

HONINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

Date Approved: *12 April 2023*

Date for Review: **April 2025**

Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination, both in the workplace and in the wider community. This legislation applies to all organisations that provide a service to the public, including Parish Councils. Honingham Parish Council recognises its responsibilities in relation to equality and is committed to equal opportunities. This applies to all services, activities and facilities provided by the Council, as well as to all employees of the Council, Councillors and members of the public using those services.

Legislative Background

Honingham Parish Council is committed to ensuring that the services and activities it provides meets the needs of all local people and that these services are available equally to all individuals. The Council aims to ensure that no-one is discriminated against in line with the recognised Protected Characteristics as laid out in the Equality Act 2010, these being:

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

The Council will, when exercising their functions, consider the equality duties as laid out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, and endeavour to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Equal Opportunity

Honingham Parish Council is committed to achieving equality of opportunity for the local community and its employees. We recognise individuals and groups continue to be unfairly discriminated against and it is our responsibility to promote good community relations, equality of opportunity and to tackle unlawful discrimination in all of its forms. This applies to all members and employees of the council.

How will the Council achieve their commitment?

- Services provided by the Council are in response to the needs of the local community and will be equally accessible, free from prejudice and discrimination.
- The Council will value people and their differences and will take into account parishioner views. Individuals are entitled to be treated fairly, in a consistent manner and with dignity and respect.
- Information about the Council's services and activities, including any vacancies (employees or Councillors), are made widely available to ensure maximum awareness.
- Fair recruitment and selections processes are used to ensure that individuals are recruited or promoted on merit.
- Training will be available to employees and Councillors. Employees will be supported in carrying out their duties in line with Council policies and procedures.
- The Council will work towards eliminating all forms of discrimination, by working together as an authority to develop and implement policies and procedures which take into consideration equality issues. The Council will ensure these are in line with relevant legislation and recognised best practice.
- Where any employee, Councillor or member of the public has a disability the Council will ensure that where possible all appropriate arrangements are made to ensure equality of opportunity when using the Council's services and activities.

Employment

Honingham Parish Council will treat all prospective applicants and employees equally and will provide a non-discriminatory working environment. Employment policies and procedures will promote equality of opportunity and will take full account of the provisions of the Equality Act 2010. The Council has a duty to make reasonable adjustments to prevent disabled applicants or employees from being disadvantaged. These will be considered on a case by case basis, but the Council is able to decline requests where it considers the request to be unreasonable. If the adjustment is not able to be made an explanation of the reason why will be provided.

Advertisements, application forms and other related documents for vacancies will not specify requirements on applicants which may be considered a form of discrimination, for example a specific age range or sex of applicant. All documents will be clear, easily accessible and made available to all sections of the community, both locally and in the wider area.

Summary

Honingham Parish Council will ensure all employees and Councillors understand the values and expectations of the Council and the behaviour that is expected of them as representatives of the Council. The Council will regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of all policies and procedures to ensure continued equality of opportunity. The Council will seek to positively influence others through this commitment. Such action is the responsibility of all employees and Councillors of Honingham Parish Council.