EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

1. Purpose

1.1. Boccia England is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and is responsible for ensuring that no job applicant, employee, Board member, volunteer, supporter, participant or member (together "stakeholders") are unlawfully discriminated against because of the below Protected Characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010:

- age,
- disability,
- gender reassignment,
- marriage and civil partnership,
- pregnancy and maternity,
- race (including ethnic origin, colour, nationality and national origin)
- religion or belief,
- sex
- sexual orientation
- In addition to the protected characteristics, low socio-economic groups

1.2. Boccia England recognises 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. The organisation values everyone's individual differences and strives to maintain and continuously improve its working practices to benefit all those who participate in our sport.

2. Policy Scope

2.1. This Policy applies to all stakeholders of Boccia England.

2.2. This policy applies to all conduct in the workplace/ player environment and also to conduct outside of the workplace/ player environment that is related to Boccia England (e.g. at meetings, social events and social interactions with Boccia England stakeholders).

2.3. This policy also applies to conduct in or outside of the workplace/ player environment which may impact on Boccia England's reputation (e.g. the expression of views on social media, contrary to the commitments expressed in this policy).

3. Legal Requirements and Definitions

3.1. Boccia England is required by law to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. We must treat everyone fairly and not discriminate in our workforce activities, for example, in recruiting staff, or in our operational activities, for example, in how we work together.

3.2. Boccia England will review legislation each time this policy is reviewed to ensure it continues to reflect the current legal framework and good practice

3.3. Protected Characteristics; age, disability, gender, reassignment, marriage, covil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, belief, sex, or sexual orientation as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

3.4. Boccia England takes seriously all claims of bullying, harassment, discrimination or victimisation by anyone involved with Boccia England. It is necessary for all stakeholders to be aware of the following definitions:

3.5. Direct Discrimination: treating someone less favourably than you would treat others because of a Protected Characteristic.

3.6. Indirect Discrimination: occurs when there is a condition, rule, or practice which applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic.'

3.7. Harassment: unwanted behaviour linked to a protected charactersitic that violates someone's dignity or creates an offensive environment for them

3.8. Bullying: behaviour that is repeated, intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally. It takes many forms and can include: physical assualt; teasing; making threats; name calling; or cyber related.

3.9. Victimisation: treating someone unfairly because they have complained about or supported a claim of discrimination or harassment.

3.10 Boccia England is committed to creating an environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination. The organisation promotes dignity and respect for all, and a culture where individual differences and contributions are recognised and valued.

3.11 Boccia England will not tolerate any form of discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, bullying or victimisation.

3.12 Boccia England will not tolerate any form of retaliation, violence or victimisation against any member of staff who has made a complaint under this policy.

3.13 Boccia England takes seriously any complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by employees, participants, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.

4. Responsibilities

4.1. The Board of Boccia England has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented, followed, and reviewed when appropriate. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that this policy is enforced and any breaches are dealt with appropriately.

4.2. The Chief Executive has the day to day responsibility for implementing this policy and ensuring stakeholder compliance. Specifically, the Chief Executive must ensure that

operations such as recruitment, training and employment/ volunteer decisions conform to this policy and legislation.

4.3. Line managers/ Officials/ Coaches are responsible for acting as role models, ensuring compliance with this policy, providing support and guidance and dealing quickly and effectively with concerns, complaints or any breaches of this policy.

4.4. All stakeholders have the responsibility for applying this policy by making sure that their behaviour and actions do not amount to discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation in any way. Everyone should recognise and respect the needs and backgrounds of staff, participants and other people they deal with.

4.5. All stakeholders are responsible for raising any breaches of this policy to the Chief Executive.

5. Reasonable Adjustments

5.1. Boccia England recognises that it has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled employees, volunteers, coaches and service users. The organisation will consider all reasonable requests for adjustments and where possible, will accommodate these requests and work with the individual/s to implement them.

5.2. Employees wishing to make a request for a reasonable adjustment should discuss their requirements and reasons for them to their line manager.

6. Implementation

This Policy will be implemented immediately following Board approval.

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

6.2 Recruitment

6.2.1 Boccia England will regularly review its recruitment and employment practices to ensure continuing compliance with relevant legislation, fairness, and good practice. Selection for employment/ volunteering is on the basis of merit and ability

6.2.2 All job advertisements produced by Boccia England will contain the following policy statement:

"Boccia England is fully committed to the principles of the equality of opportunity. It is responsible for ensuring that no job applicant, employee or volunteer receives less favourable treatment, on the grounds of on the grounds of any protected characteristic, *age, disability, ethnicity, parental or marital status, nationality, religious belief, gender, social status or sexual preference, than any other.*

6.2.3 No applicant for any post (including job applicants, volunteers, 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.

6.2.4 Consultants and advisers (and where appropriate suppliers) to Boccia England will be required to abide by this policy and it will be referred to in any service level agreements or contracts issued by Boccia England.

6.3 Training & Development

6.3.1 All new joiners will receive an induction which includes an overview of equality and diversity.

6.3.2 Employees and Board members will receive equality and diversity training and refresher courses to make them aware of their rights and responsibilities and how to conduct themselves and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

6.3.3 Volunteers, members and other stakeholders will receive regular equality and diversity updates in newsletters to make them aware of their rights and

responsibilities and how to conduct themselves and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

6.3.4 The organisation will ensure that all stakeholders are helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, ensuring that training, development and progression opportunities are available to all. Selection for promotion, training or any other benefit is on the basis of merit and ability.

6.3.5 Boccia England 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.

6.4 Employment

6.4.1 Boccia England will oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and disciplinaries, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities.

6.5 Profile Data Collection

6.5.1 Boccia England will collect, monitor and analyse the diversity of applicants and its workforce and participants to ensure that it reflects the diverse communities we work in. This includes information such as age, sex, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability.

7 Communication

This Policy will be communicated in the following ways:

- Circulated to employees upon approval from Board.
- This Policy is included in the Employee Handbook.
- The Policy will be highlighted in all employees, Board and relevant volunteer inductions.
- This Policy will be available for download on the Boccia England website and available in hard copy upon request.

- Stakeholders will receive a notification in their newsletter that the policy has been amended and is available from the website.

8 Equality and Diversity Action Plan

8.1 Boccia England will produce, implement and monitor an Equality & Diversity Action Plan to ensure this policy is delivered throughout all areas of the organisation.

9 Equality & Diversity impact

9.1 This policy covers equality and diversity across the organisation and applies to all stakeholders and groups.

9.2 The organisation will evaluate the impact of our policies, services and operations and make changes to them where they impact unfairly or adversely on any protected characteristic.

10 Complaints

10.1 All stakeholders have a duty to ensure that they adhere to this policy and report any incidents of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation as soon as they become aware of it.

10.2 Employees should follow the grievance procedure and other stakeholders should follow the complaint's procedure which links to the grievance and complaints policies.

10.3 Allegations regarding bullying, harassment, unlawful discrimination or victimisation will be treated in confidence and investigated swiftly and in accordance with the appropriate procedure. The organisation will ensure that individuals who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably by the organisation as a result.

10.4 Breaches of this policy or false allegations made in bad faith will be dealt with under the relevant Disciplinary or Complaints' Policy.

10.5 All stakeholders should also understand that they, as well as Boccia England can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination. The result of which can be criminal prosecution.

11 Monitoring and Evaluation

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

11.2 The Equality & Diversity Action Plan will be reviewed by the Chief Executive regularly, but in any event not less than once every 12 months.

11.3 On an annual basis, statistical and, if appropriate qualitative, information will be collected and a report will be produced for the Board. Once approved by the Board the report will be published internally and externally, to show the impact of the equality & diversity plan and progress towards achieving its objectives.