

Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Customer Compliments & Complaints

March 2021



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Introduction

Folkestone and Hythe District Council is committed to delivering a high level of customer service. We seek feedback from customers in a variety of ways, ranging from consultations, surveys and understanding their experiences. This policy relates to the Council's approach to making reasonable adjustments for customers who complain about the Council's services.

Objectives

As a provider of excellent quality services, Folkestone & Hythe District Council is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities are not disadvantaged in the way that they can complain or about the way that we handle their complaints. This policy confirms our commitment to improving accessibility for everybody that we deal with and to provide reasonable adjustments for disabled people.

This policy does not seek to explain how we will approach every situation but is intended to set out a general statement about how we deal with reasonable adjustment requests. It ensures compliance with the Equality Act 2010 which provides the legislative framework to protect the rights of individuals and to advance equality of opportunity for all.

The law requires service providers to make reasonable adjustments in the following circumstances:

- a. Where there is a provision, criterion or practice which puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage (more than minor or trivial) in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled
- b. Where a physical feature puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled
- c. Where a disabled person would, but for the provision of an auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled

Our Approach

The Equality Act 2010 does not define what is 'reasonable'. Guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission suggests that the most relevant factors in considering the relevant factors are:

- a. The effectiveness of adjustments in preventing or reducing the disadvantage for the disabled person
- b. The practicality of making the adjustment
- c. The availability of resources including external assistance and finance
- d. Any disruption to the service that making the adjustment may cause. Examples of this may be by allowing more time than we would usually allow for someone to provide information that we need or by providing information in an accessible format for example larger font than usual

Service Offer

We will:

- a. Make our customers aware that reasonable adjustments can be provided when dealing with complaints by publishing this policy and the Complaints & Compliments Policy
- b. Providing this policy and the Complaints & Compliments Policy in alternative formats on request, such as large print, Braille and printing documents in alternative colours
- c. Using email or telephone in preference to hard copies of letters where this is appropriate
- d. Providing information in easy-read formats where it is appropriate
- e. Extending time limits for complainants to respond where this is lawful and reasonable
- f. Communicating through a representative or intermediary
- g. Providing reasonable rest and comfort breaks in meetings
- h. Considering requests from customers with disabilities for reasonable adjustments, discussing with them in detail to understand specific circumstances, letting them know the outcome of their request and giving them an indication of revised timescales and other impact this could have on dealing with their complaint
- i. Recording and monitoring reasonable adjustments that have been requested and made

Linked Policies and Procedures

This policy needs to be read in line with our Complaints & Compliments Policy.