
Report to: Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership Board (LEP)

Date: 6 June 2019

Subject: **Equality and Diversity Policy and Statement**

Director: Alan Reiss, Director Policy Strategy & Communications

Author(s): Julie Haigh, Senior Executive Support Officer

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 At the March 2019 meeting the LEP Board (“Board”) noted changes made to the Local Assurance Framework, which included the Equality and Diversity Policy and Statement (EDS).
- 1.2 The EDS is to be reviewed annually and outlines the measures to be taken in connection with Board and sub group membership recruitment.

2 Information

- 2.1 Within the Assurance Framework submitted in March 2017 a new expectation was that each LEP must set out its rules governing its commitment to diversity, including a diversity statement explaining how the LEP will look to ensure diverse representation at board and sub group level which is also reflective of their local business community, including geographies and protected characteristics.
- 2.2 The Equality Act 2010 defines the following as “protected characteristics”: age, disability; gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sexual orientation.
- 2.3 As a result the LEP Equality & Diversity Policy including a Diversity Statement was produced and approved at the March 2017 meeting of the Board.
- 2.4 This Policy and Statement are to be reviewed annually and this took place at the March 2019 Board meeting. However, due to the requirement noted in paragraph **2.7** amendments to the Diversity Statement (**at Appendix 1**) have been made for which we seek Board approval.

Composition of the Board

- 2.5 The table in **Appendix 2** details the composition of the LEP Board. As a result of the recent local elections, the representative and substitute member from City of York Council has changed as detailed in the appendix.

- 2.6 In accordance with the Diversity Statement all members of the Board and its sub groups received training which provided an overview of equality and diversity in June 2018.

Next Steps to 2020 and beyond

- 2.7 The National Local Growth Assurance Framework states that the diversity statement should include a commitment to ensure that by 2020 at least one third of members of LEP Board are women with an expectation for equal representation by 2023. This is reflected in the Policy and Statement at Appendix 1.
- 2.8 In future a key, but not exclusive, focus will be to attract business leaders within the digital, creative, health, care sectors and social enterprise and to have high regard for our Diversity and Equality Policy. This refresh will take the Board and sub groups into 2023 and therefore the requirement of equal representation on the Board will apply for future recruitment campaigns.
- 2.9 Our intention, when a recruitment campaign is launched, will be to promote it online using a recruitment information pack which will include positive images of people of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) heritage and women, with a view to attracting a more diverse range of candidates. It will be shared through extensive digital channels and networks including Northern Powerhouse Women, Yorkshire Enterprise Network, Made in Yorkshire, Forward Ladies, Export Network, YABA, Women on Boards, Yorkshire Women in Business, Leeds Link and Deliciously Yorkshire. Advertising will also take place via the Business Insider and The Business Desk which will run in conjunction with an extensive social media campaign e.g. LinkedIn, Twitter.
- 2.10 In the meantime we will continue to research and then reach out to BAME people and women in business networks in an attempt to attract a greater number of applicants for future recruitment campaigns. The LEP will continue to strive to do more proactive engagement to build on these networks, including those linked to BAME business communities.
- 2.11 Also in preparation for the next recruitment campaign, and to ensure full consideration of the Equality and Diversity Policy and Statement during this process, members of future Interview Panels will in turn also receive more in depth diversity & equality briefing, particularly around recognising subconscious bias, ahead of conducting future interviews.
- 2.12 Going forward, the LEP will continue to monitor the composition of its Board and sub groups in this regard in order to enhance these measures and will seek to redress any imbalances through proactive targeting.

3 Financial Implications

- 3.1 None.

4 Legal Implications

- 4.1 None.

5 Staffing Implications

5.1 None.

6 External Consultees

6.1 None.

7 Recommendations

7.1 That the LEP Board notes and provides any comments on the contents of this report.

7.2 That the LEP Board approves the attached Equality & Diversity Policy and Diversity Statement which forms part of the LEP's Assurance Framework.

8 Background Documents

8.1 None.

9 Appendices

Appendix 1 - Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership Equality and Diversity Policy including Diversity Statement

Appendix 2 - LEP Board composition