

Halton Hologate with Halton Fenside Parish Council

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

July 2026

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1. Introduction

This policy sets out Halton Holegate Parish Council's approach to equality and diversity. The Council is committed to promoting equality and diversity and promoting a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people from different backgrounds and experiences can bring valuable insights to the workplace and enhance the way we work.

The Council is an inclusive organisation, committed to providing equal opportunities throughout employment including in the recruitment, training and development of employees, and to pro-actively tackling and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

2. Our vision for equality

Our vision for equality is to address inequalities through our work and ensure that our workforce reflects the community. Our policy sets out a clear commitment to ensure equality is at the heart of everything we do. From the money we spend and the people we employ, to the community we serve and services we provide. The policy applies to all aspects of the council's functions including:

- our partnerships
- services
- commissioning
- community engagement
- our workforce

We will collaborate with partners to have a positive impact on residents and support them to reach their potential in all areas. We will use lived experience and data to understand the root causes of the challenges our communities are facing, especially - but not exclusively - those with protected characteristics.

We will use this insight and engagement to co-produce and shape solutions in partnership with residents. Our ambition is to ensure that our leadership and workforce represent the community we serve and that decision-making considers the impact on our communities.

The Council has a public sector Equality duty under the Equality Act 2010 to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

As part of this duty, we will publish equality information about our employees and residents who share a protected characteristic and prepare and publish equality objectives. We use this information to support evidence-based decision-making and review and update our objectives.

We will publish our performance on delivering our equality objectives and the good work undertaken by the council and its partners.

We will research a range of issues that could affect opportunity like socio-economic and educational backgrounds and financial circumstances.

Where these factors contribute to lack of equal opportunity for our residents, visitors and workforce, we will take measures to address them.

This will involve developing policies that address the inequality experienced by people who are non-binary and transgender.

We are also aware of the special circumstances of care-leavers. We will take measures where appropriate to combat the disadvantage that may arise.

We will support and promote the invaluable work of the faith communities in the parish. We will ensure they are protected and encouraged by the Council. We will also continue to work with our trade union colleagues in this important area of work.

3. Our commitment to equality

Utilising our evidence-based assessment of community needs, we will agree our key Equality Objectives in our Strategic Plan, recognising that diversity is a key asset and something to celebrate. We plan to:

- Work with communities across Spilsby to bring people together from different backgrounds and promote understanding.
- Uphold and protect equality and diversity in all circumstances.
- Address inequalities.
- Improve opportunities, particularly for women and neurodiverse.
- Ensure our workforce reflects the community.

4. Putting the policy into practice

Equality is embedded throughout the Council's plans, services and activities and is a key driver for everything we do.

We outline the ways in which we will achieve this.

As a Council we will:

- Co-produce our services with the community to ensure services meet local needs and are fully accessible, checking any issues in service take-up through equality monitoring.
- Utilise research and evidence to understand the needs of our communities, undertaking equality impact assessments (EIA) to realise the impact of our decision-making.
- Ensure our partnerships and suppliers share our commitments to equality, through the procurement process and in providing services, for example, community events and celebrations promoting cohesion.
- Bring the community into our processes, inviting residents – especially those who are underrepresented – to share their priorities and concerns, for example by inviting those with lived experience to scrutiny panels.
- Commit to continuous improvement, by inviting, listening to and acting on feedback and modelling on the best practice of others for example, other councils.

As a service provider we will:

- Work to provide opportunities for the local community, addressing inequalities in access to services and outcomes by those with protected characteristics and those with common characteristics which are not formally protected but which are important to us.
- Ensure our services celebrate the diversity of the local community, respond to the changing needs of residents and are delivered without discrimination, prejudice or bias.

- Make our services, buildings and information about our services, accessible - particularly to those at higher risk of disadvantage or discrimination.
- We shall treat service users fairly and equally and we shall empower people to be aware of their rights and entitlements.
- Promote social integration and cohesion through our services and ensure that external contractors comply with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- Address inequalities in access to service provision by protected characteristics and by groups with characteristics which are not formally protected but which are important to us.

As an employer:

The Council aims to provide an inclusive and accessible working environment for existing and potential employees, that is free from harassment and discrimination. One where individual values, beliefs, identities and cultures are respected and celebrated.

We aim to have a workforce that addresses areas of inequality - protected and otherwise.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination and harassment. Both in terms of how staff treat each other and our residents, and in return we expect our staff to be treated with respect.

We will not tolerate discriminatory or abusive behaviour towards our staff.

We will:

- Tackle inequality, including racial inequality, through our work to be an anti-racist community.
- Tackle areas of under-representation within the workforce, using disaggregated data to put in place targeted actions.
- Work to close our pay gaps, in terms of gender, ethnicity, disability or sexual orientation.
- Promote our code of conduct and values to ensure we treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Provide equality and diversity training for staff, and ensure all staff complete this as part of annual mandatory training.
- Ensure staff can access confidential reporting systems, for those who may face bullying, harassment, prejudice and/or discrimination.
- Ensure that we consider individuals' needs and make reasonable adjustments where appropriate to remove barriers for disabled people.
- Implement and review our policies to promote well-being at work.
- Take action to protect employees who are at risk of violence while carrying out their duties.
- Ensure staff can safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults.
- Facilitate and support staff networks.
- Publish workforce information including the gender pay gap and use evidence to develop initiatives and interventions to address equality issues.
- Develop, review and promote policies and practices that ensure equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination in the workforce.

5. Roles and responsibilities

Individuals and groups have specific roles in meeting our equality, diversity and inclusion responsibilities.

There is a clear infrastructure to help deliver equality in the Council.

The Chair

Set the priorities for the Council which focuses on tackling inequality, protecting vulnerable residents. They also ensure the parish is a great place to live, work, and visit. The Chair is responsible for equality considerations in their decision-making.

Councillors

Represent the views of their communities and bring their views into the Council's decision-making process in their role as Community Leaders.

Officers of the Council

Officers are expected to have an understanding of equality and embed relevant policy and practice into service delivery. Our values underpin everything that the Council does including our work with partners to improve the quality of life for everyone who studies, works and lives in the parish.

The Compliance Officer ensures this Policy is embedded across the organisation, reviewed, and updated.

6. Equality monitoring and benchmarking

We are committed to collecting equality data that provides intelligence about employees and residents. This will help us understand the needs of those who use our services, the people we employ and the money we spend.

We will also check and publish pay gap information in relation to gender, ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation, as well as the average hourly differences for religion/belief and age.

7. What happens when things go wrong?

As a Council we recognise that sometimes our collective or individual decisions or actions may not meet the standards we have set out.

We expect our work and all colleagues to show our commitment to Equality. We do not tolerate discrimination, harassment or victimisation

Customers have the ability to give feedback on their experience with the Council through our comments, compliments and complaints process.