

GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership

Board Paper – 14th February 2017

Agenda Item 4.1

1. What is this item for:

- a. To confirm to the Board that the Assurance Framework for the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) has been revised and updated again based on national guidance for LEPs.
- b. To outline the changes made and reasons for this
- c. To ask the LEP Board to approve the revised and updated version of the Assurance Framework so that it can replace the existing version for the Framework as soon as possible.

3. Background:

Members of the Programme Management Group (LEP staff and Gloucestershire County Council officers) have worked through the guidance issued in November 2016 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-enterprise-partnership-national-assurance-framework> together with lessons learned in implementing the Growth Deal programme so far to update the Assurance Framework. This annual review and updating of the Assurance Framework is something expected by BEIS and is good practice to ensure the Assurance Framework remains fit for purpose.

The Programme Management Group has now completed its update of the Assurance Framework and a copy is supplied with this covering paper. The next stage after approval by the LEP Board is for the Assurance Framework to be approved and signed-off by the Gloucestershire County Council Section 151 Officer. This will confirm to BEIS that our Assurance Framework has been updated and that GCC as our accountable body is satisfied that we are delivering our Growth Deal programme in a way that complies with our Assurance Framework.

The previous version of our Assurance Framework which was refreshed during 2016 and approved by the Board on 21/6/16 can be found at <http://www.gfirstlep.com/Home/Assurance-Framework/?Result=1>

The key new changes/updates made to this version of the Assurance Framework are as follows:

- i) The LEP's commitment to diversity
- ii) Refining and explaining the role of the Programme Management Group including the management of risks.
- iii) Project management arrangements including progress updates.
- iv) Requirement to develop an agreed process to manage the allocation of unspent local growth deal funding
- v) Updates and refinements to the monitoring plans process including launch meetings, progress update arrangements and the annual review process.
- vi) Further explanation regarding value for money scores.

Please note that the annexes to the main Assurance Framework document are currently being updated to ensure consistency with the main document and are available on request. All revised and updated annexes will be published on the GFirst LEP website along with the revised and updated main Assurance Framework document.

4. **Risks / Issues:**

The existing published Assurance Framework needs updating and any delay in approving and publishing the revised assurance Framework may delay implementation of projects or result in challenges to the programme management processes.

5. **Recommendations:**

The Board is asked to:

1. Note that the Assurance Framework has been revised and updated.
2. Note the main changes to the Assurance Framework listed in this covering paper.
3. Approve the updated and revised updated Assurance Framework so that it can be published as soon as possible.

6. **Further information:**

For further information about the Assurance Framework or points raised in this Board paper, please contact Mally Findlater mally.findlater@gfirstlep.com