



## Annex B: Section 151/73 /127 Assurance Statement

The Section 151/73 / 127 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. The report should focus on any issues raised in Annex A: Annual Performance Review Preparation. This report 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**.

**(max 500 words)**

Leicester City Council's s151 officer, Deputy Director of Finance/Deputy s151 officer and staff continue to ensure the LLEP is properly reflected in the Accountable Body's (AB) wider governance framework.

The company remains legally dormant and hence the LLEP continues to use AB systems, including accounting, payroll and the corporate IT network. Discussions about future operating model options following an external review commissioned by the Board have been placed on hold, until the national direction of travel for LEPs is clear.

AB decisions remain subject to the Council's formal governance and decision making processes, e.g. acceptance and allocation of any capital funding and management of the GPF as determined by the LLEP Board. The Council's rules specifically provide for AB decisions. The LAF has been consistently implemented at all decision making levels.

The elected City Mayor distinguishes between his roles as 'the Council' and as AB to the LLEP. The distinction is drawn in the Council's Constitution and capital programme governance.

The Council's Director of Finance took up the role of Chief Operating Officer in March 2021, although remains the s151 officer for the time being. The Deputy Director of Finance continues to be the responsible AB officer for the LLEP and routinely engages with the LLEP secretariat and board. The s151 officer remains in touch with the LLEP Chair and Chief Executive. Both the s151 officer and the Deputy Director of Finance have an open invitation to be present at Board meetings, with at least one attending each meeting.

The Deputy Director and his team work closely with the LLEP secretariat on the range of business, and review reports to the Board and Investment Panel. There is regular and consistent communication, e.g. 'accountable body' meetings, pre-meets to discuss Board papers and actions, together with reviews of matters such as capital spending profiles, LLEP operating finances and GPF loan applications and repayments.

The AB has continued to support progressing investments in Enterprise Zones, through senior finance and legal officers.



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& Industrial Strategy

In the light of the staffing challenges consequent on the uncertainties around the future role of LEPs, the AB has sought to assure itself that proper governance and administrative arrangements remain in place within the LLEP. The AB is satisfied that this is presently the case, although naturally remains cautious.

The AB has offered to help assure LLEP staff around potential future alternative employment opportunities with a view to retaining key personnel; and is ready to offer more direct short-term support should this prove necessary if key staff depart and cannot be replaced in a timely fashion.

Signed:

Name: Alison Greenhill

Position: Chief Operating Officer and s151 officer, Leicester City Council

Date: 11.01.2022