

GM LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

SUBJECT: GM LEP Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

DATE: 13th October 2020

FROM: Vanda Murray

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides an update on the development of a GM LEP Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

RECOMMENDATIONS

The LEP Board is asked to consider the report and provide feedback on the proposed way forward.

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At their meeting in July, the Board discussed how the LEP could use its business experience and expertise to promote greater diversity and inclusion within the work of the LEP itself, the private sector and to add value to wider GM policy development and delivery.
- 1.2 At the subsequent meeting in August, the LEP Board received a report from the Diversity Champion setting out the initial thinking on how this could be taken forward including a number of ideas to help inform discussion.
- 1.3 At the September meeting, the Board had an update on the refresh of the GM Social Value Policy and how this could strengthen delivery of the LEP's diversity and inclusion priorities.

2. GM LEP DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

- 2.1 Following the Board's discussion on the above and in consultation with the Diversity Champion, it is proposed that the LEP develops a more detailed Action Plan based on the following three themes.
- 2.2 ***Highlighting Equality Issues in LEP Decision Making***
The Board has explored how to best consider equality and diversity implications in all its decision making, including programmes such as the Local Growth Fund, as well as how it can feed into the development of wider GM policy including the Equality Advisory Panels; the Greater Manchester Tackling Inequalities Board; the Independent Inequalities Commission and the Social Value Framework.
- 2.3 As part of the current membership refresh, the Board also noted the opportunity to ensure the LEP is attracting a diverse range of candidates and increasing diversity in its Board moving forward.
- 2.4 It is therefore proposed that the all future Board reports will highlight equalities and environmental issues for any proposals or recommendations so that the Board can be fully informed of any implications for diversity and inclusion in its decision making.
- 2.5 ***Development of the LEP Economic Proposition***
The LEP is developing a LEP Economic Proposition setting out a bold vision led by business and the LEP, working with the GMCA, to set out the sort of Greater Manchester we want to help create as we build back better including the initial actions to achieve that vision.
- 2.6 This will include a commitment to tackle inequalities, embrace diversity and balance profit with people and sustainability to support productive, job rich, fair employment.
- 2.7 As part of this approach, it is proposed that the LEP prioritises the creation a new generation of leaders and managers through a world leading programme of Female Entrepreneurship and significantly increasing the number of female and BAME leaders
- 2.8 ***Champion of Best Practice in the GM Private Sector***
The LEP has a key role as the voice of business, sitting at the heart of Greater Manchester's governance arrangements, ensuring that business leaders are empowered to set the strategic course, determine local priorities and drive growth and job creation.

- 2.9 The Board have discussed how the LEP can use this position to act as a platform for the latest thinking in equalities within business, highlighting best practice and showcasing leading voices in this area.
- 2.10 It is proposed that the LEP hosts a diversity and inclusion event with the GMCA, bringing together business, academia and partners to explore key topics and help shape the actions needed to realise greater diversity in the private sector. This could include a number of key themes such as recruitment; training and development; communicating best practice and role models; and how supply chains can contribute to an inclusive economy.
- 2.11 The event will also be a good opportunity to promote the role of the Good Employment Charter in strengthening diversity in GM business as part of its wider vision to raise employment standards across GM.
- 2.12 Building on these principles, it is further proposed that the LEP develops a 'business case' for diversity, setting out the evidence that demonstrates that a diverse workforce is more creative, innovative and productive. This could draw on the evidence in Government commissioned reviews along with private sector led initiatives and GM specific data.
- 2.13 The business case could also underscore the strong link between gender-balanced organisations and corporate performance, underlining how businesses that fully embrace diversity perform better on measures like return on investment and total shareholder return.

3. NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 The LEP Board is asked to consider the report and provide feedback on the proposed way forward.