

Over Parish Council. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion policy

Over Parish Council is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce and Councillors as well as eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for Over Parish Council to be truly representative of all sections of our community in Over, and for each Employee / Councillor to feel respected and able to give their best.

The organisation, in providing facilities, is also committed against unlawful discrimination of hirers or the public/parishioners.

The policy's purpose is to:

- provide equality, fairness, and respect for all in parish council activities.
- not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation
- oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes pay and benefits, terms, and conditions for participation /employment, dealing with grievances and discipline and training or other developmental opportunities
- ensure the parish council meets its duty under Equality Act 2010 in developing and implementing policies for the community

Over Parish Council commits to:

- Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion within the Council as they are good practice
- Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination. Promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.

This commitment includes training for Employees and Councillors about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity, and inclusion policy.

Responsibilities include staff and Councillors conducting themselves to help the Parish Council provide equal opportunities in employment, policy development and implementation, decision making and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation /unlawful discrimination.

All Councillors should understand they can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, against Employees, Over Parishioners, Hirers, Suppliers and the Public

- Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination by fellow Councillors, Employees, Hirers, Suppliers, Visitors, the Public and any others during the Parish Council's activities.

Such acts, from Employees will be dealt with as misconduct under the Council's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken

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.

- Make opportunities for relevant training and development available to all Staff and Councillors to encourage them to develop their talents and resources to maximise the effectiveness of the Parish Council.
- Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness and that they are up to date and the policy is reviewed to take account of changes in the law.
- Monitor annually the make-up of the Parish Council regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy is working in practice, reviewing annually and taking action to address any issues.

This equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by the Parish Council and has been agreed and adopted on 9th April 2019 and reviewed and amended on 9th February 2021