

Rother Fed

Rotherham Federation of Tenants and Residents

Why do we need an Equal Opportunities Policy?

- **To comply with the law:**

The main Acts in Great Britain on discrimination are:

The Equal Pay Act 1970 (as amended)

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (as amended)

The Sex Discrimination Act (Gender Reassignment Regulations) 1999

The Race Relations Act 1976

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995

Employee Rights Act 1999

Asylum and Immigration Act 1996

Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidated) Act 1992

- **To redress existing discrimination through positive action:**

This means attempting to iron out previous inequalities resulting in past discrimination. It does not however, mean giving certain groups *preferential* treatment.

- **To achieve the full potential of staff and member's delegates:**

We wish to make full use of the skills and experience of all people and to celebrate the fact that they can bring a different outlook to Rother Fed.

- **To encourage good management:**

Our Equal Opportunities policy encourages good personnel and work practices for staff and volunteers.

- **To provide good customer care and be representative:**

When we commit to responding to the needs of all members of the community, we give good customer care.

- **To apply for funding:**

Many funding bodies, including local authorities, expect organisations they fund to comply with equal opportunities and to have their own policy. Our policy has been produced to both the 2010 Rotherham Ltd and the Council's equal opportunities standard.

Equal Opportunities Policy

Statement of Intent

Rother Fed wholeheartedly supports the principle of equal opportunities in all aspects of its work, and will ensure its legal obligations under the discrimination acts are upheld. However, Rother Fed recognises that in our society power is not held equally and that groups and individuals have been and continues to be discriminated against on many grounds.

Therefore Rother Fed is committed to the prevention of all forms of discrimination and will not tolerate any direct or indirect discrimination on the grounds of: race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, social origin, marital status, caring responsibilities, offending background, faith, belief or political opinion.

Rother Fed will guard against institutional racism & discrimination by ensuring its policies, procedures and services do not have an unfair detrimental impact on a specific group; and that its policies, procedures and services reflect the needs of all groups, not simply the majority group, so far as is reasonably practical.

Rother Fed will ensure that employees and volunteers are not treated less favourably because he or she has brought proceedings, given evidence at proceedings, or made allegations about discrimination.

Discrimination by an employee will be considered to be misconduct which may lead to dismissal.

Equal Opportunities Policy Framework

This policy is supplemented by the following policies and procedures, which collectively form the Equal Opportunities Framework.

- Bullying and Harassment Policy and procedures
- Staff Development Policy and procedures
- Recruitment Policy and procedures
- Employment Policy and procedures
- Complaints and Comments procedures

Monitoring

Monitoring is essential in determining the effectiveness of the Equal Opportunities Policy. Therefore Rother Fed will ensure sufficient time and

resources are given to undertake monitoring activities. The purpose of monitoring is to:

- Determine the effectiveness of the Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Highlight areas of good practice which can be shared throughout the organisation and its members.
- Highlight areas for improvement and remedial action
- Ensure equal access to Rother Fed services as appropriate (recognising some services/projects may be targeted at specific groups or geographical locations).
- Ensure equal opportunities in recruitment and selection leading to a diverse and representative workforce.
- Ensure equal opportunities for all Rother Fed staff in their employment.

Staff are reassured that any personal information will be collected in line with the Data Protection Act and will be used for statistical purposes.

Remedies under the Policy

Any employee who believes that he or she is being treated less favourably on the grounds of race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, social origin, marital status, caring responsibilities, offending background, religious belief or political opinion, is encouraged to raise the matter through the **Grievance Procedure**.

If an employee raises a grievance on what they consider to be discrimination, Rother Fed will ensure they are not treated less favourably as a result or suffer disciplinary action.

Discrimination by an employee will be considered as misconduct which may lead to dismissal.

Responsibilities:

The Executive Committee Members

The Executive Committee (directors of the board) has a legal obligation to ensure that employees work in an environment free from discrimination. This will be achieved by:

- (a) Ensuring Policies and Procedures adopted by Rother Fed on Equal Opportunities are in compliance with statutory legal requirements.
- (b) Reviewing and monitoring the effectiveness of the Equal Opportunities Policy through appropriate and adequate reporting mechanisms.
- (c) Ensuring sufficient resources are available to provide equal opportunity for all staff.

- (d) Authorising the Manager to monitor, implement and co-ordinate activity to promote equal opportunities.
- (e) Stimulating joint consultation between the Executive Committee and Rother Fed employees on Equal Opportunity issues.

Manager

The Rother Fed Manager will make the necessary arrangements for implementing the Equal Opportunities Policy and Procedures. The Manager should also ensure:

- a) All new employees receive as part of their induction, an overview of the equal opportunities policy and associated procedures, and their responsibilities under it.
- b) All employees are fully aware of the equal opportunities policy and procedures, and their responsibilities under it, and are kept up to date.
- c) Relevant changes to Equal Opportunities legislation is reported to the Executive Committee.
- d) Reports of discrimination are investigated, sufficiently and fairly following the procedures, and maintaining confidentiality.

All Rother Fed employees and volunteers (applicable to the Executive Committee members, delegates and all staff)

In carrying out their duties, and whilst on Rother Fed and members' premises, Rother Fed employees and volunteers have a responsibility to:

- a) Adhere to Rother Fed's Equal Opportunity Policy and procedures.
- b) Give due regard to the needs, rights and beliefs of others.
- c) Report any suspected breaches of this policy to Rother Fed management.
- d) Co-operate with management when reports of discrimination require investigation.
- e) Report any shortcomings in Equal Opportunities practice and procedures to Rother Fed management.
- f) Inform their line manager if they perceive a need for Equal Opportunities training.
- g) Attend Equal Opportunities training where required.
- h) Co-operate with Management where work practices need to be changed to improve equal opportunities.
- i) Avoid organising meetings and events during religious festivals. Rother Fed will provide a calendar of religious festivals for this purpose.

(Note: At a tribunal, individual employees may be liable to pay compensation if they have discriminated against anyone or group, not just the organisation).

Rother Fed Manager has additional responsibility to: (also applicable to the Executive Committee)

- a) Comply with this policy, paying particular attention to equal opportunities in recruitment, employment, and service/project delivery.
- b) Ensure their staff understand and value diversity and are equipped with the skills and knowledge to respond positively to the needs of all groups.
- c) Ensure they do not, either deliberately or unwittingly, instruct, induce or apply pressure on their staff to discriminate.
- d) Monitor their service/project to ensure equal opportunities.

Date Policy adopted: July 2006

Date for review: April 2008

Signed:
Chair Executive Committee

Policy No: pol01