



STOKE MANDEVILLE PARISH COUNCIL

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Statement on Equality and Diversity Policy

1. Stoke Mandeville Parish Council is committed to the principle of *equal opportunity and equality for all* regardless of race, gender, religious beliefs, creed, colour, disability, ethnic origin, nationality, marital/parental status, sex or sexual orientation and age.
2. Stoke Mandeville Parish Council declares its opposition to any form of direct or indirect discrimination on these grounds.
3. Stoke Mandeville Parish Council recognises its obligations under relevant legislation¹ and their Codes of Practice to eliminate discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity in employment and volunteering.
4. Stoke Mandeville 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, Stoke Mandeville 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, Stoke Mandeville 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, eg, by avoiding communication methods which directly or indirectly discriminate against particular groups or individuals.
- b) *Equality of Access* means that all service users have equal access to services which may be appropriate to them, eg by meeting so far as practicable the special needs of minorities which might otherwise restrict their access to services.
- 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 Equal Opportunities & Equality Policy has been observed in relation to the project etc.

Consultation and Communications

6. Stoke Mandeville 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, Stoke Mandeville Parish Council will ensure that no minority or disadvantaged group is adversely discriminated against in any consultation or communication process.

Councillors, Employment & Volunteering

7. Stoke Mandeville 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, Stoke Mandeville 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, ie 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 as a consequence of their disability.

Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers & Co-option of Councillors

8. Stoke Mandeville 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, Stoke Mandeville 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. Stoke Mandeville 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 with the Chairs of Council sub-committees 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.

¹ 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