



MARCHES LEP

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@levellingup.gov.uk, copying the DBT Area Lead, by **29 February 2024**. This statement should also be published on the LEP's website by **15 March 2024** with confirmation sent to the email address above. **(max 500 words)**

Despite the huge uncertainty about the future of LEPs for much of 2023 followed by confirmation of withdrawal of support for LEPs the need to transfer functions, the Marches LEP (MLEP) has maintained the highest standards of governance and transparency. We've managed to retain board members who have been active and engaged at board meetings and in other forums where they represent the LEP.

In November the Board agreed to an orderly wind up of the MLEP. We set up a transition board group. There was so much interest in managing the process well and protecting the MLEP legacy that a majority of the private board members joined the group and have given up their time every week to attend these meetings.

We have continued to open our meetings to the public and have had observers at a number of meetings throughout the year. All our Board and Performance and Risk Management Committee (PRMC) papers are published on our website giving transparency to how decisions have been made and how we have managed projects and programmes.

We have offered to attend the Overview and Scrutiny Committees of our three local authorities and were due to attend one, but this was cancelled by the Local Authority.

Our Accountable body S151 officer or deputy S151 officer has attended every board meeting as well as numerous other additional meetings including PRMC and provided ad-hoc advice as requested to ensure that the funding we manage is being spent in line with the funding conditions.

We have updated our Assurance Framework a number of times throughout the year to ensure it is up to date and continue to publish the latest version on the MLEP website.

The gifts and hospitality register and register of interests for all board members and senior staff have been updated regularly and published on the LEP website.



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

Department for
Business & Trade

Conflicts of interest forms are requested to be completed in advance of board meetings and then conflicts are also asked to be declared at the beginning of meetings.

Overall, we feel we have continued to deliver a high standard of governance and transparency throughout 23/24.

Signed:

Name: Sonia Roberts

Position: Chair, Marches LEP

Date: 27.02.24