Council works in a manner that engages with and acknowledges the diversity of groups in society, and makes adaptations to respond to the needs that arise from this diversity of service users and staff.

Social Justice is about the elimination of poverty and the equal distribution of resources, such as employment and public goods and services. It concerns quality of life, wellbeing, and opportunities to participate fully in society.

Statement of Priority: Meath County Council strives to provide opportunities and achieve outcomes for a diversity of groups in its employment and from its service provision, and to advance fair and just relations in the wider society.

Statement of Process: Meath County Council works in a manner that gives priority to those experiencing inequality, in targeting resources, providing opportunities, and implementing positive actions.

Democracy is about voice, having a say, being heard, and contributing to decision-making. It concerns transparency, accountability, and empowerment. It includes for the choice to speak up or not to do so.

Statement of Priority: Meath County Council works to promote and encourage strong community leadership and organisation, and to empower the individual and collective voice for a diversity of groups.

Statement of Process: Meath County Council works in a manner that enables meaningful participation in decision-making processes, with these processes characterised by clarity, engagement and accountability.

Autonomy is about self-determination, and having and making choices. It includes the right to act in one's own interests, free from coercion, having regard to the rights of others.

Statement of Priority: Meath County Council works to ensure groups experiencing inequality have meaningful choices based on real options, in service provision and employment, within the bounds of available resources.

Statement of Process: Meath County Council works in a manner that enables informed choices for groups experiencing inequality, and supports their access to real options on foot of these choices.

Using the Statement

Meath County Council will use this equality and human rights values statement in implementing the three steps of the Duty: assessment of equality and human rights issues; addressing these issues as part of its planning cycle; and reporting on progress.

Meath County Council will engage a wider audience with these values, through including a focus on the statement in:

- corporate plans and annual reports; and
- annual report on implementing the Duty.