



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 BEIS Area Lead, by **19 January 2023**. This statement should also be published on the LEP's website by **28 February 2023** with confirmation sent to the email address above. **(max 500 words)**

As Chair and Chief Executive respectively, we can confirm that GFirst LEP operates in accordance with the latest revision of the **National Assurance Framework** (Sept 2021) for Local Enterprise Partnerships.

This is reflected in our **Local Assurance Framework** – (Version 10 Updated Jan 2023) which is published on our website.

GFirst LEP commits to make all decisions relating to the expenditure of public funds in an open and transparent way.

All board directors are required to fully declare any commercial interests, gifts, hospitality and expenses and potential conflicts of interests in relation to funding decisions. A publicly available **register of interests** is maintained and a register of interests in relation to specific business at each board meeting is also published. Every board meeting has a standing agenda item for board members to declare any new or changed conflicts of interest before the meeting continues. A public register of **gifts, hospitality and expenses** received by board members (and staff members) is also maintained and published on our website.

The LEP Board has appointed individual members to act as 'champions' for the following areas:- **Diversity & Equality, Skills, Growth Hub, Sustainability, Small Business, VCS and Risk.**

GFirst LEP continues to exceed the Government's requirement for **private sector representation** and **gender diversity** on its board. Currently we have 12 of 14 (85%) board members from private sector and a full 50% (7 from 14) female. All board members have formally committed to the **Nolan Principles** of conduct in public office.

A joint LEP/Accountable body group, the Programme Management Group (PMG), meets on a regular basis (was monthly, now quarterly) to review programme activity and delivery, funding profiles and risks/issues with our area lead/deputy area lead in attendance. The LEP is also subject to regular **audits** of compliance against the assurance framework, conducted by the Accountable Body.



The LEP works with a number of advisory forums, as detailed in Annex B of the Local Assurance Framework including the LEP Investment Panel and the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC). It is also subject to oversight from the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee drawn from County Council members. In 22-23 the LEP continues to pro-actively report to the JC on a regular basis, for example providing an update on the LEP review and LEP 'integration' programme at the December Scrutiny meeting. We also actively engage in the work planning for the Scrutiny Committee

Board member details, Board papers and minutes are published on the GFirst LEP website in line with the recommend timings, i.e. 5 working days prior to meetings and 10 days post meetings for minutes.

Appointments to the board are in accordance of the GFirst LEP CIC Articles of Association and are subject to an open recruitment process.

We also hold an annual review each year with an opportunity for our wider stakeholders and partners to receive an update on LEP activity and future plans. In 2022 the annual review was held at Cotswold Airport with over 200 delegates in attendance.

Signed:

Name: Ruth Dooley

Position: Chair

Date: 17-1-23

Signed:

Name: David Owen

Position: Chief Executive

Date: 17-1-23