

Adopted: September 2023

Next Review September 2027

1. BACKGROUND

The Equality Act 2010 replaces the existing anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. It simplifies the law removing inconsistencies and making it easier for people to understand and comply with it. It also strengthens the law in important ways to help tackle discrimination and inequality.

The Act applies to all organisations that provide a service to the public or a section of the public.

2. COUNCIL'S COMMITMENT

Wereham Parish Council aims to ensure that our services meet the varied needs and expectations of the local people and that everyone has equal access to all services regardless of age, gender reassignment, sex, sexual orientation, disability, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief or any other individual characteristics which may limit a person's opportunity in life.

The Council will endeavour to:-

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a characteristic and those who do not.

In order to promote equality of access to services the Council will aim to ensure the following: -

- The services provided are in response to the needs of the whole community
- The Council will monitor views and take into account residents views
- The information on services is widely available to ensure maximum awareness of provisions
- That in advertising and publicity the Council will be presented as an authority committed to promoting equality of access to employment and services
- That staff will be consulted and their contribution valued in the information and promotion of equality of access to Council services
- That staff will be trained and supported in carrying out their duties in line with implementing equal opportunities policies

3. MONITORING

The Parish Clerk will establish appropriate systems to monitor the service delivery on the basis of the protected characteristics to ensure that they act fairly and without discrimination.

The Parish Council could do this by carrying out an audit and producing a report should it be required. If needed they would collect data in regard to the public and employees using it's services using district council data. The website, parish magazine, noticeboard and by phone could be used to

send a message to the public for comments on the Parish Council's services in regard to equality. They could be analysed: such as which customer groups use the services and identify improvements; ensure that services can be accessed by all groups; ensure equality of treatment, opportunity and access to all groups employed/public; policy review; highlight reputation as a fair provider to employees and public and evidence that we know who are public and employees needs are through using district data available for the parish.

4. EMPLOYMENT

It is the policy of Wereham Parish Council to afford equal treatment to all its employees and prospective employees including pay as a statutory duty as an employer. The aim of this policy is to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, sex or sexual orientation, marital status, physical or other.

Whilst the main responsibility for providing equal opportunity rests with the Council, individual employees also have responsibilities. The elimination of discriminatory practices depends upon the co-operation of all employees. In particular employees should:-

- Co-operate with measures introduced to make sure there is equality of opportunity and no discrimination
- Ensure that they do not discriminate against colleagues
- Fair treatment of part time workers no less favourable than full time workers, as part of the employer statutory duties.
- Draw the Parish Clerk's attention to discriminatory acts or practices
- Not victimise individuals on the grounds that they have made a complaint or provided information about discrimination
- Not harass, abuse, bully or intimidate others.

Where employees commit such acts in the course of their employment it will be considered a disciplinary matter and the appropriate action taken