East Stoke Parish Council Equality and Diversity Policy

1. Statement of Commitment

East Stoke Parish Council is committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion in all its activities and decision-making. The Council aims to treat all people fairly and with respect, and to ensure that no individual or group is disadvantaged.

This policy is guided by the principles of the Equality Act 2010.

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2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Councillors
- Employees (including the Parish Clerk)
- Contractors and suppliers
- Members of the public engaging with the Council

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3. Equality Principles

The Council will:

- Treat all people with dignity and respect
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Not discriminate unlawfully on the basis of protected characteristics, including:
    - Age
    - Disability
    - Gender reassignment

    - Marriage and civil partnership
    - Pregnancy and maternity
    - Race
    - Religion or belief
    - Sex
    - Sexual orientation

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4. Service Delivery

In delivering services and making decisions, the Parish Council will:

- Consider the needs of different groups within the community
- Ensure services are accessible as far as reasonably practicable
- Make reasonable adjustments for individuals with disabilities where possible
- Take account of equality impacts in a proportionate way given the Parish Council's size

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5. Employment

As an employer, the Parish Council will:

- Provide equal opportunities in recruitment, employment, and training
- Make decisions based on merit and ability
- Provide a working environment free from discrimination, bullying, or harassment

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6. Roles and Responsibilities

- The **Parish Council as a whole** is responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy.
- The **Chair and Clerk** will support implementation in day-to-day activities.
- All councillors are expected to uphold these principles when acting on behalf of the Parish Council.

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7. Complaints

Any complaints relating to discrimination or unfair treatment:

- Will be taken seriously

- Will be considered promptly and fairly
- May be addressed through the Parish Council's complaints procedure or, where relevant, employment procedures

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8. Proportionality

The Council recognises its small size and limited resources (precept under £10,000).
It will apply this policy in a **proportionate and practical way**, while meeting its legal obligations.

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9. Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually
- The Council will consider any equality issues that arise and update practices where necessary

Signed by Chair **Date**

Signed by Clerk **Date**