



EARLS COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY (2026)

1. Introduction

Earls Colne Parish Council ('the Council') is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of its work and service delivery.

The Council aims to ensure that no individual is treated unfairly, disadvantaged or discriminated against because of a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

The Council recognises its responsibilities as a public authority and employer and seeks to foster good relations within the community.

2. Legal Framework

- Equality Act 2010
- Public Sector Equality Duty
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Relevant ACAS guidance
- NALC and SLCC best practice guidance

3. Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 protects individuals from discrimination on the basis of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief



- Sex
- Sexual orientation

4. Council Commitment

- Treat all individuals fairly and with respect
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Provide services in an inclusive and accessible manner
- Prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Promote an inclusive working environment
- Consider equality impacts when making decisions and policies

5. Employment and Recruitment

- Recruitment decisions will be based on merit
- Selection processes will be fair and objective
- Reasonable adjustments will be considered for disabled applicants and employees
- Training opportunities will be offered fairly
- Bullying, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated

Employment matters will be managed in accordance with the Council's Grievance and Disciplinary Policy.

6. Councillors and Conduct

- Members must comply with the adopted Code of Conduct
- Discriminatory behaviour will not be tolerated
- Councillors should consider equality implications when making decisions
- Members should support an inclusive and respectful culture

7. Service Delivery and Accessibility

- The Council will seek to make meetings and information accessible



- Council communications will aim to be clear and inclusive
- Reasonable adjustments will be considered where appropriate
- The Council will seek to engage with all sections of the community

8. Complaints

Complaints relating to discrimination or unfair treatment will be handled in accordance with the Council's Complaints Procedure or employment procedures where appropriate.

9. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure compliance with legislation and best practice.

10. Related Policies

- Code of Conduct
- Member / Officer Protocol
- Complaints Procedure
- Grievance and Disciplinary Policy
- Communications Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

Signed: _____ (Chairman)

Next Review Date: May 2027