

## **Terms of Reference**

### **Aim**

To work with the Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) Assembly Steering Group and related thematic forums to ensure that equalities work in terms of the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010 (age, religion or belief, disability, race, gender, sexuality, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership) as well as social class remain an important focus for the voluntary, statutory and private sector (“partners”). This will be carried out in accordance with the VCS Assembly principles of:

- Independence
- Social justice and sustainability
- Diversity, dignity and respect
- Equality and equity
- Participation and empowerment; responsiveness and accountability
- Collective wealth creation and social entrepreneurship

### **This will be achieved by:**

1. Ensuring that VCS representatives at district partnerships are aware of and promote equalities issues to all voluntary, statutory & private sector (‘partners’).
2. Working with representatives from the VCS forums to ensure equality issues are regularly considered in each forum
3. Disseminating and publicising information and best practice around equalities issues to all partners
4. Supporting best practice in the VCS to meet it’s statutory obligations as a provider of services and as an employer
5. Working with partners to ensure effective measurement of the impact of changes to policies and services is undertaken
6. Electing a representative to the VCS Assembly Steering Group

**Membership**

Members will be sought from the VCS thematic forums and groups that represent or work with communities of interest and/or have an interest in equality and equity. Individuals with an interest in equality and equity can also be members.

**Associate Membership**

Statutory partners may join as associate members; they cannot vote or stand as officers or community representatives.

Elected officers and forum representatives must stand down if they miss 3 consecutive meetings.

**Co-Chairs**

Term of office reviewed after 3 years

**Forum Representatives**

Term of office reviewed after 3 years

**Frequency of meetings**

Quarterly plus task and finish groups, events and consultations

**Quorate**

4 voting members