



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Policy and Procedures

APPENDIX 11

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Greenwich LINK strives to ensure that its Participants and Executive Committee members reflect the wider community.
- 1.2 Greenwich LINK strives for high standards, recognises the need for encouraging diversity and wholeheartedly supports a policy of Equality in all areas of its work and responsibilities.
- 1.3 This policy provides guidance to enable all who work with or for Greenwich LINK to comply with anti-discrimination legislation. The policy will also address anti-discrimination issues involving areas that currently fall outside any legislation.
- 1.4 Failure to follow the procedures in the policy may lead to action being taken.
- 1.5 Greenwich LINK's aims and objectives will be achieved through action planning, effective monitoring and a willingness to tackle problems where they arise. Greenwich LINK is committed to reviewing this policy on an annual basis. Through training, publications, interaction with members and other activities, Greenwich LINK will ensure those it works with know its statements of policy.
- 1.6 Greenwich LINK will regularly review the implementation of its Equality and Diversity Policy and strategy. Where evidence is found of ineffectiveness, immediate remedial action will be taken to ensure implementation.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 Equality ensures that policies, procedures and practice within Greenwich LINK do not discriminate against the people within it. It is about treating people fairly and equally regardless of who they are, their background or their lifestyle.
- 2.2 Diversity ensures that all people are valued as individuals and are able to maximise their potential and contribution to Greenwich LINK and to the community. It recognises that people from different backgrounds can bring fresh ideas and a different approach, which can make the way we work and learn more fun, more creative, more efficient and more innovative.
- 2.3 Direct Discrimination occurs when an individual is dealt with less favourably on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin or sex. Also because of, for example, marital status or caring responsibility; sexual orientation; age; physical, sensory or learning disability; mental health; political or religious beliefs; class; HIV status; employment status; unrelated criminal convictions; union activities.
- 2.4 Indirect Discrimination occurs when a requirement or condition, which although it applies equally to persons of all groups, is such that only a considerably smaller proportion of a particular group can comply with it. Examples: a rule about clothing that disproportionately disadvantages a racial group cannot be justified; requiring applicants to have British qualifications.

- 2.5 Victimization occurs when an individual is treated less favourably because that person has asserted rights under the Sex Discrimination Act, the Race Relations Act or the Disability Discrimination Act or acted as a whistleblower on such activity. People must be able to act against unlawful discrimination without fear of reprisals.
- 2.6 Harassment means repeated, unreciprocated and unwelcome comments, looks, actions, suggestions or physical contact which is found objectionable and offensive and which might threaten an employee or participant or create an intimidating or uncomfortable environment. Harassment can be sexual, racial, directed against people with disabilities or indeed related to any characteristic exhibited by the individual.
- 2.7 Positive Action refers to measures taken to assist participants and members who have been under-represented in specific areas, to reach a level of confidence, knowledge and competence that is comparable with their peers. These measures would normally take the form of additional training.
- 2.8 Greenwich LINK urges staff, volunteers and members to be aware of the less obvious types of discrimination which result from general assumptions and pre-conceptions about the capabilities, interests and characteristics of individuals.

3. Policy Statements

3.1 Equality

- 3.1.1 Greenwich LINK is an Equality organisation. No volunteer, member or member of the community should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin; sex; marital status or caring responsibility; sexual orientation; age; physical, sensory or learning disability; mental health; political or religious beliefs; class; HIV status; employment status; unrelated criminal convictions; union activities.
- 3.1.2 Nor will such persons be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.
- 3.1.3 This principle applies to recruitment, promotion, transfer, training, benefits, facilities, procedures and all terms and conditions of employment.

3.2 Diversity

- 3.2.1 Greenwich LINK will actively encourage diversity to maximise achievement, creativity and good practice and to bring benefit to individuals and communities.
- 3.2.2 Greenwich LINK encourages all people it works with and for, to contribute to an environment in which people feel comfortable expressing how they feel and what they need, knowing they will be treated with respect and that their contribution will be valued.

- 3.2.3 The way we work, train and learn within Greenwich LINK reflects both the Mission and Objectives of Greenwich LINK and the spirit and intentions of legislation that outlaws discrimination and promotes equality and diversity.
- 3.2.4 Greenwich LINK will make reasonable adjustments to working practices, equipment and premises and offer, where appropriate, additional support to Executive Committee Members, Participants and staff to ensure they are able to take a full and active part in Greenwich LINK work.
- 3.2.5 Greenwich LINK will endeavour to deliver services in a way that genuinely recognises the importance of an inclusive society that brings opportunities and access and not barriers to individuals.

4. Aims and Objectives

4.1 The aims and objectives of the Equality and Diversity Policy are:

- 4.1.1 To encourage, promote and celebrate diversity in all our activities and services.
- 4.1.2 To ensure equal access to opportunities to participate.
- 4.1.3 To ensure compliance with legislation on discrimination and equality (Disabled Persons Employment Acts of 1944 and 1958, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and the Race Relations Act 1976, Disability Discrimination Act 1995).
- 4.1.4 To promote equality in other areas not currently covered by legislation.
- 4.1.5 To create environments free from harassment and discrimination.
- 4.1.6 To maximise the use of resources in the best interests of Participants
- 4.1.7 To confront and challenge discrimination where and whenever it arises whether it be between colleagues, or in any other area relating to Greenwich LINK work.
- 4.1.8 To make a willingness to accept and implement this policy to be a necessary qualification for any position in Greenwich LINK.
- 4.1.9 To ensure, through positive action and so far as is practicable, that all Greenwich LINK premises and services are accessible to all people.

5. Policy Implementation: Expectations

- 5.1 Greenwich LINK recognises that passive policies do not provide equality and Greenwich LINK will seek to promote equality and diversity within the following framework of responsibilities.
- 5.2 Responsibility for implementing and developing the policy rests with the Executive Committee. The overall co-ordinating responsibility for management of equality and management of diversity is delegated to the LINK Development Manager. However, Greenwich LINK believes that all who participate in the

Network have an individual responsibility: to accept the Policy and ensure a personal involvement in its application; to co-operate actively to ensure that the environment we desire is a reality.

5.3 Greenwich LINK expects individuals

- 5.3.1 To co-operate with measures introduced by Greenwich LINK to ensure equality of opportunity, and diversity.
- 5.3.2 To respect, include and encourage other Participants regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin; sex; marital status or caring responsibility; sexual orientation; age; physical, sensory or learning disability; mental health; political or religious beliefs; class; HIV status; employment status; unrelated criminal convictions; union activities.
- 5.3.3 To feel sufficiently confident to inform the Executive Committee and the Host organisation if they suspect discrimination is taking place.

5.4 Greenwich LINK expects our Executive Committee and Host Organisation

- 5.4.1 To ensure that grievances are dealt with in a fair and consistent manner and in line with Greenwich LINK Complaints Procedure.
- 5.4.2 To ensure that individuals within their area are aware of their legal responsibilities, and the organisation's Equality and Diversity Policy.
- 5.4.3 To promote actively the benefits of Participant diversity, in all aspects of the organisation.
- 5.4.4 To ensure that the highest standards of equality practice are observed in the delivery of Greenwich LINK services and to undertake training and development opportunities to ensure that competence is maintained.
- 5.4.5 To offer advice and guidance to members and participants about Greenwich LINK's Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedures.
- 5.4.6 To facilitate training and discussion on equality and diversity issues as appropriate.

6. Policy Implementation: Training

- 6.1 In line with the intentions of this policy, Greenwich LINK will not discriminate in the provision of training courses / opportunities wherever possible.
- 6.2 Appropriate training will be provided to enable the Executive Committee, staff and volunteers to perform their jobs effectively. The training offered will take into account the needs of all people.

6.3 Briefing on this policy will form part of the Induction Procedure for Executive Committee Members

7. Enforcement

Greenwich LINK recognises the need for a continuing commitment to genuine equality and diversity within the organisation. The effectiveness of the Policy's aims and objectives can only be judged by how the Policy operates in practice.

7.1 Policy Enforcement

7.1.1 Any member or Participant who feels they have been a victim of unlawful discrimination or unfairly treated in a way contrary to the intention of this Policy should raise the issue through Greenwich LINK Complaints Policy.

7.1.2 Any member who feels he or she has been unfairly treated in a way contrary to the intention of this Policy should make a complaint through the Greenwich LINK Development Manager, who must report any such complaint to the Executive Committee. If the complaint is about the Development Manager, this should be made through the Chair of the Executive Committee.

7.1.3 All incidents of direct discrimination are grave offences and will be dealt with under the Complaints Policy.

7.1.4 Incidents of indirect discrimination will be investigated to determine whether they should be dealt with under the Complaints Policy.

7.1.5 Incidents of victimisation or harassment will be dealt with in accordance with Greenwich LINK's Complaints Policy.

7.1.6 Greenwich LINK will not treat lightly or ignore grievances from members of disadvantaged groups on the assumption that they are over-sensitive about discrimination.

8. Monitoring

8.1 Greenwich LINK views the collection/analysis of data to be vital in informing change and improving performance. Where appropriate, statistics on Greenwich LINK's activities will be collected and analysed in relation to equality and diversity matters. We will review Participant turnover and seek information on reasons for leaving. Local and national data or statistics will be used to benchmark our performance.

8.2 The Executive Committee will review annually issues of equality and diversity relating to Greenwich LINK activities. Volunteer recruitment and selection procedures will be monitored and reviewed annually by the Development Manager who will report to the Chair of the Executive Committee. All aspects of personnel policies and procedures shall be kept under review to ensure that they do not operate against the Equality and Diversity Policy.

- 8.3 In order to determine the impact of this Policy it is important that a monitoring system be developed which will measure commitment, progress and effectiveness. The Equality and Diversity Policy will be monitored and reviewed as follows:
- 8.3.1 The policy will be an agenda item at Greenwich LINK Executive Committee meetings. A Task Group will be established to implement and oversee a Policy review. All relevant parties will be encouraged to submit comments for consideration. The review recommendations will be presented to an Executive Committee meeting for their comments and ratification.
- 8.3.2 Where it appears that there may have been or there is a breach of the Policy, the Chair of the Executive Committee and the Development Manager will investigate the circumstances and action will be taken to counter any proven breach of policy.
- 8.3.3 If it is found that the Policy is excluding or discouraging the development of Participants, the Chair of the Executive Committee and the Development Manager should take positive action to re-adjust the Policy.

Review Form

Equality and Diversity Adviser:

Tel:

Email:

Monitoring Arrangements:

Date of local review(s):

Other information: