



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@levellingup.gov.uk, copying the BEIS Area Lead, by **19 January 2023**. This statement should also be published on the LEP's website by **28 February 2023** with confirmation sent to the email address above. **(max 500 words)**

We are confident that the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) meets the governance requirements set out in the latest National Local Growth Assurance Framework. We have strong and effective arrangements in place to ensure accountability and transparency of decision-making. The decisions of our business-led Board and sub-boards are based on strong evidence and recommendations are appropriately challenged. Any conflicts of interest are actively managed, supported by regularly updated and reviewed conflicts forms. Agendas, papers and decisions of the Board and Pillar Boards are published on our website.

Meetings of the Supervisory Board and Joint Scrutiny Committee (JSC) continue to be held using video technology or on a physical basis to which the public may seek access.

Private sector directors are fully engaged in all the LEP's policy development and decision-making and collectively bring a wealth of skills, experiences, personal qualities and networks to our work. They have actively contributed to the three primary roles of the LEP: agitating, enabling and commissioning, as well as providing strong guidance and direction on the activities underway for integration of the LEP activities into the West Midlands Combined Authority or transfer to Birmingham City Council, to ensure that the stakeholders of the GBSLEP continue to be adequately served. All Directors and those who contribute to sub-boards and advisory groups are required to adhere to the Nolan principles.

This is the third full year of the LEP operating as a fully independent and active company limited by guarantee, controlling its revenue funding and employing its Executive. The operating structure has continued to respond in an agile and effective manner to the challenges presented by the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic and the other economic impacts on business in the GBSLEP Area.

Birmingham City Council (BCC) continues as the Accountable Body for all capital funding. We have maintained a strong working relationship with BCC as evidenced by their active participation in, and contribution to, the LEP's agenda. There is a Joint Working Protocol in place which sets out the roles and responsibilities of both parties, with a series of performance measures



which are being met. Scrutiny of our operations by the Accountable Body is undertaken in a variety of ways including:

- input into the development of relevant policies and procedures and being part of their approval process;
- making an active contribution to the GBSLEP Board and its decision-making sub-boards;
- reviewing capital funding decisions;
- regular engagement with the S151 officer and team; and
- undertaking internal audits.

Wider overview and scrutiny of GBSLEP is undertaken by the JSC and by individual local authority scrutiny committees where appropriate.

Whilst we have robust processes and structures in place, we are committed to continuous improvement. This enables us to maximise positive impact on our local economy, achieving value for money in the use of public Funds, drawing upon the collective skills and expertise of the LEP Executive and our partners across the private, public and academic sectors.

Signed: 

Name: Anita Bhalla

Position: Chair

Date: 12 January 2023

Signed: 

Name: Henriette Breukelaar

Position: Chief Executive

Date: 12 January 2023