



## **WILTSHIRE INVOLVEMENT NETWORK**

### **Equality and Diversity Policy**

#### **Introduction:**

The Equalities and Diversity policy aims to provide a coherent equalities and diversity framework which underpins all of WIN's activities.

To achieve an independent network of participants made up of both individuals and community groups that celebrates their own and each other's diversity.

Win is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating unlawful discrimination. It will seek to protect the right of everyone not to be discriminated against and work to ensure equality of opportunity for all, so that each person is appropriately supported.

#### **Equality and Diversity Statement:**

WIN acknowledges and respects the fundamental human right of every person not to be discriminated against on the grounds of perceived difference. Direct and / or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation will not be tolerated.

The policy will be realised through working towards achieving three main priorities:

- 1.** Improving WIN's understanding of Equality and Diversity and increasing opportunities for everyone to participate.
- 2.** Making sure WIN is pro-active towards social inclusion.
- 3.** Providing effective community engagement to involve people who are seldom heard or involved.

WIN will do this through consulting and working with all staff, participants, stakeholders and partner agencies.

## **1. Purpose of the policy**

1.1 This policy seeks to clarify for all individual and community groups, participants and staff WIN's understanding and interpretation of 'equality and diversity'.

1.2 It provides a clear statement of principles for an inclusive involvement network.

1.3 In order to improve the delivery of equality and diversity in WIN activities we will take account of best guidance.

1.4 It also identifies 'equality groups' (see section 5.) within the community, which WIN recognises are most likely to experience ongoing discrimination and disadvantage. The needs and issues are therefore a focus of this and other related WIN policies.

1.5 It summarises how WIN will ensure that equality and diversity is integral to all the work of WIN.

1.6 It ensures compliance with the Equality Act 2011

## **2. Equality and Diversity**

Wiltshire Involvement Network's Equality and Diversity Policy is based on equality and respect for all, coupled with a focus on managing, valuing and celebrating diversity.

WIN's understanding of Equality is underpinned by three core values:

- Equal Outcomes / Fairness

WIN understands equality to be about fair and equal treatment but acknowledges the need to move beyond just treating 'like for like' to focus on improving equality outcomes for all in order to ensure substantive equality and effective meaningful change. This may mean responding to individuals or groups differently.

WIN understands equality to be linked to the dignity and worth of each individual and believes in the recognition of dignity

- Participative Democracy

WIN also understands equality to be about participative democracy and community engagement in order that everyone including the most disadvantaged is able to have a say in their health and social care.

### **2.1 Diversity Values:**

Acknowledging and celebrating the rich diversity of the community, which WIN serves, make everyone feel valued and respected. Promoting the benefits of a diverse community helps to break down barriers and the negative attitudes, created through a lack of understanding, misinformation and fear of the 'other' and helps to promote social cohesion and good community relations.

#### **4. Vision:**

Wiltshire is a socially and culturally diverse community made up of urban and rural areas and WIN believes that such diversity brings with it both challenges and great strengths. It recognises that only through listening to and involving local people and community groups in their health and social care will inequality be reduced.

#### **5. Identified 'Equality Groups'**

Whilst acknowledging that no list can be comprehensive, WIN has identified the following groups, which have traditionally experienced high levels of social and economic disadvantage, intolerance and discrimination.

- Women
- Young people
- Older people
- Single parents
- People providing care
- People of lower socio economic classes
- Black minority ethnic people
- Gypsies and travellers
- Asylum seekers and refugees
- Disabled people
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual
- Trans-gender people
- People of a particular religion / culture who hold certain beliefs
- Women who are pregnant

## 6. Statutory Legislation

WIN will comply with all anti discrimination and human rights legislation including:

- The Equal Pay Act 1970
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (updated 1986)
- The Race Relations Act 1976
- The Race Relations Amendment Act (2000)
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Gender Recognition Act 2004
- The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- The Employment Equality (Religion / Belief) Regulations 2003
- The Equality Act 2006, 2010 and 2011 (changes)
- The Employment Equality Regulation (Age) 2007
- AA European Regulations and Directives
- Other Equality Codes of Practice

***It recognises that not all individuals or groups benefit from current anti discrimination legislation. It is committed to moving beyond legislative compliance to actively promote equality and universal non discrimination in all areas, throughout the community it serves.***

## 7. Implementation

The implementation of this policy seeks to achieve this focus throughout these core functions by:

- Engaging in community profiling in order to plan strategically for the changing needs of a diverse community.
- Providing additional support or make reasonable adjustments to the way in which activities are delivered where necessary, to ensure equality of access for all participants within financial constraints.

- Using premises that are fully accessible to all members of the community.
- Monitoring the work of WIN and the engagement of participants to ensure non discrimination.
- Working with participants and stakeholders to provide a safe and accessible environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, intimidation, victimisation or violence.
- Fostering good relations with community groups and individuals

***WIN will apply the nine diversity areas (protected characteristics) which broadly reflect the groups identified above.***

#### **The Nine 'protected characteristics'**

- Age
- Disability
- Transgender
- Race
- Faith
- Sexual Orientation
- Sex
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Maternity and pregnancy

## **8. Monitoring and Review**

The overall implementation of this policy will be the responsibility of the Core Group and monitored by the Chairs Group. Periodic Service Reviews will be carried out to examine the way WIN manages the Equality and Diversity policy.

The WIN Strategic Plan is an overarching document that summarises how participation will be developed and demonstrates to all participants, partners and stakeholders and the wider community how equalities will be incorporated into the Wiltshire Involvement Network way of working.

## Appendix

The law protects individual(s) from being treated unfairly and helps build a more fair society. Protected characteristics have the same meaning as the phrase 'on grounds of'; equality strands were previously used to describe the equality characteristics.

### **Discrimination:**

- **Direct**

Where somebody is treated less favourably because of their race, sex, marital status, religion, sexual orientation or gender reassignment.

- **Indirect**

This occurs when the effects of certain requirements, conditions or practices that has been imposed has an unreasonably adverse impact on one of the protected characteristic group(s) or individual(s)

**Discrimination by association** – this is direct discrimination against someone because they are associated with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

**Discrimination by perception** – this is direct discrimination against someone because others think that they possess a particular characteristic. They do not necessarily have to possess the characteristic, just perceived to have.

**Harassment** – unwanted behaviour related to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of harming a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

**Harassment by a third party**- employers are potentially liable for the harassment of their staff or customers by people they don't themselves employ, i.e. a contractor.

**Victimisation** – when a service provider treats someone badly because the service provider thinks that they are doing or may do these things.

**Transgender – Gender Reassignment** – The protected characteristic of gender reassignment will apply to a person who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process to change their gender.

**Disability** – The protected characteristic of disability applies to a person who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

**Positive Action** – protected characteristics please note:

- There is no requirement to take positive action

- There is no restriction on treating disabled people more favourably than non-disabled people.
- It is also permitted to take steps to meet the needs of people with a particular disability

## **Relevant UK Legislation and Codes of Practice**

### **Generic**

- Equality Act 2006
- Equality Bill 2009
- Human Rights Act 2009
- 2005 Code of Practice – Mental capacity Act

### **Disability**

- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act (SENDA) 2001
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005

### **Gender**

- Equal Pay Act 1970 (as amended)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (as amended)
- Equal Pay (as amended) Regulations 1983 and 2004
- Sex Discrimination Act 1986
- Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999
- Sex Discrimination (Indirect Discrimination and Burden Proof) Regulations 2001
- Gender Recognition Act 2004
- Civil Partnerships Act 2004
- Gender Act 2007

### **Race**

- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000
- The Race Relations Act 1976 (amendment) Regulations 2003

### **Faith**

- The Employment Equality (Religion and Belief) Regulations 2003

### **Sexual Orientation**

- The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

### **Employment Related**

- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Employment Regulations Act 2004
- Employment Rights Act (increase of limits) Order 2004