



## 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](mailto:localgrowthassurance@communities.gov.uk), copying the Cities and Local Growth Unit Area Lead, by **14 January 2022**. This statement should also be published on the LEP's website by **28 February 2022** and confirmation sent to the email address above.

**(max 500 words)**

The LEP Board has met online, due to the pandemic, on six occasions in 2021. All Board meetings have been quorate and well attended. At its September meeting, the Board received an independent interim evaluation report on progress against our 10-year Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) along with our two major investment programmes – Local Growth Fund and Enterprise Zones - that support the SEP goal to attract more and better jobs to the North East.

Until the autumn, the Board functioned with a full complement of Members. We are in the process of assessing the skill set needed to fill the board member vacancy we have to complement the needs of the Levelling Up White paper focus and the needs of the National LEP Review. The Board constitution has remained unchanged and is published on our website [here](#). During the year the Board approved a refreshed [Officer Scheme of Delegation](#) following consultation with our accountable body.

The Board has two positions that respectively act as our Diversity Champion and SME representative. All Board and Investment Board members, including Observers, submit a Register of Interest at least annually. These are published on our website [here](#).

The Board continues to be supported by four sub boards that oversee operational work programmes, including our Investment Board that has met on 7 occasions and has delegation to approve most project investments including from our £23.5m 2021/22 Getting Building Fund allocation. Minutes and papers from both Boards are published on our website.

North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) continues to operate as the accountable body for the North East LEP. The NTCA Monitoring Officer and S73 Officer respectively provide legal and financial support, helping to ensure that we operate legally with clear policies, procedures and financial controls. Both regularly attend Board meetings.

The NTCA Cabinet has received quarterly reports on LEP Board funding decisions, 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 - annually we jointly attend the NTCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee to report on our activities. As in 2021, we again look forward holding an online public AGM, on 25 January 2022 and welcoming circa 200 people.

In accordance with Government gender balance requirements 50% of Board members are women, above the 33% minimum. Private sector representation is also compliant with the 66% minimum requirement.

We take seriously the importance of delivering our responsibilities as a Local Enterprise Partnership through compliance with national best practice guidelines. In September 2021 we updated our Local Assurance Framework which sets out how we make decisions and ensure value for money when making project investments.

Importantly, this document also sets out how we communicate and transparently publish information about our affairs, including annual accounts, with the latest accounts published on the NTCA website.

In May, we published an Annual Review of activities in 2020/21 [here](#) and our Delivery Plan for 2021/22 can be viewed [here](#).

Signed

Name: Lucy Winskill  
Position: Chair  
Date: 12 January 2022

Signed:

Name: Helen Golightly  
Position: Chief Executive  
Date: 12 January 2022