



STONEHOUSE
TOWN COUNCIL

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY
(Reviewed 22 May 2016 - Minute No.TC1866/4)
Next Review: Annual Meeting of Town Council May 2018

The aim of this Policy is to communicate the commitment of Stonehouse Town Council and its Members to the promotion of equality of opportunity in all aspects of its business.

It is our policy to provide equality to all irrespective of:

- Gender, including gender reassignment
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Having or not having dependents
- Religious belief or political opinion
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national originals, being a traveller)
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age

We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All members of the public will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any of the above grounds. Decisions on council membership, selection for office, training or any other benefit will be made objectively, without unlawful discrimination, and based on aptitude and ability.

We recognise that the provision of equal opportunities in all our activities will benefit the organisation. Our equal opportunities policy will help members and staff to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the Council will be utilised to maximise the effectiveness of the organisation.

Stonehouse Town Council recognises the statutory duty to implement an equal opportunities policy which applies to applicants for employment, volunteers and members alike.

Stonehouse Town Council is committed to the principles and practice of Equality and values the diversity of the local population. We want our services, facilities and resources to be accessible and useful to every citizen regardless of gender, age, ethnic origin, religious belief, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or any other individual characteristic which may unfairly affect a person's opportunities in life.

Equality Commitments

We are committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity for all persons.
- Promoting a good and harmonious environment in which all men and women are treated with respect and dignity and in which no form of Intimidation or harassment is tolerated

- Preventing occurrences of unlawful direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Fulfilling all our legal obligations under the equality legislation and associated codes of practice
- Complying with our own equal opportunities policy and associated policies
- Taking lawful affirmative or positive action where appropriate
- Breaches of our equal opportunities policy will be regarded as misconduct

Implementation

The Chairman of Town Council and Finance & Strategy Committee have specific responsibility for effective implementation of this policy. We expect all Members to abide by the policy and help to increase the equality environment in so far as matters under Town Council control

In order to implement this policy we shall:

- Communicate the policy to Members by notifying existing and new Members
- Stonehouse Town Council will endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that it will not consciously, or unconsciously discriminate in the selection or recruitment of applicants for co-option/election to the Council.
- Incorporate specific and appropriate duties in respect of implementing the equal opportunities policy in roles and responsibilities of Committee Members
- Incorporate equal opportunities notices into general communications practices (e.g. announcements, annual report at annual general meeting, notices and newsletters)
- Ensure that adequate resources are made available to fulfil the objectives of the policy

Monitoring and review

We will establish appropriate information and monitoring systems to assist the effective implementation of our equal opportunities policy. The effectiveness of the equal opportunities policy will be reviewed regularly (at least annually) and action taken as necessary.
