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## Equal Opportunities and Diversity Company Policy

Our aim is to ensure that all individuals are treated fairly, responsibly and equitably in all aspects of employment and the delivery of our services. We will recognise, respect and value difference and diversity.

Decisions about employment and service delivery will be based solely on factors that can be justified both legally and ethically. Those decisions will be made irrespective of matters such as age, disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnership, sex, or gender reassignment.

We will meet all relevant laws, regulations and codes of practice in our operations and wherever possible conform to best practice as an employer and as a service provider.

We are committed to ensuring that our services are provided fairly and equitably to all sections of the community and as far as possible that our workforce reflects the multi-racial, multi-lingual communities within which we serve.

Equality is important for our future success. We will recruit, train and promote the best people, leaving prejudice and outdated values behind.

Through communication and training we will raise the awareness of our staff and ensure that they conform to this policy throughout the organization with appropriate disciplinary action in the event of individual failure to meet our corporate requirements.

This policy shall be reviewed annually and reissued at least every two years.

Signed.....

Date.....*4<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2024*

**Simon Lamb**  
**Managing Director**

## Procedure

### Purpose:

**This Procedure describes and details the company's requirements, routines, controls and records involved in the pursuance and management of its Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy, as described above. It is aimed at ensuring that the current Legal requirements and Codes of Practice are properly addressed.**

The Procedure refers to the records retained as evidence of compliance with those requirements and Codes. It encompasses an Annual Review that ensures the continuous improvement of the routines, Policy, objectives and targets and this Procedure.

Further, it provides relevant direction to all company personnel and evidence of intent and achievement in the field of Equal Opportunity and Diversity to Customers and other interested parties.

### Scope

The company's Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy and associated Procedure as described herein apply to all managers, staff, suppliers and sub-contractors.

The periodic review of the Policy and Procedure together with its implementation and operation are described below, together with the detailing of the company's objectives and targets and the responsibility for their effectiveness and operation.

### References

EQUALITY ACT 2010

### Management Responsibility

The Directors will champion and positively promote the declared Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy of the company. They must ensure that their employment and service delivery decisions take full account of the company's commitment to equality and diversity. Appendix 1 contains a matrix explaining the responsibilities and liabilities of the organization and its Members.

Ultimate responsibility for the suitability, effectiveness, awareness and implementation of the Company's Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy (hereafter "the Policy") and associated Procedure rests with the Managing Director.

The company recognizes that certain groups and individuals have historically been, and could continue to be, unfairly treated as a result of reasons such as skin colour, disability, marital status, age and sex. Other factors such as age, sexuality and

health status (including HIV or AIDS) can create disadvantage. It is also recognized that discrimination can take place at an Institutionalized level as well as personal. The company strongly believes that any such discrimination whether unlawful or simply contrary to the standards of the basic fairness, is wrong. Its approach to equal opportunity diversity is to avoid discrimination against anyone on the above grounds.

Further, a wide definition of the term 'family' is adopted and extended to include a long-term unmarried partner, household and dependents and a long-term partner of homosexual persons.

Company personnel must ensure that they do not discriminate, either unlawfully or contrary to the Policy. If in any doubt about service delivery, employment practices or personal behaviour, individuals are required to seek advice from their line manager in the first instance.

The company is committed to a policy of fairness and equitable treatment for all in every aspect of employment. The company is also committed to eliminating all forms of unjustified discrimination, whether unlawful or contrary to its commitment to fairness and equitable treatment. This applies from initial recruitment to all aspects of staff management including training, terms and conditions and where necessary, discipline etc., as described below.

### **Employees Responsibility**

Under no circumstances must company employees demonstrate racism, sexism, homophobia or other breaches of the declared Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy. Any employee who acts in such a way, whether personally, or by colluding with or ignoring the actions of organisations with whom the company works, or in any other way that is contrary to the Policy, will be subject to disciplinary action.

All employees are required to read and comply with the Policy and ensure that their behaviour fully supports the company objectives of equality and fairness. Lack of awareness is not acceptable as an excuse for failure to comply with company requirements. They shall also comply with the company's Code of Conduct.

It is the duty of all employees to accept their personal responsibility in the implementation of the Policy and in support of company objectives. As the same time, the company acknowledges that specific responsibilities fall upon management, supervision and the individuals professionally involved in recruitment and employee administration.

### **Objectives and Targets**

The company is an equal opportunity employer. The objective of this Policy and Procedure is to ensure that every job applicant and employee is treated according to their merits and abilities irrespective of sex, colour, race, age, nationality or national or ethnic origins, and that they are not disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which are not essential for carrying out the job.

**The company's primary target is to achieve an annual nil return of non-compliant events in the field of Equal Opportunities and Diversity. This includes events identified or reported both by internal sources and by external parties associated with the company's activities. The results are annually reviewed by the board of Directors.**

## Details of Equal Opportunities and Diversity Routines

### **Personnel Recruitment and Selection Responsibility**

The responsibility for the recruitment and selection of all permanent staff rests with the Directors. Application for such employment may be made on a standard Application Form or by completing a New Start Questionnaire which is available from the HR admin function.

In all cases, the company's Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy and Procedure requirements are applicable, such that both legal requirements and management objectives are fulfilled.

### **Recruitment and Selection Processes**

When a vacancy arises, consideration is given as to whether recruitment should take place from a particular group because membership of that group is seen to be an essential qualification. In such case this will be stated as a Genuine Occupational Qualification in the job description and the associated advertisement. Vacancies are also given a wide internal circulation to existing staff who may possess the necessary qualification and experience.

The advertisement of job vacancies is managed centrally by the company secretary and HR admin function. In order to obtain applications from diverse sources, advertising is placed in a wide range of relevant publications and, where appropriate, in different languages.

Hourly-paid operatives are normally selected by the Operations Director from the job applications received. In the case of staff positions the Managing Director in conjunction with the appropriate director makes the final selection. Selection is based only upon the Applications suitability for the vacancy to be filled, taking account of all relevant circumstances and requirements (including the company's Equal Opportunity and Diversity Policy, Codes of Practice and legal obligations).

Throughout the recruitment and selection process directors shall ensure that all applicants receive the equal treatment.

Relevant work/life experience will be valued as an alternative to formal education. When formal qualifications are an essential criterion in selection, comparable qualifications gained overseas will be rated as equivalent to UK qualifications.

Selection criteria and procedures are periodically reviewed in the light of employee records to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and in all other ways treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.

Interview questions and assessments will concentrate on criteria that are relevant to the job.

Individual skills and abilities and an objective assessment of suitability for the role will determine who is successful.

### **Positive Action**

It is recognized that the senior management team as well as other areas the company may not reflect the diversity of the general population.

The company will take positive action on an on-going basis to encourage applications from under –represented groups, whether to senior management jobs or other areas where there is a demonstrable under-representation.

Whether in respect of advertising or selection, managers will ensure that such positive action shall not become positive discrimination, by ensuring that applicants are considered strictly on their merits.

### **Working Conditions and Practices**

#### **Conditions of Employment**

Within 8 weeks of commencement of employment, all new employees receive confirmation of their agreed terms and conditions of employment by the issue of the company's standard Terms and Conditions of Employment applicable at that time.

Standard (but different) Conditions of Employment are applicable to both Staff and Hourly – Paid personnel, with those conditions specific to the individual being added to the company's standard document. A copy of the agreed staff Terms and Conditions signed and dated by the employee is returned to and retained by the HR Administration Function.

To ensure that direct or indirect discrimination is not occurring, recruitment and other employment decisions are monitored by the Company Secretary in conjunction with the records of job applicants and existing employees.

#### **Details of Terms and Conditions of Employment.**

The company will ensure that terms and conditions, including pay, are fair and equitable, taking account responsibility, performance and contribution.

The benefits, facilities and services available to company employees will be clearly defined so that people are aware of their entitlements.

## **Promotion**

All personnel are considered for promotion by the company's management, taking into account the individuals capabilities and requirements, their suitability for advancement and the company's needs at the time of consideration. Careful attention is given by management to ensure that the Policy requirements are full addressed when making their decision as to the possible promotion of an individual.

All employees are given equal opportunity and encouraged to progress within the organization. Matters of under-representation of any groups are given attention at senior management level.

An employee who believes that he or she has been unfairly treated in any sense associated with this Policy is entitled to raise the matter through the appropriate Grievance Procedure.

## **Discipline and Dismissal**

A written Disciplinary Procedure is operated by the company. Details are notified to new staff together with their Terms and Conditions of Employment for them to sign to confirm their awareness.

## **Harassment**

Sexual or racial (or other) harassment is normally regarded as gross misconduct by the company, and is dealt with in accordance with the company's Disciplinary Procedure.

The company is opposed to any form of harassment or bullying on any ground, whether covered by the law or not. Anyone acting in such a way will be subject to disciplinary action. This applies in employment or any other aspect of our activities such as the provision of services.

The aim is to create an environment in which all employees, those using and providing our services and anyone else we come into contact with, is treated with dignity and respect.

## **Direct Discrimination**

This is treating someone less favorably on the grounds of sex, race, age or disability. For example, turning away job applicants because of the colour of their skin; questioning only women at interview about child care arrangements or refusing to employ men to work in mainly female teams. All such practice is not permitted by the company and is dealt with in accordance with the Discipline Procedure.

## **Indirect discrimination**

This arises when a requirement or condition is applied which cannot be justified, and which disproportionately affects one sex or race group and which cannot be justified. For example, not putting part time staff, who are mainly women, on training courses or insisting on full time working without justification. All such practice is not permitted by the company and is dealt with in accordance with the Discipline Procedure.

## **Victimisation**

Victimisation of someone who has made an allegation of discrimination is unlawful and therefore not permitted by the company. Any claimed instance of victimization is dealt with by application of the standard Grievance Procedure.

## **Disability**

People with disabilities are not treated less favourably than other people. The company only considers excluding disabled people when all avenues to alter circumstances have been investigated and discarded as unworkable.

The company recognizes its legal and social obligations under the Equality Act 2010. Managers will:

Interview all applicants in line with pre-employment health related checks as outlined in the Equality Act 2010.

They will make every effort when employees become disabled to ensure they can stay in employment. Adopt a positive approach to making reasonable adjustments where in the employment context or in our service delivery.

## **Maternity Leave and Pay**

The company is committed to ensuring that women who want to continue their careers after they have a baby should be able to do so.

The aim is to adopt a positive approach to pregnancy and maternity leave and to regard it as a normal part of employing women. It is not viewed as a nuisance or the end of a woman's commitment to her career and to the company.

Legal requirements regarding time off for antenatal care will be met including giving consideration to pregnant employees' comfort and their safety needs.

In addition, the company will keep in contact during maternity leave and ensure that employees on maternity leave are considered for vacancies and promotion. Return to work after maternity leave will be eased by colleague-support and appropriate training, and serious consideration to requests for alternative working patterns will be given by the company.

## **Parental Leave**

The company promotes suitable arrangements, rules, procedures and guidance on the availability of leave of absence from work for parental and compassionate reasons. In so doing the requirements of the Employment Rights Act 2002 will be met.

## **Penalties**

The penalties for unlawful discrimination are significant and legal liability is not restricted to the company. Employees may all be personally liable for their actions whether committed deliberately or unknowingly. This applies whenever are 'in the course of employment' which could apply to organized social events, residential training courses or any other activity which could reasonably be regarded as taking place in the course of employment.

## **Work with other Organisations and Suppliers**

The company recognizes that its role as an equal opportunities organization is not limited to being an employer and direct service provider. It plays a part in the local economy, and promotes its equal opportunities policy within other organisations with which it deals.

The company ensures that it's tendering process and, as far as possible and applicable, the operation of its sub-contractors and suppliers, actively promote equal opportunities policies. Appendix 2 contains a sub-contractor's equal opportunities checklist that is used as a guide of standards for the company's sub-contractors.

The company will take action against it's' sub-contractors who discriminate against, or harass any of its staff, residents or other people affected by their actions.

Any member of staff working with other organisations and individuals who they feel are acting contrary to this Policy should inform the organization or individual of their concern and seek advice on the most appropriate course of action from their line Manager.

## **Resolving Problems**

It is recognized that some people may be reluctant to complain about discrimination and harassment. All staff are encouraged to approach a board director of their choice in order to gain action on a problem.

That board director shall treat any complaint, concern or suspicion seriously. They will act promptly, sensitively and objectively and will protect employees from victimization.

## **Flexible Working**

The company recognizes that patterns of work are changing, as employees increasingly have to balance work and domestic commitments. An innovative, 'can do' approach to flexible working is encouraged, considering each request, whatever the reason, in a way which fairly balances the needs of the individual and the company.



Requests will not be turned down simply because it involves a new way to work. Staff working part time and those working other flexible work arrangements will be valued as highly as those working full time.

Lack of childcare facilities may act as an obstacle to many potential applicants. To assist working parents, flexible hours may be agreed with Board Directors.

### **Training and Awareness and Development**

The company recognizes that the provision of training is not only an important source of development for its staff but is essential in furthering its equal opportunities policies by, for example, recruiting people who may be under-represented in the workforce.

The company is committed to ensuring that all staff have equal access to training facilities and are encouraged to attend training relevant to their role within the organization or for their career development.

The training budget and schedule is developed by the Health and Safety function over the year following review by the board of directors. The objective of the review is to establish the requirements of both the employee and company and devise a plan for the coming year.

Training is organized through the HSQE function engaging specialists and external service providers for the relevant requirement.

### **Communication**

Updated versions of this policy and Procedure are available in hard copy from Head Office.

Information bulletins provide key information and up-dates on all relevant topics, and are issued by the HSQE Manager and place on company website accordingly.

The results of Annual Reviews and associated Policy and Procedure modifications are communicated to all personnel by issuing changes to controlled documentation in accordance with the company's Document Control Procedure.

### **Awareness**

All directors will receive training appropriate to their needs in the conduct and management of the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy. They are required to disseminate all relevant instruction and requirement to the employees so as to ensure proper awareness at all levels and to fully comply with company Policy and Procedure.

Site inductions at the commencement of all projects enable these requirements to be implemented at site level, such that Policy is effected at all operating locations of the company.

### **Monitoring**

## **Management Review**

This Policy and Procedure are reviewed annually by the company's Board of Directors. The Review includes consideration of all adverse situations (including the effects of selection decisions and personnel practices and routines) reported or identified from internal and external sources, and decisions made as to the need for revisions to current documentation and instructions.

The performance of the company in relations to its declared targets (see Section 5 above) is reviewed and conclusions made as the need to amend or add targets for the next period.

A review is also made of progress on equal opportunity and diversity both statically, by monitoring matters such as offers of employment, workforce composition and performance reviews, and by reviewing progress of any equal opportunity plans and initiatives. This ensures that direct or indirect discrimination is not occurring, and is achieved by reference to the database records maintained in the HR function.

## **Feedback**

Feedback of performance of the Policy and Procedure is welcomed by the company, from all sources.

The implementation of both corrective and preventative actions as a result of reviewing any issues that may have arisen will be advised and incorporated by the Managing Director and circulated accordingly.

## **Records**

The following records and documents in support of this Procedure are maintained within the company:

Completed Application Forms that may be in electronic format

New Start Questionnaire

Standard Terms & Conditions of employment (and Appendices)

Annual Review of the Policy and Procedure

Database record of ethnic origins and disabilities of company employees

Typical copies of external advertisements

The retention period of the above records varies. Application Forms and Questionnaires from unsuccessful applicants are retained for a minimum periods of 2 years, so as to enable combined review and analysis to establish trends or other

relevant characteristics. Application Forms successful applicants are retained for as long as is necessary (normally throughout their period of employment and for a further 5 years) on their Personal File, held by the Company Secretary.

Other key records are retained for a minimum period of 5 years, in compliance with the company's Quality Management System.

No records are permanently deleted or otherwise destroyed without the recorded approval of the Managing Director and Company Secretary.

## PROCEDURE REVISION SHEET

### Appendix 1 – MATRIX OF MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES AND LIABILITIES

Note: the matrix identifies the main responsibilities and liabilities under law. It is not intended as a definitive statement. The 'staff' column includes responsibilities and liabilities of managers and Directors in their capacity as individual employees.

|  | <b>Board / company</b>   | <b>Staff – including Managers, Board Directors</b>  |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Employment Tribunals and courts</b> | <p><b>RESPONSIBILITY:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Strategy / policy in employment &amp; service delivery</li><li>2. Training &amp; communication 'in company' to third parties...</li><li>3. Monitor progress, service take up etc</li><li>4. Comply with codes etc</li><li>5. Champion</li><li>6. Implement policy in all people-management and service delivery</li><li>7. Deal with problems</li><li>8. Set example</li></ol> <p><b>LIABILITY:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. For employer, managers, staff, 3<sup>rd</sup> parties (in) actions</li><li>2. Unlimited £ compensation</li><li>3. Own (in) actions</li><li>4. Individual / shared with employer for unlimited £s</li></ol> | <p><b>RESPONSIBILITY</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Know Policy</li><li>2. Comply</li><li>3. Avoid Collusion</li><li>4. Raise problems</li></ol> <p><b>LIABILITY</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Own actions</li><li>2. Individual / shared with employer for unlimited £s</li></ol> |
| <b>Criminal Courts</b>                 |  | <p><b>RESPONSIBILITY</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Observe Law</li></ol> <p><b>LIABILITY</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>2. Own actions</li><li>3. Fine/prison</li></ol>   |

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|---------------------|--|--|
| <b>Civil Courts</b> | <b>RESPONSIBILITY</b><br>1. Duty of Care |  |
|                     | <b>LIABILITY</b><br>2. £ Damages         |  |
|                     |  |  |

Note: Thirds parties such as sub contractors and service- users also have responsibilities and liabilities e.g. to provide a fair and equal service to service-users, to avoid harassment, to comply with criminal law etc.

## Appendix 2 Sub – Contractors Equal Opportunities Policy Checklist

The Following table is not intended to be definitive list of criteria for assessing whether or not a sub-contractors policy is sufficient and staff may want to be flexible with smaller or new subcontractors. This can be done providing sub-contractors are advised to develop the areas in which they are weak. All sub-contractors will have to accept and comply with MAKERS CONSTRUCTION LTD policy.

| Criteria  | Essential                | Desirable                |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Clear equal opportunities policy / statement   | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| 1. Ensure that everyone has equal access to services provided   | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| 1. Use clear and objective recruitment methods  | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| 1. Make sure racial harassment and any other form of harassment are considered a serious offence under the companies disciplinary code                            | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| 1. Demonstrate positive action initiatives undertaken   |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1. Declare an interest to increase the representation of ethnic minorities in the workforce, wherever they are under represented in relation to local communities | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |

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|--|--------------------------|--|
| 1. Practice effective ethnic monitoring of the equal opportunities i.e. employment applications. | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
|--|--------------------------|--|