

EQUALITIES POLICY

Statement

THE BOARD OF FINANCE, as legal employer for Diocesan people, declares its intention to be an equal opportunity employer.

Preamble

It is a fundamental part of the Christian faith that all human beings are created in the image of God, and are valued equally by Him and share equally His love. Unlawful and unfair discrimination between people is accordingly contrary to God's purpose. It may also contravene the law of the land, such as the various Acts of Parliament that outlaw some types of discrimination within employment.

Aims and Objectives

The Diocesan Synod, and the Board exist to support and promote the aims of the Church of England in particular, and of the Christian faith in general. The employees of the Board will be expected to show commitment to those aims.

In relation to certain posts, it will be a requirement that the holder be a communicant member of the Church of England, or a Church in communion therewith, or of a member Church of the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland, or of 'Churches Together in England'.

Having respect to the foregoing, the Board pledges that it and its employees will not discriminate, directly or indirectly, between people on the grounds of race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, age, gender, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation or (save where there is a genuine occupational requirement) religion or belief, or in recruiting or promoting to posts. The Board will at all times seek to promote equality of opportunity, within the limits of what is permissible under law.

Enforcement

Unlawful discrimination by any of the Board's employees will render the person concerned liable to disciplinary action.

Application of the Policy

The Board will seek to give effect to its policy in the following ways:

- **Recruitment**

The usual practice will be for all posts to be advertised internally and externally at the same time. There may be occasions, however, where a decision is taken to advertise posts internally only as this is a fair way to provide opportunities for existing employees as part of a development and retention strategy. Similarly, where the post has been undertaken satisfactorily on a temporary basis for some time, a decision may be taken to confirm the post holder in a permanent post.

The Board will seek to draw vacancies to the attention of groups which may otherwise be disadvantaged in seeking employment and, when appropriate, will encourage applications from particular ethnic/racial groups for particular posts in accordance with positive action provision of relevant legislation.

- **Selection**

Care will be taken in preparing job descriptions, profiles of post holders, required qualifications etc., to ensure that no unnecessary requirement or condition is produced which will disadvantage any member of a particular group.

The only exception to this policy will be:

- where there is a requirement specific to a post that limits availability to members of a particular group (a genuine occupational requirement).
- where there is a requirement in relation to a certain post that a member of staff in order to fulfil their duties, should be a communicant members of the Church of England, or of a Church in communion therewith, or of a member Church of the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland or of 'Churches Together in England'.

- **HR Policies**

The Board intends that its personnel policies - including its procedures for appointment, short-listing, interviewing, training, promotion, and all terms and conditions of employment, as well as its grievance and disciplinary arrangements - should be non-discriminatory. The Diocesan Secretary will be responsible to the Board for ensuring the regular review of HR policies with this object in mind.

- **Training**

The Board will seek to ensure that training is available to and brought to the attention of all employees, which

- enables them to fulfil their highest potential in their sphere of work;
- assists them to avoid discriminatory behaviour in their work.

- **Harassment**

Harassment at work is unacceptable and is contrary to a harmonious and productive working environment. This is dealt with further in Appendix 13.

Monitoring and Review of this Policy

The Board of Directors, through the Diocesan Secretary will keep records of the gender, ethnic origin, and disability (if any) of employees, job applicants, and interviewees.

The Board will receive and consider an annual report from the Diocesan Secretary on the implementation and effectiveness of this policy, including analyses of the information mentioned above.

The Chairman of the Board will have general oversight of the monitoring of this policy on behalf of the Board and Diocesan Synod. The Chairman, and the Diocesan Secretary will be under a duty to report to the Board any evidence of discriminatory practices, and to propose remedies for them.

The Board of Directors accepts its responsibility to consider carefully any recommendations made to it under this policy, and to provide the resources necessary for its implementation.