

Annex C: Governance Assurance Statement

The LEP Chair and Chief Executive should here provide a brief formal assurance statement on the status of governance and transparency. This should include any overview and scrutiny function undertaken by the Accountable Body. This should be sent to localgrowthassurance@communities.gov.uk copying the Cities and Local Growth Unit Area Lead by **16 December 2019**. This statement should also be published on the LEP's website by **28 February 2020** and confirmation sent to localgrowthassurance@communities.gov.uk (**max 500 words**)

The LEP benefits from integrated accountability and decision-making arrangements with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, its accountable body; the LEP meets as a LEP Board with bespoke governance documentation, and the Combined Authority appoints the LEP's advisory panels which are chaired by LEP Board members (including voting private sector representatives). Officers serve both the LEP and the Combined Authority.

The advantages of this structure include:

- "joined-up" decision-making, facilitating a clear, shared strategic direction
- effective use of private sector representation to reflect the business voice and influencing strategy and delivery across broader agendas
- a joint Assurance Framework
- consistent and close engagement with the LEP by the S73 Officer and the Monitoring Officer.

The benefits of this joint working in terms of efficiency and synergy were also highlighted by the LEP Network peer review pilot.

The Combined Authority's Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Governance and Audit Committee have an active, informed and independent role in relation to holding the LEP to account.

Engagement with external stakeholders is central to LEP activity and reflected in its structure:

- The LEP's Business Communications Group (made up of representatives from key business organisations) advises the LEP on barriers to growth and ensuring that businesses are at the heart of everything the LEP does.
- LEP advisory panels members include representatives from the third sector and other public sector organisations, as well as private sector and local authority representatives.

We remain committed to remaining the most transparent LEP in the country - the LEP meets or exceeds all transparency requirements. Examples of best practice include:

- dedicated LEP governance and transparency pages
- LEP Board and LEP advisory panel meetings are open to the public
- meeting venues are varied, to encourage increased public attendance.
- reports and minutes are published (subject to defined exceptions)
- the LEP's annual meeting is actively promoted to the public and this year an agenda item enabled public questions to be put to the LEP Board both in advance and at the meeting
- a summary of remuneration and expenses paid to LEP Board members is published

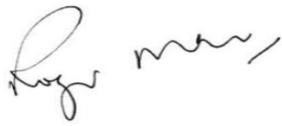
The LEP actively promotes the highest standards of conduct embedding the Nolan principles, and exceeding requirements. Examples of this include:

- LEP Board members are trained/updated annually on standards issues
- the LEP's advisory panel meetings are subject to statutory conduct requirements
- a new comprehensive Conflicts of Interest Policy clarifying standards requirements
- a new Conflicts of Interest Protocol to secure impartial, fair and transparent consideration of applications for loans or grants from LEP Board members
- we reviewed the LEP's standards arrangements against best practice recommendations made by the Committee on Standards in Public Life.

The LEP is committed to achieving diversity and equality of opportunity. The LEP has a Diversity and Equality Policy (including its diversity statement) and follows best practice in appointing a diversity champion. It receives a report on its diversity statement at its annual meeting.

A corporate performance report is submitted to each meeting of the LEP Board, providing information on budgets, performance management, risk, audit, scrutiny and any other significant matters that emerge, in line with commitments in the Assurance Framework.

We have been actively working throughout the year to ensure our high standards of governance and transparency continue as we implement any changes required as a result of the LEP review and we are confident that our arrangements at 1 April 2020 will be fully compliant.

Handwritten signature of Roger Marsh in cursive script.

Signed:
Name: Roger Marsh
Position: Chair
Date: 16 December 2019

Handwritten signature of Ben Still in block letters with a horizontal line underneath.

Signed:
Name: Ben Still
Position: Chief Executive
Date: 16 December 2019