



Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1** At Community Interest Luton we strive for an environment where everyone feels part of one organisation and all policies/ procedures, values and behaviours are underpinned by an inclusive and diverse culture; where employees are proud and happy working for Community Interest Luton and service users enjoy using and accessing the facilities available to them.
- 1.2** We believe that the elimination of prejudicial barriers and the creation of an inclusive and diverse culture will result in an efficient and effective centre which the local community are proud to use and which is run by a positive and motivated workforce.

2. Introduction

- 2.1** Community Interest Luton is committed to the principles of equality of opportunity for all and promotes an inclusive and diverse culture. By this we mean that we make full use of the talents and skills available in all groups and communities in the local community and, as a result, we all contribute to the success of our organisation.
- 2.2** It is our policy that no part of a person's working life – recruitment, training, development, promotion, conditions of service or any other area of employment – should be influenced by considerations of gender, marital status, sexual orientation, race, age, colour, nationality, religion, ethnic or national origin, physical or mental capabilities, social background, organisational role or any condition other than that person's suitability. No employee will be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable.

3. Ownership

- 3.1** The Chairperson of Community Interest Luton has ownership for the communication and review of this Policy and for diversity issues relevant to Community Interest Luton. Everyone at Community Interest Luton has responsibility for the part that they play in ensuring that the principles set out in this policy are followed at all times. This Policy covers diversity in relation to Community Interest Luton including both employees, volunteers, service users and stakeholders.



4. Manager Responsibilities

4.1 Managers will ensure that they and their staff operate within the Policy and that all reasonable and practical steps are taken to avoid discrimination. Managers are responsible for leading by example and advocating positive behaviours.

5. Employee and Volunteer Responsibilities

5.1 Whilst the responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination rests with management, the attitudes of staff are crucial to the successful operation of fair employment practices. In particular, all employees must:

- Comply with this Policy;
- Not discriminate either directly or indirectly in their day to day activities or induce or help others to do so;
- Not victimise any individual who makes a complaint of discrimination;
- Inform their manager if they become aware of any discriminatory practice.

5.2 Any breach of this Policy will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure and serious offences will be treated as gross misconduct.

6. Client and Member Services

6.1 Community Interest Luton encourages all organisations that it works with or to which it supplies services to, to act in a way which is supportive of Equal Opportunities and Diversity. Where member organisations don't have policies in place Community Interest Luton encourages them to develop, adopt and implement them appropriately.

6.2 Where Community Interest Luton receives complaints from external agencies such as service users, member organisations or funders the Chairperson of Community Interest Luton should be informed so that issues can be resolved. It is hoped that most issues can be resolved informally however if a formal investigation is required then the Chairperson of Community Interest Luton will undertake this.

6.3 If the issues are unable to be resolved by the Chairperson of Community Interest Luton then the Community Interest Luton Board of Trustees may be involved. The Chairperson of Community Interest Luton will bring any serious complaints or



concerns to the attention of the Community Interest Luton Board of Trustees immediately, to resolve the issues appropriately.

6.4 Community Interest Luton monitors referrals and service users to ensure that services are reaching all groups and persons as stated in the Policy. The findings of this monitoring, is given to the Community Interest Luton Management Board for review.

7. Definition of Terms

- Direct Discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another because of race or his/her sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, religion or belief or disability.
- Indirect Discrimination occurs where an apparently neutral provision, criterion, practice requirement or condition is applied, which puts persons of a certain race, sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age at a particular disadvantage compared with others. Requirements which can be objectively justified are not unlawful indirect discrimination.
- Victimization occurs when a person is treated less favourably because he/she has previously complained of discrimination, given evidence for another person in a discrimination case or done any other 'protected act'.
- Harassment occurs when a person on the grounds of race or ethnic or national origins, sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief, or sex, engages in unwanted conduct which has the purpose of violating the person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person being harassed and that behaviour should reasonably be regarded as having that effect.
- Bullying is regarded as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or an abuse or misuse of power, which has the purpose, or effect, of intimidating, belittling and humiliating the recipient; leading to loss of self-esteem for the victim and ultimately the self-questioning of their worth in the workplace and society as a whole.



8. Equality and Diversity

8.1 Equal opportunities ensure equality and fairness for everyone and look to remove any barriers which may hinder this. They concentrate on compliance with anti-discrimination legislation, focusing on minority groups and ensuring positive action for these groups of individuals.

8.2 Diversity is valuing everyone as an individual, whether they are an employee, a service user or another stakeholder.

8.3 Diversity therefore values the qualities, skills and attributes that different people bring to their jobs and to the resolution of problems and opportunities. It ensures that all individuals maximise their potential and contribution to Community Interest Luton.

8.4 Diversity is a core part of our service and is about managing people with differences whether this is gender, ethnic or national origin, religion, age, physical or mental capabilities, marital status, sexual preference, social background, organisation role and many other factors. Diversity recognises and values these differences and views this positively to improve the quality of decisions by welcoming different perspectives.

9. What diversity is not

9.1 Diversity is not about:

- Reducing standards or making compromises;
- Changing views or prejudices – rather it is concerned with making sure that individuals recognise the existence of their own stereotypical views and prejudices and then encouraging them to question such views before an action is taken;-
- Positive discrimination or political correctness.

10. Monitoring Diversity

10.1 This Policy will be regularly reviewed, to ensure continuing compliance with Community Interest Luton's goals and with relevant employment legislation.



11. Legal Obligations

11.1 There is a considerable amount of legislation which has a bearing on our obligations with regard to Diversity and Equal Opportunities. This legislation includes the following:

- The Race Relations Act, 1976, makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person either directly or indirectly on the grounds of racial discrimination.
- The Sex Discrimination Acts, 1975 and 1986, prohibit discrimination based on sex or marital status. It also forbids discrimination against workers undergoing gender reassignment. It does not cover discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation. Further, the Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999 offer transsexuals protection from discrimination on the grounds of sex, in employment or vocational training.
- The Disability Discrimination Act, 1995 prohibits discrimination against a disabled person. The definition of Disability under the Act is, “A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.” People who have or develop a disability, and people who have had a disability, but no longer have one, are covered by the Act.

There are five types of discrimination: failure to make reasonable adjustments; direct discrimination; disability-related discrimination; harassment and victimisation.

- The Equal Pay Act, 1970, prohibits discrimination in pay by implying an equality clause into every contract of employment.
- The Employment Act, 2002, incorporated the right of employees to request flexible working, this came into effect in April 2003.
- Employment Rights Act, 1996
- Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations, 1999
- The Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations, 2000, defines a part-time worker as someone who is “not identifiable as a full-time worker”. These Regulations prohibit the less favourable treatment of part-time workers in all aspects of employment. Part-time workers are entitled to be treated on the same basis and are entitled to the same benefits, pro-rata, as their full-time colleagues.



- Employment Equality (Age) Discrimination Regulations 2006, makes it unlawful to discriminate, either directly or indirectly on the basis of a person's age.

11.2 In 2009 the UK Government introduced the Equalities Bill and they are aiming to introduce this as UK legislation in October 2010. The aim of the Bill is to streamline the different discrimination laws under one umbrella.

12. Recruitment

12.1 Community Interest Luton's recruitment process is designed to result in the selection of the most suitable person for the job, based on his / her own merits and abilities to do the job. Internal and external applications are encouraged from a diverse pool of individuals.

12.2 Job descriptions and person specifications detail the skills and abilities required to carry out the role and will be worded to ensure that no intent of either direct or indirect discrimination is suggested, nor will there be any stereotyping of roles.

12.3 Advertisements will be worded to ensure that no intent of either direct or indirect discrimination is suggested, nor will there be any stereotyping of roles.

12.4 Interviews will be based on an unbiased approach, and questions will relate specifically to the requirements of the job and be non-discriminatory.

12.5 It will be made clear to all applicants that Community Interest Luton is an equal opportunities employer through the recruitment and selection methods we adopt and the behaviours we display, and that our policy is to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of sex, marital status, sexual orientation, race, age, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, or disability.



13. Training

13.1 Community Interest Luton is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in terms of access to training events and activities, in order to increase employees' knowledge and skills, to help them to perform more effectively in their current role, and to provide opportunities to develop their potential. Selection for training will depend entirely on job requirements and the individual's abilities and alternative methods of training will be reviewed and applied where appropriate to do so.

14. Pay and Benefits

14.1 Community Interest Luton provides a transparent reward system. Our aim is to make sure that all employees are paid in line with market rates for a charitable organisation.

15. Procedure for Reporting Complaints

15.1 If you feel that you are being subjected to bullying, harassment, victimisation or discrimination on any of the grounds discussed in this document you should discuss this, in confidence, with your line manager in the first instance to try to resolve this informally in line with Community Interest Luton's Grievance Procedure. If the complaint relates to the conduct of your line manager, you may discuss the matter with Chairperson of Community Interest Luton. Alternatively you can contact members of the Board of Trustees if the complaint relates to the Chairperson of Community Interest Luton.

15.2 Confidentiality will be observed throughout and the need for any disclosure of the details of the case will be discussed and agreed.

15.3 If the situation cannot be resolved informally then you have the right to pursue your complaint formally through Community Interest Luton's Grievance Procedure. Once a grievance has been raised, a full and immediate investigation will be undertaken to establish the facts and decide upon an appropriate course of action.

15.4 Where there is evidence that discrimination has occurred, prompt and corrective action will be taken, including disciplinary action leading to dismissal where appropriate



16. Breach of this Policy

16.1 Any employee found to be discriminating, or supporting others to discriminate, may be guilty of misconduct and subject to Community Interest Luton Disciplinary Procedure.

16.2 Any volunteer or consultant found to be discriminating, or supporting others to discriminate may be guilty of misconduct and subject to the termination of their contract to provide services to Community Interest Luton.

17. Further Guidance

- Employers Forum for Disability
www.employers-forum.co.uk
- Commission for Race Equality
www.cre.gov.uk
- Equal Opportunities Commission
www.eeoc.gov

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Chairperson