

# BORDEN PARISH COUNCIL

## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY (DRAFT)

Adopted on: 19/02/2026

Minute: 171e

Due for review: February 2029 (3-years)

Borden Parish Council (the Parish Council) is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and to avoiding unlawful discrimination as detailed under the Equality Act 2010.

The Parish Council is committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion for employees, to eliminating unlawful discrimination, and to being representative of all sections of society and for any employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

### **This policy's purpose is to:**

1. Provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time.
2. 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
  - sexual orientation
3. 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
  - selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

### **The Parish Council commits to:**

1. Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense.
2. 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 staff are recognised and valued.

This commitment includes training 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.

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, contractors, service providers, and the public.

3. Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by contractors, service providers and the public in the course of the Council's work 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.

4. Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to 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.
5. Make decisions concerning staff based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
6. 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.
7. The Parish Council will not discriminate unlawfully against those either providing services for, or seeking to use the services provided by the Parish Council. Any bullying or harassment of staff by contractors, service providers, and the public should be reported to the Parish Council, who will take appropriate action.
8. This policy will be reviewed annually or when updates are made.

#### **Agreement to follow this policy**

The equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by the Parish Council.

#### **Disciplinary and grievance procedures**

Details of the grievance and disciplinary policies can be found at [www.bordenparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.bordenparishcouncil.gov.uk). This includes with whom an employee should raise a grievance.

Use of the Council's grievance 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.