

THE PARISH ⊕ ST LEONARD HYTHE

Equality and Diversity Policy

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Leonard, Hythe

'We aim to be an ever-more welcoming, inclusive, and caring Christian community that reaches out to all, thankful to God who draws us together and gives us life in all its fullness.'

I Policy Statement

- I.1 The PCC of St Leonard, Hythe (PCC), aims to create a working environment in which all individuals are able to give their best, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and where all decisions are made on merit. To this end, the PCC seek to promote a work environment free from discrimination and where everyone will receive equal treatment and our policies recognise the Equality Act 2010.
- I.2 The PCC are committed to ensuring that all employees, volunteers and job applicants receive equal and fair treatment regardless of their individual backgrounds or individual characteristics and we seek to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and otherwise treated solely on the basis of their relevant aptitudes, skills and abilities.
- I.3 We aim to ensure that all employees achieve their full potential and that all decisions in respect of recruitment, training and pay are not influenced by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.
- I.4 However there may be certain positions, where the post is subject to an occupational requirement under the Equality Act 2010. For example jobs which have an essential requirement for the role holder to promote the Christian faith and it is therefore a genuine occupational requirement, the PCC reserves the right to clearly state this need in relation to recruitment and the role description.
- I.5 We will consider seriously and investigate fully reported incidents of sexual, racial or other harassment or discrimination. If such incidents come to light they will be viewed as serious misconduct and appropriate action will be taken. While the PCC accepts overall responsibility for implementing and monitoring the Equality and Diversity policy, there is an obligation on employees to co-operate in the adoption and furtherance of these policies.
- I.6 In the event that this policy and the law conflict, the law shall take precedence. If employees are in any doubt as to what their rights are, they are to discuss matters with their manager. If this policy changes as a result of amendments in the law, the changes will be notified to the employee via their manager.
- I.7 No one will be subjected to any detriment for reporting or raising a formal complaint of discrimination, harassment and/or bullying in accordance with this policy or the Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy.
- I.8 All matters relating to an employee's concerns or complaint whether informal or formal, will be treated as confidential.
- I.9.1 This policy does not form part of your contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

2 Who is Covered by the Policy

- 2.1 This policy is intended to apply to all current employees of the PCC including full-time, part-time and fixed-term employees; plus consultants, contractors and trainees, trustees and volunteers.
- 2.2 It is intended that paid casual and agency staff and trustees and volunteers when they are being considered to undertake regular activities and duties authorised by the PCC or in a capacity viewed as officially representing the PCC on a regular basis also adhere to this policy. In such cases, the individuals will be made aware of this policy by their official supervisor.
- 2.3 This policy is also intended to apply to all potential/future employees of the PCC in a paid role of employment and trustees and volunteers who undertake authorised regular activity with or on behalf of the PCC.
- 2.4 All members of the main committees and working groups of the PCC will be made aware of this policy.

3 Equal Opportunities - Responsibilities

- 3.1 To this end, it is the responsibility of all managers to ensure that recruitment, selection, training, development and promotion procedures result in no job applicant or employee receiving less favourable treatment because of a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 or on the basis of being a part-time or fixed term worker.

The protected characteristics are race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability, trade union membership or non-membership, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, age.¹

- 3.2 We are committed to providing equality of opportunity for career development for all members of staff with skills, experience, qualifications, training, attitudes and aptitudes required for specific posts.
- 3.3 All managers have the primary responsibility for successfully meeting these objectives by:
- Not discriminating in the course of employment against employees or job applicants.
 - Not inducing or attempting to induce others to practise unlawful discrimination.
 - Bringing to the attention of employees that they will be subject to action under the Disciplinary Procedure for discrimination of any kind.
 - Attending equal opportunities training where facilitated by the PCC.
 - Encourage your employees to familiarise themselves with this policy, attend relevant training and address any discriminatory attitudes prevailing among your employees.
- 3.4 It is the responsibility of all employees to ensure that no individual is subject to discrimination on the grounds of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. All employees must contribute by:

¹ <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/guidance/home/protected-characteristics>

- Not discriminating against fellow employees, customers, suppliers or members of the public with whom you come into contact during the course of your duties.
- Not inducing or attempting to induce others to practise unlawful discrimination.
- Reporting any discriminatory action to your manager.
- Attending equal opportunities training where facilitated by the PCC.

4 Equal Opportunities – Practices and Procedures

4.1 The success of the policy depends on the contribution made by everyone, in their own behaviour, in discouraging discrimination by colleagues and in encouraging good practice and following the correct procedures:

- No person or group of people applying for employment or seeking contracts with the PCC will be treated less favourably than any other person or group.
- There will be no discrimination in the selection, recruitment or training of any employee.
- We will collate information and monitor records relating to those seeking employment. A full report giving this information will be included in the annual Meeting of the Board in May each year.
- In hiring contractors, consultants and other agencies to work with, we will have due regard to our commitment to promoting Equal Opportunities.
- We will seek to reflect the policy in the election, co-option or nomination to, and the working practices of any of its sub-committees or working parties.
- We will ensure all employees are aware of and apply the Equal Opportunities Policy and undertake training as necessary for their role.
- Employees who actively and knowingly breach the Equal Opportunity policy will be subject to our disciplinary procedure.
- We will ensure that all employees enjoy the freedom to work without suffering discrimination or harassment from other employees.

These practices and procedures will be monitored and reviewed from time to time.

- 4.2 The PCC will monitor and review the effectiveness of our Equal Opportunities policy and associated practices and procedures from time to time to ensure that individuals are selected, trained, promoted and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. The PCC will consider what action needs to be taken to bring about change where necessary.
- 4.3 The PCC accepts responsibility for considering carefully any recommendations made under this policy. If the PCC agrees that change is needed it will provide, where reasonable and practicable, the resources necessary for implementing those recommendations.

5 People with Disabilities & HIV

5.1 Consistent with the Equality Act 2010 we will use the following definition of disability:

A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.²

5.2 For the purposes of this policy and practice, we also include those who are HIV positive regardless of whether they show symptoms of their condition and those who have had a disability within the definition above even if they have since recovered.

5.3 We recognise that people with disabilities and those who are HIV positive offer exactly the same range of skills and talents and the same level of commitment to their employer as other people. We recognise that people with disabilities do not constitute a uniform group whose conditions are apparent. Indeed, the opposite is the case. People with disabilities may include, for example: those with mobility, visual or hearing impairment, epilepsy, diabetes, severe facial disfigurement, a mental illness, learning difficulties, arthritis, dyslexia and those who are HIV positive or who have AIDS. We recognise that each person is an individual and should be treated as such.

5.4 We are committed to providing equality of opportunity, wherever practicable and making reasonable adjustments where necessary, to all our employees and applicants for employment who have a disability. We are also committed to providing equality of opportunity to all employees and applicants for employment regardless of their HIV status.

5.5 We will take reasonable and practicable steps to ensure that the working environment does not preclude people with disabilities from carrying out duties for which they are suitably qualified. This may include relocating individuals or modifying existing accommodation as appropriate. Such solutions may be, for example, to install ramps or widen doorways to improve wheelchair access or to provide better lighting and signage. We may also examine the scope for wider installation of hearing loops in our buildings, for example in meeting and interview rooms and public areas.

5.6 We will take specific steps to raise awareness of disability matters throughout the organisation.

6 Forms of Discrimination

The following forms of discrimination are strictly opposed by the PCC:

- **Direct Discrimination:** Where a person is less favourably treated because of sex, race or disability. An example is if someone is refused promotion on the grounds they are black, disabled or a woman.
- **Indirect Discrimination:** Where a requirement or condition which cannot be justified is applied equally to all groups but has a disproportionately adverse effect on one particular group. An example is the restricting of recruitment to areas which is non-essential to the job description which may exclude a disabled person.
- **Associative Discrimination:** This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses one of the protected (types) of discrimination.
- **Perceptive Discrimination:** This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess one of the protected characteristics.
- **Victimisation:** This is where someone is subject to detriment because he or she has taken relevant action against the Board under the Equality Act.

² <https://www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010>

7 Definition of Harassment

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity and creates a hostile or degrading environment. Discrimination and harassment may take the form of:

- **Physical:** Contact, assault or gestures, intimidation, aggressive behaviour.
- **Verbal:** Unwelcome remarks, suggestions and propositions, malicious gossip, jokes and banter based on any aspect of discrimination.
- **Non verbal:** Offensive literature or pictures, graffiti and computer imagery, isolation or non co-operation and exclusion from social activities.

All employees have a duty to report any act of discrimination or harassment known to them.

8 Raising a Grievance

- 8.1 Grievance procedures are in place for employees of the PCC to pursue complaints including allegations of unfairness in relation to selection, career development or training decisions.
- 8.2 If any employee feels they are a victim of discrimination or harassment, they must raise the matter immediately with their manager, incumbent, or Chair of the PCC immediately. Where they feel that their complaint has not been resolved they should raise a formal grievance under the Grievance Procedure.

Signed: _____

Date: _____