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**Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy**

**October 2024**

**1. Vision Statement – Our Commitment**

Pembroke EMB (PEMB) is dedicated to fostering a working environment for staff, volunteers, and Board members that promotes equality of opportunity and prevents unlawful discrimination. We strive to ensure our workforce and Board reflect the diversity of the local community and that our services to tenants and residents are accessible and inclusive.

**2. Outcomes – What We Aim to Achieve Through This Policy**

* To promote equality, fairness, and respect for all paid staff and volunteers, encompassing all aspects of employment, including pay, benefits, grievance handling, discipline, dismissal, redundancy, parental leave, flexible working requests, and opportunities for employment, promotion, and training.
* To maintain a focus on ensuring our staff, volunteers, and Board members represent all sections of the community, fostering an environment where everyone feels respected and empowered to contribute their best.
* To prevent unlawful discrimination based on the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic origin), religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
* To guarantee equality of access to our services for all community sections, recognizing that some individuals and groups may require specific measures to facilitate this (e.g., providing information in various languages).

**3. Purpose of This Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to:

* Articulate PEMB’s vision regarding equality, diversity, and inclusion.
* Provide information on discrimination and relevant legislation.
* Outline the actions that PEMB will undertake to realise its vision.
* Define expected behaviours from staff and Board members.
* Detail the management process for addressing situations where individuals believe they have been treated unfairly.

**4. Scope**

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, and Board members of PEMB.

**5. Definitions**

* **Equality**: Ensuring everyone is treated fairly and with dignity and respect by challenging discrimination and removing barriers to achieving desired outcomes.
* **Diversity**: Recognizing and valuing different backgrounds, abilities, and perspectives, and promoting an environment that celebrates individual differences.
* **Inclusion**: Creating a space where everyone has equal access to opportunities and resources, and where all individuals feel valued and accepted.
* **The Equality Act 2010**: Legislation protecting individuals against discrimination in the workplace and broader society. It prohibits discrimination based on protected characteristics, including age, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy, disability, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.
* **Discrimination**: Unequal or differential treatment based on protected characteristics.
* **Direct Discrimination**: Less favourable treatment due to a protected characteristic.
* **Indirect Discrimination**: Practices that apply to everyone but disproportionately affect individuals with specific protected characteristics without justification.
* **Harassment**: Unwanted behaviour related to a protected characteristic that intimidates or humiliates an individual.
* **Unconscious Bias**: Implicit beliefs and attitudes influencing our perceptions and actions towards others, often without our conscious awareness.

**6. How the Policy Will Be Delivered – What We Will Do**

* We will ensure that all staff, volunteers, and Board members understand the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy, along with their rights and responsibilities, and will provide training to assist them in fulfilling these responsibilities. This training will address unconscious bias, acknowledging that discrimination often arises from implicit rather than overt behaviours.
* We will actively create conditions for our staff and Board to represent the local community, including thoughtful job advertising, flexible employment terms, and accessible meeting arrangements to encourage participation from underrepresented groups.
* We will ensure that service delivery to tenants and residents is non-discriminatory, identifying and addressing any specific needs to facilitate access (e.g., providing materials in alternative languages).
* We will communicate the policy and residents' rights within it, including the right to complain, through welcome materials and regular newsletters.
* We will explore ways to enhance accessibility to our services for all community sections.
* We will monitor and address the following areas concerning our staff:
  + Pay and benefits to ensure equitable compensation for similar roles.
  + Comparable terms and conditions of employment for all employees.
  + Fair grievance and disciplinary processes.
  + Equitable handling of dismissals and redundancies.
  + Parental leave policies that support parents.
  + Flexible working requests evaluated reasonably.
  + Fair selection for employment, promotion, and training opportunities.
* We will make reasonable adjustments for employees with disabilities, such as accommodating medical appointments or modifying equipment and training materials.

**7. Responsibility for Delivering the Policy**

All staff and Board members of PEMB are responsible for upholding the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy and ensuring their understanding of it. This includes participating in training and conducting themselves in ways that promote equal opportunities and prevent discrimination, harassment, and victimization.

**8. Acting on Discriminatory Behaviour**

Any allegations of discriminatory behaviour or harassment should be reported to the Chair of the Board or the PEMB manager. An investigation will ensue, which may involve the Disciplinary Procedure, Code of Conduct, or escalation to relevant authorities, depending on the circumstances.

**9. Reviewing This Policy**

We will review this policy every three years to ensure it remains effective and relevant.

By implementing this Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy, Pembroke EMB seeks to promote a fair and respectful environment where everyone can thrive and contribute to our community.