

Kingston Parish Council

(Chairman Councillor Mrs.J.R. Rowland.)
(www.kingston-lewes-pc.gov.uk)

Report No. 525

Equal Opportunity Policy

STATEMENT OF INTENT - Kingston Parish Council seeks to create a culture in which people can feel confident of being treated with fairness, dignity and tolerance irrespective of their personal circumstances, background or lifestyle. Discrimination consists of conduct or words or practices that disadvantage or advantage people; the Council will not intentionally discriminate on grounds of disability, race, colour, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, gender, marital status, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, unrelated criminal conviction, age or trade union membership.

AIMS - Kingston Parish Council aims to:

- Ensure the best possible equality of opportunity in all aspects of service delivery.
- Be responsive to the needs of the Community and recognise that these needs will be diverse.
- Work within the law in respect of equal opportunity issues and have regard for “best practice” working methods.
- Consult with the Community as widely as possible to produce tangible results in terms of equality of service delivery.
- To encourage a commitment to equal opportunities in the Community at large.
- Through policies and service delivery, to eliminate unlawful discrimination, to promote and foster good relations between people of different racial groups and to promote race equality.

THE LAW AND BEST PRACTICE

In addition to the detail contained within this policy, there are other documents that have a direct impact in terms of equal opportunities and diversity.

The following summary covers major pieces of legislation and guidance documents but the list is not exhaustive:

- Legislation -
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and 1986
 - Race Relations Act 1976
 - Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
 - Local Government and Housing Act 1989
 - Disability Discrimination Act 1995
 - Protection from Harassment Act 1997
 - Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
 - Equal Pay Act 1970
 - Gender Reassignment Regulations 1999
 - Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
 - Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

COMPLAINTS

Members of the public who express a concern over their treatment by the Council in terms of equality issues should refer the matter through the complaints procedure set out hereunder:

PROCEDURE

1st. Stage – Contact the Clerk to the Council, Mr. D.F. Jarman, either by post at 1. North Road Cottages, Ringmer, BN8 5JP; by telephone 01273 813279; or by e-mail: kingstonpc@hotmail.com giving your personal details and details of your complaint. The Clerk will acknowledge your complaint within three working days and respond to the complaint within 15 working days. If the complaint cannot be resolved by the Clerk, or you are dissatisfied with the result you may proceed to –

2nd. Stage – Ask for your complaint to be referred to the Parish Council's Complaints Panel which comprises of three Members of the Council. A meeting of the panel will be convened, without members of the public or press being present, within 15 working days and will afford you and, if you wish, a representative of your choice to attend the meeting and to put your case.

The decision of the panel will be notified to you in writing within 5 working days of the meeting. If you are dissatisfied with the result you may proceed to –

3rd. Stage – Ask for your complaint to be referred to the Parish Council sitting as an appeals panel, without members of the public or press being present. The Appeals Panel will be convened within 15 working days and will afford you and, if you wish, a representative of your choice, the opportunity to attend the meeting and to put your case. The decision of the Panel will be notified to you in writing within 5 working days and will be final.

This procedure does not preclude or restrict you taking advantage of any legal procedure which may be available to you under the relevant legislation.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Elected Members are responsible for:

Formulating and determining policies that have regard for the positive impact of equal opportunity principles.

Monitoring statistical data submitted to Council.

Adopted by Council
11th. September, 2006

Signed ...J.R. Rowland
Chairman

