

## **Long Preston Parish Council**

### **Equality and Diversity Policy**

Adopted July 2012

#### **Principles**

Long Preston Parish Council is committed to the promotion and delivery of equal opportunities in all its activities with people irrespective of disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion, race, cultural or ethnic origin, nationality, age, marital status, geographical location or lifestyle. We aim to encourage, value and manage diversity and we believe that potential is distributed across all the population.

We recognise that many people in our society experience discrimination. We define discrimination as acting unfairly, directly or indirectly, against a group or individual through, for example, exclusion, verbal comment, denigration, harassment, victimisation and a failure to appreciate needs (or the assumption of such needs without consultation).

We believe all forms of discrimination are unacceptable, regardless of whether there was any intention to discriminate or not. We believe all our Councillors and employees have a duty to ensure that this policy is effective in ensuring equal opportunities and in preventing discrimination.

#### **Statement of Intent**

Long Preston Parish Council aims to create a culture that respects and values each other's differences, that promotes dignity, equality and diversity, and that encourages individuals or groups to develop and maximise their true potential.

We aim to remove any barriers, bias or discrimination that prevents individuals or groups from realising their potential and helping us to develop an internal culture that positively values diversity.

We will introduce, implement and monitor policies to ensure that we provide equality and fairness for all job applicants, employees whether part-time, full-time, fixed term or temporary and Councillors. Selection will be on the basis of merit and ability only.

Externally Long Preston Parish Council believes that equality of opportunity should relate to all aspects of our work and we will take every opportunity individually and in partnership with others to challenge discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity.

#### **Implementation**

It is the responsibility of the Parish Council to establish and direct implementation of policy, to monitor effectiveness, then review and develop the policy where necessary.

Monitoring and review of this policy will take place annually.

The Clerk to the Council is responsible for the policy's day-to-day implementation and working in accordance with the agreed action plan.

Each Councillor and employee is responsible for his or her own compliance with this policy. Breaches of the Equal Opportunities Policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary action.

Long Preston Parish Council will ensure that all new Councillors and employees receive induction on this and related policies and action plans. Contractors and consultants will be informed of their obligations under this policy.

Appropriate training and guidance will be provided to support the effective implementation of this policy. The policy will be widely promoted, and copies will be freely available.

Councillors or employees who feel their treatment, internally or externally, is in contravention with this policy should raise the matter with the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Council. If the matter cannot be resolved informally a staff member shall have recourse to the grievance procedure and Councillors should use the complaints procedure. In any event a report of the matter should be sent to the Chair of the Council (or to the Vice-Chair if the issue is against the Chair) for monitoring purposes and where necessary to follow up with the individual/s concerned. A copy of the report will be given to the individual/s concerned.

### **Issues raised by individuals/organisations outside of Long Preston Parish Council**

These should be raised with the Chair of the Council (or to the Vice-Chair if the issue is against the Chair). If the matter cannot be resolved informally the individual/s or organisation shall have recourse to the complaints procedure. In any event a report of the matter should be sent to the Chair (or nominated representative) for monitoring purposes and where necessary to follow up with the individual/s concerned. A copy of the report will be given to the individual/s or organisation concerned.