

Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership

Governance Assurance Statement

February 2024



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 DBT Area Lead, by **29 February 2024**. This statement should also be published on the LEP's website by **15 March 2024** with confirmation sent to the email address above. **(max 500 words)**

Dorset LEP has a comprehensive local assurance framework document on our website that demonstrates our commitment to transparency and accountability and sets out our approach to appraise, deliver, monitor and evaluate our schemes to ensure value for money. The LAF is reviewed and updated annually most recently in Autumn 2023. We have an excellent relationship with our Accountable Body including our S151 officer who attends our Board meetings and is an active member of our Finance, Audit & Corporate Risk Committee (FACR).

All our policies and procedures are on our webpages and updated annually, all were reviewed and updated as appropriate in Autumn 2023. These policies include decision making and due diligence, codes of conduct, expenses, etc

Our Board and committees all have their own webpages with members listed, agendas, papers and meeting dates.

We publish our delivery plan, annual report and annual accounts on our webpages and have a publicly available project dashboard showing all core project information such as status, duration, budget, outputs, location and delivery partner. We have Standard Operating Procedures for all aspects of work of the LEP and this provides exceptional business continuity

Additional assurance and performance monitoring is undertaken through our governance structure.

The main LEP committees are:

- Finance, Audit & Corporate Risk Committee (FACR) – attended by S151 officer
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee - with representation from both councils
- Nominations and Remunerations Committee

Additionally Dorset LEP. convenes and supports and a board member chairs the Dorset Skills board. The responsibility for convening the Enterprise Zone Committee transferred to Dorset Council.

The activity and recommendations of these committees are reported to the LEP board. Board members are recruited through an openly advertised process. DBT acknowledged potential difficulties in board recruitment and retention following the announcement re LEP core functions and funding. Despite this, following a skills audit of the board and vacancies arising, two new business board members were recruited in this financial year to fill business leadership and financial skills gaps. Change in Council representation maintained the gender balance we had.



Signed: 

Name: Cecilia Bufton

Position: Chair of the Dorset LEP Board

Date: 29 February 2024

Signed: 

Name: Vinita Nawathe

Position: Executive Director

Date: 29 February 2024