



WHITCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION POLICY

Whitchurch Parish Council – equality, diversity, and inclusion policy

Title	Equality, diversity, and inclusion policy
Owner	Chairman
Version number	1.0
Primary audience	General public, councillors and staff
Document location	Shared drive
Objective	
This policy sets out the council's position on equality, diversity and inclusion.	

STATEMENT ON EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

1. Whitchurch Parish Council is committed to the principle of equal opportunity and equality for all regardless of race, gender, religious beliefs (or lack thereof), creed, colour, disability, ethnic origin, nationality, marital/parental status, sex or sexual orientation and age.
2. Whitchurch Parish Council declares its opposition to any form of direct or indirect discrimination on these grounds.
3. Whitchurch Parish Council recognises its obligations under relevant legislation (listed below) and their Codes of Practice to eliminate discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity in employment and volunteering.
4. Whitchurch Parish Council recognises that all councillors, employees, and volunteers have a personal responsibility to ensure equal opportunity and equality for all.

ACCESS TO SERVICES & FACILITIES

5. As a local service provider, Whitchurch Parish Council will actively promote equal opportunity and equality for all by ensuring equality in the delivery and availability of its services (in this policy, the term service includes facilities). Specifically, Whitchurch Parish Council will ensure that service users have equality of opportunity, access, and treatment.

a) Equality of Opportunity means that all service users have equal opportunity to learn about services which may be appropriate to them, e.g., by avoiding communication methods which directly or indirectly discriminate against groups or individuals.

b) Equality of Access means that all service users have equal access to services which may be appropriate to them, e.g., by meeting so far as practicable the special needs of minorities which might otherwise restrict their access to services. Service users should also be able to contact the Parish Council in ways which suit them best, unrestricted by their own IT skills or provision.

c) Equality of Treatment means that, once service users have accessed services, they have their needs met so far as practicable in a manner that takes account of any special requirements.

d) Equality Assessments will be prepared by the Clerk in relation to all major projects, service improvements or changes, or new policies. The Assessment will report whether the Equality and Diversity Policy has been observed in relation to the project etc.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

6. Whitchurch Parish Council will actively promote equal opportunity and equality for all by ensuring equality in how it consults and communicates with those living in the parish. Specifically, Whitchurch Parish Council will ensure that no minority or disadvantaged group is adversely discriminated against in any consultation or communication process.

COUNCILLORS, EMPLOYMENT & VOLUNTEERING

7. Whitchurch Parish Council will actively promote equal opportunity and equality for all by ensuring equality in how it manages and treats councillors, employees, and staff. Specifically, Whitchurch Parish Council will ensure that:

- a) All councillors, staff and volunteers receive a copy of, and understand fully, their personal commitment under the Equality and Diversity Policy.
- b) The Chair is fully trained and equipped to implement the Equality and Diversity Policy in relation to the recruitment, retention, and treatment of councillors; and that appropriate training and materials are in place to enable the Chair to meet the needs of councillors.
- c) The Clerk is fully trained and equipped to implement the Equality and Diversity Policy in relation to the recruitment, retention and treatment of employees and volunteers; and that appropriate training and materials are in place to enable the Clerk to meet the needs of employees and volunteers.
- d) The Clerk is fully trained and equipped to implement an Equal Pay policy for all Council employees, i.e., that all staff receive equal pay for the same or broadly similar work, for work rated as equivalent and for work of equal value.
- e) In relation to any disabled councillor, employee or volunteer, the Clerk is fully trained and equipped to carry out a review of the reasonable adjustments that might be made to ameliorate any substantial disadvantage which the person may experience because of their disability.

RECRUITMENT OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS & CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLORS

8. Whitchurch Parish Council will actively promote equal opportunity and equality for all by ensuring equality in how it co-opts councillors and recruits' employees and staff. Specifically, Whitchurch Parish Council will ensure that individuals are recruited, and councillors co-opted on objective criteria having regard to the relevant aptitudes, potential, skills, experiences, and abilities, through a transparent process which eliminates any illegal direct or indirect discrimination.

ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

9. Whitchurch Parish Council is committed to eliminate any form of harassment, especially racial or sexual harassment, by any councillor, employee, or volunteer.

MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION

10. The Chair of the Council and the Clerk shall take the lead responsibility for ensuring the implementation of this policy in all areas of the Council's work. The policy shall be reviewed by the Council at least annually.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

11. The following are the main Acts: Disability Discrimination Act 1995; Disability Discrimination Act 2005; Race Relations Act 1976; Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000; Sex Discrimination Act 1975; Equality Act 2006; Equal Pay Act 1970; Human Rights Act 1998; Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999; Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003; Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003; Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

Supporting Materials

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following supporting materials:

- TBA

Review and approval

Sign off		
Full Parish Council	10/02/25	V1.0
Next review date		
This policy should be reviewed every year or when significant change occurs to the subject matter.		
The next review date for this policy is February 2026 .		

Version Control / History

Version no.	Author	Date	Status/Comments
0.1	AGS	03.01.2025	Policy put into new template
1.0	AGS	09.02.2025	Signed off version