

Equality and Diversity Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Stoll is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our workforce and our service users.

2. Objectives

- 2.1 Stoll strives to create a workforce which is truly representative of all sections of society and where each employee feels respected and able to give of their best.
- 2.2 Stoll strives to ensure housing and support are provided to our service users based solely on need and without any bias or prejudice.
- 2.3 Stoll strives to ensure that no member of staff or service user is disadvantaged due to discrimination on the basis of their gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability or age, pregnancy or trade union membership or the fact that they are a part-time employee or a fixed term employee.
- 2.4 Stoll is committed to continual development of its Equality and Diversity Policy with the long-term aim that the composition of Stoll's workforce and service users should reflect that of the local community and that all staff and service users of Stoll should be offered equal opportunities to achieve their full potential.

3. Policy Content

3.1 To whom does this Policy Apply?

- 3.1.1 The Equal Opportunities Policy is applicable to members of Stoll staff, job applicants, volunteers, consultants and contractors employed by Stoll, its tenants and those applying for housing and any other persons involved in the work of Stoll.
- 3.1.2 The Equality and Diversity Policy is for guidance only and shall be provided to all staff and service users.

3.2 Scope

- 3.2.1 This Policy applies to advertising of jobs and recruitment and selection, to training and development, opportunities for promotion, to conditions of service, benefits and facilities and pay; to health and safety and to conduct at work, to grievance and disciplinary procedures and to the termination of employment, including redundancy.

3.2.2 Stoll is committed to a programme of action to make its policy properly effective:

- Selection and promotion criteria and procedures will be regularly reviewed to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities and that sufficiently diverse sectors of the community are reached. All employees will be given equal opportunities.
- Stoll will take appropriate steps to accommodate the requirement of workers' religions, cultures and domestic responsibilities.

3.3 Responsibilities for Implementation of the Policy

3.3.1 It is the overall responsibility of the Board of Trustees to ensure that Stoll's Equality and Diversity Policy is properly implemented.

3.3.2 It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive to ensure that the necessary monitoring, record keeping, training programmes and reviews are properly established and maintained with particular reference to the Race Relations Act (1976), the Sex Discrimination Act (1975) and the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and the guidance and advice of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights.

3.3.3 It should also be recognised that each member of staff has a responsibility to act in accordance with the Equality and Diversity Policy stated here and the Code of Conduct and should familiarise themselves with these to ensure they act in accordance with them.

3.4 Recruitment, Selection and Promotion

3.4.1 Stoll aims to ensure that no job applicant receives less favourable treatment on any of the unlawful grounds listed above. Job vacancies will be publicly advertised and will state the minimum qualification to do the job successfully.

3.4.2 Job vacancies will be advertised in the disability and ethnic press and in other publications to reach as wide a range of applicants as possible.

3.4.3 The Equality and Diversity Statement and Monitoring Form will be issued to all job applicants for the purposes of monitoring the disability status and ethnic origin of applicants together with a statement explaining that monitoring is an attempt to evaluate the implementation of the Equality and Diversity Policy and will not affect the candidate's application unless the job advertised has specified a particular worker (as permitted in the Race Relations Act).

3.4.4 The procedures for recruitment, selection and promotion will be examined and reviewed regularly. This will include reviewing and revising, where necessary, the wording of advertisements, the composition of the interview panel and selection criteria.

3.4.5 The sex, ethnic/racial origin and physical disability of job applicants will be recorded.

- 3.4.6 Job descriptions will be reviewed so that they do not state the need for qualifications which are not essential for the successful performance of a job and that they do not require experience which would effectively discriminate against certain groups of people. This will be done whenever a post becomes vacant.

3.5 Current Staff Records

- 3.5.1 Records will be maintained of the gender, disability and racial/ethnic origin of all staff and Stoll will monitor its use of fixed-term staff and part-time staff.

3.6 Staff Training and Conditions of Service

- 3.6.1 Staff training needs will be identified through regular staff appraisals and all staff will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within Stoll.
- 3.6.2 Committee members will be encouraged to attend training courses on disability and race awareness and other relevant courses and all staff will receive training with regard to equal opportunities appropriate to their work.
- 3.6.3 Special training needs of particular relevance to the promotion of either men or women will be identified where sexual distinctions may give rise to discrimination.
- 3.6.4 Training will be provided when appropriate for staff who act in a supervisory capacity on the implications of current legislation and standards of good practice which are appreciated and applied.
- 3.6.5 Stoll's conditions for service, benefits and facilities will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they are available to all staff who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them. This includes, pay, bonus criteria, policies and all benefits offered.

3.7 Housing Management

- 3.7.1 Stoll's Equality and Diversity Statement will be issued to all housing applicants (including transfers).
- 3.7.2 Disability and ethnic record keeping will be carried out for all housing applicants, including unsuccessful applicants.
- 3.7.3 Stoll will carry out an annual review of diversity amongst housing applicants.
- 3.7.4 Housing Management Policies will be reviewed with reference to Stoll's Housing Services Committee and Residents Association to ensure application of our Equality and Diversity Policy.
- 3.7.5 Relevant agencies will be consulted concerning ethnic minority issues.

3.8 Staff Responsibilities

- 3.8.1 It will be a condition of service that all members of staff have a duty to act in accordance with this Policy at all times. It is an obligation for staff that they should not harass their clients or work colleagues or be discriminatory in anyway.

3.9 Disability Discrimination

- 3.9.1 If a member of staff or tenant is disabled, or becomes disabled in the course of their employment/housing with Stoll, they are encouraged to inform Stoll about their condition. This is to enable Stoll to support that member of staff/tenant as much as possible and to facilitate any reasonable adjustments to their working/housing conditions that may be necessary.

3.10 Termination of Employment

- 3.10.1 We will monitor redundancy criteria and procedures to ensure that they are fair and objective and do not directly or indirectly discriminate against staff.
- 3.10.2 We will ensure that disciplinary procedures are carried out fairly and uniformly for all staff, whether they result in the giving of disciplinary warnings, dismissal, other disciplinary action or no further action.

3.11 Other Procedures

- 3.11.1 Stoll will review other procedures and policies with regard to its commitment to equality and diversity.

3.12 Breaches of the Policy

- 3.12.1 If a member of staff or tenant believes that they may have been disadvantaged on any of the unlawful grounds listed above, they are encouraged to raise the matter through Stoll's grievance procedure. If they believe they have been harassed on any of the unlawful grounds listed above, they are encouraged to raise the matter with a Senior Manager, the Chief Executive or the Trustee Board as appropriate.
- 3.12.2 Allegations regarding potential breaches of this Policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Staff and tenants who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result.
- 3.12.3 False allegations of a breach of this Policy which are found to have been made in bad faith will be dealt with under our disciplinary procedure.
- 3.12.4 If after investigation it is proven that a member of staff or tenant or any other worker has been harassed on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability or age, pregnancy or trade union membership or the fact that they are

a part-time employee or a fixed term employee, disciplinary action will be taken. In serious cases, such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal. Stoll will always take a strict approach to serious breaches of this Policy.

3.13 Monitoring and Revision of Policy

- 3.13.1 Stoll will undertake to review the operation of its Equal Opportunities Policy regularly and revise future programmes of action accordingly.
- 3.13.2 Stoll will monitor the effectiveness of this Policy annually to ensure it is achieving the objectives stated in this Policy.