



Shevington Parish Council

Equal Opportunities Policy

Preamble

An equal opportunities policy is designed to ensure that, as a minimum, an organisation complies with its equality obligations under the various pieces of anti-discrimination legislation. An organisation may however extend the scope of its equal opportunities policy to cover groups and categories that enjoy different levels of statutory protection from discrimination.

Organisations may wish to adapt their equal opportunities policy to apply more generally to their business, for example, to extend equality of opportunity to customers or users/beneficiaries of their services. The same basic principles apply but organisations must take care to ensure that the wording of their policy is clear and accurate and that they understand what they are committing themselves to.

Key elements

Key elements in any equal opportunities policy include the following:

- A statement of intent, including the aims and objectives of the policy.
- Who the policy applies to (scope).
- An outline of specific commitments/actions which will be undertaken.
- How the policy will be implemented and who is responsible.
- Monitoring and review.
- How complaints will be dealt with.

1 Statement of Intent

The aim of this policy is to communicate the commitment of the members of Shevington Parish Council and its Clerk to the promotion of equality of opportunity with regard to all the Parish Council's activities.

It is our policy to provide employment equality to all, irrespective of:

- Gender, including gender reassignment;
- Marital or civil partnership status;
- Having or not having dependants;
- Religious belief or political opinion;
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins);
- Disability;
- Sexual orientation;
- Age.

We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All job applicants, employees, volunteers, contractors and others who work for us, all residents, all applicants for financial aid and all who we come into contact with will be treated fairly

and will not be discriminated against on any of the above grounds. Decisions about recruitment and selection, promotion, training or any other benefit will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination.

We recognise that the provision of equal opportunities in the workplace is not only good management practice, it also makes sound business sense. Our equal opportunities policy will help all those who work for us to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be utilised fully to maximise the efficiency of the organization for the benefit our residents and beneficiaries.

2 To Whom Does the Policy Apply?

This Policy applies to:

- Residents of Shevington Parish Council;
- Applicants for grants;
- Beneficiaries of services;
- Job applicants and potential applicants;
- Employees;
- Contract workers;
- Agency workers;
- Trainee workers and students on work experience or placements;
- Volunteer workers;
- Former employees;
- Current, former and future members of the Parish Council;
- All whom the Parish Council come into contact with.

3 Equality Commitments

We are committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity for all persons
- Promoting a good and harmonious working environment in which all persons are treated with respect.
- Preventing occurrences of unlawful direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimization.
- Fulfilling all our legal obligations under the equality legislation and associated codes of practice.
- Complying with our own equal opportunities policy and associated policies.
- Taking lawful affirmative or positive action, where appropriate.
- Regarding all breaches of equal opportunities policy as misconduct which could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- This policy is fully supported by the Parish Council and the Clerk.

4 Implementation

The Clerk has specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. The Parish Council expect all its personnel to abide by the Policy and help create the equality environment which is its objective.

In order to implement this policy we shall:

- Communicate the policy to employees, job applicants and all relevant others.

- Incorporate specific and appropriate duties in respect of implementing the equal opportunities policy into job descriptions and work objectives of all staff.
- Provide equality training and guidance as appropriate, including training on induction and management courses.
- Ensure that those who are involved in assessing candidates or recruitment or promotion will be trained in nondiscriminatory selection techniques.
- Incorporate equal opportunities notices into general communications practices (eg, newsletters, website).
- Obtain commitments from other persons or organizations such as subcontractors or agencies that they too will comply with the policy in their dealings with our organisation and our workforce.
- Ensure that adequate resources are made available to fulfil the objectives of the policy.

5 Monitoring and review

We will establish appropriate information and monitoring systems to assist the effective implementation of our equal opportunities policy. The effectiveness of our equal opportunities policy will be reviewed annually and action taken as necessary. For example, where monitoring identifies an under-representation of a particular group or groups, we shall develop an action plan to address the imbalance.

6 Complaints

Residents, employees or others who believe that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the agreed complaints/grievance procedures. A copy of these procedures is available from the Clerk. All complaints of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.

In addition to our internal procedures, employees have the right to pursue complaints of discrimination to an industrial tribunal under the current anti-discrimination legislation. However, employees wishing to make a complaint to a tribunal will normally be required to raise their complaint under our internal grievance procedures first. Every effort will be made to ensure that employees who make complaints will not be victimised. Any complaint of victimisation will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. Victimisation will result in disciplinary action and may warrant dismissal.

Signature: *J W Maloney* Chairman

Signature: *K Pilkington* Clerk