

# East Sussex Community Voice

## Equality and Diversity Policy

### Policy Schedule

Version	Date of next review by ESCV Board	Date of adoption by ESCV Board
1	n/a	28 <sup>th</sup> September 2020
2	28 <sup>th</sup> September 2022	
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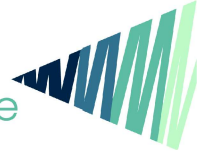
East Sussex Community Voice (ESCV) recognises the diverse needs of our community and is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and diversity in employment and service delivery.

We will challenge discrimination and encourage respect, understanding and dignity for everyone living, working and visiting East Sussex. We will do this through our influence in the community, strategic planning and policy formation in employment, recruitment of volunteers and service delivery.

### 1. Our commitments

1.1. ESCV actively ensures that it complies with the current and any forthcoming statutory requirements and standards, and seeks to influence and encourage our partners and contractors to meet their obligations through agreement and contractual arrangements. We will:

- value the talent, needs and desires of all members of the community
- employ principles of equity and fairness in consultation and community engagement
- promote good relations between all sections of society
- tackle institutional factors and behaviour that inhibit equality of opportunity in employment and the recruitment of volunteers and equitable service delivery.



## 2. Principles and drivers

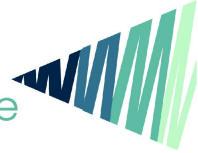
- 2.1. We aim to develop and maintain a workforce and volunteer base with a broad range of skills and experience that reflect the needs and interests of our community.
- 2.2. By supporting equality of opportunity we will address unequal or inequitable access to services and employment through our influence across the County. Our policies are designed to ensure that we make the most of the diverse experiences, skills and talents of everyone living and working in East Sussex.
- 2.3. We want East Sussex to be a good place to live, work and visit. In employment and volunteering opportunities, we will work to ensure that everyone has equal access to opportunities and that the attributes, talents and skills of our workforce reflect those of the communities we serve.

## 3. The duty to promote equality

- 3.1. We recognise that equality is central to the development of our policies and practices in respect of race, gender, disability, religion and belief, sexuality and age. This means we will tackle discrimination, encourage understanding and promote equality of opportunity in relation to each of these strands in all aspects of our work.

## 4. Our performance

- 4.1. *Representing the people of East Sussex* – The ESCV Board, Director, employees and volunteers will be active in promoting equality. All have responsibility for ensuring that our services are delivered effectively to everyone in the community. All are expected to promote equality and good relations between everyone in the community.
- 4.2. The Board and Director oversee the development and implementation of ESCV's equality agenda, providing leadership to staff and integrating the equality ethos and requirements into mainstream activity and processes.
- 4.3. *Consultation, communications and monitoring* – through consultation and our contacts across the county, we seek to understand how effective our services are at meeting the needs of the community, and with their support, we promote good relations between everyone in East Sussex. We

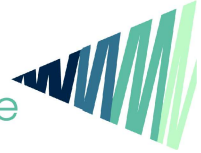


encourage our partners to share, and help us to shape, our principles and policies – we expect to learn from their experience of working in the community and we will help, where we can, to add value to their work.

- 4.4. Within ESCV we also seek the views of our staff on the experience of working for the company and from volunteers, the experience of volunteering for the company. We will assess all comments against equalities strands and seek to address concerns and make the most of opportunities.
- 4.5. *Procurement and contracts* – our influence extends to our responsibilities to ensure that organisations delivering services on our behalf, or from whom we purchase goods and services, do so in accordance with our policies. We expect all organisations with whom we have a contract to deliver services as required on policies that are compatible with ours.
- 4.6. *Delivering services* – ESCV is a service provider in the County. We aim to deliver those services effectively to all members of the community on the basis of equal access in recognition of the diverse needs of different members of the community. We assess the impact of new and existing processes, strategies and policies on our residents, communities and visitors to East Sussex. One of the ways in which we do this is through conducting Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) to ensure that equality of opportunity is central to our work and that any adverse effects on particular groups are identified and addressed as required.

## 5. Our promise

- 5.1. We will be an efficient, consumer focused, accountable organisation, working with partners and local communities to:
- Make a positive difference to local people's lives;
  - Help to create a prosperous and safe county; and provide high quality services.
- 5.2. We set out how we are going to meet this vision in our Articles of Association registered with the Community Interest Company Regulator. We will work towards this promise in a way that benefits all and does not unreasonably, or unlawfully, disadvantage any group of people.



5.3. Equality of opportunity and valuing the diversity of staff – equality of opportunity and diversity for staff (and volunteers) in East Sussex is supported by our Equal Opportunities Statement.

5.4. Our staff and volunteers are East Sussex Community Voice's most significant and valuable asset. We make the most of the potential of staff and volunteers by recognising, supporting and valuing the diversity that we all bring into the workplace. We will challenge discrimination, intentional or unintentional. We have policies in place to educate staff to develop their understanding of our equalities duties and enable them to put this learning into practice. We also have policies enabling us to take disciplinary action when appropriate.

5.5. We aim to ensure that we meet the needs of all our staff and in turn we expect staff to work effectively, diligently and responsibly to meet the business needs of ESCV.

5.6. We assess the impact on all staff of our terms and conditions of employment and other Personnel policies.

## **6. Future development of the Policy**

6.1. Our Equality and Diversity policy is not static, it is updated and modified as new legislation and codes of practice are introduced and our understanding develops of the needs of everyone living, working and visiting East Sussex.

6.2. We are aware that inequality exists and recognise the continual need to ensure that we work hard to deliver our services fairly to all, and that we always make the most of all staff. We are committed to tackling inequality and to making steady, assessable, improvements.