



# **IRON ACTON PARISH COUNCIL EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

## **INTRODUCTION AND AIMS OF THE POLICY**

Iron Acton Parish Council recognises and values people's differences and will assist them to use their talents to reach their full potential.

The organisation will do all it can to ensure it recruits, trains and promotes people based on qualifications, experience and abilities for all roles within the organisation.

This policy is designed to ensure that Iron Acton Parish Council complies with its obligations under equality legislation and demonstrates our commitment to treating people equally and fairly.

Iron Acton Parish Council is unreservedly opposed to any form of discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (defined as Protected Characteristics).

Using fair and objective employment practices, the organisation aims to ensure that :

- All employees, prospective employees and members are treated fairly and with respect at all stages of their employment or period of office as a councillor.
- All employees, councilors or any person engaged in work connected to the council have the right to be free from harassment and bullying of any description, or any other form of unwanted behavior. Such behavior may come from other employees, councilors or anyone engaged in work for the council.
- All persons engaged in business connected to the council should have an equal chance to contribute and to achieve their potential, irrespective of any defining feature that may give rise to unfair discrimination.

- All persons engaged in business connected to the council should have the right to be free from discrimination because they associate with another person who possesses a Protected Characteristic or because others perceive that they have a particular Protected Characteristic, even if they do not.

## **SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

The policy applies to:

Employees

Councillors

Anyone conducting business on behalf of the Council

Where applicable this policy includes all stages of recruitment, selection or training.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the responsibility of All councilors and its employees to assist in the development and implementation of the equality and diversity policy.

Responsibility for approving the policy and monitoring that it is being followed rests with

The Chairman unless that person is the subject of an allegation.

All persons regardless of role that are connected with the Council have a duty to act within this policy, ensure it is followed and to draw attention to any suspected discriminatory acts or practices.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY**

All councilors and employees will be involved in creating an equality environment and one that values diversity.

### **Communications**

All members of the Council and its employees should have a written copy of the policy that they can refer to.

A copy should be provided to anyone joining the committee in an official capacity for the first time.

A copy of the policy should be available on request from the Clerk and be available to view on the website.

### **Working with partners**

In selecting our partners we will consider their commitment to Equality and Diversity by asking for a written copy of their company policy where appropriate or drawing their attention to the councils own policy where none exists e.g. self employed contractors may not have such a policy.

### **Users of our service**

We will make our services accessible by :

1. Information published on the Parish Council Web Site
2. By a written request to the Clerk.

The policy will be implemented by following the steps outlined below:

1. Everyone participating in work connected to the Council should be made aware of the policy and the procedures to follow should an incident take place.
2. If an incident occurs those involved should contact the Chairman or their representative if unavailable and give a brief account. Whilst this can in the first instant be a verbal account it should be followed as soon as practicable in a written format. Electronic copies are acceptable in PDF format as these cannot be altered but a hand written or typed hard copy is preferred.

## **Iron Acton Parish Council Equality and Diversity Policy**

The following document outlines the policy adopted by the councilors of Iron Acton Parish Council to ensure that anyone regardless of role who has cause to work for or on behalf of the council will be treated in a fair way. In simple terms it outlines the standards of behavior expected between members of the council and those who work with them to carry out the work of the council.

It is expected that all councilors and staff conduct themselves appropriately whilst in the course of their duties. This includes how they speak to or about others e.g. fellow councilors or staff or the public they serve within council meetings regardless of whether those persons are present or not.

### **REPORTING DISCRIMINATION**

Any employee who feel that they have suffered any form of discrimination should raise the issue by contacting the Chairman or Vice Chair of the Council as their line manager.

Any councilor who feel that they have suffered any form of discrimination should raise the issue by contacting any of the Councillors who would in turn refer the matter to the Chairman or Vice Chair of the Council.

Service users who feel that they have suffered any form of discrimination should contact any of the Councillors who would in turn refer the matter to the Chairman or Vice Chair of the Council

Councillors may also use this approach if they feel that they have been the subject of abuse whilst conducting council business. Iron Acton Parish Council will not tolerate any harassment from anyone including third parties towards members and will take appropriate action to prevent it.

This procedure can also be followed by anyone who report behaviour that may have witnessed even though not directed at them personally that they find offensive in relation to age, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, whilst conducting business on behalf of the council

## **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

This policy will be monitored to judge to what extent it is working and identify areas for improvement.

Regular monitoring of the effectiveness of the policy will be conducted by the Chairman assisted by the Clerk in the following ways:

1. The policy will be reviewed every two years to ensure that it remains up to date and reflects the needs and practices of the organisation.
2. The policy may also be reviewed if legislation changes or if monitoring information suggests that policy or practices should be altered.
3. After review all proposed changes to be placed on the official agenda and debated by councilors prior to the revised changes being adopted.
4. The Chairman and Clerk may call for an extra ordinary meeting of the council to conduct a review of procedure in cases where the existing rules are no longer deemed appropriate and to wait until the next planned review would be too long.
5. In the event of both the Chairman and the Vice Chair being the subject of the complaint jointly then the matter would need to be referred to the appropriate department of South Gloucestershire Council.

Approved: 15/03/21

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| Minute No: | 14-03-21 |
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