

LOUND PARISH COUNCIL

Equality and Diversity Policy

Lound Parish Council is committed to equality of opportunity and to providing a service and to following practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination.

Our aim is to encourage all staff, councillors, volunteers and contractors to give their best and treat each other and members of the public with respect.

The aim of this policy

The aim of this policy is to provide a framework to:

- Provide equality, fairness and respect for all, when delivering our services and in our governance and employment practices
- Prevent unlawful discrimination when delivering our services and in our governance and employment practices, in relation to the Equality Act 2010.
- Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in delivery of our services to the public, in our governance, employment conditions, recruitment practices and in training or other developmental opportunities

The Council commits to:

- Encourage equality and diversity in the delivery of our service and within our governance and employment practices as this is good and proper practice and helps us to make the most of skills and deliver our services well
- Create a service-delivery and working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and contributions are recognised and valued.
- Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.
- Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff and councillors, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation
- Decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act)
- Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and to update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law

Acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, in relevant circumstances and any appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice in the case of staff. The Council reserves the right to take

steps to protect staff in cases of inappropriate behaviour to them, including by councillors and members of the public

Sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights/Code of Conduct and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

This Policy will be reviewed annually.

Approved by the Council on: 3rd February 2020

Signed: