

NITON AND WHITWELL PARISH COUNCIL

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

STATEMENT OF INTENT - Our Commitment to Equality and Diversity

Niton and Whitwell Parish Council is committed to providing and promoting equal opportunities, eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity in the community.

Niton and Whitwell Parish Council will comply with current legislation with regard to diversity and equality. We believe that meeting the needs of our residents and staff can only be achieved through recognising the value of every individual. Our aim is to create an environment that respects the diversity of staff and service users and enables them to achieve their full potential, to contribute fully, and to derive maximum benefits and enjoyment from their involvement with the Parish Council.

To this end the Parish Council acknowledges and strives to embed in all its activities the following basic rights for all:

- To receive a professional and appropriate service
- To be treated with respect and dignity
- To be treated fairly with regard to all procedures, assessments and choices
- To receive encouragement to reach their full potential

The Council acknowledges that these rights carry responsibilities, for Niton and Whitwell Parish Council as a corporate body, its staff, volunteers, service users and those who supply services on its behalf. We must all recognise and uphold these rights and act in accordance with them in dealings with others. Councillors and employees have a personal responsibility for fostering a fully integrated community; for adhering to the principles of equal opportunity at work; and for facilitating the provision of dedicated services to people on equitable terms

Our statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010

As a public body leading and speaking on behalf of the community, the Parish Council must play its part in making society fairer by tackling discrimination and providing equality of opportunity for all. The Equality Act 2010 placed a new Equality Duty on the Parish Council to work to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

No individual will be subjected to unjustifiable discrimination. This includes, but is not limited to, discrimination because of the following characteristics (known as protected characteristics under the Act)

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Marital status and civil partnerships
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and beliefs
- Sexual orientation
- Ethnic origin
- Nationality

Niton and Whitwell Parish Council is aware that the above list is not exhaustive and that there are other forms of discrimination that should not be tolerated

We will engage with people to ensure the service is relevant and meets their needs. We will make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. The duty under law to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, as service providers, we have an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.

We will empower people to recognise and counter discrimination and we will be supportive in doing so.

No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored annually by the Parish Council to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law.