

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

The Company is fully committed to providing equal opportunities for all employees, workers and job applicants. The Company aims to create a culture that encourages and values diversity and that appoints, rewards and promotes staff based on merit.

It is unlawful to discriminate against any employee, worker or job applicant because of any “protected characteristic”, namely age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

The aim of the policy is to ensure no job applicant or employee is discriminated against either directly or indirectly on any unlawful grounds.

The Company has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented in accordance with the appropriate statutory requirements and full account will be taken of all available guidance and in particular any relevant Codes of Practice.

The Company will ensure that the policy is circulated to any agencies responsible for its recruitment and a copy of the policy will be made available for all employees and made known to all applicants for employment.

The policy will be communicated to all private contractors reminding them of their responsibilities towards the equality of opportunity.

The Company will maintain a neutral working environment in which no worker feels under threat or intimidated.

Discrimination is unacceptable and breaches of the policy will lead to disciplinary proceedings and, if appropriate, disciplinary action.

Language

It is important to understand the different language that is used to describe identity, as this can be a difficult and sensitive area, and is continually evolving. For example:

- Some people have a gender identity that does not match the gender they were assigned at birth. This is known as being ‘transgender’ or ‘trans’, and commonly includes those within the protected characteristic of gender reassignment contained within Equality legislation as well as those with nonbinary identities;
- ‘Non-binary’ is used to describe someone who does not identify as male or female. They may identify as neither man or woman, both man and woman, fluid between the two or outside of that binary entirely;

- ‘Transitioning’ or ‘gender reassignment’ is a process by which a person aligns their life and physical identity to match their gender identity. It is the process of moving towards a permanent, full time adaptation of a gender identity across all aspects of life, including work. Each person’s transition will be unique. For some, it will involve medical intervention, such as hormone therapy and surgeries, but not all trans people want or are able to have this;
- ‘Cisgender’ refers to where someone’s gender identity aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth.

The Company recognises that using language that is outdated or which the individual considers inappropriate can cause offence.

The Company recognises that sexual orientation is a separate issue to gender identity. Gender does not imply any particular sexual orientation; a transgender person may be heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual or asexual. Employees should not assume that a transgender colleague has any particular sexual orientation. After transition, a person’s sexual orientation may stay the same or may change.

Individuals will self-identify. How they choose to describe themselves should be respected.

Names and pronouns

Employees will be addressed by the name and pronouns that correspond to their gender identity and that which they have requested to be used at all times.

Intentionally and/or persistently mis-gendering or using colleagues’ previous names may amount to harassment or bullying and will not be tolerated. Breaches of this policy will be treated in a serious manner and dealt with under the Company’s disciplinary procedure.

Recruitment, selection and career development

The Company will endeavour, through appropriate training, to ensure that employees making selection and recruitment decisions will not discriminate, whether consciously or unconsciously, in making these decisions.

Promotion and career development will be made on merit. If you have any specific needs, the Company will accommodate and support you as far as practicable. All decisions relating to this will be made within the overall framework and principles of this policy.

Job descriptions, where used, will be in line with this equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Job requirements will be reflected accurately in any person specifications. The Company will adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of vacancies.

The Company will not confine its recruitment to areas or social media sources that provide only, or mainly, applicants of a particular group.

All applicants who apply for jobs with the Company will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job.

All employees involved in the recruitment process will periodically review their selection criteria to ensure that they are related to the job requirements and do not unlawfully discriminate.

Short listing and interviewing will be carried out by more than one person where possible.

Interview questions will be related to the requirements of the job and will not be of a discriminatory nature.

The Company will not reject any applicant because they are unable to complete an application form unassisted unless personal completion of the form is a valid test of the standard of English required for the safe and effective performance of the job.

Training and promotion

All appropriate staff will receive training in the application of this policy to ensure that they are aware of its contents and provisions.

All training and promotion will be in line with this policy.

Monitoring

The Company will maintain and review the employment records of all employees in order to monitor the progress of this policy.

Monitoring may involve:

- the collection and classification of information regarding the sex, age, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, current working pattern, flexible working arrangements, caring responsibilities and marital status for all employees, such information which may be used to examine the distribution of employees and the success rate of the applicants, and
- recording recruitment, training and promotional records of all employees, the decisions reached and the reason for those decisions.

The results of any monitoring procedure will be reviewed at regular intervals to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy. Consideration will be given, if necessary, to adjusting this policy to afford greater equality of opportunities to all applicants and employees.

Signed:  Date: 01/03/24