



RINGSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: William Jacob
Clerk and RFO: Simon Lee

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Ringstead Parish Council is dedicated to encouraging an equal, diverse, supportive and inclusive culture and recognises that it functions at a fundamental level of democracy. We aim at nurturing an inclusive environment where everyone belongs, eliminating unlawful discrimination and promoting diversity.

We want our workforce, those who serve as Parish Councillors and our volunteers to be representative of all sections of society. We will achieve this through equal opportunities given to all those involved in delivering our services.

We are also committed against unlawful discrimination of customers or the public.

Our policy's purpose

This policy reinforces our commitment to equality and fairness throughout our organisation. Not to unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage or civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

We oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination, including:

- pay & benefits
- terms and conditions of employment
- dealing with grievances and discipline
- dismissal
- redundancy
- leave for parents
- requests for flexible working
- selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

We will treat all involved in delivering the Council's services fairly and with respect. When selected for employment, or co-option onto the Council, it will be based on aptitude and ability only.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which came into force on 5 April 2011, imposes on public authorities (which as specified in Schedule 19 includes principal authorities, parish councils) in the exercise of their functions, a duty 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 characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- To foster good relations between those who share protected characteristics and those who do not.

The protected characteristics of marriage and civil partnership are not covered by the provisions of Section 149.

Our commitments

The organisation commits to:

1. Encourage equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace.
2. Take a zero-tolerance stance on bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination. This includes promoting dignity and respect for all, taking seriously complaints of unfavourable treatment, and disciplining those that breach this policy.
3. Make opportunities for training, development, and progress available to all staff, Parish Councillors and volunteers.
4. Make decisions on hiring, promotions, and benefits based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
5. Regularly review practices and procedures to ensure fairness, update them where necessary to take account of changes in the law.
6. Monitor the make-up of those involved with delivering our services regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality,
7. To encourage all to speak up if they feel they have been subject to discrimination.
8. To encourage our employees and Parish Councillors to treat everyone with dignity and respect.

Agreement to follow this policy

The equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by all Parish Councillors and the Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer.

We will monitor and review this policy biannually to ensure that our ongoing mission to provide a equal and diverse workplace is fulfilled.

Adopted Minute: March 2023 Item 7.1.
For review January 2025