

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY (EOP)**

### **Statement**

The purpose of this policy is to explain how Barkway Parish Council (BPC) provides equal opportunities to all of its employees, whether full-time, part-time, fixed contract, agency workers or temporary, irrespective of their gender, race, ethnic origin, disability, age, nationality, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, marital status or social class (the factors). All forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination are opposed.

### **1. Responsibilities and Implementation**

BPC is committed to the principles of equal opportunity. It is the joint responsibility of everyone involved to adopt these principles and act accordingly.

BPC recognises that certain groups in society suffer discrimination in some circumstances and are thus denied the equality of opportunity because of the factors listed above.

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

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

BPC 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 behaviour does not take place.

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

BPC will not tolerate sexual or racial harassment, or other bullying, in any form, by any person employed or involved in the operation and implementation of Council duties and work.

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**

BPC 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 Council 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 and the experience necessary for the position so that potential candidates can be measured against these criteria in the selection process.

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**

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

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

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

#### **5. Development and Training**

BPC will facilitate development and training without discrimination.

Interview panel members will receive equal opportunities development and training relating to selection and recruitment to ensure that selection is made on an objective basis.

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**

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

BPC 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.

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

BPC 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 Council will monitor the effectiveness of this policy, for example by analysing statistics from monitoring of recruitment applications, and the number (if any) of complaints.

Adopted by Barkway Parish Council

Signed

Dated: 11 November 2013

Reviewed: 14.03.2016