

HATFIELD PEVEREL PARISH COUNCIL**EQUALITY POLICY**

Hatfield Peverel Parish Council will provide equality of access through good practices, and actively promote fair treatment and opportunity, regardless of a person's age, gender, disability, religion, ethnicity, sexuality or income

The Council will achieve this by attaining the following objectives:

1. Providing equality of access to the Council's services.
2. Continuously improving the Council's services and practices in line with experience and views of minority groups.
3. Providing fair employment and equal pay, while ensuring all managers manage their teams in a way in which will create a working environment where differences in individuals are valued and respected.
4. Enacting the Council's community governance role by combating discrimination within the District.

This statement sets out the guidelines by which Hatfield Peverel Parish Council seeks to eliminate discrimination both in the workplace and within the whole community.

The Council's definitions of inequality, institutional prejudice and prejudiced action are derived from the report in the Stephen Lawrence inquiry. It believes these provide a useful basis for the consideration of all inequalities. The Council therefore adopts the following definitions for the purposes of this policy:

Inequality: In general terms consists of conduct or words or practices which disadvantage or advantage people because of their culture, ethnic origin, gender, disability, age, religion, sexuality or income.

Institutional prejudice: The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their culture, ethnic origin, gender, disability, age, religion, sexuality or income. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and stereotyping which disadvantages people.

Prejudiced action: Any action (or inaction) which is perceived to arise from prejudice by the victim or any other person.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of every Councillor and member of staff to develop the Council's services in order that they are provided in fair and equitable manner.

The following groups have specific responsibilities:

Councillors: The Members' Code of Conduct adopted by the Council places a positive duty on all Councillors to promote equality by not discriminating against others. Councillors are essential to the successful implementation of equalities which they can achieve by:

- Providing leadership and support
- Ensuring resources are available
- Engaging with the local community
- Scrutinising equality of the Council's services and action; and delivery of this Equalities policy

Employees: All employees working for the Council will play a vital role in the practical achievement of this policy. To achieve this they will need to:

- Work towards speedy implementation of the Policy
- Organise and participate in equalities training
- Engage with the local community

Most importantly all staff have a major role to play in equalities work by challenging discriminatory behaviour and procedures.

Legal Background

We will ensure that, as a Parish Council, we meet the requirements as identified by current legislation, guidance and codes of practice. That legislation to include, Disability Discrimination Act (1995), Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000), Human Rights Act (2000), Sex Discrimination Act (1975) , Gender Recognition Act (2004)

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