Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

General

The Company actively encourages and promotes equal opportunities in respect of age, disability, gender including gender reassignment, health, physical ability, race, ethnic origin, nationality, trade union membership, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, health, sexuality, religious beliefs, or irrelevant criminal conviction. Wherever possible it is our wish to ensure that the diversity of our employees and our clients reflects the diversity of the wider population.

Objectives

- To create a working environment where discrimination in any form is not condoned and where harassment, victimisation and bullying will not be tolerated.
- To ensure ongoing training on equal opportunities for all employees, in order that we can all work together as a team. Delivering the best outcome and respecting the capabilities of everyone.
- To work towards achieving a workforce who reflect the diversity in our society.
- To ensure that recruitment is fair for all and our processes are in accordance with the relevant legislation and Codes of practice.
- To review staff promotion procedures frequently, to ensure that individuals are selected for promotion, training or reward based on individual merit and ability.
- To update our policies and procedures when necessary to meet any new legislation and to follow the codes of practice.

Recruitment & Selection

All interviews will be managed and conducted appropriately and in accordance with the relevant legislation and Codes of practice.

We will advertise for all job vacancies to ensure we receive a wide pool of applications as we wish our workforce to reflect the ethnic composition and diversity of the local population.

Interviewers will be trained and competent with the required skills to ensure the process is fair, in order to not discriminate unlawfully against applicants.

Candidates who have learning difficulties or disabilities will be treated fairly and special provision made, to the degree that they are given a fair opportunity to understand the subjects being discussed and are able to give a full account of themselves within the assessment process.

We will always fully consider the abilities, experience, and qualifications of all candidates in each recruitment or promotion exercise as we understand the merits of developing a workforce that has a diverse range of skills.

Training & Development

All employees will be given the opportunity for training and development based on the individual's requirements and in accordance with the future needs of the business.

All employees will be subject to a period of six (6) month probation. A probationary period of 6 months shall be served by every employee hired in any continuing or temporary position on an original appointment, promotion, or demotion; and shall be successfully completed before the employee can be given a continuing appointment. Successful passing of the probation period shall be documented and transmitted in writing via the HR department. Thereafter, all employees will have regular 1 (one) year appraisals with their line managers and any additional training will be provided as required. Records will be kept in each personnel file by the HR department.

Training on Equal Opportunities and Diversity will be ongoing throughout The Company as we require every member of staff to recognise and carry out their own responsibility, to contribute to the success of the policy.

Discrimination

It is unacceptable for any employee, applicant, supplier or member of the public to be discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of age, disability, gender including gender reassignment, health, physical ability, race, ethnic origin, nationality, trade union membership, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, health, sexuality, religious beliefs or irrelevant criminal conviction.

A breach in this policy could lead to formal disciplinary action being taken in accordance with the documented appeals procedure of The Company and could result in dismissal.

We define discrimination as follows:

- Direct Discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic.
- Discrimination by Association occurs when someone is treated less favourably because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic.
- Perception Discrimination occurs against someone when others think they possess a particular protected characteristic and applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

- Indirect Discrimination can occur when you have a condition, rule policy or practice within The Company that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who have a protected characteristic.

Victimisation or Retaliation

Victimisation or retaliation occurs when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance or have been suspected of doing so.

The Company will take all reasonable steps to ensure that employees are protected against victimisation or retaliation. It is unlawful and a disciplinary offence and any breach in this policy could lead to formal disciplinary action being taken in accordance with the documented appeals procedure of The Company and could result in dismissal.

Harassment

Harassment is unwanted conduct relating to a relevant protected characteristic which has the purpose of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

The Company will take all reasonable steps to ensure that employees are protected against harassment. It is unlawful and a disciplinary offence and any breach in this policy could lead to formal disciplinary action being taken in accordance with the documented appeals procedure of The Company and could result in dismissal.

Discipline & Grievance

All complaints will be treated in confidence and taken seriously. Victimisation, retaliation, or harassment following a complaint will be monitored.

If any member of staff or applicant for a staff position reports that they have been unfairly discriminated against the matter will be fully investigated by a senior member of staff independent from the process and personnel under investigation.

All Grievances must be submitted in writing to the HR department, and all appeals to the Board of Directors within 5 working days of the decision.

Where any employee reports that they have been unfairly discriminated against the case will be dealt with in accordance with the documented appeals procedure of The Company. All appeals will the reviewed within 10 working days.

** This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and any amendments communicated to the relevant personnel.*

Eimear Tams

Managing Director

Signature: **Date: Jan 2025**