

Liverpool City Region

Race Equality Declaration of Intent



**LIVERPOOL
CITY REGION**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

METROMAYOR
LIVERPOOL CITY REGION

Introduction

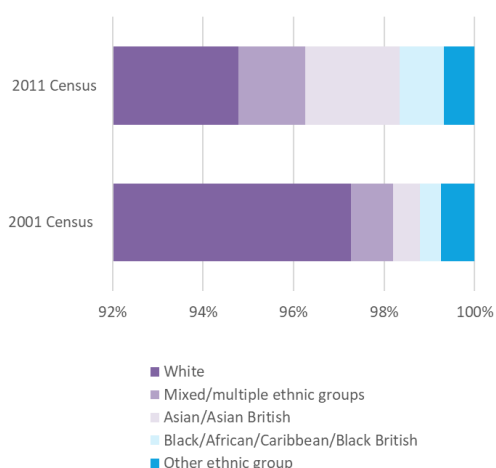
On the 25th May, news spread of the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, USA, during the height of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The Pandemic and its disproportionate impact on disadvantaged and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups and the Black Lives Matters Movement give social and racial justice a new level of urgency.

This context, and the global focus on racial injustice and inequalities mean we must act now to tackle race equality and work together to create an anti-racist culture through the elimination of bias, discrimination and injustice across systems and institutions.

Racism is a structural problem which exists in nearly all major institutions and organisations. Liverpool City Region Combined Authority recognises institutional and systemic racism as a legitimate issue, one that has no quick fix, but can no longer go unaddressed.

The City Region's population is increasingly diverse and multicultural, (figure 1) yet institutional racism is affecting the outcomes for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) residents. Among other indicators, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents in the City Region face higher employment gaps, are more likely to be economically inactive, are paid less- on average- than white residents are more likely to live in poverty, and less likely to own their own home. The Combined Authority accepts that it has an important role to play in tackling this injustice and inequality and driving forward positive change.

Figure 1: Population by ethnicity in LCR



As a major employer, we must look internally at our own organisation, which is failing to be representative of the population it serves, especially at a senior level. As a funder, we have a responsibility to ensure our programmes are accessible to all of our residents, with a relentless focus on narrowing gaps, and finally as a key institution in the City Region, we must use our convening and soft powers to set best practice for other organisations and stakeholders to follow. Put simply, we must do the right thing for our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees and residents and influence the partners we work with to do the same.

Our Engagement

The Combined Authority has set out a series of commitments around how it seeks to support race equality in its areas of influence and responsibility. We are at the beginning of a process to engage with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities to understand if we have the right approach and whether our targets will achieve the desired outcomes. We will hold further discussions in the near future where we will be able to discuss our commitments in more detail.

Our role as an employer

The Combined Authority is a major employer in the City Region, with over 950 employees. Despite this, less than 3% of the Combined Authority's workforce are from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups. Additionally, there is no Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic representation at director level and only 3.4 % Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic representation at a senior management level. The Combined Authority is committed to creating a more diverse workplace, this is critical to ensure the organisational capability meets the needs of a diverse City Region.

Ambition

The Combined Authority will:

- Develop a diverse, representative workforce that promotes opportunity for underrepresented employees
- Increase the number of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff in senior positions
- Embed equality and diversity as an integral part of the ethos and culture of the organisation

Actions

The Combined Authority will:

- Agree formal targets for workforce diversity with a focus on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff numbers and employees in leadership and senior positions
- Review Combined Authority recruitment policy and practice to identify improvements based on a peer review and diversity good practice
- Implement well-managed use of positive action to address under representation in the organisation where appropriate
- Develop internal talent management strategies that give specific attention to developing internal Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff
- Develop and deliver meaningful and compulsory Equality & Diversity training for all employees
- Complete a diversity monitoring data audit and address gaps
- Publish a workforce monitoring report annually and our Race Equality Pay Gap to aid transparency and monitor progress
- Invest in resource to oversee this work, making links between, and providing support for, different parts of the organisation and external stakeholders.

Achievements

By 2025 there will be:

- An annual increase in the percentage of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees
- A minimum of 6% of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees in the workforce
- An increase to a minimum of 6% of senior positions held by Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people
- 100% completion by all staff of Equality & Diversity training each year
- Well understood approach to equality across the organisation
- Clear accountability for diversity through the performance management framework

Our role in developing the City Region's economy

The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority signed a historic devolution agreement with Her Majesty's Government in 2015. This agreement has given us more power and funding in the areas of transport, housing, land and property, infrastructure, low carbon, culture, visitor economy, business support and innovation, and skills and employment. We have direct influence to reduce inequalities in these areas, particularly skills and employment and business support. Despite this, not all of the programmes and interventions we deliver are equally accessible to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents. The first round of the Future Innovation Fund is just one example of this, which received only 3 applications from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic-led businesses.

Ambitions

The Combined Authority seeks to

- Improve the accessibility and take up of Combined Authority funded programmes across Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents
- Embed consideration of race equality in all policies, programmes and interventions
- Deliver policy, programmes and interventions that effectively narrow gaps between Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic and White residents

Actions

The Combined Authority will:

- Review and improve the Equality Impact Assessment process and ensure all necessary staff are trained to complete assessments effectively
- Complete an audit of the collection, consistency and monitoring of diversity information for all funded programmes and projects
- Work with national statistics providers to improve availability of data to identify race inequalities (for example the number of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic-led businesses)
- Work with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities to understand how we can improve the accessibility of projects and programmes for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents, businesses and organisations
- Work with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities to co-design employment, skills and business support interventions that narrow the gaps in outcomes between Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic and White residents
- Include race equality considerations in all future policies and strategies and ensure decision makers understand the targets and priorities that have been set
- Improve the racial diversity of strategic decision-making panels across the region

Achievements

By 2025 there will be:

- An additional 2,500 Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic led businesses supported by the Combined Authority to start or grow a business
- An additional 5,000 Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents supported through employment and skills programmes including work placements and apprenticeships

- Rigorous and consistent diversity monitoring for all Combined Authority funded projects and programmes
- High-quality Equality Impact Assessments completed for all policy, projects and programmes prior to sign off
- Improved availability of data to understand economic performance through a race equality lens

Our role as a Civic Leader

Institutional racism is bigger than any individual organisation. The Combined Authority must use its soft powers to extend influence beyond our own organisation and to influence other organisations to also prioritise race equality and deliver positive actions for change.

Ambition

The Combined Authority seeks to:

- Listen to and amplify the voice of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities
- Increase the number of organisations across the City Region prioritising race equality
- Support organisations to make positive change in the area of race equality

Actions

The Combined Authority will:

- Engage with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities to have honest conversations about racism and barriers in the City Region
- Engage with young Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents and empower them to enact change in the City Region
- Facilitate conversations between Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities and organisations across the City Region
- Work closely with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities to co-design solutions
- Support local and national campaigns for racial justice
- Be an active leader and play our part in educating and supporting the business community to tackle racism
- Facilitate increased Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic representation in senior leadership and board level positions across the City Region
- Share best practice and promote organisational models that tackle race equality
- Change the narrative in our region for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents, encourage positive narratives, challenge negative media, images and communications

Achievements

By 2025 there will be:

- Increased engagement between organisations and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities
- An increase in the number of organisations taking positive action to address race equality

- An improvement in the recognition and understanding of the day-to-day experience of racism that makes life for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents different from that of White people