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Signature:	Signed by:	Position:	Date:
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1. Introduction

1.1. Background and Legal Framework

The Wansbeck Valley Foodbank supports equality of opportunity and the promotion and celebration of diversity. The Foodbank is committed to treating people no less favourably than others on any unlawful grounds in the delivery of services or employment because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins) sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership. These are known as “protected characteristics”.

1.2. Types of Unlawful Discrimination

Direct discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic

Indirect Discrimination is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate business aim

Harassment is where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage, civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Associative discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic

Perceptive discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that he/she has a particular protected characteristic when he/she does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic. Third Party Harassment occurs where an employee, volunteer or client is

harassed and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity), by third parties, such as clients or customers. For an organisation to be liable;

- The harassment must have occurred on at least two previous occasions (although not necessarily by the same harasser or suffering the same type of harassment);
- It must be aware that the previous harassment has taken place and
- It must have failed to take reasonable steps to prevent harassment from happening again

Victimisation occurs where an employee, volunteer or client is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied training opportunity or a promotion because he/she has made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because he or she is suspected of doing so. However, an employee or volunteer is not protected from victimisation if he or she acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint.

The Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedure are in accordance with the following relevant Employment legislation;

- The Equality Act (2010)
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974)
- Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)
- Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act (1993)
- Criminal Justice and Public Disorder Act (1995)
- Protection from Harassment Act (1997)
- Crime and Disorder Act (1998)
- Human Rights Act (1998)
- Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999
- Employment Relations Act (1999)
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999)

1.3. Purpose

The Wansbeck Valley Foodbank is committed to the promotion of equality and diversity for all clients, volunteers and employees of the Foodbank. We aim to ensure that the environment is one where all individuals are treated with courtesy and respect. We aim to create and maintain the conditions whereby clients, volunteers and staff are treated solely on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential. This policy sets out the Foodbank's approach to equal opportunities and diversity and the arrangements for dealing with complaints of less favourable treatment. Its purpose is to establish a

framework and minimum standards for embedding equality and diversity principles and best practice across the Foodbank

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, agency workers, collaborative partners and contractors working for or on behalf of the Foodbank. The Foodbank will ensure that any partners we work with meet or are working towards the relevant legislation.

3. Policy Statement

The Foodbank is committed to equal opportunities and diversity as a fundamental part of the way it undertakes professional business practice. This is to ensure that all individual's characteristics are recognised, accepted, and valued and that each person is able to contribute fully to create an environment in which they can give their best. It is The Foodbank's policy that it or those working on behalf of the Foodbank will not discriminate on ground of any "protected characteristic" including but not limited to: race, colour, nationality, national or ethnic origins, gender, gender assignment status, age, marital/civil partnership status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, disability and religion/beliefs. This enables everyone to realise their full potential, respect work colleagues, visitors and clients and work in harmony within the values of the Foodbank.

4. Roles & Responsibilities

The Trustees and Project Manager have overall responsibility for ensuring the Foodbank complies with all relevant legislation relating to Equality.

4.1. Staff, Volunteers and Clients

Clients, volunteers and staff at all levels have responsibilities for promoting equality and diversity and treating others with dignity and respect. Eliminating discrimination depends on everyone's collaboration. Employees and Clients are required to:

- Refrain from harassing, abusing or intimidating others on any grounds including any protected characteristic
- Cooperate with measures introduced by the Foodbank to make sure there is equality of opportunity and non-discrimination
- Refrain from victimizing individuals on grounds that they have made complaints or provided information about discrimination or harassment
- Familiarise themselves and be aware of applicable policies such as Grievance policy and Disciplinary policy.

5. Equal Opportunities in Employment

The Foodbank will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy. Person

and job specifications will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability. Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary in respect of meeting a genuine business need.

If an individual has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out day to day activities, the Foodbank will give consideration to whether it would be reasonable to make any adjustments to premises, or work arrangements and will make all such reasonable adjustments.

The Foodbank will consider any possible indirectly discriminatory effect of its standard working practices, including the number of hours to be worked, the times at which these are to be worked and the place at which work is to be done when considering requests for variations to these standard working practices and will refuse such requests only if the Foodbank considers it has good business reasons, unrelated to any protected characteristic, for doing so. The Foodbank will comply with its obligations in relation to statutory request for contract variations. The Foodbank will also seek to make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices where possible in respect of disabled staff and volunteers.

The Foodbank will be proactive in promoting and maintaining a conducive learning environment for all and in raising awareness among all staff, volunteers and clients of what is expected of them whilst they work at the Foodbank

The Foodbank cannot unlawfully discriminate in the selection of employees and volunteers for recruitment or promotion, but the Foodbank may use appropriate lawful methods, including lawful positive action, to address the under-representation of any group that The Foodbank identifies as being under-represented in particular types of job.

6. Grievances

If a member of staff or a volunteer considers that they may have been unlawfully discriminated against, they may use the Foodbank's grievance procedure to make a complaint. The Foodbank will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievances that it upholds. The member of staff or volunteer will not be penalized for raising a grievance, even if their grievance is not upheld, unless their complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith.

7. Clients, suppliers, and other people not employed by the Foodbank

The Foodbank will not discriminate unlawfully against volunteers, or customers using or seeking to use goods, facilities or services provided by the Foodbank. Staff and volunteers should report any bullying or harassment by volunteers, clients, suppliers, visitors, or others to their manager who will take appropriate action.

8. Training

The Foodbank will provide training to all existing and new employees and volunteers to help them understand their rights and responsibilities and what they can do to help create a working environment free of bullying and harassment.

The Foodbank will provide training in equality and diversity to managers and others likely to be involved in recruitment or other decision making where equal opportunities issues are likely to arise. The Foodbank will provide additional training to managers to enable them to deal more effectively with complaints of bullying and harassment.

9. Equality Analysis

Any development or change to any existing or proposed policy, procedure, strategy or service must be subject to a systematically and thorough Equality Analysis. Each policy, procedure, strategy or service should be analysed to ensure;

- the effects on any protected group are fully understood and minimised;
- they do not actually or potentially, directly or indirectly, discriminate against any protected group.

10. Monitoring Compliance

This policy will be monitored periodically by the Foodbank to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law. In particular the Foodbank will monitor staff, volunteers and job applicants as listed in the table below and will review its equality and diversity policy in accordance with the results shown by the monitoring. If changes are required, the Foodbank will implement them. Information provided by job applicants and employees for monitoring purposes will be used only for these purposes and will be dealt with in accordance with the. General Data Protection Regulations Act 2018

Standard/Process/Issue	Monitoring & Audit			
	Method	By	Reported to	Frequency
Ethnic and gender composition of existing workforce and number of people with disabilities	Numbers of staff and volunteers broken down by ethnicity, gender, and disability	Project Manager	Board of Trustees	Annually
Ethnic and gender composition of applicants for jobs (including promotion) and number of people with disabilities	Number of applicants broken down by ethnicity, gender and disability.	Project Manager	Board of Trustees	Annually
Trainin	Check Training Records for completeness, highlighting missed training and/or poor record keeping	Project Manager	Board of Trustees	Annually

