Equality, diversity and inclusion policy

Suckley Parish Council is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce, our services and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and residents, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

The Council - in providing services and/or facilities - is also committed against unlawful discrimination of service users, residents or the public.

The policy's purpose is to:

- provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time
- not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation
- oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

The Council commits to:

- Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make sense

- Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.

  This commitment includes training all employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the Council provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

  All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the

course of their employment, against fellow employees, suppliers and the public

- Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the Council's activities.

  Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the Council's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

  Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

- Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the Council.

- Decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).

- Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

Use of the Council's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

The above Policy was unanimously adopted by Suckley Parish Council at a Council Meeting held on Monday 26th September 2022 at 7.00 pm in Suckley Village Hall.