

MISTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Mistley Parish Council is committed to meeting the varied needs and circumstances of its residents and employees and to ensuring that services are equally appropriate to all without discrimination. The Council's goal is to support the development of a strong, secure, self-reliant, self-confident community, free from unlawful discrimination.

In support of this commitment, the Council has adopted a Policy Statement for employment and service delivery.

Employment – No Council employee or job applicant will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, trade union activity, age, religious or political beliefs, disability or will be disadvantaged by requirements which cannot be justified.

Service Delivery – The Parish Council will ensure that its services, including the ones carried out in partnership with any other organisations are available equally to all, regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic origins, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, trade union activity, age, religious or political beliefs, disability or will be disadvantaged by requirements which cannot be justified.

Legislation – In developing this Policy, Mistley Parish Council has taken into account all current appropriate legislation: the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) guidelines, the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) Code of Practice, and the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) guidelines.

Discrimination and Harassment – Mistley Parish Council will take action to ensure that all forms of discrimination are eradicated from its policies and practices.

Discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably because of his or her colour, disability, gender, race, nationality, religion or beliefs, sexual orientation, HIV status and age.

Legally it is not necessary to prove that someone intended to discriminate, and it is sufficient only to show that the outcome of an action was less favourable treatment. Less favourable treatment can take many forms – words, actions, or failure to provide opportunities or services and can be perpetuated by individuals, groups or organisations.

Mistley Parish Council recognises that harassment and discrimination of employees and service users is unacceptable and is working towards building an organisational culture that reinforces this belief. The Council is committed to addressing any possible harassment of employees and service users, since it is a barrier to achieving its equalities objectives.

Equality in Employment – Mistley Parish Council recognises the value in which people from differing backgrounds are encouraged to introduce fresh ideas and perceptions, enabling the Council to deliver high quality services to all members of the community.

To underpin the Council's commitment to equality in employment the Council:

- Will ensure that all recruitment, selection, and training/development procedures operate in a fair and non-discriminatory way, so that the best person to do the job is appointed.
- Will consult regularly with the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) and other supporting organisations such as the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) to identify any gaps in its employment policies and take action to remedy.
- Will consider sympathetically any request for flexible working, job-share, travel arrangements, child and dependent care leave and will guarantee interviews for disabled people who meet the essential criteria for a job.

Equality in Service Delivery – Mistley Parish Council will ensure that all services are accessible to all people without discrimination.

The Council aims to ensure that all employees, contractors, and stakeholders/community partners have the information they need to provide equality of opportunity and that this is reflected in their conduct. The Council will require, where legally possible, partners and contractors to have equal opportunities policies and will seek sufficient information and evidence that compliance with equalities legislation is genuine.

Responsibilities – The accountabilities and responsibilities in relation to this Policy can be summarised as follows:

Parish Councillors – Take the lead in promoting equality, ensuring equalities issues are given due consideration within their area of responsibility, in decision-making and in monitoring services and service delivery.

The Parish Clerk – Will actively support and assist the equalities work by:

- Monitoring the performance of the Parish Council's services, agreeing the necessary action, and maintaining a commitment to the Council's equalities work.
- Being pro-active in development a service led approach to equalities development.
- Working within the framework of the agreed Commission for Racial Equality's standards.

Other employees have responsibility for implementing the Policy as an integral and core element of the work of the Parish Council. Employees also support the Parish Council in meeting the requirements of this Policy, seek training opportunities and personal development as appropriate.

Conclusion – This Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis and at least annually and updated as necessary. This is a framework within the Parish Council and Councillors, the Parish Clerk and other employees can work towards making the Policy a reality. The Parish Council has a complaints policy/procedure. Details can be found on the Council's website or obtained from the Parish Clerk. For further information about this Policy or the work of Mistley Parish Council, please contact the Parish Clerk:

Parish Clerk
 Mistley Parish Council
 Tel. 07982 507584
 Email – clerk@mistleyparishcouncil.gov.uk
 Website – <https://www.mistleyparishcouncil.gov.uk>

*Review Body – Mistley Parish Council. Reviewed annually and normally each May at the Annual Parish Council Meeting. **Adopted 20/05/2019. Last Reviewed 22.05.23. Next Review Date 20.05.24.***