

Heart of the SW LEP Equalities and Diversity Statement Draft for approval by SCC & F & R Committee

Heart of the SW LEP and Somerset County Council, in undertaking its role as the Accountable Body to the Heart of the SW LEP, shall comply with their responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and will have regard to these requirements when apportioning funding.

The Board is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in the delivery and accessibility of its services. In particular, Heart of the SW LEP will look to ensure diverse representation at Board and sub-group level which is reflective of the local business community (including geographies and protected characteristics). Heart of the SW LEP is committed to providing a safe environment free from unlawful discrimination and harassment both in employment and service delivery.

Heart of the SW LEP and the County Council shall have due regard in the exercise of their roles and responsibilities to the need to:-

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimization and any other conduct prohibited under legislation;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

The Public Sector Equality Duty is supported by a set of specific duties which are intended to help public bodies to carry out the above aims in a way that is tangible, transparent and accountable. A key specific duty is to:

- Prepare and publish one or more measurable and specific equality objective(s).

Heart of the SW LEP's equality objectives

Heart of the SW LEP's objectives focus on two priority areas:

- Workforce action: ensuring best practice in recruitment and inclusion, working with our Accountable Body.
- Board Recruitment: ensuring diverse representation at Board and sub-group level which is reflective of the local business community (including geographies and protected characteristics). Our Finance and

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Resources Committee will lead this work, providing regular reports to the Heart of the SW LEP Board.

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