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NOTTINGHAM FOREST FOOTBALL CLUB EQUALITY POLICY

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1. INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

Nottingham Forest Football Club (“the Club”) is committed to driving equality, promoting inclusion and eliminating discrimination for all those who come into contact with our Club. Football is for everyone; it belongs to and is to be enjoyed by anyone who wants to participate in it, whether as a player, official, staff member or spectator.

The aim of this Equality Policy is to:

- promote equality, fairness and respect across our Club
- not unlawfully discriminate on the grounds of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics
- oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination
- comply with the English Football League’s Code of Practice.

We commit to confronting and eliminating all unlawful discrimination and ensure that we treat everyone fairly and with respect and that we will provide access and opportunities for all members of our community to take part in, and enjoy, our activities. Every staff member, Board member, official, spectator, supporter and visiting Club member can be assured of an environment in which their rights, dignity and individual worth are respected, and in particular that they are able to work and watch football in an environment without the threat of intimidation, victimisation, harassment or abuse.

All Club representatives must abide by and adhere to this policy and to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, so that we work towards legal compliance with equality legislation.

This policy applies equally across Nottingham Forest Football Club and Nottingham Forest Community Trust and is fully supported by our Board of Directors. The Club has nominated Nicholas Randall QC, as the Board member to lead on Equality, Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination, and Claire Heald, Head of Human Resources, to be Equality Champion.

2. POSITIVE ACTION

We commit to raising awareness and education, widening diversity and representation, investigating concerns and applying relevant and proportionate sanctions, as we believe these are all key to promote inclusion and eradicate discrimination within football. To that end this Equality Policy will be reviewed and updated, if required, on an annual basis.

We will create a working and sporting environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, where we promote dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of everyone are recognised and valued, so that each individual feels respected and able to give their best.

We will educate and train managers and employees about their rights and responsibilities including conducting themselves in ways which help us provide equal opportunities at work, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our supporters, so we will monitor the make-up of our workforce regarding information such as age, gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality and diversity. We will also monitor the make up of our supporter base so that it more closely reflects the diversity of our local community.

We will make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of our Club.

We will review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness and update them to take account of changes in the law. We will ensure that all decisions concerning staff are based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).

3. COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIANCE

We regard all forms of discriminatory behaviour, including but not limited to behaviour described in section 4 as unacceptable, and we are concerned to ensure that individuals feel able to raise any legitimate grievance or complaint related to such behaviour without fear of being penalized for doing so.

All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers, supporters and the public.

We will take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, supporters, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of our activities.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under our grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and any appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence

4. RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION

4.1 Legal Rights

Discrimination has been legally defined through a series of legislative acts, including the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act 1976, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Equality Act 2010.

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

Under the Equality Act 2010, individuals are protected from discrimination 'on the grounds of' a protected characteristic. 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.

4.2 Forms of discrimination and discriminatory behaviour include the following:

4.2.1 Direct Discrimination

Direct discrimination is defined as less favourable treatment on the grounds of a protected characteristic.

4.2.2 Indirect Discrimination

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

4.2.3 Discrimination arising from Disability

Discrimination arising from a disability occurs when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability, and this treatment cannot be justified.

4.2.4 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.

4.2.5 Victimization

Victimization occurs when a person is treated less favourably because s/he has made allegations or brought proceedings under anti-discrimination legislation, or because they have supported another person in doing so.

4.2.6 Bullying

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

5. CHANGES TO THIS POLICY

This policy may be amended from time to time at the discretion of the Club. We will endeavour to give advance notice of any change.

Please ask your manager or a member of the Human Resources Department if you have further queries.

Issued by the Human Resources Department, September 2017