

# OLD CATTON PARISH COUNCIL

## DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION POLICY

### 1. Purpose

Old Catton Parish Council is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion and ensuring that disabled people are treated fairly, with dignity and respect.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- prevent disability discrimination
- ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and associated regulations
- deliver accessible services, facilities and employment practices
- promote equal participation in community and civic life

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Councillors
- employees and job applicants
- volunteers and contractors
- members of the public engaging with the Council
- all services, functions, meetings, digital content and activities of the Council

### 3. Legal Framework

This policy is underpinned by:

- Equality Act 2010
- Public Sector Equality Duty (s149 Equality Act 2010)
- Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 (as amended)
- Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018
- other relevant national guidance and case law

### 4. Public Sector Equality Duty

In exercising its functions, the Council will have due regard to the need to:

1. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct
2. advance equality of opportunity between disabled and non-disabled people
3. foster good relations between disabled and non-disabled people

The Council will:

- publish equality information as required
- set, monitor and review equality objectives

- consider equality implications when making decisions (including equality impact considerations)

## 5. Definitions

- **Disability:** A physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
- **Reasonable Adjustments:** Changes or adaptations that remove or reduce barriers and ensure disabled people are not placed at a substantial disadvantage.

The Council recognises:

- Actual disability
- Perceived disability
- Disability by association (eg carers)

## 6. Types of Disability Discrimination

The Council recognises the following forms of discrimination under the Equality Act 2010:

- **Direct discrimination** – treating someone less favourably because of disability
- **Indirect discrimination** – applying a policy or practice that disadvantages disabled people without justification
- **Discrimination arising from disability** – unfavourable treatment resulting from something connected to disability (eg absence, behaviour, aids), without objective justification
- **Failure to make reasonable adjustments** – not removing barriers where reasonable to do so
- **Harassment** – unwanted conduct relating to disability creating an intimidating, degrading or offensive environment
- **Victimisation** – detrimental treatment because an individual has made or supported a complaint

## 7. Commitments

The Parish Council commits to:

- Creating an inclusive and accessible environment
- Proactively identifying barriers
- Making anticipatory reasonable adjustments for service users
- Treating disabled people fairly in employment and volunteer arrangements
- Consulting disabled people wherever possible when developing services and facilities
- Challenging stigma and discrimination

## **8. Reasonable Adjustments**

The Council recognises that for services to the public the duty is anticipatory.

The Council will:

- consider access needs in advance of activities, meetings and services
- provide alternative formats and communication support where reasonable
- adapt policies, practices and procedures where required
- consider auxiliary aids or adaptations
- record adjustments requested and made

Adjustments may include (but are not limited to):

- accessible venue choice
- step-free access
- accessible toilets
- hearing enhancement systems
- additional time for participation
- remote/online participation options
- flexible recruitment or employment arrangements
- accessible communications and documents

## **9. Digital Accessibility**

The Council will ensure that:

- its website and mobile content meet accessibility standards
- online documents (including agendas and minutes) are provided in accessible formats where reasonably practicable
- accessibility statements are published and maintained
- issues reported by users are acted on promptly

## **10. Employment and Recruitment**

The Council will:

- ensure equality in recruitment, selection, training and conditions of service
- make reasonable adjustments during recruitment and employment
- avoid unlawful pre-employment health enquiries
- support disabled staff in retaining employment
- ensure confidentiality of disability-related information
- consider disability-related absence fairly and lawfully

## **11. Accessibility in Meetings, Services and Facilities**

The Council will:

- hold meetings in accessible venues wherever practicable
- offer online or hybrid participation where reasonable

- provide papers in alternative formats on request
- communicate clearly about accessibility arrangements
- work to remove physical, communication and attitudinal barriers

## **12. Responsibilities**

- **Parish Councillors:** ensure decision reflect equality duties.
- **Clerk to the Council:** lead officer for policy implementation and first point of contact.
- **Employees and Volunteers:** comply with the policy and report barriers or concerns.

## **13. Complaints and Reporting**

Anyone who believes they have experienced disability discrimination in relation to the Council may:

- raise the issue informally where appropriate
- submit a formal complaint under the Council's Complaints Policy

Complaints will be:

- taken seriously
- handled promptly and fairly
- recorded and monitored

## **14. Monitoring and Review**

The Council will:

- Review this Policy annually or as required by changes in legislation or guidance.
- Monitor accessibility and equality practices
- Use feedback to improve services and facilities
- Review equality objectives regularly

## **15. Policy Approval and Adoption**

This policy was approved and adopted by the Parish Council on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

**Adopted: 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

Amended and approved: 12<sup>th</sup> January 2026