

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Cawston Parish Council & Community Hall

POLICY STATEMENT

Cawston Parish Council & Community Hall recognises that it operates within a diverse society of race, ethnic group, culture, faith, sexuality, ability, gender and age culminating in people with different skills, attitudes and experiences. This policy seeks to value these differences, making our services relevant and available for everyone. We aim to draw upon the widest range of perceptions to meet the changing needs of our users, Councillors, Employees, volunteers, partners and funders.

Cawston Parish Council & Community Hall believes in equality of opportunity and values all individuals and the contribution that they have to make in our society regardless of any collective identity. However, we recognise that individual and discriminatory practices have resulted in certain groups of society being denied equal access to services, volunteering and employment. Common grounds for discrimination are:

- ethnic origin
- gender, marital status or caring responsibility
- sexual orientation
- age
- physical or mental disability or mental health
- political or religious belief
- gender reassignment
- class
- HIV status
- employment status
- unrelated criminal conviction

(This list is not exhaustive)

Cawston Parish Council & Community Hall is committed to providing an environment free of stereotyped and oppressive beliefs, attitudes and practices. We seek to promote equal opportunities and diversity and to respond to the needs of all individuals in a fair and equitable manner. Cawston Parish Council & Community Hall will introduce measures that aim to combat direct or indirect discrimination in its employment practices and its provision of services. We will not discriminate by imposing any conditions or requirements, which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

Cawston Parish Council & Community Hall recognises that a policy will not in itself provide equality of opportunity or ensure diversity is valued. We are committed to implementing a positive programme of action to make

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this policy fully effective and ensure that any groups/organisations/individuals actively promote the policy in the delivery of Cawston Parish Council & Community Hall work. However, it is acknowledged that some voluntary groups, by their nature, will focus their core activity on particular groups within society.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Responsibilities:

Cawston Parish Council & Community Hall has ultimate responsibility to ensure that it meets its legislative duties.

The Proper Officer has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented by ensuring that:

- Councillors, Employees and volunteers receive sufficient information and training to enable them to translate this policy into organisational culture.
- That managing equal opportunities and diversity is internally driven, from a sense of commitment by the organisation and its Councillors, Employees and Volunteers wherever they are based.
- Adequate resources are made available to enable those responsible for equality and diversity issues to perform their work effectively.
- Ensure that a commitment to the objectives of this policy is reflected at all levels through the organisation.
- Ensure all Councillors, Employees and volunteers are fully encouraged and enabled to reach their full potential.

Individual Councillors, Employees and Volunteers will:

- support, implement and assist development of this policy;
Promote equality of opportunity;
- contribute to maintaining an environment which celebrates diversity and is free of fear or discrimination;
- Ensure that their behaviour and actions do not amount to discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation in any way.

The Proper Officer will be responsible for ensuring that fair and adequate arrangements exist for both effectively handling and recording of all aspects of the employment relationship, such as:

- recruitment and selection
- terms and conditions of employment and volunteering
- Equal access and availability of employee and volunteer facilities.

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Training:

Much of the success of this Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy will depend on effective training. Cawston Parish Council & Community Hall places particular emphasis on the following:

- training all Councillors, Employees and Volunteers in contact with members of the public in the implications of discrimination legislation to ensure that they understand how and why discrimination can inadvertently occur and how it can be avoided;

Training and Development:

Cawston Parish Council & Community Hall will introduce procedures within its training programme to help put its Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy into action. The aims of these procedures will be to:

- eliminate actual or potential inequalities in the opportunities available to Councillors, Employees and Volunteers
- develop skills relevant to their jobs and to develop their careers within Cawston Parish Council & Community Hall service;
- take those steps necessary to inform all Councillors, Employees and Volunteers of existing training opportunities which enable them to develop their careers fully within Cawston Parish Council & Community Hall service;
- Encourage and enable individuals and organisations to develop skills and thinking appropriate to working in a multi-cultural and multi-racial society through any external training organised or provided by Cawston Parish Council & Community.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DIVERSITY IN SERVICE DELIVERY

Cawston Parish Council & Community Hall aims to ensure that all people will receive a positive and sustained welcome from their first point of contact with the organisation.

BREACH OF THIS POLICY

Any degrading behaviour or harassment will be treated seriously. If a matter cannot be resolved informally Cawston Parish Council & Community Hall will operate the Complaints and Grievance Procedures to deal with the matter.

Cawston Parish Council & Community Hall is committed to promoting equality of access to our services and encouraging a wider participation at all events it organises through ensuring that our services are well publicised.

Cawston Parish Council & Community Hall aims to make its offices and meeting venues accessible to those with disabilities.

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Monitoring:

On the provision of monitoring information, Cawston Parish Council & Community Hall will draft an annual action plan to address any issues that such information reveals to ensure that the policy is implemented effectively and the organisation reflects the community it serves.