

Pakenham Parish Council

EQUALITY POLICY

1. Pakenham Parish Council recognises that discrimination and victimisation is unacceptable and that it is in the interests of the Council, its employees, residents and visitors to Pakenham to utilise the skills of the total workforce. It is the aim of the Council to ensure that no employee or job applicant receives less favourable facilities or treatment (either directly or indirectly) in recruitment or employment on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.
2. Our aim is that our workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society and each employee feels respected and able to give of their best.
3. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination or victimisation. To that end the purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment.
4. All employees, whether part-time, full-time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
5. Our staff will not discriminate directly or indirectly, or harass customers or clients because of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation in the provision of the Company's goods and services.
6. This policy and the associated arrangements shall operate in accordance with statutory requirements. In addition, full account will be taken of any guidance or Codes of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, any Government Departments, and any other statutory bodies.

Council commitment

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our staff are recognised and valued.
- 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 are available to all staff.
- To promote equality in the workplace which we believe is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- We will review all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.
- Breaches of our equality policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- The policy will be monitored and reviewed annually

- grievances concerning discrimination are dealt with properly, fairly and as quickly as possible;
- proper records are maintained.

Responsibilities of staff

Responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination rests with all staff and the attitudes of staff are crucial to the successful operation of fair employment practices. In particular, all members of staff should:

- comply with the policy and arrangements;
- not discriminate in their day to day activities or induce others to do so;
- not victimise, harass or intimidate other staff or groups who have, or are perceived to have one of the protected characteristics.
- ensure no individual is discriminated against or harassed because of their association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.
- inform the Chairperson if they become aware of any discriminatory practice.

Third parties

Third-party harassment occurs where a Council employee is harassed, and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties such as clients or customers. Pakenham Parish Council will not tolerate such actions against its staff, and the employee concerned should inform the Chairman at once that this has occurred. The Council will fully investigate and take all reasonable steps to ensure such harassment does not happen again.

Rights of disabled people

The Council attaches particular importance to the needs of disabled people.

Under the terms of this policy, Council are required to:

- Make reasonable adjustment to maintain the services of an employee who becomes disabled, for example, training, provision of special equipment, reduced working hours. (NB: Council are expected to seek advice on the availability of advice and guidance from external agencies to maintain disabled people in employment);
- Include disabled people in training/development programmes;
- Give full and proper consideration to disabled people who apply for jobs, having regard to making reasonable adjustments for their particular aptitudes and abilities to allow them to be able to do the job.

Monitoring

- The Council deems it appropriate to state its intention not to discriminate and assumes that this will be translated into practice consistently across the organisation as a whole. Accordingly, an annual review will be introduced to measure the effectiveness of the policy and arrangements.
- If monitoring shows that the Council staffs, or areas within it, are not representative, or that sections of our workforce are not progressing properly within the Council, then an action plan will be developed to address these issues. This will include a review of recruitment and selection procedures, Council policies and practices as well as consideration of taking legal Positive Action.

Grievances and discipline

Employees have a right to pursue a complaint concerning discrimination or victimisation via the Council's Grievance Procedure.

Discrimination and victimisation will be treated as disciplinary offences and they will be dealt with under the Council's Disciplinary Procedure.

Review

The effectiveness of this policy and associated arrangements will be reviewed annually by the Council.

Adopted: 27 July 2021