



HALE PARISH COUNCIL OF THE HALTON BOROUGH IN THE COUNTY OF CHESHIRE



Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

Adopted 17th January 2025

Purpose and Scope

Hale Parish Council is dedicated to actively fostering a community that values equality, champions diversity, and cultivates an inclusive environment where everyone feels respected, supported, and empowered to contribute. This policy applies to all councillors, employees, volunteers, contractors, and any individuals working on behalf of the council. It covers all aspects of council activity, including recruitment, service delivery, public engagement, and internal operations.

We will actively ensure that everyone who interacts with the Council - in whatever capacity, is treated fairly, with dignity, and without discrimination.

Our Commitment

We are determined to create and maintain a proactive, welcoming environment that celebrates differences and values contributions from all individuals, irrespective of their background, identity, or circumstances. We will challenge and eliminate all forms of discrimination while embedding equality, diversity, and inclusion into everything we do.

Definitions

- **Equality** means ensuring equal opportunities for everyone and actively addressing unfair treatment or discrimination.
- **Diversity** acknowledges and celebrates the variety of experiences, perspectives, and identities within our community.
- **Inclusion** ensures that everyone - regardless of who they are - feels valued, heard, respected, and has the opportunity to thrive.

Legal Framework

Hale Parish Council will proactively adhere to the principles outlined in the Equality Act 2010 and any other relevant legislation. We take our legal responsibilities seriously and will actively promote best practices in equality, diversity, and inclusion.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Council Leadership:** Councillors and staff will lead by example, championing equality, diversity, and inclusion and ensuring that these values are embedded in all council activities.
- **Employees and Volunteers:** everyone who works with or on behalf of Hale Parish Council must actively uphold the principles of this policy, promoting fairness and

respect in all their actions.

- **The Community:** we will actively engage with all members of our community to help us achieve our goals for equality and inclusion.

Areas of Focus

Recruitment and Retention

We commit to:

- Implementing fair, transparent, and unbiased recruitment processes.
- Proactively seeking applications from underrepresented groups and removing barriers to participation.
- Actively supporting the professional development of all staff and volunteers.

Training and Development

We will:

- Provide regular and proactive equality, diversity, and inclusion training for councillors, staff, and volunteers.
- Actively create opportunities for learning that enhance awareness and understanding of diverse perspectives.

Pay Equality

Hale Parish Council will:

- Proactively ensure fairness in remuneration, regularly reviewing and addressing any disparities.

Accessibility

We will:

- Continuously improve the accessibility of all services, facilities, and activities, removing barriers to participation wherever possible.

Workplace Culture

We will:

- Proactively foster a workplace where inclusive language and respectful communication are standard practices.
- Take a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of discrimination, harassment, or bullying.
- Provide active support for individuals from underrepresented or minority groups, ensuring their voices are heard and valued.

Complaint Procedures

We will:

- Ensure that clear, confidential channels for reporting incidents of discrimination, harassment, or inequality are available and accessible to all.
- Investigate complaints promptly, fairly, and with the utmost sensitivity, taking decisive action where necessary.
- Actively protect individuals from retaliation for raising concerns or participating in investigations.

Monitoring and Evaluation

We will:

- Look to collect and analyse data on diversity and inclusion metrics to identify and address gaps.
- Regularly review the effectiveness of this policy, ensuring it remains relevant and impactful.
- Continuously adapt and update the policy based on feedback, data findings, and evolving best practices.

Communication and Engagement

We will:

- Actively communicate our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion through council meetings, public announcements, membership of appropriate relevant bodies and ongoing engagement with our community.
- Proactively seek ideas and feedback to enhance our approach and outcomes.

Action Plan

Our proactive goals include:

- Increasing representation of diverse groups within the Council and its activities.
- Delivering EDI workshops (including unconscious bias training) for all involved with the Council.
- Proactively improving the accessibility of Council facilities and communication.
- Regularly publishing updates on our progress and inviting community involvement in shaping our priorities.

Agreement and Adherence

By working with or on behalf of Hale Parish Council, all councillors, employees, and volunteers agree to:

- Proactively uphold the principles and objectives of this policy.
- Actively contribute to an inclusive, fair, and supportive environment.

Failure to adhere to this policy may result in appropriate action, up to and including actions which may result in termination of involvement with the Council.