

## Governance Assurance Statement 2021/22

**This Governance Assurance Statement is a brief formal statement by the LEP Chair and Chief Executive on the status of governance and transparency.**

The LEP upholds the highest levels of governance and transparency. A robust and compliant Assurance Framework is in place, decisions are evidence based and sign off processes are transparent. All decisions are published and promoted in accordance with national guidance. Within the year the Executive team have done a major review across a number of governance areas including risk management.

The LEP is held to account through the MCA, as Accountable Body and its statutory committees - the Audit, Standards and Risk Committee (with a focus on governance and assurance, on risk management arrangements and on financial and non-financial performance) and through the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (who have the authority to review and scrutinise any decision made, or action taken by the LEP).

Despite the on-going uncertainty regarding the government's position on LEPs, locally stakeholder collaboration has continued, with the LEP leading significant engagement with businesses and other partners. Most notably, in furtherance of the central driver of growth in our economic plan. The LEP has given significant focus during the year to the region's innovation and productivity agenda. We are leading work, in partnership with colleagues in the West Midlands and eminent professors, to set out for government how a new and different approach to innovation can radically grow our economy. We have taken the decision to introduce an Innovation Board to lead this work within the region. This work will continue to be a focus of our 2022/23 delivery plan.

Delivery, in year, has been challenging as the effects of the pandemic on capacity in the partners and the supply chain, has impacted the pace and scale of business plan and scheme development. In support of this, the MCA with the support of the LEP, has made available resourcing for additional capacity. In addition, a major independent review of business processes has been undertaken by the Executive in partnership with Local Authorities, to identify new actions and opportunities to improve efficiency and the effectiveness of processes with a focus on expediting delivery whilst maintaining the highest standards of probity. Work to implement actions is underway and is captured as part of the review of the Assurance Framework of the LEP / MCA.

The LEP Board and Executive have gone through a period of change within the year. The board commenced the 2022 year with a new Interim Chair, following the conclusion of the Chair's term, the departure of one of the Vice Chair's and an additional private sector member. The strength of the private sector membership has enabled the Mayor and the Board to make interim appointments pending a new external recruitment campaign to positions. The outcome of the LEP Review and clarity on the Government's position is crucial for us to mobilise and attract leading business representatives.

Following the decision to integrate the established MCA/LEP team and the PTE, a new organisational structure and operating model has been agreed and the new Executive team will be in place by the end of the 2021/22 financial year.

Signed: Lucy Nickson  
Position: Chair  
Date: 14<sup>th</sup> January 2022

Signed: Dave Smith  
Position: Chief Executive  
Date: 14<sup>th</sup> January 2022