

Introduction

Lostwithiel Community Centre recognises the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion. We operate in an increasingly diverse community, and we understand that the people who provide and use our services have diverse characteristics and different experiences, needs and aspirations.

Understanding, valuing and effectively managing these differences can result in greater participation, and help bring about success at an individual, team and organisational level. Lostwithiel Community Centre Manager and staff members are committed to creating an inclusive working environment where individual differences are valued and respected, in which each employee is able to fulfil his/her potential and maximise his/her contribution.

It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of and to apply this policy. Lostwithiel Community Centre Manager and Trustees are fully committed to the policy and will endeavour to ensure its full implementation.

Policy Statement

The Centre Manager has a strong and clear commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

It is our policy that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement in the Community Centre on the basis of their ability, qualifications and aptitude for the work. Everyone has a right to equality of opportunity and to a good and harmonious working environment and atmosphere where they are treated with dignity and respect.

We aim to provide opportunities for all sections of the community and continue to strive to create an inclusive working environment in which difference is recognised and valued. Bringing together people from diverse backgrounds and giving each person the opportunity to contribute their skills and experience will help us to respond more effectively to the needs of the people we serve.

We all want to work in a harmonious workplace where we feel valued, respected and included, irrespective of gender, including gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, race/ethnic origin, religious belief or political opinion, disability, having or not having dependants, sexual orientation and age.

In order to provide a high quality service the Community Centre needs to attract, recruit, develop and retain the very best people at all levels. Our approach is based on three key principles:-

(i) **Equality** – we promote equality of opportunity by seeking to remove barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunity and access for all groups of people.

(ii) **Diversity** – we accept each person as an individual. Our success is built on our ability to embrace diversity – and we believe that everyone should feel valued for their contributions. By working together we will deliver the best possible service for our staff and trustees.

(iii) **Inclusion** – we create a working culture where differences are not merely accepted, but valued; where everyone has the opportunity to develop in a way that is consistent with, and adheres to, Commission values of impartiality, honesty, integrity and objectivity. Our aim is to be an organisation where people feel involved, respected and connected to our success.

These principles of equality, diversity and inclusion are considered when community centre manager policies are being developed and reviewed.

Policy Application

Lostwithiel community centre is committed to a policy of promoting equality of opportunity, providing an inclusive workplace and eliminating any unfair treatment or unlawful discrimination. This applies to all employment policies and practices including those relating to:

Recruitment and selection, including promotion career progression;
Terms and conditions of employment; Working environment;
Training and development; and Redundancy .

Equal treatment involves much more than simply treating everyone alike; it requires recognition that some groups and individuals have particular and specific requirements that need to be met if they are to enjoy equal access to the opportunities available at the community centre.

Embracing diversity in the workplace means creating an environment in which the contributions of all staff can be valued and supported. We aim to celebrate and value the differences in people, recognising that people come from a wide variety of backgrounds and can be different from one another in many ways. These can include differences that are highlighted in current equality legislation such as race, religion and sex but also include things like individual's personality, personal interests and lifestyle choices.

People with different backgrounds, skills, attitudes and experiences bring fresh ideas and perceptions. As a diverse centre we seek to encourage and harness these differences to make our services relevant and accessible.

Inclusion is a state of being valued, respected and supported. It is about focusing on the needs of every individual and ensuring the right conditions are in place for each person to achieve his or her full potential. For the Community Centre this means designing and operating flexible services, practices and procedures that take appropriate account of the needs of employees, customers.

Our goal is to ensure that these commitments, reinforced by our values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality, are embedded in our day-to-day working practices with all our colleagues, customers and Trustees .

A range of policies and procedures are in place to ensure that we have a workforce that reflects the community it serves and that staff are valued and respected.

Examples include:

(i) Dignity at Work – The Community centre aims to provide a working environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, free from any form of inappropriate behaviour and one in which all employees can give of their best.

The Community Centre 'Dignity at Work' Policy is about creating and sustaining a productive working environment for all staff, where discrimination or harassment does not occur and is known to be unacceptable. This policy provides information on what to do should you feel your dignity at work has been affected, and also if you have been accused of offensive behaviour. The policy also highlights the sources of information and assistance which are available for dealing with inappropriate behaviour. There are separate informal and formal procedures for resolving complaints under this policy. (ii) Implementing reasonable adjustments in the workplace –in conjunction with the member of staff, manager, and trustees ,we will endeavour to identify and meet different work-related needs such as providing physical adaptations or equipment and reviewing working arrangements for people with disabilities. (iii) 'Work-life Balance' policies - including a range of flexible/alternative working patterns, breaks. While every effort will be made to accommodate requests for flexible/alternative working arrangements, consideration must also be given to business need and maintaining service delivery; (iv) Diversity awareness training – Training is arranged on a regular basis for Community staff. Training reminds staff about important legislation and policies around equality and diversity and being sensitive to cultural and religious needs of staff;

Recruitment and selection, including promotion – the principles of equality and diversity are central to making sure that the Community Centre attracts the best candidates for our posts. We must ensure that all methods used to attract and select candidates are justifiable and free from bias and/or prejudice. We will require all staff involved in recruitment to be trained in applying equality and diversity principles in the recruitment process;

Monitoring – We will monitor our recruitment process, from application to employment, to identify barriers.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Community Centre works with Equality and Good Relations service providers to develop and review policies; it liaises with statutory bodies, and benchmarks with other organisations to ensure that the Community Centre adhere to the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion.

Operational responsibility for implementing the policy and procedures lies with the Centre manager . All staff and management have a duty to implement this policy, ensuring that they treat staff fairly and objectively in all areas including allocation of duties, performance appraisal, temporary promotion, training and development and the handling of grievances and complaints.

Every person working for the Community Centre has a personal responsibility for implementing and promoting the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion in his/her day-to-day dealings with everyone – including job applicants, work colleagues, members of the public, customers and trustees. Inappropriate behaviour is not acceptable.

Behaviours, actions or words that breach policy will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in line with the Community centre disciplinary policy. It is essential that:

⌚ everyone is aware of the policy, understands what it means and puts it into practice; ⌚ our employment policies and practices avoid any kind of unfair treatment or unlawful discrimination; ⌚ individual differences are valued and respected.

Monitoring

Monitoring equality and diversity in the workforce enables the Community centre to examine how our employment policies and processes are working and to identify areas where these appear to be impacting disproportionately on certain groups of staff.

It is also necessary to meet legislative requirements. Under fair employment legislation, we have a legal duty to monitor the community background and gender composition of their workforce and of those applying to fill vacancies. Monitoring can be done at a variety of different points in the employment cycle including recruitment, promotion, training, staff surveys, performance management, grievances and dismissals.

Equality and diversity 2010 act and Disability Discrimination Act 1995 ensures employments currently monitors the workforce and applicants for community centre jobs in terms of:-

⌚ disability; ⌚ race; ⌚ age; ⌚ men and women generally; ⌚ sexual orientation; ⌚ marital; and ⌚ dependant status.

The purpose of collecting this information is to look for differences between groups, identify trends over periods of time, to investigate the reasons for these differences and to put appropriate actions in place. Understanding the composition of the workforce enables the Community centre to highlight differences between groups in terms of satisfaction, engagement and progression. This in turn enables the centre to identify tackle and prevent issues that would otherwise undermine employee engagement and productivity.

Equality and diversity monitoring can help to:

⌚ recruit and retain the best - from the widest talent pool; ⌚ create awareness – signalling the Community centre commitment to creating a more inclusive work environment; ⌚ improve productivity – valuing and supporting the diversity of people’s backgrounds and lifestyles is important in making the most of the contribution that they can bring to the organisation’s performance;

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy