
Report to: Governance and Audit Committee

Date: 22 July 2021

Subject: **Annual Accountability Reporting**

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1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To provide annual reports in respect of complaints and concerns raised about the Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (the LEP) and/or members of the LEP Board this year.
- 1.2 To provide a summary of applications for grants considered during the last financial year under arrangements to address conflicts of interest.

2. Information

Annual reports

- 2.1 Concerns from a member of the public or third party about the LEP may be reported through:

- the procedure for considering complaints alleging a failure to comply with the LEP Boards Members' Code of Conduct,
- the LEP's confidential complaints procedure,
- the LEP's whistleblowing policy.

Complaints about the LEP may also be channelled through the Combined Authority's complaints policy.

- 2.2 The procedure for considering complaints alleging a failure to comply with the LEP Board Members' Code of Conduct requires the Monitoring Officer to report annually to the LEP and to the Governance and Audit Committee about any outcome of any such complaint.

- 2.3 The Monitoring Officer can now report that no complaint has been received in the financial year ending March 31 2021 under this procedure. Nor has complaint been received under this confidential complaints procedure, nor under the Combined Authority's complaints procedure.
- 2.4 The LEP's Whistleblowing Policy provides for the Combined Authority's Head of Internal Audit to Provide an annual report to the LEP and to the Combined Authority's Governance and Audit Committee. The Head of Internal Audit has confirmed that n concerns were received under this policy during the financial year 2020 – 21.

Grant applications

- 2.5 The LEP and Combined Authority's jointly adopted Conflicts of Interests Policy provides an overview of conduct-related provisions applying to Members and officers, with a particular focus on conflicts of interest arising in respect of applications for loans or grants to business, which is addressed by way of the Conflicts of Interest Protocol. The Protocol seeks to ensure that such applications are dealt with fairly and impartially, including where decisions are made by officers under delegated authority. (The specific declaration requirements in the Codes of Conduct adopted by the Combined Authority and the LEP reflect the statutory requirements relating to declarations at formal meetings, and do not extend to declarations outside of formal meeting of the LEP Board or committees.)
- 2.6 For transparency and accountability, Appendix 1 to this report is a summary of the grant applications considered by officers under the delegated authority in the financial year 2020 – 21, and their outcome. Declarations made by members at the LEP Board or panel meetings are publicly available on the LEP or Combined Authority's website as they are recorded in the minutes for each meeting.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 None arising directly from this report.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1 None arising directly from this report.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 None arising directly from this report.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 None arising directly from this report.

7. Staffing Implications

7.1 None arising directly from this report.

8. External Consultees

8.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

9. Recommendations

9.1 That the Governance and Audit Committee notes that no complaints or concerns have been raised this year about the LEP (or about any member of the LEP Board) under the LEP's complaints procedures, the Combined Authority's complaints policy and the LEP's whistleblowing policy.

9.2 That the Governance and Audit Committee notes that the summary set out in the Appendix 1 to this report, relating to grant applications considered under conflict of interest arrangements in place during 2020 – 21.

10. Background Documents

None.

11. Appendices

Appendix 1 – summary of grant applications considered under conflict of interest arrangements during 2020 – 21.