

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. 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)**

The Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership is committed to working in an open and transparent manner and within a strong governance structure and we review our procedures on an annual basis to achieve this.

Our role

The role of the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership is to provide the clear vision and strategic leadership to drive sustainable private sector-led growth and to make a significant contribution to economic growth and job creation in the SWLEP area by:

- Ensuring that strategies for achieving economic growth and job creation within the area reflect the needs of business; and
- Driving the successful implementation of those strategies through engagement with local and central government, business, potential investors and others.

Our governance principles

The SWLEP should be governed so as to ensure that it:

1. Operates in accordance with its Assurance Framework;
2. Pursues activities which add value, and in particular activities which do not unnecessarily duplicate the work of the members of the partnership or the roles of other organisations with similar aims;
3. Effectively identifies and appropriately represents the views and needs of business in the SWLEP area;
4. Effectively identifies and appropriately takes into account the views of other stakeholders;
5. Makes effective use of the resources available to it and accounts appropriately for that use as set out in the SWLEP Accountable Body Agreement;
6. Is accountable for its performance, through:
 - a. Clear decision-making by the Board;
 - b. Self-assessment by the Board of its own performance, including regular monitoring of progress, annual performance review through the Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy's Annual Conversation, and relevant benchmarking against other LEPs; and
 - c. Appropriate transparency through public reporting of:
 - i. Governance arrangements and the Assurance Framework;
 - ii. Decisions;
 - iii. Planned and completed activities;
 - iv. Engagement with business and stakeholders;

- v. Progress against the delivery of the Strategic Economic Plan;
 - vi. Democratic accountability for its spend through the endorsement or challenge to its actions by the Joint Strategic Economic Committee of both local authorities; and
 - vii. Scrutiny of its strategies and operation by the Joint Scrutiny Task Group.
7. Is able to meet or respond quickly to any requirements or pre-conditions set by central government with regard to transparency, accountability and robust governance;
 8. To this end, we will be revising our Governance Framework for implementation from April 2018 to reflect our own experience of a new method to use of revolving loan fund, the Growing Places Infrastructure Fund. We will also make the necessary changes to incorporate the recommendations of the DCLG Non-Executive Director Review of Accountability and Transparency of LEPs, which have been accepted in full by the Government.

Our transparency

We hold our Board meetings in public and welcome stakeholders and members of the public to scrutinise and participate in the SWLEP processes. The SWLEP also complies with the spirit of the Local Government Transparency Code 2015. Finally our Governance Framework clearly states that all members of the SWLEP Board, its Subgroups and officers shall, when carrying out any duties or responsibilities on behalf of the SWLEP, abide by the 7 principles of public life: selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty; and leadership as defined in section 28 of the Localism Act 2011.

Chair & Chief Executive Sign-off:

Signed: 

Name: John Mortimer
 Position: Chairman, SWLEP
 Date: 7th December 2017

Signed: 

Name: Paddy Bradley
 Position: SWLEP Director
 Date: 7th December 2017