STOKE BLISS GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy.

Nov 13th 2026

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The objective of this policy is to promote equality of opportunity for all and to ensure that no individual is discriminated against in the planning and delivery of any of the Council's activities.

1.2 Stoke Bliss Parish Council is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce, our services and eliminating unlawful discrimination of service users, residents, or the public.

1.3 The Council therefore aims to ensure that the values of equality, diversity and respect for all are embedded into everything that it does.

1.4 The Council encourages all employees, councillors, volunteers and contractors to give their best and treat each other and members of the public with respect.

2.0 Aims of the Policy

2.1 The policy is intended to demonstrate the Council's commitment to eliminating discrimination and encouraging and valuing diversity among employees, councillors, volunteers and contractors.

2.2 This policy provides a framework for providing equality, fairness and respect for all in delivering the Council's services, events and activities, and in its governance and employment practices including equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time.

2.3 The Council recognises its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and is committed to meeting them in full. The Council believes that a culture that embraces equality and values diversity will help to ensure that everyone feels involved and included in its plans, programmes and activities.

2.4 The policy's purpose is to not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, being married or in a civil partnership, being pregnant or on maternity leave, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.

2.5 The Council aims to create and environment that respects and welcomes everyone and in which no form of bullying, harassment, disrespectful or discriminatory behaviour is tolerated by anyone towards anyone. This particularly applies in relation to the protected characteristics named in the Equality Act 2010.

2.6 The Council aims to oppose and avoid all forms and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination in the delivery of its services to the public, in its governance, employment conditions, recruitment practices, in training or development opportunities.

3.0 The Council's Commitments

3.1 The Council understands that for equality to be achieved this policy need to be made understandable to, and embraced by employees, councillors, volunteers and contractors.

3.2 The Council encourages equality and diversity in the delivery of its services and within its governance and employment practices and gender neutrality in its language use, as this is good and proper practice and helps to make the most of skills available and efficient delivery of Council services.

3.3 The Council aims to create a service-delivery and working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and contributions are recognised and valued. This commitment includes training employees and councillors about their rights and responsibilities under this policy. Responsibilities include employees and councillors conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

3.4 All Council employees should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of employment, against employees, suppliers and the public.

3.5 The Council will take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the Council's activities.

3.6 The Council will make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all employees and councillors, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

3.7 The Council will review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness and to update them and policy to take account of changes in the law.

3.8 The Council will seek to create an environment in which diversity and the contributions of all employees, volunteers and councillors are recognised and valued in all that the Council does. In this way the Council hopes to provide an example of good equality practice and promote community cohesion within our community.

3.9 The Council is committed to:

- using accessible venues for events and meetings;
- using plain English, and offering accessible communications, for example, emails, letters, reports and publicity materials in suitable format as far as it is within its means to do so.

3.10 Acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination will be dealt with as misconduct under the Town Council's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures and appropriate action taken. The Council reserves the right to take steps to protect employees in cases of inappropriate behaviour to them, including by councillors and members of the public. In the case of councillor misconduct in this respect, complaints may be made to the District Council Monitoring Officer, under the Council's Code of Conduct.

3.11 Sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights/Code of Code and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

3.12 Use of the Council's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.