

# **Humber LEP Equality and Diversity Policy**

## **1. Humber Local Enterprise Partnership (referred to further in the document as The LEP)**

The LEP is a business-led partnership which brings together businesses and democratically elected council leaders, as well as the University of Hull and education and training providers. Established in 2011, the LEP works closely with Government to promote and develop the natural economic area surrounding the Humber Estuary, and provides strategic leadership for economic growth.

The LEP is responsible for developing, maintaining and overseeing the delivery of the Humber's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), which will soon be superseded by the Humber Local Industrial Strategy. The strategy will provide the framework for determining the key funding priorities to which relevant resources should be directed.

## **2. The Humber Region**

The resident population of the Humber in 2017 was 929,900 (460,600 male and 469,300 female). The Humber has a similar profile to England in terms of those aged under 15 years and the working age population, and a proportionately greater population of pensionable age. 453,300 people are economically active of which 53,400 (8.7%) are self-employed (NOMIS - Sept 18), comprising 600 (11.5%) males and 17,800 (5.9%) females. This broadly reflects the national picture with respect to self-employment.

According to 2011 census data, 96.5% of the Humber's population are White - some 10 percentage points more than for England. White British is the largest ethnicity category at 93.5% compared to 79.8% for England.

There are 29,970 businesses in the Humber of which 88.1% are micro, 9.7% are small, 1.8% medium and 0.4% large. The manufacturing sector employs 15.1% of all in employment in the Humber, almost double the national figure of 7.9%. However, three of the broad industry groups, professional, scientific & technical (4.9%), information and communication (1.8%), and financial and insurance (0.9%) are under-represented in the Humber, when compared to the regional and national averages. Skilled trades occupations and process, plant and machine operatives represents over a fifth of all in employment in the Humber (21.7%), a much higher rate than nationally (16.3%), highlighting the industrial heritage of the area.

In the Humber LEP area, all four authorities all have a higher gender pay gap than the regional (18.8%) and national rates (19.1%). North East Lincolnshire and North Lincolnshire, with 30.1% and 30.0% respectively, have the greatest gender pay gap.

### **3. LEP Vision**

The LEP's core vision is driving growth within the Humber Economy for the benefit of our communities. To achieve this, the LEP will ensure that all barriers are removed and that our businesses, residents, visitors, workforce and communities benefit from diversity and equality of opportunity for all. It is a fundamental ambition of the LEP and its partners that no community will be excluded from full participation in economic life and progress.

The Humber LEP explicitly recognises the value of our diverse communities, and the importance of inclusivity in achieving our future prosperity. Diversity in the workforce enables competitive advantage through realising improved business outcomes: these include increased innovation and creativity; enhanced problem-solving; improved productivity; increased revenue; and an improved culture.

We, therefore, aim to integrate equality and diversity into all LEP practices, processes and policies including the work that others do on behalf of the LEP. The LEP and Hull City Council as our Accountable Body, shall comply with their responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

### **3. What is Equality and Diversity?**

Equality is defined as: ensuring individuals or groups of individuals are not treated differently or less favourably on the basis of their specific protected characteristic, including race, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation and age.

Diversity aims to recognise, respect and value people's differences to contribute and realise their full potential by promoting an inclusive culture for all.

Equality and diversity issues impact everyone; hence, we are committed to removing those barriers that restrict Humber residents and continuing to work towards positive change.

In the LEP context, we are also committed to obtaining a diverse range of views and contributions from businesses and other stakeholders of all sizes, sectors and locations within the Humber, and ensuring that they are treated fairly.

### **4. Our commitment**

The LEP is committed to supporting a fully inclusive culture. We recognise that we have an important role to play in promoting diversity and eliminating discrimination. We seek to do this in the way that we conduct ourselves and

our business. We are committed to upholding the principles of equality and fairness in everything we do.

This policy sets out and reinforces our commitment to engaging in and promoting good equality practices, within our own business and with regard to all who wish to work with us.

Our priorities and objectives are focussed to deliver key outcomes for priority groups, key sectors and local communities. We aim to deliver a positive equality impact; for example, by targeting positive activity with key sectors, priority groups, and local communities.

In delivering these priorities and objectives, the LEP has due regard to the need to:

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under legislation;
2. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it;
3. Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

## **5. How we will fulfil our commitment and meet our responsibilities**

### **5.1 Board composition**

The LEP is aware that the current composition of our main LEP Board and Sub-Boards does not reflect fully the diverse communities of the Humber region. Therefore, the LEP has established a Board Member Panel to consider and recommend to the LEP Board actions needed to ensure its board composition reflects the diverse communities of the Humber. In determining the optimum composition of the Board, the LEP will balance a diverse membership with skills mix and expertise. Our guiding principles are that we want our Boards and Sub-Boards:

- To be proactive, assertive and confident in our aspiration and ambition
- Attract the best talent
- Perform highly effectively and accountably to ensure that we deliver on our ambition

We are committed to ensuring that by 2020 at least one third of LEP Board members are women with an expectation for equal representation by 2023.

### **5.2 Appointment Process**

As noted, the LEP has formed a Board Member Panel with a diverse composition of Board members and advisors, drawn from the public and private sectors. The Panel is reviewing the LEP's recruitment and appointment processes, for the LEP Board and Sub-boards, to ensure that

these embrace a positive approach to diversity enabling us to select the best person based on merit and free from unconscious bias pertaining to factors such as gender, race, age etc. that are not relevant to the individual's ability to contribute effectively and constructively to the LEP. Taking this approach will ensure that the LEP derives the positive benefits of a diverse range of talented Board and Sub-Board members.

The active engagement of the wider business community and key stakeholders in our recruitment and appointment processes is important. In particular, for the appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair, we will directly involve business leaders and public sector stakeholders in the appointment process.

Once finalised, the appointment process will be agreed by the LEP Board and published on our website.

### **5.3 Appointment Committee**

An Appointment Committee will be established to oversee the appointment of new Board members, the Chair and Vice-Chair. This Committee's composition will be diverse in order to further promote the LEP's commitment to diversity.

### **5.4 Recruitment**

The LEP will endeavour to recruit openly from the Humber community so that the Board reflects regional diversity. Board and Sub-Board diversity will be assessed twice per annum and the results discussed at Board level with additional intervention where necessary.

The LEP will encourage actively Board and Sub Board applications from individuals with diverse backgrounds and;

- Will ensure recruitment literature does not contain barriers to economic inclusion;
- Will promote the LEP's commitment to equality and diversity in recruitment application packs and adverts;
- Will aim to reach the widest possible candidate pool by using a range of recruitment methods and positive action, for example targeting underrepresented groups through social media channels;
- Will define the selection criteria in terms of measurable skills, experience, knowledge and personal qualities;
- Will assess candidates against the role specification in a consistent way throughout the process.

### **5.4 Selection**

All Board and Sub Board appointments will be made on merit, in the context of the skills and experience required by the Board and Sub-Boards as a whole to be effective. We will expect that Board members involved in recruitment and selection will have committed to and undergone unconscious bias training.

## 5.5 Equality and Diversity Champion

The LEP will consider whether to appoint a Board member to act as its champion for Equality and Diversity. However, we will make explicit our expectation that equality and diversity is the responsibility of all Board and Sub-Board members and that the Chair of the Board will actively promote and lead on ensuring the LEP Board understands its role in promoting diversity and eliminating discrimination.

## 5.6 Decision-making

As strategies, policies and programmes of work are developed, the LEP will assess the impact on equality and diversity and consider what actions, if any, may be appropriate to address any identified adverse impacts and to realise further benefits.

The social, environmental and economic impact of the programmes and policies, and the impact on equality and diversity, will also be monitored and reported as strategies, policies and programmes are implemented.

The LEP will be open and transparent in relation to all decision-making, and publish all information regarding its progress in meeting its commitments and duties in relation to equality and diversity.

## 5.7 Partner Accountable Body

The LEP will work with Hull City Council, as our Accountable body, to ensure that all commissioning and tendering processes pay due regard to the Equality Act 2010, general duties under the Public Sector Equality Duties and to the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012. In particular, we will ensure that the following principles are adhered to:

- Advancing equality of opportunity;
- Demonstrating our commitment to supporting those with a protected characteristic into enterprise and employment;
- Ensuring the elimination of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

## 5.8 Stakeholders

The LEP will engage with all stakeholders through events, newsletters, websites and at the AGM, striving to be inclusive and transparent in all communications, encouraging consultation and collaboration.

## 5.9 Training

The LEP will ensure that all members of the Board, through their induction process, and all members of the Executive Team undertake equality, diversity and unconscious bias training.

## 5.10 Safe Environment

The LEP will provide a safe, inclusive environment free from all discrimination and harassment both in employment and service delivery.

#### **5.11 Accountability**

The LEP is responsible and accountable for the implementation of this policy and for ensuring diversity issues are addressed through the active promotion of this policy.

LEP Board members and Executive Team members have a responsibility to challenge any unfair discrimination for reasons covered by equalities legislation and good practice.

#### **6. Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed periodically in line with the review of the Assurance Framework as recommended by BEIS. Any changes will be approved by the LEP Board.

**March 2019 (updated June 2019)**