**Equality and Diversity Policy**

**About One Voice**

One Voice (Immingham District) Ltd is a volunteer organisation, our purpose is to promote for the benefit of the public urban and/or rural regeneration in the socially and economically deprived area of Immingham and district by all or any of the following means:

* the relief of financial hardship
* the advancement of education, training or retraining, particularly among unemployed people, and providing unemployed people with work experience
* the maintenance, improvement or provision of public amenities
* the provision of recreational facilities for the public at large or those who by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, financial hardship or social or economic circumstances, have need of such facilities:
* the protection or conservation of the environment
* the provision of public health facilities and childcare
* the promotion of public safety and prevention of crime

**Aims of this policy**

One Voice (Immingham District) Ltd recognises that in our society power is not held equally and that groups and individuals have been and continue to be discriminated against on many grounds, including due to the protected characteristics of; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Groups and individuals can also be discriminated against for other reasons to, for example where they live.

One Voice (Immingham District) Ltd recognises that where discrimination occurs within our organisation and community, it is unacceptable.

This Equality and Diversity Policy is to set out clearly and fully outlines the positive action One Voice (Immingham District) Ltd intends to take to combat direct and indirect discrimination within the organisation, in the services it provides and in its relationships with other bodies.

In adopting this Equality and Diversity Policy, One Voice (Immingham District) Ltd is also making an unequivocal commitment to implementing it, so as to ensure that equal opportunity becomes a reality.

**Types of Discrimination:**

* Direct Discrimination – Direct discrimination is when an individual is treated **differently** and **worse** than someone else for certain reasons. The Equality Act says the individual has been treated **less favourably**.
* Indirect Discrimination - is when there’s a **practice, policy or rule** which applies to everyone in the same way, but it has a worse effect on some people than others. The Equality Act says it puts the individual at a **particular disadvantage**.
* Discrimination by association - This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.
* Perception discrimination This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.
* Harassment is “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”. Harassment applies to all protected characteristics except for pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership.
* Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act; or because they are suspected of doing so.

**One Voice Practice**

One Voice (Immingham District) Ltd will try always to ensure that all activities and events are open and welcoming to everybody.

* We aim to make our meetings and events accessible to people with disabilities – e.g. meet in accessible premises, and produce information in alternative formats.
* We aim to use local opportunities to help our volunteers, reference group and members better understand how discrimination occurs and how to prevent it.
* All volunteers, sessional/self-employed workers and consultants of One Voice (Immingham District) Ltd will have the Equality and Diversity Policy explained to them, or a copy provided for them to read and understand, and will undertake to comply with and implement this policy.
* Currently One Voice (Immingham District) Ltd do not employ staff but if it were to in the future individuals who apply for a job role are assured that we are committed to equal opportunities at every stage of the application process. One Voice (Immingham District) Ltd refers to ACAS to ensure that the most up to date processes are followed <http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1371>
* Anybody who experiences discrimination within One Voice (Immingham District) Ltd can make complaints to the Chair of Trustees.

**What we will endeavour to**

In addition to the following our Code of Conduct Policy we will:

* Treat people with dignity and respect regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.
* At all times value and respect people’s feelings. Language or humour that people may find offensive will not be used, e.g. sexist or racist jokes or terminology which is derogatory to someone with a disability.
* Class incidents of harassment and/or discrimination seriously. Our hope is that no one will be harassed, abused or intimidated on the grounds of his or her age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

**Dealing with Complaints**

* The board of trustee directors will take complaints of discrimination and harassment very seriously.
* They will investigate them thoroughly, and provide opportunities for the person making the complaint to speak in a safe environment about their experience.
* If the complaint is against a particular individual the board of trustee directors will hear their point of view.
* If the complaint is against a member of the board of trustee directors, then a separate panel will be convened excluding that individual.
* The board of trustee directors will decide the action to take based on the principle of ensuring the continued inclusion and safety of any individual who has experienced discrimination or harassment.
* Any decision to terminate someone’s membership will be made in line with the rules set out in the memorandum of articles and association.
* Any decision to terminate an agreement with a sole trader/consultant or partner organisation will be made by a vote of the trustee directors.
* Any decision to ask a volunteer to stop volunteering will be made by a vote of the trustee directors
* Any decision to ask a participant not to attend further activity sessional will be made by a vote of the trustee directors

**Review**

This policy has been agreed by the trustee directors of One Voice (Immingham District) Ltd. The policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

Signed:                                                            Date:

Chair of One Voice (Immingham District) Ltd