

Joint Assurance Statement

The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is performing strongly and delivering growth programmes of national significance with half of its investment priorities directly delivering economic benefit in Lancashire's most deprived communities. We have also established strong governance structures with transparent decision-making practices underpinned by robust financial management and accountability arrangements. The LEP's Assurance Framework sets out our practices and approach in more detail with the Framework regularly reviewed in light of strategic and operational requirements and new national guidance.

In our view, the LEP fully meets or exceeds all required governance and financial requirements, including the recommendations set out in the recent Ney Review commissioned by Government. However, the LEP is not complacent with the Board and Performance Committee regularly challenging and testing the effectiveness and rigour of the LEP governance and financial arrangements.

Our positive assessment is also shared by Lancashire County Council's (LCC's) Section151 Officer, on behalf of the LEP's accountable body. Furthermore, LCC's Monitoring Officer, who also performs the LEP's Company Secretary role, and Head of Audit, are both actively engaged in ensuring the highest public standards in the conduct and operation of the LEP's governance and financial arrangements. The accountable body's External Scrutiny Committee has also recently reviewed the performance of the LEP with the LEP offering to present annually, or more regularly on specific issues. LCC's Internal Audit Service also undertakes independent reviews the performance and practice of the LEP, as part of the accountable body's corporate audit programme, with no issues of concern to report.

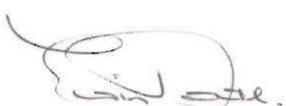
The LEP is also involved in peer reviews involving other LEPs, most recently Staffordshire and Solent, to test existing governance arrangements and share best practice.

The LEP Board continues to command the support of business, university and local authority leaders in Lancashire and recognises the need to work hard to retain their confidence. The LEP especially benefits from having five local authority leaders as LEP Board Directors, with the LEP Chair a non-constituent member on the shadow Lancashire Combined Authority. A tangible benefit of this collaborative approach was a successful Growth Deal 3 outcome for Lancashire secured earlier this year.

The LEP Board already meets in public but we are committed to making the work of the LEP more accessible. For example, the LEP has produced a Key Achievements document, an Annual Report and Business Plan with operational budget and other financial information on LEP programmes and projects available on the LEP's website.

Work on a new website will also make it easier for stakeholders and the public to find out more about the LEP's work, its decision-making and governance structures with agendas, key decisions, business cases and strategic documents easy to find. This information is already publicly available, but we will make it easier to both locate and navigate. A linked and complementary LEP website will be dedicated to meeting the needs of businesses, investors and developers. Both of these websites will go live in early 2018.

In early 2018, the LEP will refresh its Strategic Economic Plan and this will provide another key opportunity for stakeholders and the public to engage with the LEP in shaping and delivering Lancashire's ambitions and priorities.



Edwin Booth, DL
LEP Chairman



Martin Kelly
LEP Chief Operating Officer