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

**Date:** 3 September 2020

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

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## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 At the February 2020 meeting the LEP Board (“Board”) approved amendments to governance arrangements of the LEP and LEP governance documents, which included the Equality and Diversity Policy and Statement (EDS).
- 1.2 To adhere to the commitment within the EDS that it be reviewed by the Board as a minimum every year at the Board’s annual meeting and any changes or recommendations are to be agreed by the Board. The current Statement is at Appendix 1.
- 1.3 The EDS commits to the Board receiving an annual report outlining the measures taken in connection with Board and sub group membership recruitment and therefore contained within this report are details of these measures and subsequent outcomes of the Board and Panels refresh conducted in early 2020.
- 1.4 The EDS also requires that at its annual meeting, the Board identifies a member of the Board to act as **Diversity Champion**.

## **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 last took place at the February 2020 meeting when a commitment was approved to ensure that the Board would be compliant with the National Assurance Framework (NAF) and Government's 'Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships' (Strengthened LEPs) review, by 31 March 2020 in regard to Leadership and capacity. The requirement being whereby at least one third of members of the Board are women with an expectation for equal representation by 2023 and that the Board should otherwise reflect the diversity of the City Region.

### **Recruitment of private sector Members**

- 2.5 In order to comply with the requirements of the NAF and Strengthened LEPs, a recruitment exercise was carried out in late 2019/early 2020 to ensure that the diversity and representation stipulations were met. The Board agreed (6 June 2019) to appoint a recruitment consultant to progress the search and selection work. The recruitment process has focused particularly on driving inclusive leadership, with specialist measures to increase diversity.
- 2.6 A subsequent targeted recruitment campaign focused on seeking to attract a Board which reflects the diversity of the City Region. The main, but not exclusive, focus was to attract business leaders who represent key sectors (health tech, advanced manufacturing, digital and fin-tech) and to have high regard for our Diversity and Equality Policy.
- 2.7 The opportunity was advertised via the Yorkshire Post online as well as [womenonboards](#) and [NEDonboard](#). It was also extensively shared across our social media and LinkedIn and Board members were asked to do same. The advertisement included 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. The following also assisted by cascading to their networks and/or members:

3M BIC	The LEP Network
Barclays Bank	Leeds Bradford International Airport
Bradford Chamber of Commerce	Leeds Chamber of Commerce
Bradford Council	Leeds City Council
Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS	NHS Trust
Foundation Trust	Northern Power Women
Calderdale Council	OneMedical Care
Channel4	PwC
DeliciouslyYorkshire	Seddon Construction
Deloitte LLP	Sky Leeds Dock
E3 Recruitment	Verity Housing
Forward Ladies	Wakefield Council
Herida Healthcare	Yorkshire Asian Business
Hull University Teaching	Association
Hospitals	Y&H Chambers of Commerce
Kirklees Council	York and North Yorkshire Chamber
KPMG	of Commerce

- 2.8 This campaign resulted in **32 applications (13 female, 5 BAME)** from business leaders across the region (41% and 16% respectively of total applications). This compared to 17% and 9% respectively of total applications

at the last recruitment campaign in Autumn 2017. Of these 32 applicants, 11 candidates (6 female, 5 male, 2 BAME) met in early February 2020 with an Appointments Panel comprising the LEP Chair, an existing Private Sector representative, and a local authority representative, supported by the LEP's Director of Economic Services.

- 2.9 Subsequent recommendations of this Appointments Panel were to form a Board consisting of 18 members (13 private sector, 5 public sector). The Board approved these recommendations of appointment. With 18 members of whom **9 are female**, 9 are male, **5 BAME** this resulted in a Board composition which met the requirements of both the NAF and the Strengthened LEPs review and the commitment of the Board at their February 2020 meeting to the diversity agenda, which was made public record, to have a gender balanced Board by March 2020, three years ahead of the Government's deadline. The Board's previous composition had been 19 members, 8 female, 11 male and 3 BAME.
- 2.10 Recruitment of private sector panel members also took place alongside that of the Board. Appointments Panels for the Business, Innovation & Growth, Employment & Skills, Green Economy and Inclusive Growth and Public Policy Panels were convened throughout February and March 2020. As the Panels are Advisory Committees of the Combined Authority the Board was asked to recommend a total of 15 new private sector panel appointments to the CA at their meeting in June 2020. These appointments resulted in the total private sector membership of the LEP (Board and panels) being increased to 45 (previously 24). Of these 45 members, 15 are female and 5 BAME.
- 2.11 Following their appointment, induction sessions were provided to all new Board and panel members in May 2020.

### **Composition of the Board**

- 2.12 The table in Appendix 2 details the composition of the Board.
- 2.13 In accordance with the Diversity Statement all private sector members of the Board and its sub groups received training which provided an overview of equality and diversity in August 2020.
- 2.14 The LEP will continue to monitor the composition of its Board and panels in this regard in order to enhance these measures and will seek to redress any imbalances through proactive targeted recruitment.

### **LEP Diversity Champion**

- 2.15 The role of the LEP's Diversity Champion is to ensure that the Board understands its role in promoting diversity and eliminating discrimination, providing appropriate challenge and highlighting opportunities where advantageous.
- 2.16 A private sector member who fulfilled the role of the LEPs Diversity Champion took the decision to step away from the Board in January 2020 and therefore a new nomination for this position had to be considered.

- 2.17 The Chair invited expressions of interest for this vacant position. Kate Hainsworth responded and in order to ensure continuity her appointment to the position, with immediate effect, was proposed and approved at the February 2020 Board meeting.
- 2.18 The DES requires that at its annual meeting, the Board identifies a member of the Board to act as **Diversity Champion**. It is therefore proposed that Kate Hainsworth continues in this position.

### **Next steps on recruitment beyond 2020**

- 2.19 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. The requirement of equal representation on the Board will also apply for all future recruitment campaigns.
- 2.20 We will continue to research and 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.
- 2.21 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 and equality briefing, particularly around recognising unconscious bias, ahead of conducting future interviews.
- 2.22 Going forward, the LEP will continue to monitor the composition of its Board in this regard in order to enhance these measures and will seek to redress any imbalances through proactive targeting.

### **Wider Equality and Diversity activities**

- 2.23 The Inclusive Growth and Public Policy Panel has a key role in advising the LEP Board on policy in relation to diversity, equality and inclusion matters, including in the context of issues around the Covid-19 pandemic and the regional economic recovery planning work being led by the West Yorkshire Economic Recovery Board. In particular, the Panel has recently identified the importance of the following:
- The global reaction to social injustices and inequality, including the Black Lives Matter movement;
  - People living in our most disadvantaged areas are twice as likely to die of Covid-19 than the wealthiest;
  - The sudden economic downturn (monthly GDP fell by 20.4% in April, the biggest monthly fall on record) and an uncertain recovery has created the potential for a lost generation of young people - unable to enter the labour market and becoming 'NEET' (those young people not in employment, education or training); and

- The important role played by the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector during the pandemic in terms of connecting with the people and communities that need the most assistance. It was suggested that a key role of the third sector should be to ensure the most excluded benefit from the economic recovery.

2.24 In terms of specific actions and ongoing work, the Panel is supporting the region's work on diversity, equality and inclusion in the following ways:

- *Working in partnership with the range of local, regional, and national organisations to create new and better actions*
  - The Panel comprises a diverse membership, covering the public, third and private sectors, and has provided policy advice to the West Yorkshire Economic Recovery Board, which is also comprised of a range of senior regional stakeholders and partners, in the preparation of the Board's recovery plan. The interventions contained in the plan therefore will make a positive impact in not just reducing, but eliminating, the unfairness individuals and communities in our region face in relation to the region's inclusive growth goals.
  - As part of ongoing learning and development, officers are exploring the potential for unconscious bias training for Panel members, potentially as a model to be rolled out to other regional Panels, Committees and Boards.
- *Assess the impact on equality as we develop our strategies, policies and programmes, and consider what actions, if any, may be appropriate to improve any identified adverse impacts*

It has also been recognised that the Panel should seek to further develop its role in supporting the work of other Panels and Committees, where appropriate, on the basis that:

- Inclusive Growth is inherently cross-cutting in nature – tackling inequalities is highly relevant to all areas of the LEP's work (including skills, business, green economy, and place) – therefore there is a need to make more explicit the role of the Panel in supporting other Panels and Committees to ensure they all deliver inclusive growth outcomes;
  - Identifying Inclusive Growth champions on each Panel would be useful in setting challenges and overseeing standards; and
  - The Panel could also provide a strong united voice to lead on related representations/challenges to Government.
- *Through the Combined Authority's role as the accountable body, monitor our social, environmental and economic impact and the impact on equality as we implement our strategies, policies and programmes*  
There is potential for the Panel to further develop its monitoring role:
    - Access to robust and comprehensive data sets is key and there is a need to be able to identify the risk groups, eg going beyond age groups into ethnicity, gender and place;
    - There are however currently limitations in terms of our understanding of the current socio-economic context;
    - Any regional delivery plans must be evidence based – such as better understanding impacts on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups in terms of health and industrial sectors;

- The Panel will explore a fit for purpose indicator set, eg a dashboard or index, and in line with the emerging Strategic Economic Framework; and
- The finalised Economic Recovery Plan has also made initial steps towards a monitoring framework for measuring success, including in relation to the delivery of inclusive growth and equality related outcomes. This work will continue in tandem with the Panel's more focussed work on options for monitoring the delivery of inclusive growth and eliminating inequalities in the city region.

### **The LEP/Combined Authority as an employer**

2.25 Internally the organisation has also taken actions to improve the profile of diversity issues within the workforce and our profile as an employer. These have included:

- A number of statements and increased communication to staff about our commitment to diversity from the Managing Director
- Enhancing role of a Senior Leadership Team Diversity Champion
- Beginning development of a Diversity intranet site
- Establishment of a BAME group of officers supported by and with links to the Senior Leadership Team
- A gender equality group being set up
- Revised recruitment processes developed and being rolled out to the organisation
- Improved monitoring of job applications received and appointments made
- Commitment to providing training on unconscious bias and diversity and inclusion
- More diverse images being used in our communications and on our communication channels

### **3 Clean Growth Implications**

3.1 None.

### **4 Financial Implications**

4.1 None.

### **5 Legal Implications**

5.1 None.

### **6 Staffing Implications**

6.1 None.

### **7 External Consultees**

7.1 None.

## **8 Recommendations**

- 8.1 That the Board notes and provides any comments on the contents of this report.
- 8.2 That the Board approves the attached Equality & Diversity Policy and Diversity Statement which forms part of the LEP's Assurance Framework.
- 8.3 That the Board approves Kate Hainsworth to continue in the position of LEP Diversity Champion.

## **9 Background Documents**

- 9.1 None.

## **10 Appendices**

- Appendix 1 - Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership Equality and Diversity Policy including Diversity Statement
- Appendix 2 - Board composition
- Appendix 3- Combined Authority advisory committee private sector representatives