

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)**

Starting from a strong position; the CWLEP board has sought to further strengthen its governance and transparency over the last 12 months. It has taken steps to build on its track record and reputation for achieving excellent delivery of programmes and projects that deliver on the objectives of removing barriers to growth. Policies that have introduced have reinforced a determination to be '*best in class*' as far as governance and transparency are concerned. The policies, introduced in May 2017, include an Equality & Diversity Statement, a comprehensive complaints procedure and a Code of Conduct for board members.

The specific steps that have been taken include the following :-

Tackling representation and diversification on our main board and sub groups

CWLEP board believes representation from across all aspects of the business and public stakeholder community is very important. In October 2017 CWLEP began a recruitment drive for a private sector director and were conscious that, although there had been previous directors from an ethnic minority background, there had been no ethnic minority presence on the board since early 2017. The recruitment targeted that sector successfully resulting in the appointment of a director, originally from Pakistan, an owner and CEO of a telecommunications company.

Developing governance and decision making processes

The governance processes have been expanded and strengthened during the year. All local authorities in Coventry & Warwickshire are now represented at the main board and have nomination rights to appoint a director. Hinckley & Bosworth have observer rights, as do the FE College principals. The two sub-boards with delegated responsibility from the main board, the F&G Board and the Programme Delivery Board, both have established strong oversight of their respective areas of responsibility and have formal terms of reference that will go to the main board in January 2018 for endorsement.

Strengthening Business engagement and overall profile of CWLEP

From the outset, CWLEP recognised the importance of engaging with the business community and gave specific nomination rights to the Chamber of Commerce and FSB to nominate a director to the board. There are in fact now 3 directors who champion SME's at board level. CWLEP in practice has a wide reach into the business community and it seeks to ensure that as much of its work, decisions and success is disseminated as widely as possible, using a number of approaches. The formal methods of communication have been covered in Annex A and the board remains committed to go further in this area where the Mary Ney review and the LEP review suggests further engagement and decision making processes. The

CWLEP and its family of the Growth Hub and CW Champions are vital vehicles through which the LEP reaches business audiences through events, regular newsletters and very strong public relations and social media coverage.

The CW Growth Hub remains one of the most well praised and endorsed by businesses and has recently hosted a highly successful Business Festival, opened by Margot James who congratulated CWLEP on hosting such a comprehensive range of events over a 2-week period. Every 2 months CWLEP raises its profile at the very successful CW Champions events where high profile speakers told and sold the story of the area and where over 170 businesses have the opportunity to network.

In the last 12 months the CW Champions is now a formal part of the CWLEP governance and is part of the Growth Hub subsidiary. In addition, CWLEP has recently produced an Annual Review of it's success and this has been distributed widely to the CW area and regional and national stakeholders.

CWLEP has in recent months achieved significant national media coverage for it's success in the automotive and advanced manufacturing sector; all of which sitting alongside its support for City of Culture and has helped to raise the profile of the economy, CWLEP and LEP's in general.

Final Outcome of Annual Conversation 2017

On 20th February 2018, Stephen Jones, Director Cities and Local Growth Unit sent a letter to CWLEP announcing the final outcome and conclusion of that process that determined that overall the performance rating of CWLEP is GOOD. Governance of the CWLEP is considered to be: GOOD, Programme delivery in CWLEP is considered to be: GOOD and CWLEP's approach to strategy development is considered to be: EXCEPTIONAL.

The CWLEP Chair and CEO have signed this document on 28 February 2018.