



Burton Upon Stather Parish Council

Equality And Diversity Policy

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Burton upon Stather Parish Council (the Council) is committed to promoting an equal opportunities approach in every aspect of Council business including employment. It is important to the Council as a community leader and advocate to embrace diversity and ensure that everyone has access to the Council and that all individuals are treated fairly. The Council will comply with all its statutory duties, in terms of service provision and employment, actively opposing all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination. This policy covers Councillors, employees and contractors,

2. LEGAL BASIS

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) applies to public bodies and others carrying out public functions. It ensures that by complying with the legislation, consideration is given to how different people will be affected by the activities, policies and services provided. This legislation conveys a duty on the Council to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation or any other conduct that is prohibited in the Act.

The Act states that no individual will be directly or indirectly discriminated against on the basis of the following 'protected characteristics';

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment.
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

This list is not exhaustive, and the Act is not limited to the above characteristics.

In addition to this, the Public Sector equality duty came into force in April 2011¹ and dictates that:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;

¹ S.149 Equality Act 2010

- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to follow the legislation and provide equal opportunities and advancement to all employees, with an exception on a case-by-case basis if there is a genuine occupational qualification or another factor for which a different approach can be objectively justified. The Council will also ensure an equality of opportunity in the provision of services and access to Council facilities.

This equality policy underpins all policies, procedures and strategies, therefore providing a strong foundation for equality and diversity within the Council, and its organization and interaction with the wider community and all of the services that it provides.

4. COMMITMENTS AS AN EMPLOYER

All employees will be treated fairly and equally. Selection for employment, promotion, training, remuneration or any other benefit will be done on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be encouraged to develop their full potential in order to maximise the efficiency of the Council. If there is a vacancy, the Council will ensure that advertising complies with this policy both in content and placement to promote access to all.

The Council commits to the following;

- Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all.
- No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- Training, development and progression opportunities will be available to all staff.
- Employment practices will be reviewed to ensure fairness.
- To view any breaches of this policy as serious misconduct, possibly leading to disciplinary proceedings.
- To have a robust complaints procedure in place, namely the Council's Grievance Policy, which enables employees to complain about discrimination or harassment.

In conclusion, the commitment to equality in the workplace is good management practice as it seeks to utilise the diverse range of talents available in the local community, representing society as a whole.

5. COMMITMENTS AS A PROCURER OF GOODS AND SERVICES

When the Council acts as a client for third party contractors, it will operate within the Act and not discriminate against them when researching contractors or obtaining and presenting tenders. Information about third parties will be redacted on initial presentation to the Council so that it can operate without bias or discrimination on any basis.

Once a third-party contractor has been instructed, or goods and services have been obtained for any Council business, the Council will assume that the contractor or company in question complies with the Act and will not tolerate any breach from anyone working for or on behalf of the Council.

6. EQUALITY IN SERVICE DELIVERY

The Parish Council is committed to taking any steps that it can to promote a socially inclusive community by;

- Identifying any barriers that different groups may face to participation in community life.
- Respecting diversity within the community.
- Listening and responding to the views of the community through appropriate consultation and participation which are accessible to all.
- Delivery of services that are of high quality and accessible.
- In the promotion of events and meetings, consider methods of reaching the wider community.
- Ensuring that where available, all staff and Council members have access to equality and diversity training and relevant resources.

7. COMMITMENT

Burton upon Stather Parish Council will comply with both the current and future legislation referring to equality and diversity. The Council will publicise this policy on the website and will highlight it in recruitment and relevant official documentation.