# Annex C: Governance Assurance Statement

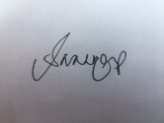
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| The LEP Chair and Chief Executive should here provide a brief formal assurance statement on the status of governance and transparency. This should include any overview and scrutiny function undertaken by the Accountable Body. This should be sent to the Assurance Team via [localgrowthassurance@communities.gov.uk](mailto:localgrowthassurance@communities.gov.uk), copying the Cities and Local Growth Unit Area Lead, by **14 January 2022**. This statement should also be published on the LEP’s website by **28 February 2022** and confirmation sent to the email address above.  **(max 500 words)** |
| It is our view that the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership is fully compliant\* with the requirements of the National Assurance Framework guidance, meeting gender, business quotients and local government representation required of the Board  During 2021/22, following a prior review of LEP Governance, led by the Chief Executive, and senior officers of the Members of the Company, recommendations for improvement continued to be implemented including:   * The preparation of a three year Financial Strategy * Ensuring the LEP is resourced and supported to maximise the strategic impact of the LEP, (whilst recruitment is paused – due to the national LEP Review) * Building trust and confidence, transacting in fair and transparent processes and operating with independence and impartiality * Establishing a regular Company Member meeting and Joint Scrutiny Committee * Holding the first LEP Annual Conference * Publication of an Annual Report   The proposals were also reviewed by the BEIS/MHCLG Compliance Unit and confirmed compliant for accuracy of statement and carrying out a rigorous and complete review. \*The appointment of an independent Company Secretary remains as an outstanding action to be implemented; again this transition has also been postponed pending the outcome of the LEP Review.  A new Chair was appointed this year, Debbie Francis and acting Chair and Deputy Chair, resigned after completing 6 years of service to the LEP.  There is a positive working relationship with the S151 officer of our Accountable Body and the LEP's Company Secretary, both of whom are actively involved and engaged with the LEP to ensure the highest public standards and assurance arrangements are met. LEP Board meetings are regularly attended and appropriate financial and legal advice given to support all LEP decision-making. Where there may be a conflict of interest in respect of these two roles, independent advice is sought.  A new Scrutiny Committee is formed, comprised of representatives from all local authorities, to ensure that all decisions made, are based on a strong evidence base, and to build positive relationships between local authorities and business, making recommendations for increased partnership collaboration and to enhance decision-making. The Committee meets twice in 2021-22.  Local Growth Funds are fully committed to 52 projects (£273m) and expenditure will be completed within this financial year. Getting Building Fund is fully committed for 10 projects (£34m). Most of the expenditure will be completed within this financial year, with some slippage mainly due to Covid related causes.  The LEP is committed to involving partners and external stakeholders in all that it does. Growth Hub and Skills and Employment are delivered under a partnership arrangement with Lancashire County Council. Other key elements of partnership work this year included production of a new Internationalisation Strategy, Skills and Employment Framework and Innovation Plan.  Business-led Sector Groups are formed to represent key sectors of employment in Lancashire to produce new Sector Plans for growth and employment.  On the LEP website, all LEP Board and Sub-Committee meeting Agendas and Minutes, Annual Report, Annual Business Plan, Statement of Accounts, Risk Register, Local Assurance Framework, LEP Achievements, Strategies and Policies are published. |

Signed: 

Name: Debbie Francis

Position: [Chair]

Date: 13 January 2022

Signed: 

Name: Sarah Kemp

Position: [Chief Exec]

Date: 13 January 2022