



# STANFORD IN THE VALE PARISH COUNCIL EQUALITY POLICY

## Background

Stanford in the Vale Parish Council is committed to providing the highest quality of provision and service and recognises that the implementation of an effective Equality policy is an integral part of such an approach. However, Stanford in the Vale is a relatively small parish council, which currently has only two part-time employees. It is not responsible for the management of buildings and its services provision is limited. This scope of this policy is, therefore, designed to reflect this. The Council, as a corporate body, has responsibilities as an employer, a service provider and a public authority. The Council will treat all its employees, partners and customers with dignity and respect, free from discrimination, victimisation and harassment.

## Legal position

Under the **Equality Act 2010** it is unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the following grounds (known as “protected characteristics” in section 4 of the 2010 Act):

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

**Section 149 of the 2010 Act** imposes a **Duty** on Parish Councils to consider:

- The need to eliminate discrimination and harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- To advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- To foster good relations between those who share protected characteristics and those who do not.

## Our commitment

Stanford in the Vale Parish Council understands its obligations under the Equality Act 2010, and is fully committed to its duty, imposed by Section 149 of the 2010 Act. It is committed to the principle of equal opportunities and declares its opposition to any form of less favourable treatment, whether through direct or indirect discrimination, on the grounds of the protected characteristics as specified in the Equality Act 2010. The Council is dedicated to promoting, upholding, and protecting the rights of individuals. It strives to fully utilise the talents and



resources of its employees and is equally committed to ensuring that recipients of its services have equal opportunities and are not discriminated against.

## **The Council as an Employer**

The Council will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy. All employees, whether full-time, part-time, fixed contract, agency workers or temporary, will be treated fairly and equally. Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.

Every employee is required to assist the council to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities and avoid unlawful discrimination. Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the council for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

**Grievances:** Employees are entitled to complain about discrimination or harassment through the Grievance Procedure outlined in the contract of employment.

## **The Council as a Service Provider**

The Council's parishioners have the right to expect fair and non-discriminatory treatment whilst participating in or receiving any of the Council's services or activities. In exercising its functions and delivering services, the Parish Council will have due regard to the three aims of the Equality Duty and will take a proportionate approach when complying with it. Equality issues will be an influence on policies and decisions.

The council will not discriminate against or harass a member of the public in the provision of services or goods.

**Complaints:** If a service user believes that the Council has unlawfully discriminated against or harassed them, the Council's complaints procedure should be used. The council will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any complaint that it upholds.

## **Policy Implementation and Review**

Councillors hold ultimate responsibility for overseeing and guiding this policy, ensuring that fairness and equality principles are at the core of the decision-making process. The Clerk is responsible for ensuring that the standards set out in this policy are adhered to and will provide advice to the Parish Council on any updates or changes in legislation.

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Approved at Parish Council meeting: 2nd October 2024, Minute reference 18/10/24

Policy version reference: Version 1

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Date for next review: October 2026