

Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council Equal Opportunities Policy

Adopted by the Finance and General Purposes Committee of Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council on 5 September 2023.

Note: This Policy should be used in conjunction with the Council's Grievance Policy.

1 Statement

Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council wishes to ensure that employees, Councillors, and members of the public have equal access to and are treated with respect in relation to all its activities. The Council has responsibilities as an employer, a service provider, and a public authority, but both Councillors and employees also have responsibilities as well as rights. The Council will treat all employees, Councillors, and members of the public with dignity and respect, free from discrimination, victimisation, and harassment.

2 Legal position

Under the Equality Act 2010 it is unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the following grounds:

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

These are known as "protected characteristics" in section 4 of the 2010 Act.

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;
- how to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- how to foster good relations between those who share protected characteristics and those who do not.

Where there is any uncertainty on definitions or requirements, the 2010 Act will prevail.

3 The Council as an employer

All employees are required to treat one another with mutual respect.

Actions, behaviour, and attitudes should consistently demonstrate respect for the dignity and worth of an individual, irrespective of the position they have within the organisation.

The Council provides a workplace where individuals are valued, listened to and treated with respect, and a work environment that seeks out and values the insight, experience, contribution and full participation of all staff.

Harassment and discrimination in any form is unacceptable behaviour and offenders will be subject to disciplinary action.

4 The Council as a service provider

The Council wishes to ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, all services provided by the Council are accessible to all individuals and groups equally and without discrimination.

All members of the public will be treated with respect. Employee and councillor actions, behaviour and attitudes should consistently demonstrate respect for the dignity and worth of an individual.

5 Role of Councillors and employees

All Councillors and employees are responsible for implementing this Policy. It is important that all individuals who are employed by the Council appreciate that they have a responsibility and a role to play in the provision of equal opportunities.

6 Monitoring of equal opportunities

The Council's Personnel Sub-Committee will have responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of this Policy.

Complaints from employees about discrimination or unfair treatment will be dealt with as laid down in the Council's Grievance Policy.

Complaints from members of the public about discrimination or unfair treatment will be dealt with through the Council's Complaints Procedure.

Document control

Version	Date	Editor	Changes	Approved	
				On	Ву
0.1	29/06/23	H Geary	Review, reformatted and minor amendments		
0.2	29/08/23	G Bridgman	Further formatting and amendments		
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