

Introduction

Denham Parish Council is committed to providing and promoting equal opportunities, eliminating discrimination, encouraging diversity and inclusion in the community and in all aspects of our work.

Denham Parish Council aims to maintain a culture that respects and values each other's differences and which promotes equality, diversity and inclusion.

An up-to-date copy of this Policy shall be maintained on the parish council's website.

Purpose

Denham Parish Council recognises that supporting equality is of primary importance. This policy will help Councillors and employees of the Council to ensure that they meet their duty under the Equality Act 2010.

Inclusion is the culture in which the mix of people can come to work, feel comfortable and confident to be themselves, and work in a way that suits them and delivers the business or service needs. Inclusion will ensure that everyone feels valued and importantly, adds value.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, temporary staff, volunteers, contractors, casual workers, and Councillors of Denham Parish Council.

All employees and Councillors have a duty to uphold equal opportunity principles. Any breach of this policy will be dealt with through the code of conduct or disciplinary process.

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 applies to public bodies and others carrying out public functions. It supports good decision-making by ensuring public bodies consider how different people will be affected by the activities, policies and services provided.

The Equality Act 2010 places a Public Sector Duty on Denham Parish Council to work to:

- a. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- b. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who don't share it
- c. Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who don't share it

Equality Act 2010 (Amendment) Regulations 2023

From effect 1 January 2024 protections derived from EU law into our UK legislation:

- a) **Breastfeeding and Pregnancy Discrimination.** This amendment clarifies that discrimination due to breastfeeding is a form of sex discrimination and permits more favourable treatment for maternity leave.
- b) **Maternity Leave Entitlement.** The amendment provides protection from discrimination for those who are entitled to maternity leave under schemes that are equivalent to statutory provisions.
- c) **Indirect Discrimination.** It clarifies the scope of indirect discrimination, ensuring protection for individuals who are disadvantaged due to a relevant protected characteristic, even if they don't possess it themselves.

Duty to Prevent Sexual Harassment

As of 26 October 2024, employers are now subject to a new duty to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

No individual, group or organisation will be discriminated against. This includes, but is not limited to the following characteristics (known as protected characteristics under the Act)

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Marital status and civil partnerships
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and beliefs
- Sexual orientation
- Ethnic origin
- Nationality

Equality Commitments

Denham Parish Council supports the principles and practices of the Equality Act 2010 and recognises that it is the duty of all Councillors and employees to accept their personal responsibility for fostering a fully integrated community at work by respecting and adhering to the principles of equality for all.

Denham Parish Council will actively promote equality throughout the organisation including through the application of policies which will ensure that individuals receive treatment that is fair and equitable. This enables all employees to achieve their full potential.

Denham Parish Council is committed to

- Promoting equality of opportunity for all persons
- Promoting a good, harmonious, and inclusive environment, in which all persons are treated with respect and valued
- Preventing occurrences of unlawful direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Fulfilling its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010

How we will reach our commitment

To provide services that are equally accessible to all people, free from prejudice and discrimination and sensitive to the needs of all sections of the community.

Value people and their differences, creating vitality within our organisation and the services we deliver. Endeavour to have a diverse, inclusive and representative Council membership.

Seek to influence the work and contribution of partner organisations from all sectors by ensuring that equality issues and considerations are fully taken into account when developing strategies and practices. Work actively towards eliminating all forms of discrimination, both of a direct and indirect nature.

Encourage partnership and participation in the development and application of council policy.

Policy into practice

Ensure that all policies and practices are in line with relevant employment legislation, anti-discrimination legislation and good practice guidelines.

Integrate equality of opportunity into all aspects of local authority responsibilities, activities and events.

Recruit and value a workforce that reflects the make-up of the community.

Ensure all employees/members/volunteers understand the values and expectations of the council and the standards of behaviour that is expected from each of them, and act in accordance with these values in their work.

Make clear the action an employee may take if they feel unfairly treated.

Provide training, as necessary, to relevant employees/members so that they can actively put this policy into practice.

Provide equal access to all service users and potential service users according to need.

Give people who use or might use council services the opportunity to influence the way their needs are met.

Seek to influence partner organisations in a collective commitment to equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion.

In line with government guidance, encourage voluntary organisations to provide evidence of their commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in terms of their personnel policies and delivery of their services, as a criterion in determining the award of grant aid from the council.

Ensure that the council has policies that result in services sensitive to the needs of all sections of the community.

Use socio-economic data to ensure compliance with the policy, where appropriate.

Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of policy and practice on a regular basis as determined by law.

Encourage feedback from members, employees and residents.

Develop a well-defined complaints procedure in dealing with alleged contraventions.

Policy Review

Denham Parish Council will review this policy as is necessary and appropriate, or at a maximum of three years after adoption.

Derek Wilson
Executive Clerk

8 December 2025