

ST CLEER EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY
ST CLEER PARISH COUNCIL IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER

The Policy

St Cleer Parish Council's intention is to be an effective Equal Opportunities organisation. This means it will do everything in its power to ensure that everyone has equal access, and is treated with respect, in relation to employment opportunities, to its services and to all its activities. It is mindful of the nine characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010. They are:

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

Age

A person belonging to a particular age (for example 32 year olds) or range of ages (for example 18 to 30 year olds).

Disability

A person has a disability if she or he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender reassignment

The process of transitioning from one gender to another.

Marriage and civil partnership

Marriage is a union between a man and a woman or between a same-sex couple. Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples (except where permitted by the Equality Act).

Pregnancy and maternity

Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

Race

Refers to the protected characteristic of race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

Religion and belief

Religion refers to any religion, including a lack of religion. Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

Sex

A man or a woman.

Sexual orientation

Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

Equality Act

Find out more about the Equality Act 2010, which provides the legal framework to tackle disadvantage and discrimination. <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en>

As an Employer

All employees are required to treat one another with mutual respect. Actions, behaviour and attitudes should consistently demonstrate respect for the dignity and worth of an individual, irrespective of the position they have within the organisation

St Cleer Parish Council is making every effort to create a workplace where individuals are valued, listened to and treated with respect.

St Cleer Parish Council maintains a work environment that seeks out and values the insight, experience, contribution and full participation of all staff.

Harassment and discrimination in any form is unacceptable behaviour and offenders will be subject to disciplinary action.

As a Service Provider

- St Cleer Parish Council will strive to ensure that all services provided by, or on behalf of, the Council are made accessible to all individuals and groups equally and without discrimination;
- all service users will be treated with respect. Actions, behaviour and attitudes should consistently demonstrate respect for the dignity and worth of an individual;
- St Cleer Parish Council will, wherever appropriate, work in partnership with other agencies in the area, including the County and District Councils, voluntary groups and community organisations to promote equal opportunities;
- St Cleer Parish Council will ensure that all contractors directly supplying goods and services or executing works for, or on behalf of, the Council comply with this Council's stated policy on equal opportunities.

The Policy in Action**As an Employer**

St Cleer Parish Council aims to achieve the policy by:-

- ensuring its employees are made aware of their rights and responsibilities to each other, the customer and the organisation regarding equal opportunities issues;
- providing a way in which individuals can communicate any concerns
- treating any unacceptable behaviour seriously;

- ensuring all Councillors and employees realise they have a key role in implementing this policy and are expected to take personal responsibility in ensuring its success;
- providing awareness training for all employees and Councillors, ensuring opportunities to develop relevant competencies are available to implement the policy;
- meeting the commitments and living the aims of being a “Positive about Discrimination” employer.

As a Service Provider

St Cleer Parish Council aims to achieve its policy by:-

- providing training for all staff in equal opportunities awareness and customer care, emphasising equality of treatment in service delivery, recruitment and community engagement
- ensuring that no member of the public is disadvantaged, or treated less favourably than others, in terms of access to Council services. Where the Council’s practice, policy or procedures are found to make access impossible or unreasonably difficult, we will take such steps as are reasonable in the circumstances to change these practices, policies or procedures;
- ensuring that, wherever practical, all public buildings and premises owned or managed by the Council are accessible to all. Where this is impractical in the short-term, we will provide reasonable alternative methods of access so that no member of the public is disadvantaged by physical barriers;
- recognising the importance of communication in attaining equity and quality services which are responsive to the needs of all local people, for example through the provision of information in large print and on audio tape on request;
- complying with all relevant legislation relating to discrimination and equity.

Role of Councillors and Employees

All Councillors and employees are responsible for implementing the Council’s Equal Opportunities Policy. It is important that all individuals who are employed by the Council appreciate that they have a responsibility and a role to play in the provision of equal opportunities.

Monitoring of Equal Opportunities

The council will delegate authority committees and working groups supported by the clerk to ensure that

- the implementation and monitoring of the policy as it applies to St Cleer Parish Council as an employer, involving staff as appropriate in the monitoring process;
- the policy is implemented and monitored as it applies to St Cleer Parish Council as a service provider, involving local community and voluntary groups in the monitoring process;
- complaints from staff about discrimination or unfair treatment will be dealt with as laid down in the Council’s Grievance Procedures;
- complaints from members of the public about discrimination or unfair treatment will be dealt with through the Council’s Complaints Procedure.