

Bersted Parish Council – Equal Opportunities Policy

This policy was approved on *Date 09.07.2019* *Minute 19126.*

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Bersted Parish Council is a properly constituted Parish Council and we conduct our business within the of structure the Local Government Act 1972 and any updates made since that time, the Councils Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 Bersted Parish Council is committed to the values of equality and diversity, and its approach is to cover the whole range from a failure of good manners to direct discrimination. We believe that equal opportunities are essential to the values that lie at the heart of the organisation and, as such, should extend to the employment of our staff and work with our electors, contractors and partners.
- 2.2 The Council will ensure every aspect of its governance and operation is free from unfair discrimination and will promote equality of opportunity both internally and in our work externally.
- 2.3 Bersted Parish Council fully supports the right of all people to be treated with dignity and respect at work and is committed to promoting a working environment free from all forms of harassment and bullying and agree that appropriate steps should be taken to achieve this.
- 2.4 The Council will monitor and review the implementation of the policy to measure the effectiveness of Bersted Parish Councils equality of opportunity. The Council will monitor the implementation of this policy in how it relates to staffing issues and in the recruitment and retention of staff or volunteers.
- 2.5 Bersted Parish Council will comply with all current and future legislation referring to equality or diversity and promote good practice in all aspects of the organisation

3. Objectives

The Council's main objectives in implementing this Equality of Opportunity Policy are to:

- 3.1 develop and strengthen practices that value and empower individuals, through listening, consulting, providing support and promoting equality to eliminate discrimination.
- 3.2 provide equal opportunities for all staff, electors and contractors.
- 3.3 attract and retain high quality staff whose diversity and talents are valued and appreciated.
- 3.4 promote increased participation and involvement by individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds and from underrepresented groups.

4. Responsibilities

- 4.1 The Council on approving this Equality of Opportunity Policy takes responsibility for monitoring, implementation and reviewing its effectiveness.

- 4.2 The Clerk / RFO has overall delegated responsibility for co-ordinating the day-to-day operation of the policy and the development, maintenance and monitoring of supporting procedures.
- 4.3 The Clerk / RFO will report to the Council.
- 4.4 The Council will monitor the effectiveness of the policy in terms of non-discriminatory recruitment and selection procedures.
- 4.5 All Councillors and staff are required to read and understand their responsibilities under this policy. Any breach of the policy will be investigated and may result in disciplinary action.
- 4.6 All Councillors and staff have a responsibility to ensure that their actions comply with both the requirements and the spirit of the Equality of Opportunity Policy. This includes not just adhering to the Policy but to actively promote inclusivity, to be aware in their daily work of anything they or others do that may put some groups at a disadvantage and to develop inclusive working practices.

5. Complaints

- 5.1 Anyone who believes they have not been treated fairly and in accordance with the Equality of Opportunity Policy may complain by following the appropriate complaints procedure.
- 5.2 Any reported breaches of this policy will be subject to an investigation.

6. Review of this policy

- 6.1 The Equality of Opportunity Policy will be reviewed every two years by the Council to ensure it remains useful, progressive, and reflective of the UK legislation.
- 6.2 Any recommended changes to the policy should be approved by the Council. The revised policy will be thereafter communicated to Councillors and staff directly and electors and contractors via the website.