



Controlled Document

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Equality and Diversity Policy

OUR COMMITMENT

Lenham Parish Council is committed to providing and promoting equal opportunities, eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity in the community.

This policy is intended to assist the council to put this commitment into practice.

Compliance with this policy should also ensure that employees do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.

Striving to ensure that the work environment is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect. Also to create an environment in which individual differences and contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.

THE LAW

It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality, caste and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership. These are known as “protected characteristics”.

Discrimination after employment may also be unlawful, e.g. refusing to give reference for a reason related to one of the protected characteristics.

The council will not discriminate against or harass a member of the public in the provision of services or goods. It is unlawful to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, service providers have an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.



COMMITMENTS AS A COMMUNITY LEADER AND ADVOCATE

The Parish Council is committed to creating a socially inclusive and cohesive community by:

- Promoting equal opportunity and equal access to employment, services and information.
- Identifying and addressing the barriers that different groups face to participation in community life.
- Working towards ensuring fair and equitable resources.
- Respecting the diversity of our community.
- Working with others to ensure that Lenham Parish areas are safe places in which to live, work or visit.
- Listening and responding to the views of our communities through appropriate and widespread consultation and participation mechanisms, which are accessible to all.
- Ensuring the communications produced and events held positively reflect and promote the diversity of the communities and are made fully acceptable.

COMMITMENTS AS A SERVICE PROVIDER

The Parish Council is committed to ensuring that our services are accessible to all and responsive by:

- Ensuring our residents are aware of the Council's services and the delivery of those services in ways that are sensitive to residents' needs.
- Ensuring that all those in the community are able to visit the council's meeting rooms and open spaces.
- Ensuring that the information provided about the council's services is accessible to our community.
- Consulting and involving all sections of the community in the development and monitoring of our policies and services in ways which enable people to participate.

COMMITMENTS AS A PROCURER OF GOODS AND SERVICES

The Parish Council is committed to ensuring that those contractors and others from whom goods and services are procured share and implement the values within this policy by:

- Demonstrating that all practicable steps are being taken to allow equal access and equal treatment in employment and service delivery for all, as appropriate to the nature of the contract concerned.



DIGNITY AT WORK

The council had a separate dignity at work policy concerning issues of bullying and harassment on any ground, and how complaints of this type will be dealt with.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Every employee is required to assist the council to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination. Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the council for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees or customers are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the council's disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

GRIEVANCES

If you consider that you may have been unlawfully discriminated against, you should use the council's grievance procedure to make a complaint. If your complaint involves bullying or harassment, the grievance procedure is modified as set out in the dignity at work policy.

The council will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that it upholds. You will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if your grievance is not upheld, unless your complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be monitored at least every four years or when appropriate to ensure it is compliant with current equal opportunities legislation

