



# BRIZE NORTON PARISH COUNCIL

## Equal Opportunities Policy

<b>Code of Conduct Policy</b>	
Adopted by Full Council	<b>May 2019</b>
Last Review	<b>June 2021</b>
This Review	<b>June 2023</b>
Next Review	<b>2025</b>

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Brize Norton Parish Council is committed to providing the highest quality of provision and service and recognizes that the implementation of an effective Equal Opportunities Policy is an integral part of such an approach.

Brize Norton Parish 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.

### **LEGAL POSITION**

It is unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the following grounds:

- **age**
- **disability**
- **gender reassignment**
- **marriage and civil partnership**
- **pregnancy and maternity**
- **race**
- **religion or belief**
- **sex**
- **sexual orientation**

Under the Equality Act 2010 these are known as "protected characteristics".

Section 149 of the 2010 Act imposes a duty on Parish Councils to take into account:

- The need to eliminate discrimination and harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- To advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share it.
- To foster good relations between those who share characteristics and those who do not.

## **PURPOSE & SCOPE**

Brize Norton Parish Council is a small Parish Council, which currently has two part time employees (Clerk and Maintenance Person) so therefore its service provision is limited. However, the Council takes its responsibilities as an employer, a service provider and a public authority seriously and to this end we aim to ensure that no councillor, employee, volunteer, organization, job applicant or individual to whom we provide services, will be discriminated against by the Council in any way.

Brize Norton Parish Council opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination whether it be direct or indirect discrimination, victimization or harassment on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010.

## **OUR COMMITMENT: THE COUNCIL AS AN EMPLOYER**

The Council (as a corporate body) has responsibilities as an employer, a service provider and as a Public Authority. Employees, as individuals, also have responsibilities as well as rights.

All employees of Brize Norton Parish Council will be treated fairly and equally. Selection for employment, promotion, training, remuneration or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude or ability (unless there are genuine occupational qualifications or objectively justified reasons for a different approach to be taken). All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents of the workforce will be fully utilized to maximise the efficiency of the Council.

Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated. This is further defined in the Dignity at Work Policy adopted by the Council.

When vacancies arise within the Parish Council, the Clerk will continue to ensure that in advertising, the placement and content is compatible with the terms of this Policy.

## **OUR COMMITMENT: THE COUNCIL AS A CORPORATE BODY**

The commitment to equal opportunities in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense as it seeks to utilise the talents available from the local community, representing society as a whole.

Contractors and other service providers will be considered on their merits and potential contracts and applications will be considered objectively and without unlawful discrimination.

## **OUR COMMITMENT: THE COUNCIL AS A SERVICE PROVIDER**

Reasonable adjustments will be made where any person is put in a detrimental position and such reasonable adjustments remove the detriment.

Volunteers and members of the community will be treated with similar respect and will be treated equally and fairly.

## **IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING**

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

- Communicate this policy to councillors, the Clerk and members of 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

The effectiveness of the Equal Opportunities Policy will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis by the Personnel Working Party.

Breaches of our Equal Opportunities Policy will be regarded as serious misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings. Employees are entitled to complain about discrimination or harassment or victimization through the Council's Grievance Procedure.

This policy is fully supported by all Members of the Council and adopts the model contract as devised by the employee professional body in the local government sector (the Society of Local Council Clerks).

The policy will be monitored and reviewed every two years, or unless legislation changes. Other Personnel Policies will be reviewed against the values stated in this main Equal Opportunities Policy to ensure that the Council strives to remain an equal opportunities employer.

## **THE LAW**

The Policy will be implemented within the framework of the relevant legislation, which includes:

- Civil Partnership Act 2004
- Disability Discrimination Acts 1995, 2004, 2006
- Disability Equality Duty 2006
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Equality Acts 2000, 2010
- Equal Pay Act 1970 and the Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value Amendment 1983
- Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002
- Gender Reassignment Regulations 1999

- Gender Recognition Act 2004
- Park Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Race Relations (Amendments) Act 1976, 2000 and 2003
- Race Relations Code of Practice 1983
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and (Amendment) 1986
- Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997