

## CHAPTER 1 SCHEDULE 2

### **EQUALITY AND COHESION POLICY AND PROCEDURE ( Clause 9)**

#### **1.1 Equality and Diversity Statement**

1.2 Wyke Estate TMO wholeheartedly supports the principle of equality and diversity in all areas of its service delivery, employment, partnerships and as a purchaser of goods and services.

The Organisation acknowledges and respects the fundamental human right of every person not to be discriminated against on the grounds of a perceived difference ( also known as protected characteristics) such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation

Direct and /or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation will not be tolerated within the workplace, or in the way services are delivered or functions and duties carried out.

1.3 The TMO is committed to:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation
- Promoting equality of opportunity
- Promoting community cohesion

#### **2.0 Statutory Obligations and Legislation**

## 2.1 The TMO will comply with all equality legislation and codes of

Practice including:

- The Equality Act 2010

(which incorporates previous equality legislation such as: the sex

Discrimination Act 1975; the Equal Pay Act 1970; the Race

Relations Act 1976, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and

the Equal Pay

2006)

- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- Employment Protection Act 1975
- Employment protection ( Consolidation) Act 1978
- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Civil Partnership Act 2004
- All European legislation and directives.
- Code of practice for Racial Equality in Housing
- Housing and the Disability Duty

## 3.0 Aims and Objectives

3.1 The Organisations aims are:

- To deliver a fair and equal service to all residents living on the Wyke Estate ;

- To ensure that the composition of the Board reflects that of the population in the above;
- To encourage active participation from all persons or groups of person living in the above;
- To ensure that all tenants have equal access to meetings and information concerning the activities of the organisation;
- To increase awareness within the organisation of the needs of disadvantaged groups;
- To ensure that no member of staff, or the Board or tenants/ user of services provided by the Organisation suffers direct and /or indirect discrimination.

3.2 The organisation will take positive action to overcome the results

Of unfair discrimination by encouraging and helping

Different groups to participate in the Organisation's decision- making process and to receive fair and equal treatment in respect of service delivery and employment opportunities.

3.3 The Organisation recognises that some groups have traditionally experienced high levels of social and economic disadvantage, intolerance and discrimination such as:

- Asylum seekers and refugees
- Black and minority ethnic people
- Disabled people
- Gypsies and Irish travellers
- Lesbians, gay men, bi-sexual woman and men

- Older people
- People of a particular religion/ culture or who hold certain beliefs
- People of lower social- economic classes
- Single parents and carers
- Trans-gender people
- Woman and girls
- Young people

To counteract discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and build cohesive communities, the Organisation will undertake Equality Impact Assessments as a tool to assess our services and employment practices to identify any effect or likely effect on the following groups ( protected characteristics):

The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender re-assignment
- Marriage and civil partnership( but only in respect of elimination unlawful discrimination)
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief- this includes lack of belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

These protected characteristics broadly reflect or includes the groups identified above. This means that everything the Organisation does from

managing employees, providing services, working in partnership and consulting with residents will be checked against the needs and potential impact on the equality groups. We will take action to minimise any negative effects or change the way we do things and therefore maximise opportunities for promoting equality.

#### **4.0 Procedure**

##### **4.1 The TMO as a Tenant- Led Organisation**

4. TMOs manage homes on behalf of the Council, Each one is an independent organisation which is run by a committee of residents. These residents are elected to the committee by their neighbours to represent their views and manage the services the TMO takes on. TMO tenants are still tenants of the Council

4.3 Each TMO chooses the services it wants to take on- some manage the caretaking and basic repairs service, others do this but also external decorations and major works. The services each TMO does can also change overtime as new ones are taken on or handed back to the council.

4.4 We want our TMOs to be successful so we do all that we can to help, for example:

- Arranging training for committee members and staff
- Having specialist workers in Hackney Homes to give advice and support
- Letting TMOs know when they are doing well or not so well
- Organising forums for TMO managers, and committee members. The forums allow us to share experiences, exchange information and consult on our plans and policies

To help achieve this, the TMO will:

- ensure equality of opportunity in consultation and participation
- be representative, democratic and accountable
- promote and encourage active membership by individuals in all

- take positive steps to tackle unlawful discrimination
- create and maintain the TMOs reputation for being a good equal opportunities organisation
- develop a monitoring system to assess progress in achieving our equality aims and objectives

## **5.0 The TMO as a Service Provider**

### **5.1 Repairs and maintenance**

The circumstances of individuals will be taken into account when considering whether or not a repair is urgent. Priority will be given at the discretion of TMO staff to those households where there are young

Children, people who are elderly or housebound, or suffering from an illness or disability. The circumstances of individuals will be taken into account in respect of recharging for repairs due to negligence or abuse, or undertaking repairs or redecoration which are the resident's responsibility. Any repair due to domestic violence or a hate crime will be treated as an emergency . All employees and contractors will be required to conduct themselves in a polite and professional manner at all times. They will not discriminate and will treat residents and their household with dignity and respect regardless of their age, , disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or faith, sex or sexual orientation. The TMO will issue guidelines on equal opportunities to all its contractors, and outline the standards it expects. The TMO will refer staff to Hackney Homes Code of Conduct handbook. Contractors shall be expected to have an Equalities and Diversity Policy and Comply with legal requirements.

### **5.2 Office Opening Times**

The TMO will ensure that office opening times are published and that an Adequate after- office hours service is available.

### **5.3 Consultation and Participation**

The TMO will ensure that the views of a representative range of

Household types and residents are taken into account if new policies are being considered.

5.4 The above will be adopted Wyke Estate TMO to ensure that it meets its equalities and diversity obligations when delivering its housing and management services

5.5 The TMO is committed to providing high quality and accessible services to all our residents and will work hard to ensure that the different needs and expectations of the borough's diverse communities are met.

To help achieve this, the TMO will:

- provide a fair, appropriate and high quality service to all our tenants and leaseholders
- identify and address the service needs of all groups
- take positive steps to tackle any discrimination, harassment or victimisation
- develop systems to monitor progress with equality targets and satisfaction levels.

## **6.0 The TMO as a Democratic Organisation**

6.1 The Constitution is available to members and TMO residents. Reference is made to the TMOs Constitution ( Annex A), the Code of Governance ( including a Code of Conduct) and Code of Confidentiality the TMO is required to publish (See Chapter 1 Clause 16.5) and the training Plan ( Chapter 1 Clause11). The TMO will need to develop its Code of Conduct for members. This will define the duties of members and how breaches are to be dealt with. This should link to the code of Confidentiality.

## **6.2 The procedures should ensure that all residents are informed about the TMO and consulted about its activities**

- Procedures for ensuring that the Organisation is representative democratic and accountable

- All residents of Wyke Estate TMO are eligible to become a member of the Organisation, attend general meetings and put their name forward for election to the Board
- The Board of the Organisation has delegated responsibility and resources for ensuring that the Equal Opportunities Policy is implemented monitored and updated every 6 months.
- The Board will review and monitor procedures for informing and involving new and existing members.
- The TMO Manager will make regular reports to the Board on membership levels and participation.
- Any proposed change in the Organisation's policy and procedures must be referred to a general meeting of the Organisation's membership.

### **6.3 Procedures for promoting and encouraging active membership of the Organisation from all individuals and sections of the community.**

- The TMO Manager will ensure that all new residents are informed of the opportunities to become a member and participate in the Organisation's affairs.
- All new residents will be given a copy of the Organisation's handbook and sign up to Wyke Estate TMO's Equality & Diversity Policy.
- All communications will be written in 'plain English' and available in alternative formats such as Braille, large print, audio tape/ disk, provide a BSL interpreter where requested.( Wyke Estate TMO) TMO will also arrange translations into other languages of key documents.
- The TMO Manager will ensure that all residents are informed of the Organisation's ongoing training programme.
- All members and employees of Wyke Estate TMO will be expected to comply with the principles set out in this policy.

#### **6.3.1 The Board will ensure that no person or groups of persons are**



Restricted from participating either directly or indirectly. To this end, the Board will regularly review its practice in respect of the venues where meetings are held, to ensure that the venue are accessible for older people or people with disabilities or restricted mobility

6.3.2 All residents of( Wyke Estate of TMO) may attend both meetings of their Board and general meetings expect where confidential business is being discussed.

### **6.3 Obligations to provide information about the Organisation and its activities**

- Details of all general meetings and events organised by the Organisation will be sent to all residents of Wyke Estate. All residents will receive the regular newsletter and the Organisation's annual report. These will be translated into other languages on request.
- All communications will be written in plain English.
- All residents members will receive minutes of general meetings
- Summaries of the main points to arise from Board meetings will be included in the regular newsletter and sent to all residents.
- All new Board members must undertake a programme of induction and procedures of the Organisation.
- All Board members are responsible for ensuring that the aims and objectives of the Organisation are implemented in a fair and equal manner and that the special needs of disadvantaged groups are taken into account.
- The Organisation will liaise with other groups/ agencies / organisations to further the Organisation's Equality & Diversity Policy.

6.4 The AGM is run in accordance with the Constitution. However, the TMO ensures that no one is unreasonably precluded because of Language difficulties, learning or any other special needs. An

Interpreter can be made available for those tenants and leaseholders

For whom English is not their first language and a BSL interpreter for deaf

And hard of hearing people, provided sufficient notice is given.

Training provision is made for the attainment of competencies of Board members. Particular attention is given to the induction of new Board which addresses equalities issues

In order to maintain the highest standards of service to the TMO, all members of the TMO Board, are required to subscribe to the principles of the code of Conduct for board members.

A letter of Accountability is also sent to all Board members advising them to follow the Code of conduct and to uphold the organisations core policies including those of equal opportunities.

7.0 The TMO as an Employer aims to ensure that we:

7.1 Reference may be made to the schedules to chapter 7. These include the TMOs recruitment policy and employment practices for both directly employed and seconded staff, disciplinary procedure and standard terms of conditions.

**7.2 How breaches of Equality and Cohesion policies and procedures will be Handled**

This describes how breaches will be investigated and dealt with. Reference is made to the procedures for dealing with disputes and complaints [ Chapter 7 Schedule 4]

7.3 Any breach or complaint concerning the TMOs Equality and Cohesion Policy or its implementation will be normally referred through the TMOs management complaints procedure.

Any deliberate breach of the TMO, Equal Oppurtunities Policy or negligence in rectifying faults which have been brought to their attention will render any employee, officer or member liable to disciplinary action.

7.4 The TMO will be an organisation that attracts the best people for its jobs, where all employees are respected, feel valued and have a say in the services they deliver; an organisation which retains its values their diversity and supports their progress. To achieve this, the TMO will :

- Take positive steps to achieve this at all levels of the Organisation
- Consider everyone on their abilities and appoint the most suitable person for the job
- Take positive steps to oppose all forms of discrimination ( individual and institutional, direct and indirect) harassment, victimisation or bullying.

7.5 To achieve our aims, the TMO will:

- Value all our employees, provide them with the skills and training to do their jobs well and where possible, provide them with the opportunities to progress and develop within the organisation
- Provide training and guidance to all employees to ensure our commitment to equality and diversity is known understood and adhered to promote our equality and diversity polices and ensure that they are integrated throughout the organisation.

## **8.0 TMO Commitments to Consultation and Participation**

8.1 The TMO manager will ensure that all members are informed and consulted about the activities of the Organisation.

The[ Wyke Estate TMO] TMO Manager will provide all members with assistance in obtaining information they require about the Organisation's activities.

The TMO Manager is responsible for advising the Board where policies, procedures and practices require further consultation with residents.

The Board will undertake an annual self-completion questionnaire of all residents to measure resident satisfaction with the range of services provided by the Organisation and the Council and residents views about how services

might be improved. The TMO Manager will ensure that assistance will be given to all those who require it in completing the questionnaire. A summary of all consultations will be sent to all residents or included in the newsletter.

The Board will ensure that no person or group of persons are restricted from participating in meetings, either directly or indirectly.

All those who attend and participate in any meeting organised by the Organisation will be expected to conduct themselves in a way that respects the rights of all other persons, in particular, persons belonging to the groups included in this policy.

## **8.2 Board composition and Equalities and Diversity obligations**

The Manager of the Organisation is responsible for ensuring that the Annual General Meeting and nominations for election to the Board are published according to the constitution. Standards and to ensure that this is demonstrated and maintained throughout the service.

### **10.2 Access to buildings**

10.2.1 We will identify the physical features of all TMO buildings that may Require changes as well as providing British Sign Language Interpreters on request for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Receptions should have hearing loop systems and mobile hearing Induction loop systems should be available for meetings, home visits Or interviews. We will make every effort to ensure that the TMO Buildings are fully accessible to service users and accommodate staff With disability and achieve DDA ( Disability and Discrimination Act) Compliance.

### **10.3 Language**

We will provide interpretation and translation of language on request.

Communication aids will also be made available to people who are hearing impaired or visually impaired.

#### **10.4 Pregnancy and Maternity**

The TMO will not discriminate or treat unfavourably a woman who is pregnant, in the services that we deliver or because she is breastfeeding an infant.

Where the mother is happy to breastfeed in the public area we will provide a comfortable seat.

If we can not provide a designated place for those mothers who wish to breastfeed in private please refer to 10.2.20 we will aim to provide another area such as an interviewing room, if space allows and it is clean and comfortable.

#### **10.5 Ensuring Equality in Employment**

In order to ensure that a positive equal opportunities climate exists a number of measures have been adopted in several key areas.

TMO to demonstrate that they have updated and equality impact assessed their employment policies and procedures in accordance with good practice.

#### **10.6 Advertising**

All vacant posts will be advertised

A copy of the job description, person specification, Equality and Cohesion Policy and Procedure, background information about the Organisation and application form will be sent to each applicant.

All applicants who meet the essential requirements required in the person specification will be selected for interview.

Interview panels will consist of between 3 and 5 people appointed by the Board. The panel will be representative of the Organisation's membership but may include people with special expertise

No person may be appointed to serve on the panel that is related in any way to any applicant. Failure on the part of a panel member or applicant to disclose a known relationship constitutes grounds for dismissal should the applicant be appointed

The TMO is committed to developing our workforce. As part of this commitment, all advertisements appear in the internal careers bulletin which is circulated to all staff. Where it is felt that the internal applicant pool may not provide a sufficiently wide field of applicants, advertisements may additionally be placed in external publications.

The TMO will aim to advertise job opportunities to attract the widest pool of suitable candidates. Publications are selected for their coverage of the appropriate professional or technical market, ensuring they reach a broad range of suitable potential applicants. The TMO's commitment to ensuring equality in employment is demonstrated on all advertisements by the text:

“ The TMO is an equal opportunity employer”

### **10.7 Recruitment and Staff Management**

TMO to have an up-to-date Equality and Cohesion Policy in respect of recruitment and staff management.

TMO to demonstrate that Board members have undertaken training in equalities and diversity matters as they affect recruitment and staff management.

### **10.8 Equality and Diversity Training**

The TMO is committed to ensuring all staff have fair access to training and development opportunities. The TMO will ensure that staff receive a wide range of training in relation to equality and diversity:

- New staff will attend corporate induction which promotes equality and diversity in all that we do

- Equality and diversity training is mandatory for all staff and TMO Board members
- Equality impact Assessment training for managers
- Recruitment and Selection training which promotes equality and diversity in our recruitment process
- Staff should also receive training on specific equality related policies such as Domestic Violence, Hate Crime, Harassment and Bullying and Customer Care.

Temporary staff are entitled to attend mandatory, health and safety and job related training.

### **10.9 Disciplinary Procedures**

The Organisation's policy will be included in the contract of employment.

These proceedings will normally be conducted in the same manner as the Management Complaints Procedure.

Through publicising and distributing guidelines and procedures, and by ensuring that all managers are encouraged to attend training on the disciplinary process, steps are taken to ensure that all managers and employees are aware of their personal responsibility for preventing acts of discrimination, including victimisation and harassment. Disciplinary action will be taken where there is a reasonable belief that a member of staff has deliberately breached this policy.

### **10.10 Grievances**

The Organisation's policy will be included in the contract of employment.

These proceedings will normally be conducted in the same manner as the Management Complaints Procedure.

Any complaints from employees of unfair discrimination should be pursued through the organisation's grievance procedure. People outside of the organisation with comments about the operation of this policy

should address them to the TMO Manager and may wish to use the Organisation's formal complaints procedure to this end.

### **11.0 Monitoring and review of equal opportunities policies and procedures**

11.1 The TMO should consider a range of methods for collecting information in relation to Equal Opportunities. In addition to the summary of formal records, consideration might be given to regular sample household questionnaire surveys and focus group meetings, targeted at disadvantaged groups.

Hackney Homes will indicate to TMO the sort of information that needs to be collected in this regard and as such will provide share good practice methodology with them where appropriate.

### **11.2 Details of monitoring and review of the Equalities and Cohesion policies and procedures:**

The TMOs Equalities and Cohesion Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that:

- The TMOs aims and objectives are being fulfilled;
- Information is up to date.

The following areas will be monitored:

- The standard of repair service provided to each household;
- The standard of service provided generally to each household;
- The representatives of the Committee and membership;
- The needs of disadvantaged groups and the appropriateness of the TMOs policies and procedures;
- Inclusion of contractors on approved list and compliance with equal opportunities;
- The composition of the membership of the TMO;



- Nominations from the Council for voids on the estate, and new tenants moving onto the estate;
- Disciplinary action taken against staff

Information will be collected in the following ways:

- Management complaints;
- Regular self- completion questionnaire surveys;
- Regular reports to the Committee;
- Regular updating of household database.

Information will be collected by means of a survey about each household and updated regularly to monitor the diversity of our residents and better meet their needs. It will include equality data such as:

- Age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation
- Household type;
- Main language spoken;
- Special needs
- Preferred method of communication.

The TMO will also gather equality data from their staff on age, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

They will use the staff profile to monitor:

- Disciplinary action taken against staff
- Diversity of senior management
- Staff involved in grievances
- Promoting of staff

- Training of staff
- Recruitment and selections of staff
- Staff leaving the organisation

11.3 This information will be used to inform equality impact assessments and review policies and services. There will be confidentiality of information including personal circumstances e.g. reference to mental health and sexual orientation.

11.4 All reports to the Committee will comment on the implications for the TMOs Equalities and Cohesion Policy. An Equal Opportunities monitoring report be made to the TMOs Annual General Meeting. This annual report will identify issues and make recommendations