



Equality of Opportunity

Responsibility: Full Council

Review Cycle:

Annual review and publication of Equality of Opportunity Statement

Four Yearly review and publication of Equality of Opportunity Policy

Four yearly review and publication of Equality Objectives

<u>Date of Adoption</u>	<u>Document</u>	<u>Resolution Number</u>	<u>Date of Renewal</u>
19 th Nov 2018	Equality of Opportunity Statement	18.11.126	November 2019
19 th Nov 2018	Equality of Opportunity Policy	18.11.126	November 2022
19 th Nov 2018	Equality Objectives	18.11.126	November 2022

1. Equality of Opportunity Statement

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

The aim is for our members and workforce to be truly representative of all sections of our parish communities, and for each member and employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

The organisation - in providing services and/or facilities - is also committed against unlawful discrimination of customers or the public

2. Introduction – the Equality Duty

2.1 The Equality Duty is a duty, set out in Section 149 of the Act, on public bodies, as listed in Schedule 19 of the Act.

2.2 Herstmonceux Parish Council has **due regard** (conscious and proportionate consideration) to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equalities Act 2010;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic (below) and people who do not share it, the protected characteristics;
 - age
 - disability
 - gender reassignment
 - pregnancy and maternity
 - race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality
 - religion or belief – including lack of belief
 - sex
 - sexual orientation
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

2.3 Herstmonceux Parish Council support good decision making by ensuring consideration of how different people will be affected by their activities. This helps the Parish Council to ensure fair recruitment and employment practices and the delivery of policies and services are efficient and effective; accessible to all and which meet different people's needs.

3. Members of the public

3.1 The Council opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

3.2 When within their remit, the Council seek to advance equality of opportunity by;

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered due to peoples protected characteristics;
- meeting the needs of individuals with protected characteristics who live or visit the parish;
- encouraging those with protected characteristics who live or visit the parish to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low

3.3 The Council recognises that many members of the public use its services or visit its premises. The Council takes seriously its responsibility to members of the public and affirms that they will be treated with respect.

3.4 The Council takes seriously its responsibility as an employer and affirms that they expect members of the public to treat employees, members and voluntary helpers with respect.

4. Employment Principles

4.1 Herstmonceux Parish Council will advance equality of opportunity to, and not discriminate against, any employee, member or voluntary helper, irrespective of their social class, age, ability, gender or gender re-assignment status, marital status, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation and those who are pregnant or fall within a period of maternity.

4.2 Recruitment, promotion, training, remuneration or any other benefit will be based on aptitude and ability.

4.3 All employees whether full-time, part-time, fixed contract, agency workers or temporary, will be treated fairly. Individual support needs will be identified through the induction and ongoing performance management process. Where necessary, the Council will make reasonable adjustments to ensure the needs of employees with protected characteristics are met.

4.4 All employees, members and voluntary helpers will be encouraged and supported to develop their full potential and talents.

4.5 Resources of the workforce and the Council will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

5. Organisational Responsibilities

5.1 The Council's is responsible for publishing annual information to show their compliance with the Equality Duty (bullet point 1.2) and to set equality objectives (bullet point 7), at least every four years; and

5.2 Overseeing the implementation, monitoring and review of the Equal Opportunities Statement (bullet point 1).

5.3 The Clerk's responsibilities include communicating the Public Sector Equality Duty and Equalities Policy and the implementation of both where applicable in the work of the Council. The focus will remain on performance rather than process notwithstanding:

- Knowledge and timing – of the requirements of the Equality Duty and consciousness of the Duty in development of policy options and decision making
- Consideration and sufficient information – The Duty must be exercised in such a way that it influences an informed final decision
- Delegation – any third parties exercising functions on behalf of the Parish Council are required to comply

- Review – The Duty is a continuing duty and must be regarded in reviews of relevant policies.

5.4 The Clerk may also advise Members on equality matters in areas such as recruitment, reasonable adjustment and other matters appertaining to equality of opportunity.

5.5 The co-operation of all members and employees is essential for the success of this policy. However, ultimate responsibility for achieving the policy’s objectives and for ensuring compliance with relevant statutes and codes of practice lies with the council.

5.6 Intentional breaches of the provisions or spirit of this policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary action for employees (in accordance with the council’s disciplinary policy) or a complaint against Members through Council’s Code of Conduct, to Democratic Services.

6. Legal framework

6.1 The policy will be implemented within the framework of the Equality Act 2010.

7. Herstmonceux Parish Council Equality Objectives:

	Objective	Measure	Monitoring and Review (actions undertaken and outcomes)
1	Compliance with our own equal opportunities policy and associated communications / employment / workplace policies	Member and employee knowledge and understanding of Public Sector Duty (Section 149) Member and employee knowledge and understanding of Specific Duties (Section 153)	
2	Neighbourhood Plan consultation and Referendum to be made available to all members of the Parish	Consideration and recording of measures put in place for accessibility and participation in having a voice for all parishioners in the community, including those who may have limited opportunities to be involved due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age • Disability 	

