

# Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Draft)

## **Including Prevention of Harassment**

### 1) Statement of policy

- a) We recognise that discrimination is unacceptable and we have made the decision to adopt a formal Diversity and Inclusion policy to provide guidance to all Heart for Chorley workers, referral agencies and beneficiaries. Breaches of the policy will lead to disciplinary proceedings and, if appropriate, disciplinary action for workers and removal of service provision for beneficiaries.
- b) The aim of the policy is to ensure no job applicant (including Trustee recruitment), employee, worker or beneficiary is discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.
- c) We will ensure that the policy is circulated to any agencies responsible for our recruitment of workers or referral of beneficiaries and a copy of the policy will be made available for all employees and beneficiaries and made known to all applicants for employment and requests for services.
- d) The policy will be communicated to all private contractors and partner agencies reminding them of their responsibilities towards the equality of opportunity and prevention of discrimination or harassment.
- e) The policy will be implemented in accordance with the appropriate statutory requirements and full account will be taken of all available guidance and in particular any relevant Codes of Practice.
- f) We will maintain a neutral environment in which no employee, worker or beneficiary feels under threat or intimidated.

### 2) Recruitment and selection

- a) The recruitment and selection process is crucially important to any diversity and inclusion policy. We will endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that employees and Trustees making selection and recruitment decisions will not discriminate, whether consciously or unconsciously, in making these decisions.
- b) Promotion and advancement will be made on merit and all decisions relating to this

will be made within the overall framework and principles of this policy.

- c) Job descriptions, where used, will be revised to ensure that they are in line with this policy. Job requirements will be reflected accurately in any personnel specifications.
  - d) We will adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of vacancies.
  - e) We will not confine our recruitment to areas or media sources which provide only, or mainly, applicants of a particular group.
  - f) All applicants that apply for jobs with us will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job.
  - g) All employees and Trustees involved in the recruitment process will periodically review their selection criteria to ensure that they are related to the job requirements and do not unlawfully discriminate.
  - h) Shortlisting and interviewing will be carried out by more than one person and any conflicts of interest will be declared.
  - i) Interview questions will be related to the requirements of the job and will not be of a discriminatory nature.
  - j) We will not disqualify any applicant because they/he/she is unable to complete an application form unassisted unless personal completion of the form is a valid test of the standard of English or form filling required for the safe and effective performance of the job.
  - k) Selection decisions will not be influenced by any perceived prejudices of other staff.
- 3) Training and promotion
- a) Senior staff/ Trustees will receive training in the application of this policy to ensure that they are aware of its contents and provisions.
  - b) All promotion or career progression will be in line with this policy.
- 4) Monitoring
- a) We will maintain and review the employment records of all employees in order to monitor the progress of this policy.
  - b) Monitoring may involve:
    - i) the collection and classification of information regarding race in terms of

- ethnic/national origin and sex of all applicants and current employees;
  - ii) the examination by ethnic/national origin and sex of the distribution of employees and the success rate of the applicants; and
  - iii) recording recruitment, training and promotional records of all employees, the decisions reached and the reason for those decisions.
- c) The results of any monitoring procedure will be reviewed at regular intervals to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy. Consideration will be given, if necessary, to adjusting this policy to afford greater equality of opportunities to all applicants and staff.

#### 5) Project specific

- a) Any exclusions of beneficiaries based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation will be as a result of risk assessment for the protection of vulnerable people and project specific criteria due to the nature of the primary need only. Some examples are:
- i) Gender, race or religion related due to the protection of vulnerabilities such as criminal history or domestic violence of existing residents,
  - ii) Gender related due to the over representation of a particular gender or gender identity in the local homeless population,  

(1) At the writing of this policy Chorley Borough has an over-representation of homeless people that identify as male
  - iii) Single bedroomed homes would exclude some families of more than one person due to minimum square footage requirements of shared rooms.
- b) No exclusion from services will be automatic based on a rule where protected characteristics are identified and every referral to services will be considered and assessed for risk as the vulnerability and needs of the beneficiary and the goal for the relief of poverty is priority. Some examples and reasons are:
- i) A person with a gender identity different to the target gender of a Heart for Chorley home would be assessed for risk levels and not automatically rejected due to the identified gender. There may be additional factors that overcome any assumed risk or the priority target.
  - ii) A married couple, or living as married, would not be rejected from a single persons' home based on their relationship. The home may have a bedroom of

minimum size for a couple and all other related risks could be assessed as manageable.

## 6) Personal Influences

- a) Heart for Chorley is a Christian organisation and operates with a Christian ethos which is communicated during the employment and referral procedures and is stated in Company policy. However, no Biblical or religious rules or laws are pressed upon any worker or beneficiary.
  - i) Any individual is free to express their own viewpoint on any matter in the interest of respectful, healthy discussion and comparison which leads to greater learning and understanding.
  - ii) No individual is free to force their viewpoint or beliefs on anyone else or misuse the freedom of expression to proselytise, manipulate, offend, convert or isolate any other individual.
  - iii) Any individual has the right to disagree with another's opinion or viewpoint, but this should not lead to discrimination in any way or result in any person being rejected, disrespected or limited.
  - iv) In the event of an opinion or viewpoint being expressed or acted on, bringing unacceptable and unmanageable risk to the residents, the house, the business or the community, disciplinary (in the case of workers) or termination (in the case of beneficiaries) procedures will be followed.
- b) Any Diversity and Inclusion breaches will be dealt with primarily through training and education unless the breach is serious enough to constitute misconduct.
  - i) It is the absolute intention of Heart for Chorley to not discriminate in any way. However, accidental breaches of this policy may happen due to traditional, habitual or colloquial speech. Correction of this type of breach is the responsibility of every person and should be addressed respectfully but firmly.
  - ii) Any repeat of accidental breaches should be brought to the attention of an appropriate member of staff or trustees as training, competency, disciplinary (workers), education or action/ support plan (beneficiaries) procedures may need to be followed.