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Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

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

1. Purpose and Scope

We aim for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society, and as an organisation, to provide inclusive and accessible services and facilities. We are committed against unlawful discrimination of staff, customers, and the public.

The policy's purpose is to:

- Create an environment where everyone is treated with dignity, respect and courtesy.
- We aim to create an environment where there is zero tolerance for discrimination against any protected characteristics.
- Create an environment where we do not unlawfully discriminate any of the protected characteristics as outlined in the Equality Act 2010.
- Oppose and act to avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination.

This document:

- Explains how we will create this environment in our buildings public spaces.
- How we will deal with any complaints relating to discrimination.

The policy of the council is based on the principle that – as far as possible – all people, including those with any protected characteristics, will be accorded the same equality of treatment, dignity, and respect.

The council recognises that there may be constraints to the service that we can offer from premises we occupy. We undertake to listen to and consider any solutions that might resolve these issues and that respect the dignity of the person with a protected characteristic.

2. Legal Responsibility & Policy Support

Moulton Parish Council recognises its duty of care to its employees and its legal obligation to support Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion at work under the terms of:

[Employment Rights Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](http://legislation.gov.uk)

[The Health and Safety at Work Act \(1974\) \(legislation.gov.uk\)](http://legislation.gov.uk)

[The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations \(1999\) \(legislation.gov.uk\)](http://legislation.gov.uk)

[Human Rights Act \(1998\) \(legislation.gov.uk\)](http://legislation.gov.uk)

[Data Protection Act \(1998\) \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
[Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
[Equality Act \(2010\) \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

3. Inclusive Approach:

The council will take an inclusive approach to:

- Provide access to our services and facilities for as wide a range of people including those with any protected characteristics, acknowledging that there may be some circumstances where particular provision may be necessary for people with certain characteristics for example age or disability.
- 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.

4. Employees:

The council is an equal opportunities employer and will work to make all reasonable adjustments to the workplace to enable any member of staff with any protected characteristics, including and physical and mental disabilities, to allow them to enjoy a satisfying and fulfilling working life.

In addition, we will 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 organisation. Decisions concerning staff will be based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).

The council will provide equality awareness training for all members of staff on how they may meet the needs of people with protected characteristics and, about their rights and responsibilities under the [Equality Act 2010](#). This is achieved by ensuring all read and sign the staff manual containing all policies and procedures yearly, in addition to undertaking ad-hoc face-to-face training, for example Mental Health First Aid, and discussions during the working day. We will also review our practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

All staff should understand that they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public. All staff and representatives of the council are responsible for their own behaviour in the workplace and for taking steps to revise unacceptable behaviour and appropriately challenge that of others.

All staff will be advocates for offering an inclusive service.

5. Complaints Process:

There are different ways of processes for staff and members of the public.

Staff

The council take seriously any complaints of unlawful discrimination by staff, during the organisation's work activities. Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation'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.

Public

The council take seriously any complaints of unlawful discrimination by customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others during the organisation's work activities. Complaints of this nature will be dealt with via the Complaints Procedure or the customers/suppliers own policies and procedures.

Notes:

Protected Characteristics

A 'protected characteristic' is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and marriage and civil partnership. It is unlawful to discriminate against an individual because of any of the protected characteristics.

Discrimination includes treating people differently because of a protected characteristic. Customers can complain of harassment even if the behaviour in question is not directed at them. This is because the complainant does not actually need to possess the relevant protected characteristic. An employee can complain of unlawful harassment if they are related someone with a protected characteristic, or because a colleague believes they have a protected characteristic.

Examples of discrimination and harassment related to a protected characteristic could include:

- Making assumptions about someone's ability due to their **age** or denying development opportunities to someone based on their age. This could also include assumptions about their lifestyle or making inappropriate jokes related to age.
- Making fun or mimicking impairments related to a health condition or using inappropriate language about disabilities. Constantly selecting social activities that make it impossible for a colleague with a **disability** to participate in.
- Refusing to treat a person as their new gender or disclosing information about their gender identity could be harassment on the grounds of **gender reassignment**.
- **Pregnancy/Maternity** harassment could include refusing opportunities due to pregnancy or maternity leave, or inappropriate touching and invasion of personal space such as unwanted touching of a pregnant person's stomach.
- Harassment based on **race** could include derogatory nicknames, or stereotyping based on ethnicity. It could include racist comments or jokes, or assumptions about someone's lifestyle based on their ethnicity.
- **Gender** harassment could include not considering people for a job based on gender stereotyping roles or implementing practices that disadvantage one gender over another. Rude, explicit jokes, even if not directed at an individual, or comments on individuals dress or appearance.

- Regularly arranging team meals over periods of fasting or religious occasions or failing to adjust a dress code to accommodate religious dress could be examples of harassment based on **religion/belief**.
- Excluding same sex partners from social events could be both **sexual orientation** and **marriage/civil partnership** discrimination, as could not offering the same work-related benefits.

6. Related Policies

This policy applies to all employees of Moulton Parish Council and should be read in conjunction with our other policies and procedures. These policies have been written with the needs of the employee at the centre, and the council recognises that employees who are happy and well at work will perform at their best. Please refer to additional workplace policies:

- Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Flexible Working Policy
- Managing Ill Health and Absence Policy
- Bereavement and Special Leave Policy

This policy is reviewed annually by the Executive Officer and submitted to the full council for approval.

Last Reviewed: January 2024
Review Due: January 2025