

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. Forth Valley Disability Sport (FVDS) is fully committed to promoting equality. Fairness, justice, respect for each other, inclusion, addressing inequalities and removing barriers are just some of the principles of equality that influence FVDS development, delivery and decision making. FVDS believes that everybody should have the opportunity to participate in physical activity, including sport, and no individual should be discriminated against for reasons of gender reassignment, race, disability, age, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity. These are known as the protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010) recognises and acknowledges that inequalities do exist in Scottish sport. FVDS is committed to taking positive steps and being pro-active in overcoming these inequalities. By taking positive action FVDS will try to ensure that physical and attitudinal barriers are removed and traditionally excluded communities are welcomed into sport.
- 1.2. FVDS recognises the importance of introducing a robust and all embedding equality policy. FVDS has a strong commitment to implementing and promoting Equality Standard throughout the organisation and its Affiliated Member Clubs.
- 1.3. FVDS is totally committed to promoting and achieving equality and ensuring that all discrimination is eliminated. Discrimination on any of the grounds listed in paragraph 1.1 will not be tolerated in FVDS.

## **2. COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY**

- 2.1. FVDS will ensure that the needs of our member clubs are considered when developing programmes, services, procedures and policies.
- 2.2. FVDS will address any form of discrimination that occurs within the organisation. See appendix one
- 2.3. FVDS will meet statutory and legislative obligations to eliminate discrimination and increase equality in sport. FVDS will remain informed of new developments in equalities legislation. FVDS will ensure it continues to promote age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex (gender), sexual orientation, in line with legislative requirements. FVDS will produce an Equality Action Plan that strengthens the existing commitment to equality and addresses areas of weakness and required development.

## **3. FVDS COMMITMENTS**

- 3.1.1. FVDS has in place a Code of Conduct that adequately reflects what is expected of committee members, volunteers, coaches, officials

and athletes in terms of equitable conduct when carrying out their duties.

### **3.2. Education, Training and Development**

FVDS will ensure that its committee and key volunteers have an understanding of the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion in sport. Consequently, FVDS will ensure that members receive ongoing education and training on equality and its impact on sport. Volunteers within FVDS will receive briefings on the Equality Policy and its implications.

### **3.3. Partnership Support and Development**

3.3.1.FVDS will continue to work and develop relationships with key partners in sport to develop programmes, policies and initiatives that are inclusive and to share information and good practice.

3.3.2.FVDS will develop links with new partners in areas of sports equality.

3.3.3.FVDS will provide advice and officer support to organisations and agencies that wish to promote inclusion through sport.

### **3.4. Communication and Access to Information**

3.4.1.FVDS will continue to work with the media and celebrate the success of athlete members with a disability. FVDS will continue to promote its athlete members as positive role models, particularly those athletes from under-represented groups.

3.4.2.FVDS will consider equality when producing newsletters and reports and attempt to ensure that images are used that reflect diversity within our area. FVDS is committed to the use of inclusive (gender-neutral) language.

3.4.3.FVDS will give due regard to equality and accessibility of information in all matters relating to their website.

3.4.4.FVDS will as far as possible and within available resources attempt to provide information in alternative formats and languages if requested.

3.4.5.FVDS will ensure that its equality policy and its commitment to equality are communicated to all committee members, coaches, officials, athletes, and partners in sport.

3.4.6. The FVDS Equality Policy will be circulated to our club members and appear on the FVDS website.

### **3.5. Policy Review and Programming**

3.5.1. FVDS is committed to ensuring that equality is given due regard when developing new policies, programmes, projects, services or initiatives.

3.5.2. FVDS will constantly review the equality impact of its key policies as part of the Board Policy review cycle every two years.

## **4. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

In addition to the intent set out within its Equality Policy, FVDS recognises its obligations in relation to a number of acts including the following:

- Equality Act 2010 and the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2012 – which adds political belief as a 10<sup>th</sup> protected characteristic
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Scotland Act 2000
- Gender Recognition Act 2004
- Civil Partnership Act 2004
- Data Protection Act 1998 and any further amendments

*Any later amendments to the above Acts/Regulations or future Acts/Regulations that are relevant to FVDS.*

## **APPENDIX 1 – Relevant legislation and forms of unacceptable discrimination**

### **Legal rights**

Discrimination has been legally defined through a series of legislative acts, including the Race Relations Act, the Sex Discrimination Act, the Disability Discrimination Act and the Equality Act 2006.

In April 2010, the Equality Act 2010 received Royal Assent. The Equality Act 2010 is a new law which harmonises where possible, and in some cases extends, protection from discrimination. It applies throughout the UK and came into force in October 2010.

Discrimination refers to unfavourable treatment on the basis of particular characteristics, which are known as the 'protected characteristics'. Under the Equality Act 2010, the protected characteristics are defined as age (employment only until 2012), disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status (employment only), pregnancy and maternity, race (which includes ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality), religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.

Under the Equality Act 2010, individuals are protected from discrimination 'on grounds of' a protected characteristic<sup>1</sup>. This means that individuals will be protected if they have a characteristic, are assumed to have it, associate with someone who has it or with someone who is assumed to have it.

### **Forms of discrimination and discriminatory behaviour include the following:**

#### **Direct discrimination**

Direct discrimination can be described as less favourable treatment on the grounds of one of the protected characteristics.

#### **Indirect discrimination**

Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied to an individual or group that would put persons of a particular characteristic at a particular disadvantage compared with other persons.

#### **Discrimination arising from disability**

When a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and this unfavourable treatment cannot be justified, this is unlawful. This type of discrimination only relates to disability.

#### **Harassment**

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct relating to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or which creates an intimidating or hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.

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<sup>1</sup> The exception to this is pregnancy and maternity, which does not include protection by association or assumption – a woman is only protected from discrimination on grounds of her own pregnancy.

**Victimisation**

It is unlawful to treat a person less favourably because he or she has made allegations or brought proceedings under the anti-discrimination legislation, or because they have helped another person to do so. To do so would constitute victimisation.

**Bullying**

Bullying is defined as a form of personal harassment involving the misuse of power, influence or position to persistently criticise, humiliate or undermine an individual.