

Annex B: Section 151/73 Assurance Statement

The Section 151/73 Officer should here provide a report to the Annual Performance Review 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 issues raised in Annex A Annual Performance Review Preparation. This should be sent to localgrowthassurance@communities.gov.uk copying the Cities and Local Growth Unit Area Lead by **16 December 2019. (max 500 words)**

I joined Lincolnshire County Council as Executive Director of Resources in April 2019 following the retirement of Peter Moore. My predecessor confirmed the Greater Lincolnshire LEP's Local Assurance Framework (LAF) as compliant in February 2019 following the release of the updated National Assurance Framework.

Whilst in post my team commissioned some further work through our Internal Audit Function to review the LAF and following the completion of this work some minor recommendations were made which will be incorporated into a revised version in the New Year ready for my further review and sign off in February 2020.

I have attended the majority of Board and Investment Board meetings and observed the extensive discussions on strategic direction and formal decision making process in allocating the variety of funds we hold on behalf of the LEP. There is good knowledge on the Investment Board and I find these meetings particularly valuable in assessing the transparency and accountability of the LEP.

The LEP boards are aware of both a direct and a perceived conflict of interest which is currently managed through a standing item during meetings and I have witnessed first-hand its implementation.

This has been a challenging year for the LEP and there has been pressure to commit and contract funds by the end of year. As Accountable Body we currently hold contracts over the value of the Local Growth Fund allocation passed to the LEP. Although we have clawback provision within the contracts I would like to seek some assurance that further monies will be released in the new year to lessen the risk for us as an organisation. This is in particular following the Mid – year review and various improvement plan meetings where the majority of targets were reached or exceeded.

We continue to provide an Accountable Body service through our finance team and identified operational representative who provides advice and guidance to the LEP team on a daily basis. This is a strong working relationship and following team restructures is a wholly independent function with reporting to me as S151 Officer and line managed by the Head of Economic Development.

The LEP commissioned an external audit on the finances held by Lincolnshire Council on behalf of the LEP and gave assurance that the funds were held and administered as per the grant determinations and general accounting

standards.

I do not have any immediate issues of concern regarding governance and transparency and feel the GLLEP operates within the terms of its Governance Framework. I will continue to support the LEP and focus on areas to ensure that the LEP can fully commit monies and importantly help deliver large strategic projects that provide impact to the Greater Lincolnshire Area. I look forward to further discussions at the Annual Performance Review.

Signed:



Name: Andrew Crookham
Position: Executive Director of Resources
Date: 16/12/2019