



Phase 2b Western Leg Information Paper

H1: Equality, diversity and inclusion policy

This paper outlines HS2 Ltd's policy on equality, diversity and inclusion.

It will be of particular interest to those potentially affected by the Government's proposals for high speed rail.

This paper was prepared in relation to the promotion of the High Speed Rail (Crewe - Manchester) Bill. Content will be maintained and updated as considered appropriate during the passage of the Bill.

If you have any queries about this paper or about how it might apply to you, please contact the HS2 Helpdesk in the first instance.

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 High Speed Two (HS2) is the Government's scheme for a new, high speed north-south railway, which is being taken forward in a number of phases. Phase One will connect London with Birmingham and the West Midlands. Phase 2a will extend the route from the West Midlands to Crewe. The Phase 2b Western Leg will connect Crewe to Manchester. As set out in the Integrated Rail Plan, published in November 2021, HS2 East is proposed to deliver a new high speed line from the West Midlands to East Midlands Parkway.
- 1.2 HS2 Ltd is the non-departmental public body responsible for developing and promoting these proposals. The company works under the terms of a Development Agreement entered into with the Secretary of State for Transport.
- 1.3 The construction and operation of Phase One of HS2 is authorised by the High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Act 2017 and Phase 2a by the High Speed Rail (West Midlands – Crewe) Act 2021.
- 1.4 In January 2022, the Government introduced a hybrid Bill to Parliament (hereafter referred to as 'the Bill'), to seek powers for the construction and operation of the Phase 2b Western Leg (the Proposed Scheme), which is called the High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester) Bill. The Proposed Scheme comprises the Phase 2b Western Leg from Crewe to Manchester and several off-route works. It also facilitates the delivery of Northern Powerhouse Rail by providing the Crewe Northern Connection and junctions and other infrastructure to be used in future schemes.
- 1.5 The work to produce the Bill includes an Equalities Impact Assessment and an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), the results of which are reported in an Environmental Statement (ES) submitted alongside the Bill. The Secretary of State has also published draft Environmental Minimum Requirements (EMRs), which set out the environmental and sustainability commitments that will be observed in the construction of the Proposed

Scheme. For more information on the EMRs please see Information Paper E1: Control of environmental impacts.

- 1.6 The Secretary of State for Transport is the Promoter of the Bill through Parliament. The Promoter will also appoint a body responsible for delivering the Proposed Scheme under the powers granted by the Bill. This body is known as the 'nominated undertaker'. There may be more than one nominated undertaker. However, any and all nominated undertakers will be bound by the obligations contained in the Bill, the policies established in the EMRs and any commitments provided in the information papers.
- 1.7 These information papers have been produced to explain the commitments made in the Bill and the EMRs and how they will be applied to the design and construction of the Proposed Scheme. They also provide information about the Proposed Scheme itself, the powers contained in the Bill and how particular decisions about the Proposed Scheme have been reached.

2 Overview

- 2.1 This information paper outlines the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy for HS2 Ltd, which any nominated undertaker will be expected to adopt.
- 2.2 The policy addresses HS2 Ltd's approach to embedding inclusion in its workforce and the planning, design, construction and operation of the Proposed Scheme.
- 2.3 Equality, diversity and inclusion are all interlinked but there are subtle differences. At HS2 Ltd, we have interpreted these terms as follows:
 - equality, in essence, is about creating a fairer environment, where everyone can participate and has the opportunity to fulfil their potential;
 - diversity is simply about difference; and

- inclusion is about engendering active participation amongst people who, because of their social identity, are generally less able to participate.

3 Legislation

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010 there is an obligation for a public authority (and a person exercising public functions) to fulfil the Equality Duty (the Duty) set out in section 149 of that Act. The Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between those with a protected characteristic and all others. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 3.2 HS2 Ltd is bound by section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. HS2 Ltd will fulfil the Duty in promoting and delivering the Proposed Scheme.
- 3.3 HS2 Ltd considers equality legislation as setting minimum standards and aspires to go beyond the mechanistic approach of ticking boxes. HS2 Ltd is committed to working towards embedding EDI into mainstream management and businesses processes – but perhaps more importantly ensuring that it becomes an inextricable part of the whole value system of the organisation.

4 Governance

- 4.1 EDI is championed at the highest level in the organisation by the Chief Executive and the wider Board.
- 4.2 On a day to day basis, EDI is managed through line management.

5 Policy principles

- 5.1 The Proposed Scheme will be a catalyst for the delivery of transport systems and infrastructure that will be inclusive by: engaging with all stakeholders fairly, delivering value through effective management of the

design and building process; and operating a safe, sustainable and reliable system to provide exceptional levels of service to passengers.

5.2 To this end, HS2 Ltd will:

- embed equality, diversity and inclusion in all its activities;
- work with stakeholders, including:
 - other transport providers;
 - affected parties including (but not limited to) tenants, landowners and occupiers;
 - communities;
 - staff;
 - contractors;
 - local and national government, and industry;
- approach its activities proactively by:
 - minimising the potential for discrimination, harassment and bullying;
 - seeking out opportunities to promote inclusive development;
 - seeking out the views of stakeholders;
 - seeking to ensure that people with protected characteristics do not experience disproportionate disadvantage as a result of the planning, design, construction and operation of the Proposed Scheme; and
- create opportunities for local, disadvantaged and underrepresented people and companies to benefit from the investment in HS2.

6 Application of the policy

- 6.1 The policy applies to HS2 Ltd, its staff and its contractors. All staff and contractors can expect treatment in accordance with the policy and will be expected to implement the policy in the course of their work.
- 6.2 The policy enables HS2 Ltd to address the needs of people and communities who are from the nine protected characteristic groups as defined in the Equality Act 2010.
- 6.3 HS2 Ltd recognises that people may belong to and identify with more than one of the protected groups, and that this may complicate the issues that they experience as a result of the development and operation of the Proposed Scheme.

7 Extent of the policy

- 7.1 The policy applies to all HS2 Ltd functions, employment related activities, and the planning, design, construction and operation of the Proposed Scheme. This includes:
 - employment policies, procedures and practices;
 - the corporate governance framework and business planning activities;
 - processes for gathering and disseminating information;
 - procurement policies and procedures and the contractual framework; and
 - policies and standards which govern the operation and delivery of transport services.

- 7.2 HS2 Ltd and any future nominated undertaker(s) would be expected to apply the policy consistently and continuously throughout each stage of the Proposed Scheme, ensuring that the Proposed Scheme can be constructed and operated in accordance with the principles of the policy.

8 Implementation

- 8.1 The EDI Policy will be performance managed by the EDI Steering Group chaired by a member of the HS2 Executive Committee and implemented

through HS2 Ltd's Management Systems. Implementation by suppliers and third parties will be achieved through contracts and agreements developed by HS2 Ltd.

- 8.2 The Proposed Scheme is currently in the planning phase and will proceed to construction and operation after the Bill is enacted. The principles that have shaped the policy have informed HS2 Ltd's work so far. An Equality Impact Assessment has been conducted to ascertain the impact of the Proposed Scheme on individuals and communities. HS2 Ltd and any future nominated undertaker would be expected to apply the EDI policy to all aspects of the Proposed Scheme.

9 Review

- 9.1 The policy will be reviewed annually or more often in the event of a significant change in circumstances including new legislation or a specific request from stakeholders.

10 More information

- 10.1 More detail on the Bill and related documents can be found at www.gov.uk/hs2-phase2b-crewe-manchester.