

# Woodmansey Parish Council

## EQUALITY POLICY

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### Introduction and Policy Statement

Woodmansey Parish Council is committed to pursuing an equal opportunities approach in every aspect of Council activity, including the management and delivery of services and the employment of its staff. Furthermore, Woodmansey Parish Council recognises its statutory duties under legislation in terms of service provision and employment and is committed to meeting them by complying with this policy.

Our Equality Policy underpins all policies, procedures and strategies, therefore providing a strong foundation for equality in the Parish Council and the services it provides to our community.

Woodmansey Parish Council opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination whether it be direct or indirect discrimination, victimization or harassment on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010 or the identified additional unfair grounds.

### The Legal Situation

Woodmansey Parish Council recognises that it is unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the following grounds:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Under the Equality Act 2010 these are known as “protected characteristics”. It is also unfair to discriminate against an individual on the following grounds:

- political views
- Family or caring responsibilities
- Chronic illness or HIV/ Aids status
- Socio Economic Status.

### Our Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide equal opportunities to all employees, irrespective of their characteristics (unless there are genuine occupational qualifications or objectively justified reasons for a different approach to be taken) and an equality of opportunity and access in the provision of services.

Woodmansey Parish Council will comply with all current and future legislation referring to equality and diversity and will aim to promote good practice in all aspects of the organisation. The Parish Council will publicise this policy in its website and will highlight it in recruitment and relevant official documentation.

### Equality of Opportunity for Employees and Parish Councillors

By 'equality of opportunity', Woodmansey Parish Council will ensure that all Parish Councillors, employees whether full-time, part-time, fixed term contract, agency workers or temporary staff, will be treated fairly, equally and provided with 'a level playing field'. Selection for employment / appointment, promotion, training, remuneration or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All Parish Councillors and employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the Parish Council will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the Parish Council.

Every Parish Councillor / employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated. The commitment to equal opportunities in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense as it seeks to utilise the talents available from the local community, representing Society as a whole.

### Equality of Opportunity in Parish Council Services to the Community

The Parish Council will ensure that all persons contacting the Parish Council will be treated in a fair and reasonable manner and provided with the same equality of opportunity to receive services which the Parish Council is responsible, regardless of their individual characteristics.

If any individual feels they are at a disadvantage due to their circumstances, they should discuss this in the first instance with the Parish Clerk in order to ensure they are provided with the necessary and appropriate support to achieve equal opportunity and service.

### How Woodmansey Parish Council deals with potential breaches of this policy

Any breaches of the Parish Council's equal opportunities policy will be regarded as serious misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings or other sanctions, including possible legal action. Members of the public using the Parish Council's services, Parish Councillors themselves and employees of the Parish Council are entitled to complain about discrimination or harassment or victimization through the council's Grievance or Complaints procedure.

### Internal Resolution

Any person (employee, Parish Councillor, or member of the public) wishing to raise a complaint regarding potential discrimination, should do so, in writing, to the Parish Chair within 15 working days of any alleged incident. An investigation will then be conducted by the Chair supported by the Parish Clerk, or an independent person / body not related to the complaint and appointed for the purpose, who will report to the Parish Council Chair in the first instance.

The Parish Council should seek advice from relevant bodies in all cases of complaints of discrimination in acknowledgement of the need to ensure proper and due process is followed.

**March 2021**