

Annex E: 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, 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 2020). You should cover any overview and scrutiny function undertaken by the Accountable Body.

The Swindon & 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 & 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 productivity in the SWLEP area by:

- ensuring that strategies for achieving economic growth and productivity 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 is 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; and
 - vi. democratic accountability for its spend through the endorsement or challenge to its actions by the Joint Scrutiny Committee involving businesses and the two local authorities;
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 maintain our Governance Assurance Framework ensuring any national modifications are reflected in the current approaches.

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 and we continue to do so as a company limited by guarantee. 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.

As an incorporated body we encourage local organisations to become active members of our company and hold our Directors to account on the operation of the SWLEP as a business. This is achieved in a number of ways: through our Annual General Meeting; our annual event; our public Board meetings; and through business and stakeholder consultation sessions which we hold to support the development of our Local Industrial Strategy and other programmes as required throughout the year.

Signed:



Name: John Mortimer
Position: Chairman
Date: 17 January 2020

Signed:



Name: Paddy Bradley
Position: Director
Date: 17 January 2020