

Introduction

The aim of this policy is to communicate the commitment of the Parish Council, its Members and Clerk to the promotion of equality and diversity in relation to Pennington Parish Council.

Statement of Intent

Pennington Parish Council is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

Everyone will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of: gender (including gender reassignment), marital or civil partnership status, having or not having dependants, religious belief or political opinion, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins), disability, sexual orientation or age.

Pennington Parish Council recognises that the provision of equal opportunities in the community is good practice.

Pennington Parish Council is committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity for all persons, and ensuring that people are treated solely on the basis of their abilities and potential.
- Promoting a culture that respects and values differences, and that promotes equality and fairness to all in the community.
- Ensuring that all decisions about recruitment and selection of staff are made objectively and without unlawful discrimination.
- Fulfilling its legal obligations under equality legislation (Equality Act 2010) and associated codes of practice.
- Taking an inclusive approach to providing access to our services and facilities for as wide a range of people as possible, acknowledging that there may be some circumstances where particular provision may be necessary for people with certain disabilities.

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 applies to public bodies and others carrying out public functions. It supports positive decision making by ensuring public bodies adequately consider how activities, policies and services provided might affect different people.

The Equality Act 2010 places a public sector duty on the Parish Council to:

- Eliminate discrimination, victimisation and harassment, and other conduct prohibited under the act. From October 2024, the act placed a new positive duty for Councils to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace.
 - Inappropriate conduct includes anything that constitutes a range of behaviours that can be construed as offensive, humiliating, intimidating, hostile, or degrading and can be via
 - spoken words
 - written words
 - banter
 - posts or contact on social media

- imagery
 - graffiti
 - physical gestures
 - facial expressions
 - mimicry
 - jokes or pranks
 - acts affecting a person's surroundings
 - aggression
 - physical behaviour towards a person or their property
 - sexual comments or jokes
 - displaying sexually graphic pictures, posters or photographs
 - suggestive looks, staring or leering
 - propositions and sexual advances
 - making promises in return for sexual favours
 - sexual gestures
 - intrusive questions about a person's private or sex life or a person discussing their own sex life
 - sexual posts or contact on social media
 - spreading sexual rumours about a person
 - sending sexually explicit emails or text messages
 - unwelcome touching, hugging, massaging or kissing
- Progress positive relationships and equal opportunities between those who share protected characteristics, and those who don't.
Protected characteristics include:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender
 - Marital status and civil partnerships
 - Pregnancy/ maternity
 - Race
 - Religion and beliefs
 - Sexual orientation
 - Ethnic origin
 - Nationality

As an Employer

Pennington Parish Council is committed to encouraging equality and diversity among its workforce and aims to represent all areas of society and for each employee/ member to feel respected in their role.

The Council also applies these aims in the selection of members where co-option is required to fill a casual- midterm vacancy.

The Council aims to:

- Provide equality, fairness and respect for all employees (full or part time) in relation to pay, benefits, terms and conditions of employment, grievance and disciplinary, dismissal and redundancy, flexible working hours, employment selection, and training and development.

- Provide equality, fairness and respect for all when delivering services.
- Create a working environment free from bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination, victimisation and to promote dignity and respect.
- Take seriously, investigate and appropriately handle complaints of bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, victimisation and discrimination reported during the course of Council conduct.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of our Equality and Diversity policy annually, and take action as necessary.

All employees and Councillors have a duty to uphold equal opportunities principals and it is the responsibility of every employee and Council member to ensure that their actions are not discriminatory in any way.