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

Date: 13 June 2018

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

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1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 At the March 2017 Board meeting the LEP Board (“Board”) approved the submission of the Assurance Framework, which included the Equality and Diversity Policy and Statement (EDS).
- 1.2 The EDS is to be reviewed annually and any changes or recommendations are to be agreed by the Board.
- 1.3 The EDS outlines the measures to be 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 & Panel refresh conducted in autumn 2017.

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 is attached (Appendix 1) for the Board’s approval.

Recruitment of private sector Members

- 2.5 A LEP Board and Panel recruitment exercise was undertaken in autumn 2017 to recruit new private sector Members in an open and transparent manner, consistent with the Leeds City Region Assurance Framework. Our main, but not exclusive, focus was to attract business leaders within the digital, creative, health and care sectors and to have high regard for our Diversity and Equality Policy.
- 2.6 The opportunity was promoted via an online “Join the LEP” recruitment information pack which 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. This was shared through extensive digital channels and networks including Yorkshire Enterprise Network, Made in Yorkshire, Forward Ladies, Export Network, YABA, Women on Boards and Deliciously Yorkshire. Advertising also took place via the Business Insider and The Business Desk which was run in conjunction with an extensive social media campaign e.g. LinkedIn, Twitter.
- 2.7 LEP Board and Panel Members, Senior Leaders and business intermediary partners were proactively encouraged to engage and share this opportunity with their existing networks and approach relevant colleagues to maximise interest.
- 2.8 As a result of this campaign, 69 applications were received in total. Subsequently 26 shortlisted candidates who met the selection criteria were interviewed by an Appointment Panel consisting of the LEP Chair, Cllr Tim Swift (Deputy Chair) and Joanna Robinson (PS Member).
- 2.9 Of these 69, 12 applications were from females and 6 applications were bAme, 17% and 9% respectively of total applications. All female and bAme candidates were subsequently offered appointments on either the Board, a Panel or to join the Enterprise in Education programme as Enterprise Advisors.
- 2.10 The Appointment Panel proactively sought to ensure a good representation across the wider geography of the Leeds City Region as well as a mix of sector and size of business, including social enterprise (see Appendix 2).

Composition of the Board and Panels

- 2.11 The table in Appendix 2 details the composition of the Board following this recruitment exercise.
- 2.12 Induction sessions were subsequently provided to all new Board and Panel Members and Enterprise Advisors.
- 2.13 Both new and existing private sector Members were also briefed on our Equality and Diversity Policy.

Next Steps

- 2.14 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 Appointment Panels will in turn also receive more in depth diversity & equality briefing, particularly around recognising subconscious bias, ahead of conducting future interviews.
- 2.15 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 targeting.
- 2.16 The LEP will also continue to research and then reach out to bAme and women in business networks in an attempt to attract a greater number of applicants in future recruitment campaigns. There are numerous existing networks already in place and our intention is to continue to grow these in number. For example, the Insider Top 40 most significant women in Yorkshire was announced only recently and therefore we have already made steps to engage with both individuals directly and the publication. This is also the case with the Northern Powerhouse Women network. Contact was made in late April in preparation of forthcoming 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.

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

1. Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership Equality and Diversity Policy including Diversity Statement
2. LEP Board composition