



A Plan for a more diverse Active Partnership for Luton and Bedfordshire



1. A Message from our Chairperson

I am delighted to have the opportunity to share my thoughts on the importance and significance of our work to become a more diverse Active Partnership. We serve one of the more diverse populations in the country. If we are to achieve the best possible outcomes, make the best decisions for the long term, and have respect and credibility throughout the county we need to broaden our knowledge and understanding of all of the communities across Bedfordshire.

This sounds a massive task. but we will be much better placed to achieve this if we continue to diversify our board membership, staffing and the relationships that we foster so that our representation and the people that we work with much more closely represents our county.

We have made significant strides in this respect over the last couple of years but we know we have further work to do to achieve this. I know that I speak for all of the board and the senior management team when I say that we are all committed to delivering on the actions outlined within this document.



2. Our commitment to becoming a more diverse organisation

The team BEDS&LUTON board has published the following statement to demonstrate its commitment to becoming a more diverse organisation, and ensuring that this commitment to diversity underpins every aspect of our work.

‘teamBEDS&LUTON is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and is responsible for ensuring that no job applicant, employee, volunteer or member receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, gender, disability, race, ethnic origin, nationality, colour, parental or marital status, pregnancy, religious belief, class or social background, sexual preference or political belief.

teamBEDS&LUTON will ensure that there will be open admission to all those who wish to work in partnership or alongside the teamBEDS&LUTON Active Partnership in all aspects of our work and that they are treated fairly.

teamBEDS&LUTON are committed to achieving gender parity (with a minimum of 30% female) and greater diversity generally on its board, including, but not limited to Black, Asian, minority ethnic (BAME) diversity, sexual preference and disability.’

3. Background

3.1 team BEDS&LUTON (tB&L) is one of 43 Active Partnerships (AP) operating within England. Established in 2005, historically the organisation was tasked with the strategic development and delivery of creative and worthwhile sport and physical activity interventions throughout Bedfordshire. Using a combination of advocacy and direct delivery, tB&L provides strategic leadership together with a broad range of services and opportunities to the sporting and physical activity infrastructure in the “old county of Bedfordshire” within the 3 local authority areas of Central Bedfordshire, Bedford and Luton.

3.2 tB&L is hosted by Active Luton, the Leisure Trust for Luton Borough Council. All contractual agreements, banking, finance arrangements, human resources and primary accommodation are provided through Active Luton. This organisation is a charity and registered as a company limited by guarantee.

3.3 tB&L is governed by a board of no more than 12 members. Three of the members are provided by an elected officer from each of the Unitary Authorities and each year one of the unitary authorities provides an officer to be part of the board.

The board has had a diversity champion in place for many years. The CEO attends in an advisory capacity and is an ex-officio member. This board is a sub-committee of the main Active Luton board.

The new governance code requires that our board and governance procedures are externally reviewed every four years. The first external review commenced in the autumn of 2019. The actions arising from the first phase of the review have formed an action plan which is now being delivered.

The minutes of the last years board meetings are publicly available via the 'about us' section of our website.

3.4 The AP has worked hard to increase female representation on the board over the last 3 years. Throughout this period representation has exceeded the requirements of the Code of Sports Governance; that being a minimum of 30% of each gender on the Board. Female representation on the board as at June 2020 is 50%.

3.5 The AP is also working to ensure that the membership of the board is reflective of the BAME communities that we serve across Bedfordshire. These communities account for just under 20% of Bedfordshire's population. Following the recent board recruitment process representation from these communities is currently 25%.

3.6 The AP is mindful that the board does not currently have a representative from the disability sector. The board will seek to address this should a vacancy become available. In the meantime the board will consider how it can best secure advisory/observer support from this sector.

3.7 The AP staffing team is small, and currently comprises 6 personnel and a full time equivalent number of 3.85 pending the recruitment of two new positions, delayed by COVID-19. Female representation is currently 80%, with 16% BAME. Whilst this meets our minimum commitments it is acknowledged that we have no staff from a South Asian background. The AP has and continues to work hard to mitigate this issue through the development of strong working and partnership relationships with South Asian based clubs and community groups.

3.8 The AP staffing team does not currently have a representative from the disability sector. It is acknowledged that one team member and existing contracted support have very close relatives who are registered disabled. The AP will continue to mitigate this issue through the development and maintaining of strong working relationships with the disability sector and other minority groups.

4. Our diversity plan objectives

4.1 Increase the diversity of representation at board level, including representation of at least 30% of each gender on the board.

4.2 Maintain the diversity of representation at staffing level whilst ensuring that strong and mutually beneficial relationships are developed and/or maintained with community groups and organisations from all sections of our community.

4.3 Continuously improve the understanding and appreciation of diversity issues amongst all board members, staff and volunteers through training and experience of practical situations.

5. Our proposed activities

5.1 Audit Board and staff way of working:-

The board to review its working practice, as a means to promote a flexible approach to board membership. This to include:-

- supporting flexible working.
- Holding meetings during conventional working hours.
- Offering financial support for childcare if evening or weekend meetings are essential.
- Provide the equipment to allow remote working where at all possible.
- Ensure that venues used are appropriate and accessible to all.

We will:

Regularly engage with board and staff members to understand challenges, strengths and opportunities of current board and staffing operations with respect to meeting times, working hours, ability to input, format of material, pre and post, conflict with other commitments and venues. In the meantime, we will continue to provide as much flexibility as practically possible to ensure that all board members have the opportunity to attend our board meetings. This will include the actions outlined above.

5.2 Proactive Recruitment

The AP will consider how it will attract an increasingly diverse range of candidates for its board, staff and volunteer members. It will look to proactively reach out to talented candidates from diverse backgrounds, thinking carefully about both the channels and tone used to recruit. Actions may well include:

- Ensuring roles at all levels are publicly advertised to reach all communities that we serve.
- Ensure that roles are recruited on the basis of merit.

- Broaden and diversify recruitment practices to actively address new markets where prospective candidates may be more prevalent.

We will:

Revise our recruitment processes and practices for board members.

Actively seek suggestions on how to market opportunities and where to go to recruit candidates from the wider community for board, staff and volunteers.

Independently review our recruitment processes, interview panels and the questions asked of candidates.

5.3 Progressing talent from within the organisation and amongst our wider partnership base

- The AP has a small but talented staff and volunteer base. Strong leadership, line management and mentoring support, both from within the AP, but also through the Active Partnerships National Team are essential to identifying and developing a pipeline of diverse talent. We have recently appointed a new person into the role of director from within the team and have an opportunity to bring two new members into the team during the summer of 2020.

- The established relationship management structure will provide us with more and better opportunities to work closely with a more diverse range of people and community groups. This will broaden our understanding and knowledge of the talent that exists within our communities.

We will:

Seek to identify potential candidates for the board, using our competency profile, our diversity profile targets and related succession planning.

Seek to identify potential candidates for staffing and volunteering roles, using our competency profile, our diversity profile targets and related succession planning.

Establish a nominations committee for appointment of board members and senior staff. This committee is to take positive action towards female applicants, those from the BAME community and those with disabilities, to guarantee an interview, providing that they meet the essential requirements of the person specification.

5.4 Ensure team BEDS&LUTON's commitment to diversity is communicated through internal practices and externally

- As the AP implement's its action plan and further demonstrates its commitment to diversity, we need to be aware of the range of audiences who will receive our messages.

- It is important that the AP recognise that 'one size fits all' approach will generally not work. The people and organisations that we wish to reach will come from a variety of different cultures and backgrounds, but are also at different places along the journey of awareness and understanding. We have multiple stakeholders and partners and our messages should be tailored to fit each group.

We will:

Undertake a review of the AP's current marketing and communication tools and activity.

Collaborate with organisations such as Women in Sport, Sporting Equals and the English Federation of Disability Sport together with our Bedfordshire based Unitary Authorities and our hosts to make recommendations on how the AP can best understand the respective markets and potential talent pools and which channels and tools to use to promote our work.

Ensure that all information, publicity and advertising for board, staffing and volunteer positions promotes a positive attitude towards women and girls and people from BAME and disability communities.

Team BEDS&LUTON Diversity Action Plan

<p>Outcome 1 – Review our current ways of working, for both the board, our staff and volunteers.</p> <p>This will achieve compliance with Governance Code sections 2.1;2.2;2.3;2.4</p>	<p>Action</p>	<p>By Whom</p>	<p>By When</p>
<p>Consider the future representation of the Board to ensure it is reflective of the county that we serve and meets our wider diversity targets</p>	<p>1. Undertake a full diversity analysis of the board through an anonymous questionnaire.</p> <p>2. Establish a nominations committee to manage all recruitment processes and practices taking into account the initial analysis and targets. The committee to ensure that diversity features as part of its recommendations to the board.</p>	<p>1. Business Manager.</p> <p>2. Chairperson and Director</p>	<p>1. Update by 30.09.2020</p> <p>2. Complete and ongoing.</p>
<p>Consider the future representation of the staff and volunteers to ensure it is reflective of the county that we serve and meets our wider diversity targets</p>	<p>1. Undertake a full diversity analysis of the staff and volunteers through an anonymous questionnaire.</p> <p>2. Establish a nominations committee to manage recruitment processes and practices for senior management positions taking into account the initial analysis and targets. The committee to ensure that diversity features as part of its recommendations to the board.</p>	<p>1. Business Manager.</p> <p>2. Chairperson and Director</p>	<p>1. Update by 30.09.2020 following new recruitments.</p> <p>2. Complete and ongoing.</p>

<p>A thorough review of current working practices for the board and staff to understand challenges, strengths and opportunities of current board and staffing operation</p>	<p>1. Board Interviews and/or questionnaires x 12 2. Staff interviews and/or questionnaires x 8</p>	<p>1. Director and Business Manager 2. Director and Business Manager</p>	<p>1. Ongoing as part of the external governance review. 2. Complete as part of the staff satisfaction process – 31.01.2021.</p>
<p>Compile a series of recommendations to help team BEDS&LUTON create an optimal environment for its Board and staff to help encourage diversity</p>	<p>1. Compile and collate information gleaned from interviews and/or questionnaires. 2. Feedback recommendations to board and staff and agree actions with these audiences 3. Consider future training needs and provide appropriate training opportunities for board members and staff. Put together a training plan for board members to approve.</p>	<p>1. Director and Business Manager. 2. Director and Business Manager 3. Director and Business Manager</p>	<p>1. Completed as part of external governance review. 2. by 30.09.2020 3. by 30.09.2020</p>
<p>Outcome 2 – Proactive Recruitment. This will achieve compliance with Governance Code Sections 2.2;2.3;2.4;2.6;2.7;2.8</p>	<p>Action</p>	<p>By whom</p>	<p>By When</p>
<p>Undertake a review of current team BEDS&LUTON recruitment practices</p>	<p>Having established the nominations committee, review the system and processes for recruitment of board members, senior staff and all other staff with the Director and Chairperson</p>	<p>Process overseen by Business Manager with review undertaken by an external partner</p>	<p>Complete as part of external governance review.</p>
<p>Obtain and collate suggestions on inclusive communication and where, and how, to market opportunities to women, disabled people and the wider BAME communities</p>	<p>Desk time to collate and present recommendations from the above review.</p>	<p>Business Manager</p>	<p>Complete as part of the external governance review.</p>

<p>Provide a check and challenge on the current make-up of interview panels and questions.</p>	<p>Share interview questions and make-up of the panel for roles at board, senior staff and general staffing level with suitable partners.</p> <p>Desk time to collate feedback and put together conclusions</p>	<p>Business Manager</p>	<p>Complete as part of the external governance review.</p>
<p>Outcome 3 - Progressing talent from within. This will achieve compliance with governance code sections 2.1; 2.2;2.4;2.7;</p>	<p>Action</p>	<p>By Whom</p>	<p>By When</p>
<p>Against the competency profile, and in consideration of the Board and Senior Management Succession Plan and diversity profile, seek to identify potential candidates for Board, Senior Management and wider staffing requirements.</p>	<p>1. Use the new relationship management structure to broaden our knowledge and understanding of the talent within our key partners and wider community groups and organisations.</p> <p>2. Make sure that effective leadership and mentoring is provided to existing staff and board members, using the APN as appropriate.</p>	<p>Director/Business Manager/Senior Relationship Manager.</p>	<p>1. Ongoing as part of RM roles.</p> <p>2. Ongoing as part of RM roles.</p>
<p>Through the Nominations Committee, the board, director, senior relationship manager and business manager to take positive action towards female applicants, those from BAME community and those with disabilities, to guarantee an interview, providing that they meet the essential requirements of the person specification.</p>	<p>Ensure the process of recruitment is clear, appropriate and provides easy signposting to opportunities that positively support our aspirations for greater representation.</p>	<p>Chairperson and Director</p>	<p>Nominations committee established and appointment processes in place that reflect the need for a balanced outcome in relation to female/BAME and disability applicants.</p>

Outcome 4 – Ensure team BEDS&LUTON commitment to diversity is communicated through internal practices and externally. This will achieve compliance with governance code sections 2.1;2.2;2.3;	Action	By whom	By When
Publish team BEDS&LUTON commitment to diversity	1. Statement on website emphasising commitment to Equality and Diversity. 2. Equality and Diversity Policy available to view on website.	Business Manager	Complete and ongoing
	Through all communications, including digital and social platforms, ensure that the commitment is understood, and the communication reflects this.	Director	Complete and ongoing
	Include diversity and equality as a standing agenda item on all board and staff meetings	Business Manager	Complete and ongoing
	Appoint a board member and senior staff member to lead on diversity issues for team BEDS&LUTON	Chairperson and Business Manager	Complete
Undertake a review of team BEDS&LUTON current marketing and communication tools and activity.	Review the content, language and imagery used in the following: Website Social Media Channels E-newsletter.	Director and marketing and communications officer	Regular review – Next review to be completed by 30 September 2020.

	Share what we currently do, look at campaigns and plans for review and recommendations		
Collaborate with organisations such as Women In Sport, Sporting Equals and the English Federation of Disability Sport to make recommendations on how team BEDS&LUTON can best understand the respective markets and potential talent pools and which channels and tools to use to promote the CSP and our work.	Meet with all organisations and allow desk time to consider recommendations; such recommendations to be built into marketing materials	Director and marketing and communications officer	By 30 September 2020
Ensure that all information, publicity and advertising for Board positions promotes a positive attitude towards women, the BAME community and disabled people.	Identify relevant materials and take action to amend/promote accordingly.	Director and marketing and communications officer	Complete and ongoing.