

Hull & East Yorkshire LEP Equality and Diversity Policy

1. Hull & East Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (referred to further in the document as HEY 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 April 2021, the LEP works closely with Government to promote and develop the natural economic area in Hull and East Yorkshire, and provides strategic leadership for economic growth.

The LEP is responsible for developing, maintaining and overseeing the delivery of the Economic Strategy. The strategy will provide the framework for determining the key funding priorities to which relevant resources should be directed.

2. The Hull and East Yorkshire Region

The total population of Hull and East Yorkshire LEP area is 601,000 people in 2019. This reflects 341,000 people (or 57% of the total population) in the East Riding of Yorkshire, 260,000 people (or 43%) in the City of Kingston upon Hull. The age profile of the HEY LEP area is that of an older population than at the level seen nationally, with higher proportions of people aged 50-64 and 65+ (42% aged 50 and over) than England (37% aged 50 and over). The working age population accounts for 61% of the population in Hull & East Yorkshire, which is slightly smaller than in England (62%). The East Riding of Yorkshire has a significantly older population with 49% of people in the area aged 50 and over, whilst only 33% of residents in the City of Kingston upon Hull are aged 50 and over.

According to 2011 census data, 94.1% of the population City of Kingston upon Hull are classified as white, East Riding of Yorkshire (96.1%) and England (79.8%).

Hull & East Yorkshire is home to around 20,100 businesses. The business profile of Hull & East Yorkshire is dominated by micro businesses which whilst they account for 87% of all businesses locally, is a lower share than nationally (90%). Hull & East Yorkshire has a slightly larger share of small-sized businesses (10%) than the share nationally (8%). Meanwhile, the proportion of medium-sized and large businesses in the immediate area reflect levels seen nationally. Overall, this means that Hull & East Yorkshire has a higher-than-average size of businesses which is above national levels. Within the local geography, notable deviations from national trends include a significantly larger proportion of small-sized businesses (14%) in the City of Kingston upon Hull, and the resultant lower share of micro businesses than at the national level. The City of Kingston upon Hull also has a larger share of large businesses (0.8% vs 0.4% nationally).

3. LEP Vision

The LEP's core vision is driving growth within the Hull and East Yorkshire Economy. 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 HEY 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.

4. 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 Hull and East Yorkshire 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 region, and ensuring that they are treated fairly.

5. 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.
4. How we will fulfil our commitment and meet our responsibilities

5.1 Board composition

The LEP will aim to 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 at least one third of LEP Board members are women with an expectation for equal representation by 2023.

5.2 Appointment Process

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 Hull and East Yorkshire 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.

5.5 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.

5.6 Equality and Diversity Champion

The LEP will 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.

5.7 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.

5.8 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.

5.9 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.

5.10 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.

5.11 Safe Environment

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

5.12 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.