



## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

### **Policy Statement for the Steering Committee**

At Rhondda LGBT Support Network, we support and respect differences and encourages the growth of all members. We are committed to promoting equal opportunities and supporting equality and diversity within the LGBT Community in Rhondda Cynon Taff.

### **Statement of Intent**

The Network aims to create a culture that respects and values each others' differences, that promotes dignity, equality and diversity, and that encourages individuals to develop and maximise their true potential.

We aim to remove any barriers, bias or discrimination that prevent individuals or groups from realising their potential and contributing fully to our organisation's performance and to develop an organisational culture that positively values diversity.

We are committed wherever practicable, to achieving and maintaining membership that broadly reflects the LGBT community in Rhondda Cynon Taff.

Every possible step will be taken to ensure that individuals are treated fairly in all aspects of their involvement with the Network.

Rhondda LGBT Support Network is committed to creating and maintaining a supporting environment where no-one receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, religion, or other lifestyle choices. In addition, the Network supports and recognises the following documents:

<i>Race Relations Act 1976, 2000 Amendment and 2003 Amendment Regulations</i>
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- It's unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds of race, colour, nationality – including citizenship – or ethnic origins in employment, education, housing and the provision of goods, facilities and services.
- The 2000 Amendment placed enforceable duties on public authorities to promote equality.
- The penalties for race discrimination can be high since there is no limit on compensation and there is no length of service requirement in bringing a claim.

*Sex Discrimination Act 1975, 1986 Amendment, Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005 and Gender Equality Duty 2007*

- It's unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds of sex or marital status in employment, education, housing and the provision of goods, facilities and services.
- Less favourable treatment of women on the grounds of pregnancy or maternity leave is also defined as a form of discrimination.
- Sex based harassment - i.e. harassment based purely on the victim's sex; harassment of a sexual nature - i.e. physical activity of a sexual nature or non-physical activity of a sexual nature such as offensive jokes or vulgar comments; sexual harassment on grounds of gender reassignment status; and harassment on grounds of rejection of harassment or submission to harassment are expressly prohibited.
- The penalties for sex discrimination can be high since there is no limit on compensation and there is no length of service requirement in bringing a claim.
- The Gender Equality Duty requires public authorities to promote gender equality.

*Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003, Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007*

- It's unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds of their sexual orientation, whether lesbian, gay, heterosexual or bisexual in employment or vocational training.
- Discrimination relating to perceived sexual orientation is also unlawful.
- The penalties for sexual orientation discrimination can be high since there is no limit on compensation and there is no length of service requirement in bringing a claim.
- The Equality Act also made it unlawful to discriminate in the provision of goods, facilities and services on the grounds of sexual orientation.

*Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations and Gender Recognition Act 2004*

- It's unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds that they have undergone, are undergoing or intend to undergo gender reassignment in employment and vocational training.

- A person who has undergone gender reassignment also has the right not to be discriminated against as a person of their acquired gender.

#### *Civil Partnership Act 2004*

- Same sex partnerships are recognised and those who undergo the ceremony have the same rights as married couples.

#### *Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005 and the Disability Equality Duty 2006*

- It's unlawful for any employer or service provider, regardless of size, to discriminate against someone on the grounds of their disability.
- Employers and service providers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to enable a disabled person to work or use a service.
- The penalties for disability discrimination can be high since there is no limit on compensation and there is no length of service requirement in bringing a claim.
- A disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Since December 2005, this also included people with cancer, HIV and multiple sclerosis.
- The Disability Equality Duty requires public authorities to promote disability equality.

#### *Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974*

- Ex-offenders have certain employment rights if their convictions become 'spent', including not having to declare spent convictions and protecting them against dismissal or exclusion (with certain exceptions such as for those working with children).

## **Implementation of policy**

The Steering group is responsible for the policy's day-to-day implementation. It is the responsibility of the steering group to monitor effectiveness, and to review and develop the policy where necessary. Monitoring and review will take place annually.

Each employee, volunteer, consultant, trainer, facilitator or Steering group member is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. Breaches of the Equal Opportunities Policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to membership to the Network being terminated, appropriate action against a member of the Steering group, termination of contracts for services of consultants or trainers, or withdrawal of volunteer agreements.

Appropriate training and guidance will be provided to develop equality and diversity. Adequate resources will be made available to fulfil the aims of this policy. The policy will be widely promoted, and copies will be freely available to all members of the network.

Date policy was accepted by Steering committee \_\_\_\_\_

Signed chair \_\_\_\_\_