

Equality and Diversity Policy



SOUTH LANARKSHIRE
Leisure & Culture

"working together to improve the quality of
life of everyone in South Lanarkshire."

South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture Ltd is a recognised Scottish Charity, No. SC032549

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Foreword

Recent equalities legislation has placed a positive duty on organisations to promote equality of opportunity. This demands that the Trust takes a pro-active approach and supports our commitment to deliver services that meet the needs of everyone who lives and works in South Lanarkshire.

The Scottish government in its five strategic objectives of:

- a Wealthier and Fairer;
- a Healthier;
- a Safer and Stronger;
- a Smarter; and
- a Greener Scotland.

Set equal opportunities at the centre of its policy. South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture's Equality and Diversity Policy is at the centre of our vision to work together **"to improve the quality of life of everyone in South Lanarkshire."**

The Trust recognises that implementing the aims of the policy can only be achieved with a sustained commitment from board members, and all employees plus continuous monitoring of the work that we do. For this reason the policy provides a detailed framework covering both implementation and monitoring to ensure progress is continual.

The Trust's Business Plan sets out a series of ambitious programmes which are designed to build on our successes to date and deliver our vision of improving the quality of life for everyone in South Lanarkshire. We recognise that we cannot achieve our vision on our own and we remain committed to working with our partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors, together with local neighbourhoods, to ensure that the programmes delivered are responsive and built around the needs of the community.

This policy plays an integral part in supporting the Trust's vision for South Lanarkshire, and in promoting social inclusion and the provision of quality services as key themes in the Trust's work.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Gerry Campbell', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gerry Campbell
General Manager

1. Introduction

This policy document clearly lays out our vision and commitment to equality and diversity. It enables Board members, employees, contractors, partners and the local community to be clear with regard to:

- the standards we set as a Trust and encourage our partners to use
- rights and responsibilities under the policy
- our declared objectives and how we intend to achieve them

The Trust's Equality and Diversity Policy is not about political correctness or the preferential treatment for some sections of the community over others. The policy is entirely concerned with fairness and equity and the provision of fully accessible, quality services. The policy also aims to tackle discrimination and disadvantage in all its forms, create a stable, inclusive and cohesive community by ensuring that we meet our legal obligations. We not only wish to meet these obligations, but to do more by promoting best practice in employment and the delivery of services, both by the Trust and by the agencies acting on our behalf.

At the heart of this policy is an approach incorporating equality and diversity into all aspects of our work. We can do this by addressing and including equality at every stage in our decision making, and by recognising and encouraging the positive contribution of diversity to the life of the area.

This requires a whole organisation approach that focuses upon incorporating equality and diversity considerations into following areas:

- **Consultation and engagement**
- **Contracting and procurement**
- **Employment issues**
- **Service delivery**
- **Managing and monitoring our effectiveness**

These five key areas, supported by coherent and effective governance and monitoring arrangements, will provide a focus for embedding our vision for equality and diversity into the Trust's work and ensure that the Trust is proactively addressing equality and diversity issues across all levels, and that identified actions are being met. These arrangements are set out in more detail in our Equality and Diversity Strategy which is available at www.slleisureandculture.co.uk.

The success of our approach will be assessed against the impact that it has in creating change in the areas of equality and diversity across South Lanarkshire.

This policy applies to all those who come into contact with and work in the Trust, including:

- Residents
- Customers
- Employees
- Potential residents, customers and job applicants
- Contractors and partners
- Board members
- Local businesses

2. Policy Statement

The Trust believes that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. This applies not only to our workforce but also to our customers in the way we deliver our services to the local community.

Our aim is to ensure that our services are relevant, responsive and sensitive to the needs of all services users. We want to make sure that the Trust is seen to be fair and equitable in the provision of services, by service users, partners and the wider community.

To meet these aims the Trust is committed to:

- The Scotland Act 1998 definition of equal opportunities.
- Meeting all its duties by promoting equality of opportunity and removing barriers that affect access to opportunity for disadvantaged groups and individuals in the community.
- Ensuring the equal opportunities principle of fairness for all underpins every aspect of the Trust's work in combating all forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation in the workplace, in service delivery, or within the community.
- Fair employment and equal pay policies that ensure our workforce represents the community.
- Providing quality services which users (and potential users) can access easily and equitably without prejudice, discrimination or harassment.
- Ensuring that services, facilities, and employment opportunities are accessible and receptive to the values and the diversity needs within the community.
- Identifying groups within the community whose needs/requirements are not met by Trust services.
- Developing and adopting a coherent and strategic approach to the implementation of this policy and improving equality practices throughout the Trust.
- Influencing partners and promoting and encouraging tolerance, fairness and equality.

Vision

The following vision statement outlines the type of equality and diversity organisation that the Trust aims to be.

We want South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture to be viewed as a forward thinking Trust and through our Equality and Diversity Policy we want to:

- Achieve equality and diversity in all of our activities and responsibilities.
- Maintain a discrimination free work environment.
- Value and develop our employees' skills and abilities regardless of gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief and gender reassignment.
- Deliver relevant, culturally sensitive and fully accessible services to all sections of the community.
- Monitor and tackle inequality in service delivery via the targeting of services to excluded social groups.
- Consult, engage and be aware of the views of the whole of the community and involve them in the decision-making process.
- Celebrate cultural and other forms of diversity and recognise how this enriches the life of the area.
- Have open and transparent contracting and procurement processes based upon equality of opportunity and provision.

Policy objectives

In meeting this vision our objectives are to:

- Value and respect the diversity of those who live, work and do business in South Lanarkshire.
- Create a culture, in which discrimination has no part, and where everyone can achieve their full potential.
- Listen to, engage and collaborate with the community, partners and staff in order to continually improve our equality and diversity practice.
- Work with relevant partners and agencies to influence their equality and diversity principles.
- Ensure sound equality and diversity principles are embedded in all our communications.
- Empower people by providing accessible information.
- Mainstream equality and diversity into service delivery and all decisions by developing systems and processes, which are accessible and transparent.
- Ensure all projects and programmes delivered by contractors adhere to equality and diversity principles.
- Be accountable and ensure that our commitments are delivered by target setting, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing performance and progress on a regular basis.
- Take necessary action when non-compliance with this policy is identified.

3. Our policy commitments

Consultation and engagement

The Trust recognises its important role in promoting and encouraging tolerance, fairness and equality.

In our role as the main leisure provider we undertake to work closely with local people, businesses, employers, voluntary and community groups and our other public and private partners to build a more tolerant, compassionate and respectful community in which we can all live and work.

The Trust will continue to pursue its equality and diversity objectives and use multi-agency and partnership working to secure its equality objectives.

When we work in partnership we will:

- Encourage active partnerships, both internally and externally, to foster the development of the Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Ensure that all partners conform to the requirements placed upon the Trust by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended and Sex Discrimination Act 1975 as amended and any other legislation such as regulations covering age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and religion or belief.
- Encourage contractors and suppliers of goods and services to adhere to this policy, such contractors and suppliers will be requested to provide details of their equal opportunities policies as part of the agreement of contractual process.
- Publicise our Equality and Diversity Policy and Strategy widely and positively.
- Encourage and facilitate the involvement of the community in decision making and developing of services through partnerships at local and regional level.

The Trust recognises the importance of consulting, involving and being aware of the views of employees and the whole community in delivering its Equality and Diversity Policy.

When consulting and involving communities we will:

- Consult with people from all communities in South Lanarkshire to help shape the services we deliver and our policies and practices.
- Ensure our impact assessment process involves the systematic participation of the community, employees and partner groups in identifying unmet need and adverse impact.
- Support the development of partnerships and forums which enable effective consultation and involvement to take place.
- Share information with equality forums and other organisations as appropriate to help achieve the Trust's equality aims and objectives.

When consulting and involving employees we have set out:

- our trade union partnership working agreement

Under the Service Level Agreement with South Lanarkshire Council, the Trust agreed to the partnership working agreement which was signed in partnership with the trade unions in 2002. In practice this means that trade union representatives are involved in the development and evaluation of employment policies.

- our employee forums

The Trust provides time off with pay to enable employees to participate in a number of employee forums or networks, for working parents and carers, employees with disabilities and minority ethnic employees. These forums meet several times a year and enable members to network, raise concerns and participate in the debate about promoting equality and identifying and tackling discrimination.

Contracting and procurement: buying services from others

The Trust recognises that the three statutory equality duties to promote race, disability and gender equality - which cannot be delegated - apply to procurement.

Procurement is a crucial part of enhancing community well being, improving services and promoting social inclusion. In discharging its obligation to achieve best value, South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture recognises that complying with equality duties in respect of procurement serves to help achieve that aim. We aim to ensure that contractors, agencies and suppliers who deliver services and provide goods on our behalf also share our vision and values.

We will actively promote equality of opportunity and remove discrimination or harassment in procurement collaborations and partnerships.

When we buy services we will:

- Ensure that anyone seeking work from the Trust knows about our policy and is clear about the expectations of them.
- Encourage any company, business or individual wishing to provide goods or services to the Trust, to contribute to our policy by implementing fair practices in employment and training.
- Promote equalities via the Trust's procurement partnership activities.
- Require contractors and suppliers to provide details of their equal opportunities policies as part of the agreement of contractual process.
- Monitor the equalities performance of contracts.

Employment issues

We are committed to ensuring that employees are treated fairly and have equal access to jobs at every level within the organisation. We want to ensure that all prospective employees are treated fairly at each stage of our recruitment process.

We aim to be an employer of choice and to lead by example in the way we support and develop our employees.

In the workplace we will:

- Ensure that the workplace is free from discrimination and harassment of any form.
- Ensure that managers deal with employment complaints and concerns consistently and fairly.
- Develop our managers to lead by example in a fair and effective manner.
- Respond to the diverse needs of communities and individuals.
- Listen to, consult with employees, and act on their views/aspirations and encourage employee forums to take ownership of issues and contribute solutions.
- Work with our Trade Union partners to review and revise policies and codes of conduct in line with a fair and positive attitude.
- Lead the way in recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce.
- Ensure that all employees have the same opportunities to develop and progress.
- Ensure that our workforce reflects the make up of our community.

Service delivery

Our customers include residents, local businesses and visitors to the area and all will be afforded equal access to the services provided by South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture. We are committed to providing high-quality services that everyone can use.

When we deliver services we will:

- Comply with legal requirements and other relevant codes of practice and good practice guidelines.
- Integrate equality considerations into all mainstream Trust activities, at policy and procedural level, to avoid marginalising issues.
- Assess the extent to which our service is accessible, including the assessment of premises, facilities and methods of providing information.
- Take appropriate remedial action, wherever practical, to make services accessible.
- Ensure services are relevant to the people of South Lanarkshire and take into account different needs which will inform and improve equality and diversity.
- Provide information about services that is clear, accurate and accessible to all.
- Treat all customers positively, taking into account their race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief.
- Endeavour to maintain accreditation in all key areas of equality such as double tick and Investors in People.
- Investigate; respond seriously, confidentially and promptly to complaints of bullying, harassment, discrimination or victimisation.
- Complaints will be regularly monitored by number, type and outcome.
- Promote opportunities for all to comment upon our services – through a robust customer feedback system.
- Ensure that all employees receive appropriate equality and diversity training; such training will be incorporated into a broad range of training methods such as induction, as well as both general and specific training.

4. Mainstreaming equality and diversity

Mainstreaming equality and diversity will mean addressing and including it at every stage in policy, planning, service delivery and review processes. All of our core activities will take equality and diversity into account.

In practice this will mean:

- Considering the potential impact of and assessing the effect on customers and communities of our policies, strategies and functions.
- Taking action to improve them if they result in discrimination or disadvantage to any groups or communities.
- Building the competence of managers and employees to achieve equality results.
- Steering and supporting employees' efforts with equalities expertise.
- Setting or adopting clear equalities indicators and targets in all work activity.
- Creating clear accountability.
- Reviewing performance.
- Consulting with designated community, employees and stakeholder groups.
- Recognising achievements.
- Tackling under performance.
- Challenging persistent failures.
- Recognising the right of individuals to hold and practice their political and religious beliefs. (All employees are expected to comply with the employee Code of Conduct).

When we develop plans and policies, we will:

- Ensure that our approach to delivering and monitoring equality and diversity is coordinated and effective.
- Ensure that our proposals for services, plans, procedures and policies are impact assessed.
- Design our services to meet the diverse needs of all our communities and ensure that plans and policies do not negatively discriminate against particular groups, either directly or indirectly.
- Make sure all staff, customers, contractors and community groups are aware of our equality policies.
- Develop specific resources for improving equality practice.
- Incorporate equality matters into our service including areas such as governance, performance measuring and monitoring and continuous improvement.
- Set equality targets within service areas as part of the business planning process.
- Develop a variety of means to assess the effectiveness of our Equality and Diversity Policy in practice. This will include monitoring of 'double discrimination' for example, where discrimination occurs on more than one ground.
- Report all equal opportunities information within our performance reporting mechanisms.
- Review our Equality and Diversity Policy on a regular basis to assess how effectively we are meeting our objectives.
- Ensure that all Trust communications promote images that reflect the full diversity of cultural need and aspirations of South Lanarkshire communities.
- Promote both staff and public awareness of equality and diversity issues through the establishment of publicity campaigns and the production of a range of publicity/information materials.

5. Performance management

South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture is committed to using the development of performance management to further its equality and diversity objectives. This Trust believes that a key measure of the effectiveness of a service is its impact on equality and diversity.

In managing our performance we will:

- Use impact assessments to develop equality and diversity objectives and targets by involving key partners and community representatives in the process.
- Develop performance indicators throughout the Trust which measure both service user's perceptions and service performance.
- Report performance on equality and diversity indicators as a key part of our Performance Management Reporting Framework.
- Publicise our performance using the Trust's website and other alternative formats.

Our approach to consultation

Consultation and involvement are key to the development of the work the Trust does and are essential in ensuring that we understand and meet the needs of employees and all those living and working in the community. Our approach is designed to ensure that we use resources appropriately to provide the services the community needs and wants efficiently, effectively and to the highest standard possible.

6. Responsibilities for implementation

Responsibility for the prevention and elimination of unfair treatment and the implementation of this policy lies with the Board of Directors of SLLC, managers and employees.

Line managers and supervisors have a responsibility to familiarise themselves with the policy, and to reinforce it through management competence and performance development reviews, to ensure that it is understood and implemented by all employees.

All employees have responsibility for working towards equality and inclusion, and for the implementation of this policy.

We all have a duty to:

- Comply with and promote the Trust's Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Co-operate with other procedures and practices that complement the Trust's Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Be aware of our behaviour and its impact upon others.
- Report any suspected discriminatory actions.
- Report any suspicions of harassment taking place.
- Not victimise people because they have made a complaint or have been involved in a complaint of harassment or discrimination.
- Seek guidance on matters of equality and best practice when unsure of the appropriate course of action.
- Work within the Code of Conduct for Trust employees as applicable.

7. Policy monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis and will be formally reviewed annually. The review will assess how effectively the objectives of policy are being implemented into practice.

This will be done at the following levels:

- At a Trust wide level, we will monitor and review our achievements through a regular review of the policy, the Single Equality Scheme and the equality and diversity targets in the Trust's Business Plan.
- At a service level, the Trust will monitor and review Equality and Diversity achievements through equality indicators set in the performance management system.
- At the individual officer level, the Trust will monitor and review achievements as an integral part of work reviews and personal performance management.

Managers are expected to inform the HR Section of all formal complaints made. The information provided will be anonymised and recorded by department, gender, race, type of complaint, resolution, any follow up action taken.

The impact of the Equality and Diversity Policy will be monitored through the collection and analysis of these anonymous statistics.

We will:

- Consult with designated community, employee and partner groups on appropriate aspects of Equality and Diversity Policy during its development and review.
- Monitor access to services by equality groups and report publicly on the results of this monitoring and take action to improve our performance.
- Assess the effect of new and existing policies and plans on equality groups.
- Monitor and report our performance in terms of our workforce profile and recruitment statistics.
- Monitor incidents of disciplinary actions, grievance and reasons for leaving employment.
- Link equality monitoring to our performance management framework.
- Publish the results of monitoring on the Trust's website.
- Review other Trust policies on a regular basis to ensure that individual rights are safeguarded.
- The HR and Business Development Sections will monitor compliance with the Equality and Diversity Policy in respect of all plans and policies, all procedures and documentation, all premises and facilities, all training programmes, application of employment policies to equality groups and all complaints on the grounds of discrimination and harassment.
- All monitoring information will be reported to the Senior Management Team and the Board.

Responsibility for the prevention and elimination of unfair treatment and the implementation of this policy lies with the Board of Directors of SLLC, managers and employees.

Line managers and supervisors have a responsibility to familiarise themselves with the policy, and to reinforce it through management competence and performance development reviews, to ensure that it is understood and implemented by all employees.

8. What to do if something goes wrong?

Members of the public

We welcome your comments and complaints at any time. By telling us what you think and letting us know when things go wrong, you can help us to improve our services to you. You can do this:

- **by writing to** – Development Officer, South Lanarkshire Leisure & Culture Limited, 1st Floor, North Stand, Cadzow Avenue, Hamilton, ML3 0LX.
- **by phoning** – at the numbers given below.
- **by emailing or by using our comments and complaints form** - at the addresses given in the “Contact us” button on the front page of the Trust’s website at www.slleisureandculture.co.uk.
- **by visiting any of our Facilities** - at any of the addresses given on the same web page listed above.

The Trust is committed to equality and diversity and tackling all forms of discrimination.

If you believe you have been treated less favourably because of, for example, your race or ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age or because you have a disability, please let us know this when you make a complaint.

For more information, or if you want this information supplied in a different format or language, please phone **01698 476202** or email maggi.archibald@southlanarkshireleisure.co.uk.

Employees

In conjunction with the trade unions, we have developed a “Dignity at Work Policy” to make sure that unacceptable behaviour such as bullying, harassment, discrimination or victimisation does not occur. Any employee, who feels they have been unfairly treated in any way, can raise a complaint using the procedures set out in the “Dignity at Work Policy”.

Employees can make their complaint informally or formally. Before deciding what to do they should get advice from their trade union representative or the Human Resources Department.

All complaints received are dealt with confidentially and sensitively to protect both the complainer and the person the complaint is about.

For confidential advice, and a copy of any of our policies or procedures, phone the Human Resources Officer on 01698 476208.

For more information or if you would like this information in a different format or language, please telephone [01698 476202](tel:01698476202)
text phone [18001 01698 476202](tel:1800101698476202)
or e-mail maggi.archibald@southlanarkshireleisure.co.uk

Further copies of this report are available in PDF format by emailing:

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