

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

### One Manchester's vision and commitment

One Manchester is a business with a social purpose. The principles of equality, diversity and inclusion are at the very heart of One Manchester's established values of being Ambitious, Connected and Trustworthy supported by our mission of creating opportunities, transforming communities and changing lives.

We consider that equality means breaking down barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunities and access for all. We work within the spirit and practice of the Equality Act 2010 by promoting a culture of respect and dignity and actively challenge discrimination should it arise.

We consider diversity to mean celebrating difference and valuing everyone. Each person is an individual with visible and non-visible differences and by respecting this, everyone can feel valued for their contribution. Inclusion means a sense of belonging; feeling respected and being valued for who you are.

We recognise that the barriers to achieving true equality of opportunity range from overt prejudice in favour of, or against, particular groups or individuals to unwitting ignorance of different lifestyles and needs. On whatever level it exists, discrimination is neither acceptable nor tolerable.

Our vision for and commitment to equality and diversity goes beyond simply documenting the actions we take to actually measuring the outcomes we achieve. As part of our interaction with our customers and employees we will be pro-active and monitor and evaluate our progress towards meeting our objectives to:

- actively work to increase and improve the usability and accessibility of our services and in doing so aim to meet our legal, moral and ethical obligations
- encourage diversity and eliminate unfair treatment and discrimination through a range of policies and procedures
- recognise that employees have rights to work in a supportive, safe and harassment free environment and have individual and collective responsibility to value and respect each other's contributions

We believe our commitment to the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion make good business sense and will bring the following benefits and added value to our organisation:

- keep us relevant – knowing and understanding our existing and future customer base, will lead to better informed decision-making and policy development and will ensure we continue to provide homes and tailor services to meet diverse and changing needs
- ensure we are an employer of choice – aspiring to achieve a diverse and inclusive workforce will enable us to recruit and retain talented colleagues who reflect the communities that we serve. A supportive working environment will be more productive

- enhance our reputation – enabling us to maintain our competitive edge as a sustainable, social business

One Manchester will be a more attractive and rewarding organisation to work for, do business with and receive services from.

### **Who does this policy apply to?**

The rights and obligations set out in this policy apply equally to all employees, whether they work part time or full time or on a permanent or fixed term contract. They also apply to associated people such as volunteers, work placements, agency staff, contractors and others employed under a contract of service. The policy not only applies to all conduct in the workplace but also to conduct outside the workplace that is related to work, for example at meetings, social events and social interactions with colleagues. It also applies to expressions of views on social media which may impact on the Group's reputation if those views are contrary to the commitments expressed in this policy and can be linked to One Manchester.

This policy does not form part of an employee's contract of employment and may be amended at any time.

### **Equality Legislation and Regulation**

#### Equality Legislation

We have responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 to promote equality of opportunity and to ensure that people have equal access to services and employment opportunities. This Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against someone because of one or more 'protected characteristics'. These protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Religion/belief
- Race (including ethnic origin, colour, nationality and national origin)
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage (civil/same sex)
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy/maternity

However, this policy is not restricted to these characteristics. We also take into consideration additional factors such as socio-economic status e.g. income, education, occupation, which may impact on an individual's life.

Discriminatory conduct under the Equality Act 2010 covers:

- Direct discrimination: when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have (perceptive discrimination) or because they associate with someone who has that characteristic (associative discrimination). Note – perceptive or associative discrimination do not cover marriage (civil/same sex) and pregnancy/maternity
- Indirect discrimination: a rule, policy or practice which is applied more widely but has a disproportionately adverse effect on particular groups of people and this rule etc. cannot be objectively justified

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- Victimisation: treating a person badly because they have made, or people think they have made, a complaint about discrimination or have given evidence in a discrimination case
- Harassment: unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. Protected characteristics are limited to race, sex, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation, age and gender reassignment
- Discrimination arising from disability and failure to make reasonable adjustments in relation to disability

## Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires Registered Providers delivering public services – i.e. the provision, allocation and management of social housing – to give 'due regard' to the need:

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- To advance equality of opportunity between people
- To foster good relations between people

## Regulatory requirement

This policy meets the requirements of the regulatory framework which requires registered housing providers to respond to the needs of diverse residents. Registered providers are required to treat all residents and tenants with fairness and respect including protected characteristics and those with additional support needs.

## Our Guiding Policy Principles

One Manchester has signed up to the Chartered Institute of Housing's Equality and Diversity Charter and their 10 Leading Diversity by 2020 challenges. These provide a framework against which we can assess our own performance and this is our public commitment to delivering a fair and accessible housing service which is clearly focused on outcomes for staff, tenants and communities.

## Governance

We will:

- ensure awareness of, and compliance with, the relevant legislative and regulatory requirements as a landlord and employer
- ensure that our governance structure understands, and is broadly representative of, the diverse communities we serve
- provide training on equality, diversity and inclusion to Board and Committee members, and involved residents, so they are able to discuss the issues fully and lead the promotion of diversity across our business activities

## Employment

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We will:

- treat all employees, whether permanent or temporary, full time or part time, fairly and with respect and dignity
- recruit, develop and promote staff on the basis of a fair and objective assessment of competence, skills, knowledge and experience without influence by any of the protected characteristics; and help and encourage all employees to develop their full potential
- regularly review the benefits, terms and conditions of employment and facilities available to ensure that access is not restricted by unlawful means
- promote a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people from different backgrounds and experiences can bring valuable insights to the workplace and enhance the way we work
- provide a working environment where harassment, bullying, victimisation and offensive behaviour are unacceptable and where employees are able to bring complaints without fearing prejudice
- aspire to a diverse workforce, with the skills to achieve our strategic goals, and which broadly reflects the diversity of the communities we serve
- comply with the requirements of equalities legislation, including making reasonable adjustments in the workplace where appropriate
- pay the living wage and apply fair and transparent processes for job evaluation in order to ensure equal pay for equal work
- publish statutory calculations each year showing any pay gap between male and female employees in compliance with gender pay reporting legislation
- routinely conduct Equal Pay Audits to compare the pay of men and women doing equal work
- where service delivery is not compromised, ensure that all staff can work flexibly and that the benefits of work-life balance are recognised
- equip staff with appropriate equality, diversity and inclusion awareness training tailored to their needs
- monitor across the diversity strands our staff profile, recruitment, promotion, training and development opportunities, complaints, grievances and reasons for leaving. We will take action to address any inequality or discrimination identified
- monitor satisfaction with OM as an employer and analyse these results across the diversity strands. We will seek and act on staff feedback where we can
- capture any equalities issues when undertaking exit surveys and act on any issues raised
- conduct Equality Impact Assessments on policies and practices that will impact on staff

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## **Providing Homes**

We will:

- aim to understand and respond to the diverse housing needs in our areas of operation so we can provide quality housing of the type and design people need
- ensure that no current or potential customer is discriminated against by letting or selling a property on less favourable terms due to a protected characteristic
- review the condition of our homes as part of our asset management strategy, ensuring that the needs and aspirations of residents are taken into account
- aim to provide a suitable housing solution for tenants with a disability/mobility need

## **Meeting the needs of our customers**

We will:

- deal promptly and effectively with all aspects of hate related crime, harassment (racial and on other grounds), anti-social behaviour and domestic violence
- ensure that we meet the requirements of equalities legislation so that all our customers are able to use the parts of our offices that are open to the public
- work to ensure that information about customers' rights and responsibilities, and the services that are available, is accessible to all groups within the community, in its content, style and mode of delivery. We will provide information in alternative formats / languages where a need for this is clearly identified
- work to ensure that our services are accessible to all, assessing this through a programme of Equality Impact Assessments
- ensure our actions are informed by maintaining comprehensive profile data about our customers. We will use this both to tailor services to individual needs and also to identify trends across our customer base as a whole
- take account of disability discrimination legislation, prior to taking legal action against a vulnerable person
- ensure that employability support, volunteering, work placements, and training opportunities are accessible to all sections of our diverse communities
- monitor who is/is not accessing our services and take action to address any barriers
- provide a range of contact methods, shaped to customers' requirements, including effective use of digital services
- encourage and welcome diversity when it comes to customer involvement and participation in service development

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- provide a range of opportunities for customers to have their say on decisions that affect them and to scrutinise our performance. We will ensure that input from consultation is an integral part of the decision making process
- monitor customer satisfaction across our services with the aim of ensuring there are no significant differences across the strands of diversity
- promote inclusion and community cohesion and take prompt, responsive action in all cases of discrimination, hate crime, harassment or victimisation
- in accordance with our Support and Wellbeing Service, identify those with additional support needs and provide, procure or signpost customers towards the advice and support they may need to sustain their tenancy

### **Contractors, Partners and Suppliers**

We will:

- ensure that our contractors, partners and suppliers are aware of the importance of equality and diversity to us and that they sign up to/support our commitments
- ensure such organisations have a current and effective Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy, and, where not, that they are willing to work in accordance with our own
- where appropriate, help partner organisations to understand the diverse needs of our customers in order that they are better equipped to provide an efficient service to all our service users

### **Responsibility**

Whilst everyone at One Manchester has a responsibility for delivering our equality, diversity and inclusion commitments, key contributions are expected as follows:

- The Board is responsible for ensuring compliance with our legal and regulatory requirements and our policy commitments
- The Executive Management Team has overall responsibility for ensuring this policy is applied across the business
- The Executive Management Team, Heads of Service and managers are responsible for ensuring this policy is disseminated to all staff and embedded in service delivery
- Managers are also responsible for ensuring that all members of their teams receive diversity and equality training appropriate to their role
- Managers and associated One Manchester staff are responsible for actively championing and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all areas of their work, and, where appropriate, for the delivery of identified actions

### **Monitoring, review and evaluation**

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We have exciting growth plans and aspirations to be a leader in regenerating communities and places. We will continue to deliver high quality services to our customers by investing in our people and places.

How we will measure and report on progress:

- We will develop a suite of measures, and areas to monitor, to help demonstrate we are meeting our ED&I objectives
- We will work with appropriate agencies to review our organisational practices
- Report to our Board annually outlining performance against this policy
- Utilise our Scrutiny Panel to focus on particular aspects of our ED &I policy as part of scrutiny reviews
- Staff and customers will be updated through established communication channels.

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or in line with any legislative changes.

### **Legislation**

This policy and any subsequent procedures have been written in accordance with relevant guidance, legislation and associated definitions, which includes but isn't prescribed to:

- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard

### **Associated Policies:**

Allocations Policy	Recruitment Policy
Tenancy policy	Grievance Procedure
Repairs Policy	Flexible Working Procedure
Complaints Policy	Family Leave Procedure
ASB and Hate Crime Policy	Pay Policy
Domestic Abuse Policy	Vulnerability Policy
Safeguarding Children Policy	Safeguarding Adults Policy
Whistleblowing Policy	Speak Out Policy
Learning and Development Policy	

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