

Wiltshire and Swindon Sport Equality Policy

Context and overview

Key details

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Operational from 1.5.13

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Policy Objectives

Wiltshire and Swindon Sport is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and is responsible for ensuring that no job applicants, employees, workers, board members, partners or service users (together "Stakeholders") are unlawfully discriminated against because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (together the "Protected Characteristics").

In addition Wiltshire and Swindon Sport recognise that we live in a diverse society and will endeavour to ensure that all Stakeholders are given the same opportunities regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds.

Wiltshire and Swindon Sport will encourage partner organisations, and customers, to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equality as set out in this Equality Policy.

Purpose of the Policy

Wiltshire and Swindon Sport recognises that individuals (and/or certain groups in our society who share one or more Protected Characteristics) may not have been able to participate equally and fully in sports related activities in the past. In some instances, this may have been as a result of unlawful discrimination.

This Policy has been produced to try to prevent and address any unlawful discrimination or other unfair treatment, whether intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect, against Stakeholders that may preclude them from participating fully in sports related activities.

Legal Requirements

Wiltshire and Swindon Sport is required by law not to unlawfully discriminate against its Stakeholders and recognises its legal obligations under, and will abide by the requirements of, the Equality Act 2010, and any equivalent legislation (as amended)

in any UK jurisdiction, Jersey, Guernsey or the Isle of Man and any later amendments to such legislation or subsequent equality related legislation that may be relevant to Wiltshire and Swindon Sport.

Wiltshire and Swindon Sport will seek advice each time this Policy is reviewed to ensure it continues to reflect the current legal framework and good practice.

Discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation

Wiltshire and Swindon Sport recognise the following as being unacceptable:

Unlawful discrimination which can take the following forms:

- **Direct Discrimination:** treating someone less favourably than you would treat others because of a Protected Characteristic.
- **Indirect Discrimination:** applying a provision, criterion or practice which, on the face of it, applies equally to all but which, in practice can disadvantage individuals with a particular Protected Characteristic. Such requirements or conditions are lawful only if they can be objectively justified.
- **Harassment:** engaging in unwanted conduct relating to a relevant Protected Characteristic or unwanted conduct of a sexual nature where the conduct has the purpose or effect of violating the recipient's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the recipient, or any other individual affected by such conduct. Wiltshire and Swindon Sport is committed to ensuring that its Stakeholders are able to conduct their activities free from harassment.
- **Bullying:** the misuse of power or position to criticise persistently or to humiliate and undermine an individual's confidence.
- **Victimisation:** subjecting someone to a detriment because he or she has in good faith taken action under the Equality Act 2010 (or equivalent legislation) by bringing proceedings, giving evidence or information in relation to proceedings, making an allegation that a person has contravened the Equality Act 2010 (or equivalent legislation) or doing any other thing for the purpose of or in connection with the Equality Act 2010 (or any equivalent legislation).

Wiltshire and Swindon Sport regards discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation, as described above, as serious misconduct. All complaints will be taken seriously and appropriate measures including disciplinary action may be brought against any Stakeholder who unlawfully discriminates against, harasses, bullies or victimises any other person.

Reasonable Adjustments

When any decision is made about an individual, the only personal characteristics that may be taken into account are those that are consistent with any relevant legislation and are relevant to the substance of the decision being made.

Wiltshire and Swindon Sport recognise that it has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled persons. Wiltshire and Swindon Sport will consider all requests for adjustments and where possible will accommodate reasonable requests and will work with disabled. Full details of the process that will be followed are outlined in the Staff Handbook. Stakeholders to implement any adjustments that will enable them to participate more fully in sports related activities.

Responsibility, implementation and communication

The following responsibilities will apply:

- The **Board** of Wiltshire and Swindon Sport is responsible for ensuring that this Equality Policy is implemented, followed, and reviewed when appropriate. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that this Equality Policy is enforced and any breaches are dealt with appropriately.
- A member of the Board will be appointed as the "**Equality Champion**" and will ensure that equality is included as an agenda item at Board meetings when appropriate and that the Board takes equality issues into consideration when making decisions.
- The **Chief Executive** has the overall responsibility for the implementation of this Equality Policy.
- A member of staff will be designated as the **Equality Officer** by the Chief Executive and will have the overall day-to-day responsibility for the implementation of this Equality Policy and for achieving any equality related actions resulting from it. The Equality Officer's work programme will be amended to reflect this. If required, an internal and/or external equality group will be created to provide additional support.
- All Stakeholders have the responsibility to respect, follow and promote the spirit and intentions of this Equality Policy. Individual work programmes for Wiltshire and Swindon Sport staff will be amended to include equality related tasks where appropriate.

This Equality Policy will be implemented immediately following Board approval. Implementation requires the following actions:

- Wiltshire and Swindon Sport will **regularly review** its employment practices to ensure continuing compliance with relevant legislation, and where possible

good practice. All job packs sent out will contain the following policy statement:

- *"Wiltshire and Swindon Sport is committed to providing equal opportunities for all and is committed to following best practice in the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults."*
- No applicant for any post (including job applicants, consultant advisers and suppliers) will be **placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions** which are not necessary to the performance of the job or which constitute unlawful discrimination.
- Consultants and advisers to Wiltshire and Swindon Sport will be required to **abide by this Equality Policy** and it will be referred to in any service level agreements or contracts issued by Wiltshire and Swindon Sport .

This Equality Policy will be communicated in the following ways:

- The Policy will **be included in any employee handbook** (or equivalent paper or electronic document). Reference will be made to this Equality Policy in any code of conduct. This Equality Policy is for guidance only and will not form part of any contract of employment with any employees of Wiltshire and Swindon Sport;
- The Policy will be **highlighted in all staff and volunteer inductions**;
- A copy of this Equality Policy will be publicly available on the Wiltshire and Swindon Sport website and copies in other formats will also be available from Wiltshire and Swindon Sport office.
- Each time this Policy is reviewed, Wiltshire and Swindon Sport **Stakeholders will be consulted**. Following consultation, a notice of the changes being made will be publicly available and a direct communication will be sent to all those who contributed to the consultation process (subject to Data Protection provisions); and
- Wiltshire and Swindon Sport will **promote continuing professional development** for all employees and volunteers to support equal opportunities within the organisation and, where appropriate, provide specialist facilities, equipment or training.

Actions

Wiltshire and Swindon Sport will produce, maintain and monitor an Equality Action Plan to ensure the objectives of this Equality Policy are consistently delivered throughout all areas of the organisation.

Wiltshire and Swindon Sport recognise that, in some cases, to further the principle of equality, an unequal distribution of resources may be required. If appropriate and proportionate, Wiltshire and Swindon Sport will consider positive action or may introduce special measures to assist any group with a Protected Characteristic which is currently underrepresented within any group of Stakeholders.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This Equality Policy will remain in force until it is amended, replaced or withdrawn. A review of this Equality Policy will take place as and when required, but not less than once every three years.

The Equality Action Plan, created to ensure the objectives of this Equality Policy are delivered, will be reviewed by the Chief Executive and the Equality Officer regularly, but in any event not less than once every 12 months.

On an annual basis, statistical and, if appropriate qualitative, information will be collected, and a report will be produced by the Chief Executive for the Board. Once approved by the Board the report will be published internally and externally, to show the impact of this Equality Policy and progress towards achieving the Equality Action Plan.

Complaints Procedures

To safeguard individual rights under this Equality Policy, any Stakeholder who believes they have suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of this Equality Policy may raise the matter through the appropriate procedure (i.e. the employee grievance procedure for employees or the complaints procedure for Stakeholders who are not employees).

An individual raising an employee grievance will not be penalised for doing so unless it is untrue and not made in good faith.

As with all grievance and disciplinary procedures, the final point of appeal relating to this policy is the Board appeals committee.