

STEETON with EASTBURN PARISH COUNCIL

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Reviewed and adopted at a meeting on 6th May 2020

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination legislation and incorporates into a single Act. It simplifies the law removing inconsistencies and making it easier for people to understand and comply with it. It also strengthens the law in important ways to help tackle discrimination and inequality. The Act applies to all organisations that provide a service to the public or a section of the public.

Codes brought into force by the Equality Act 2010 and which provide guidance on compliance:

- The Equality Act 2010 Code of Practice on Services, Public Functions and Associations;
- The Equality Act 2010 Code of Practice on Employment;
- The Equality Act 2010 Code of Practice on Equal Pay.

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination on certain grounds. 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. This is unlawful if it is on certain grounds, known as “protected characteristics”. These are:

- Age
- Disability
- Race (includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Marital Status (including Civil Partnerships)
- Pregnancy and maternity

The Council also undertake not to discriminate unfairly on the grounds of working status (part-time/full-time employees), trade union membership/activity and unrelated criminal convictions (subject to the Council’s ‘Code of Conduct’).

Steeton with Eastburn Parish Council’s commitment to Equality

The Council aims to ensure that our services meet the varied needs and expectations of the local people and that everyone has equal access to all services regardless of age, gender, sex and sexual orientation, disability, marital status, ethnicity, religious belief or any other individual characteristic which may limit a person’s opportunity in life.

Steeton with Eastburn Parish Council will endeavour to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and with those who do not;

- Foster good relations between people who share a characteristic and those who do not.

In order to promote equality of access to services the Council will aim to ensure the following

- That services provided are in response to the needs of the whole community;
- Will monitor views and take into account customer views;
- That information on services is widely available to ensure maximum awareness of provisions;
- That in advertising and publicity the Council will be presented as an authority committed to promoting equality of access to employment and services;
- That staff will be consulted and their contribution valued in the information and promotion of equality of access to Council services;
- That staff will receive training and support in carrying out their duties in line with implemented equal opportunities policies.

Monitoring

The Parish Clerk will establish appropriate systems to monitor service delivery on the basis of age, gender, sex and sexual orientation, disability, marital status, ethnicity, religious belief or any other individual characteristics to ensure that they act fairly and without discrimination.

Employment

The Council endeavours to afford equal treatment to all its employees and prospective employees. The aim of this policy is to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, sex or sexual orientation, marital status, physical or other disability.

Whilst the main responsibility for providing equal opportunity rests with the Council, individual employees also have responsibilities. The elimination of discriminatory practices depends upon the co-operation of all employees.

In particular, employees should:

- Co-operate with measures introduced to make sure there is equality of opportunity and no discrimination;
- Ensure that they do not discriminate against colleagues;
- Draw the Parish Clerk's attention to discriminatory acts or practices;
- Not victimise individuals on the grounds that they have made a complaint or provided information about discrimination;
- Not harass, abuse, bully or intimidate employees.

Breach of this policy will be considered a disciplinary matter, with resulting action ensuing.