

POLICY: EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

PURPOSE: To define the Policy of the Melbourn Parish Council towards Equality and Diversity with the aim of ensuring a harmonious working environment and protecting the rights of all social groups

SCOPE: All Employees, Service Providers and Councillors of the Melbourn Parish Council. Members of the public who, for whatever reason, have dealings with the Melbourn Parish Council

POLICY:**Principles**

- 1.1 We, The Melbourn Parish Council, are committed to providing equality of opportunity and treatment for all Staff, Service Providers and Councillors. This commitment also extends to all members of the public with which it has direct or indirect contact through day-to-day business.
- 1.2 The objective of this policy is to ensure that all employees and others covered by the scope of this Policy are treated with respect and dignity and that no one feels threatened or intimidated for any reason.
- 1.3 Staff and Councillors will ensure that adequate resources are made available to promote equality, respect and dignity at work and deal with any complaints of harassment. To achieve this we commit to (a) proper training and familiarisation of employees and councillors with this policy and (b) proper investigation of complaints and issues arising from possible violations of this policy.
- 1.4 The financial standing of any individual will not be allowed to affect either their contribution to the business of the Council, to act as a barrier in securing equal rights, or to prosecute complaints about treatment that may arise under this policy.
- 1.5 Councillors and Staff at all levels are responsible for ensuring that everyone's dignity is respected and that the working environment is harmonious. This requires that behaviours should never cause offence or be considered to be harassment or bullying.
- 1.6 The Chair of the Parish Council has the overall responsibility for ensuring that this Policy is effectively communicated to all Staff and Councillors, implemented and monitored.
- 1.7 Section 3 below covers the application of this policy to Employees. However, the principles and philosophy described in this section apply also to other groups as defined by the Scope statement.
- 1.8 To summarise, the Council is committed to creating a harmonious environment where their employees, Melbourn Councillors serving the community and members of the public are treated with dignity and respect. The principles guiding the treatment of employees, enshrined within the **Harassment & Bullying Policy and Procedure** (5.03) (see 3.2 overleaf), will also be applied to non-employees, Service Providers, Councillors and members of the public with whom the Council have contact.

2. Protected Characteristics

Melbourn Parish Council is opposed to any forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination whether these are direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation or harassment on grounds as defined in the **Equality Act 2010**. These are:

- Age
- Disability
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Race or Colour
- Religion or Belief

3. Employment Practices

Through its employment practices, Melbourn Parish Council will adhere to the principles of Equality in all the categories listed in Section 2 above. As part of the general requirement for all policies, the Council commits to regularly check the conformity of its Equality practices with current legislation. *A specific review will be made annually, for presentation at a Full Council meeting, reporting the impact of the Equality and Diversity Policy on the different social groups covered by the scope of this document. The review will act as a simple 'health-check' that the policy is properly applied, and will consist of (a) confirmation that employees and councillors have received training or refresher training on this policy and (b) review any incidents arising from this policy to ensure appropriate action was taken.* **In addition, the Council commits to following other areas of good employment practice as shown in 3.1 to 3.8 below: -**

3.1 Recruitment and Selection

All posts will be advertised formally and be open to the widest pool of applicants. The Council will actively promote equal opportunities in its business to ensure employees receive treatment that is fair and equitable and consistent with relevant aptitudes, potential skills and abilities. Employees will be recruited and selected, promoted and trained on the basis of objective criteria that fully take account of the principles laid out above. Those involved in recruitment and selection will be trained and aware of the steps required to avoid discrimination and to ensure equality of opportunity (see 3.4 below).

3.2 Harassment and Bullying

Harassment and Bullying related to the above characteristics will not be tolerated. Harassment is unsolicited and unwelcome workplace behaviour that adversely affects the dignity of the recipient. Where such behaviour is motivated by gender, sexual orientation, marital status, race, colour, national or ethnic origin, nationality, age, or disability it amounts to infringement of equal employment opportunities.

The Council will address harassment and bullying formally under the separate **Harassment Policy and Procedure** (5.03), also linked to Grievance and Discipline (see 3.3 below).

3.3 Grievance and Discipline

Issues arising with employees from violations of this Equality Policy will be handled when appropriate through the separate Policies and Procedures on **Grievance** (5.04) and/or **Discipline** (5.05)

3.4 Retention, Training and Re-Training

The Melbourn Parish Council will train and develop all staff on the basis of merit and ability according to the equality principles set out in this document. In particular, the Council will provide training to implement this Policy with respect to recruitment and the associated Policies and Procedures on Harassment, Grievance and Discipline. As with all other policies, it commits to ensuring all staff are familiar with this Equality Policy and are monitored as to its implementation. Such training will highlight how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping.

Steps will be taken to ensure service suppliers, contractors and agency staff is also included in Equality training.

3.5 Rehabilitation of Offenders

The Council will not discriminate against anyone who has spent a conviction under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

3.6 Equal Pay

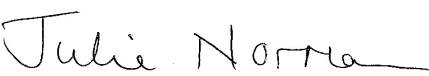
Men and Women are entitled to be paid equally for the same work without any bias on the grounds of their sex. This right being was first set out in the Treaty of Rome, then made enforceable under UK law through the 1970 Equal Pay Act (but now superseded by the Equality Act 2010).

3.7 Victimisation

Unfair treatment arising due to one person subjecting another and bringing about detriment in the process, where this can be demonstrated to have contravened the terms of the Equality Act 2010.

3.8 Dismissal and Redundancy

The Council will ensure that dismissal or redundancy decisions fully respect the equality principles laid down in this policy.

Document Approval:  (Chair to Melbourn Parish Council)

Date of Parish Council Meeting: 6 February 2017

Review: Annually