

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 the Assurance Team via localgrowthassurance@communities.gov.uk, copying the Cities and Local Growth Unit Area Lead, by **20 January 2021**. This statement should also be published on the LEP's website by **24 February 2021** and confirmation sent to the email address above.

(max 500 words)

The Chair and CEO remain committed to continuing the excellent track record the LEP has for good governance and, with the support of the Board, ensure the systems and processes we use meet National Assurance Framework requirements. To strengthen our governance management a Director for Corporate Services joined the LEP Secretariat in October 2020, whose main responsibility is ensuring the LEP complies fully with the standards set out in our Accountability & Assurance Framework (AAF).

Our governance structure as outlined in our AAF recognises that the most significant sources of funding for promoting economic growth in the Marches is the Local Growth Fund, the EU Funding Programme (2014 - 2020), and the Marches Investment Fund. The governance structure also recognises that the LEP receives other funding from the government to support the work of the LEP.

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 our accountable body's S151 Officer on the proper use and administration of public funds.

As outlined in our scheme of delegation the LEP Board may delegate specific functions to the LEP Chair, CEO, the S151 Officer at our accountable body, Shropshire Council, or the LEP Performance Risk and Monitoring Committee (PRMC), as required for the timely and efficient operation of the Partnership. However, the LEP Board retains overall responsibility for these functions even when they delegate responsibility for delivery or project/programme monitoring.

When decisions are made by the LEP Board they are translated into action by the LEP Secretariat or sub-groups of the LEP Board working with the Marches partners to deliver LEP priorities and desired outcomes.



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

The LEP CEO and Secretariat work with the S151 Officer of the Accountable Body to report on progress in delivery of Growth Deal and other funds to both the PRMC and the LEP Board. The LEP Board monitors programme spend, receives information on project performance and manages risk through receiving copies of the programme risk register at Board meetings. The PRMC monitors the detail of programme performance, finances and output metrics for the Growth Deal and other funding streams 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 at least one scrutiny committee each year. In 2020/21 the LEP Chair and CEO have attended the scrutiny committees of Shropshire Council (16 Sept), Herefordshire Council (7 Dec) & Telford and Wrekin Council (9 Dec).

Information on the LEP's governance arrangements and projects it has supported are available on the LEP website. Also, we have held all our LEP virtual Board meetings in public since March 2020 and held a successful virtual Business Recovery week in Oct 20 when we held our AGM and launched our 2020 annual report.

Signed:

Name: Mandy Thorn MBE DL
Position: Chair, Marches LEP
Date: 19/01/2021

Signed:

Name: Gill Hamer
Position: Chief Executive, Marches LEP
Date: 19/01/2021