

Appendix 2

Equality and Diversity Policy 2011-2015

Leeds City Council has adopted the Equalities Review 2007 definition of an equal society which strengthens our approach to equality and diversity. The definition is:

“An equal society protects and promotes equal, real freedom and substantive opportunity to live in the ways people value and would choose, so that everyone can flourish. An equal society recognises different people’s different needs, situations and goals and removes the barriers that limit what people can do and can be”

The council is committed to:

- eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advancing equality of opportunity; and
- fostering good relations within and between our communities with a view to building good community relations

The Policy is in line with Leeds City Council’s duties and responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

Our aims are that:

- all our existing and potential service users are treated with dignity and respect;
- our partnership and contract arrangements promote equality of opportunity;
- we will work with and between communities to help develop and strengthen relationships;
- our workforce will be reflective of all sections of society; and
- each employee feels respected and able to give of their best.

We will treat everyone with the same attention, courtesy and respect regardless of:

- Age,
- Disability,
- Race or racial group (including colour, nationality and ethnic origin or national origins),
- Religion or belief,
- Sex
- Marriage and Civil Partnership,
- Gender reassignment,
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Sexual orientation,
- Caring responsibilities,
- Social class, or
- Trade union activity.

We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that we do not unlawfully discriminate.

Our commitment is to create an environment both for staff and people of Leeds:

- that promotes dignity and respect for all;
- where people are treated fairly and according to their needs;
- where no form of intimidation, bullying or harassment is tolerated; and
- in which individual differences and the contributions of all are recognised and valued.

This policy applies to:

- all council Members;
- all service users and those applying to access services;
- all contractors and sub contractors; and
- all employees, whether part-time, full-time or temporary, and all job applicants.

Roles and responsibilities

We all have a right to be treated fairly and with dignity and respect. For this to happen we have a responsibility to ensure that our own actions and behaviours are equally fair and that we respect the dignity of others.

Less favourable treatment should be challenged directly, either by the recipient or by any witnesses. Where this is not possible, for whatever reason, then the complaints procedure can be used.

Good practice

In **all** our activities we will:

- give due regard to equality and diversity when reviewing existing and developing new strategies/ policies and services/ functions to ensure that we
 - secure flexible and fair working practices,
 - provide excellent services and
 - fairly award contracts, and commission services
- engage and involve interested groups and individuals (both internal and external to the council) with our decision making processes
- deal with all complaints of discrimination, harassment or victimisation promptly and with sensitivity to all those involved
- take all opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations within and between our communities.

In delivering our services we will:

- assess the needs of our existing and potential service users and ensure fair access to our services. This includes making reasonable adjustments to enable disabled people to use our services;
- ensure the availability of appropriate support services. This includes translation and interpretation and making key information available in a range of alternative formats,
- provide access points for reporting hate crimes.

In employment, learning and development we will:

- provide increased opportunities in areas of under-representation. This could include school placements, supported trainee schemes or mentoring;
- continue to progress equal pay;
- assess the needs of our existing and potential disabled employees and provide appropriate reasonable adjustments, and
- take appropriate positive action in recruitment and selection.

Support to implement the policy

All our policies and practices are supported by appropriate training or briefing sessions and guidance. For the equality and diversity policy:

- general and bespoke equality and diversity training is available through Human Resources, and
- advice and guidance is also available from the Equality Team.

Monitoring

All our policies contribute to our overall aims around equality. Key policies – such as those relating to employment, service delivery, community engagement, commissioning and procurement - are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity and protect people against unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. We collect and analyse data relating to these areas of policy, to identify trends and areas of inequality, and then take appropriate action.

Communications

The equality and diversity policy is available on the intranet and our external website. We will use all opportunities to promote the policy. This includes key messages, induction events for new staff, and specific equality and diversity events.

Responsibility for reviewing this document

The Head of Equality will be responsible for the bi-annual review and update of this policy.