

PANGBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Pangbourne Parish Councilrecognises that it functions at a fundamental level of democracy and that its services affect, both directly and indirectly, the lives of all those who work for or with the Council, those who visit the Council’s sites or interact with the Parish Council in any way. The Council is committed to equality of opportunity and respect for diversity. This is in relation to our role as an employer and provider of quality services to the people who live in, work and visit the Parish of Pangbourne.

This Policy provides a general statement of the Council’s expectations and responsibilities in relation to equality and is a reflection of our requirements under current equalities legislation.

The overall aims of this Policy are to:-

* Eliminate unlawful discrimination;
* Promote equality of opportunity;
* Promote equality of access;
* Demonstrate that we value diversity

# 1) Introduction

1. Pangbourne Parish Council is an equal opportunities employer. We are committed to equality of opportunity and to providing a service and following practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination. The aim of this policy is to ensure that no applicant or member of staff receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance. It seeks also to ensure that no person is victimised or subjected to any form of bullying or harassment.
2. We value people as individuals with diverse opinions, cultures, lifestyles and circumstances. All employees are covered by this policy and it applies to all areas of employment including recruitment, selection, training, deployment, career development, and promotion. These areas are monitored and policies and practices are amended if necessary to ensure that no unfair or unlawful discrimination, intentional, unintentional, direct or indirect, overt or latent exists.
3. We will endeavour to ensure that all employees, workers or self-employed contractors whether part time, full time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the Parish Council.

# 2) Our Commitment as an Employer

1. To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of our staff are recognised and valued.
2. Every employee, worker or self-employed contractor is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
3. Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff.
4. Equality in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
5. We will review all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.

# 3) Our Commitment as a Service Provider

1. We aim to provide services to which all people are entitled regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, offending past, caring responsibilities or social class.
2. We will endeavour to make sure that our services are delivered equitably and meet the diverse needs of our service users by assessing and meeting the diverse needs of those we work with and serve.
3. This policy is fully supported by Pangbourne Parish Councillors as a corporate body.
4. This policy will be monitored and reviewed periodically.
5. We have clear procedures that enable our service users, candidates for jobs and employees to raise a grievance or make a complaint if they feel they have been unfairly treated.
6. Breaches of our equality and diversity policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

# 4) Equal Opportunity Policy Statements

It is unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the following grounds:

* Age
* Disability
* Gender reassignment
* Marriage and civil partnership
* Pregnancy and Maternity
* Race
* Religion or belief
* Sex
* Sexual orientation

Under the Equality Act 2010 these are known as “protected characteristics”

## AGE

We will:

* ensure that people of all ages are treated with respect and dignity;
* ensure that people of working age are given equal access to our employment, training, development and promotion opportunities; and
* challenge discriminatory assumptions about younger and older people.

## DISABILITY

We will:

* provide any reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled people have access to our services and employment opportunities; and
* challenge discriminatory assumptions about disabled people.

## RACE

 We will:

* challenge and eliminate racism wherever it occurs;
* respond swiftly and sensitively to racist incidents;
* actively promote race equality; and
* actively promote good race relations between people of different racial groups.

## GENDER

We will:

* challenge discriminatory assumptions about people of all genders;
* take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against people of all genders;
* offer equal access for people of all genders to representation, services, employment, training and pay and encourage other organisations to do the same; and
* provide support to prevent discrimination against transsexual people who have or who are about to undergo gender reassignment.

## SEXUAL ORIENTATION

We will:

* challenge discriminatory assumptions about people of all sexual orientations;
* ensure that we take account of the needs of people of all sexual orientations; and
* promote positive images of people of all sexual orientations.

## RELIGION OR BELIEF

We will:

* ensure that employees’ religion or beliefs and related observances are respected and accommodated wherever possible; and
* respect people’s beliefs where the expression of those beliefs does not impinge on the legitimate rights of others.

## PREGNANCY OR MATERNITY

We will:

* Ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity and that a positive image is promoted regardless of pregnancy or maternity;
* challenge discriminatory assumptions about the pregnancy or maternity of our employees; and
* ensure that no individual is disadvantaged and that we take account of the needs of our employees’ pregnancy or maternity.

## MARRIAGE OR CIVIL PARTNERSHIP

We will:

* Ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity and that a positive image is promoted regardless of marriage or civil partnership;
* challenge discriminatory assumptions about the marriage or civil partnership of our employees; and
* ensure that no individual is disadvantaged and that we take account of the needs of our employees’ marriage or civil partnership.

## EX-OFFENDERS

We will:

* prevent discrimination against our employees regardless of their offending background (except where there is a known risk to children or vulnerable adults).

## EQUAL PAY

We will:

* ensure that all employees, male or female, have the right to the same contractual pay and benefits for carrying out the same work, work rated as equivalent work or work of equal value.

Signed: Pangbourne Parish Council

Date Effective from: Tues 20th February 2024

Next Review Date: February 2027