

Equality, Diversity and Equal Opportunities Policy

Aims

The aim of this policy is to communicate the commitment of Neasham Parish Council (the 'Council'), its Councillors and Clerk to meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 5 April 2011. The Equality Duty applies to public bodies and others carrying out public functions. It supports good decision-making by ensuring public bodies consider how different people will be affected by their activities, helping them to deliver policies, representation and services which are efficient and effective; accessible to all; and which meet different people's needs.

The Council's intention is to be an effective Equal Opportunities organisation. This means it will do everything in its power to ensure that everyone has equal access, and is treated with respect, in relation to employment opportunities, to its services and to all its activities.

Policy Statement

It is the Council's policy to provide representation, information, facilities, services and employment to all irrespective of:

- Gender, including gender reassignment
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Having just had a baby or being pregnant
- Becoming an adoptive parent
- Having or not having dependants
- Religious belief or political opinion
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins)
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age

The Council is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination and harassment. All people and employees will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any of the above grounds. All decisions will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination.

The Council recognises that supporting Equality is of primary importance. This policy will help all those who are Councillors or employees of the Council to develop sound and effective policies that impact on the village and surrounding areas.

The Council aims to create a culture that respects and values each other's differences, that promotes dignity, equality and diversity. We aim to remove barriers, bias or discrimination that prevent individuals or groups from realising their potential and contributing fully to the community to develop a culture that positively values diversity.

The Council will challenge discrimination. It aims to provide equality and fairness to all in the community and expects all Councillors and its employee to be aware of, and understand the Equality Act 2010.

Equality Commitments

The Council is committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity for all persons.
- Promoting a good and harmonious environment in which all persons are treated with respect.
- Preventing occurrences of unlawful direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Fulfilling our legal obligations under equality legislation and associated codes of practice.
- Complying with our own equal opportunities policy and associated policies.
- Taking lawful affirmative and positive action where appropriate.

Implementation

The Chair has specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. In order to implement this policy he or she shall:

- Communicate the policy to Councillors, the Clerk and the public
- Incorporate equal opportunities into general practices
- Ensure that other persons or organisations will comply with the policy in their dealings with the Council

Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed annually, and action taken as necessary.

In addition to the internal procedures, any person has the right to pursue complaints of discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. Complaints will be dealt with as stipulated the Council's Complaints Policy.

This Policy was approved by Neasham Parish Council on 6 March 2017

Ref: 2017/03