



COLEHILL PARISH COUNCIL

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY – ADOPTED 10th September 2024

Note this new policy has been drafted to replace our existing Equal Opportunity Policy which was based on the Race Relations Act 1976, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975. All those historic acts were replaced by the Equality Act 2010. This new draft is based on Dorset Council's Equality & Diversity Policy and the Reef's Equality & Diversity Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Council is committed to encouraging a supportive and inclusive culture among our community by creating an environment which is safe, enjoyable and respectful.
- 1.2 We recognise our duty under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that people in the workplace and in wider society are not discriminated against for any of the following protected characteristics:
 - age
 - disability
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage and civil partnership
 - pregnancy and maternity
 - race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
 - religion or belief
 - sex
 - sexual orientation
- 1.3 This policy reinforces our commitment to providing equality and fairness to all our employees, councillors, volunteers and residents, and to avoid any less favourable facilities or treatment based on any of the protected characteristics. We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 **Discrimination** is when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic, or because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic, or because others think they possess a protected characteristic. Discrimination also occurs when a rule or policy applies to everyone, but disadvantages a particular protected characteristic.
- 2.2 **Harassment** is when a person harasses another if they engage in unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic, and the conduct has the purpose or effect of violating that person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

2.3 **Victimisation** is when someone is treated badly because they have made / supported a complaint or grievance under the Equality Act 2010.

3. Policy principles

3.1 All employees, councillors, volunteers and residents within Colehill will be treated fairly and with respect.

3.2 When we develop our plans and deliver our services we will aim to:

- design our services to meet the diverse needs of our residents,
- involve and consult with individuals and organisations as necessary,
- respond to, investigate and take appropriate action to address any complaints of bullying, harassment, discrimination or victimisation,

3.3 As an employer we will aim to:

- treat all employees fairly and equally,
- ensure selection for employment, promotion, training, remuneration or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability,
- help and encourage all employees to develop their full potential and talents to maximise the efficiency of the organisation,
- make reasonable adjustments to support current employees and potential employees,
- provide all employees with access to learning and development opportunities,
- provide an environment free from harassment, discrimination, victimisation and bullying.

3.4 Councillors and employees who are newly disabled are encouraged to bring this to the attention of the Parish Clerk to enable a review to be made. This review will include an assessment of physical features and arrangements to ensure that these do not place the disabled person at a substantial disadvantage. Where they do, then adjustments will be made where reasonable to do so.

3.5 All councillors and employees are expected to comply with the policy. Any breaches by employees will be dealt with under the Council's Disciplinary Procedure. Any breaches by councillors will be reported to the Monitoring Officer as Code of Conduct complaints.

Version History

Date	Summary of Changes
10/9/24	New policy

This Policy will be reviewed annually.