**BARLING MAGNA PARISH COUNCIL**

**EQUALITY POLICY – renewed by Council on 11 July 2019**

**Policy Statement and Commitment**

Barling Magna Parish Council is committed to playing its part in making society fairer by tackling discrimination and providing equality of opportunity and access for its residents, employees, volunteers, contractors and anyone else who comes into contact with the Council, regardless of their characteristics.

Barling Magna Parish Council opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination whether it be direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation or harassment on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010. We are committed to the promotion and delivery of equal opportunities in the work place and in the delivery of services.

The Parish Council is also committed to meeting its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty to:

1. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
2. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected-characteristic (defined below) and persons who do not share it;
3. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected-characteristic and persons who do not share it.

**Definition of discrimination**

Drawing on the Equality Act 2010, sections 13-27, we define discrimination as: to treat anyone less favourably; to harass or victimise them or to subject them to a provision, criterion or practice which puts them at a disadvantage.

It is unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the grounds of the following ‘protected characteristics’ (as defined in the sections 4-12 of the Equality Act 2010):

• Age

• Disability

• Gender reassignment

* Pregnancy and maternity
* Race
* Religion or belief
* Sex
* Sexual orientation
* Marriage and civil partnership

**Employment**

All employees whether full-time, part-time, fixed term contract, agency workers or temporary staff, will be treated fairly and equally. Selection for employment, promotion, training, remuneration or any other benefit will be by ability and aptitude alone. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop to their full potential.

Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated. Breaches of the Council’s Equality Policy will be regarded as serious misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

Employees are entitled to complain about discrimination or harassment or victimisation through the council’s Grievance Procedure.

**Services to residents**

In exercising its powers, fulfilling its duties and delivering services, the Parish Council will have due regard to the policy statement and commitment above.

**Complaints**

Barling Magna Parish Council will establish appropriate information and monitoring systems to assist the effective implementation of this policy.

The effectiveness of our Equality and Diversity Policy will be reviewed annually and action taken as necessary.

In addition to the Council’s internal complaints procedures, any person has the right to pursue complaints of discrimination under the Equality Act 2010.

**Review**

The policy will be monitored and reviewed annually. Other policies – especially personnel policies - will be reviewed against the values stated in this main Equality Policy to ensure that the council remains an equal opportunities employer.

Last reviewed – 11 July 2019