

# Radford Semele Parish Council



## Equality and Diversity Policy

Version 1.31

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# Radford Semele Parish Council

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# Radford Semele Parish Council

## Equality and Diversity Policy 2020.

### 1. Introduction

Radford Semele Parish Council recognises the need for equality for people from all parts of society when conducting all aspects of its functions. The Parish Council will seek to ensure that no-one is disadvantaged by the application of other conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justified. In doing so, the Parish Council acknowledges that it has a role in the pursuit of opportunity for all and it seeks to work within the context of the Equality Act 2010.

The Parish Council is committed to treating all people equally and with respect irrespective of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

### 2. Age

People of any age or apparent age are protected from discrimination. Less favourable treatment of a person because of age is not lawful.

### 3. Disability

By law, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to conduct normal day to day activities (for example using a telephone, walking, lifting, and reading). A long-term impairment is one where it has lasted or is likely to last for at least 12 months or the lifetime of the person affected.

Those certified as blind, severely sight impaired, partially sighted, or sight impaired by a consultant ophthalmologist will be deemed to have a disability. Also, people with cancer, HIV infection or multiple sclerosis are deemed to have a disability.

There are however a number of exemptions of groups of people who do not fall within the category of disabled. These include, for example, people suffering from an addiction to alcohol or nicotine. **More favourable treatment by an employer or service provider** does not amount to direct discrimination.

The Parish Council has a duty to make reasonable adjustments but can refuse to make adjustments that it considers to be unreasonable if;

- The proposed adjustment may not resolve the problem.
- The proposed adjustment may not be a practical solution.
- The overall cost be in making the change may not be affordable.

# Radford Semele Parish Council

The Parish Council endeavours to hold meetings in venues that are accessible to wheelchair users. When there are more than forty people at an event, we aim to use a PA system and a hearing loop system.

## 4. Gender Reassignment

Gender reassignment is a protected characteristic that applies to a transsexual person who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing, or has undergone a process (or part of a process) to change their sex (by physiological or other attributes of sex).

## 5. Race Equality

The Parish Council has a general duty to eliminate racial discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, and promote good race relations between people of different racial groups.

## 6. Religion or Belief

The legal provisions do not refer to a particular religion but do refer to a lack of religion. It means that people's faith must be considered so that they can, for example, wear signs of their faith and not be expected to act in contradiction to their beliefs. The beliefs must be:

- Genuinely held and be a belief not simply a viewpoint or opinion.
- It must be relevant to weighty and substantial aspects of human life and behaviour and attain a certain level of cogency, seriousness, cohesion and importance.
- It must be worthy of respect in a democratic society, not incompatible with human dignity, and not in conflict with the fundamental rights of others.

## 7. Sex

- i. A reference to a person who has a particular protected characteristic is a reference to a man or to a woman.
- ii. A reference to persons who share a protected characteristic is a reference to persons of the same sex.

An example is that to discriminate against a breast-feeding woman is unlawful and she could breast-feed in the Parish Council Chamber and in Parish Council meetings.

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## 8. Sexual Orientation

The law protects a person's sexual orientation towards: -

- i. People of the same sex
- ii. People of a different sex or
- iii. People of either sex

## 9. Marriage & Civil Partnership

The law affords protection to people who have or share the characteristics of being married or being a civil partner. By contrast, a person who is engaged, a divorcee or a person whose civil partnership has been dissolved is not protected.

## 10. Pregnancy & Maternity

The legal rules deal with the treatment of pregnant women in non-work situations and cover the period of actual pregnancy and for the ensuing period of 26 weeks beginning with the day of delivery. Notwithstanding other employment provisions which attach to pregnancy and maternity a person discriminates against a woman if, in the protected period as identified above, she is treated unfavourably because of

- The pregnancy
- Illness suffered as a result
- The exercising of her rights to compulsory, ordinary or additional maternity leave.

## 11. Public Sector Equality Duty

The law imposes on public authorities (which includes principal authorities, parish councils and parish meetings, and in Wales, community councils) in the exercise of their functions, a duty to consider:

- the need to eliminate discrimination and harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by law;
- to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- to foster good relations between those who share protected characteristics and those who do not.

The protected characteristics of marriage and civil partnership are not covered by these provisions.

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## 12. Equal Opportunity

This new and comprehensive statement is to demonstrate the Parish Council's wholehearted commitment to action in tackling inequality..

## 13. The Parish Council 's commitment

- To provide services that are equally accessible to all people, free from prejudice and discrimination and sensitive to the needs of all sections of the community.
- Seek to influence the work and contribution of partner organisations from all sectors by ensuring that equality issues and considerations are fully taken into account when developing strategies.
- Work actively towards eliminating all forms of discrimination, both of a direct and indirect nature.

## 14. Policy into Practice

- Ensure that all policies and practices are in line with relevant employment legislation, anti-discrimination legislation and good practice guidelines.
- Integrate equality of opportunity into all aspects of local authority activity.
- Ensure all employees/members understand the values and expectations of the Parish Council and the standards of behaviour that is expected from each of them.
- Make clear the action a person who feels unfairly treated may take.
- Provide equal access to all service users and potential service users according to need.
- Give people who use or might use Council services the opportunity to influence the way their needs are met.
- Seek to influence partner organisations in a collective commitment to equality of opportunity.
- In line with Government guidance, encourage voluntary organisations to provide evidence of their commitment to equality in terms of their personnel policies and delivery of their services, as a criterion in determining the award of grant aid from the Council.
- Ensure that the Council has policies that result in services sensitive to the needs of all sections of the community.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of policy and practice on a regular basis as determined by law
- Maintain a well-defined complaints procedure in dealing with alleged contraventions.

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In **access to services** the aim is to ensure that all those who receive from the Council or wish to use a Council service can do so without fear of discrimination or disadvantage.