

ASH-CUM-RIDLEY PARISH COUNCIL

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Introduction

Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council is committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of its work. The Council opposes all forms of discrimination and strives to ensure that everyone has equal access to its services, employment opportunities, and participation in community activities. This policy sets out the Council's commitment to fairness, respect, and inclusivity and applies to all employees, councillors, volunteers, service users, contractors, and members of the public engaging with the Council.

Legal Position

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against an individual based on the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including ethnicity, nationality, and colour)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

In addition to prohibiting discrimination, Section 149 of the Act places a legal duty on the Council to take proactive steps to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation. The Council is also required to advance equality of opportunity between different groups and foster good relations between those who share protected characteristics and those who do not.

The Council as an Employer

Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council is strongly committed to ensuring that selection for employment, promotion, training, remuneration or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability and will ensure that no employee, or potential employee receive less than favourable treatment and that where ever possible they are given the help they need to attain their full potential. The Council is dedicated to fostering a working environment that respects and values the rights of all individuals and will ensure that all staff receive a copy of this policy.

Our Commitment

The Council expects all employees, volunteers, and councillors to contribute to a culture of dignity and respect. No form of intimidation, bullying, or harassment will be tolerated, and any such behaviour will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Bullying and Harassment Policy. Breaches of this policy will be treated as serious misconduct and may result in disciplinary action. Employees who experience

discrimination, harassment, or victimisation are encouraged to raise their concerns through the Council's Grievance Procedure. The Council will monitor and review this policy regularly to ensure it remains effective and that it continues to uphold its commitment to being an equal opportunities employer.

SERVICE USERS/MEMBERS

Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council aims to provide its service users with assistance in an unbiased non-prejudicial manner which encourages a positive attitude to the rights of all individuals, groups and communities within the geographical area.

This policy is fully supported by all Members of the Council. The policy will be monitored and reviewed. Other Personnel policies will be reviewed against the values stated in this Equality & Diversity policy to ensure that the Council strives to remain an Equal Opportunities employer.