



EQUALITY, INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement

We know that diversity brings new ideas, fresh perspectives and encourages innovation. Plymouth and South Devon (PASD) Freeport recognise that difference is an asset which must be celebrated.

We will encourage all our partners to reflect that diversity in our community. As a public-private sector endeavour we are committed to meeting the needs of our different stakeholders. We are guided by our commercial instinct and the region's business and economic needs as much as we are by our public sector values of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. We know that not only is there a business case for equality and diversity, but that morally promoting equality, championing diversity and facilitating inclusion is the right thing to do.

PASD Freeport provides unrivalled opportunity for our stakeholders and local community. However, we know that existing socioeconomic barriers stand in the way of people reaching their potential. Labour market data shows some groups (women, people with disabilities, and older workers) are already disadvantaged in the labour market in Plymouth, with lower rates of employment, fewer people in higher paid occupations and lower pay. The proportion of men working in the manufacturing sector as proportion of our workforce is currently higher than the proportion of women.

We understand the link between equality and opportunity and are committed to ensuring that the benefits of PASD Freeport are felt across the region. Through our Skills Plan, we will work with key employers to supply training, work experience and apprenticeships to ensure that residents in Plymouth's most deprived areas reap the benefits of PASD Freeport.

Equality Act 2010

PASD Freeport will actively promote equality and is committed to challenging unfair discrimination facing those on the grounds of protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act (2010).

- Age
- Disability
- Religion or Belief
- Marriage and Civil Partnerships
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Gender Reassignment
- Race
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation.

Underpinning our commitment to ensuring that as many people as possible benefit from PASD Freeport is our active compliance with the Equality Act (2010). Our public sector partners have additional duties under the Equality Act known as the Public Sector Equality Duty which apply even when working in partnership. These are:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act (2010)
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Our Equality Objectives

PASD Freeport will establish an equality objective to encourage female participation within STEM occupations and in doing so, help to reduce the gender pay gap.

Our Commitment to Equality and Diversity

Our specific commitments to promote equality and diversity: -

- We give due regard to the impact of decisions we take; we carried out an Equality Impact Assessment on our outline and full business cases and we will review this regularly.
- We will encourage diversity in the membership of the PASD Freeport Board and stakeholder group(s) by striving to achieve fair and balanced representation of women on the Board and encourage proportionate representation from other disadvantaged and underrepresented groups.
- We will promote diversity and encourage businesses operating within the Freeport to sign-up to initiatives such as the Plymouth Charter.
- We will ensure that any engagement activity is accessible and provides opportunities for our stakeholders to have their voices heard.
- Our employment and Skills Plan will be strongly aligned to ensuring people from protected and disadvantaged groups are able to access all opportunities within the Freeport.
- Key areas for this to focus include:
 - Ensuring women, ethnic minority groups and other disadvantaged communities are able to benefit from all opportunities, including STEM.
 - A targeted skills/jobs brokerage programme within our broader skills strategy to link people from deprived communities with opportunities.
 - Development of apprenticeship and internship opportunities.

Modern Slavery

PASD Freeport and its partners are committed to acting in accordance with the Modern Slavery Act (2015) and to eliminating practices and conditions which may foster modern slavery.

Responsibility of Plymouth and South Devon Freeport Members and Directors

PASD Freeport Members are responsible for ensuring that the Public Sector Equality Duty which applies to our Local Authority Partners is reflected in Freeport related activity undertaken by the partners and that they are clear that any requirements this may impose on the Freeport Company are reflected in this policy.

PASD Freeport directors have responsibility for due diligence which includes responsibility for ensuring that PASD Freeport operates per the requirements of the Equality Act (2010). Our directors are expected to act with integrity and treat all stakeholders with respect and dignity.

PASD Freeport has the governance structures and mechanisms in place to support our directors to do this and to monitor our progress around equality and diversity. To ensure they are supported in this role the Freeport team will be charged with: -

- Providing baseline community mapping data covering the protected characteristics and STEM data.
- Providing reports covering Race, Disability and Gender pay gap reporting and unemployment - across disability, age, gender and race.

Employee Policy Statement

The terms equality, inclusion and diversity are at the heart of this policy. 'Equality' means ensuring everyone has the same opportunities to fulfil their potential free from discrimination. 'Inclusion' means ensuring everyone feels comfortable to be themselves at work and feels the worth of their

contribution. 'Diversity' means the celebration of individual differences amongst the workforce. We will actively support diversity and inclusion and ensure that all our employees are valued and treated with dignity and respect. We want to encourage everyone in our business to reach their potential.

We recognise that discrimination is unacceptable and although equality of opportunity has been a long-standing feature of our employment practices and procedure, we have made the decision to adopt a formal policy. Breaches of the policy will lead to disciplinary proceedings and, if appropriate, disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

The aim of the policy is to ensure no job applicant, employee or worker is discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

We will ensure that the policy is circulated to any agencies responsible for our recruitment and a copy of the policy will be made available for all employees and all applicants for employment.

The policy will be available to all private contractors reminding them of their responsibilities towards the equality of opportunity.

The policy will be implemented in accordance with the appropriate statutory requirements and full account will be taken of all available guidance and in particular any relevant Codes of Practice.

We will maintain a neutral working environment in which no employee or worker feels under threat or intimidated.

Recruitment and Selection

The recruitment and selection process is crucially important to any equality, inclusion and diversity policy. We will endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that employees making selection and recruitment decisions will not discriminate, whether consciously or unconsciously, in making these decisions.

Promotion and advancement will be made on merit and all decisions relating to this will be made within the overall framework and principles of this policy.

Job descriptions, where used, will be revised to ensure that they are in line with this policy. Job requirements will be reflected accurately in any personnel specifications.

We will adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of vacancies.

We will not confine our recruitment to areas or media sources which provide only, or mainly, applicants of a particular group.

All applicants who apply for jobs with us will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job.

All employees involved in the recruitment process will periodically review their selection criteria to ensure that they are related to the job requirements and do not unlawfully discriminate.

Short listing and interviewing will be carried out by more than one person.

Interview questions will be related to the requirements of the job and will not be of a discriminatory nature.

We will not disqualify any applicant because they are unable to complete an application form unassisted unless personal completion of the form is a valid test of the standard of English required for the safe and effective performance of the job.

Selection decisions will not be influenced by any perceived prejudices of other staff.

Training and Promotion

Senior staff and board members will receive training in the application of this policy to ensure that they are aware of its contents and provisions.

All promotion will be in line with this policy.

Monitoring

We will maintain and review the employment records of all employees in order to monitor the progress of this policy.

Monitoring may involve:

- the collection and classification of information regarding the race in terms of ethnic/national origin and sex of all applicants and current employees;
- the examination by ethnic/national origin and sex of the distribution of employees and the success rate of the applicants; and
- recording recruitment, training and promotional records of all employees, the decisions reached and the reason for those decisions.

The results of any monitoring procedure will be reviewed at regular intervals to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy. Consideration will be given, if necessary, to adjusting this policy to afford greater equality of opportunities to all applicants and staff.