

Annex C: Marches LEP Governance Assurance Statement

The LEP Chair and Chief Executive should here provide a brief formal assurance statement on the status of governance and transparency. In particular, you 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 Conversation process (in April 2018). You should cover any Overview and Scrutiny function undertaken by the Accountable Body. (max 500 words)

Over the past two years I have worked with my LEP Director to develop and improve the governance structures of the Marches LEP. We have made these changes in consultation with our partners on the LEP Board and have held two Board away days in that time to discuss and agree how we can strengthen our governance arrangements, make them more transparent for stakeholders and how we manage conflicts of interest.

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, 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 comprises 15 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, has worked with the Finance (S151) Officer to develop a PRMC (whose Members are 3 LEP Board Members), through which the work programme can be monitored by the LEP Board. The LEP Board does monitor programme finance, receives essential information on individual project performance and manages risk through exception reports. The PRMC monitors the detail of programme performance, finances and output metrics for the Growth Deal and other projects and oversees the LEP Risk Register.

Over the past year the LEP Board has put in place a new Conflicts of Interest and Code of Conduct Policy for the LEP Board and our subgroups. We have also directed resource to ensure our LEP website provides a clear picture of LEP activities and how it makes decisions with the aim of improving the transparency of the work of the LEP to all stakeholders.

Chair & Chief Executive Sign-off:

Signed: 

Name: Graham Wynn OBE

Position: Marches LEP Chairman

Date: 22/11/2017

Signed: 

Name: Gill Hamer

Position: Marches LEP Director

Date: 22/11/2017