

Equal Opportunities Policy

Our Commitment

Barlow Parish Council is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and to avoiding unlawful discrimination in employment or to our customers.

This policy is intended to assist Barlow Parish Council to put this commitment into practice. Compliance with this policy should also ensure that employees do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.

Striving to ensure that the work environment is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect is an important aspect of ensuring equal opportunities in employment.

The Law

It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment on grounds of sex, gender, pregnancy, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national grounds, sexual orientation or belief or because someone is married or is a Civil Partner. It is unlawful to treat someone less favourably on grounds of disability than others without that disability are or would be treated, unless the less favourable treatment can be justified or to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to employment caused by disability. From October 2006, it will be unlawful to discriminate unjustifiably on grounds of age in relation to employment. Discrimination after employment may be unlawful, e.g. in refusing to give reference or in the form of reference given.

It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in the provision of goods, facilities or services to customers on grounds of sex, pregnancy, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national grounds, sexual orientation. It is unlawful to discriminate, without justification, on grounds of disability or to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using caused by disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it possible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services.

It is unlawful to victimise someone because he or she has alleged unlawful discrimination or supported someone to make a complaint or given evidence in relation to a complaint.

Types of unlawful discrimination

- Direct Discrimination – is where a person is treated less favourably than another in comparable circumstances on a prohibited ground.
- Indirect Discrimination – is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied which is such that it would be to the detriment of a considerably larger proportion of the relevant group to which the individual belongs than to others, which is not objectively justifiable and which is to the individual's detriment.
- Harassment – is where there is unwanted conduct related to one of the prohibited grounds which has the purpose of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person, or is reasonably considered by that person to have the effect of violating his or her dignity or by creating an intimidating hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for him or her, even if this effect was not intended by the person responsible to a complaint.
- Victimisation – is where someone is treated less favourably than others because he or she has alleged by unlawful discrimination or supported someone to make a complaint or given evidence in relation to a complaint.

Equal Opportunities in employment

Barlow Parish Council will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion and opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection of redundancy.

Person and Job Descriptions will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.

Barlow Parish Council will consider any possible indirectly discriminatory effect of its standard working practices, including the number of hours to be worked, in times at where these are variations to these working practices and will refuse such requests for Parish Council considers it has good reasons, unrelated to any prohibited ground of discrimination for doing so.

Customers Suppliers and other People not employed by Barlow Parish Council

Barlow Parish Council will not discriminate unlawfully against customers using or seeking to use, facilities provided by Barlow Parish Council.

Employees and Parish Councillors should report any bullying or harassment by customers, suppliers, visitors or others to the Chair, Vice-Chair or Clerk who will take appropriate action.

Your responsibilities

Every employee and Parish Councillor is required to assist Barlow Parish Council to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination.

Employees can be held personally liable as well as or instead of Barlow Parish Council for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

Monitoring and Review

This Policy will be monitored yearly by Barlow Parish Council.

Leading Statutory Authority

- *Disability Discrimination Act 1995*
- *Race Relations Act 2000 (amended)*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1975*
- *Civil Partnership Act 2004*

Plus more