



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

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2	Hannah Carruthers	07/03/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General review and updating. • Added roles and responsibilities. • Updated protected characteristics. • Added information on bi-annual Equalities Mainstreaming Report. • Added a glossary of terms.
3	Hannah Carruthers	29/04/2024	Reviewed – no changes.
4	Hannah Carruthers	10/02/2025	Reviewed – no changes.

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1.0 Aims and Objectives

- 1.1 This policy forms the basis of our commitment to help us meet our obligations under the Equalities Act 2010 and to oppose and avoid all forms of discrimination.
- 1.2 The aim of this policy is to provide managers and employees with guidance to ensure that all staff are treated fairly and consistently across LVJB in accordance with equality and diversity principles and that we do not discriminate against employees on any basis.
- 1.3 LVJB must ensure that all our employees are treated fairly, equally and with respect. This includes all aspects of working life including:
 - Pay and benefits and terms and conditions of employment;
 - Dealing with grievances and disciplinary issues, dismissal, redundancy;
 - Leave and flexible working;
 - Selection for employment, promotion, training and other developmental opportunities.

2.0 Scope of the Policy

- 2.1 This policy relates to all employees of LVJB, all customers receiving a service from LVJB, candidates applying for vacancies and all other stakeholders.

3.0 Monitor and Review

- 3.1 This policy has been created and will be maintained in accordance with the LVJB Policy Approval Framework. It has been agreed by CLT (and the Board as required), in consultation with the Trade Union where appropriate.
- 3.2 Human Resources is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy and supporting procedures and will conduct reviews at appropriate intervals.
- 3.3 Anyone who feels they have been unfairly treated or discriminated against should contact the HR Manager.

4.0 Equal Opportunities

- 4.1 LVJB is committed to equality of opportunity for all its employees and the terms of this policy and its supporting procedures and guidance notes are designed to ensure the fair and transparent treatment for all staff irrespective of age, race, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender or contractual status. An Equality Impact Assessment is undertaken on this policy each time it is reviewed and updated.

5.0 Responsibility for this Policy

- 5.1 Human Resources. Any changes to this policy and supporting procedures will be made in consultation with appropriate bodies.
- 5.2 LVJB reserves the right to update HR Policies in line with new or updated Employment Legislation.

6.0 General Principles of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

6.1 We value the diversity and inclusion of all people and communities in Edinburgh and the Lothians and in our workforce. We are committed to meeting the needs of all our residents, employees and stakeholders.

6.2 We strive to create a fair workplace and society where all forms of inequality are reduced or diminished and where everyone can participate and has the same opportunity to fulfil their potential.

6.3 Diversity, inclusion and equality legislation can be defined as below:

Diversity	The collective mixture of differences and similarities that include, for example, individual and organisational characteristics, values, beliefs, experiences, backgrounds, preferences and behaviours.
Inclusion	The achievement of an environment, in our workplace and externally, in which all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully, have equal access to opportunities and resources, and can contribute fully to the success of our organisation.
Equality Act 2010	This is the legal requirements to ensure we don't discriminate against individuals. Not only do we need to meet these requirements but we strive to exceed them.

6.4 We recognise that to achieve our vision we require to provide services that are tailored to people's needs, by treating people differently where necessary to ensure fairness. We also recognise, respect and value the diversity of our workforce as an asset and key resources in enhancing and maximising performance to effectively meet the diverse needs of our service users. We are committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging a culture that values and promotes equality, diversity and inclusion across the organisation.

6.5 Under the Equality Act 2010 we need to have policies and working practices which ensure we don't discriminate against groups with protected characteristics. These characteristics are: age, race, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender or contractual status.

7.0 Our Commitment

7.1 LVJB is committed to ensuring that no employee, job applicant, client or stakeholder receives less favourable treatment on the basis of their of age, race, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender or contractual status, political belief or trade union membership.

7.5 The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is supported by a number of over-riding aims and objectives that LVJB shall endeavour to achieve. These are indicated below:-

- To eliminate discrimination on the grounds of age, race, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender or contractual status.
- To support employees who are representative of all sections of society and for all our colleagues to feel respected.
- To support equal pay and a culture where work of equal value gets paid equally.
- To advance equality of opportunity.
- To create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

- To promote dignity and respect for all our colleagues.
- To encourage diversity and inclusion, recognising individual differences between all colleagues and recognising everyone's contribution.
- To advance equality in the workplace, not just because it's the law but because it improves colleagues' lives.
- To train all employees about their rights and responsibilities under this policy.
- To protect all stakeholders from unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation in their experience of receiving a service from LVJB.
- To support employees and stakeholders by investigating thoroughly any relevant issues raised and addressing appropriately.
- To invest in reasonable adjustment as appropriate.

8.0 Key Areas

8.1 While issues of equality and diversity cover all aspects of the work of LVJB 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.

8.2 Recruitment and Selection

- Ensure job vacancies are accessible to people from all sections of the community by ensuring vacancies are advertised on our website and are accessible in different formats and languages.
- Ensure that job applicants are not discriminated against on the grounds of any protected characteristic.
- Ensure that all employees and job applicants are not discriminated against because they have a responsibility for dependent children or adults.
- Ensure that 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 to attract all suitable applicants.
- Regular review of the Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure to eliminate discrimination and promote inclusion. Ensure that recruiting managers are aware of the policy, understand its requirements and are able to apply it.

8.3 Dignity at Work

- Have policies and procedures in place to eliminate harassment or bullying in the workplace.
- Ensure dignity at work and ensure any abuse is dealt with under the LVJB Disciplinary Procedure.

8.4 Policies and Procedures

- Carry out an Equality Impact Assessment on all policies and practices to ensure any negative impacts towards any group are eliminated or minimised.
- Monitor and ensure that all policies and working practices comply with relevant equalities legislation.
- Ensure consultation with staff representatives.
- Consider any reasonable change to the workplace or to working practices to help colleagues continue in their role or help them return to work.
- Ensure managers have the best advice they can get when it comes to making decisions on adjustments, including advice from Occupational Health.
- The Assessor shall ensure that the allocation of financial resources within the organisation shall as appropriate take into account equality considerations.
- It will be ensured that all staff within LVJB are aware of this policy and understand the need to consider and address equality issues during their daily work.

8.5 Performance, Training and Development

- Ensure that My PaTH includes all staff and is applied fairly and equally.
- Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all colleagues, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- Ensure Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training is available to all employees.
- Encourage all staff who meet the relevant criteria to develop and progress in their career pathways and all decisions in this regard will be based on merit.

8.6 Equal Pay and Benefits

- Eliminate discrimination against any group of staff.
- Ensure that all staff benefits are applied equally and fairly to all staff.

8.7 Services

- Ensure that equality considerations are integrated into all relevant areas of service planning, management, and delivery.
- Improve our awareness and understanding of the needs of different groups through liaison, involvement, dissemination of information and training.

- Ensure that LVJB services are accessible and delivered appropriately and sensitively in order to facilitate equality of treatment.
- Ensure our website is reviewed to ensure the information is presented in an easy-to-understand manner and that where possible different formats and aids are available.
- Ensure that information about services is readily available, easily accessible and offered in appropriate formats and languages.
- 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.
- Ensure that our Complaints Handling Procedure is accessible for everyone.

9.0 Roles and Responsibilities

9.1 Corporate Leadership Team

- 9.1.1 The Corporate Leadership Team has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented and for ensuring that monitoring takes place to check its effectiveness.
- 9.1.2 The Corporate Leadership Team have a role to play in demonstrating active leadership in the area of equality, diversity, and inclusion.

9.2 Managers

- 9.2.1 Managers are responsible for ensuring that all aspects of their work comply with the policy, that they demonstrate equality practices in their leadership and take steps to advance equality in their service areas.
- 9.2.2 Managers are responsible for taking action when equalities issues are brought to their attention, including ensuring that any allegation of harassment or bullying is fully investigated and appropriate action taken if necessary.
- 9.2.3 Managers are responsible for ensuring that their team is able to access appropriate equality training and development opportunities.
- 9.2.4 Managers should ensure due diligence is given to equalities in any decision made regarding a service, policy, criterion, or practice.
- 9.2.5 Managers must ensure knowledge of this policy and The Equality Act 2010.
- 9.2.6 Managers must ensure reasonable adjustments are made for employees as required.

9.3 Employees

- 9.3.1 All employees are responsible for making sure that our actions at work support the duty to advance equality and eliminate discrimination in employment and service delivery, in line with legislation and this policy.

- 9.3.2 Employees should strive to prevent bullying, harassment and victimisation and be aware that we can be held liable for these acts and unlawful discrimination that takes place at work against fellow employees, customers, suppliers, and the public.
- 9.3.3 Employees must not behave, or induce other colleagues to behave, in a way that is discriminatory or offensive.
- 9.3.4 Employees who feel they are being discriminated against or harassed or bullied, or that a colleague is being discriminated against or harassed or bullied, should report it to their line manager.
- 9.3.5 Employees who feel they cannot raise an issue with their line manager should report it to a more senior manager or the HR Manager.
- 9.3.6 Employees must not victimise anyone who has made a complaint or helped an investigation into discrimination or harassment.
- 9.3.7 Employees are required to ensure fairness towards colleagues, service users and other members of the community in carrying out their duties and must not discriminate against any person or group when at work or in the course of their duties in interactions with the public.
- 9.3.8 Employees should help promote the policy in the workplace in all aspects of service delivery and to work towards the elimination of discrimination.

10.0 Equalities Mainstreaming Report

- 10.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty a monitoring report is published on the LVJB website bi-annually.
- 10.2 The [Equalities Mainstreaming Report](#) includes all relevant statistical data collected in the previous two years. We actively encourage our employees to share their personal equality monitoring data so that we can be better informed and take action to eliminate discrimination.
- 10.3 The report is circulated to the Corporate Leadership Team, enabling an opportunity for consideration, suggested improvements and amendments to our policies and practices. The monitoring report is also circulated to the Joint Board's Elected Members.
- 10.4 The report includes information on:
- Workforce profile and salary range by age, disability, gender, ethnicity, religion or beliefs, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, caring responsibilities.
 - The work undertaken to ensure we inclusively engage with our stakeholders.
 - Review of job applications by age, disability, gender, ethnicity, religion or beliefs, sexual orientation and marriage or civil partnership.
 - Training and development of staff on the subject of equality, diversity and inclusion.
 - Equal Pay and Gender Pay Gap.
 - Equalities Outcomes and Promises.
- 10.5 Information gathering and monitoring associated with the Equalities Mainstreaming Report will inform the contents of this policy when it is reviewed and will ensure that issues are identified and addressed.

11.0 Related Policies

- [Complaints Handling Policy](#)
- [Code of Conduct for Employees](#)
- [Grievance Procedure](#)
- [Fair Treatment at Work Policy](#)
- [Disciplinary Procedure](#)

12.0 Local Agreement

- 12.1 This document is a local collective agreement between the Board and the recognised Trade Unions. Every effort will be made by both parties to ensure that this document will be maintained as a local collective agreement and adjusted by agreement to meet changing future needs. In the event of failure to reach agreement, both parties reserve the right to terminate this local agreement by giving four months' notice in writing. In such circumstances the terms of the local agreement will cease to apply to existing and future employees.

Appendix 1 – Glossary of Definitions

Equality	This is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents. It is about understanding that no one should have poorer life chances because of where, what or whom they were born, what they believe, or whether they have a disability. Equality recognises that historically, certain groups of people with particular characteristics eg race, disability, sex and sexuality, have experienced discrimination.
Diversity	This is about recognising, respecting and valuing differences between individuals and groups. It is not about treating everyone in exactly the same way, but treating people as individuals and creating a working culture and practices that harness and appreciate differences.
Protected Characteristic	The Equality Act 2010 refers to the groups who are protected from discrimination because of a characteristic they share ie age, sex, race, sexual orientation etc. This is a protected characteristic.
Discrimination	This is where you treat a person or a group differently or unequally in comparison with other people or groups, based on a characteristic they have or that you think they have.
Unlawful Discrimination	This is discrimination based on the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010. It includes: direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, discrimination arising from a disability and discrimination by perception or by association.
Direct Discrimination	This where someone is treated unfairly or unequally because of their protected characteristic. For example, not employing someone because they are black or because they are disabled.
Indirect Discrimination	This is where organisation's practices, policies or procedures have the unintentional effect of disadvantaging people who share certain protected characteristics.
Discrimination by Perception	This is where someone thinks that you have a characteristic and treats you less favourably. For example, where an employer believes an employee is gay or is of a particular race, and treats them less favourably as a result.
Discrimination by Association	This is where you're treated less favourably because a colleague, associate, family member or friend has a protected characteristic.
Harassment	Unwanted behaviour related to a protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or which creates a hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
Victimisation	This is treating someone unfavourably because they have taken some form of action relating to the Equality Act, eg made a complaint under the Act or supported somebody who is doing so, such as appearing as a witness.
Reasonable Adjustment	This is any change that we can make to the workplace or to working practices that could help prevent a colleague being at a disadvantage. This could be equipment, a change to working hours, a change of working location or anything else that could reasonably be done to help the employee continue in their post or help them return to work.