



HORNDEAN PARISH COUNCIL

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY and INCLUSION POLICY

Horndean Parish Council is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

The organisation - in providing services and/or facilities - is also committed against unlawful discrimination of our residents/members of the public.

Our policy's purpose

This policy's purpose is to:

1. Provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time

2. Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of:

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

3. Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in:

- pay and 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

Our commitments

The organisation commits to:

1. Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice.
2. Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.

This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

All staff 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 their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public

3. Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.

Complaints will be investigated under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures and, if proven, appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious cases could, if proven, amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter 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.

4. Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, 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.
5. Make decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
6. Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.
7. Monitor the declared make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually.

Our disciplinary and grievance procedures

Details of the organisation's grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be found within the Staff Handbook/Council IT system. This includes with whom an employee should raise a grievance – usually their line manager.

Use of the organisation's grievance 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.

As a community leader and advocate

We are committed to creating a socially inclusive and cohesive community by:

- Promoting equal opportunity and equal access to employment, services and information.
- Identifying and addressing the barriers that different groups face to participation in community life.
- Working towards ensuring fair and equitable resources.
- Respecting the diversity of our community.
- Working with others to ensure that Horndean is a safe place in which to live, work or visit.
- Listening and responding to the views of our communities through appropriate and widespread consultation and participation mechanisms, which are accessible to all.
- Ensuring the communications, we produce and the events we hold positively reflect and promote the diversity of our communities and are made fully accessible.

As a service provider

We are committed to ensuring that our services are accessible to all and responsive by:

- Ensuring our customers are aware of our services and that we deliver our services in ways that are sensitive to customers' needs.
- Ensuring that all those in the community are able to visit our offices, community halls and open spaces.
- Ensuring that the information we provide about our services is accessible to our community.
- Consulting and involving all sections of our community in the development and monitoring of our policies and services in ways which enable people to participate.

As a procurer of goods and services

We are committed to ensuring that those contractors and others from whom we procure goods and who deliver our services share and implement our equality vision and values by:

- Demonstrating that all practicable steps are being taken to allow equal access and equal treatment in employment and service delivery for all, as appropriate to the nature of the contract concerned.