



Burton upon Stather Parish Council

Equality Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

Burton upon Stather Parish Council (BUSPC) is committed to pursuing an equal opportunities approach in the employment of its staff and the way in which services are provided for the public.

BUSPC recognises its statutory duties under legislation in terms of service provision and employment and is committed to meet them by complying with this policy.

BUSPC is committed to promoting equal access to services and facilities and equal treatment for all employees or job applicants irrespective of:

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

which are protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 and that this is managed in such a way to comply with Equal Opportunities legislation and Codes of Practice.

LINKS WITH OTHER COUNCIL POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

BUSPC's Equal Opportunities Policy is one of the most important policies and underpins all other corporate policies, procedures and strategies, therefore providing a strong foundation for Equality of Opportunity in the Council and the services it provides.

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY IN THE PROVISION OF SERVICES AND ACCESS TO FACILITIES

BUSPC is committed to equality in the provision of and access to its facilities.

BUSPC will achieve this by:

- Recognising and accepting that particular individuals or groups are denied equality through direct or indirect discrimination either intentional or unintentional;
- Providing training for all Councillors and employees as required, so that they have a good understanding of the diverse needs of different people;
- Providing facilities and delivering services of the highest possible quality and accessible;
- Providing clear information about facilities and services where necessary making them available in a variety of formats;
- Ensuring that feedback procedures are accessible and effective;
- Assessing the impact of and monitoring its facilities and services to ensure that they do not discriminate and identify where improvements can be made;
- Ensuring that all Councillors and employees understand what their roles and responsibilities are in relation to equality in service provision.

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY IN EMPLOYEMENT, TRAINING AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BUSPC is committed to providing equality of opportunity. All Councillors and employees will have a part to play in achieving this and the Council will ensure that individuals are aware of their personal responsibility to follow and support the Equal Opportunities Policy.

No Councillor, employee or prospective employee should receive unfair or unlawful treatment due to age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion/belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership, and pregnancy/maternity. BUSPC will seek to identify and act upon unlawful discrimination, which denies individual opportunity on anyone falling within the criteria mentioned above. Councillors, employees and applicants have the right to complain about unfair discrimination through the appropriate procedures.

The Council will achieve this by:

- Ensuring that its recruitment and selection policies and procedures are equitable and fair so that the best people are appointed to deliver its services;
- Only considering applicants for jobs on the basis of their relevant experience, skills and abilities unless a genuine occupational qualification exists for specific posts;
- Ensuring that all employees receive fair and equal treatment in relation to their employment, regardless of whether they are part-time, full-time, or employed on a temporary basis;
- Ensuring that employment policies and opportunities are of the highest possible quality, therefore equality, equity and consistency are embedded in practices, pay and conditions;
- Making sure that equal consideration is given to people's needs and develop flexible and responsive employment opportunities to tackle those needs;
- Encouraging and supporting employees to reach their full potential within the resources the Council has available to it;

- Taking appropriate action against incidents of harassment, bullying or discrimination and offering support and advice to victims or witnesses to incidents; and
- Taking disciplinary action against employees who discriminate against people who work for the Council or who seek employment with the Council.

CONTRACTORS AND SUPPLIERS

BUSPC will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that all contractors and suppliers carrying out work on behalf of the Council have the appropriate policies and working practices in place to ensure Equality of Opportunity and to comply with the requisite equality legislation and guidance.

The Council will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that:

- Contractors and providers have employment policies, procedures and practices that do not discriminate; and
- Monitor whether contracts and commissioning arrangements meet these equality commitments.

MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION OF THIS POLICY

Council

Strong leadership is essential to ensure that this policy is fully understood and followed by all Councillors, employees and contractors. Whilst the Council will be ultimately responsible for implementation of this policy, the Personnel Committee will have responsibility in respect of recruitment, employment and staff performance and management issues.

Councillors

Councillors have overall responsibility for the direction and scrutiny of this policy and will ensure that the principles of fairness and equality guide the decision making process.

Clerk

It is the responsibility of the Clerk to:

- Ensure that within devolved areas of responsibilities, the standards established within this policy are followed
- Advise the Council on changing legislation standards as regards this policy

Employees

All employees must:

- Co-operate with any measures introduced to ensure equal opportunities;
- Report any suspected discriminatory acts or practices;
- Not persuade or attempt to persuade others to practice unlawful discrimination;
- Not victimise anyone as a result of them having reported or provided evidence on discrimination;
- Not harass, abuse or intimidate others on account of their race, gender etc;
- Not pressurise job applicants in an attempt to discourage them from applying for or taking up a post.

Breaches of Policy

Any breach of the Equal Opportunities Policy will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure. Serious offences such as harassment and victimisation may be treated as gross misconduct.

COMPLAINTS

Any employee who has a concern regarding the application of this policy should make use of the Council's grievance procedure.

Existing Employees

Employees wishing to raise an action alleging unlawful discrimination during an internal selection procedure should discuss this with the Chair in the first instance. An investigation will be conducted by the Chair, or an independent person appointed for the purpose, who will make a recommendation to the Personnel Committee. The employee will receive written notification as to the outcome. An appeal, where appropriate, should be made to a nominated independent Councillor.

Prospective Employees

Any prospective employee wishing to raise a complaint should do so, in writing, to the Clerk within 15 days, at the latest of the alleged incident. An investigation will be conducted by the Clerk, or an independent person appointed for the purpose, who will report to the Personnel Committee.

Members of the public

Any member of the public wishing to raise a complaint should in the first instance contact the Clerk.

INFORMATION AND TRAINING

Councillors and employees will be provided with appropriate training regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion/belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership, and pregnancy/maternity.

MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

The Council will monitor all policies on a yearly basis.

ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

A copy of this Policy can be made available on larger typeface.