



OFFHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Equal Opportunities Policy

Adopted 05.04.22

Reviewed 05.03.24

1. Vision Statement:

- Offham Parish Council is committed to promoting equal opportunities in Offham Parish.
- The Council values diversity and encourages fairness and justice.
- The Council wants equal chances for everyone in Offham Parish Council to work, learn and live free from discrimination and victimization.
- The Council will combat discrimination throughout the organization.

2. In seeking to achieve this vision, the Council will strive to:

- Encourage equality of opportunity for all people and actively promote good relations.
- Eliminate any conditions, procedures and individual behaviour that can lead to discrimination even where there was no intent to discriminate, with particular regard to: Race; Gender; Disability; Sexuality; Age; Religion and Belief plus Employment issues.

Whilst recognising that individuals may experience disadvantage on more than one level.

- Offer services fairly to all people, ensuring that anyone in contact with the organisation is treated with respect, making provision for those groups within the community whose needs and expectations are less well met.
- Comply with all legislation dealing with discrimination and the promotion of equality, following the codes of practice issued to support this legislation.
- Ensure all employment policies, procedures and guidelines reflect and reinforce the Councils' commitment to equality.

- Ensure mechanisms are in place for responding to complaints of discrimination and harassment from employees and the public.
- Encourage disadvantaged groups and individuals to participate in the community.
- Make this policy known to all Councillors, employees, job applicants and local residents.
- Periodically review the Equal Opportunities policy.

3. **Supporting Guidelines**

- The Equal Opportunities Policy is reinforced by guidelines specifically relating to accessibility and the Parish Council's role as an employer.

4. **Responsibility**

- The Equal Opportunities Policy is covered by the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer. Overall responsibility for the implementation of the policy lies with the Parish Council. This Policy will come into effect from 8th March 2021.

Equal Opportunities - Accessibility Guidelines

Offham Parish Council exists to maximise the well being of the people of the parish. In pursuing this aim, it will strive for a just society which gives everyone equality.

1. **Vision Statement:**

- The Council's services must be accessible to and appropriate for all the members of the community who might wish or need to use them.
- The Council will take all reasonable steps to ensure its employment arrangements are accessible.

2. **In seeking to achieve this vision, the Council will strive to:**

- Facilitate physical access into the buildings it controls.
- Monitor and evaluate accessibility in order to make improvements.
- Use communication methods that are appropriate and sensitive.
- Improve the accessibility of employment arrangements or physical features of the workplace to meet the needs of staff and applicants with disabilities or other needs.

Employment Training and Organisational Development

Guidelines

1. **Statement of Principles**

Offham Parish is committed to ensuring that all its employment policies, procedures and guidelines will reflect and reinforce the Councils' commitment to equality.

The Council will through its policies and training seek to create a:

- Prejudice-free and supportive working environment.
- Workforce which reflects the diversity of the local population, ensuring that people from all sections of Offham Parish's local communities have equality of opportunity to obtain employment in all areas and levels of the Council.

2. **Recruitment and Selection**

The Council will strive to:

Ensure that all employees are recruited and promoted on the basis of ability and other objective relevant criteria.

Work towards ensuring that, through recruitment, its workforce better represents the community it serves.

Be committed to equality of opportunity for all people and protect against all forms of discrimination, with a particular regard to:

Gender; Race; Disability; Religious and Belief; Age; Sexuality

Ensure that it communicates job opportunities to all sections of the community to ensure the recruitment process does not discriminate or discourage applications from any section of the community.

Collect and use recruitment information to support a fair and effective recruitment process.

3. **Training and Organisational Development**

The Council will:

Seek to ensure that all employees are developed by the provision of appropriate and accessible learning opportunities in line with organisational needs.

Provide training that complies with the Council's Equalities Policies.

4. **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Council will:

Specifically monitor recruitment, promotion, and training opportunities and take up of training, pay, grievance, disciplinary and exit from employment.

Continue to review its monitoring processes to comply with changes in legislation.

Equal Opportunities policy - Supporting statements

- **Race Equality:** Offham Parish Council is committed to promoting a cohesive society and eliminating unlawful racial discrimination. The Authority will promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial, national and ethnic groups.
- **Disability Equality:** Offham Parish Council will not treat a person less favourably directly or indirectly on the basis of his/her disability and will promote equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.
- **Gender Equality:** Offham Parish Council will not treat a person less favourably directly or indirectly due to gender or marital status.
- **Equality of Employment:** Offham Parish Council will through its policies and training seek to create:
 - A prejudice free and supportive working environment;
 - A workforce which reflects the diversity of the local population ensuring that people from all sections of Offham Parish's local community have equality of opportunity to obtain employment in all areas and levels of the Council.
- **Accessibility:** The Council's services must be accessible and appropriate for all members of the community who might wish or need to use them. The Council will ensure its employment arrangements are accessible. (See Accessibility Guidelines).
- **Sexual Orientation:** Offham Parish Council will not discriminate directly or indirectly on the grounds of sexual orientation.
- **Gender Reassignment:** Offham Parish Council will not discriminate directly or indirectly on the grounds of gender reassignment.
- **Religion and Belief:** Offham Parish Council will not discriminate directly or indirectly on the grounds of religion or belief. (This is defined as any religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief. It excludes philosophical or political beliefs unless those beliefs are similar to a religious belief, e.g. the belief has a profound effect on the person's way of life.)
- **Age:** A person's age will not lead to unfair discrimination.