

Annex E: Governance Assurance Statement

Marches LEP

The LEP Chair and Chief Executive should here provide a brief formal assurance statement on the status of governance and transparency. In particular, they should focus on any issues raised in Annex A. This statement should also be published on the LEP's website following conclusion of the Annual Performance Review process (in April 2019). You should cover any overview and scrutiny function undertaken by the Accountable Body. **(max 500 words)**

Over the past year I have continued to work with my LEP Director to maintain the high levels of good governance we put in place in 2016 and 2017. We also made sure all the necessary changes were made in January 2018 to ensure we are compliant with the Mary Ney Review recommendations along with the Government's Best Practise Guidance on Governance for LEPs.

Our governance structure as outlined in our Accountability and Assurance Framework of February 2017 recognises that the three most significant sources of funding for promoting economic growth in the Marches are the Local Growth Fund, the EU Funding Programme (2014 - 2020) and the Marches Investment Fund. The governance structure also recognises other sources of funding which the LEP either has responsibility for allocating (core and Growth Hub funds) or plays a role in supporting others to access and that further funding opportunities will emerge.

The governance arrangements are designed to ensure that: the LEP Board has an overview of all LEP-related activity; funding is being allocated in a transparent and coordinated manner which provides value for money; and assurance is provided through the accountable body Finance (S151) Officer from Shropshire Council on the proper use and administration of public funds.

With the approval of the Marches Enterprise Joint Committee (MEJC), the LEP Board may delegate specific functions, within an agreed scheme of delegation, to the LEP Director, Finance (S151) Officer at Shropshire Council (the LEP's accountable body), or the LEP Performance Risk and Monitoring Committee (PRMC), as required for the timely and efficient operation of the Partnership. However, the LEP Board will retain overall responsibility for these functions even when they delegate responsibility for delivery or project/programme monitoring.

The LEP Board which currently comprises 13 Public, Private and Voluntary Sector members makes its recommendations to the MEJC. The MEJC, the meetings of which are open to the public, comprises the three Local Authority Leaders plus myself as an Observer. In reaching a decision, the

MEJC may adopt the Board's proposals, or refer them back to the Board for further consideration. When decisions are made, they are translated into action by the LEP Management Team, working with the Marches partners to deliver LEP Board priorities and desired outcomes.

The LEP Core Team, which is managed by the LEP Director, continues to work closely with the Finance (S151) Officer of the Accountable Body to report on progress in delivery of the Growth Deal and other funds to both the PRMC and the LEP Board.

The LEP Board does monitor programme finance, receives essential information on individual project performance and manages risk through receiving copies of the programme risk register at every LEP Board meeting. The PRMC monitors the detail of programme performance, finances and output metrics for the Growth Deal and other projects and reviews in detail the LEP Risk Register at every meeting.

In relation to scrutiny of the work of the LEP the agreement with the three Local Authorities in the Marches is the LEP is invited to attend a scrutiny panel when required e.g. the LEP attended a Herefordshire Council Scrutiny panel in October 2018. The LEP also provides update reports on a bi-monthly basis to the three area business boards and we have continued to ensure our LEP website provides a clear picture of the LEP's governance arrangements and the projects it has supported with the aim of improving the transparency of the work of the LEP to all stakeholders.

Signed: 
Name: Graham Wynn, OBE
Position: Chair
Date: 02 January 2019

Signed: 
Name: Gill Hamer
Position: Director
Date: 02 January 2019