**PAILTON PARISH COUNCIL** - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY - July 2023

This policy will be reviewed in May 2024

**Pailton Parish Council is committed to serving our community to the best of our abilities and the provision of equal opportunities is inherent in all we do. We extend this commitment to all who engage with us, or provide services to us, whether directly employed, such as our Clerk to the Council, volunteers on our Working Groups or partners and contractors supporting us on our White Lion community project. We will treat everyone in a in a fair and disciplined manner.**

The purpose of this policy is to provide equal opportunities to all who are directly employed, engage with us or supply contracting services to us, irrespective of age, gender, marital status, being pregnant or on maternity leave, disability, race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

Pailton Parish Council (PPC) opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. Employees, volunteers, partners and contractors will be treated fairly and equally. Selection for employment, promotion, training, remuneration or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. Employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents to maximise the efficiency of the Parish Council.

**Statement on Equal Opportunities**

 PPC recognises its obligations under the Public Sector Duty provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and the spirit and intent of the related Codes of Practice:

• For the elimination of discrimination on grounds of age, sex or marital status and the promotion of equality of opportunity in employment;

 • For the elimination of discrimination on grounds of race and the promotion of equality of opportunity in employment;

• For the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of disability and the promotion of equality of opportunity in employment.

 **Commitment to Policy**

PPC supports the principles and practices of equal opportunity and recognises that it is the duty of all Councillors and employees to accept their personal responsibility for fostering a fully integrated community by adhering to the principles of equal opportunity. PPC will actively promote equal opportunities throughout the organisation and with every organisation or individual with whom we engage, either directly or indirectly. We will ensure that individuals receive treatment that is fair and equitable and consistent with their relevant aptitudes, potential, skills, experiences and abilities. The Parish Clerk will seek to ensure that all councillors, employees – whether direct or indirectly employed- comply with these principles.

PPC will ensure that individuals are recruited and selected, promoted and trained on objective criteria having regard to the relevant aptitudes, potential, skills, experiences and abilities. In particular, no applicant will be placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions which are not necessary to the performance of the job or which constitute indirect unfair discrimination. Reasonable adjustments will be made where a disabled person is put in a detrimental position and such reasonable adjustments remove the detriment.

PPC recognises the problems that sexual or racial harassment may cause at work and is committed to ensure that such unacceptable behaviour does not take place. Sexual harassment includes (but is not limited to) unwanted physical contact, suggestive remarks or behaviour, compromising invitations, demands for sexual favours and similar unwanted behaviour.

Racial harassment is similarly unwanted treatment but is concerned with derogatory treatment and language on racial grounds. All forms of harassment are abhorrent and will not be tolerated by PPC.

Sexual and racial harassment are regarded as unlawful discrimination and additionally may also be subject to criminal proceedings. All such cases will be dealt with clause 13 – dealing with complaints as part of our approved Standing Orders.

PPC recognises its duty to ensure that if any detrimental impact on a disabled person, as a consequence of their disability, can be removed by the adoption of reasonable adjustments, then the Council is committed be put the adjustments in place, where reasonably practicable and where the detriment is substantial.

**Training and Advertising**

PPC will train, develop, promote and recruit employees and volunteers (whether direct or indirect) on the basis of merit and ability only. When vacancies are advertised, or contracts are let, the PPC will continue to ensure that such advertising, both in placement and content, is compatible with the terms of this Policy. In practical terms this means that the wording of advertisements will be carefully scrutinised to ensure that any hidden discrimination is avoided or that sexually, racially or disability loaded wording is avoided. Every effort will be made to ensure that the advertisements are placed in a way that provides the biggest audience, to also includ the Parish Council website, to open up opportunities to as many people or organisations as is practicable.

**Communication**

The principles in this Policy will be brought to the attention of all Councillors, staff and partners/contractors who support the PPC through their work on the White Lion project: all will be encouraged to bring to the attention of the Parish Clerk any act of discrimination they observe.

Anyone with whom we engage and become disabled are encouraged to bring this to the attention of the Clerk to the Council enable a review of their individual needs to be made. This review will include an assessment of the Council’s working practices to ensure that these do not place the disabled person at a substantial disadvantage. Where they do, then adjustments will be put in place where reasonable to do so.

24 July 2023

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Chairman of the Parish Council