

## Yaxham Parish Council

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY STATEMENT AND PROCEDURE**

Yaxham Parish Council is committed to equal opportunities in all its activities, including the employment of staff and volunteers. The Council aims to ensure that no person wishing to gain employment, paid or voluntary, receives less favourable treatment because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or through any recruitment which cannot be justified by the requirements of their job or status.

In order to achieve its objectives the Council will:

- 1) Recognise its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010.
- 2) Recruit, select and promote individuals solely on the basis of their merits and requirements of the job
- 3) Encourage all persons who believe that they may have suffered discrimination, or sexual or racial harassment, to raise the matter through an appropriate procedure
- 4) To provide Council members and employees with instruction and information to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities for equal opportunities
- 5) Distribute and publicise this policy to all members of the Council

### **PREVENTING HARASSMENT**

Yaxham Parish Council supports the right of all people to go about their normal lives without harassment. The Council is committed to trying to prevent harassment in so far as this is practical within its powers.

Harassment is where one person behaves in an offensive or threatening way towards another person. There are a number of types of harassment, including **sexual harassment, racial harassment and bullying**. Harassment is most likely to occur where the victim is in a weak position, e.g. where the harasser is physically stronger or has some authority.

**Sexual harassment** is sexually offensive or intimidating behaviour. Different types of behaviour can cause harassment – examples include:

- Making unwanted physical contact
- Making remarks or suggestions of a sexual nature
- Gestures, stares and “wolf-whistles”
- Showing suggestive pictures or other materials

**Racial harassment** is behaviour towards someone of a different racial group, motivated by racial dislike or hatred.

### **WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE THE VICTIM OF HARASSMENT**

If you are suffering harassment, if possible, ask the person to stop and make it clear that if they do not stop you will make a formal complaint. If this is not possible, or does not work, talk to or submit your complaint in writing to the Clerk or the Chairman (or in their absence the Vice-Chairman) of the Council. This will be followed up by an investigation and prompt action where necessary.

At all times concern for the interests of the victim will be of paramount concern.