

Equality & Diversity

review date June 2019

'Equality' is about providing everyone with equal access to council services, no matter where they live, whatever their background (sex, age, faith, race, sexual preferences or how able they are).

'Diversity' is about providing services which respect, value and cater for the differences in the way people would like /need to have them delivered

Equality is about treating individuals fairly, supported by legislation designed to promote equality and eliminate discrimination and harassment. **Diversity** is about the recognition and valuing of difference for the benefit of the Council and the individual. Equality and diversity are not interchangeable but are interdependent. There is no equality of opportunity if difference is not recognised and valued.

Barton Parish Council is committed to equality of opportunity in our approach to service delivery, employment and being a community leader. We are committed to identifying, understanding and eliminating all barriers that prevent access to services, information and employment. Barton Parish Council is committed to actively promoting equality and diversity, and working to combat discrimination across all nine protected characteristics of equality:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnerships
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion/belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

We are fully committed to ensuring equality of access throughout all council services.

As members and employees of **Barton Parish Council**, we need to understand, respect and cater for differing needs. The equality groups covered by legislation are:

Different genders: Men, women and transgender people.

Different ages: Younger and older people, working age people, children.

Disabled people: Physically or mentally impaired people, people with a long term limiting illness and carers for these people.

Different religions: This can also include different faiths/value systems as well as formal religions.

Different sexual orientations: Heterosexual, bisexual and gay/lesbian people.

Different races: People from different ethnic, cultural and geographical backgrounds.

Clerk

P. De Backer

Chairman

M. Penston

July 2010

ADVICE NOTE: Equal Opportunities Policy – an Example

LEGAL POSITION

It is unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the following grounds:

- **age**
- **disability**
- **gender reassignment**
- **marriage and civil partnership**
- **pregnancy and maternity**
- **race**
- **religion or belief**
- **sex**
- **sexual orientation**

Under the Equality Act 2010 these are known as “protected characteristics”.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide equal opportunities to all employees, irrespective of their characteristics (unless there are genuine occupational qualifications or objectively justified reasons for a different approach to be taken). We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination whether it be direct or indirect discrimination, victimization or harassment on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010.

SCOPE

All employees whether full-time, part-time, fixed term contract, agency workers or temporary staff, will be treated fairly and equally. Selection for employment, promotion, training, remuneration 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 council.

OUR COMMITMENT

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. This is further defined in the Dignity at Work policy adopted by the council.

The commitment to equal opportunities in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense as it seeks to utilise the talents available from the local community, representing Society as a whole.

Breaches of our equal opportunities policy will be regarded as serious misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings. Employees are entitled to complain about discrimination or harassment or victimization through the council's Grievance procedure.

This policy is fully supported by all Members of the council and adopts the model contract as devised by the employee professional body in the local government sector (the Society of Local Council Clerks).

The policy will be monitored and reviewed annually/bi-annually. Other Personnel policies will be reviewed against the values stated in this main Equal Opportunities policy to ensure that the council strives to remain an Equal Opportunities employer.

Uses of Policy – Staff Handbook, Induction of staff and Members, decisions relating to Recruitment and Selection, Training and Development, Promotion, Remuneration, Retirement, cross-referenced to Grievance, disciplinary and Dignity at Work Policies.

Document History		
Status	Date	Version
Adopted	13 June 2010	
Review by Clerk	23 May 2017	
Draft to Council for Debate	1 st June 2017	
Council Approved	6 th June 2017	latest
Next Review by Clerk	June 2019 or change of legislation	