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EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority is committed to eliminating discrimination, victimisation and harassment; advancing fairness and equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between different people and groups; and promoting diversity and inclusion in everything that we do. This applies both to the Authority's role as an employer, and to the provision of public services by the Authority.
- 1.2 The Authority understands that equality, diversity and inclusion are linked but distinct issues that may need approaching in different ways.
- “Equality” means that everybody has the same opportunities and is treated with respect.
- “Diversity” means valuing individuals for the different perspectives they have to offer.
- “Inclusion” means that everybody has a voice and a means to participate, which may involve making reasonable adjustments to our usual processes.
- 1.3 The Authority's vision for the future includes the Yorkshire Dales National Park being a friendly, open and welcoming place, with outstanding opportunities to enjoy its special qualities. This commitment extends to all people, including in particular those with the characteristics recognised by legislation, which relate to age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage/civil partnership; pregnancy/maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; or sexual orientation.
- 1.4 This policy is important in helping to deliver the core values of the Authority, which include:
- Integrity: Our relationships with the public, partners and each other are built on honesty, equality, impartiality and consistency. We welcome and respect diversity and demonstrate equality in working relationships.
 - Involvement: We are open and approachable, and are proactive in encouraging wider and diverse participation in achieving our statutory purposes.
 - Valuing People: We value the people who work for us and will ensure that they are equipped and empowered to provide professional services to the public.
 - Commitment: We will do what we say we will do.

2. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN SERVICE DELIVERY

- 2.1 The Authority is committed to equality of opportunity in the provision of services, and aims to ensure that services are accessible and appropriate to the differing needs of all people, whilst paying due regard to the purposes of the Authority and the resources available.
- 2.2 The Authority will not discriminate unlawfully against anyone using or seeking to use its services, but will seek to reduce disadvantage and to meet the needs of people, so as to help them to benefit in mind, body and spirit from what the National Park has to offer. The Authority will comply with the Equality Act 2010, but aspires to go beyond that in working to promote opportunities for all the public to understand and enjoy the special qualities of the National Park.

3. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN EMPLOYMENT

- 3.1 Equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- 3.2 All employees, whether part-time, full-time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the Authority.

4. OUR COMMITMENTS:

- To welcome all ideas, comments, and suggestions which are aimed at helping us to deliver policies and services which are accessible to all, and meet different people's needs.
- To build the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion into our policies, decision making and processes. We welcome comments and suggestions to help us to do this, and will seek to base our decisions on relevant evidence; where necessary we will obtain this through consultation and engagement.
- To carry out equality impact assessments (EIAs) of proposed new policies, as part of reviewing existing policies, and in relation to key decisions (eg changes in resource allocation). EIAs will be carried out with rigour and with an open mind, as part of the decision making process, and not as an add-on at the end of it.
- To adopt and publish targets relevant to equality, diversity and inclusion, and to publish our performance in meeting them. To ensure that they are not seen as a sideline or a special interest, this will be done through our mainstream corporate planning processes.
- To require contractors to take all reasonable steps to meet their obligations under the Equality Act 2010, and prohibit them from unlawfully discriminating.
- To create an environment which is diverse and inclusive, in which individual differences and the contributions of all people, including employees, volunteers and stakeholders are recognised and valued.
- As an employer, to provide a working environment that promotes dignity and respect for all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated; training, development and progression opportunities will be available to all employees; and employment practices and procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure fairness.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

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| <p>ALL EMPLOYEES</p> | <p>All employees are responsible for ensuring that this policy is followed as directed in the Employee Code of Conduct. They are also responsible for taking advantage of opportunities to improve their awareness of the barriers to equality, diversity and inclusion in service provision and employment, for working towards the elimination of these barriers and for performing their duties in accordance with the equality principles and standards that underpin the Authority's activities. All employees must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be open to new ways of implementing good practice on equality, diversity and inclusion. • Report any suspected discriminatory acts or practices (usually direct to their line manager, but under the Confidential Reporting Policy if necessary). • Not practice or encourage unlawful discrimination, nor tolerate it if witnessed. • Not victimise anyone as a result of them having reported or provided evidence of discrimination. • Not make unwelcome comments, gestures or actions based on personal characteristics such as age, ethnicity, gender, sexuality or disability. |
| <p>MANAGERS</p> | <p>All managers are responsible for implementing equality, diversity and inclusion in service provision and employment and for implementing, monitoring and promoting this policy.</p> |
| <p>SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM</p> | <p>The Senior Management Team (SMT) is responsible for providing leadership in the implementation of this policy and for ensuring that corporate and service planning and performance management systems incorporate specific equality objectives/considerations, in terms of service delivery and employment.</p> <p>It is responsible for ensuring that employees are adequately informed, trained and supported so that their duties are carried out in accordance with this policy.</p> |
| <p>MEMBERS</p> | <p>The principles in this policy apply to Members and by adhering to this policy, Members will also be complying with their general obligations under the Members Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Members have overall responsibility for the direction and scrutiny of this policy and will ensure that the principles of fairness and equality underpin their decision making process. Members, like Officers, will be provided with adequate training to ensure currency with equality issues.</p> |
| <p>TRADE UNIONS</p> | <p>The Authority believes that Trade Unions are key partners in promoting and helping to ensure adherence to this Policy and that the involvement, support and participation of employees and their Trade Unions is essential.</p> <p>UNISON is the trade union recognised by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.</p> |

6. PUTTING COMMITMENTS INTO PRACTICE

- 6.1 The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (EDIWG) is a cross-Authority working group which meets twice yearly to discuss and progress action on equality, diversity and inclusion issues. The Member Champion for Corporate Management is a member of the EDIWG. The EDIWG will ensure that the Authority meets its obligation to publish information about its compliance with the public sector Equality Duty, as well as publishing specific targets, and performance in relation to them. The Group is chaired by the Authority's Monitoring Officer, who will ensure that the Senior Management Team receive an annual progress report in relation to performance on equality, diversity and inclusion issues.
- 6.2 The role of EDIWG is to review and develop Authority policies and procedures and make recommendations to SMT to ensure that the Authority provides a fair and equally accessible service to all. It is responsible for:
- Providing a focus for equality, diversity and inclusion issues within the Authority and raising awareness amongst Officers and Members;
 - Challenging existing cultures and traditions, where required in connection with the above;
 - Having oversight of the services and practices operated by the Authority in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion awareness, and best practice elsewhere;
 - Considering relevant changes in legislation, and recommending changes to policies accordingly.

7. RIGHTING WRONGS

- 7.1 No organisation gets everything right all the time. We recognise that mistakes can be made, often from lack of thought. We welcome all feedback to help us to improve, and this can be addressed to the Head of HR and Communications, who is the lead officer for this policy.
- 7.2 We recognise that sometimes people wish to use formal procedures to register a complaint or their dissatisfaction. We respect people's right to do that, and will ensure that all such communications are dealt with quickly and effectively under the correct policy, which may be:
- The compliments, comments and complaints policy, for general comments and complaints against the Authority itself, or staff of the Authority;
 - The grievance procedure, for complaints and concerns expressed by employees of the Authority;
 - Our separate procedures for complaints about misconduct by a Member of the Authority.
 - Employees may wish to speak to their union representative for advice.

Details of the complaints procedures are available via our website www.yorkshiredales.org.uk (or via the Intranet for employees). They can also be obtained via the contact details below. Help can be provided to anyone who may have difficulty reading or understanding these documents.

Contact details: Head of HR & Communications, YDNPA, Yoredale, Bainbridge Leyburn, North Yorkshire DL8 3EL. Phone: 0300 456 0300. Email: Hannah.clarke@yorkshiredales.org.uk

The following documents are key tools used by the Authority to meet the commitments made in this Policy:

- National Park Management Plan
- Corporate Plan (including Core Values)
- Compliments, Complaints and Comments Policy
- Anti-Harassment, Anti-Bullying and Anti-Victimisation Policy
- Guidance on the principles of good decision making
- Recruitment Policy
- Employee Training and Development Policy
- Grievance Procedure
- Disciplinary Policy
- Employee Code of Conduct
- Members Code of Conduct

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