

WILTSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Policy Guidance On Equality For Gay, Lesbian, and bisexual People

Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service is committed to eliminating prejudice and discrimination directed at people who are gay, lesbian, and bisexual

(NB Transgender people who have or in the process of going through a gender reassignment programme are protected under Sex Discrimination Law)

In pursuing these objectives, we acknowledge our statutory duties under the Employment Equality(Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003, the Human Rights Act 1998, Local Government Act 1988 and The Equality Act 2006 - which makes discrimination against lesbians and gay men in the provision of goods and services illegal.

We will ensure that in meeting our duties gay, lesbian, people are given equal and fair treatment and free from discrimination and harassment.

We aim to achieve these objectives by:

- Ensuring that policies, procedures and practices are not based on the assumption that everyone is, or should be ,heterosexual
- Acknowledging same sex relationships and ensure that, wherever possible , partners have equal access to the services and benefits available to heterosexual couples
- Encouraging the participation of gay, lesbian, and bisexual in the policy planning and implementation processes
- Encouraging a culture of openness about sexual orientation and ensuring that gay , lesbian, and bisexual employees have a safe, secure and supportive environment to work in
- Ensuring that service recipients are aware that they have no right to refuse service from gay, lesbian, and bisexual employees
- Ensuring that recruitment and selection is carried out fairly and consistently in accordance with our procedures, standards and best practice
- Providing appropriate development opportunities to assist with the implementation of this policy and ensuring that employees and elected members are aware of their individual responsibilities and the Service's commitment
- Handling sensitively allegations of discrimination and harassment and providing appropriate support to the alleged victim(s) in accordance with our policies and procedures
- Managing our employees fairly and appropriately and ensuring that there is no discrimination in terms of attitude, work allocations, promotion, training and other conditions of employment

- Providing information and guidance to managers and employees on appropriate language and behaviour issues that may affect people who are gay, lesbian, or bisexual.
- Ensuring that all contractors, suppliers, consultants and partners are made aware of this policy and our expectation that their policies will include as a minimum:
 - * a commitment to equality of opportunity
 - * The name or position of person responsible for the effective implementation of the policy

Draft Di Parkin 4/11/08

Appendix 1 FBU Gay and Lesbian committee statment

The trade union movement represents ALL working people, regardless of their sex, race, religious belief, sexuality or disability.

The group was set up by gay and lesbian firefighters who are 'out' in the workplace and felt they were in a position to help others within the UK fire service. Within the group's ten year existence, we have achieved official recognition with the FBU, as well as representing the FBU in forums which were once untouched. We also have an extensive network to support and advise (LGBT) lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual members (firefighters, officers and control staff) who may feel isolated or harassed.

The group is run on a strictly confidential basis and accepts the rules, constitution and democracy of the Fire Brigades Union.

Our main aims are:

Ensuring LGBT members have a voice within the FBU, and making sure we are not left out in equality issues at Brigade, Regional and National level.

Providing support to LGBT members in ALL regions of the FBU.

Identifying and dealing with any issues/problems faced by our members.

Providing members with the opportunity to talk/meet with other members.

Distribute information concerning lgbt issues to members.

Any lesbian, gay, bisexual transsexual FBU member contacting the group will only be dealt with by a group member. All information will be protected and NOT made available to any official unless the member gives his/her permission.