**EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

Updated: Draft March 2018 Signed off: 19/04/2018

Review Date: March 2021

**Scope**

This policy applies to employees of Age UK Enfield and is interlinked with the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers

**Introduction**

Age UK Enfield is an organisation committed to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, the promotion of equal opportunities and the elimination of discrimination.

The Policy is applied to:

1. All employees working for Age UK Enfield irrespective of the funding source, this includes Bank/Agency workers.
2. All aspects of promotional, educational, casework and other functions of Age UK Enfield as determined by the Board.
3. Members and Customers/Clients – Age UK Enfield would expect Clients to concur with and actively promote these objectives.
4. Volunteers

*All new Employees are required to attend Induction Training which includes Equality and Diversity training.*

**Recruitment within Age UK Enfield**

Employment procedures and practices will be undertaken strictly in accordance with the following and all other relevant legislation:

* The Equality Act 2010
* Health and Social Care Act 2012
* The Care Act 2014
* NHS Accessible Information Standard 2016

Age UK Enfield will monitor and keep under review its procedures and practices to assess the impact of the policy in the following areas:

* 1. Job Advertisements
  2. Job Descriptions and Person Specifications
  3. Wording, presentation and media used for advertising
  4. Shortlisting
  5. Interview assessments

Appointments shall only be made following an open recruitment procedure, which may be an internal procedure, except for temporary appointments of three months or less. All appointments are subject to a successful Probationary Period. (See the Probationary Period Policy and Written Statement of Particulars.)

**Recruitment and Selection Procedures**

Age UK Enfield will train all members of employees and any other recruitment panel member involved in the recruitment and selection procedure.

i. Interview techniques

ii. Codes of practice

**Appointments below Director Posts**

Normally Directors shall make appointments below Director posts.

**Employment Practices**

Age UK Enfield will ensure that:

* Discussion and in-service training, subject to funding, will be undertaken for Employees and Management in relation to Equality and Diversity issues.
* Procedures and practices will reflect the cultural and religious needs of Employees and customers/clients.
* Specific needs training as defined by the employee to assist in coping with his/her disability is provided subject to funding.
* As far as possible the premises are suitably adapted to meet the needs of disabled Employees and customers/clients.

**Review Process**

* Age UK Enfield will monitor and review the effectiveness of this policy on an annual basis.

The Equality Act of 2010 consolidates discrimination legislation. Within the act there are nine ‘protected characteristics’:

* Age
* Disability
* Gender Reassignment
* Marriage and Civil Partnership
* Pregnancy and Maternity
* Race
* Religion or Belief
* Sex
* Sexual Orientation

Age UK Enfield will not use health related questions on any application forms or during the interview process. Reference requests must not contain questions about health problems or sickness absence.

Age UK Enfield is will make reasonable adjustments where practical to accommodate any health or disability issues.

Employees should refer to the Grievance Policy and Procedure (contained in the Employee Handbook) if they wish to raise a grievance under the Equality Act legislation. Customers, clients, carers and organisations need to request a copy of the Age UK Enfield Complaints procedure in order to make a complaint of this nature.

**Accessible Information Standard & Communications**

The aim of the Standard is to establish a framework to ensure that clients and where appropriate volunteers and carers who have information or communication needs relating to a disability, impairment or sensory loss receive accessible information and communication support appropriate to their needs.

In implementing the Standard, Age UK Enfield are required to complete five distinct stages:

1. Consistent process for **identifying** communication needs of Individuals
2. Consistent process for **recording** the communication needs of Individuals
3. Consistent process for **flagging** the communication needs of Individuals
4. Consistent process for **sharing** information regarding the communication needs of Individuals
5. **Meet** the communication needs of Individuals

Age UK Enfield will:

* Ensure systems and processes are in place to consistently and routinely identify, register, flag and share clients, carers information and communication needs, where they relate to a disability, impairment or sensory loss, as part of service user records.
* Through training and communication, ensure that Age UK Enfield staff are aware of the implications of the Standard and are aware of and able to follow local processes and procedures which have been put in place to ensure:
* A consistent approach to identification of information/ communication needs of service at first registration or interaction with their service or project
* A consistent and routine recording of information/communication needs as part of client records
* Inclusion of any recorded data about individuals’ information and/or communication support needs as part of existing data-sharing processes, and as a routine part of referral, discharge and handover processes.
* Steps are taken to ensure that individuals receive information in an alternative, accessible format and any communication support which they need.
* Ensure that staff continue to follow relevant existing legal duties, including those set out in the Data Protection Act 1998 and Mental Capacity Act 2005, The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Regulation (EU) 2016/679) around the handling and processing of data.
* Implement an accessible complaints policy and ensure there are mechanisms in place for individuals to make a complaint, raise a concern or pass on feedback in alternative formats and with communication support.
* Develop a mechanism to support individuals with information and communications needs to provide feedback on their experience of services, and of receiving information in appropriate formats and / or communication support.
* Ensure that standard information from Age UK such as leaflets are readily available in accessible formats such as large print and easy read including access of Website.
* Documents to be available in other formats, including easy read summary versions and other languages upon request.