

Annex C: Governance Assurance Statement

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, copying the Cities and Local Growth Unit Area Lead, by **20 January 2021**. This statement should also be published on the LEP's website by **24 February 2021** and confirmation sent to the email address above.

(max 500 words)

The LEP Board has met on six occasions in 2020, all Board meetings have been quorate with minutes and papers published on our website. The main Board continues to be supported by four sub Boards that oversee operational work programmes, including our Investment Board that met more frequently, on 9 occasions, to help expedite project funding decisions on the Getting Building Fund awarded in July 2020.

The Board constitution was refreshed in Spring 2020 and is published on our website [here](#). Open recruitment of private sector representatives, including a representative from the Voluntary and Community Sector, (who has also become our first Diversity Champion) has strengthened our Board. Following a national recruitment campaign, we appointed a new private sector Board Chair in September. We maintain and publish Registers of Interests, at least annually, on our website [here](#) for all Board Members, including Observers.

On 1st April 2020 the North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) replaced the North East Combined Authority (NECA) as the North East LEP's accountable body. New operational management arrangements have been established with the Monitoring Officer for the NTCA, whose role is to ensure that we operate legally with clear policies and procedures.

The NTCA Cabinet has received quarterly reports on LEP Board funding decisions and approved a new officer delegation scheme to support the North East LEP, these are published on the NTCA website [here](#).

The NTCA committees perform an important democratic role in being able to review our activities and to hold the LEP to public account. The NTCA Scrutiny Committee has received information on planned key decisions.

In accordance with requirements set out by Government our Board has evolved to maintain compliance with new standards, including the requirement that by 1st April 2020 that at least 33% of our Board are women and 66% are from the private sector. Currently, 50% of our Board are women and 66.6% are from the private sector.



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

We take seriously the importance of delivering our responsibilities as a Local Enterprise Partnership through compliance with national best practice guidelines and we set out in our Local Assurance Framework how we make decisions and ensure value for money when we make project investments.

Importantly, this document also sets out how we communicate and transparently publish information about our affairs such as our annual accounts, with the latest accounts for 2019/20 available to be view on the NECA website [here](#).

The COVID 19 Pandemic has resulted in planned public events being cancelled or to move online. On 24 November we held a virtual AGM with 292 in attendance which compares favourably to 150 in 2019.

In May 2020 we published our 2020/21 Delivery Plan. Later this year, we will publish an annual review setting out progress. In addition, the pandemic has necessitated the LEP to take a lead role in forming an Economic Response Group, convened with regional partners to co-ordinate efforts to mitigate against immediate economic impacts and to plan ahead. This plan is expressed in an ambitious 'Recovery and Renewal Deal' submitted to Government in the autumn.

Signed:

Name: Lucy Winskill

Position: Chair

Date: 20 January 2021

Signed:

Name: Helen Golightly

Position: Chief Executive

Date: 20 January 2021