**Henfield Parish Council**

**Equality and Diversity Policy**

**1. Aims**

1.1 The aim of this policy is to communicate the commitment of Henfield Parish Council, its Members and Officers to meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 5 April 2011. The Equality Duty applies to public bodies and others carrying out public functions. It supports good decision-making by ensuring public bodies consider how different people will be affected by their activities, helping them to deliver policies, representation and services, which are efficient and effective; accessible to all; and which meet different people's needs.

**2. Policy Statement**

It is Henfield Parish Council’s policy to provide representation, information, facilities, services and employment to all irrespective of:

• Gender, including gender reassignment

• Marital or civil partnership status

• Pregnancy or maternity

• Having or not having dependants

• Religious belief or political opinion

• Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins)

• Disability

• Sexual orientation

• Age

Henfield Parish Council is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All people and employees will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any of the above grounds. All decisions about which will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination.

Henfield Parish Council recognises that supporting Equality is of primary importance. This policy will help all those who are Council Members or work for the Council to develop sound and effective policies that impact on the village, community and surrounding areas.

Henfield Parish Council aims to create a culture that respects and values each other’s’ differences, that promotes dignity, equality and diversity. We aim to remove barriers, bias or discrimination that prevent individuals or groups from realizing their potential and contributing fully to the community to develop a culture that positively values diversity.

Henfield Parish Council will challenge discrimination. It aims to provide equality and fairness to all in the community and expects all Members and Officers to be aware of and comply with the Equality Act 2010.

**3. Equality Commitments**

Henfield Parish Council is committed to:

• Promoting equality of opportunity for all persons.

• Promoting a good and harmonious environment in which all persons are treated with respect.

• Preventing occurrences of unlawful direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimization.

• Fulfilling our legal obligations under equality legislation and associated codes of practice.

• Complying with our own equal opportunities policy and associated policies.

• Taking lawful affirmative and positive action where appropriate.

• Providing a non-discriminatory working environment where discrimination, harassment or bullying is unacceptable and which will not be tolerated

This policy has been adopted by and is fully supported by all Members of Henfield Parish Council.

**4. Adherence**

Adherence to equality and diversity law is the responsibility of all elected or co-opted members of the Parish Council, its employees and contractors. They will be expected to act in accordance with this policy in their treatment of employees, their colleagues, volunteers, residents, customers and partners.

Where a possible breach is perceived, it should be reported to the Parish Clerk who, as nominated Officer, has the responsibility to investigate and take appropriate action.

**5. Monitoring and Review**

Henfield Parish Council will establish appropriate information and monitoring systems to assist the effective implementation of our Equality and Diversity policy.

The effectiveness of our Equality and Diversity policy will be reviewed annually, and action taken as necessary.

In addition to the Council’s internal procedures, any person has the right to pursue complaints of discrimination under the Equality Act 2010.

***APPROVED AT THE FINANCE, RISK & CHANGE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING – 16TH MARCH 2020.***

***Reviewed 20 December 2022.***