

Annex E: 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, they 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 Performance Review process (in April 2018). You should cover any overview and scrutiny function undertaken by the Accountable Body. **(max 500 words)**

The West of England Local Enterprise Partnership is a driving force for the region, boosting productivity and people's earning power. We are building on the region's powerful combination of high skill levels, strong connectivity, attractiveness as a place to live and work to deliver our ambition for clean and inclusive growth.

Over the last year we have:

- Hosted in Bristol the national Industrial Strategy one year on event '*Forging our Future, the story so far*'. Speakers included Secretary of State for Business, Environment and Industrial Strategy, the Rt Hon Greg Clark MP and Patricia Greer, CEO, West of England LEP.
- Hosted a series of high profile ministerial and senior civil servant visits including Secretary of State for Business, Environment and Industrial Strategy, the Rt Hon Greg Clark MP, Minister of State for DCMS the Rt Hon Margot James MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary BEIS the Rt Hon Richard Harrington MP, Permanent Secretary BEIS Alex Chisolm and Melanie Dawes, Permanent Secretary MHCLG.
- Recruited 12 senior business leaders, who really understand the needs of the local economy, to our Board. These senior leaders are diverse, and represent our global strengths from aerospace, financial service and creative to innovative tech companies. They are engaged and acting in a collaborative way to drive Local Industrial Strategy that ensures our businesses can continue to be amongst the best in the world.

We have a strong attendance record at LEP Board meetings at 80%.

- We have completed the delivery of nine LGF schemes which include the following:
 - £5.765 million for the University of Bath and South Gloucestershire Council to jointly purchase the Bristol & Bath Science Park as a centre of excellence for research and development across the region
 - £2.1 million on major improvements to the Aztec West roundabout – including more lanes on the approaches, widening the foot and cycle way,

and new pedestrian and cyclist crossings to improve access to the Business Park and Enterprise Area.

- £1.8 million for Bath's new Odd Down coach park – as part of the regeneration plans for Bath Quays; helping to prepare for the growth of businesses in the city
- £1.3 million to establish a Health Technology Hub at UWE to support a research and innovation centre.
- We are on track to deliver the Growth Deal job target of 9,000 local jobs across more than 50 projects leveraging in significant public and private sector investment.
- Our Local Growth Hub has engaged with well over 600 businesses, and we are actively communicating with SMEs.
- Our Enterprise Zones are seeing significant private sector investment, with the delivery of enabling infrastructure meaning office development is now progressing at pace in Temple Quarter and at Bath Quays
- We have invested £6 million in skills capital programmes including the City of Bristol Construction Centre; training 1,500 learners in sustainable and innovative building techniques.

These are big and impressive successes.

In partnership with Tim Bowles, Mayor of West of England, and the Combined Authority, we are providing vision and strategic leadership to drive Local Industrial Strategy and sustainable, inclusive private-sector led growth.

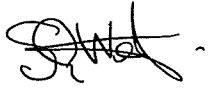
We have more to do. Our Local Industrial Strategy, alongside Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships', brings further growth opportunities. We have plenty of innovative ideas, from a 5G test bed, to a living city lab; creating a real-life platform for testing new technology at scale. We are actively working to reshape our post 16 skills system, that will allow us to tailor skills and training based on what local businesses want.

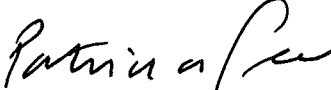
There are many opportunities and I am keen that we embrace them all, but we will need Governments' investment. Replacement funding for Local Growth Funds and EU Structural Funds should at least match existing funding levels and start by 20 / 21 to ensure continuity in activity.

We have delivered all of this whilst ensuring that the governance and transparency of the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is in accordance with the law and Government standards, and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used efficiently to deliver our vision for clean and inclusive economic growth in the region.

We have a sound system of internal control, set out in both the WECA Constitution and our Local Assurance Framework, which facilitates the effective exercise of the LEP's functions and which includes arrangements for good financial management, governance and transparency.

The West of England Local Enterprise Partnership has made a significant positive difference and I look forward to even greater success in the year to come.

Signed: 
Name: STEVED WEST
Position: Chair
Date: 9/1/2019

Signed: 
Name: PATRICIA GREER
Position: Chief Exec
Date: 09/01/2019