



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

1. Introduction

Aldbourn Parish Council is dedicated to fostering an inclusive and diverse community, ensuring that equality and fairness are integral to its operations, including employment, decision-making, service provision, and partnerships. The Council is committed to upholding dignity, respect, and equal treatment for all employees, councillors, volunteers, partners, and residents.

This policy outlines how the Parish Council will promote and maintain equality and diversity in compliance with legal obligations and best practices.

2. Legal Framework

This policy aligns with the Equality Act 2010, which prohibits discrimination based on the following protected characteristics:

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

The Parish Council is legally obligated to eliminate discrimination, promote equal opportunities, and foster positive community relations.

3. Purpose

The key objectives of this policy are to:

- Ensure fair treatment for all individuals, irrespective of their background.
- Remove barriers to participation in employment and community engagement.
- Ensure decision-making and service provision are free from bias and discrimination.
- Provide a framework for handling discrimination and complaints effectively.
- Encourage diverse and inclusive participation in Council activities.

4. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Parish councillors (elected and co-opted), employees, and volunteers.
- Organisations or individuals working on behalf of the Parish Council.
- Residents and community members engaging with Council services.

5. Commitment

Aldbourne Parish Council is committed to:

- Providing fair and equal access to all services and opportunities.
- Actively promoting diversity within the Council and the wider community.
- Identifying and eliminating discriminatory practices.
- Ensuring accessibility in facilities, communications, and events.
- Training councillors, staff, and volunteers to support an inclusive environment.
- Taking proactive measures to remove barriers for underrepresented groups.

6. Employment and Volunteering

The Parish Council is an equal opportunities employer and will:

- Base hiring, promotion, and training decisions on merit, skills, and qualifications.
- Ensure a workplace culture that upholds dignity, respect, and fairness.
- Make reasonable adjustments to accommodate employees with disabilities.
- Provide equal access to career development and training opportunities.
- Address any instances of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation through formal disciplinary measures.

Employees and volunteers can report any concerns through the Council's Grievance Procedure, and serious breaches of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

7. Policy Implementation in Decision-Making

The Parish Council will integrate equality into decision-making by:

- Conducting equality impact assessments when implementing new policies or procedures.
- Ensuring consultations involve diverse community perspectives.
- Promoting fair allocation of resources, funding, and procurement opportunities.
- Reviewing policies regularly to identify and remove barriers to inclusion.

8. Service Delivery and Partnerships

The Parish Council will:

- Ensure services are accessible, inclusive, and responsive to all community members.
- Provide clear, transparent, and accessible information about services.
- Promote equality principles in partnerships and collaborations.
- Encourage inclusive participation in local governance and decision-making.

9. Monitoring and Policy Review

To ensure ongoing effectiveness, the Parish Council will:

- Review this policy biennially or in response to legislative updates.
- Monitor complaints and feedback to identify areas for improvement.
- Encourage continuous engagement with the community on equality matters.
- Evaluate Council policies to ensure ongoing alignment with equality standards.

10. Reporting and Addressing Concerns

Individuals who experience or witness discrimination, harassment, or unfair treatment should:

- Report concerns to the Parish Clerk or Council Chair.
- Expect a confidential, fair, and timely response.
- Use the Grievance Procedure (for staff) or submit a formal complaint (for residents).

All complaints will be taken seriously, with appropriate actions taken, including disciplinary measures where necessary.

This policy is fully supported by all members of Aldbourne Parish Council and applies to all individuals and entities acting on its behalf.

11. Review and Amendments

This policy will be reviewed every five years or in response to legislative changes to ensure continued compliance with equality and diversity law and best practices.

Adopted on: Wednesday, 5 March 2025 - Item 180/25

Next Review Date: March 2030