



## **Woughton Community Council EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

### **STATEMENT 2021**

Woughton Community Council aims to be socially inclusive and therefore no person or groups of people using the services or working for the organisation will be treated less favourably than any other person because of their age\*, appearance, class, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, HIV status, medical condition, political views, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or trade union involvement.

\*excepting some services that are by their nature specifically related to a community group.

### **INTRODUCTION**

**The Woughton Community Council stands for:**

- Respect and freedom for all
- Acceptance and understanding between people of different opinions and lifestyles
- Active concerns for the need of the community
- Valuing diversity

**The Woughton Community Council aims to:**

1. Develop activities, which stimulate and challenge its members of the community in an environment that enables them to take responsibility in their lives and find a sense of achievement.
2. Create opportunities for exchanging views, so that its members can improve their understanding of the world, of themselves and of one another.
3. Ensure that all staff and Councillors understand the reasons for the Equality & Diversity policy and receive training on it.
4. Review and adapt services to ensure that they reflect the needs of the community.
5. Introduce equal opportunities and diversity as a core element in all forward planning.
6. Raise awareness of underrepresented groups and community issues.
7. Work within the guidelines of the following acts:
  - Sex Discriminations Act 1975 and (Amendment) 1986
  - The protection from Harassment Act 1997
  - Equality Act 2010
  - Gender Reassignment Regulations 1999
  - Equal Pay Act 1970 and the Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value Amendment 1983
  - Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974)
  - Race Relations Act 1976 and (Amendment) 2000
  - Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Amendment 2004)
  - Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
  - Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

We will achieve these objectives through a clear process of recruitment, training, awareness raising, monitoring and positive action.

**Woughton Community Council aims to be an equal opportunities organisation and supports wholeheartedly a policy of valuing diversity and equal opportunity in all areas of its work and responsibilities. Woughton Community Council's Policy Statement on Equal Opportunities and Diversity (Appendix 1) is a fundamental**

**part of our equal opportunities and valuing diversity commitment and should be read in conjunction with this document.**

### **SERVICE PROVISION**

Woughton Community Council is committed to providing equality of opportunity in its diverse service provision. Services include all aspects of Community based work and Commercial Services.

We aim to provide high quality services that are accessible to all and recognise differences which are reviewed on a regular basis. We aim to promote its diverse services throughout all sections of the community using a range of mediums which are accessible to all.

### **RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT**

Entry to employment or change of post within the Woughton Community Council is determined by personal merit, staff development/training and ability relevant to the Aims and Purposes of the Woughton Community Council.

Selection criteria and procedures will be kept under review, to ensure that individuals are selected on the basis of their merits and abilities. Candidates are encouraged to have a good working knowledge of equal opportunities and diversity issues.

All employees will be given equal opportunities and diversity training to progress within the organisation.

Woughton Community Council will support positive action to ensure our staff teams reflect the community we aim to serve.

If a member of staff believes that he/she has been discriminated against, it is his/her responsibility to report the matter to his/her line manager or to the most appropriate person in authority. All allegations of discrimination will be treated seriously in accordance with Woughton Community Council's Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures (which can be obtained from Staff Handbook).

Woughton Community Council recognises that it has clear obligations towards all its members and the community to ensure that people with disabilities are given equal access to enter employment. In addition, when staff members become disabled while employed by Woughton Community Council then wherever possible, steps will be taken, to enable them to remain in employment. This applies equally to registered and non-registered disabled staff. We guarantee interviews to all disabled people who meet the basic job requirements in line with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005.

As outlined in Woughton Community Council's Harassment Policy, harassment is totally unacceptable, and any such behaviour will be considered a disciplinary offence. All allegations of harassment are treated seriously and all reasonable practicable steps will be taken to prevent such behaviour.

### **INDUCTION AND TRAINING**

All new staff, volunteers and Councillors will receive an induction on joining Woughton Community Council. It is the responsibility of all Managers to ensure that all employees:

1. Undertake a thorough induction into the roles and nature of the organisation and their role/responsibilities within it.
2. Fully understand the spirit and aim of the Woughton Community Council's Equal Opportunities commitment.
3. Understand the practical day to day implications of what is expected of them at work.
4. Comply with Woughton Community Council policy guidelines.

It is the responsibility of the Operations Manager to:

1. Issue contracts and ensure all staff and volunteers understand the terms and conditions of their employment.
2. Issue a Staff Handbook ensuring staff and volunteers are aware of organisational policies and they comply with them.

3. Issue all new starter documentation and process as appropriate.
4. Set up new starter on all digital platforms, payroll and Brightpay employee dashboard.
5. Where relevant issue a Disclosure form, complete the relevant details and forward it to the Woughton Community Council's DBS Partner for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

Training is open to all members of the Council, staff and volunteers. Please refer to Woughton Community Council's Training Policy for further details.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

The success of this equal opportunities/diversity policy depends on the commitment of all employees. It is the responsibility of every individual to eliminate discrimination and to ensure the practical implementation of this policy.

Implementation is principally about two things – making the policy known and understood and ensuring that the principles are applied in all areas of work. To this end the Woughton Community Council recognises that successful implementation means the following:

1. The designation of responsibility for the oversight of the policy.
2. The communication of the policy to make it known and understood; access to training for all if necessary.
3. The implementation of procedures to ensure that discrimination, however slight, does not occur.
4. The implementation of a procedure for handling complaints of discrimination, including harassment, and ensuring that people are aware of it, how it works and how to use it.
5. The collation of statistics and analysis of them to monitor the effectiveness of the policy and to determine the nature of any corrective action.

## **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

Monitoring is carried out by Woughton Community Council to ensure that the policies and procedures are observed and to enable Woughton Community Council to review, update and improve its approach to equal opportunities/diversity.

This policy will be subject to annual review in line with legislative changes.

## **INFORMAL AND FORMAL GRIEVANCES**

We recognise there may be occasions where you have a problem or concern that you wish to raise. If you have a complaint or grievance regarding the application of this policy, you should raise it with your immediate line manager or the Operations manager as appropriate.

Most routine complaints and grievances are best resolved informally in discussion with your immediate line manager. If you are unable to do this, you may wish to discuss the issue with the Operations or Council Manager who will then advise you of options.

If you cannot resolve your grievance informally you may wish to raise your concerns formally. The Woughton Community Council grievance procedure provides a mechanism for these to be dealt with fairly and speedily. The full grievance procedure is available from the Staff Handbook.

If a service user raises a grievance to you, you should ensure that the complainant completes the Complaints Form which should be submitted to Council Manager in order that an investigation can be conducted. The process to be followed in such cases is detailed within The Comments, Compliments and Complaints policy.



## **APPENDIX I WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DIVERSITY POLICY STATEMENT**

The Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy reflects both the Aims and Purposes of the Woughton Community Council and the spirit and intentions of legislation which outlaws discrimination.

Woughton Community Council recognises that people from different backgrounds can bring fresh ideas and skills. It values diversity and welcomes interest from all sections of the community. It is committed to build and reinforce a culture where people value each other and treat each other with dignity and respect.

Woughton Community Council recognises its obligations under the Sex Discrimination Acts, Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination and Equality Act 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.

As an employer of paid staff and an organisation which has Council members and volunteers, Woughton Community Council aims to ensure that no individual receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of any protected characteristics.

It welcomes diversity and recognises that action may be needed to give everyone a chance to contribute on equal terms within the Aims and Purposes of the Woughton Community Council.

In order to achieve this, Woughton Community Council will strive to follow the principles detailed within this policy, keep requirements and practices under review and to take action where necessary in order to facilitate the recruitment, involvement and development of paid staff, Council members and volunteers from all sections of the community.

<b>Last review date:</b>	<b>August 2021</b>
<b>Next review date:</b>	<b>August 2022</b>
<b>Lead:</b>	<b>Operations manager</b>
<b>Overseeing Committee:</b>	<b>Operations</b>
<b>Approved:</b>	<b>31/08/2021</b>
<b>Review cycle:</b>	<b>Annually</b>



## Appendix 2 – Complaints Form

Name and Title (Please fill in your full name and title, if any).	
Address	
Postcode	
Telephone Number	
Email address	
How would you like us to contact you? (please tick box(es) below as appropriate)	
Telephone <input type="checkbox"/>	Letter <input type="checkbox"/>
Email <input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you consider your complaint to relate to any of the following?	
Race	Yes / No
Religion / Belief	Yes / No
Sexual Orientation	Yes / No
Disability	Yes / No
Gender	Yes / No
Age	Yes / No
Did you speak to a member of staff or Councilor about your complaint? If so, who and what was the outcome?	
What is your complaint? (Please use additional sheets as necessary and provide as much information as possible).	

For Office Use			
Date received:		Date of response	
		Officer allocated	

Outcome:	Resolved (Stage1) <input type="checkbox"/>	Resolved (Stage2) <input type="checkbox"/>	Passed to Committee (date) <input type="checkbox"/>	__/__/__
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