

Equal Opportunities Policy - January 2023

BUCKLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Ruth Johnson
CLERK, BUCKLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL

1. Introduction

Bucklesham Parish Council recognises that everyone has a contribution to make to our society and a right to equal treatment. We aim to ensure that no Bucklesham Parish Councillor, volunteer, organisation, job applicant or individual to whom we provide services, will be discriminated against by us on any unfair grounds whatsoever.

We aim to foster awareness of prejudices in all who work for and with the Council, and we aim to encourage the removal of such prejudices.

We also aim to ensure that Bucklesham Parish Councillors, volunteers and staff working with individuals and with organisations for which the Council provides services do not suffer discrimination, but should this occur, the Council commits itself to taking positive action against such discrimination.

2. Our Policy

Bucklesham Parish Council is committed to:

- addressing positively opportunities for full participation within the organisation;
- adopting an effective system to monitor its practice with regard to ensuring equality of opportunity;
- promoting good practice with regard to equality of opportunity for organisations and individuals involved in the work of the Council.

In particular the Bucklesham Parish Council will:

- work to ensure that all its services are provided in a way that promotes awareness of the rights and needs of people from minority groups and enables all people to have access to those services;
- work to ensure that our terms and conditions of employment and volunteering reflect a range of needs and interests that encompass people who may otherwise be disadvantaged. The policy of the Council is to ensure that no person receives less favourable consideration than others in the selection and appointment of staff or in the recruitment of volunteers.

3. Recruitment and promotion practices

The Bucklesham Parish Council will ensure equality of opportunity for all job applicants and volunteers. It will ensure that:

- application forms are continually reviewed to ensure structure and content are not open to discrimination;
- when recruiting, the Parish Council will develop personnel specifications which recognises the importance only of relevant experience or qualifications;
- acceptance of the Parish Council's Equal Opportunities Policy is a condition of employment.

4. Development and Training

The Council will facilitate development and training without discrimination ensuring that:

- 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.

5. 9 Protected Characteristics

Legislation

Bucklesham Parish Council (BPC) acknowledges the definitions of various groups of people who are vulnerable to discrimination as set out in the relevant UK legislation. The Council will support and implement the relevant UK legislation and will work to ensure that no person protected by the legislation is discriminated against unlawfully, and that any positive obligations and duties are performed. The Council gives the following specific commitments to the 9 protected characteristics:

1.Age

BPC believes that people of all ages have skills, experiences and ideas which are equally valid, and have valid needs, expectations and aspirations. BPC will not discriminate against anyone on the basis of age.

2.Disability

BPC recognises that they have a responsibility under UK legislation that applies to persons who are not apparently disabled or ill and will endeavour to meet those responsible.

3.Gender Reassignment

BPC recognises any individual's right to be addressed in which ever manner they chose. The Council endorses the right of any individual to reassign their gender and will not discriminate anyone on the basis of gender or their gender reassignment.

4.Marriage and Civil Partnership

BPC recognises the rights of individuals to choose to be married or in a civil partnership or neither and will not discriminate against anyone on the basis of their status.

5.Pregnancy

During the period of a woman's pregnancy and her statutory maternity leave, the Council will ensure she is protected under the Equality Act against discrimination on the grounds of either pregnancy or maternity. The Committee acknowledges that breastfeeding is covered under the Equality Act and will ensure any breastfeeding mother is given a clean, safe and private space in which to feed their baby and ensure there is adequate changing facilities available to all parents.

6.Race

BPC will be alert to any implications of its service and actions for potential unlawful discrimination. The Council will challenge racism in any form and will encourage members of the public to do the same.

7.Religion and Belief

BPC endorses the right of any individual to their own beliefs or the absence of a belief.

8.Sex

BPC recognises that discriminating against a person based on their sex is unlawful. The Council will ensure no persons are discriminated against due to their sex.

9.Sexual Orientation

BPC will ensure all sexual orientations are protected equally. Whether heterosexual, gay, lesbian or bisexual, everyone will be protected against discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Sexist policies, practices and attitudes (including policies, practices and attitudes which may relate to sexual orientation and gender identity) will be challenged, and others will be encouraged to do the same.

Adopted by the Parish Council at a meeting on: *4th January 2023*

Signed:

Ruth Johnson

David Brinkley

Ruth Johnson
Clerk

David Brinkley
Chair

Version Control

Date	Details	Next Review
10 th September 2020	First Publication	September 2021
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4 th January 2023	Updated to include Protected Characteristics	September 2027