

# Earsham Parish Council

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

---

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide equal opportunities to all employees, irrespective of their characteristics. Earsham Parish Council oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination whether it is direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation or harassment on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010.

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”.

### **Scope**

All employees whether full-time, part-time, fixed term contract, agency workers or temporary staff, 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.

### **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.

The commitment to equal opportunities in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense.

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, harassment or victimisation through the council's Grievance procedure.

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

The policy will be monitored and reviewed regularly. 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.

### **The Law**

Equality Act 2010 - The Act will simplify, strengthen and harmonise the current legislation to provide a new discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

The policy will be implemented within the framework of the relevant legislation, which includes the nine main pieces of legislation that have merged:

- the Equal Pay Act 1970
- the Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- the Race Relations Act 1976
- the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- the Equality Act 2006, Part 2
- the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

The new Equality Act came into force on 1 October 2010. The Equality Act brings together over 116 separate pieces of legislation into one single Act. Combined, they make up a new Act that will provide a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all.

Reviewed 24<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Signed .....  
(Chairman)

Adopted 29<sup>th</sup> November 2017