

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Gosfield Parish Council acknowledges its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and the obligations of the Public-Sector Equality Duty in Section 149, which includes both services and employment.

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, temporary staff or volunteers, 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.

SERVICES

Part 3 of the 2010 Act prohibits discrimination, harassment and victimisation by providers of a service to the public or a section of the public (for payment or not). As confirmed by section 31, the 'provision of a service' includes a reference to (i) the provision of goods and facilities, (ii) the provision of a service in the exercise of a public function, and (iii) the exercise of a public function that is not the provision of service.

A person is protected both when requesting a service and during the course of being provided with a service, and when the service is terminated. Section 29 of the 2010 Act confirms that refusing to provide or not providing a service includes providing a person with a service of different quality, or in a different way or on less favourable terms then the service would normally be provided is unlawful.

Section 158 permits a person (e.g. a council) to take positive action in general for the advancement of equality.

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 (if adopted) 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. 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.

Re-Adopted
Date 11th May 2026
Minute reference 26/091 Item M
Signed ……Chairman
Review Date: May 2027