

March 2018

Equality and Diversity Policy

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| This document is relevant to | All Staff |
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Introduction

What is Equality and Diversity?

1. This document sets out Livability's policy for the promotion of equality of opportunity and diversity in our provision and in our employment practices. One of Livability's core values is that we believe in the equality and unique value of every individual and creating opportunity for people to fulfil their potential and live life to the full.
2. Diversity consists of visible and non-visible differences and aims to recognise, respect and value people's differences to contribute and realise their full potential by promoting an inclusive culture for all.
3. Equality is ensuring individuals or groups of individuals are not treated differently or less favourably, on the basis of their specific protected characteristic.
4. Equality of opportunity means that an individual's diversity is viewed positively and, in recognising that everyone is different, valuing equally the unique contribution that individual experience, knowledge and skills can make.
5. Livability recognises that a diverse workforce can foster innovation and creates an inclusive and positive working environment for our staff and in turn the people that use Livability's services.

Legal Definitions

6. It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of a protected characteristic. The Equality Act 2010 covers the following protected characteristics:
 - **Age** - where this is referred to, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age (for example 32 year olds) or range of ages (for example 18 to 30 year olds).
 - **Disability** - a person has a disability if she or he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
 - **Gender reassignment** - the process of transitioning from one gender to another.
 - **Marriage and civil partnership** - marriage is no longer restricted to a union between a man and a woman but now includes a marriage between a same-sex couple.
 - **Pregnancy and maternity** - pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth.

- **Race** - a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.
 - **Religion and belief** - religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief.
 - **Sex** - a man or a woman.
 - **Sexual orientation** - whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.
7. Bullying and harassment, behaviour that makes someone feel intimidated or offended are also considered as equality and diversity issues. As is victimisation, subjecting an individual to detrimental treatment because they raised a complaint about discrimination.
8. The Public Sector Equality Duty, additional to the Equality Act, requires public authorities, including some charities and private care homes providing care on behalf of the local authority homes to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Guiding Principles

9. Livability has a dynamic and inclusive Christian Ethos which is the organisation's DNA. Welcoming people from all faiths and none, we work together towards the good of the whole community. We partner with local churches and faith groups as agents of community change. Our ethos commits us to using all of our resources to make this world a place where everyone can find their place and take part.
10. Because of our Ethos we choose to be open, enabling, inclusive and courageous. As words and value choices they inform all areas of our work and our approach to all that we do. These values are reflected in this policy and our workplace culture.
11. Livability aims to treat all staff, people who use our services, volunteers, job applicants, suppliers and other stakeholders, fairly and equally, paying due regard to any barriers they may face.
12. Livability has a duty and responsibility to ensure our staff operate in an environment that embraces and encourages equality and diversity.

13. It is Livability's policy that no person acting on our behalf shall discriminate in any situation against another individual or group, directly, indirectly, because of a protected characteristic.
14. Livability will seek to meet the needs of people with protected characteristics and other groups we seek to serve, to encourage their involvement and participation in our services and in the wider community
15. Livability operates within a Christian ethos. Staff and people that use our services of all faiths and none will be supported to meet their spiritual needs in ways appropriate to them. We do not seek to impose our beliefs on others but respect the unique worth of all individuals to make choices.
16. Livability recognises there are other forms of discrimination not specifically mentioned in this policy, and commits itself to applying general principles of fairness, justice and equality for all.
17. The principles of this policy will be appropriately considered during the development and review of other policies.
18. This policy covers all Livability staff, regardless of position or status.

Responsibilities

19. **The Board of Trustees of Livability** are responsible for ensuring governance of Livability's equality and diversity policy and objectives and ensuring that the impact on equality and diversity is considered in strategy development and review.
20. **The Chief Executive and Directors** are responsible for the effective promotion and implementation of this policy and any other policies and procedures associated with it, and specifically for ensuring that the impact on groups with protected characteristics is actively considered when developing and reviewing organisational strategy and business plans.
21. **The Human Resources Team** are responsible for the effective implementation and regular review of this policy and related staffing policies, taking into account legislative developments or amendments as well as ensuring that advice and support given to managers champions diversity across the charity.
22. **Managers** are responsible for considering the impact of practice and plans on groups with protected characteristics and ensure their staffs are confident about equality and diversity. All Managers should promote, respect and encourage each employee to reach their full potential and deal appropriately with any breach of this policy.

23. **Staff and volunteers** are required to comply with this policy and, in line with the values of the organisation, to act to remove any barriers to equality of opportunity and help create a positive working environment that is open, diverse, friendly and welcoming.

The Policy

24. Livability aims to create and sustain an inclusive environment that provides equality of opportunity for everyone and reflects the diversity of the communities we serve. Livability has a rich and vibrant heritage of creating choices for disabled and disadvantaged people, and believes that everyone should have the freedom to live their life and the chance to use their abilities.
25. We will challenge 'institutional prejudices' where we find historic evidence of unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness or stereotyping in our policies, procedures or practices.

Staff

Recruitment and Selection

26. Livability's Recruitment and selection procedure is based solely on the necessary and justifiable job requirements and the individual's suitability. However, a small number of posts may have an occupational requirement for a practicing Christian. We will keep such requirements under review.
27. Where posts are advertised externally, consideration will be given to the most appropriate medium so that we attract a wide range of potentially suitable applicants who are representative of those that use our services.
28. Selection exercises, including interviews are documented and designed to ensure that discrimination forms no part of the recruitment process.
29. Livability will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments throughout the recruitment and selection process for applicants with disabilities or other protected characteristics.

Training and Development

30. Livability's Performance Review procedure (PRP) ensures that all Livability staff have an individual plan designed to promote their opportunities and career advancement.

31. PRPs are carried out in accordance with a clear criterion in order to ensure that its application is free from discrimination at every stage.

Internal Selection Processes

32. Whenever undertaking processes to select between groups of staff, for instance in secondment, promotion or redundancy scenarios, Livability will apply a fair and consistent selection criteria, free of discrimination and based on objective assessments of competence.

Pay Reviews/Awards

33. Where the financial position allows Livability allocates a percentage of the pay bill towards an annual pay award/review.
34. This award is divided amongst staff fairly but may differ, dependant on any legislative changes or requirements. The award is discrimination free and protected characteristics are not taken into account.

Flexible Working

35. Livability recognises that its staff may also be carers for family members, and where operationally viable, seeks to support staff through flexible working policies and procedures.

Staffing Policies

36. Specifically we will seek to understand and consider the effect of our policies and services on people with the protected characteristics.
37. Staffing policies will be Equality Impact Assessed by a trained member of the HR team in order to ensure that they do not adversely impact staff with protected characteristics as outlined in the Equality Act 2010.

Grievance and Bullying and Harassment Policy (Employees)

38. Any staff member who believes they have been discriminated against, feels they are a victim of bullying and harassment or has witnessed such behaviour, should raise the matter under the relevant policy and procedure with their Line Manager or HR Business Partner.

39. By having clear and well-publicised staff grievance and bullying and harassment procedures, Livability ensures that every opportunity is given to address any area or situation where discrimination is perceived to have arisen.

Disciplinary and Investigation

40. Dependant on findings from an initial fact finding exercise, a formal investigation into the allegation may be instigated.
41. Livability takes a serious view on breaches of this policy. Where an investigation reveals evidence which supports an allegation of discrimination or bullying and harassment; Livability will pursue disciplinary action against the staff member.

Monitoring

42. Livability will endeavour to monitor, in particular age, ethnicity, sexual orientation disability and religion and belief and seek to address any underrepresentation where possible.

People that use Livability's services

43. Through a wide range of disability, education, training and community services, Livability promotes inclusion and wellbeing for all.
44. Livability aims to involve the people that use Livability's services at the heart of everything we do and to support them to increase the opportunities for choice in the way they live their lives.
45. Livability embraces the beliefs of the Equality Act 2010 and this legislation has been pivotal in the creation of several policies related to people that use Livability's services.
46. Through the implementation of the livable communities strategy Livability seeks to embed principles of co-production and increase and improve the involvement of people who use our services in the day to day working, strategic planning and all aspects of the charity's operations. Livability believes in the unique value of each person, and strives for high standards and to create conditions for equality of opportunity for all.
47. Key Workers are expected to demonstrate and proactively promote work that values diversity. All staff recognise diversity by valuing and respecting people who use Livability services.
48. As outlined in the Personal Relationships and Sexuality policy, Livability staff will not impose their personal beliefs and values on people they support.

49. Livability believes that the people that use our services, their families and their carers have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. To ensure a consistent approach to combat bullying and harassment, the charity has a dedicated policy which details how staff should deal with cases of bullying or alleged bullying of a person that the charity supports.
50. Additionally if a person who uses Livability's services or a family member feels that there has been a breach of this policy, then Livability has a complaints procedure that can be used to raise the concern.

Volunteers

51. Volunteers have an important contribution to make to the achievement of Livability's mission and vision. Livability is committed to equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion for all volunteers who engage with the charity.
52. Livability staff and managers will ensure that all volunteers are treated with respect and dignity and will endeavour to create an environment where volunteers feel integrated and engaged.
53. Volunteers who have an issue relating to their volunteering are able to raise it and have it addressed on a fair and consistent basis and should discuss the situation with the local manager or the Volunteering Co-ordinator.

Related Policies and Procedures

54. This policy has no dedicated procedure attached to it due to the number of areas on which it impacts and it is therefore integrated with all key policies and procedures affecting service users, students, applicants, volunteers and employees which are available via Livability's intranet.
 - Code of conduct
 - Admissions
 - Care Practice Policy
 - Bullying and Harassment Policy for service users
 - Key Working Policy
 - Personal Relationships and Sexuality Policy
 - Flexible Working and time off in lieu Policy and Procedure
 - Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure

- Volunteer Policy and Procedure
- Capability Policy and Procedure
- Complaints and Compliments Policy and Procedure
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Grievance Policy and Procedure
- Investigation (Employment) Policy and Procedure
- User Involvement Policy
- Learning and Development Policy and Procedure
- Bullying and Harassment Policy (employees)

55. Please note that this list is not exhaustive, the list in paragraph 54 highlights some of the policies which have been referred to and referenced in this policy.

Further Information

56. If you require any further information about any aspect of his policy please refer to the toolkit or contact your HRBP.

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Consult the Intranet for the latest version of this procedure.

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