

MARKYATE PARISH COUNCIL

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Markyate Parish Council Equal Opportunities Policy (EOP) can be distilled to a single statement. Simple though it sounds, this must then permeate every other policy that is adopted, and the principle behind the statement be reflected in all of our behaviors and practices.

Statement

Markyate Parish Council is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, gender, race, religion or sexual orientation.

It is committed to openness, and actively seeks to make available information about how it works, its decisions and the services it provides.

1. Responsibilities and Implementation

Markyate Parish Council (referred to as 'the Organisation') is committed to the principles of equal opportunity. It is the joint responsibility of everyone involved to adopt these principles and act accordingly.

The organisation recognises that certain groups in society suffer discrimination in some circumstances and are thus denied equality of opportunity because of **age, physical or mental disability, ethnic origin, gender, marital status, political allegiance, race, religious belief, sexual orientation, or other irrelevant factors (the factors)**.

The organisation recognises that everyone has a contribution to make to our society and a right to equal treatment irrespective of the factors.

The organisation recognises that we live in a multicultural society and believes that cultural diversity should be viewed positively.

The organisation will implement measures to combat direct or indirect discrimination in its employment practices and provision of its services, including positive actions to make this policy effective and ensure that the policy is reflected in the delivery of our work.

2. Bullying and Sexual or Racial Harassment

In keeping with the EOP, harassment of any individual for any of the factors is unacceptable and the aim is to ensure that unacceptable behavior does not take place.

Specifically, sexual and racial harassment are both forms of discrimination and as a consequence is unlawful. Bullying and harassment also lowers morale and reduces the effectiveness of people at work.

The organisation will not tolerate sexual or racial harassment, or other bullying, in any

form, by any member of staff, manager, volunteer, partner, or visitor.

Appropriate action will be taken in the event of such harassment being proven, which can include summary dismissal in the case of an employee.

3. Recruitment

The Organisation is committed to ensuring that it acts as an equal opportunities employer. No job applicant, employee, client or member will be discriminated against because of the factors

It is the responsibility of the Councillors to ensure that this is reflected in all recruitment and selection, personnel, and other procedures, and to investigate any complaints and respond accordingly.

Every vacancy will be advertised both internally and externally with the object of encouraging applications from all those to whom the post may be of interest.

Job descriptions will be provided for all advertised posts along with a list of key job requirements.

Application forms if used will not provide the potential to discriminate because of any of the factors at the point of application. The ethnic origin, age, and gender of applicants will be monitored separately.

Due regard will be paid by interview panels to cultural bias and the effect that it may have on interview proceedings.

This EOP should supplement all appropriate external documentation used for recruitment.

All recruitment and selection documentation should be retained for one year and will clearly record the reasons for an appointment.

4. Volunteers, Partners and Client Services

The Organisation intends to act with due regard to this policy and with due regard for the law.

The Organisation will encourage everyone with whom it works to act in a manner which is supportive of our principles.

The organisation will offer appropriate assistance to those who require it regardless of any of the factors listed above.

5. Development and Training

The Organisation will facilitate development and training without discrimination.

Equal opportunities will become an integral part of the development and training programme for all staff.

Existing development and training practices will be regularly reviewed to ensure they are not discriminatory.

6. Other

The office premises of the Organisation shall, where possible, have facilities for and be accessible to people with disabilities.

In all its work and all its published material, the Organisation will exercise care to act in a manner which displays respect for all people, cultures, and faiths. The Organisation will also endeavour to ensure its partners are aware of religious issues which should be borne in mind when planning training and consultancy work.

The Organisation will work with due concern for vulnerable groups such as children or mentally disabled people and take advice where necessary if dealing with such groups.

The Organisation will consult with representatives from groups possibly subject to discrimination and act on such advice whenever appropriate.

The Organisation will welcome and consider fully any constructive criticism or suggestions from any group or individual as to how this policy may be improved or more effectively implemented.

The Board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy, for example by analyzing statistics from monitoring of recruitment applications, and the number (if any) of complaints. An annual report on these issues will be submitted at each AGM.

The Clerk is expected to draw any complaints to the attention of the Councilors even if immediately resolved.

This Policy was adopted by Markyate Parish Council on the 3 July 2007.

END

This Policy to be reviewed in July 2008.