



## **KINGSTON BAGPUIZE WITH SOUTHMOOR PARISH COUNCIL**

### **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY**

**Date adopted:** 5 October 2020

**Reviewed:** November 2022

**Date of next review:** November 2024

#### **INTRODUCTION**

All public bodies and organisations carrying out public functions have a duty to consider the needs of all individuals in their day to day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. The Public Sector Equality Duty ensures that all public bodies play their part in making society fairer by tackling discrimination and providing equality of opportunity for all.

Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor Parish Council is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce and members and eliminating unlawful discrimination. The Council is also committed against unlawful discrimination of members of the public and its residents.

The purpose of this policy is to provide equal opportunities for everyone who comes into contact with the Parish Council, irrespective of their characteristics (unless it can be shown that the treatment is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim).

#### **LEGAL POSITION**

To discriminate against someone means to treat them less favourably, to harass or victimise them or to subject them to a provision, criterion or practice which puts them at a disadvantage. It is unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the grounds of the following 'protected characteristics' (as defined in the Equality Act 2010) as follows:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership

## **COUNCIL'S COMMITMENT**

This policy is fully supported by all Members of the Council.

The Parish Council opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination whether it be direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation or harassment on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010.

We are committed to the promotion and delivery of equal opportunities in the work place and in the delivery of services. In all our activities we will have due regard to the three aims of the Equality Duty:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

## **EMPLOYEES AND COUNCILLORS**

All employees and councillors 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 and councillors 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.

Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

Every employee and councillor is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated. 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 the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy will be regarded as serious misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings. Employees are entitled to complain about discrimination or harassment or victimisation through the council's Grievance Procedure, which is available from the parish clerk and available to download from the council's website.

## **SERVICE DELIVERY**

In exercising its functions and delivering services, the Parish Council will have due regard to the three aims of the Equality Duty and it will take a proportionate approach when complying with it. Equality issues will be an influence on its policies and decisions and it will consider the needs of all individuals in its day to day work. It will review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.