



## **DIVERSITY, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION POLICY**

Reviewed by Clive Wolstenholme STFC Secretary - 01/07/24

Strathspey Thistle Football Club (the Club) actively promotes Diversity, Equality and Inclusion in our behaviour, values and practices.

The Club believes that football is for everyone and should be enjoyed by participants at all levels whether as a player, official, staff member or spectator. The Club aims, therefore, to encapsulate people in a way that encourages positive change, allows people to feel valued and improve the lives and experiences of our fans and wider community of which the Club plays such an important part.

As supporters of Strathspey Thistle Football Club, we are one family, and regardless of your background, it is fundamental to our values that everyone should be made to feel welcome as supporters of this Club. We are committed, therefore, to confronting and eradicating any form of discrimination, whether it is of race (including ethnic origin, colour, nationality and national origin), religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, age, pregnancy or maternity, disability or gender reassignment.

(Protected characteristics outlined within the Equality Act 2010).

We ensure that we treat everyone fairly and with respect, and that we provide access and opportunities for all members of the community to enjoy their matchday experience with us.

At Strathspey Thistle FC, we are proud to represent every part of our diverse community and for those that don't share these views, we will not compromise on our values.

## **OUR STANCE**

- We have zero-tolerance towards discriminatory language, abuse, chanting and behaviour of any kind.
- We expect our community to behave towards others in a manner consistent with principles of fairness, respect and tolerance.
- We find hateful behaviour based on any form of discrimination wholly unacceptable.
- We don't want you at Strathspey Thistle FC if you can't accept that, or if you behave in a manner that is incompatible with these values.

## **IN THE FIRST INSTANCE**

- We encourage you, if you see or hear racist, sexist, homophobic, or other behaviour of hate or division to use any of our reporting mechanisms. Collecting evidence quickly and efficiently allows us the best chance to deal with any incidents:
  - Please report what you see or experience to any of our match day stewards or committee members.
  - Alternatively email me [wolstc@aol.com](mailto:wolstc@aol.com) with as much detail as possible.

## **OUR PROMISE TO YOU:**

- We will thoroughly investigate such incidents and any behaviour from an individual or group, which is calculated to divide our fans and community, or cause trouble.
- We will deal with this appropriately and expediently, which may result in a banning order or ejection from our ground.
- We will continually review our methods, approach and means of dealing with such behaviour to help prevent further incidents.
- We believe that being inclusive and welcoming is an important part of what this club stands for, and the team that everyone in our community will be proud to support and be associated with.

**This Policy is fully endorsed by the senior office bearers and committee members of Strathspey Thistle Football Club.**

## **Board Responsibility / Objectives Statement – 01/07/24**

The Strathspey Thistle FC Board are publicly accountable for Equality and will receive regular updates on the club activities and the implementation of the Equality Policy from a members of the staff board. It is the role of the Board to address any actual or potential breaches of the policy.

## **Equality Policy – 01/07/24**

### **1. Policy Statement**

Strathspey Thistle Football Club endorses the principle of Equality and is committed to ensure that everyone who wishes to be involved with the club, regardless of their role, current or potential

1.1 have a genuine and equal opportunity to participate to the full extent of their own ambitions and abilities, regardless of their age, sex, gender identity, disability, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, religion, race, socioeconomic status or sexual orientation; and

1.2 can be assured of an environment in which their rights and dignity and individual worth are respected and valued, and in particular that they are able to be involved and participate without the threat of discrimination, intimidation, victimisation, bullying, harassment or abuse.

### **2. Policy Objectives**

This Policy has the following objectives:

2.1 To promote fair and equitable treatment for everyone involved with Strathspey Thistle Football Club, in whatever capacity.

2.2 To ensure that no one working for, wishing to work for or working on behalf of Strathspey Thistle Football Club receives less favourable treatment on the grounds set out in Policy 1.

2.3 To adopt a planned approach (strategically and operationally) to eliminating perceived barriers which discriminate against or exclude particular groups.

2.4 To give clear guidance and communication to all individuals who, either administer an area of Strathspey Thistle Football Club or work for the club on its commitment to Equality.

2.5 To ensure that the content of policies, procedures, competitions, regulations (where applicable) and assessments provides equal opportunity for all except where specific situations or conditions properly or reasonably prevent this.

2.6 To adopt systems and procedures which ensure all materials prepared, produced or distributed on behalf of Strathspey Thistle Football Club and all relevant public statements made on behalf of the club reflect its commitment to equality and inclusion.

### **3. Scope**

3.1 This Policy applies to all current and potential employees (temporary), workers, directors, co-optees, consultants, agents, sub-contractors, volunteers, and any other person providing services on behalf of Strathspey Thistle Football Club (“associated persons”).

3.2 The Policy extends to all activities of Strathspey Thistle Football Club.

### **4. Policy Overview**

4.1 Strathspey Thistle Football Club is committed to remove and eliminate any direct or indirect discrimination of any form or kind within the club structures and will under no circumstances condone unlawful discriminatory practices. The organisation takes a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying.

Examples of the relevant legislation and the behaviours in question are given in Appendix A.

### **5. Positive Action**

5.1 The principle of Equality goes further than simply complying with legislation. It entails taking positive steps to counteract the effects of barriers – whether real or perceived – that restrict the opportunity for all to participate equally and fully.

5.2 Strathspey Thistle Football Club will therefore seek to institute, support or contribute to appropriate measures or initiatives that enable access to the club and participation in associated activities by people from any group that is under-represented or has difficulty accessing it.

5.3 Strathspey Thistle Football Club will furthermore seek to apply employment practices in general, and recruitment and selection practices more specifically, which encourage and support people with protected characteristics to gain access to work or training.

## **6. Reasonable adjustments**

6.1 Strathspey Thistle Football Club recognises that it has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled persons.

6.2 The duty to make reasonable adjustments may include the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if these make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to carry out their role. It may also include making changes to working arrangements.

6.3 Strathspey Thistle Football Club will consider all requests for adjustments and where possible will accommodate any reasonable requests. Where appropriate, advice may be sought from specialist agencies.

## **7. Implementation**

7.1 To achieve these objectives, Strathspey Thistle Football Club is committed to promote and advance equal opportunity through the Club structures which will cover all areas of our organisation.

The Club Chairman is ultimately responsible for implementing the Policy.

7.2 The following steps will be taken to publicise this policy and promote Equality within Strathspey Thistle Football Club:

- A copy of this Policy will be published on the Strathspey Thistle Football Club website.
- The Board will take full account of the Policy in arriving at all decisions in relation to activities of the Club.
- Strathspey Thistle Football Club will collaborate fully with any practical surveys or other initiatives designed to assess the level of participation of different sections of the community in football and will take account of the findings in developing measures to promote and enhance Equality.
- The Club will provide access to training for all of its Board Members and staff to raise awareness of both collective and individual responsibilities.

## **8. Responsibilities**

8.1 The Board will review all Strathspey Thistle Football Club activities and initiatives against the aims of the policy on an annual basis and will report on developments and highlights.

8.2 The Board, or where appropriate a designated project leader, will review any measures or initiatives the club may institute or take part in to promote and enhance equal.

## **9. Disciplinary Process**

9.1 Strathspey Thistle Football Club reserves the right to audit compliance with the policy from time to time. If you are an employee, a worker or casual staff and misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this policy the club's disciplinary procedures will be used in addition to any appropriate external measures. Disciplinary action can ultimately lead to dismissal.

The Club Chairman and/or his designated deputy will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of our Equality Policy. They will have overall responsibility for overseeing the delivery of the Equality Action Plan and the overall progress of Equality within the Strathspey Thistle FC structures.

### **Club Public Commitment Statement – 01/07/24**

Strathspey Thistle Football Club is committed to remove and eliminate any direct or indirect discrimination of any form or kind within Strathspey Thistle Football Club structures and will under no circumstances condone unlawful discriminatory practices. The organisation takes a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying.

### **Appendix A – Legal Notes**

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.

### **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 could 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.