

# Equality and Diversity Policy

Fylde Community Link recognises the benefits of a diverse workforce and wishes to attain a workforce that is representative of the communities from which it is drawn to secure the widest pool of talent possible. The Organisation is committed to providing a working environment which encourages and values equality and diversity, and provides freedom from discrimination.

The Organisation will seek to promote the principles of equality and diversity in all its dealings with employees, job applicants, people whom we support, family members, suppliers, contractors and the public. This will be achieved by promoting and demonstrating fairness and equality of opportunity in:

## 1. The provision of services

- Fair access to services
- Fair treatment while accessing and receiving services
- Equal quality of service offered
- Fair outcomes for all of the people whom we support

## 2. The employment of staff

- Fair access to jobs
- Fair treatment in employment
- Fair access to training and development opportunities

## 3. Procurement

- Fair opportunities for suppliers
- Accountability

More detail about equal opportunities in employment can be found in the Safer Recruitment Policy.

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from being treated less favourably because they have a protected characteristic. The relevant protected characteristics in employment are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including ethnic or national origins, colour and nationality)
- Religion or belief (including lack of belief)
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Fylde Community Link is committed to challenging discriminatory practices, procedures and attitudes. All employees and those who act on behalf on the Organisation are required to adhere

to this policy when undertaking their duties or when representing the Organisation in any other way. Acts of discrimination by employees of the Organisation may result in disciplinary action. Failure to comply with this policy will be treated in a similar fashion.

## **Types of Discrimination**

### **Direct Discrimination**

This occurs when a person or a policy intentionally treats a person less favourably than another on the grounds of race, sex, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, disability, religion or beliefs, age or sexual orientation.

### **Associative Discrimination**

This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

### **Indirect Discrimination**

This occurs when an organisation's practices, policies or procedures have the effect of disadvantaging people who share certain protected characteristics.

### **Perceptive Discrimination**

This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess the characteristic.

### **Harassment**

This occurs when a person is subjected to unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating their dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

### **Victimisation**

This occurs when a person is treated less favourably because they have brought or intend to bring proceedings or they have given or intend to give evidence.

## **Complaints of Discrimination**

The Organisation will treat seriously, and, where appropriate, take action on any complaints of discrimination made by employees, job applicants, people whom we support, family members, suppliers, contractors or other third parties.

All complaints will be investigated in accordance with the Organisation's Grievance Procedure or Commendations and Complaints Policy, as appropriate.

If an employee believes that they have been discriminated against, they must raise the matter as soon as possible with their line manager or other senior member of staff in line with the Organisation's Grievance Procedure.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated thoroughly. If an employee makes an allegation in good faith, they will not be treated less favourably, whatever the outcome.

### **Allegations of Discrimination**

If an employee is accused of unlawful discrimination, the Organisation will investigate the matter fully.

In the course of the investigation the employee will be given the opportunity to respond to the allegation and provide an explanation of their actions.

If the Organisation concludes that no unlawful discrimination or harassment has occurred, this will be the end of the matter.

If the Organisation concludes that the claim is false or malicious the complainant may be subject to disciplinary action.

If on the other hand the Organisation concludes that the employee's actions amount to unlawful discrimination they will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including summary dismissal for gross misconduct.

### **Compliance**

Regular audits and reviews of documentation and practices take place in order to ensure compliance with this policy.

### **Review**

This policy is reviewed at least annually or whenever there are changes to legislation or significant change to processes, procedures and circumstances.

### **Relevant Legislation**

Equality Act 2010

### **Relevant Organisational Policies and Procedures**

Commendations and Complaints Policy  
Grievance Procedure  
Safer Recruitment Policy