



Serving the community

Blaby Parish Council

GENERAL POLICY NO.4 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The purpose of this policy is to provide equal opportunities to all employees, irrespective of their gender, race, ethnic origin, disability, age, nationality, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, marital status or social class. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

All employees whether full-time, part-time, fixed contract, agency workers or temporary, will be treated fairly and equally. Selection for employment, promotion, training, remuneration or any other benefit will be on the basis of attitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisations.

Responsibility as an Employer

The Council is responsible for the determination of the Policy of race relations, equality of employment and associated matters.

The responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of such policies is designated to the Staff, Policy & Finance Committee.

The Council will:

- Review the Policy annually;
- Ensure that the Policy is known to all employees and job applicants, and to the wider community via the Parish Council's website leicestershireparishcouncils.org/blabyparish;
- Provide appropriate training and guidance to Members and employees, to ensure they understand their responsibilities under the law and under this Policy;
- Regularly review existing procedures and change them if they are found to be actually or potentially discriminatory.

Our Commitment

- Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- The commitment to our equal opportunities in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- Breaches of our equal opportunities policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- This policy is fully supported by all levels of management.

The Law

The policy will be implemented within the framework of the relevant legislation, which includes:

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Gender Reassignment Regulations 1999
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1977

Recruitment & Selection Procedures

The Council's aim is to ensure that there are no discriminatory barriers to the employment and promotion of members of any group.

- When a post becomes vacant, an accurate job description, either a new one or an existing one, will be reviewed and drawn up before the job is advertised. No unnecessary duties will be included to avoid the possibility of direct or indirect discrimination.
- Person Specifications will be written to cover only the qualities essential and desirable to the post. Unnecessary physical requirements will be discarded. The value of skills gained through non-traditional work will be considered. The competence gained through experience will be balanced against that gained through more formal routes.
- Application forms will elicit the information about the applicant's suitability for the job. All applicants will be required to complete a form for equal opportunities monitoring purposes only, detailing gender, age, marital status, ethnic group and disability (registered or not). This form will ensure, wherever possible, the applicant's anonymity. Special provisions will be considered for those persons unable to complete the application forms for themselves.
- Any information collected for equal opportunities reasons will be used solely for that reason and for none other.
- All vacancies will be advertised using whatever medium/media deemed relevant to reach all parts of the community. The advertisement will promote the Council's commitment to equal opportunities for all.
- Criminal offences will not, in themselves, be a reason for debarring an applicant from equal treatment in the recruitment and selection process where the offence is relevant to the duties of the individual as an employee.
- Short-listing will take place by a minimum of two Members and the Manager. The process of short-listing candidates for interview will be based on a proper assessment of the requirements from the job description and person specification against the details of the individual application form.

- Reasons for rejecting or selecting candidates for interview will be recorded and kept by the Council for a minimum period of 6 months.
- When any form of testing is used as part of the recruitment procedure, steps will be taken to ensure that it is appropriate and an unbiased means for assessing the skills and attributes necessary for the job.
- Prior to interviewing, a common core of questions which are relevant to the job-related requirements will be prepared and issued to all interviewers.
- Interviews will be conducted by a minimum of two persons. The assessment of the successful candidate will be based against clearly identified requirements for the job as detailed in the job description and person specification.
- Questions will not be asked regarding marriage prospects, family arrangements, religion, sexual orientation, or a disabled person's impairment, unless permitted under appropriate legislation, or any other question which may lead to assumption or stereotyping.
- All persons involved in the selection interview will complete a standard interview form detailing reasons for rejection/selection. These will be kept for a minimum of 6 months.
- All unsuccessful applicants will be advised that should they so request, a confidential feedback of a written explanation as to reasons for their non-selection will be provided.
- Exit interviews will be conducted on all employees leaving the Council and their reasons for leaving will be detailed and recorded and kept for a minimum of 2 years.
- Equality Monitoring Forms will be issued to all job applicants for completion. Data will be recorded and monitored.

Training and Development

- The Council's induction course for new employees will include training on the Equal Opportunities Policy. This will involve, at the very least, every new employee being given a copy of the Policy.

Pay, Grading and Conditions of Service

- Pay, grading and conditions of service relevant to all posts will provide consistency, transparency and equality.
- Jobs will be evaluated by the same analytical and non-discriminatory method.

Dealing With Harassment/Discrimination

The Council's aim is to reduce and prevent harassment and/or discrimination and ensure a safe and non-threatening environment for employees and the general public.

The Council aims to provide individuals who believe they have been subject to harassment and/or discrimination with a means to have that complaint addressed and to

deal with those employees who are found to be in breach of the procedure of the Council's policy on Equal Opportunities under the disciplinary procedure.

- All complaints will be dealt with through the Council's harassment and discrimination procedure (Employment Policy No.2 – Harassment/Discrimination Complaints Procedure).
- The procedure will take into account any complaint received on the grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, disability, marital status, caring responsibilities, trade union membership, age and sexual orientation.
- All employees will be made aware of the procedure.
- In proven cases of harassment and/or discrimination the employee(s) against whom the complaint was made, will be subject to the Council's disciplinary procedure.

Adopted 12th July 2011

Updated Yearly, Last Updated November 2019