



SOUTH LANARKSHIRE
Leisure & Culture

South Lanarkshire Leisure & Culture Equality and Diversity Policy

“Happier, healthier, more connected lives.”

Foreword

Equalities legislation places a positive duty on organisations to promote equality of opportunity. This demands that South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture (SLLC) 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

sets equal opportunities at the centre of its policy. SLLC's Equality and Diversity Policy is at the centre of our vision of "healthier, happier, more connected lives" for South Lanarkshire residents.

SLLC recognises that implementing the aims of the policy can only be achieved with a sustained commitment from Trustees, 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.

SLLC's Strategy 2022-27 sets out a series of objectives which are designed to build on our successes to date and deliver our vision of healthier, happier, more connected lives for South Lanarkshire residents. 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 SLLC's vision for South Lanarkshire, and in promoting social inclusion and the provision of quality services as key themes in the SLLC's work.



Chief Executive

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Policy statement
 - Vision
 - Policy objectives
3. Policy commitments
 - Consultation and engagement
 - Contracting and procurement
 - Employment issues
 - Service delivery
4. Mainstreaming equality and diversity
5. Performance management
6. Responsibilities for implementation
 - Management
 - Employees
7. Policy monitoring and review
8. What to do if something goes wrong

Section 1

Introduction

This policy document clearly sets out our vision and commitment to equality and diversity. It provides clarity to employees, contractors, partners, and the local community around:

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

The Equality and Diversity Policy is not about political correctness or the preferential treatment. 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. This will be achieved by promoting best practice in employment and the delivery of our services.

At the heart of this policy is an approach incorporating equality and diversity into all aspects of our work.

This requires an 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 our work and ensure that we are proactively addressing equality and diversity issues across all levels, and that identified actions are being met.

This policy applies to all those who meet and work in South Lanarkshire Leisure & Culture (SLLC), including:

- Customers
- Employees
- Potential customers and job applicants
- Contractors and partners
- SLLC Board members

Section 2

Policy Statement

SLLC 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.

Our aim is to ensure that our services are relevant, responsive, and sensitive to the needs of all services users.

To meet these aims SLLC is committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity and removing barriers that affect access to opportunity for disadvantaged groups and individuals in our community.
- Ensuring the equal opportunities principle of fairness for all underpins every aspect of SLLC's work in combating all forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation in the workplace.
- Fair employment and equal pay policies.
- 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.
- Developing and adopting a coherent and strategic approach to the implementation of this policy and improving equality practices.
- Influencing partners and promoting and encouraging tolerance, fairness, and equality.

Vision

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

Vision: Healthier, happier, more connected lives.

We want South Lanarkshire Leisure & Culture to be viewed as a forward-thinking organisation, 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.
- Deliver relevant, culturally sensitive, and fully accessible services.
- Monitor and tackle inequality in service delivery.
- Consult, engage and be aware of the views of the whole of the community and involve them in the decision-making process.
- Have open and transparent contracting and procurement processes based

upon equality of opportunity and provision.

Section 3

Policy objectives

In meeting this vision our objectives are to:

- Value and respect the diversity of those who work for us.
- Create a positive, safe, healthy and accessible working and learning environment.
- 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.
- Ensure sound equality and diversity principles are embedded in all our communications.
- Empower people by providing accessible information.
- 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.

Section 4

Our policy commitments

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 employee's 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 Best Value strategies that comprise four main aspects: sound governance, performance measuring and monitoring, continuous improvement, and three-year budgeting.

- Set equality targets and 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.
- Review our Equality and Diversity Policy on a regular basis to assess how effectively we are meeting our objectives.

Working with others

When we work in partnership we will:

- Ensure that all partners conform to the requirements placed upon SLLC by the Equality Act 2010.
- 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. (applicable to contracts over £50k which require SLC approval).

Consultation and engagement

SLLC 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 the identifying unmet need and adverse impact.
- Develop a more detailed profile of our workforce through regular workforce verification exercises.

When consulting and involving employees, we have set out:

- our trade union partnership working agreement.

In 2001 the Council and SLLC with the trade unions signed a partnership working agreement. In practice this means that trade union representatives are involved in the development and evaluation of employment policies. Representatives of the joint trade union executive committee are members of the corporate equal opportunities working group and made an important contribution to the planning and development of our gender equality scheme. Under the service level

agreement SLLC adopt policies provided to them by SLC.

- our Employee Network

The Council and SLLC provides time off with pay to enable employees to participate in the Employee Network. There are four themes to the network with meetings taking place for employees with caring responsibilities, employees with disabilities, minority ethnic employees and for employees who identify as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual or transgender (LGB or T).

Supported by corporate personnel services SLC, 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. SLLC staff are advised of the forums and given paid time off to attend.

Contracting and procurement: buying services from others

SLLC recognises that the Equality Act 2010 harmonised and replaced previous equalities legislation and also included a new public sector equality duty which replaced the separate duties relating to race, disability and gender equality.

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 use our influence and purchasing power to 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 SLLC 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 SLLC, to contribute to our policy by implementing fair practices in employment and training.
- Promote equalities via SLLC's procurement partnership activities.

When contracts are over £50k:

- SLLC 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.

Support the promotion of equalities within the national Procurement Learning and

Development strategy.

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.
- Work with our Trade Union partners and SLC who develop our policies to review and revise policies and codes of conduct in line with a fair and positive attitude.
- Recruit and retain a diverse workforce.
- Ensure that all employees have the same opportunities to develop and progress.

Service delivery

Our customers include residents, local community groups, local businesses and visitors to the area, and all will be afforded equal access to the services provided by SLLC. 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 SLLC activities, at policy and procedural level, to avoid marginalising issues.
- Assess the extent to which public services are 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 consider 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, considering their gender, race, ethnic origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, nationality,

religion, belief or any other individual characteristics.

- Endeavour to achieve accreditation in all key areas of equality such as the Crystal mark and double tick.
- 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 the compliments and complaints process.
- 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.

Section 5

Performance management

SLLC is committed to using the development of performance management to further its equality and diversity objectives.

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 at Corporate, Resource and Service levels which measure both service users 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 SLLC's website and other alternative formats

Our approach to consultation

Consultation and involvement are central to the development of the work SLLC does and are essential in ensuring that we understand and meet the needs of employees and all those living and working in our 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. This approach, which links directly to both local and national priorities, is set out in our Consultation Strategy.

This identifies that we will:

- Consult and listen to people about the way we develop and deliver services
- Involve the community in the decision-making process
- Ensure there is an audit trail of the impact consultation has made on the way we deliver services across our areas of responsibility
- Plan and improve our services based on needs
- Monitor and report on customer satisfaction and the impact of consultation on service planning/development

Section 6

Responsibilities for implementation

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

Line managers and supervisors have a responsibility to familiarise themselves with the policy, and to reinforce it through management competencies 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 Equality and Diversity Policy
- Co-operate with other procedures and practices that complement the 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 employees as applicable

Section 7

Policy monitoring and review.

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis. 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 Companywide level, we will monitor and review our achievements through a regular review of the policy, the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), the equality and diversity targets in the Company's Business plan and through the performance management system action identified in Service plans.
- At a service level, SLLC will monitor and review Equality and Diversity achievements through equality indicators set in the performance management system.
- At the individual officer level, SLLC will monitor and review achievements as an integral part of work reviews and personal performance management.

Managers are expected to inform Human Resources 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. The statistics will be reviewed annually by Human Resources and the Senior Management Team.

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.
- Monitor the impact of this policy on changing organisational behaviour.
- Publish the results of monitoring on SLLC's website.
- Review other SLLC policies on a regular basis to ensure that individual rights are safeguarded.
- Individual Resources will monitor specific issues and these will be incorporated into the particular Resource Strategy.
- Human Resources and the Governance and Compliance Team 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.

Section 8

What 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** – Governance and Compliance Manager, South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture, 5th Floor, Council Headquarters, Almada Street, Hamilton, ML3 0AA
- **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 our website at www.slleisureandculture.co.uk
- **by visiting any of our offices** - at any of the addresses given on the same web page listed above

SLLC 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 ethnic origin, gender, age, sexual orientation or because you have a disability, please let us know this when you make a complaint.

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 HR section. Complaints can be made by an individual or a group.

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 HR

helpline on 01698 476209.

For more information, or if you need this information in another language or format, please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs phone **01698 476262** or customer.services@southlanarkshireleisure.co.uk