

# **EQUALITY POLICY FOR ALL EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS**

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

Linlithgow Link Voluntary Group (hereafter referred to as Link) is committed to promoting equality of opportunity, good relationships with stakeholders and tackling all forms of discrimination which may arise. This comprehensive Equality Policy forms the basis of our commitment to help us meet our obligations under the Equalities Act 2010. This policy will be reviewed on a 3-yearly basis. Amendments may be required out with this period to reflect any changes in legislation or issues that may arise.

## **2 SCOPE**

The policy applies to all Link Staff and Volunteers at all levels.

## **3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

Link is committed to ensuring that no employee, job applicant, volunteer or client receives less favourable treatment on the basis of their gender, age, disability, race, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy, caring responsibilities, nationality, political belief, trade union membership or length of unemployment.

The Equality policy is supported by a number of over-riding aims and objectives that Link shall endeavour to achieve. These are indicated below:-

- To eliminate discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership.
- To advance equal opportunity.
- To foster good relations.

## **4 KEY AREAS**

While issues of equality cover all aspects of the work of Link there are a number of key areas where equality has particular significance. These are outlined below to highlight how this will be achieved, in conjunction with an indication of the actions and requirements that are necessary.

## **SERVICES**

- Ensure that the allocation of financial resources within the organisation shall as appropriate take into account equality considerations.
- Ensure that equality considerations are integrated into all relevant areas of service planning, management and delivery.
- Improve Link's awareness and understanding of the needs of different groups through liaison, involvement and dissemination of information.
- Ensure that Link services are accessible and delivered appropriately and sensitively in order to facilitate equality of treatment.
- Ensure that information about services is readily available, easily accessible and offered in appropriate formats.
- Ensure that equalities are mainstreamed into the organisation's policies, practices and services.
- Ensure that data is obtained to monitor the demographic of protected characteristics within the organisation.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

### **Recruitment and Selection**

- Ensure job vacancies are accessible to people from all sections of the community.
- Ensure that all employees and job applicants are not discriminated against on the basis that they have been unemployed for a long term.
- Ensure job adverts focus on the job needs so as to attract a broad spectrum of applicants.
- Ensure staff and volunteers are aware of the policy, understand its requirements and are able to apply it within their own area of work.

### **Dignity at Work**

- Tackle harassment or bullying in the workplace.
- Ensure dignity at work and ensure any abuse is dealt with under Link's Disciplinary Procedure.

### **Policies and Procedures**

- Carry out an impact assessment on all policies and practices to ensure any negative impacts towards any group are eliminated or minimised.
- Monitor and ensure that policies and working practices comply with relevant equalities legislation. This includes all areas of recruitment and selection, promotion, training and development, grievances, discipline, terms and conditions of employment and termination of employment.
- Ensure consultation with staff and volunteers.

## **Training and Development**

- Ensure the performance appraisal scheme shall include all staff and that it is applied fairly.
- Provide training and development opportunities for all staff and volunteers.

## **Equal Pay and Benefits**

- Ensure pay scales do not discriminate any group of staff.
- Provide a mechanism for applications from all staff to change work/life balance.

## **RESOURCES**

Link shall ensure that in terms of budgetary, resource monies shall be available to meet the requirements of this policy and to promote the issues surrounding equality in all its forms. Time shall also be taken to ensure that all staff and volunteers within Link are aware of this policy and understand the need to consider and address equality issues during their daily work.

## **CUSTOMER CONSULTATION and ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

Link has developed a customer care questionnaire and all stakeholders who use our service are encouraged to provide feedback through this mechanism.

Access to information in a variety of formats is important. Our website can be used by our stakeholders. A review shall be undertaken to ensure the information is presented in an easy to understand manner.

In addition we are pro-active by making direct contact with different organisations in order for information to be provided either at meetings or by advertisement in appropriate newsletters.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

For any policy to be successful it is essential that responsibilities are identified and allocated, Noted below are the main responsibilities that are required to support the successful operation of this Policy:-

- Link's Management Committee will have overall responsibility for the policy and ensuring adequate resources are provided to ensure that the policy is adhered to.
- Link's Staff and Management Committee have the responsibility for overseeing the implementation and monitoring of the policy.

- Link's Staff and Volunteers are responsible for ensuring that all aspects of their work comply with the policy.
- All Staff and Volunteers are required to ensure fairness towards colleagues, service users and other members of the community in carrying out their duties.
- All Staff and Volunteers must not discriminate against any person or group when at work or in the course of their duties in interactions with the public.
- All Staff must not behave in any way which colleagues may find offensive.
- All Staff should help promote the Policy in the workplace in all aspects of service delivery and to work towards the elimination of discrimination.
- All staff and volunteers have a duty to report instances of discrimination to the Link Office at the earliest opportunity so that appropriate action can be taken to remedy the situation.
- Link must ensure that any allegation of harassment or bullying is fully investigated and appropriate action taken if necessary.

## **5 MONITORING & REVIEW OF THE POLICY**

An annual monitoring report will be prepared which will include all relevant statistical data collected in the previous year. This report will be circulated to Link's Management Committee which will provide an opportunity for consideration, suggested improvements and amendments to the policy.

The annual monitoring and collection of statistical data will comprise of the following:-

- Employee and volunteer age.
- Training by gender, race, disability, age, religion or belief and sexuality.
- Salaries by gender, race, disability, age, religion or belief and sexuality.
- Job applications by gender, race, disability, age, religion or belief and sexuality.
- Successful applications by gender, race, disability, age, religion or belief and sexuality.
- Leavers by gender, race, disability, age, religion or belief and sexuality.
- Employment by gender, race, disability, age, religion or belief and sexuality.
- Reviews will take into account the views of staff and volunteers, and we will continue to engage with people from the diverse community in Linlithgow to help shape the services we deliver.

## **6 DISSEMINATION OF THE POLICY**

Any comments, suggestions or improvements to this policy should be passed to Linlithgow Link by telephone on 01506 845137 or by email to

[co-ordinator@linlithgowlink.org.uk](mailto:co-ordinator@linlithgowlink.org.uk) or in writing, addressed to Linlithgow Link, Administration Building, St. Michael's Hospital, Linlithgow, West Lothian, EH49 6QS

## 7 ACTION PLAN

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	DESIRED OUTCOME	TIMESCALE
To ensure the Equalities Policy is a constantly evolving document	Monitor and investigate any suggested improvements to the policy	A policy that truly meets today's needs and meets legislative requirements	Ongoing
Raise the profile of equality issues within Link	From 2013 prepare annual review for Committee approval and then publish on website	Heightened awareness of Link's commitment to equalities	Annually and Ongoing
Raise public awareness	The up-to-date policy and annual report available on the website	To heighten awareness and encourage input from stakeholders	Ongoing
Availability of information relating to enquiries available in various formats	Statement to be included in website and Newsletters, if possible	Encourage stakeholders to contact Link	Ongoing
Collection of statistical data for Volunteer monitoring purposes	Collect and collate the data	Report findings annually to Committee	Ongoing
Raise awareness of equalities within Link	Ensure that equalities is an item on all internal meetings agendas	Staff are aware and alert to equalities issues and have a vehicle to raise concerns and suggestions	Ongoing
Customer Care Feedback	Scrutinise all customer care returns	Take on-board any positive suggestions to improve the service	Ongoing

**SEPTEMBER 2014**

EQUALITY POLICY REVIEW 2017 MMT MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK

Linlithgow Link (Voluntary Group) is a charity registered in Scotland No  
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