

BOARHUNT PARISH COUNCIL - EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY **(Policy adopted – March 2017, Reviewed and Amended April 2024)**

Boarhunt Parish Council are committed to promoting equality and diversity in all areas of our work. This is in line with the **Equality Act 2010**, and the Hampshire County Council Equality & Diversity policy.

The Parish Council will support the aims of the Equality Duty by seeking to: -

- ensure that services are inclusive and diverse, proactively increasing understanding between and within communities
- attract and retain a diverse workforce, with equal opportunities for career progression
- ensure zero tolerance of harassment, discrimination, bullying and abuse, dealing effectively with incidents when they occur

The overall aim of this policy is to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, including the protected characteristics outlined in the legislation
- Ensure that we treat all individuals fairly, with dignity and respect, at all times.
- Promote equality of opportunity in all aspects of an individual's employment including their terms and conditions.
- Promote positive action – including recruitment and policy.
- Ensure that all potential employees can expect our recruitment processes to be free of all unreasonable barriers.
- Promote an environment free of harassment and bullying on any grounds in relation to all staff.
- Promote equality of access and where possible make any reasonable adjustments.
- Provide a safe, supportive, and welcoming environment - for staff, contractors, volunteers, and visitors.
- Integrate our values into our work.

Implementing the policy

We will endeavour to make the policy fully effective by:

- Actively promoting it.
- Regularly monitoring and reviewing our job selection procedures and criteria and change them if they result in unfair discrimination.
- Making sure that all employees and job applicants, contractors and volunteers know about this policy and agree to work within its guidelines
- Taking appropriate action, using agreed procedures, if any employee or Parish Councillor breaches this policy.

We are committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and demonstrating that we value the diversity of our workforce. To ensure that equality underpins all aspects of our employment policies, procedures, and practices, we will:

- Do our best not to unfairly discriminate against any job applicant or employee and, when recruiting, only to consider factors which are relevant to someone's ability to perform the job well
- Aim to create a workforce that is as diverse as the community we serve

- Do our best to treat all employees and job applicants fairly in relation to all our employment policies and procedures and to meet any reasonable and appropriate additional needs they may have
- Value and respect the identities and cultures of our staff, including volunteers and freelancers etc
- Do everything we can to work towards a workplace that is free from discrimination, bullying and harassment and act promptly on any complaints of discrimination, bullying, harassment, or victimisation
- Provide a safe working environment
- Make the workplace, and information about work, as accessible as we can for all our employees
- Give our employees clear information about job selection and training and encourage all employees to reach their full potential
- Make sure that we work per the relevant employment legislation and statutory codes of practice.
- Apply this policy through the organisation's recruitment and selection process, training programmes, grievance procedures and all other employment policies.
- Do all we can to give employees and job applicants access to complaint procedures if they feel unfairly treated.

Responsibility and liability

Responsibility for implementing the policy:

- The Parish Council has the ultimate responsibility for implementing and monitoring this policy, but all employees and Parish Councillors, as well as contractors, have a responsibility to work from it in all areas of their work, individually and collectively.

Employees and Parish Councillors must make sure they do not:

- Discriminate against anyone including anyone who is associated with someone who has a protected characteristic e.g. carers.
- Persuade or pressure another employee to discriminate harass, bully, or abuse other employees or the public for any reason or condone harassment.

If anyone witnesses a discriminatory incident at work, they have a duty of care to others to challenge such behaviour and practice. If necessary further action can be taken by making a report to the Clerk, any Councillor, or the Chair.

If an employee or Parish Councillor does not follow these and other requirements of the policy, we will usually deal with it under the Disciplinary Procedure.

Monitoring

Boarhunt Parish Council will review this policy annually, to ensure it is appropriate and responsive to relevant legislation. Amendments to the policy will be made, where appropriate, in the light of experience or changes in guidance and/or legislation.

APPENDIX 1 – DEFINITIONS OF THE PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS OUTLINED IN LEGISLATION

Types of discrimination ('protected characteristics')

It is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- gender reassignment
- being married or in a civil partnership
- [being pregnant](#) or on maternity leave
- [disability](#)
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

These are called 'protected characteristics'.

You are legally protected from discrimination by the [Equality Act 2010](#).

You are also protected from discrimination if:

- you are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic, for example a family member or friend
- you have complained about discrimination or supported someone else's claim