Risby Parish Council
Equal Opportunities Policy

Policy Statement
Risby Parish Council does not discriminate against employees on the basis of their gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, gender reassignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability or age. The principle of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity applies equally to the treatment of former employees, visitors, customers and suppliers.

Employees have a duty to act in accordance with this policy, and to treat colleagues with dignity at all times.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

Who is covered by the policy?
This policy covers all individuals working for the council, including part-time and fixed-term employees.

Responsibility for implementing the policy
The full council has overall responsibility for the effective operation of our equal opportunities policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework prohibiting discrimination.

All employees are responsible for the success of this policy and must ensure that they familiarise themselves with the policy and act in accordance with its aims and objectives.

Aim and scope of the policy
This policy applies to the advertising of jobs and recruitment and selection, to training and development, opportunities for promotion, to conditions of service, benefits and facilities and pay, to health and safety and to conduct at work, to grievance and disciplinary procedures and to termination of employment, including redundancy.

We will take appropriate steps to accommodate the requirements of workers' religions, cultures, and domestic responsibilities.

Forms of discrimination
Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

Direct discrimination occurs where someone is put at a disadvantage for a reason related to one or more of the grounds set out in paragraph 1. For example, rejecting an applicant on the grounds of their race because it is considered they would not "fit in" could be direct discrimination.

Indirect discrimination occurs where an individual is subject to an unjustified provision, criterion or practice which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of, for instance, their sex or race.

Recruitment and selection
We aim to ensure that no job applicant receives less favourable treatment on any of the unlawful grounds listed in paragraph 1. We will take steps to ensure that vacancies are advertised widely. Vacancy advertisements shall include an appropriate short statement on our Equal Opportunities Policy and a copy of this policy shall be sent to those who enquire about vacancies.

Job applicants should not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a protected characteristic. For example, applicants should not be asked whether they are pregnant or planning to have children.

Job applicants should not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made. There are limited exceptions which should only be used with the approval of the Council. For example:

Questions necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments).

Questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment.

Where necessary, job offers can be made conditional on a satisfactory medical check.

We are required by law to ensure that all employees are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status should not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original documents (such as a passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation.

Staff training and promotion and conditions of service
Employees will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress. Where appropriate, steps will be taken to identify and remove unnecessary or unjustifiable barriers and to provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups.

Our conditions of service, benefits and facilities will be available to all employees who should have access to them and the Council will ensure that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.

Termination of employment
We will monitor redundancy procedures to ensure that they are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.

We will ensure that disciplinary procedures are carried out fairly and uniformly for all staff, whether they result in the giving of disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action.

Disability discrimination
If you are disabled, or become disabled in the course of your employment with us, you are encouraged to tell us about your condition. This is to enable us to support you as much as possible. You may also wish to advise the Council of any reasonable adjustments to your working conditions or the duties of your job which you consider to be necessary, or which would assist you in the performance of your duties. Careful consideration will be given to any such proposals and they will be accommodated where possible and proportionate to the needs of your job. Nevertheless, there may be circumstances where it will not be reasonable for us to accommodate suggested adjustments and we will ensure that we provide you with information as to the basis of our decision not to make any adjustments.

Breaches of the policy
If you believe that you may have been discriminated against you are encouraged to raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Employees who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

Any member of staff who is found to have committed acts of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal. We always take a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.

Adopted: 5th July 2018 Review date: July 2019