

## Annex B: Section 151/73 Assurance Statement

The Section 151/73 Officer should here provide a report to the Annual Conversation on their work for the LEP over the last twelve months and their opinion with a specific requirement to identify any issues of concern on governance and transparency. In particular, you should focus on any particular issued raised in Annex A. **(max 500 words)**

As Accountable Body for the Greater Lincolnshire LEP, Lincolnshire County Council has continued to strengthen their role through the year in supporting the LEP to achieve their strategic aims and objectives whilst providing a robust environment in which to operate.

The responsibilities on the Accountable Body for proper use of all Government grant monies discharged to the LEP are significant ,and as such we have ensured that governance and decision making arrangements (via the LEP's Local Assurance Framework) are sound and that respective responsibilities and accountabilities of the LEP and the Council are clear.

The Assurance framework sets out the expectations of the Accountable Body, however I have been mindful that in order to operate a high level of governance and stewardship that we continue to respond to the changing needs of government including further guidance and review by the National Audit Office and the published National Assurance Framework.

I commissioned an internal assessment by the Internal Audit Team, Assurance Lincolnshire and this resulted in a number of additions being made within Greater Lincolnshire's existing framework. More importantly it provided an independent confidence that our systems for governance were operating at a high level.

Aligned to this has been further scrutiny by both internal and external audit as follows:-

- External Audit completed by Streets reviewing our processes and financial transactions – Completed in May 2017.
- Internal audit on the larger growth deal fund to provide assurance on the grant determination sign off – Completed in April 2017

The Accountable Body have continued to provide regular reports (minimum of 3 a year) on all finances to the LEP Finance and Audit Committee as well as twice yearly reports to Economic and Scrutiny Committee.

As the LEP do not need to formally produce a financial statement we have worked hard in ensuring that the finances of the LEP are reported fairly and transparently.

An Annual Financial Report is prepared and provides a summary of the financial decisions and transactions that have occurred during the financial period. This is signed off by External Audit and presented to all boards with final agreement at the Annual General Meeting.

I have encouraged the wider accountable body team to share best practice (recently advice on contracting) and support other areas where required but also to seek areas where continued improvements can be made.

The recent Mary Ney review is welcomed and has offered another opportunity for us to strengthen our existing governance. Having considered the initial release of recommendations I can see that we are strong in a number of areas, however note the drive to ensure clear mechanisms for the section 151 officer to fulfil their role.

Given our strong track record, I want to confirm that I feel we are in a very good position to take forward the Government's National Assurance Framework that will be derived from the recommendations in Mary Ney's review.

**Section 151/73 Sign-off:**

Signed: (Redacted vs)

Name: Pete Moore

Position: Executive Director of Finance and Public Protection

Date: 28/11/17