



Section A: Role and Governance Principles

October 2021



ROLE AND GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

Role and Governance Principles

1. Purpose

The Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) was established in 2011 with the aim of stimulating growth in the economy across the Swindon and Wiltshire area. In part it aims to do this by playing a central role in determining local economic priorities and undertaking activities to drive sustainable and inclusive economic growth. It is a primary partnership between the business community and the two local authorities; Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council. In response to the Government's Strengthening Local Enterprise Partnerships report (July 2018), SWLEP became incorporated as a company limited by guarantee on 14 January 2019.

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 make a significant contribution to economic growth and job creation'¹ in the area by:

- Ensuring that strategies for achieving sustainable and inclusive economic growth 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.

2. Strategic Vision

In January 2020, the SWLEP Board published its Emerging Swindon and Wiltshire Local Industrial Strategy which sets out its priorities for the next 10-15 years. Its vision is:

To ensure all of our communities benefit from inclusive and sustainable growth, making the Swindon and Wiltshire area world-renowned for its convergence of innovation, entrepreneurialism and great quality of life.

This will be achieved by targeted activity to develop our people, infrastructure, places business environment and innovation activity.

3. Performance

The SWLEP's performance measures are set out in its Implementation Plan. Key drivers are to:

- Increase the GVA of the area; and
- Create new, high value and highly skilled jobs.

¹ Local growth: realising every place's potential, HM Government 28 October 2010, page 12

In this context 'GVA' refers both to productivity and the size of the economy.

4. Activities

The activities which the SWLEP will undertake, in respect of the Swindon and Wiltshire area and in pursuance of the overall aims and priorities, will include:

- Investigating and reporting on the following through research, analysis and engagement with business, the unitary authorities and others:
 - the type and profile of business activity;
 - training, education and skill levels amongst the workforce and potential workforce;
 - the type and profile of skills provision;
 - the needs of business, that is, conditions or actions which are likely to encourage growth in existing areas or development of new areas; and
 - the likely impact on business of particular policies, strategies or events
- Developing strategy itself and providing input into and monitoring strategy and policy developed by others, for example, local and central government;
- Identifying and securing sources of funding which are aligned with the SWLEP's aims and activities as set out in the Emerging Swindon and Wiltshire Local Industrial Strategy;
- Administering and/or providing grants or other funding for activities likely to contribute to economic growth and job creation;
- Promoting the benefits of the Swindon and Wiltshire area as a location for the expansion, business creation and inward investment through engagement and provision of information;
- Providing information about strategies for economic growth and job creation, skills provision, funding and other support available for businesses and investors, and other activities aimed at achieving sustainable and inclusive economic growth;
- Identifying additional opportunities for the unitary authorities and other bodies to provide support for economic growth and job creation, including identifying land or other resources which may be made available to support business growth or inward investment; and
- Participating in regional and national LEP networks and activity including peer review and sharing best practice.

5. Governance principles

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

1. Operates in accordance with its Governance Framework and Assurance Procedures (Section F).
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 Swindon and Wiltshire area.
4. Effectively identifies and appropriately takes into account the views of other stakeholders (Section B, paragraph 2b).
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 (Section G).
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 by the Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy's Annual Performance Review, and relevant benchmarking against other LEPs; and
 - c. Appropriate transparency through public reporting of:
 - i. Governance arrangements and the Assurance Procedures
 - ii. Decisions
 - iii. Planned and completed activities
 - iv. Engagement with business and stakeholders
 - v. Progress against the delivery of the Emerging Swindon and Wiltshire Local Industrial Strategy.
 - vi. Scrutiny of its operation by the Joint Scrutiny Panel.
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.