



Hartshill Parish Council Equal Opportunities Policy Adopted Ref 110519

Contents

1. Policy Statement
2. Objectives of this Policy
3. Designated Officer
4. Definition of Discrimination
5. Types of Discrimination
6. Unlawful Reasons for Discrimination
7. Positive Action in Recruitment
8. Reasonable Adjustments
9. Responsibility for the Implementation of this Policy
10. Membership
11. Management Committee
12. Volunteers
13. Services
14. Monitoring
15. The Extent of the Policy
16. Acting on Discriminatory Behaviour
17. Advice and Support on Discrimination
18. History

Hartshill Parish Council Equal Opportunities Policy Adopted Ref 110519

1. Policy Statement

Hartshill Parish Council (The Council) is committed to achieving a working environment, including the voluntary sector, which provides equality of opportunity and freedom from unlawful discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, disability, caring responsibility, age, class, HIV status, employment status, religion or beliefs, age, unrelated criminal conviction or sexual orientation. This Policy aims to remove unfair and discriminatory practices and to encourage full contribution from its diverse community. The Council is committed to actively opposing all forms of discrimination. If discrimination exists within our organisation or organisations with whom we work, it directly opposes our primary function to provide central resources for the whole community.

The Council also aims to provide a service that does not discriminate against its clients, customers or volunteers in the means by which they can access the services supplied by the Council. The Council believes that all employees, clients and volunteers are entitled to be treated with respect and dignity.

We aim to ensure that any Council employees and volunteers will, when they are facilitating the provision of services for other organisations, ensure that those organisations are not discriminated against. If discrimination does occur, the Council commits themselves to taking positive action against discrimination.

We do not believe that one form of discrimination can be graded as more or less damaging than another and we oppose any scale of hierarchy of discrimination. We believe that it is our duty and the duty of all organisations working with our employees and volunteers to advocate the needs of disadvantaged employees/volunteers.

2. Objectives of this Policy

To prevent, reduce and stop all forms of unlawful discrimination in line with the Equality Act 2010. This policy sets out clearly the positive action that the Council will take to help remove discrimination. The policy affects all aspects of procedures and operations.

2.1 To ensure that recruitment of employees and volunteers, promotion, training, development, assessment, benefits, pay, terms and conditions of employment, redundancy and dismissals are determined on the basis of capability, qualifications, experience, skills and productivity.

3. Designated Officer

Name:	Mrs B Spiers		
Position:	Clerk to Hartshill Parish Council/Responsible Financial Officer/Cemetery Manager		
Telephone Number	02476 387395	Email:	hartshillparishcouncil@gmail.com

4. Definition of Discrimination

Discrimination is unequal or differential treatment which leads to one person being treated more or less favourably than others are, or would be, treated in the same or similar circumstances on the grounds of race, sex, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, disability, religion or beliefs, age, class, HIV status or sexual orientation. Discrimination may be direct or indirect, and includes discrimination by perception and association.

5. Types of Discrimination

5.1 Direct Discrimination

This occurs when a person or a policy intentionally treats a person less favourably than another on the grounds of race, sex, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, disability, caring responsibility, age, class, HIV status, employment status religion or beliefs, age or sexual orientation.

5.2 Indirect Discrimination

This is the application of a policy, criterion or practice which the employer applies to all employees/volunteers but which is such that:

- It is detrimental to a considerably larger proportion of people from the group that the person the employer is applying it to represents;
- The employer cannot justify the need for the application of the policy on a neutral basis; and

Hartshill Parish Council Equal Opportunities Policy Adopted Ref 110519

- The person to whom the employer is applying it suffers detriment from the application of the policy.

5.3 Harassment

This occurs when a person is subjected to unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating their dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or an offensive environment.

5.4 Victimisation

This occurs when a person is treated less favourably because they have brought or intend to bring proceedings or they have given or intend to give evidence.

6. Unlawful Reasons for Discrimination

6.1 Sex

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably on the grounds of sex, marital status, civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment or transgender status. This applies to men, women and those undergoing or intending to undergo gender reassignment. Sexual harassment of men and women can be found to constitute sex discrimination.

6.2 Age

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their age. This applies to people of all ages.

6.3 Disability

It is not permissible to treat a disabled person less favourably than a non-disabled person. Reasonable adjustments must be made to give the disabled person as much access to any services and ability to be employed, trained, or promoted as a non-disabled person.

6.4 Race

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their race, the colour of their skin, their nationality or their ethnic origin.

6.5 Sexual Orientation

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their sexual orientation. For example, an employer cannot refuse to employ a person because s/he is homosexual, heterosexual or bisexual.

6.6 Religion or Belief

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their religious beliefs or their religion or their lack of any religion or belief.

7. Positive Action in Recruitment

Under the Equality Act 2010, positive action in recruitment and promotion applies as of 6 April 2011. 'Positive action' means the steps that the Council can take to encourage people from groups with different needs or with a past record of disadvantage or low participation, to apply for positions within the Council, or to volunteer to provide services on behalf of the Council.

If the Council chooses to utilise positive action in recruitment, this will not be used to treat people with a protected characteristic more favourably, it will be used only in tie-break situations, when there are two candidates of equal merit applying for the same position.

8. Reasonable Adjustments

The Council has a duty to make reasonable adjustments to facilitate the employment or volunteering opportunity of a disabled person. These may include:

- 8.1 Making adjustments to premises;
- 8.2 Re-allocating some or all of disabled employee/volunteers duties;

Hartshill Parish Council Equal Opportunities Policy Adopted Ref 110519

- 8.3 Transferring a disabled employee/volunteer to a role better suited to their disability;
- 8.4 Relocating a disabled employee/volunteer to a more suitable office;
- 8.5 Giving a disabled employee/volunteer time off for medical treatment or rehabilitation;
- 8.6 Providing training or mentoring for a disabled employee/volunteer;
- 8.7 Supplying or modifying equipment, instruction and training manuals for disabled employees/volunteers;
or
- 8.8 Any other adjustments that the Council considers reasonable and necessary provided such adjustments are within the financial means of the Council.

If an employee/volunteer has a disability and feels that any such adjustments could be made by the Council, they should contact the Designated Officer.

9. Responsibility for the Implementation of this Policy

All employees, volunteers, subcontractors, agents or clients of the Council are required to act in a way that does not subject any other employees, volunteers or clients to direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of their race, sex, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, disability, religion or beliefs, age, class, HIV status or sexual orientation.

The co-operation of all employees and volunteers is essential for the success of this Policy. Employees and volunteers may be held independently and individually liable for their discriminatory acts by the Council.

The Council takes responsibility for achieving the objectives of this Policy, and endeavours to ensure compliance with relevant Legislation and Codes of Practice.

10. Membership

- 10.1 Members are people who are interested in furthering the work of Hartshill Parish Council, and local organisations who are concerned to encourage, support and undertake voluntary work.
- 10.2 The Council will create and maintain an atmosphere where people feel that their contribution towards the work of the Community is valued.
- 10.3 The membership should reflect (where possible) the balance and range of people who live in the local community, so that Hartshill Parish Council can reflect the needs of the community.
- 10.4 The membership must actively support Hartshill Parish Council Equal Opportunities Policy.
- 10.5 The Council will undertake to maintain the membership's awareness of discrimination in volunteering and how to oppose it both personally and collectively.
- 10.6 As users of many of the services provided by Hartshill Parish Council, the membership should be encouraged to examine and help develop the relevance of these services to the whole of the local community.
- 10.7 Members will be encouraged to take an active part in the general work of the Hartshill Parish Council Community Library/Community Centre/Sports Pavilion and to help facilitate this. General Meetings and the Annual General Meeting will be scheduled to take account of the fact that some people wishing to attend may have childcare or care of dependant responsibilities. Hartshill Parish Council Library/Community Centre Sports Pavilion meetings will be held in venues that offer access and proper facilities for people using wheelchairs. Premises offering a meeting room with a hearing loop will be favoured, if available.

11. Management Committee

- 11.1 The Management Committee is responsible for maintaining and developing the physical and organisational structure within which Hartshill Parish Council can operate. One major requirement is that the Committee defines the broad area of work and evaluates Hartshill Parish Council

Hartshill Parish Council Equal Opportunities Policy Adopted Ref 110519

Library/Community Centre/Sports Pavilion's performance. Therefore the Management Committee must take responsibility for the implementation of the Equal Opportunities Policy.

- 11.2** The Composition of the Management Committee should reflect (where possible) the balance and the range of the membership and the local community. By reflecting the local community and the membership, the Management Committee is more likely to introduce policies that are sensitive to the needs of the whole community.
- 11.3** It is important that certain members of the Management Committee and staff are not necessarily seen as spokespeople for a disadvantaged group, but as full participants for their overall contribution. Management Committee meetings should be scheduled to take account of the needs of members and should be held at premises which offers appropriate facilities for members (e.g. induction loop - if available - and wheelchair access).
- 11.4** Hartshill Parish Council Community Library/Community Centre/Sports Pavilion will ensure that all new Management Committee members are given induction training and the support needed to enable them to feel and become active and valued Committee Members.

12. Volunteers

- 12.1** There will be flexibility in working hours for carers and consideration given to those looking after children during holiday periods (in line with the operational needs of the organisation). Hartshill Parish Council will ensure that there is flexibility in working hours for staff wishing to observe religious and cultural festivals. Every effort will be made to fund all necessary changes needed to make the office fully accessible to staff with disabilities.
- 12.2** Gay and lesbian relationships between unmarried couples are considered to be equivalent to married couple relationships in all situations relevant to the contract or conditions of employment and the Equal Opportunities Policy.
- 12.3** Hartshill Parish Council Community Library/Centre/Sports Pavilion aims to provide support networks, if necessary, for any workers in the staff team who identify themselves as a member of a disadvantaged group.
- 12.4** Volunteers based within Hartshill Parish Council and the Management Committee must have relevant training to help develop skills and the ability to work together effectively without undermining anybody's contribution.
- 12.5** All volunteers placed by Hartshill Parish Council will have a clearly defined set of working rights; these will be included within the Volunteer Induction Pack.

13. Services

Hartshill Parish Council aims to provide an environment which is healthy, safe, efficient and welcoming.

This requires:

- Easy access for people with disabilities
- Sufficient working space and space for ease of movement
- Quiet space for all with and/or induction loops (if available) for those with hearing difficulties
- Adequate daylight, fresh air and a no smoking policy on the premises
- Area for rest or withdrawal
- Health and Safety Procedures for accident and fire emergencies in accordance with legislation and good practice
- Furniture and accessories which are right for the job, e.g. posture chairs, VDU screens
- Appropriate electric lighting
- Regular upkeep and maintenance of the buildings
- Users of the services will be treated with respect and will not have their status undermined. Any degrading behaviour or harassment will be treated seriously. If a matter cannot be resolved informally

Hartshill Parish Council Equal Opportunities Policy Adopted Ref 110519

Hartshill Parish Council will operate the Disciplinary and Complaint/Grievance Procedures to deal with the matter.

- In a case involving a member of the Management Committee or a member of Hartshill Parish Council, the matter will be brought to the attention of the Chairperson of the Council and, subject to a full meeting of existing members of the Council, may lead to a termination of membership
- In a case involving an individual or organisation receiving or requesting services, Hartshill Parish Council may decide to withdraw all services indefinitely
- Hartshill Parish Council must regularly examine and develop the services it provides so that they have a relevance and usefulness to the whole community
- Hartshill Parish Council must promote the principles of its equal opportunities policy as widely as possible.
- Should Hartshill Parish Council recruit volunteers, via North Warwickshire Volunteer Centre, they will accept the Volunteer Centre's Equal Opportunities Statement of Intent prior to registering with the Centre.

14. Monitoring

The Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy will be reviewed as a major agenda item at the Management Committee/Council meeting once every twelve months.

All new policies and plans for Hartshill Parish Council will contain a statement detailing their implications for the overall accessibility of Hartshill Parish Council and the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy.

Hartshill Parish Council Library/Community Centre/Sports Pavilion will monitor the composition of the Volunteer workforce and the users of our services – potential volunteers, people attending general meetings and training events – by age, sex, disability and ethnic group and present statistics to meetings reviewing the equal opportunities policy.

15. The Extent of the Policy

15.1 The Council seeks to apply this Policy in the recruitment, selection, training, appraisal, development and promotion of all employees and volunteers. The Council offers services in a fashion that complies with the spirit of this Policy.

15.2 The Council reserves the right to amend and update this Policy at any time.

16. Acting on Discriminatory Behaviour

In the event that an employee or volunteer is the subject or perpetrator of, or witness to, discriminatory behaviour, please refer to the Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure.

17. Advice and Support on Discrimination

Employees or volunteers may contact their employee or trade union representative if access to such an individual is possible.

Other contacts include:

Equality and Human Rights Commission

Arndale House
The Arndale Centre
Manchester
M4 3AQ

3 More London
Riverside Tooley Street
London
SE1 2RG

3rd Floor, 3 Callaghan Square
Cardiff
CF10 5BT



Hartshill Parish Council Equal Opportunities Policy Adopted Ref 110519

The Optima Building
58 Robertson Street
Glasgow
G2 8DU

Telephone (England): 0845 604 6610
Telephone (Wales): 0845 604 8810
Telephone (Scotland): 0845 604 5510
Website: www.equalityhumanrights.com

Citizens Advice Bureau

Myddleton House
115-123 Pentonville Road
London
N1 9LZ
Website: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Community Legal Services Direct - Telephone: 0845 345 4 345
Website: www.clsdirect.org.uk

18. History – Reviewed 2014, 2016, 2017, 2019

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